

**ULASAN BUKU/BOOK REVIEW**

*Bustan al-Salatin: A Malay Mirror for Rulers* by Jelani Harun, Penang: Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia, 2009, 352 pp.

Buku ini membahas dengan sangat mendalam teks *Bustan al-Salatin fi Dzikir al-Awwalin wa al-Akhirin (Taman Raja-Raja mengenai Ingatan terhadap Masa Lampau dan Masa Kini)*, salah satu karya terpenting Nuruddin al-Raniri, seorang ulama Sufi terkemuka di Aceh pada abad ke-17. Diperkirakan teks ini selesai ditulis antara 1641–1642 ketika al-Raniri bermastautin di Aceh. Al-Raniri menulis *Bustan al-Salatin* atas suruhan penaungnya, Sultan Aceh, Iskandar Thani (1636–1641).

Dalam buku ini, yang terdiri atas sembilan bab, Prof. Madya Dr. Jelani Harun, pensyarah kanan di Universiti Sains Malaysia, Pulau Pinang, menghuraikan aspek-aspek kodikologis dan filologis salinan-salinan naskhah *Bustan al-Salatin* yang tersimpan di berbagai perpustakaan di dunia. Ia menemukan tidak kurang daripada 33 salinan naskhahnya yang tersimpan di Aceh (1), Berlin (2), Brussels (1), Cape Town (1), Colombo (1), Frankfurt (1), Jakarta (3), Kuala Lumpur (2), Leiden (13), London (5) dan Paris (3) (muka surat 28). Hanya 29 salinan sahaja yang dirujuk oleh Jelani kerana dia tidak dapat mengetahui lebih banyak empat salinan bakinya. Jelani mengatakan bahawa naskhah induk *Bustan al-Salatin* sendiri tidak boleh ditemukan lagi, kemungkinannya sudah hilang atau punah.

Buku ini tidak menyajikan transliterasi *Bustan al-Salatin*, tapi menyelidiki kandungan teksnya dan menghuraikan intertekstualiti dan resepsi aktif terhadapnya, serta menjelaskan konteks kesejarahannya. Setelah memeriksa dan membandingkan seluruh salinan naskhahnya yang berhasil dikenali, Jelani menemukan bahawa *Bustan al-Salatin* mengandungi tujuh "buku" (maksudnya "bab"), tapi tiada satu salinan pun yang lengkap mengandungi ketujuh buku/bab itu. Ketujuh buku/bab itu adalah: (I) Penciptaan langit dan bumi (30 *fasal*); (II) Para Nabi dan pada penguasa (13 *fasal*); (III) Sifat dan kriteria raja dan wazir yang adil, cerdik dan bijaksana (6 *fasal*); (IV) Penguasa yang asketis dan orang suci yang saleh (2 *fasal*); (V) Raja yang tidak adil dan wazir yang suka menindas (2 *fasal*); (VI) Orang yang pemurah, mulia, berani dan perkasa

(2 *fasal*); (VII) Intelek, ilmu perubatan, ilmu firasat, ehwal wanita, dan lain-lain (5 *fasal*).

Ulama Sufi Nuruddin al-Raniri berasal dari Ranir (Rander), sebuah bandar tua di Gujarat, pantai barat India. Tarikh kelahirannya tidak dapat dikenali pasti. Pada tahun 1637, al-Raniri datang ke Aceh yang waktu itu baru setahun diperintah oleh Sultan Iskandar Thani yang naik takhta kerajaan Aceh menggantikan ayahnya Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607–1636). Namun tampaknya sebelum bermastautin di Aceh, al-Raniri sudah pernah pula mengunjungi negeri-negeri Melayu antara 1621 dan 1637. Di Aceh al-Raniri terlibat polemik keras, bahkan sampai membawa konflik, dengan ulama Sufi lain yang sudah lebih dulu menyebarkan syiar agama Islam di sana, iaitu Hamzah Fansuri dan Sayamsuddin al-Sumaterani. Al-Raniri menentang doktrin Sufi yang diajarkan oleh kedua ulama itu, khususnya mengenai fahaman *wujudiyah*. Sultan Iskandar Thani tampaknya berpihak kepada al-Raniri dan bersetuju dengan reformasi agama yang dilancarkannya.

Namun, dengan tiba-tiba Nuruddin al-Raniri meninggalkan Aceh pada 1644. Konon kepergiannya itu kerana ia tidak setuju Aceh diperintah oleh raja perempuan (sultanah). Seperti telah sama diketahui, pengganti Sultan Iskandar Thani adalah Sultanah Safiatuddin Tajul Alam (1645–1675). Mungkin ini berhubungan dengan pandangan Islam pada amnya bahawa pemimpin dalam segala tingkatan mestilah laki-laki. tampaknya, ketika Sultanah Safiatuddin mulai berkuasa, hak-hak istimewa yang dinikmati oleh al-Raniri dalam pergaulan di kalangan kaum bangsawan Aceh digerogeti, berbeza dengan zaman pemerintahan Sultan Iskandar Thani yang begitu melindunginya dan mengangkatnya menjadi salah seorang penasihat keagamaan (*religious advisor*) sang Sultan. Akan tetapi sumber lain mengatakan bahawa al-Raniri meninggalkan Aceh secara terpaksa dan dalam keadaan terhina kerana dia mendapat saingan hebat daripada seorang ulama yang cepat popular bernama Saifurrijal yang berasal dari Minangkabau. Al-Raniri kembali ke tempat kelahirannya di Rander dan wafat di sana pada 21 September 1658 (muka surat 23).

Buku ini diawali dengan huraian mengenai konteks sejarah *Bustan al-Salatin*, iaitu keadaan Aceh secara sosial, politik dan keagamaan pada akhir kurun ke-16 dan awal kurun ke-17 (Bab 1: hlm. 1–13). Kemudian

Jelani membahas kepengarangan (*authorship*) *Bustan al-Salatin* dan menyajikan biografi al-Raniri (Bab 2: hlm. 14–25). Bab 3, yang bertajuk *Text and Sources* (hlm. 26–68), menghuraikan aspek-aspek kodikologis semua salinan-salinan *Bustan al-Salatin* dan menjelaskan kandungannya serta sumber-sumber rujukan yang dipakai oleh al-Raniri sendiri untuk menulis teks ini. Jelani berkomentar bahawa al-Raniri adalah salah seorang penulis pertama dalam tradisi kesusasteraan Melayu yang menjelaskan sumber-sumber yang dirujuknya dalam penulisan karya-karyanya (hlm. 54). Ini jelas menolak anggapan awam selama ini bahawa sistem referensi yang dikenal oleh orang Melayu diadopsi daripada tradisi akademis Barat.

Fenomena anakronisme dan intertekstualiti yang menunjukkan adanya "suara-suara" dari teks lain dalam salinan-salinan *Bustan al-Salatin* dibahas oleh Jelani dalam Bab 4 yang bertajuk *The Problem of Interpolation* (hlm. 69–80). Bab 5 pula (hlm. 81–128) menelusuri arketipe (*archetype*) idea sejarah dunia semesta (*universal history*) yang bercorak Islam dalam tradisi kesusasteraan Melayu yang lebih dahulu daripada *Bustan al-Salatin*. Jelani berhujah bahawa tulisan-tulisan yang mengandungi unsur-unsur historiografi dan kosmologi yang bercorak Islam, khususnya mengenai asal-usul, genealogi yang bercorak Islam, cerita-cerita mengenai nabi dan rasul, dan lain-lain lagi sudah dikenal di alam Melayu sejak zaman kejayaan kerajaan Samudera Pasai di Aceh (1250–1524) melalui terjemahan-terjemahan Melayu beberapa teks Arab seperti *Qisas al-Anbiya*, *Hikayat Iskandar Zulkarnain*, *Hikayat Amir Hamzah* dan *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah*. Dalam bab ini Jelani juga menghuraikan tulisan-tulisan *adab* model Persia yang, antara lain melalui *Bustan al-Salatin*, tampaknya telah memberikan pengaruh ke dalam tradisi kesusasteraan Melayu.

Bab 6 (hlm. 129–161) dan Bab 7 (hlm. 162–208) boleh dianggap sebagai inti buku ini. Bab 6 menghuraikan struktur *Bustan al-Salatin*. Jelani mengatakan bahawa teks ini mengandungi dua unsur utama, iaitu sejarah dan karya yang bersifat moral (*adab*). Para sarjana berbeza pendapat mengenai kaitan antara keduanya. Satu pihak mengatakan bahawa naratif sejarah pada Buku/Bab II berfungsi sebagai latar belakang bagi buku-buku/bab-bab berikutnya (Buku/Bab III–VII) yang berisi huraian mengenai berbagai hal yang terkait dengan *adab*. Pihak lain berhujah bahawa kedua unsur itu berdiri sendiri dan tidak ada saling keterkaitan

satu sama lain. Jelani mengatakan bahawa *Bustan al-Salatin* jelas merupakan satu contoh teks tentang kosmologi atau sejarah dunia semesta menurut pandangan Islam. Bahagian terakhir bab ini membicarakan tempat negeri-negeri Melayu dalam sejarah dunia semesta menurut *Bustan al-Salatin*. Jelani menunjukkan bahawa tujuan al-Raniri menulis teks ini tiada lain untuk menciptakan suatu pijakan tekstual untuk mengesahkan hubungan genealogis raja-raja Melayu dengan Nabi Adam, dengan mengaitkannya dengan tradisi naratif Persia yang sampai batas tertentu mempengaruhi pula bahagian barat India, seperti Gujarat, tempat sang pengarang dilahirkan. Hubungan itu, iaitu hubungan keturunan antara Sultan Melaka Mahmudsyah dengan Nabi Adam serta hubungan keturunan antara raja-raja Persia, raja-raja Melayu, dan raja-raja Arab dengan Nabi Adam, digambarkan oleh Jelani dalam bentuk rajah pada muka surat 150–151.

Bab 7 pula membahas kandungan *Bustan al-Salatin* tentang *adab* dan cermin perbandingan untuk para raja dan penguasa (Buku/Bab III–VII). Jelas sekali bahawa huraian al-Raniri merujuk kepada sumber-sumber Persia di bidang ini. Dalam Buku/Bab III, al-Raniri menghuraikan ehwal mengenai raja dan keadilan, undang-undang dan cerita untuk para raja, undang-undang dan cerita untuk para pegawai tinggi istana (kadi, wazir, utusan, khatib). Menurut Buku/Bab III, raja harus tahu tugas-tugasnya yang benar terhadap Allah dan rakyatnya; raja harus punya sifat rendah hati; raja harus memberikan pengampunan atas kesalahan-kesalahan rakyatnya yang menghadapi suatu mahkamah; raja harus hormat kepada ulama dan orang soleh dan meminta nasihat kepada mereka; raja harus dekat dengan para penasehatnya yang bijaksana dan meminta nasihat kepada mereka; raja harus bijaksana mempergunakan harta benda milik kerajaan; raja harus mempergunakan kekuasaannya dengan sebaik-baiknya; raja harus bertanggungjawab atas segala tindakannya; raja harus memberi nasihat kepada para menteri dan para pegawai kerajaan; dan raja harus menjaga maruah dirinya (hlm. 168–176). Dalam Buku/Bab IV–VI, Jelani menghuraikan cerita-cerita tamsilan yang disajikan al-Raniri untuk raja dan pegawai tinggi kerajaan, misalnya tentang kesolehan, tentang raja yang tidak adil dan tentang kedermawanan dan keberanian. Selanjutnya Jelani membahas kandungan Buku/Bab VII dimana al-Raniri menghuraikan ehwal intelek, ilmu firasat, ilmu anatomi dan ilmu perubatan.

Pengaruh-pengaruh *Bustan al-Salatin* dalam kesusasteraan Melayu dibahas oleh Jelani dalam Bab 8 (hlm. 209–236). Pengaruh itu terlihat nyata dalam banyak teks Melayu masa sesudahnya. Buku/Bab VII paling banyak ditemukan salinannya: paling tidak ada 21 salinannya, berbanding empat atau lima salinan daripada buku-buku/bab-bab yang lain (hlm. 209). *Hikayat Bakhtiar* dan *Cerita Musang Berjanggut* misalnya, yang salinannya juga banyak ditemukan di dunia Melayu, jelas menimba naratif *Bustan al-Salatin*. Demikian juga teks-teks Melayu klasik lainnya, seperti *Kitab Sembilan Perkara*, *Keturunan Raja-Raja Melaka, Pahang dan Johor pada Tahun 1021 Hijrah*, dan *Kitab Kumpulan Ringkas Berbetulan Lekas*, untuk sekadar menyebut contoh. Dalam bab ini Jelani menghuraikan pula "pengganti" (*successor*) Nuruddin al-Raniri, iaitu sejarawan dan penulis *adab* Raja Ali Haji di Pulau Penyengat, Riau. Ia memperinci karya-karya Raja Ali Haji, seperti *Muqaddimah fi Intizam Waza'if al-Malik* dan *Thamarat al-Muhimmah*, yang sangat jelas mengambil "gema" daripada teks *Bustan al-Salatin*.

Buku ini diakhiri dengan Bab 9: Kesimpulan (hlm. 237–243). Jelani menyimpulkan bahawa *Bustan al-Salatin* buah pena Nuruddin al-Raniri adalah salah satu hasil sastera terbesar dalam masa kegemilangan kerajaan Aceh menyusul kebangkitan Islam di dunia Melayu pada kurun ke-16 dan ke-17. Penciptaan karya ini tidak lepas daripada tujuan untuk menciptakan landasan tekstual bagi upaya mengesahkan kaitan genealogis raja-raja Melayu dengan Nabi Adam. *Bustan al-Salatin* merupakan sintesis antara Islam dan pelbagai tradisi lokal di dunia Melayu yang dicampur dengan unsur-unsur naratif sejarah dan *adab* dari tradisi Persia. Karya al-Raniri ini mendapat apresiasi aktif yang luas di dunia Melayu, yang dapat dibuktikan dengan banyaknya teks-teks Melayu klasik sesudahnya yang secara intertekstualiti mengambil idea darinya. Buku ini dilengkapi dengan tiga apendiks: dua yang pertama (hlm. 245–246) adalah peta pulau Sumatra dan wilayah pengaruh empayar Aceh pada masa lampau. Apendik yang ketiga (hlm. 247–326) adalah ringkasan tulisan-tulisan mengenai *adab* dalam *Bustan al-Salatin* yang diperinci berdasarkan salinan-salinan naskahnya yang telah diperiksa oleh Jelani.

Mungkin tidak berlebihan apabila dikatakan bahawa buku ini adalah karya ilmiah yang paling lengkap membahas teks *Bustan al-Salatin*. Yang sedikit terasa kurang dalam buku ini hanyalah huraian yang terasa

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tidak begitu tajam tentang posisi Nuruddin al-Raniri dalam wacana (*discourse*) keagamaan di Aceh, khususnya tentang inti-inti polemik antara al-Raniri dan lawan-lawannya serta efek-efek yang ditimbulkannya secara sosial, politik dan keagamaan, baik di Aceh sendiri mahupun wilayah sekitarnya. Namun, selain itu, kualiti akademis buku tidak boleh diragukan lagi. Tidaklah salah apabila buku ini meraih anugerah Majlis Penerbitan Ilmiah Malaysia (MAPIM) untuk buku terbaik bidang ilmu kemanusiaan dan sains sosial tahun ini, anugerah yang juga telah diterima oleh Jelani pada tahun 2005 atas karyanya, *Pemikiran Adab Ketatanegaraan Kesultanan Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2003).

*Bustan al-Salatin: A Malay Mirror for Rulers* jelas penting untuk dibaca oleh para akademisi dan penuntut yang ingin meluaskan pengetahuan mereka tentang dimensi keislaman dalam kesusasteraan Melayu klasik.

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*(Below is the review which is translated into English)*

This book discusses profoundly the text, *Bustan al-Salatin fi Dzikir al-Awwalin wa al-Akhirin* (The Royal Garden of Memories of the Past and Present), one of the most important writings of Nuruddin al-Raniri, a famous Sufi ulama in Aceh in the 17th century. It is envisaged that this text was completed between 1641 and 1642 when al-Raniri was domiciled in Aceh. Al-Raniri wrote *Bustan al-Salatin* on the directive of his sponsor, Sultan Aceh, Iskandar Thani (1636–1641).

In this book, which contains nine chapters, Associate Professor Dr. Jelani Harun, senior lecturer at Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, delves in the aspects of codicology and philology of the copies of the *Bustan al-Salatin* that were kept in various libraries the world over. This has brought to the fore of at least 33 copies that were kept in Aceh (1), Berlin (2), Brussels (1), Cape Town (1), Colombo (1), Frankfurt (1), Jakarta (3), Kuala Lumpur (2), Leiden (13), London (5) and Paris (3) (p. 28). However, only 29 copies were referred to by Jelani because he

was not aware of the remaining copies. Jelani claimed that the main text *Bustan al-Salatin* could not be located, possibly because it was lost or destroyed.

This book does not provide a transliteration of *Bustan al-Salatin*, but examined its textual content and elaborated its intertextuality and active reception towards it as well as clarifying its historical context. After examining and comparing all the copies known, Jelani concludes that the *Bustan al-Salatin* contains seven "books" (meaning "chapters"), but not a single copy that has the complete seven books/chapters. The seven chapters are: (1) The creation of sky and earth (clause 30); (2) Prophets and authorities (clause 13); (3) Characteristics and criteria of just, intelligent and wise king and ministers (clause 6); (4) Ascetic authority and pious holy man (clause 2); (5) Unjust king and oppressive ministers (clause 2); (6) Generous, honourable, brave and strong person (clause 2); (7) Intellect, medical knowledge, premonition, women affairs, etc. (clause 5).

Cleric Sufi Nuruddin al-Raniri originated from Ranir (Rander), an old town in Gujarat, west of India. The date of his birth could not be determined. In 1637, al-Raniri arrived in Aceh at a time when it was ruled over a year by Sultan Iskandar Thani who ascended the Aceh throne to succeed his father, Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607–1636). However, apparently before he took domicile in Aceh, al-Raniri had already visited the Malay states between 1621 and 1637. In Aceh, al-Raniri was involved in intense polemics to the extent of triggering conflict with other Sufi clerics who had already spread Islam there, i.e. Hamzah Fansuri and Syamsuddin al-Sumaterani. Al-Raniri opposed the Sufi doctrine that was conceptualised by both clerics, particularly the *wujudiyah*. Sultan Iskandar Thani appeared to have sided with al-Raniri and concurred with the religious reformation that was launched by him.

Nuruddin al-Raniri left Aceh in haste in 1644. It was said that his departure was because he disagreed with Aceh being ruled by a female ruler (Sultanah). As it was known, the successor of Sultan Iskandar Thani was Sultanah Safiatuddin Tajul Alam (1645–1675). This might be due to an Islamic viewpoint generally that rulers at all levels must be male. Apparently, at the time when Sultanah Safiatuddin began her rule, privileges that were enjoyed by al-Raniri in his socialisation with the

Aceh aristocrats were snatched away, very much in contrast with the era of Sultan Iskandar Thani who protected and elevated al-Raniri to the position of a religious advisor to the Sultan. However, other sources claimed that al-Raniri had to leave Aceh in a dishonourable fashion because he received stiff competition from a Minangkabau cleric named Saifurrijal who was increasingly becoming popular. Al-Raniri returned to his birthplace in Rander and died there on 21 September 1658 (p. 23).

This book is prefaced with an explanation of the historical context of *Bustan al-Salatin*, i.e. the situation of Aceh socially, politically and religiously at the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century (Chap. 1: pp. 1–13). Later Jelani discusses the authorship of *Bustan al-Salatin* and presented the biography of al-Raniri (Chap. 2: pp. 14–25). Chapter 3, titled "Text and Sources" (pp. 26–68) discusses aspects of codicology in all copies of *Bustan al-Salatin* and explains their contents as well as references that were used by al-Raniri himself in writing the book. Jelani commented that al-Raniri was one of the first writers in the Malay literary tradition who explained the sources he referred to in his writings (p. 54). This is clearly contrary to the public perception all this while that the system of referencing known to the Malays was adopted from the western academic tradition.

The phenomenon of anachronism and intertextuality that shows the existence of "voices" in other texts in the copies of *Bustan al-Salatin* were discussed by Jelani in Chapter 4 titled, "*The Problem of Interpolation*" (pp. 69–80). Chapter 5 (pp. 81–128) explores the archetype of an idea of a universal history that is of Islamic nature in the Malay literary tradition prior to *Bustan al-Salatin*. Jelani opines that writings that have traces of historiography and cosmology, particularly the origins and genealogy of Islamic nature, stories of the prophets, etc. were known in the Malay world since the successful era of the kingdom of Samudera Pasai in Aceh (1250–1524) through the Malay translations of several Arabic texts such as *Qisas al-Anbiya*, the Legend of Alexander the Great, the Legend of Amir Hamzah and the Legend of Muhammad Hanafiyah. In this chapter, Jelani also explains the writings of the Persian *adab* model which, among other things, via *Bustan al-Salatin*, appeared to have influenced the Malay literary tradition.



Chapter 6 (pp. 129–161) and Chapter 7 (pp. 162–208) can be considered as the gist of the book. The former explains the structure of *Bustan al-Salatin*. Jelani argues that this text consists of two main elements, i.e. history and writings that are moralistic (*adab*). Scholars had different opinions regarding the connections between the two. One party contends that the historical narrative in the Book/Chapter II functions as a backdrop to the subsequent books/chapters (Book/Chapters III–VII) that contains explanation of various issues regarding *adab*. Other sources argue that the two elements can stand on their own and that there is no connection between the two whatsoever. Jelani says that *Bustan al-Salatin* clearly indicates that it is an example of a text regarding cosmology or universal world history from an Islamic perspective. The end of this last paragraph discusses the place of the Malay States in the universal history according to *Bustan al-Salatin*. Jelani demonstrates that the aim of al-Raniri to write this text was no other than to create a textual footprint to narrate the genealogical relationship between the Malay Rulers and Prophet Adam, by connecting the traditional Persian narrative which to a certain extent influenced western India, such as Gujarat where the author was born. This relationship – the genealogical relationship between the Malacca Sultan Mahmud Shah and Prophet Adam and the genealogical connection between Persian kings, Malay rulers and Arab kings and Prophet Adam – was shown by Jelani in the form of a graph on pages 150–151.

Chapter 7 discusses the content of *Bustan al-Salatin* regarding the *adab* and the comparison between the rulers and the authorities (Book/Chapters III–VII). It clearly shows that al-Raniri's explanation referred to Persian sources in this field. In Book/Chapter III, al-Raniri explained matters pertaining ruler and justice, laws and stories for rulers, laws and stories for senior royal officials (*kadi*, *wazir*, messenger, *khatib*). According to Book/Chapter III, a ruler must know his duties towards Allah and his subjects; a ruler should have humility; a ruler should accord pardon to his subjects who were brought to justice; a ruler should respect religious leaders and religious individuals and seek their advice; a ruler should be close to his able advisors and seek their advice; a ruler should be wise in making use of the properties of the kingdom; a ruler should use his power wisely; a ruler should be accountable for his actions; a ruler should provide advice to his ministers and government officials; and a ruler should maintain his dignity (pp. 168–176). In

Book/Chapters IV–VI, Jelani explains stories of *tamsilan* that were offered by al-Raniri to the ruler and high government officials, for instance regarding religiosity, regarding an unjust ruler, regarding philanthropy and courage. Subsequently, Jelani discusses the content of Book/Chapter VII where al-Raniri explained matters of intellect, physiognomy, knowledge of anatomy and medicine.

The influences of *Bustan al-Salatin* in Malay literature is discussed by Jelani in Chapter 8 (pp. 209–236). Those influences emerged in many subsequent Malay texts. Book/Chapter VII has many copies: at the very least 21 copies, compared to four or five copies from other books/chapters (p. 209). The Legend of Bakhtiar and *Cerita Musang Berjanggut*, for example, have many copies found in the Malay world, clearly examining the narrative of *Bustan al-Salatin*. The same goes with the Malay classical texts such as *Kitab Sembilan Perkara*, *Keturunan Raja-raja Melaka*, *Pahang dan Johor pada Tahun 1021 Hijrah*, and *Kitab Kumpulan Ringkas Berbetulan Lekas*, for the purpose of citing them briefly. In this chapter, Jelani focuses on the successor Nuruddin al-Raniri, i.e. a historian and writer of *adab*, Raja Ali Haji in Pulau Penyengat, Riau. He discussed the works of Raja Ali Haji, such as *Muqaddimah fi Intizam Waza'if al-Malik* and *Thamarat al-Muhimmah*, which clearly stole the thunder from the *Bustan al-Salatin* text.

This book concludes with Chapter 9: the Conclusion Chapter (pp. 237–243). Jelani concludes that *Bustan al-Salatin*, the creation of Nuruddin al-Raniri, is one of the major literary works during the heyday of the Aceh kingdom following the rise of Islam in the Malay world in the 16th and 17th century. The creation of this work was primarily aimed at laying the textual ground for the genealogical connection between the Malay rulers and Prophet Adam. *Bustan al-Salatin* was a synthesis between Islam and the various local traditions in the Malay world that had incorporated elements of historical narrative and *adab* from Persia. Al-Raniri's work gained active and wide appreciation in the Malay world as manifested in many of the subsequent classical Malay texts, the intertextuality of which derived its idea from Persia. This book is complemented by three appendixes: the first two (pp. 245–246) are the maps of Sumatra and the old empire of Aceh. The third appendix (pp. 247–326) contains summaries regarding *adab* in *Bustan al-Salatin* that were scrutinized based on the copies examined by Jelani.

It may not be an exaggeration to say that this book is an academic work that is most complete in discussing the text of *Bustan al-Salatin*. What is the shortcoming of this book is merely the explanation that is felt to be less incisive regarding the position of Nuruddin al-Raniri in the discourse of religion in Aceh, particularly the polemics between al-Raniri and his critics as well as the social, political and religious effects it brought about, whether in Aceh or its geographical surroundings. That said, the quality of this book is unquestionable. It is not off the mark when this book managed to gain an award from the Malaysian Academic Publication Council (MAPIM) as the best book in humanities and social sciences for this year, the kind of award that Jelani also received in 2005 for his work, *Pemikiran Adab Ketatanegaraan Kesultanan Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2003).

*Bustan al-Salatin: A Malay Mirror for Rulers* clearly is important to be read by academics and students who seek to widen their knowledge on the Islamic dimension in classical Malay literature.

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