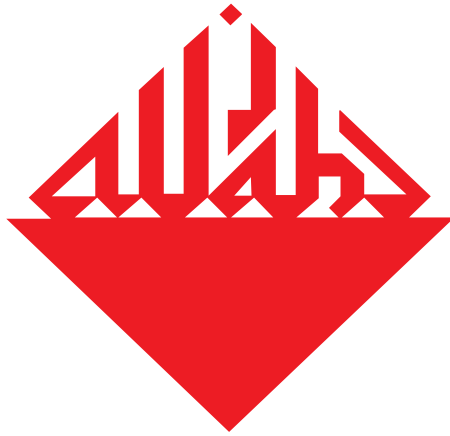


# STUDIA ISLAMIKA

INDONESIAN JOURNAL FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES

Volume 28, Number 3, 2021



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TO COMBAT EXTREMISM,  
HOW TO FRAME RELIGION MATTERS:  
SOUTHEAST ASIA IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Takeshi Kohno

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THE ROOTS OF INDONESIA'S RESILIENCE  
AGAINST VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Jamhari & Testriono

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REVISITING THE DUSUN NYOIR REBELLION  
IN NARATHIWAT (SOUTH THAILAND), APRIL 1948

Christopher Mark Joll

# **STUDIA ISLAMIKA**



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Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies

Vol. 28, no. 3, 2021

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## Islamic Turn in Malay Historiography: *Bustān al-Salāṭīn* of 17<sup>th</sup> Century Aceh

**Abstract:** *Bustān al-Salāṭīn* by *Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī* (d. 1659) is a leading Malay text on Islamic history. Written in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Aceh, one chapter of the *Bustān* was dedicated to the history of Aceh. This paper discusses how the *Bustān* described the formation of the sultanate, the rulers who were in power, their political behaviour, and the methods of statecraft they tried to establish. The text shared the emerging intellectual discourse in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Aceh, in which *al-Ranīrī*'s reform of Muslims' religious practices to uphold shari'ah-based principles gained its prominence. With the support of his patron, *Iskandar Thani* (1636-1641), *al-Ranīrī*'s Islamizing efforts for Aceh are reflected in the *Bustān*. This paper argues that the Islamic ideals and terms found in the *Bustān* signify the history of Aceh and profile the patron, which sets *Bustān* apart from previous Malay texts of historical writing.

**Keywords:** *Bustān al-Salāṭīn*, *al-Ranīrī*, Aceh Sultanate, *Iskandar Thani*, Malay, Historiography.



**Abstrak:** *Bustān al-Salātīn karya Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī (wafat 1659) merupakan teks Melayu terpenting tentang sejarah Islam. Ditulis pada abad ke-17 di Aceh, salah satu bab Bustān didedikasikan membahas sejarah Aceh. Diskusi ini berfokus pada cara kitab Bustān menggambarkan pembentukan kesultanan, para penguasa yang berkuasa, perilaku politik mereka, dan ide-ide ketatanegaraan yang mereka coba gagas. Teks tersebut menyajikan diskursus intelektual yang muncul di Aceh pada masa itu, di mana agenda reformasi praktik keagamaan yang diusung al-Ranīrī untuk menegakkan prinsip-prinsip berbasis syariah memperoleh pengaruh yang kuat. Dengan dukungan dari patronnya, Iskandar Thani (1636-1641), upaya-upaya Islamisasi al-Ranīrī untuk Aceh tercermin di dalam kitab Bustān. Visi dan peristilahan keislaman diambil sebagai sumber rujukan dalam penandaan sejarah Aceh, dan juga pengkultusan patronnya, membuat kitab Bustān melengkapi penulisan sejarah teks-teks Melayu sebelumnya.*

**Kata kunci:** *Bustān al-Salātīn, al-Ranīrī, Kesultanan Aceh, Iskandar Thani, Melayu, Historiografi.*

**ملخص:** يعتبر «بستان السلاطين» لنور الدين الرانيري (المتوفي عام ١٦٥٩) أهم نص ملايوي في التاريخ الإسلامي. وكان أحد فصول هذا الكتاب الذي تم تأليفه في آتشيه في القرن السابع عشر مخصصاً للحديث عن تاريخ آتشيه. وترتكز هذه الدراسة على الطريقة التي يصف بها الكتاب تشكيل السلطنة، والحكام الذين كانوا في السلطة، وسلوكهم السياسي، والأفكار التي حاولوا تأسيسها حول إدارة الدولة. وقدم هذا النص الخطاب الفكري الذي ظهر في آتشيه في ذلك الوقت، حيث اكتسبت أجندة إصلاح الممارسات الدينية التي وضعها الرانيري لإقامة المبادئ المبينة على الشريعة الإسلامية اكتسبت أهميتها. وبدعم من راعيه، إسكندر ثاني (١٦٣٦ - ١٦٤١)، تنعكس فيه جهود الرانيري في أسلمة آتشيه. وتؤخذ الرؤى والمصطلحات الإسلامية كمصدر مرجعي في تحديد تاريخ آتشيه، فضلاً عن الاحترام الزائد لراعيه، مما يجعل هذا الكتاب يكمل كتابة تاريخ النصوص الملايوية السابقة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** بستان السلاطين، الرانيري، سلطنة آتشيه، اسكندر ثاني، الملايو، التاريخ.

Compared to other traditional historical Malay writings, *Bustān al-Salāṭīn* (The Garden of Kings, hereafter referred to as *Bustān*) of 17<sup>th</sup> century Aceh deserves special attention. This work presents a perspective on Malay history and culture, in which Islam and Muslim traditions are taken as the main sources of reference. Its author, Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī (d. 1658), was a leading Malay *‘ālim* (scholar) of Aceh, whose intellectual fame is largely based on his refuting the *wujūdīyah* Sufi ideas of his predecessors in Malay Islamic scholarship, Hamzah Fansuri (d. 1527) and Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrānī (d. 1630) (Azra 2004). The *Bustān* is therefore to be seen as part and parcel of the religious mission of its author, who laid down an Islamic reform movement to urge Muslims to uphold Islamic orthodoxy in religious practices.

This article analyzes the *Bustān* from the above perspective. The text has strong Islamizing features in its historical narration, different from contemporaneous Malay texts of history. *Hikajat Atjeh* (Iskandar 1959) is an example. Although appearing from the same Islamic milieu as the *Bustān*, these two texts are, nevertheless, quite different, especially in that the degree to which Islam is adopted in the *Bustān* appears stronger and more pervasive compared to the *Hikajat*. Similar differences can also be found if we look at the Malay texts of the previous centuries, *Hikayat Raja Pasai* (Hill 1960; Jones 2013a) and *Sejarah Melayu* (Winstedt 1938). These two texts are primarily concerned with introducing Islam to Malay culture and politics, and therefore considers the primacy of local and pre-Islamic tradition. In the narration detailing Malay ruler's genealogy, which *Sejarah Melayu* (Winstedt 1938, 56) relates in an aura replete with Hindu-Buddhist elements, the *Bustān* shares those rhetorical devices but adds a new dimension to strengthen the Islamic connection. As Harun (2004, 32–33) asserts, the text puts Aceh, and the Malay Archipelago, within Islamic global history. In terms of language, the *Bustān* presents its narrations in a straightforward mode of articulation, emancipated from myths and legends stemming from local tradition, which are abundant in, for instance, *Hikayat Raja Pasai* (Jones 2013a, xv).

By focusing specifically on the chapter that discusses Acehnese history, this article looks at how the *Bustān* narrates and signifies the history of the Acehnese sultanate, starting from its rise as a centralized political power until the reign of Queen Ṣafīyat al-Dīn, who came

to power in 1641 after Iskandar Thani, al-Ranīrī's political patron. Attention will be given to its depiction of rulers' political behaviour, which constitutes the main discussion of the *Bustān*. The idea of power is key, because it reveals the strong desire to Islamize Acehese politics, in line with the reform of Sufism al-Ranīrī began in his capacity as *Shaykh al-Islām* (leader of the Islamic religion) of the sultanate.

This article sheds light on some issues of early modern Acehese politics and culture. Looking at the *Bustān*, the author al-Ranīrī describes Aceh in Islamic terms; all the events which determined the course of Acehese history, as will be shown below, are explained from an Islamic perspective. Furthermore, the meaning and function of the material constructions of the sultanate are Islamized in the text. All these proceeded in line with the growing voice of *sharī'ah*-oriented Islam, promoted by al-Ranīrī with the support of Sultan Iskandar Thani (1636-1641).

This article has a strong foundation in previous scholarly studies. The recent works of Wormser (2012) and Harun (2004) demonstrate the importance of *Bustān* in Malay history and culture. In particular, Harun's (2004) discussion of the universal history of the *Bustān* is of special significance, in that it is closely related to the Islamizing issue of the text. Despite the fact, Harun did not specify the discussions on the Acehese history, on which subject this article deals with. As its base text, this article uses the Romanised version of *Bustān* by Iskandar (1966), with a focus on Book Two, Chapter Thirteen. In some respects, the same is also true of the unpublished work of Grinter (1979) on Book Four, of Jones (1974) on Book Four, Chapter One, and of Steenbrink (1994, 183–203). None of these works, however, specifically discuss how the text deals with the historical realities of Aceh and its politics and culture.

### **The Author and the Text**

Born in Ranir—an old harbour town on the Gujarat coast—from a Hadrami family of the Aidarusiyah of Tarim, al-Ranīrī's link to Malay culture was through his mother, who was a Malay. This attachment to Malay grew as he joined the *Jawi* (Southeast Asian) community in Mecca, and was then reinforced by his family network which took part in channelling religious ideas from the Middle East to the Malay Archipelago (Azra 2004, 54–58; M. Laffan 2011, 14). This backdrop

explains why al-Ranīrī gravitated towards an intellectual career in a Malay setting, instead of his hometown in Gujarat.

In 1621, al-Ranīrī is said to have arrived in the lands below the wind. He lived mostly in Pahang, where he improved his Malay language and his knowledge of Malay literature. He read *Sejarah Melayu* or *Sulālat al-Salāṭīn* and *Tāj al-Salāṭīn* (Al-Attas 1986, 13; Iskandar 1966, 3), among others. Living in Pahang also provided al-Ranīrī with historical knowledge of this kingdom, which led to Pahang being one of the Malay kingdoms in the *Bustān*'s narration on Southeast Asia, next to Aceh and Malacca. This Pahang experience established his political connection with the ruling family of the kingdom, which determined his future career in Aceh. In 1637, al-Ranīrī was appointed to the position of religious advisor to the ruler of Aceh (of Pahang origin), Sultan Iskandar Thani (r. 1637-41). Al-Ranīrī chaired the office of *Shaykh al-Islām*, replacing Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrānī (d. 1630) who had served the previous ruler, Sultan Iskandar Muda.

The *Bustān* is al-Ranīrī's work on Islamic history, although he was possibly assisted by a few scholars who engaged in translating Islamic texts and literary activities in general (M. F. Laffan 2013, 570; Wormser 2012). He began creating this text in 1638, after one year serving Iskandar Thani. In the introduction to his *Bustān* (Raffles Malay MS no. 8: 4), al-Ranīrī wrote that Iskandar Thani commissioned him to "compose a book [*kitāb*] in Malay [*Jawi*] language concerning the deeds of the denizens of ... the earth ... to relate the deeds of the kings of former times and later" (Grinter 1979, 10). The *Bustān* was written in the period when al-Ranīrī began opposing the prevailing *wujudīyyah* Sufism, which was part of his religious mission in the Acehnesse sultanate (Azra 2004, 63-64). It was part and parcel of al-Ranīrī's reform to introduce *sharī'ah*-based Sufism, also known as neo-Sufism.

As a result, the *Bustān* has Islamizing features, which can be explained from the fact that one of its volumes, Book Three, has didactic purposes. It contains exemplary behaviours of leading historical figures. Termed as *ādāb*, this part of the *Bustān* is dedicated to lessons for sultans and their dignitaries in exercising their power in the sultanate (L. F. Brakel 1970; Jaelani Harun 2014, 33-35). In this respect, the *Bustān* shared the same political language as the *Tāj al-Salāṭīn* (The Crown of Kings). Written by Bukhari al-Jauhari, possibly in 1603, the *Tāj al-Salāṭīn* is an important Malay text on prevailing political ideas (Abdullah 1993;

Braginsky 2004, 432–34). These two texts discuss the qualities required of rulers and elites and the ways to lead the sultanate according to Islamic principles.

### Islam for Writing the History of Aceh

While crediting Ali Mughayat Shah (d. 1530) as the first ruler who established the sultanate of Aceh Darul Salam, the *Bustān* notes that “he is the first who converted to Islam and implemented the religion of the Prophet and the Messenger of Allah” (Iskandar 1966, 31). The *Bustān* begins by emphasizes the formation of the sultanate in relation to the ruler’s conversion to Islam. The above statement is historically grounded. As the works of modern scholars confirm (Abdullah 1989; Reid 1993), the Islamization and the formation of kingdoms are intermingled and constituted the very leading feature of Malay development of the period. The *Bustān* is not the only Malay text with such narration. It shares the opening of *Hikayat Raja Pasai*, where it states that Samudra Pasai was the first Islamic kingdom in the land below the winds (Jones 2013a, 1).

However, the *Bustān* differs from *Hikayat Raja Pasai*, which recounts the ruler’s conversion in a mythical experience of meeting the Prophet Muhammad. The *Bustān* describes the event in a more straightforward manner, as evidenced by the above quotation. However, the *Bustān* does not describe his life story and ancestors. The *Bustān* is much concerned with what Ali Mughayat Shah did for the establishment of Aceh sultanate. Therefore, besides the conversion, the text narrates that he was a powerful ruler who defeated Pidie and Samudra and other small countries (Iskandar 1966, 31). As a matter of fact, scholarly studies indicate that the conquest of these areas—Pidie (1521) and Samudra Pasai (1524), as well as Daya (1520)—was the foundation of the rise of what was later known as Aceh sultanate (Hadi 2004, 14), and Ali Mughayat Shah is acclaimed as its real founder (Djajadiningrat 1911, 152; Lombard 1986a, 8–17; Winstedt 1932, 43).

As such, the way the *Bustān* attaches Islamic features to Ali Mughayat Shah are largely based on his role in the formation of Aceh sultanate. This is different from the *Hikajat Atjeh* which traces Ali Mughayat Shah back to the royal families of the two unified kingdoms of Aceh and Lamuri in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century (Iskandar 1958, 74–75). The claim of *Bustān* that Ali Mughayat Shah was the first ruler who converted to

Islam is therefore hardly justified. Lamuri was a powerful kingdom that rivalled Aceh. Even more, it had enjoyed the visit of foreign merchants, including those of Muslim countries, leading it to appear as a Muslim kingdom before its unification (DasGupta 1962, 14; Groeneveldt 1960, 98–100). Ali Mughayat Shah came from the royal families of Lamuri and Aceh and therefore it can be said that he had already belonged to a Muslim family before his being appointed as ruler. Nevertheless, the *Bustān* crediting Ali Mughayat Shah as the first Muslim ruler of Aceh has strong justification. It points to the fact that he was the first ruler of Aceh as a sultanate or greater Aceh. More importantly, it also denotes the Islamizing intentions of the *Bustān*, which emphasizes that the religion constituted the basic existence of Aceh. The text makes Islam as the model for its writing the history of the sultanate. Islam is taken as the foundation on which the past experiences of Aceh were signified and reconstructed into a written form. This mode of historical writing continues when the *Bustān* discusses the next rulers of Aceh.

Afterwards, the *Bustān* continues by describing the rulers who came to power after Ali Mughayat Shah (r. 1514-1530), namely Salahuddin (r. 1530-1537/9) and then Ala'uddin Ri'ayat Shah (r. 1537/9-1571). Of the two rulers, the *Bustān* gives more weight to the latter, praising him as the ruler who made great contributions to consolidating the power of the sultanate. According to the *Bustān*, he established the rules and customs of Aceh Dār al-Salām, along with the construction of the city; he initiated diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Caliphate, the Islamic superpower of the period; and he was the first ruler who waged war against the unbelieving Portuguese in Malacca. In addition, he is also described as firm in upholding the rules and as good in behaviour. All of these feats led him to be called “*Marḥūm Qabhār*”, meaning the late sultan who conquered (Iskandar 1966, 31–32).

The achievements of Ala'uddin Ri'ayat Shah were complemented by the next ruler of Aceh, Sultan Hussain (r. 1571-1579), his third son who took the title of 'Ali Ri'ayat Shah. He is described in the *Bustān* as being “pious in attitudes, loving the subjects and the ‘*ulamā*’, and compassionate toward the needy (*segala fakir dan miskin*)” (Iskandar 1966, 32). The *Bustān* also notes that during his reign Aceh welcomed the visit of an ‘*ālim* from Mecca, Muhammad Azhari or Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn, an Egyptian of the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence who taught Sufism in the sultanate (Iskandar 1966, 32; M. Laffan 2011, 14–15).

The praise the *Bustān* attaches to this sultan is best explained by modern scholarly works, that he formed an alliance among Muslim kingdoms of the Malay peninsula and Java which resulted in the attack on the Portuguese in Malacca between 1573 and 1574 (Hadi 2004; Ito 1985, 13; Reid 1969, 407–8).

The *Bustān* paints a different picture of the Acehnese ruler who came to power after Sultan Hussain, his brother who had been the king of Pariaman on the west coast of Sumatra, who took the title of Raja Seri Alam (r. 1579). He is described as “being very much in anger (*sangat amarah*), unable to rule the sultanate, and having no control over everything in his duties” (Iskandar 1966: 32-3). The same weaknesses are attributed to the next successors Sultan Zainal ‘Abidin bin Sultan ‘Abdullah bin Sultan ‘Alau’ddin Ri‘ayat Shah (r. 1579). The *Bustān* described him as a murderer who sought human blood (Iskandar 1966, 33).

The *Bustān* provides no explanation as to why the two rulers are featured in this way. However, although it is not directly related to the Islamic issue, the *Hikajat Atjeh* helps clarify the above (Iskandar 1958). Following the *Hikajat*, Raja Seri Alam was a generous ruler who spent most of his days praying in the mosque. What is more pertinent, the text notes the rise of two elite groups with different and even conflicting interests. The first one consisted, among others, of members of the ruling family (*segala raja-raja*), judges (*kadi*), military officers (*bulubalang*), and jurists (*fakih*). All of them made frequent visits to the palace to receive the Sultan’s gifts of gold, silver, and cloth according to their ranks. Some of them became rich off the gifts of the ruler. The second group were Maharaja and the nobility (*segala orang besar-besar*), who opposed the ruler’s spending of wealth for unnecessary purposes, which had the potential to weaken and jeopardize the sultanate. Therefore, the second group dethroned Raja Seri Alam and crowned Sultan Zainal ‘Abidin (Iskandar 1958, 95–96). However, still following the *Hikajat*, Sultan Zainal ‘Abidin was in power for only two years. He spent most of his time on entertainment, enjoyment, and treated the sultanate’s officers with hostility. He paid no attention to the affairs of the sultanate, leading the elites, Maharaja and nobility, to remove him from the throne (Iskandar 1958, 97–98).

The above story helps explain why the *Bustān* profiles the rulers in a negative light. Looking at the story, it suggests that Aceh at the time

was under feeble sultans, and hence created an opportunity for the rise of the elites, called *orangkaya*, to powerful positions in the sultanate. In reference to the travel accounts of Augustine de Beaulieu, who visited Aceh in 1621, the term *orangkaya*, literally meaning “rich man”, which suggests economic elites had strong political power. Beaulieu noted that they had grandeur and authority above the rulers, forcing the latter to rule the sultanate “with so much trouble and dependence upon the *orangkaya*, that nothing but the title of his dignity was left him” (Beaulieu 1779, 747). According to Reid (1974, 46–47), the rising power of the economic elites marked the period of “the great mercantile *orangkaya*” in Acehnese history (1579-1589), during which five rulers of Aceh were dethroned and murdered after the death of Ala’uddin Ria’ayat Shah in 1571 (Khan 2017).

In light of the above conditions, al-Ranīrī seems to have gravitated to the idea of powerful rulers, and therefore he was inclined to look down on the feeble sultans as deviating from the ideal concepts of rulership. Al-Ranīrī’s view of the sultans is not without strong ground in Islamic political tradition. Although the *Bustān* is silent on this particular issue, it can be said that al-Ranīrī followed the Sunni political thought which denounces the condition of disorder or upheaval (*fitnah*). And, it is crucial to note, the inability of ruler is one of the main causes of the *fitnah*, as is articulated in the political notion that having a powerful ruler is more expedient than a pious one (Donner 2010; Faradj 2018, 36–37). In 17<sup>th</sup> century Aceh, the notion of a powerful and commanding ruler appears to have been commonplace. The aforementioned *Tāj al-Salāṭīn* gives a sound account concerning the issue, as it addresses the necessity of loyalty to the ruler (*raja*) and the avoidance of *fitnah*, which is delivered in the text in the form of question and answer, as quoted below:

Question: If the *raja* does not follow the commands of God and the tradition of the Prophet (*shari’ah*), how could we obey the *raja* with treason (*durhaka*), ignorant (*jahil*) and unbeliever (*kafir*) in his own.

Answer: What we obey from every *raja* who follows the commands of God is two matters: first, we obey his words (*perkataan*), and, second, we obey his deeds (*perbuatan*). And to the wrong *raja* we obey his words only in his throne (*tahta*), and not do we obey his wrong deeds.

Question: To the wrong *raja* do we have to deny his every words and deeds, so how could we obey his words only.



Answer: We obey his words because we want to avoid disorder (*fitnah*) in the country. If there is no difficulty, we do not have to obey his words and his deeds. We do not even have to look at his face. Because the *raja* is wrong, he has turned his face from God. Those who deviate from the commands of God and rejects the *shari'ah* are enemies of God and enemies of the God's Prophet. So it is obligatory for us to treat the enemies of God as our enemies (Abdullah 1993, 45; Jusup 1970, 29–30).

Given the above, the issue of feeble rulers in the *Bustān* is not just a matter of politics, but religion as well. It had strong ground in the Sunni politics which was established in the Aceh sultanate of the period. In this respect, al-Ranīrī used negative terms and judgment to depict the sultans, such as “being in anger” and “murderer”. This demonstrates his strong engagement with Sunni-based political ideas. In fact, the *Bustān*, as already noted, was dedicated to an idealized powerful sultan of Aceh, which will be discussed further below. For now, it is crucial to pay attention to an historical process which served the backdrop of Iskandar Thani's elevation to the position of Aceh's sultan, and how the *Bustān* depicts this determining historical moment.

### From Pahang to Aceh

As the childhood home of Iskandar Thani, the story of Pahang closely relates to the sultanate of Aceh when it was under the reign of Iskandar Muda (r. 1607-1636). His conquest of Pahang, and several kingdoms on the Peninsula, appears to be a very crucial moment in history to which the *Bustān* gives special attention. As will be shown, it served the foundation for the coming of a future leader of Aceh of Pahang origin, Iskandar Thani (1637-1641), and for the rise of al-Ranīrī to be the *'ālim* of *Shaykh al-Islām* who promoted the Islamization of Aceh and Malay Archipelago at large.

It should be stated that territorial expansion constituted the most lasting mark of Iskandar Muda's reign over Aceh and ultimately the golden age of the sultanate. Backed by its military might (Lombard 1986a, 112–19), Iskandar Muda made a series of conquests. The west coast of Sumatra was the first area where he extended the occupation his predecessors had already begun. In the years from 1607 to 1612, the pepper-producing areas of Minangkabau outer territories (*rantau*)—Tiku, Pariaman, Pasaman, Salida, and Bengkulu—were already under the control of Aceh (DasGupta 1962, 91; Kathirithamby-Wells 1969).

The east coast of the island was the next target of his expansionist policy. He seized Deli in 1612 and Aru in 1613. These two areas were well-known for their pepper and spice (Lombard 1986b, 122–23), which were increasingly in demand in international markets.

In Aru, Aceh encountered the kingdom of Johor on the Malay Peninsula, which was also interested in dominating the area, leading these two kingdoms into conflict. In 1613, Iskandar Muda attacked Johor and took its ruler, Sultan Ala'uddin Ri'ayat Shah II (r. 1597–1613), together with his brother Raja Sabrang, as prisoners to Aceh. In the subsequent years of 1614 and 1615, Iskandar Muda again sent his army to destroy Batu Sawar, the capital of Johor (DasGupta 1962, 91–92). Johor's unwillingness to back up Aceh's war against the Portuguese in Malacca in 1615 (Netscher 1870, 29–30) and its cooperation with the Dutch East India Company (VOC, *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*), which was increasingly in power in the archipelago during this period, appeared to be the main reasons behind Iskandar Muda's attacks on Johor (Lombard 1986b, 122–23). Following Johor, Iskandar Muda also seized Pahang in 1618, Kedah in 1619 and Perak in 1620 (Djajadiningrat 1911, 180). This series of conquests, besides securing the pepper produce, showed Iskandar's political vision of establishing hegemony on the Malay Peninsula, where the Portuguese in Malacca were deemed a serious nuisance.

Of those areas mentioned, the conquest of Pahang has special meaning for the *Bustān* and is therefore narrated in language expressions laden with the terms which express a feeling of gratefulness. It is described as the “wisdom of God with marvellous nature” (*hikmat Allah yang terlalu 'ajab*), that determined the future development of the Acehnese sultanate. Al-Ranīrī presents the conquest as divinely ordained, tantamount to the experience of Egypt as God determined the prophet Yusuf to be the ruler of the kingdom (Iskandar 1966, 35). The *Bustān* also states that the conquest was made “with the intention to give the sultanate of Aceh Darul Salam to Paduka Seri Sultan Iskandar Thani ‘Ala’uddin Mughayat Shah Johan Berdaulat *Zillullāh fī al-Ālam* (God’s shadow on earth)”; it was purported to welcome the future ruler of the sultanate (Iskandar 1966, 36).

The words the *Bustān* uses to depict the seizure of Pahang need cautious explanation. In addition to *zillullāh fī al-ālam*, which can also be found in the 15<sup>th</sup> century Malay text of *Hikayat Raja Pasai* (Jones 2013b, 24),

the narration style of *Bustān* in presenting this historical event is strongly Islamized. The text signifies the event in Islamic idioms and in connection to global Islamic history. Therefore, no mention is made concerning, for instance, the casualties of the conquest, as in the case of Kedah. The *Bustān* instead emphasizes God's blessing behind the subjugation of Pahang.

The *Bustān* also describes Iskandar Muda with great admiration, although in a manner that is not as detailed as the *Hikajat Atjeh*. The text portrays Iskandar Muda as a powerful ruler, wise in his words and good in his attitudes and behaviour, and famed in all countries. He is also said to have conquered many countries (Iskandar 1966, 35). In addition, the text credits Iskandar Muda as the one who built the Mosque Bait al-Rahman and several other mosques in every area (*manzil*). He strengthened the religious performance of the sultanate by urging the people to do their five daily prayers, to fast during the month of Ramadhan and other non-compulsory fasts, and to prohibit them from drinking *arak* (distilled liquor) and gambling. He also established the *bayt al-māl* (treasure house), *‘ushur* (tithe) and *cukai* (import duty). He was very generous to his subject, such that every Friday when he left for the mosque he always gave gifts to the needy (Iskandar 1966, 35). All these actions are presented in such a way as to show that the “foster father” of Iskandar Thani had laid down a strong ground for the Islamizing mission of his “adopted child” as he came to power in the Aceh sultanate.

In fact, the *Bustān* demonstrates how the two figures had such an intimate father-son relationship. The term “God's blessing”, as mentioned above, is used in the text to demonstrate the life story of a royal offspring who came to be known as Iskandar Thani. It is narrated in the text that, subsequent to his attack of Pahang, Iskandar Muda took the son of Sultan Ahmad Shah, the ruler of Pahang, to Aceh when he was seven years old. Having grown up in the royal palace of Aceh, he was treated and acknowledged as part of the royal family and called Sultan Bungsu. Following the story in the *Bustān*, this young boy of Pahang caught the eye of Iskandar Muda since his arrival in Aceh. His face is said to have radiated a light of happiness and other praiseworthy characteristics. Iskandar Muda also believed that this boy was descended from the royal ancestor of Malay rulers, Iskandar Zulkarnain (Alexander the Great). Therefore, so the *Bustān* states, he took the boy to be his child and ordered the head of family affairs in the palace, Tun Kemala Setia, to look after him (Iskandar 1966, 36).

The forced migration of Sultan Bungsu, as a member of Pahang royal family, is not unique in Southeast Asian history. It was commonly practised in the warfare of early modern period of the region (Bradley 2013, 149–60). Nor was this the only instance of Iskandar Muda forcing another's migration while he was in power. In 1613, as already noted, he did almost the same to the royal family of Johor after he attacked the kingdom. It was a policy of Iskandar Muda to force the people of the countries he conquered to relocate to Aceh. In fact, it is reflected in the travel account of Augustine de Beaulieu. He stated that the ruler of Aceh of the time “endeavoured to re-people the city with his conquest” after having “dispeopled the whole territories of *Achen* and drained not only the natives, but the foreigners that reside there, of all their money” (Beaulieu 1779, 748).

In relation to Pahang, the above term “re-people” explains the rise of another key figure in Iskandar Muda's life which demonstrates his connection with the relocated royal, the princess of Pahang. She was the sister of the young boy and was taken as the wife of Iskandar Muda. She came to be known as Putroe Phang or Puteri Pahang. A story within the Acehnese people emerged, which is still told today, is that a mountain-like garden in the palace of Aceh, which is referred to in the *Bustān* as “Gegunungan Menara Permata” (Iskandar 1966: 49), was built by Iskandar Muda for his Malay consort to keep her entertained and not homesick for her mountainous native country (Wessing 1988, 158–60, 167–69).

Turning to the story of Sultan Bungsu, and his close relation to Iskandar Muda, the *Bustān* reaccounts the role of Tun Kemala Setia who, under the order of Iskandar Muda, took care of Sultan Bungsu as a son of the ruler. This lasted until he reached the age of nine years old, when Iskandar Muda took him as his son-in-law to marry him to the princess Puteri Seri Alam. In the front of, among others, the *‘ālim* Shaykh Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrānī, the *Shaykh al-Islām* of Aceh, Iskandar Muda said: “God willing, I intend to marry my daughter Puteri Seri Alam Permaisuri and my son Sultan Bungsu”; and they agreed with his decree. Afterwards, he made preparations for the royal marriage. And, as the time had come, he asked Kadi Malikul Adil on his behalf to sanction the marriage of Seri Alam Permaisuri and Sultan Bungsu, who was then granted with title Sultan Hussain Shah (Iskandar 1966, 37–38).

The *Bustān* then gives a detailed narration of the wedding procession in the royal palace, with complete ornaments and rituals, and the way

Iskandar Muda made it a party for all Acehnese people. Subsequently, the text comes to the event which is of crucial momentum in Acehnese politics, when the ruler Iskandar Muda decreed, in front of the ruling elites, that he decided to take Sultan Hussain Shah, also called Sultan Mughal, to be his successor in the leadership of the sultanate (Iskandar 1966, 38–43). It was a crucial moment because Iskandar Muda did not follow the royal tradition of succession. He had a son, Sultan Muda, who was traditionally supposed to be his successor. However, most likely for political reasons, his son was accused of being involved in a conspiracy. As such, Iskandar Muda decided to choose Sultan Mughal, instead of his son. According to Lombard (1986a, 236), his involvement in a conspiracy was not substantiated. The *Bustān* mentions nothing about Sultan Muda. Yet, in line with the aforementioned Islamizing dimension of its narration, the *Bustān* instead greatly praises Iskandar Muda's decision, extolling it a divine inspiration (*diilhamkan Allah ta'ala*), equal to the prophet Daud who chose the prophet Sulaymān as his successor (Iskandar 1966, 43). Again, the *Bustān* ascribes this political impetus to religious causes, rather than traditional cultural norms.

Not long after, Iskandar Muda fell sick, and a few days before he passed away he reminded the elites of the kingdom (the Prime Minister [*Perdana Menteri*] and the high ranking military officers [*dan segala hulubalang yang besar*]) on his decision to appoint Sultan Mughal as the next ruler of Aceh (Iskandar 1966, 43). With this occasion, Aceh began under the new ruler of Pahang origin, aged 25 or 26 years, with the title Iskandar Thani. The *Bustān* describes his forcible migration from Pahang to Aceh in religious terms, as being divinely ordained. It is not a surprise, therefore, that the text credits him as the idealized ruler.

### Iskandar Thani: The Ideal Ruler

*Ia lah perkasa terlalu berani,  
Turun temurun nasab sultani,  
Ia lah menjunjung Inayat rahmani  
Bergelar Sultan Iskandar Thani*

He is courageous and so brave  
Descendant of royal family  
Upholding God's instruction  
Having the title Iskandar Thani

The above *ruba'ī* (quatrain) from the *Bustān* is the opening of the eulogy of Iskandar Thani, the patron of al-Ranīrī (Hadi 2004, 77; Iskandar 1966, 44). The text gives high praise to the leadership of Iskandar Thani, much like *Hikajat Atjeh* to Iskandar Muda. Under his authority (*daulat*), so the *Bustān* relates, the people of the sultanate gained God's grace, happiness, and glory; and the ruler was famed with just and perfect attitudes and behaviour; it was during his time that many trading boats came to the country, so that the port of Darul Salam was busy with affluent people who lived in prosperity (Iskandar 1966, 44).

The *Bustān* describes Iskandar Thani as having been just (*adil*) in his royal decrees, patient and resolute in handling his affairs, and firm to those who were committed to treason (*durhaka*). He was also described as elegant in attitude, wise in speech, pious in conduct, and caring with his subjects, especially the needy. In the field of religion, he is said as to have implemented the instructions of God, performed the *sharī'ah* of the Prophet Muhammad, established the mosque Baitul Mushahadah in the port Darul Salam, and prohibited the people from committing to certain traditional local customs, which were considered irreligious (Iskandar 1966, 44–45).

The above picture of Iskandar Thani is presented in the *Bustān* in such a way as to demonstrate that the sultan was truly God's vicegerent on earth. The text quotes a verse of the Qur'an (10: 14) with a translation relevant to the issue discussed: "Then We made you vicegerent (*khalīfah*) on earth after them, to see how ye would behave" (Iskandar 1966, 45). In this respect, the text shares the same notion of politics of another Malay text of Aceh of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, *Tāj al-Salāṭīn*, which was an influence on al-Ranīrī (Gallop 2011, 123). In the *Tāj al-Salāṭīn*, as in the *Bustān*, the Islamic title "caliph" is used in reference to the Islamic prescription. The text uses the title for the rulers who are committed, in their political conduct, to Islamic principles. The *Tāj al-Salāṭīn* sets forth examples derived from the history of the Prophets and the four Guided Caliphs, who are regarded as having exercised their power in accordance with Islamic teachings. From these examples, the text at the same time laid down Islamic criteria for the use of the title caliph and *zillullāh fī al-ālam*, God's shadow on earth (Jusup 1970, 29–35). The text equates the rulers committed to Islamic teachings with the saints (*segala wali Allah*), who are pious in both attitudes and behaviour. The *Tāj al-Salāṭīn* continues with the sentence quoted:

If the rulers' behaviour are as such [following the saints], one can call the sultan *khalifah al-Rahman* (caliph the Most Gracious) and call sultan *zillullah fi al-'alam* (God's shadow on earth). [However], if the rulers have different attitudes and behaviour [from the saints], that is, if their exercise of power follows their lust (*hawa nafsu*), not in good manner, ignorant, and they are consciously arrogant, they are rulers in the shadow of evil (*bayang-bayang iblis*) and satanic caliphs (*khalifah setan*), the enemy of God; all of which will denigrate the image of rulers (Jusup 1970, 36).

From the quotation, the *Tāj al-Salātīn* imbues political power with religious elements, that it should be conducted on the basis of Islamic principles. It follows that the text perceives rulership as divinely sanctioned, as is reflected in an illustration derived from a story about the Prophet Adam. The *Tāj al-Salātīn* describes Adam as the first prophet who was appointed by God as the first vicegerent on earth. "It is on you to know", the text relates, "that it is the prerogative of God to create Adam on this earth, on whom was bestowed the title *khalifah* and was appointed as the king among all His servants". And the Prophet Adam during his reign ruled the subjects on the basis of the commands of God. He guided them in pursuing the merit of Islam and prohibited the committing of crime (Jusup 1970, 27–28).

Because it falls into the genre of Islamic historiography, the *Bustān* does not detail the above issue of rulership as much as the *Tāj al-Salātīn*. As stated above, the *Bustān* strongly emphasizes the notion of *khalifah* (vicegerent) as a criterion for the idealized rulership of Iskandar Thani. In this respect, the text attaches an Islamic term *khianat* (treacherous) to augment the religious dimension of the rulership. Derived from Arabic word *khāna*, the Malay term *khianat* is used to protect the rulership from political disturbance and disorder. It is regarded as committing treason and is condemned by God. This is illustrated in the narration of an event that occurred after Iskandar Thani was in power for twenty years. There appeared some people who were committed to treachery (*berbuat khianat*); with the support of a chef in the court, they poisoned the food of the ruler. However, as ordained by God, Iskandar Thani recognized that the food was different from what he usually consumed. While he ordered an investigation, the ruler invited the elite circle and said: "Look, all those who did treachery to me were engulfed by their lust, but I was protected by God who always looks after me" (Iskandar 1966, 46).

Still on the issue of *khianat*, the *Bustān* also gives the illustration of events related to the coming of the Portuguese people to the court

of Aceh and of a businessman from Bengal, Haji Kamal, to the port Dār al-Salām. They landed in Aceh to ask for ruler's forgiveness for what their Portuguese fellows had done and to trade with the Acehnese people. However, they were committed to the practices of treachery. The Portuguese deceived the ruler by freeing their fellows who had been in prison since the time of Iskandar Muda, while Haji Kamal seized the boats of the natives who were supposed to trade with him. Having been informed about these events, the ruler said that they would receive the condemnation of God because of their *khianat*. Further, the text notes that the Portuguese were found dead, and Haji Kamal was arrested by the local people (Iskandar 1966, 47–48). In order to strengthen its message on *khianat*, the text then states:

Thus every treacherous man (*yang khianat*) is indeed condemned by God the Highest and there comes to them penalty for their behavior, and so too the men who commit treason against the *raja*, there will certainly come to them the condemnation of God (*murka Allah*) ... O, every servant of God, do not commit treason against the *raja* (Iskandar 1966, 46).

In the Malay tradition, *khianat* is an Islamic substantiation of the concept of *durbaka* (treason). Derived from the Sanskrit word, *droha-ka* (treason), *durbaka* has been used with a specific political meaning to indicate disloyalty to the lawful authority or the kingdom (Wilkinson 1932, 275–76). The term has evolved as a political concept to signify the state of being against the legitimate and established political authority, *daulat*. In *Sejarah Melayu*, the concept of *durbaka* is exhibited, to take one example, in an illustration of Bendahara Sri Maharaja. The text describes the Bendahara as having attempted to dethrone Sultan Mahmud from his power in the kingdom of Malacca. Having committed to *durbaka*, the Bendahara was then killed at the command of Sultan Mahmud (Brown 1976, 156–57; Winstedt 1938, 186). Different from *durbaka*, the term *khianat* is more Islamic, in the sense that it implants religious sanction to the concept of loyalty to the ruler. As can be gleaned from the above quotation, the *Bustān* signifies loyalty as not just a submission to the ruler, but also a part of religious obligation. With this, Islam strengthened the Malay notion of politics on the omnipotent ruler, leading to the rise of *raja*-oriented Islam in the Malay-archipelago of the period (Burhanudin 2006; Milner 1983).



## Taman Gairah and Ziarah

The next issue the *Bustān* turns to is about the elements of power that functioned to demonstrate the grandeur and the piety of the ruler Iskandar Thani. Taman Gairah (the Park of Pleasure) is one of the royal buildings which continues to exist today as a testament of the greatness of the Acehnese sultanate in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was established as a very beautiful garden (*Bustān*) one thousand *depa* (equivalent to a half meter) wide, where various kinds of flowers and fruit trees were planted. Named Taman Gairah, this garden was designed to face the palace, connected by a gate of stone which was called Pintu Biram Indra Bangsa. Right through the centre of the garden, the river Darul 'Ishki flows with clear, cool, and healthy water springing from the black stone in the mountain to the west, Jabal al-'Ala (Iskandar 1966, 48).

Of the garden's ornaments, which were various in nature and were made for various purposes, the one that is of special importance, and has attracted scholarly studies, is what is called in the *Bustān* as *gunongan* or *gegunongan*. "To the right of the River Darul 'Ishki", so the text narrates, "there is a very large garden ... which is named Medan Khairan; And right in the middle of the garden, there is a mountain on which a tower for meditation exists, named Gegunongan Menara Permata" (Iskandar 1966, 49). The text then notes that in the Gegunongan there is a cave (*guba*) with the door covered by silver; in its side there is his majesty's enclosure (*kandang baginda*), and those who wish enter the *kandang* are requested to recite a prayer (*salawah*) to the Prophet Muhammad (Iskandar 1966, 50).

In this respect, this *gegunongan* has become an archaeological site on the basis of which the nature of Acehnese political culture is formulated. In his classical work, Brakel (1975, 60) notes that it was designed in the shape of a mountain and embodied the Hindu view of the mountain of the Gods (*Mahameru*), the centre of universe in which the Godly king (*dewa raja*) presided (Heine-Geldern 1942). Differing from Brakel, who positioned Acehnese kingship in the framework of Hinduized Southeast Asia, Shiraiishi (1990, 47) argues that *gegunongan* and the garden, like "white blood" in the *Hikajat Atjeh* (Iskandar 1958, 116), "embodied and expressed the concept of kingship of Aceh from which all the names and categories as well as the law of lands originate". Wessing (1988, 157–94) highlighted the *gegunongan* for its functions in the structure of Acehnese politics and history.

With due regard to the contribution these works have made, one point that is neglected and therefore must be discussed here is that the *gegunongan*, and Taman Gairah in general, should be viewed as having embodied the idea of the omnipotent ruler in the framework of the *raja*-oriented politics in Aceh of the period. As Reid (1975, 48–51) asserts, Aceh since the reign of Alauddin Rai'ayat Shah al-Mukammil (1589-1604) witnessed the rise of “royal absolutism” which culminated during the era of Iskandar Muda (1604-1636). This served an important foundation of the emerging *kerajaan*-oriented Islam, in which the idea of an omnipotent ruler, strengthened by the Sufi concept of the “perfect man” (*insān al-kāmil*), constituted the main social and political discourse. The Sufi terms “*wali*” (saint) and “*kāmil*” (perfect) were used as royal titles to credit the rulers as having achieved the highest station in the Sufi path, as a Sufi king or *raja sufi* (Burhanudin 2006, 57–58). Therefore, it is conceivable that Iskandar Muda—to whom the local tradition attributes its building—is said as to have used the *gegunongan* as a site for meditation (Wessing 1988, 177–78).

During the reign of Iskandar Thani, and when the *Bustān* was written, the role of Taman Gairah as a meditation site was most likely still in place. It augmented the political power of the ruler and demonstrated their piety to Sufism. The *gegunongan* was made in a specific arrangement to become the centre of spiritual energy, as a sacred place where the ruler meditated in order to achieve the level of a Sufi king. Yet, it should be noted that the reign of Iskandar Thani witnessed the increasing supremacy of *shari'ah*-oriented Islam, in part due to the rise of al-Ranīrī to the position of *Shaykh al-Islām*, in the place of al-Sumatrānī, a *wujūdīyah* Sufi 'ālim. As such, while spiritual meditation was still practised, the ritual obligations of the *shari'ah* principles were also strengthened. The picture of Taman Gairah in the *Bustān* reflects this trend of religious development. The text also mentions a mosque in Taman Gairah, named 'Ishki Mushahadah, with a dome of gold, which is closely associated with *shari'ah*-based ritual of *ṣalah* (payer), but neglected in previous scholarly studies (Iskandar 1966, 50).

In addition to the Taman Gairah, the *Bustān* discusses the Islamic practice of *ziarah*, which involves visiting the tombs of the saints (*wali*). In the *Bustān*, the *ziarah* seems to be another major focus of Iskandar Thani following the construction of Taman Gairah. The *Bustān* relates that after the harvest season, as the people of Aceh had time to provide

a royal pilgrimage with necessary logistic support, the ruler set out to make a visit (Iskandar 1966, 52–53). For this religious ritual, Iskandar Thani made Pasai the destination for performing *ziarah*, because Pasai was an area in Aceh sultanate that was renowned for its Islamic standing. The *Bustān* counts that Iskandar Thani “heard that this country of Pasai in the past was very populated (*terlalu ramai*), and many saints presided there; and now we wish to do *ziarah* to the tombs of the saints and the rulers (*rajas*)” (Iskandar 1966, 52).

In the Malay Archipelago, and elsewhere in the Muslim world, the practising *ziarah* to the tombs of holy people is common and is thought of as pious activity. It is a widely practised Muslim tradition, alongside the *hajj* (pilgrimage) and *riḥlah* (travel for Islamic learning) (Eickelman 1990). On Java, the tombs of the nine saints (*walisanga*), located on the north coast of the island, are the most visited sites of the local *ziarah* tradition (Fox 1991). So important is this grave-related visit that it has evolved into an activity beyond the religious sphere. The *ziarah* of Sultan Agung, the greatest ruler of the Mataram kingdom (r. 1613–1646), to the tomb of the *wali* Sunan Bayat in 1633 had a strong political reason. Located in Klaten, between contemporary Surakarta and Yogyakarta, Sultan Agung’s visit marked both the spirituality and the military power over the 1630 rebellion he had quelled prior to his visit (Ricklefs 2001, 53). And, together with his decreeing changes to the Javanese calendrical system—from Saka to Javano-Islamic lunar calendar—this *ziarah* to the holy site led him to gain a reputation as a holy man and pious monarch (Ricklefs 2001, 54–55).

The *ziarah* of Iskandar Thani to Pasai should be seen from the perspective of Islamic piety and politics. Samudra Pasai had been well-known as a strong Islamic centre long before Aceh appeared as “the veranda of Mecca”. The travel of Ibn Battuta affirms this, as he stated that the ruler of the country, Sultan Malik al-Zahir had the strong desire to make the ruling elites and the people religious (Gibb 1994, 876–77). This can also be found in *Hikayat Raja Pasai*, that the people of Samudra Pasai had a strong spirit to “endure the rite of becoming Muslims” (Jones 2013b, 24). The royal visit was therefore instrumental in augmenting the ruler’s political power and religious devotion. As well, Iskandar Thani’s motive behind visiting Pasai had strong grounding in the religious and political recognition of 15<sup>th</sup> century Malacca, the most powerful Islamic kingdom in the region in this period. According

to *Sejarah Melayu*, the ruler of Malacca requested the ‘*ulamā*’ of Pasai to settle their theological issues (Winstedt 1938, 126–29). Furthermore, the accounts of Tome Pires (Cortesão 1944, 240–42) mention that the conversion of the Malaccan ruler, Iskandar Shah, was ascribed to the advice given by the ruler of Samudra Pasai and the ‘*ulamā*’.

As such, the visit to Pasai had a strong religious reason, to demonstrate that Sultan Iskandar Thani venerated the ‘*ulamā*’ and the *walis* who had made great contributions to Islamic development. With this, the ruler’s political authority was boosted. To follow the narration of *Bustān*, it is obvious that the *ziarah* provided Iskandar Thani with the opportunity to demonstrate his political power in the territories of the Aceh sultanate over the authority of local rulers, *uleebalang*, which emerged as the territorial chiefs of the granted lands they received since the time of Iskandar Muda (Ito 1985, 201–2), and continued to exist in the following centuries as Snouck Hurgronje (1906, 88) notes in 1890s that *uleebalang* acted as “the territorial chiefs *par excellence*”. In the *Bustān*, the ruler’s political power is demonstrated through his way to Pasai, where he gained the warmest welcome for local rulers of the areas he visited and stayed, which included —Gunong Idahan, Indera Dunia, Pidie, Shahr Deli, Merdu ‘Ishki, Jemper and Pesangan (Iskandar 1966, 54–56). By stopping in these places, the ruler was bolstered his power as the true ruler of the Aceh sultanate.

This travel of *ziarah* ended in Pasai. After he spent one night in a palace, the ruler in the early morning went to visit the tombs of sharifs and saints of Allah (*waliyullāh*), where he recited the first chapter of the Qur’an (*al-Fāṭīḥah*) and turned on *dian* or *istanggi* (oil lamp). On the same day, he visited similar tombs in the country of Samudra and performed the same rituals. Samudra was the final destination of his visit. Henceforth, he travelled back to Aceh Darul Salam, via the same route described above (Iskandar 1966, 56–57). The *Bustān* narrates the *ziarah* of Iskandar Thani to Pasai, which seems to demonstrate that he had qualities of being courageous, brave, and upholding God’s instruction, as the above-quoted quatrain portrays.

The visit of Iskandar Thani appears to constitute the final episode of his political career. The *Bustān* describes it as the beginning of the end of his political leadership, and simultaneously signalling the initial decline of Aceh’s political power. The kingdom of Johor, which had been seized during the reign of Iskandar Muda, began to grow in power. Moreover,

possibly with the support of the Dutch East India Company (VOC, *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*), which seized greater power in the archipelago during this period, Johor attacked Pahang, the kingdom of Iskandar Thani's ancestors. The *Bustān* depicts Iskandar Thani as being powerless, having done nothing when he heard about the attack. He just grumbled that Johor was never truly kind to Aceh, despite friendliness of Aceh towards Johor (Iskandar 1966, 58).

Not long after, Iskandar Thani fell sick and died in February 1641, one month after the VOC-Johor alliance expelled the Portuguese from Malacca. This development created unstable conditions for the next ruler of Aceh, Sultanah Safiyat al-Din (1641-1675), although she somehow succeeded, and this success continued through the leadership of the next three female rulers (Khan 2017).

### Closing Remarks

The *Bustān* presents an Islamic trend in Malay traditional historiography, in which Islam is taken with such prominence in its narrating of the Aceh Sultanate. Islamic ideals and terms are adopted to explain the history of the sultanate, the behaviours of its rulers and elites, as well as the ideas of statecraft. In this respect, the *Bustān* departs from Malay classical texts of *Hikajat Atjeh*, *Sejarah Melayu* and *Hikayat Raja Pasai*, are framed in traditional local culture rather than primarily in Islam.

As a work that is attributed to a leading *‘ālim* of the sultanate, the *Bustān* is part of al-Ranīrī's reform process, which intended to strengthen *sharī‘ah*-based Islam, in the place of *wujūdīyah* Sufism. However, this Islamizing process was also related to al-Ranīrī's close and personal relationship with his patron, Iskandar Thani. The conquest of Pahang by Iskandar Muda is an example. The *Bustān* describes this event as “the wisdom of God” which ordained that Aceh was destined to have an ideal ruler, Iskandar Thani, who is praised as having upheld the Islamic principle of *adil* (justice). Given this fact, the text's use of Islamic terms and expositions aimed to please the ruler.

The writing of the *Bustān* had strong grounds in the Aceh of the period, as the sultanate advanced in the fields of both political power and Islamic intellectual development. Backed by al-Ranīrī's reputation as a leading *‘ālim*, and with the support of Iskandar Thani, this text gained high appreciation in the Malay literary tradition. The

introduction of the *Bustān* (Book Two, Chapter 12) appears as the opening of *Sejarah Melayu*, while some parts of this text (Chapter 13) became a primary source for *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. Thus, the *Bustān* should be acknowledged as contributing to the Malay literary tradition, in particular Malay historiography because it substantially enriched and introduced Islamic features to the Malay tradition of historical writing.

Finally, the *Bustān* contributed to making Aceh appear more Islamic. Contemporary Aceh, known as the “veranda of Mecca”, is still well-known for its Islamism.

## Endnotes

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3. Feener, Michael R., and Mark E. Cammack, eds. 2007. *Islamic Law in Contemporary Indonesia: Ideas and Institutions*. Cambridge: Islamic Legal Studies Program.
4. Wahid, Din. 2014. *Nurturing Salafi Manhaj: A Study of Salafi Pesantrens in Contemporary Indonesia*. PhD dissertation. Utrecht University.
5. Utriza, Ayang. 2008. "Mencari Model Kerukunan Antaragama." *Kompas*. March 19: 59.
6. Ms. *Undhang-Undhang Banten*, L.Or.5598, Leiden University.
7. Interview with K.H. Sahal Mahfudz, Kajen, Pati, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

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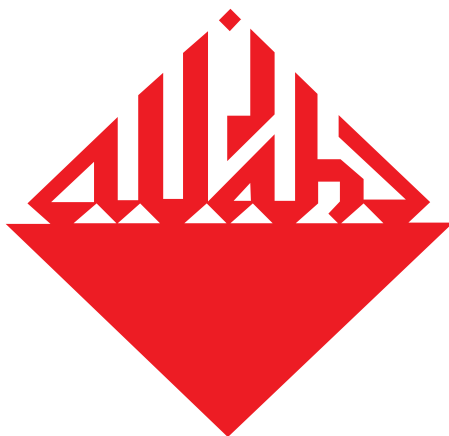


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ISLAMIC TURN IN MALAY HISTORIOGRAPHY:  
*BUSTĀN AL-SALĀṬĪN* OF 17TH CENTURY ACEH

Jajat Burhanudin

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IN JOKOWI'S ERA: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF  
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صورة للصوفية الحضرية

في إندونيسيا وباكستان

ر. يانعة ورداني ومحمد نداء فضلان

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