

***AL-TARIKH SALASILAH NEGERI KEDAH:* A MALAY WORLD LITERARY HERITAGE**

***(Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah: Sebuah Warisan Dunia
Persuratan Melayu)***

Jelani Harun
jelani@usm.my

School of Humanities,
Universiti Sains Malaysia.

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Abstract

The state of Kedah Darul Aman has a manuscript writing tradition that is directly related to the existence of its institution of Malay royalty and nobles. Manuscripts from Kedah possess unique features that are consistent with the cultural life of its society and system of monarchy. However, the history of manuscript writing that originated in Kedah remains incomplete due to the lack of information sources and material collection. This problem affects the preservation of Kedah cultural heritage, including the effort to put forward great works that originated in the state. This article will discuss an important manuscript that originated in Kedah and is currently in the safekeeping of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur. The manuscript is entitled *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* (History and Genealogy of the State of Kedah) and should appropriately be presented as a Malay world literary heritage that came into existence from the penmanship of a writer in Kedah in the early 20th century.

Keywords: great works, world heritage, manuscript, sultanate, nationhood

Abstrak

Negeri Kedah Darul Aman mempunyai tradisi penulisan manuskrip yang berhubungan secara langsung dengan kewujudan institusi raja-raja dan pembesar Melayu di negeri tersebut. Manuskrip dari Negeri Kedah memiliki ciri-ciri keunikannya yang tersendiri dan selaras dengan budaya hidup masyarakat dan sistem pemerintahan raja-rajanya. Walau bagaimanapun, sejarah penulisan manuskrip yang berasal dari Negeri Kedah masih belum sempurna lantaran kekurangan sumber maklumat dan perolehan bahan. Permasalahan ini akan turut memberikan kesan kepada kelestarian warisan budaya dan persuratan Negeri Kedah, termasuk dalam usaha untuk mengetengahkan karya-karya besar yang pernah lahir dalam sejarah negeri tersebut. Makalah ini akan membicarakan sebuah naskhah penting yang berasal dari Negeri Kedah yang kini tersimpan di Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur. Naskhah yang dimaksudkan berjudul Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah yang wajar dikemukakan sebagai sebuah warisan dunia persuratan Melayu yang lahir daripada kepengarangan Negeri Kedah pada awal abad ke-20 yang lalu.

Kata kunci: karya agung, warisan dunia, manuskrip, kesultanan, kenegaraan

INTRODUCTION

Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah (History and Genealogy of the State of Kedah) is classified as a historiographical work that contains the historical origins of the rulers and formation of the state of Kedah. It is written from the perspective of a palace chronicler, Muhammad Hassan bin Dato' Kerani Muhammad Arshad, who served in the administration of the state as the Confidential Clerk to Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah (1881-1943). This manuscript, which was produced in 1927, maintains the characteristics of traditional historical writing while, at the same time, displays several features of a more modern historical work. The final portion of the manuscript provides significant notes on two incidences: (1) the relationship and conflicts between the governments of Kedah and Siam and; (2) British interference in the political turmoil during the reign of Kedah sultans until the signing of The Bangkok Treaty in 1909. This historiographical work, therefore, is an important source of information on the sociocultural history of the development of the Kedah sultanate that exists until today.

Many earlier studies have been done on *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* by scholars who researched the past history of Kedah, including studies by Mohd. Isa Othman (2006) and Shamsudin Mohd. Yusof (2014). The latest study is found in *Malay Kingship in Kedah: Religion, Trade and Society* by Falarti (2013, p. 31), which views *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* as a source of Kedah history and one that was greatly influenced by an earlier book entitled *Salasilah atau Tarikh Kerajaan Kedah* by Wan Yahya bin Wan Muhammad Taib in 1911. However, Falarti (2013, p. 27) did not refute that there are newer features in *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* that contains “several key dates for events mentioned in *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa* (1998) and Wan Yahya’s *Salasilah atau Tarikh Kerajaan Kedah*” (1911).

In addition to its historical value, *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* also contains important notes on Kedah’s method of governance, which includes the administration of customary rules as well as laws and guidelines practiced by the Kedah sultanate in the past as part of the heritage of Malay royalty’s civilization. Some early notes on the establishment of the state, the city and the infrastructure that still exist in Kedah today are recorded in the manuscript. The wealth and significance of information contained in the manuscript makes it extremely valuable in the history of the Kedah sultanate and rightfully should be introduced as a great Malay manuscript that came about in the early 20th century, and should also be elevated as a Malay world literary heritage.

MANUSCRIPT AND AUTHOR

At the present day, the only known existing manuscript of *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* is the Jawi script version that is kept in the Malay Documentation Centre of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur (MS 100). It comprises 146 pages, measuring 32 cm by 21 cm, and is written in Jawi script using black and red inks. It is in poor condition as the black ink has seeped through the paper and become smudged. The paper has the watermark of “Guthrie and Co. Ltd”. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka’s ownership of this original manuscript is crucial since it is still readable in its original form without additions or omissions from other writers and was eventually digitized in 2016.

The absence of other copies of *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* is probably due to the emergence of printing establishments in Penang around the late 19th century and early 20th century. Not long after Muhammad

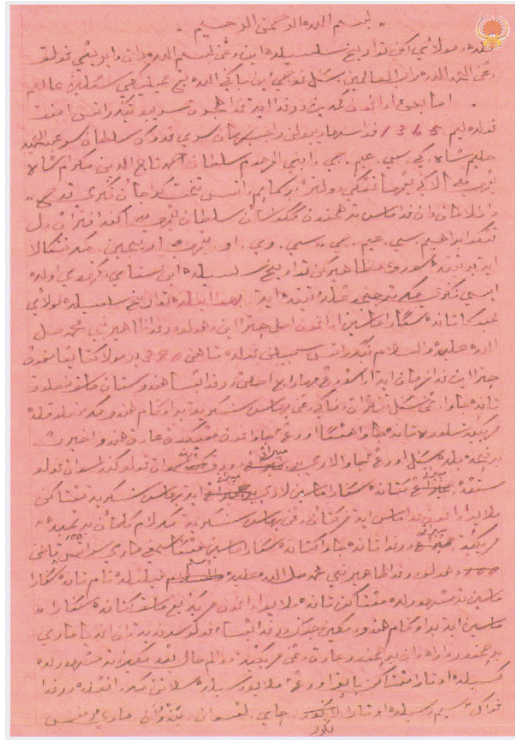


Figure 1 Digital Copy of *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* Manuscript.

[Source: Malay Documentation Centre DBP, MS 100]

Hassan completed the manuscript in 1927, it was printed the following year by Jelutung Press. This printing press was owned by Syed Sheikh al-Hadi and was active at that time at No. 555, Jelutung Road, Penang. The manuscript, which comprised 440 pages, was printed in Jawi script on 7 Rabiulawal 1347 (1928). All the excerpts of the manuscript used in this article are taken from the 1928 publication. In 1968, the manuscript that was kept in Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka was romanized by Mohd. Zahid Mohd. Shah and published by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka with the title *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*.

According to the notes by Mohd. Zahid Mohd. Shah (*Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, 1968, p. xxi), the manuscript owned by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka was acquired from Encik Soda bin Muhammad

Hassan, the son of the author. Therefore, there is a high possibility that this acquired historiographical work is the original manuscript in the author's own handwriting. In 2018, Abu Bakar Langkawi produced a new edition of *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, which was published by the Kedah branch of the Malaysian Historical Society.

The author of *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, as clearly stated on the colophon of the manuscript, is Muhammad Hassan. His father, Dato' Kerani Muhammad Arshad, served as the Confidential Clerk to Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Mukarram Shah (1854-1879). In fact, on the colophon, Muhammad Hassan detailed his genealogy all the way back to Yemen, as follows (*Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, 1928, p. 419):

Adapun yang menjunjungkan titah menzahirkan Tawarikh Salasilah ini Muhammad Hassan anak Dato' Kerani Muhammad Arshad Rahsia al-Marhum Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Mukarram Syah Yang Maha Mulia bin Tuan Syeikh Abu Bakar Kadhi bin Tuan Syeikh Abdul Kadir Mufti bin Tuan Syeikh Abdul Jalil Mufti bin Tuan Syeikh Abdul Wahab bin Tuan Syeikh Ahmad al-Mahdani, Yaman, bandar Sana'ah adanya.

[Herewith, to carry out His Highness' decree to produce Tawarikh Salasilah is: Muhammad Hassan, son of Dato' Kerani Muhammad Arshad Rahsia al-Marhum Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Mukarram Shah

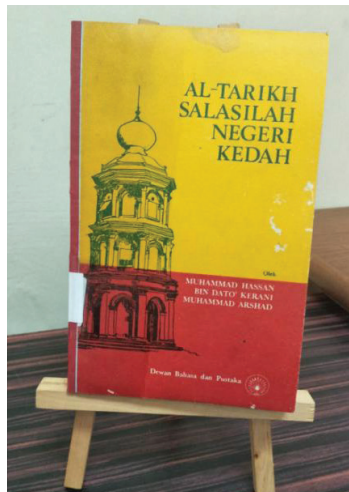


Figure 2 *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*
[Source: Writer's Collection]

Yang Maha Mulia bin Tuan Sheikh Abu Bakar Kadhi bin Tuan Sheikh Abdul Kadir Mufti bin Tuan Sheikh Abdul Jalil Mufti bin Tuan Sheikh Abdul Wahab bin Tuan Sheikh Ahmad al-Mahdani, Yemen, the town of Sana'ah.].

After his father's death, Dato' Kerani Muhammad Hassan was appointed as the Confidential Clerk to Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah (1881-1943) and to Tengku Ibrahim when he was the acting Sultan of Kedah (1913-1934). Muhammad Hassan was born in 1868 in Alor Setar, Kedah, during the reign of Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Mukarram Shah. In the introduction of *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, Muhammad Hassan noted that he received the order to write from Tengku Ibrahim on 5th January 1927 (1 Rejab 1345). This shows that the writing of this manuscript followed the old Malay court tradition whereby the author would still be working under the auspices of the sultans and, therefore, would write history according to the demands of the palace.

Muhammad Hassan's duties as the Confidential Clerk to the Sultan of Kedah gave him ample opportunity to learn about the diverse history of the Kedah government. He described this in great length in



Figure 3 Muhammad Hassan bin Dato' Kerani Muhammad Arshad [Source: *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* (1968)]

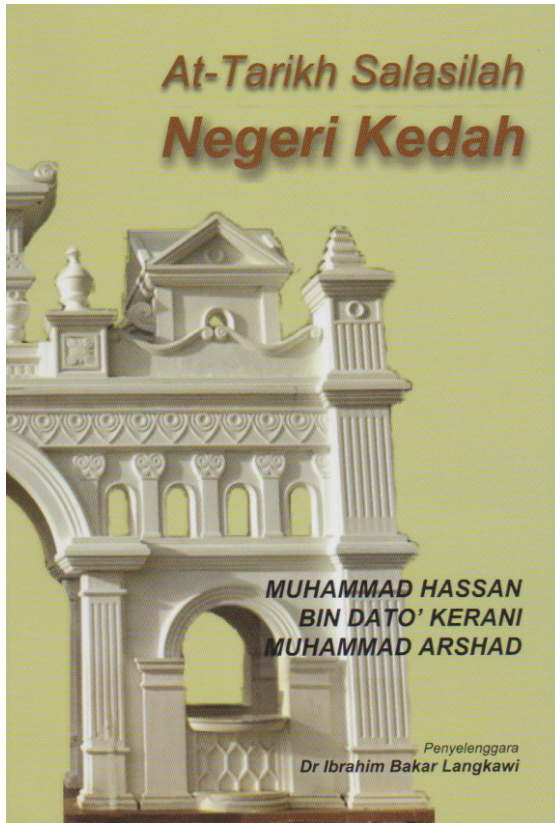


Figure 4 *At-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* by Malaysian Historical Society, Kedah Branch, 2018 [Source: Writer's Collection]

Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah, including his presence during several visits abroad by the Sultan. His job position enabled him to acquire extensive information on the Kedah sultanate of his time; he also served as the historian of the Kedah palace in the early 20th century. He died on 30th September 1942 when Kedah was under Japanese rule.

GREAT MALAY WORKS

Kedah has produced several great works that play an integral role in the history of Malay literature, the most significant being *Hikayat Merong*

Mahawangsa, Undang-Undang Kedah (2005) and *Syair Sultan Maulana* (1980). In 1998, *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa* was published by Yayasan Karyawan as a great Malay literary work, a testament to the excellence and uniqueness of the historiographical content. A manuscript such as *Undang-Undang Kedah* also has its own unique qualities and can be presented as a great Malay work that is no less important. In 2001, a total of 2951 letters written in Jawi script from Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah (1882-1943) to Raja Chulalongkorn became recognized as documentary heritage in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register (Asmah, 2013).

Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah has its own significance in the history of Kedah literature; it is a work that originated in the early 20th century but followed the tradition of Malay palace writings. There are many features in this manuscript that entitle its recognition as a great Malay work and is no less prominent than other great Malay works (Jelani, 2017). In fact, the features of a great Malay work, as identified in *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, are those that are in line with the strength of the manuscript to be presented as a heritage of Malay literature. Some of the features can be summarized as follows:

- (1) *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* is a manuscript in Malay language that originated in the golden age of the Malay Sultanate of Kedah in early 20th century, specifically under the auspices of the Malay palace literary tradition. Works produced during that period show literary characteristics that have been clearly influenced by Islam, which has been a source of Malay culture. The palace was the cultural centre where knowledge flourished and intellectuals gathered to write excellent works on Malay cultural history.
- (2) This manuscript has a clear and strong unity of structure from beginning to end and contains an introduction and colophon. It also contains clear statements concerning the purpose of the manuscript as well as for whom, when and where it was produced.
- (3) The contents of the manuscript include the history of the Kedah sultanate, which aligns with the nation's history. However, the concept of Kedah history writing differs from that of modern history. The existence of elements of myth, legend and extraordinary tales in the beginning section of the manuscript

provides a background for the historical formation of Kedah and can be accepted as part of Malay heritage that enhances Malay world literary heritage as a whole.

- (4) In addition to the chain of historical events, the strength of great Malay works also lies in the depiction of the personal lives of great figures in the nation's history. The icons who lived in certain eras indicate the uniqueness of a nation's culture through the ages and serve as exemplary models for the following generations. *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* depicts the lives of kings, nobles and religious figures who were prominent in the state of Kedah, among them being Sultan Mahmud Shah I, Sultan Muhammad Jiwa, Tengku Anom and Sheikh Abdul Jalil.
- (5) Great Malay works showcase the nation's noble philosophy as well as refined Malay language and literature that is exceptionally rich with literal and figurative meanings, metaphors and similes that reflect the mentality, culture and refinement of Malay works from these times. The features of historical writing and rules of governance found in *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* are able to arouse various interpretations, thus ensuring that the contents remain fresh in people's minds across ages.
- (6) A great Malay work becomes even more prominent if the author's name is displayed clearly compared to one that does not record its author's name. A great work should come from the penmanship of a great author who possesses rich creativity, is knowledgeable and has wide experience in his time. An author of a great Malay work is a prominent icon of Malay leadership and is also of a brilliant mind. *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* is a work written by Muhammad Hassan bin Dato' Kerani Muhammad Arshad, who was the Confidential Clerk to the Sultan of Kedah.
- (7) In the context of Malay national politics, a work that is characteristic of a great Malay work should include the basic principles of the formation of a government and state based on Malay society's cultural life, noble values, patriotic spirit, love and pride for one's nation. It should also clearly exhibit the basic characteristics of the formation of the Malay sultanate, the

government's stability in administration, the power of legislation and its association with Islamic statehood. All these are found in *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, especially of those times when Kedah faced conflicts with the Siamese, Bugis, Acehnese and the British.

WRITING THE HISTORY OF KEDAH

As a historiographical work, *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* records the origins of Kedah, which begins with the name Qalha, that is, the confluence of four rivers, namely Sungai Qilah (Kuala Merbok), Kuala Bahang (Kuala Kedah), Kuala Merpah (Kuala Murpah) and Kuala Bara. The first Raja Kedah was Maharaja Derbar Raja who hailed from Persia. After defeat in battle, he fled to Qalha where he formed his own government. It is also recorded that he set up Kota Langkasuka. The source as well as the date of his arrival from Persia was not stated by Muhammad Hassan and this could raise questions among the readers. In *Hikayat Terung Pipit* (2016), the name of Kedah as *Negeri Lindung Bulan Kedah Tua* was mentioned.

After the death of Maharaja Derbar Raja, the administration of Qalha was continued by several of his descendants until the time of Seri Paduka Maha Jiwa, who settled large numbers of people in the island of Langkawi. Seri Paduka Maha Jiwa was succeeded by his son, who went by the name of Seri Paduka Derbar Raja. In 531 AH, Sheikh Abdullah arrived in Qalha from Yemen, converted Seri Paduka Maharaja Derbar Raja to Islam and renamed him as Sultan al-Muzaffar Shah. Qalha was also renamed to Kedah Darul Aman. The arrival of Sheikh Abdullah from Yemen is an important event in Kedah history, especially in the Islamization of the Sultan and renaming of the state, which is still maintained to this day. 531 AH corresponds to 1136 AD, which is a year earlier than that of the Inscribed Stone of Terengganu (Batu Bersurat Terengganu) (1303) or the coming of Islam to Malacca around the early 15th century. Sheikh Abdullah later built a tower on top of Mount Jerai and died there (Padang To' Sheikh).

Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah further described several important events that took place during the reign of the Kedah sultans and their descendants in chronological order and complete with recorded dates. The development of Kedah was depicted through the opening of new towns, building of infrastructure, cultivation of paddy fields as well as advances

in trade, education, religion and others. Sultan Muhammad Jiwa opened Kota Setar in 1148 AH (1735) and Kota Anak Bukit in 1511 AH (1738). Later, Sultan Abdullah Mukarram Shah ordered the construction of a brick fort in Kuala Bahang (now known as Kota Kuala Kedah).

In 1205 AH (1790), Sultan Abdullah Mukarram Shah signed an agreement with Captain Light to cede Penang to the East India Company for as long as “there is the sun and the moon”. In return, the East India Company would pay 6000 ringgit annually to the Sultan of Kedah. Meanwhile, in 1217 AH (1802 AD), Sultan Dhia’uddin Mukarram Shah concluded a treaty with Sir George Leith Baronet to cede Seberang Perai to the East India Company. The Company agreed to pay 4000 ringgit annually to Sultan Abdullah Mukarram Shah and his descendants for as long as “there is the sun and the moon”. Both treaties are currently more than 200 years old and should promptly be reviewed by the state of Kedah.

Apart from this, the Kedah sultanate was not free from war threats, especially by the Acehnese, Siamese and the British. There were high officials who were accused of being traitors (such as Tengku Yaakob) and those who were honoured as defenders of the government (such as Tengku Anom). The history being recounted in the manuscript continues until the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah, who ascended the throne of Kedah in 1881, when the power and influence of the British further gripped the palace administration. A series of wars between Kedah and Siam were described by Muhammad Hassan, which have similarities and differences with the Kedah-Siam war stories found in *Syair Sultan Maulana*.

As an author in the early 20th century, Muhammad Hassan was still bound by the conventions of Malay sultanate historical writing, which was to base one’s writing on palace sources; in fact, one must follow the dictates of the ruling sultan. In this matter, Muhammad Hassan shifted his writing away from the style of *hikayat* and myths, which are found in *Hikayat Terung Pipit* and *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa*. Instead, he focused on telling the history of the Kedah sultanate based on time chronology by emphasizing on the Kedah sultans and their respective officials and religious scholars who played important roles at certain times in Kedah history. The true value of *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*’s writing in history requires more in-depth studies by scholars, including a comparison with other Kedah historical documents.

RULES OF GOVERNANCE

Apart from its historical value, *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* offers an insight into the rules of conduct in a government. Such a manuscript is no less important, especially in the context of the Kedah sultanate in the early 20th century. The rules of governance referred to involves various guidelines and sound administrative advice given by Muhammad Hassan to the sultans and officials based on the concept of justice in Islam. He provided a multitude of guidelines on justice in administration for Kedah sultans to practice. Some of them are contained in Sheikh Abdullah's "will" for Sultan al-Muzaffar Shah near the time of the Sheikh's death (*Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, 1928, p. 35): "*Hendaklah Syah Alam berbanyak sabar dan ihsan dan insaf di atas sekalian hamba Allah isi negeri maka itulah makam segala raja*" [Shah Alam should be patient and compassionate and sensitive towards Allah's servants in the state: that is the legacy of every king].

The "will" is an effective medium for advice concerning the rules of governance imparted to leaders, such as those that appeared earlier in *Hikayat Raja Pasai* and *Sulalatus Salatin* (1996). A just king should always keep the peace and wellbeing of the state and its people. This particular advice was given special attention by Muhammad Hassan through his depiction of Sultan Mahmud Shah I's reign (1280-1321), whereby the Sultan introduced the rules of weights and measures in Kedah for the ease of traders. Sultan Mahmud Shah I's display of justice is described as follows (*Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, 1928, p. 36):

Maka tetaplah Sultan Mahmud Syah di atas takhta kerajaan memerintah kerajaan negeri Kedah dengan segala menteri-menteri penggawanya dengan adilnya serta sangat kasih akan segala menteri-menteri penggawanya dan sentiasa mengambil insaf di atas segala rakyat isi negeri.

[Hence, Sultan Mahmud Shah ascended the throne and ruled the state of Kedah in a just manner, together with all his ministers for whom he had great love, and he was always sensitive to his people's needs.]

In *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, Sultan Muhammad Jiwa is also portrayed as an exemplary leader who was loved by the officials and the people. He was given further special attention by Muhammad Hassan as a Sultan who loved seeking knowledge outside his realm. In

his younger days, the Sultan disguised himself and travelled to Palembang in order to study under Sheikh Abdul Jalil, who is the great-grandfather of Muhammad Hassan. In fact, according to the Sheikh, the Sultan also travelled to Java and India. After the death of his father, Sultan Abdullah al-Muazzam Shah, Sultan Muhammad Jiwa ascended the throne of Kedah and appointed Sheikh Abdul Jalil as the state's mufti.

The strength and comprehensiveness of a sultan's rule is highly dependent on the wisdom of the officials who help him implement administrative matters. In *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, there are many stories pertaining to the appointment of high officials and their roles in palace administration, especially Raja Bendahara, Temenggung, Mufti, Kadi and other ministers. Various advices were given to the officials in order to improve their personalities and increase their political knowledge. One particular example is when Sheikh Abdul Jalil advised Sultan Muhammad Jiwa regarding the latter's desire to earn profit from trading by reselling paddy to the people from whom he purchased. Before implementing it, Sultan Muhammad Jiwa asked for Sheikh Jalil's opinion, to which the Sheikh responded (*Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, 1928, p. 137):

Adalah adat segala raja-raja itu tiada boleh sekali-kali jadi saudagar seperti berniaga jual beli. Adalah pekerjaan itu dikerjakan oleh segala saudagar-saudagar juga, bukan pekerjaan raja-raja dan menteri-menteri yang besar-besar. Jika raja-raja dan menteri-menteri di dalam negeri itu jadi saudagar, maka pada ketika itu segala saudagar dan rakyat isi negeri pun menjadi kesusahan dengan sebab menteri-menteri dan raja-raja sudah menjadi saudagar. Apakala rakyat sekalian miskin, maka kuranglah hasil negeri itu. Apakala kurang hasil, maka ketika itu hampalah khazanah. Apakala hampa khazanah, maka raja pun lemahlah...

Adalah adat menteri-menteri itu tiada boleh sekali-kali berjalan mencari makan kerana yang demikian itu jadi jahat nama raja. Dan lagi adalah adat segala menteri-menteri yang besar-besar itu duduk muafakat sama menteri akan pekerjaan negeri serta mencari jalan yang kebajikan di atas rajanya dan di atas negeri dan di atas segala rakyat isi negeri itu supaya bertambah-tambah hasilnya.

[It is the rule of conduct for sultans never to involve in trade such as selling and buying. That transaction should be handled by traders, as it is not the work of sultans or ministers. If the sultan and ministers become traders, this will result in hardship for the people since the

sultan and ministers have become traders themselves. When the people become poor, the revenue from the state will diminish. When the revenue is diminished, the treasury will be depleted. When the treasury is depleted, the sultan will become weak....

The rule of conduct for ministers is they should never go about looking for money, as this will tarnish the sultan's reputation. Another rule of conduct is that high-ranking ministers should cooperate with other ministers regarding jobs in the state and look for ways to increase the wellbeing of the sultan and the state and its people so that revenues will multiply.]

Based on this excerpt, it is clear that Sheikh Abdul Jalil disapproved of the Sultan's desire to engage in paddy trading with the people. He also extended his advice to the ministers, that is, they too should not engage in trade with the people. Instead, they should always work towards the benefit of the state, the Sultan and the people. Furthermore, he advised that each minister should possess at least 13 characteristics that are "the rules of conduct governing sultans and ministers from Bani Abbas in Arabia", as follows (*Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, 1928, pp. 138-202):

Pertama-tama, hendaklah menteri itu jangan meninggalkan pekerjaan yang difardukan Allah dan rajanya.

[First, a minister should never abandon his duties that are mandated by Allah and the sultan.]

Yang kedua, hendaklah menteri itu membawa tiap-tiap suatu pekerjaan dengan sebenar-benarnya menghasilkan harta.

[Second, a minister should implement works or jobs that truly bring in revenue.]

Yang ketiga, hendaklah menteri itu sangat menjagakan hukum rajanya supaya jangan bersalahan dengan hukum Allah dan adat yang telah diadatkan di dalam undang-undang negeri.

[Third, a minister should ensure that the laws of the sultan do not contravene Allah's laws and the customs that are already in place in the state.]

Yang keempat, hendaklah menteri-menteri itu melihat bahawa orang yang di bawahnya yang mengerjakan pekerjaan yang bida'ah

yang bersalahan dengan hukum syarak atau adat, dan hendaklah dibicarakan dengan sedaya upayanya supaya terbuang perbuatan yang salah itu dan keadaan aib segala raja-raja dan menteri-menteri. Jika dibiarkan perkara ini berlaku, akan terjadi kecelakaan negeri itu.

[Fourth, a minister should see that his subordinates who commit *bida'ah*, or acts that contravene shariah or customary laws, be brought to trial so that the wrongdoing and the resulting shame for the sultan and the minister would be eliminated. If such acts are permitted, the state will eventually collapse.]

Yang kelima, hendaklah menteri itu jangan sekali menunjukkan kerasnya atas segala rakyat daripada membesarkan dirinya.

[Fifth, a minister must never deal harshly with the people to show his power.]

Yang keenam, hendaklah menteri itu sentiasa menyuruhkan orang yang harap pada pihak-pihak negeri membawa khabar.

[Sixth, a minister should seek reliable appointed officials to gather news.]

Yang ketujuh, hendaklah menteri itu memelihara segala dagang, fakir dan miskin yang kedatangan daripada kejahatan orang yang kuasa di dalam negeri.

[Seventh, a minister should protect traders, *faqir* and the poor who are victims of corrupt powerful people in the state.]

Yang kedelapan, hendaklah menteri itu barang pekerjaan itu dengan ingat dan hemat.

[Eighth, a minister should administer his duties with care.]

Yang kesembilan, hendaklah menteri itu apabila melihat akan orang yang perbuat baktinya akan raja atau atas negeri, hendaklah dipinta penaikkan orang itu, jangan menteri itu takut kalau-kalau orang itu besar daripadanya.

[Ninth, a minister should advance someone who serves the sultan or state well and not be afraid that the person would rise above him.]

Yang kesepuluh, apabila menteri itu melihat orang yang melalui titah raja atau melalui undang-undang, hendaklah menteri itu memberi

nasihat kepadanya dengan halus. Jika ia tiada menurut nasihat itu hendaklah dihukumkan supaya jangan orang yang lain menurut dia.

[Tenth, when a minister sees someone going against the sultan's wishes or the laws, the minister should advise him subtly. However, if the latter does not follow the advice given, he should be punished in order to deter others from following in his footsteps.]

Yang kesebelas, hendaklah menteri itu mencari taulan yang baik akal dan budi pekerti di dalam menteri yang banyak itu dijadikan sahabat.

[Eleventh, a minister should make friends with those who are smart and well behaved among the many ministers.]

Yang kedua belas, hendaklah menteri itu jangan sekali-kali beri berselisihan antara segala menteri-menteri sama menteri dan antara segala hulubalang dan penggawa sekalian.

[Twelfth, a minister should never sow discord among the ministers and between the guards and chiefs.]

Yang ketiga belas, hendaklah menteri itu minta doa akan rajanya dimasukkan Allah taala adil dan insaf di atas segala isi negeri.

[Thirteenth, a minister should pray that the sultan is instilled by Allah to become a just and sensitive ruler of the people.]

To this day, no manuscript written by Kedah authors in the past has been found to specifically touch on the rules of governance in the same manner as works such as *Taj al-Salatin*, *Bustan al-Salatin* or *Nasihah al-Muluk*, whose contents comprise various advices and guidelines on administration for rulers. The existence of these elements in *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* is thus a significant matter and increases the value of the manuscript as a Malay world literary heritage. One such example of governance is Muhammad Hassan's account of Sultan Dhia'uddin al-Mukarram Shah I (1661-1688) conferring with his officials about his intention to appoint Tengku Sulaiman as Temenggung. Before the appointment was made, Raja Menehara (Raja Bendahara) respectfully laid down the terms and conditions as well as duties of the Temenggung, which can be summarized as follows (*Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, 1928, p. 93):

- (1) *Adapun orang yang menyandang pangkat Temenggung itu adalah orang yang sangat-sangat diharap kerana sekalian pekerjaan itu*

terserah kepadanya, dan segala alat senjata, hulubalang, panglima perang dan kota parit sekalian itu adalah di dalam hukumnya.

[That the person who assumes the title of Temenggung is someone who is extremely reliable since all the duties will fall upon him, and all weapons and arms, guards, war captains and fortresses are under his jurisdiction]

- (2) *Dan lagi, pekerjaan Temenggung itu ialah menangkap barang siapa membuat pekerjaan derhaka khianat dan melanggar hukum-hukum.*

[In addition, the duties of Temenggung is to arrest whoever commits treachery and contravene the laws]

- (3) *Dan lagi, Temenggung itu hendaklah sentiasa menyuruh orang-orang yang diharapkan di dalam hal-ehwal negeri supaya membawa perkhabaran yang diketahuinya mengenai bahaya dan juga mengenai fitnah yang datang dari mana-mana jua. Temenggung hendaklah tahu bagaimana hendak menolak bahaya-bahaya dan fitnah itu.*

[In addition, the Temenggung should always instruct those whom he relies on in matters of state to inform if there is threat of danger or slanders that originate from any source. The Temenggung should know how to counter these dangers and slanders]

- (4) *Dan lagi, Temenggung itu sekali-kali tiada boleh berubah hatinya, hatinya mahulah suci dan tulus ikhlas, dan setia kepada rajanya.*

In addition, the Temenggung should never be fickle; he should be pure-hearted, sincere and devoted to his ruler.

ADVICE ON WAR

The Muhammad Hassan made several important remarks on Kedah's wars with people from external nations, especially the Bugis, Siamese and Acehnese. For instance, in 1098 AH (1686 AD), a war erupted between Kedah and the Bugis due to a fight for the throne by Tengku Ngah Putra (a Kedah heir of Bugis descent). The war ended with the Bugis' defeat. A bigger conflict was described by Muhammad Hassan when Siam attacked Kedah during the reign of Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Mukarram Shah. This was caused by Tunku Yaakob's dissatisfaction with the Sultan who did not

proclaim him as ruler in Kayang. Tunku Yaakob sought help from Raja Ligor to attack Kedah, after which Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Mukarram Shah fled to Malacca. *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* also provided remarks on the *bunga emas* (golden flowers) presentation by Kedah rulers to Siam in order to maintain diplomatic ties between the two kingdoms.

Wars can cause countries to be in danger and result in the loss of lives and property, thus destroying the rulers' power and throne. Therefore, all countries should avoid going to war and, instead, solidify peaceful and diplomatic ties between them. In *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, advice on the rules of governance relating to war is highlighted through the incident of Aceh's potential attack on Kedah. It is narrated that Sultan Sulaiman Shah II (1602-1619) heard that Sultan Iskandar Mahkota Alam of Aceh was coming to attack Kedah. Hence, he held a meeting with his officials to face the threat of the Acehnese army, which was known for its strong armada. During the meeting, an official named Dato' Seraja Imam said that there are 101 signs of war, 100 of which are making efforts and finding ways to avoid war. If all these fail, then the sultan may resort to the 101st sign, which is to fight until the last man (*Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah*, 1928, pp. 61-62):

“Tetapi adalah isyarat melawan musuh itu seratus satu isyarat. Yang satu itulah yang berperang hingga tiada sayang akan nyawanya. Yang seratus itu ialah dengan kira bicaranya dan ikhtiar. Tiada juga binasa seteru itu, maka sampailah kepada yang satu isyarat maka, iaitu berperang hingga berbuang nyawa. Ampun Tuanku, jikalau boleh lagi kita ikhtiar dengan jalan yang lain daripada berperang itu terlebih baiklah daripada kita berperang, kerana tiada terlebih jahat patik-patik hamba sekalian membawa Syah Alam kepada pekerjaan perang, kerana banyak lagi yang dapat dibicarakan lain daripada pekerjaan perang itu dengan ikhtiar atau dengan harta.”

[“The signs of war are 101. One is to fight without thought for one's life. 100 are discussions and efforts. If the enemy is not slayed in those ways, then go back to the one sign, which is to fight to the death. Forgive me, your Highness, if possible, think of alternatives rather than go to war, for it would be remiss of us to lead you to war when we can avoid it by looking for alternatives or making use of property.”]

Dato' Seraja Imam then supported his advice by proposing that the Sultan greet the arrival of Sultan Iskandar Mahkota Alam with pomp and grandeur and provide him with a special palace as his residence. Sultan Sulaiman Shah II accepted the proposal and ordered his people to prepare for the Sultan of Aceh's arrival on a grand scale. When Sultan Iskandar Mahkota Alam arrived in Kedah and received such a grand welcome from the Sultan of Kedah, "he was so touched that he decided not to carry out his intentions". He went on to extend his stay in Kedah and spent much of his time hunting and having a grand time. Kedah was thus spared from an attack by Aceh, even though it had to compromise and sacrifice funds and property to entertain the Sultan of Aceh.

Due to the wisdom of the Sultan's advisor, Dato' Seraja Imam, the people of Kedah were prevented from going to war with the Acehnese army. This advice does not indicate that Kedah was always submissive to its enemy. On the contrary, it provided advice for the sultan to resort to discussion and peaceful means before engaging in war. The source of Dato' Seraja Imam's advice to the Sultan was not clearly stated by Muhammad Hassan, but there is a high possibility that it came from certain books that specifically discuss war strategies.

CONCLUSION

Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah provides a valuable insight into the evolution of historiographical works by palace writers of the Kedah Malay sultanate in the early 20th century. Beginning with *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa*, which was strongly influenced by myths, Muhammad Hassan bin Dato' Kerani Muhammad Arshad brought modern elements into the historical writings of Kedah. The historical value is not only in the written accounts of events depicting the sociocultural development of Kedah—it is also through the inclusion of rules of governance, which raised awareness among the rulers on the importance of knowledge in governing a state. The combination of historical elements and rules of governance makes *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* a great Malay work that is special and relevant for all times. It is apt, therefore, that this work is republished by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, or Yayasan Karyawan or the Kedah palace as a great Malay work in the best form. In fact, it is of utmost importance that *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* be presented at the international level as a Malay literary heritage that originated from the Kedah palace writers in the early 20th century.

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