

Elements of Myths and Legends in the Text *Sulalatus Salatin* from the Author's Perspective

Mohd Faradi Mohamed Ghazali¹

¹ Centre of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Gong Badak Campus, Kuala Nerus, Terengganu, Malaysia

Correspondence: Mohd Faradi Mohamed Ghazali, Centre of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Gong Badak Campus, 21300 Kuala Nerus, Terengganu, Malaysia. Tel: 09-6688013. E-mail: faradighazali@unisza.edu.my

Received: July 31, 2017 Accepted: August 22, 2017 Online Published: September 28, 2017

doi:10.5539/ass.v13n10p104

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v13n10p104>

Abstract

Myths and legends are the folk processes foregrounded in the past with their own interpretation on the universe and the creatures in it and apparently considered as the truth by the storyteller or its followers. The text *Sulalatus Salatin* excellently written by A. Samad Ahmad has now becoming the heritage of Malay supremacy. It is loaded with grandeur narrative elements of the fantasy to the realm of reality. Thus, this study examines the elements of historiography (the origin), symbolism, humanities and the majesty of figure through a metaphorical prose role particularly in researching the life hierarchy of the ruler and its people. This thorough study is conducted on the elements of plot, setting and unique character driven as the implicit narrative element, sarcasm, advice and the metaphorical to significantly prove such delivery style of philosophy. Myths and legends were addressed through various elements indicating the glory thoughts of the Malay author in conveying messages courteously and implicitly. Based on the results of this study, it was found that text *Sulalatus Salatin* has not only acted as Malay historical discourse alone, but each element presented implicitly contains high philosophical value of culture, religion and civilisation of the Malay race and reflects the high-end thinking credibility of the Malays. In addition, the metaphorical techniques used by the author in telling the story exhibits a style that is not easily comprehended on the surface, but encourages the readers to further analyse it in a real context. Hence, it is evident that *Salatin Sulalatus* previously seen from the lenses of myths and legends actually withholds a golden treasure of Malay thoughts in upholding its race.

Keywords: *Sulalatus Salatin*, *Sejarah Melayu*, myths, legends, traditional arts, A. Samad Ahmad

1. Introduction

The Malay historical book (*Sulalatus Salatin*) was written back in 1612 by Tun Sri Lanang and is the oldest *bumiputera* (indigenous) text, which tells about the 15th century history of Malaysia. Nonetheless, there are a lot of Orientalists claimed the text as merely mythical and romantic with a lot of fairy tales and gods elements. The *Sejarah Melayu* (Malay History) has four features known as scientific, humanistic, rational and self-revelatory. Its content has human acts of the past, which can be interpreted as the history of everything we know ranging from thoughts, hope, and feelings. It is certain that *Sejarah Melayu* covers human activities even with the presence of fairy tales. Therefore, it is visible that Western criticism is not true (Samid: 65-66). According to (Ahmad, 1957: 201), the *Sejarah Melayu* is crucial for European scholars to review and investigate matters pertaining to the Malay kingdom in the past. For instance, to study the lineage of kings and rulers, culture and rules of Malay customs. Similar to that are the relationships in the community and the development of the mind.

There are several versions of *Sejarah Melayu* texts. Amongst them are Shellabear, Raffles 18 written by Sir R.O. Winstedt and those written by A. Samad Ahmad. It is unknown which one of them is the earlier version, but most scholars stated that the older manuscript and handwritten namely "Raffles Ms. No. 18" was broadcasted along its decomposition in the Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic vol. XVI Part III in December, 1938 (Ahmad, 1958: 30). However, A. Samad Ahmad's has commonly used in schools and universities. According to (Ahmad, 2008: 202), the main purpose of *Sejarah Melayu* book is as stated in the beginning of the book, which is to execute the will of the Sultan 'Abdullah Shah Ma'ayah, which reads: "I demand to write chronicles to treasurer, fairy and regulations of the Malay rulers, their customs and traditions so that it shall be known by our

next generations, thus receiving the benefits of it.” However, since the author is a wise man with pivotal post, he wrote varieties of lesson and advises in the form of stories, will and others with the elements of myth, fairy tale and legends in accordance of his King’s will. Lessons and advices intended to remind the kings to do not oppress the commoners were discussed with the officials on decisions so that they do not make any mistakes and always remember God the Almighty.

2. Discussions

2.1 *The myth from the author of Sulalatus Salatin’s perspective*

The story of a myth is a story of holiness. Mythology is also associated with the trust of its followers. It is not just a fairy tale, but merely something that has a meaning and a sense of community supporters. Mythical story of birth was created when people are at a primitive stage. Such stories were believed within the creator’s community. It arose from the attitude and curiosity of man to answer any doubts on something seen and experienced around them.

According Hooykaas, the myth in the context of old Malay literary history is regarded as “the story of the gods”. Stories like these are usually motivated by religious elements that are related to the origin of a king. Besides, they are often adorned by “elements that are so magical” (Hooykaas, 1965: 143). Generally, myth can be described as a story presented that been actually occurred in the past. The story mostly discusses on people and events of animals and natural phenomena, which are considered as extraordinary that requires explanation. Myth is also a kind of literature that explains the reasons of something that happens. For instance, how a ‘ritual’ is initiated and how ceremonies are passed from one generation to the other. The myth is a kind of ‘narrative’ tradition containing ‘popular ideas’ about the state of the nature, historical events and also contains the activities performed by the gods and goddesses. Thus, it can be concluded that the myth acts as an element in the literature, which is relatively common. In Malay literature, myths cannot be accepted as elements of history, but cannot be separated from history (Ismail, 1971: 353).

2.2 *The myth on the origin of kings and rulers*

According to (Iskandar, 1986: 142-143), the myth in *Sejarah Melayu* can be seen and divided into specific sections. Amongst them are the myths on the origin of lineage of the kings of Malacca and some other kings in a kingdom related to the government of Malacca such as Campa, Pasai and Muktabar. Second section includes the myths of the origin of the name for places and states. Meanwhile the third section comprises the myths related to the origin and arrival or entry of Islam into Malacca and various states of Sumatra. Furthermore, the fourth contains the myths as tools to show the greatness of Malacca and fifth, symbolically patterned myths. The origin and genealogy of the Malacca rulers are associated with largest historical Islamic figure and became legendary in Malay literature, who is the renowned Alexander the Great. His descendants then became Alexander’s sequence starting when he was in the Macadonia exploring and conquering the Indian state and married the princess of the country, Shahru'l Bahriah. Raja Suran, Nila Pahlawan, Nila Utama and Raja Iskandar were born as the result from the marriage, which then became the figures from Palembang and as the first king of Malacca. Since then, to glorify the kings of Malacca, the descendants of the kings had come with stories that contain elements of myth (Iskandar. 1986: 143). Iskandar Dzulkarnain or better known as ‘Alexander the Great’ in the world history, was a Greek from Macadonia distinguished by his wisdom, strength and glory that has conquered nearly half of the world in the fourth century BC. Accordingly, the descendants of the kings of Malacca in the *Sejarah Melayu* were believed to be from the descendants of Alexander the Great, which are reflected in the text below:

“... In the ancient days, Raja Iskandar, the son of King Darab, the Roman people, Makaduniah is the name of the state, Alexander is his title, and once upon a time he went to see the sunrise, so he arrived in the Indian state. Then, there was a king in the huge land of Indian state, some of the states are under his governance, his name was Raja Kida Hindi ... So it is by Raja Iskandar, Raja Kida Hindi was caught; then he presented the faith, Raja Kida Hindi was brought into the Islamic faith in the religion of Abraham ...”

(Ahmad, 2008: 4)

“... Ketahuilah olehmu kepada zaman dahulu kala yang empunya cerita, bahawa Raja Iskandar, anak Raja Darab, Rom bangsanya, Makaduniah nama negerinya, Dzulkarnain gelarannya, sekali peristiwa baginda berjalan hendak melihat matahari terbit, maka baginda sampai pada sorokan negeri Hindi. Maka ada seorang raja di tanah Hindi terlalu besar kerajaannya, sesetengah negeri Hindi itu di dalam tangannya, namanya Raja Kida Hindi... Maka adalah Raja Kida Hindi itu oleh Raja Iskandar, ditangkap baginda dengan hidupnya; maka disuruhnya membawa iman, maka Raja Kida Hindi pun membawa imanlah menjadi Islam dalam agama Nabi Ibrahim...”

(Ahmad. 2008: 4)

Based on the quote above, it can be explained that the method of conveying historical facts through this myth technique has a specific function that includes linking the origins of the rulers of Malacca with the legend of Alexander the Great to raise the dignity of Melaka's descendant from the king of the world since the dignity of the king is supreme. Raja Suran, the second largest mythical figure after the Alexander the Great himself is said to dive into the sea and discover a country occupied by the Bersam, which are infidel and Muslims. Raja Suran was then married to the princess Mahtabu'l-Bahri, the daughter of King A'ftabul-Ardh and was blessed with three sons, Nila Pahlawan, Krishna Pandita and Nila Utama. Raja Suran's position was even further glorified when he has allegedly gone out of the sea into the air by riding a horse that can fly named Fara'ul-Bahri.

In addition, the sons of King Suran possessed certain privileges. The three sons of King Suran ride white cow, a sacred animal symbol for Hindu and went out of the sea to Siguntang Pilar Mount. Their greatness is shown when Wan Empuk's and Wan Malini's had produced golden paddy, silver leaves and copper trunked. The mighty of Nila Utama is also shown in the event when he can convert saltwater into freshwater with his coronation performed not only by an ordinary man, but by *Bat* (Betala) filled with elements of myth, which is said to have originated foam created by the cows owned by the three sons of King Suran.

Bat is also a myth included in the origin of the creation of *Batala*, that is "... the origin of his children by an ancient person who reads." In the Hindu culture, *Bat* or *Batala* plays an important role during the ceremony of the coronation of a king and in ceremonial marriage. *Batala* will recite scriptures that are considered sacred when performing the ceremonies. This is the origin of the myth of the *Sejarah Melayu* itself that says "then *Batala* stand praised *Sapura*, the noble and kind words-exalted" (Iskandar, 1986: 144).

The myths mentioned above have demonstrated the greatness of the hereditary rulers of Malacca, which is related by the figures of demons, cows and *Batala*, mythological figures and the princess Mahtabu'l- Bahri and King Aftabu'l- Ardh, various characters from the sea, as well as the heavens together creating the magical and supreme descendent of the Melaka kings in *Sejarah Melayu*. These incidents clearly presented that the king possessed certain privileges unavailable for commoners. This is necessary to soar the standards of Malay king rulers and distinguish the royals and its people.

2.3 The myth on the origin of places and states

In addition, there are myths about places. Such myths explain the ways in which a place in certain states got its name. In the text of *Sejarah Melayu*, there are a lot of stories regarding the origin of place's names in the Pasai-Samudera, which have a close relationship with elements of myth. For example, the original name of the place named "Padang Gelang-gelang" is said to have originated from the name 'ringworm'. Allegedly, once upon a time, when Merah Silu went out for fishing, he repetitively caught nothing but ringworms and later boiled them. The element of myth grew even greater when it is said that the ringworms then turned into gold and the foam turned into silver. This incident can be explained by the passage below;

"Merah Silu worked with fish trap, then he trapped the rings (ringworms), he threw them away, he tried, then he trapped the rings, he threw them, until the next time where he still traps the rings. He boiled them and they turned into gold, whereas the foam turned into silver. The field where Merah Silu received his rings are named as 'Padang Gelang-gelang' (Field of Rings) now ..."

(Ahmad, 2008: 55)

"Maka adalah Merah Silu itu menahan lukah kerjanya, kena gelang-gelang itu maka dibuangkannya, ditahannya pula lukahnya kena pula gelang-gelang itu. Setelah berapa ditahannya lukahnya itu demikian juga, maka oleh Merah Silu gelang-gelang itu direbusnya, maka gelang-gelang itu menjadi emas dan buihnya menjadi perak. Adapun padang tempat Merah Silu peroleh gelang-gelang itu Padang Gelang-gelang namanya datang sekarang ini..."

(Ahmad 2008: 55)

The above passage clearly illustrates the origin of the myth elements as the elevation of the royal's standard with something magical by emphasising their authority in opening new place. It is crucial to note that how insignificant is a king without a kingdom to administer. Besides, this too proved that different places may have different myths for their names and certainly told by different authors. Therefore, it is apparent that the diversity in the writing of mythical elements in a country's opening aimed at glorifying the king in the government system. Natural glory and greatness of a king's status depends on the ways and the opening of the country during its foundation. The more magical ways in the foundation of a country, the higher the standard of the king who founded it.

2.4 *The myth in the origins of the arrival of Islam*

Myth has a close link with a history of Islamic introduction to Melaka and Pasai. In the *Sejarah Melayu*, it was said that the first person to have converted to Islam is the king followed by the people. Kings are said to embrace Islam through dreams that have brought them to meet Islamic figures such as Prophet Muhammad and some *wali* (regent). This event can be observed through the Islamisation of Merah Silu performed by Fakir Muhammad who sailed to Pasai together with Sheikh Ismail. On the journey, they had found Merah Silu on the beach and continue to Islamise and gave him the teachings of Islam. That night, Merah Silu dreamed about the Messenger. The Prophet spat in his mouth, and Merah Silu can read the Koran smoothly. Sheikh Ismail brought the regalia and proclaimed Merah Silu as Sultan Maliku'l -Salleh. This matter is also related with the words of the Prophet to a friend. As being mentioned in the excerpt;

“At the end of time, there is a country named *Samudera* (Ocean), then immediately you can hear the (Ocean) state, hasten earnestly to the state, bring all together in the country including Islam, as in much of the country will be Wali Allah; but there is also a king, Muktabar is the country, that you take it along.”

(Ahmad, 2008: 55)

“Pada akhir zaman kelak ada sebuah negeri bawah angin Samudera namanya, Maka segeralah kamu mendengar negeri Samudera itu, maka segeralah kamu pergi ke negeri itu, bawa ia sekalian di dalam negeri termasuk Islam, kerana di dalam negeri itu banyak Wali Allah akan jadi; tetapi ada pula seorang raja, Muktabar negerinya, ialah kamu bawa beserta.”

(Ahmad, 2008: 55)

Referring to the passage, it can be highlighted that every myth about the arrival of Islam presented by the authors are different from one another, which links religious figures in the Islamisation of the great king. The text mentioned above suggests that the way of king embraced Islam is more special than his people. Rulers who came after the advent of Islam allegedly are also the descendants of the prophet Muhammad when they dream of meeting him. This event was exalted to put the position of the Malay rulers in high places and make them noble. According to Yusuf Iskandar (1986: 154), the function of Islamisation myth is undoubtedly intended to distinguish how the people and the king converted to Islam. King is generally more special than his people and this privilege arises as a social and political nature of the king himself who owns the highest level in society. Historically, this proved that the development of Islam in Melaka and Pasai starts from the highest level of the king, which followed by the officials and the people.

It is obvious that Islamic elements do not stop with the advent of Islam, but directly accepted into the story as if the religion is already familiar with the society and practiced as a way of life. Thus, it demonstrates that the arrival of Islam is presented according to the state of society and the time of the writing is made. If the writing was made after the people have recently embraced Islam, it can be assumed that the author took the opportunity to embed some teachings to reinforce people's confidence and understanding.

2.5 *Symbolically Patterned Myth*

Myth is also used as a tool to sense misappropriation that often carried by the king. This is associated with a symbolic context. In the past traditional societies, it not acceptable to overtly criticise the king as it is regarded as treason to the government or officials. Alternatively, the author uses symbolic myths to criticise the king. For instance, the Singaporean myth of ‘Swordfish Attack’. This tragedy occurred after Tun Jana Khatib was killed by Paduka Seri Maharaja. During this tragedy, Tun Jana Khatib asked his people to go against the swordfish attack using their calves and as the results, a lot of people died. Luckily, there was a smart young boy who suggested using banana trunks to prevent people's death. However, this smart solution has led to the kid's own death as the king was afraid if he grew up and becomes threat to his reign due to the boy's intelligence. The myth was created to illustrate how unjust is Paduka Seri Maharaja. Following the atrocities of that, he eventually lost the throne when Singapore is attacked by Majapahit.

Myths are the symbolic elements also present in the episode of proposal Puteri Gunung Ledang by Sultan Mahmud Shah. This myth actually contains a harsh criticism on a king who prioritises his lust without caring the lady's status; maiden, someone's wife or fiancée. Tun Biajid's wife and Tun Dewi became the object of gratification for his lust. Other than that, Tun Fatimah was taken away from her husband, Ali, while Tun Teja was taken away from her fiancé, which is Sultan Pahang; Sultan Abdul Jamil was used simply to cater his desire. Feeling unsatisfied, he sent the proposal to ask for Puteri Gunung Ledang who has the privilege of living in another world. However, in the fulfilment of the proposal, Puteri Gunung Ledang has put tough conditions to Sultan Mahmud Shah. This situation can be observed in the excerpt below;

“If the ruler of Malacca wants me, I demand gold bridge and a silver one, from Melaka to Gunung Ledang. The proposal shall include seven trays of mosquitoes’ heart, seven trays of germ’s heart, a crock of tears, a crock of betel nut juice, a bowl of blood from the prince; Raja Ahmad. Should the king of Melaka fulfil them, I shall accept the proposal.”

(Ahmad, 2008: 215)

“Jikalau raja Melaka hendakkan aku, perbuatkanlah aku jambatan emas satu dan jambatan perak satu, dari Melaka datang ke Gunung Ledang itu. Akan peminangnya hati nyamuk tujuh dulang; hati kuman tujuh dulang; air mata setempayan; air pinang muda setempayan; darah anak raja bernama Raja Ahmad itu semangkuk. Jikalau ada demikian kabullah tuan puteri akan kehendak raja Melaka itu.”

(Ahmad, 2008: 215)

The king wilfully accepted the terms given by Puteri Gunung Ledang even though it will burden his people. All the requirements were met except a bowl of blood from Raja Ahmad, the son of Sultan Mahmud. This clearly shows that the inhumane side of Sultan Mahmud as he was willing to burden the people but did not willing to sacrifice his own child. Through the story, the author actually reflects Sultan’s personality implicitly, criticising the government's biasness.

2.5 Legends in Literary History (*Sulalatus Salatin*)

Legendary is extraordinarily the patterned stories about figures in the history whether the characters really exist or just imaginary figures; nonetheless, stories about characters are true and originated from the locals. In general, the legendary revolves on the literary history of the kings and leaders of the Malay warriors like *Badang* (the powerful man) who is extremely strong and well-known in Temasik. Similar goes to the heroism and loyalty found for Hang Tuah in Malacca. While the chronicle of the Pasai Kings tells about the extraordinary powers possessed by Tun Braim Bapa, a son of Sultan Ahmad, the king of Pasai, another chronicle is present, which is the chronicle of Merong Mahawangsa that revolves around the king of Kedah; Raja Ong Maha Parita Deria who likes to consume human blood, also known as *Raja Bersiung* (the King with fang).

Legend also analyses the individuality and advantages possessed by certain human figures that are considered and believed to live in history. The figures in question will often be affiliated with political and religious power. Thus, the supremacy of these characters is often associated with special characteristics and supernatural like boldness, bravery, strength, wise and intelligence. Besides, reliable figures or legends have the ability and tremendous inner power as well as being very renowned in the local history of a society (Isa, 1999: 62). Normally, the legend is extolled and often used as a model by the local community, which later becomes a part of all members in a society (Iskandar in Zahrah Ibrahim (pngr), 1986: 161). In addition, the legend reflects less on the spiritual side, but rather focuses more on external supremacies such as agility, heroic, invincibility and power. Furthermore, legend exists almost everywhere at all times. It is local-based in nature and close to the notion of history.

Legend has little difference with the myth as it is closer to the history and highlights less elements of wonder and imaginary. For the local community, they always believe in the existence of legendary figures without questioning on its existence. In the early part of the *Sejarah Melayu*, the legend of Alexander the Great was used, which was also found in several works of Islamic literature. Alexander the Great who is said to have originated from Mecodonia had conquered the Indian state and married to the daughter of King Kinda Hinda. The lineage of King Alexander and Hindi is said to be a descendant of the kings of Malacca. Similarly, the legend of King Suran, according to Prof. Hsiao Tsu Yun, is actually a historic figure of the Hindu Raja Chola (Rajendra) (Iskandar, 1986: 16).

Another legendary figure highlighted in the text of the *Sejarah Melayu* is Badang. Badang is a legendary figure depicted as a brave warrior exists during the reign of the kings of Singapore. He acquired his strange power after consumed the vomit given by a spirit. Later on, he was appointed by King Singapore as *Raden* (officials) and later as a commander. Singapore became famous all over the Indian subcontinent and in Perlak as a result of the strength of Badang after he managed to beat the power of a legendary figure considered as the most powerful on the continents; Rivet Nadi Bijaya and Perlak. This event was revealed in passages as follows;

“And Badang eat vomit exhausted by the ghost, and he holds the ghost's beard. After that he tried to destroy all the trees and with his effort, once, they are broken. Then, he releases the ghost beard, and went home to his master fields”.

(Ahmad, 2008: 48-49)

“Maka oleh Badang dimakannya muntah hantu itu habis semuanya, dan janggut hantu itu dipegangnya juga. Setelah itu oleh Badang dicubanya segala pohon kayu hampirnya yang besar-besar itu, dengan sekali bantuannya habis patah-patah; maka janggut hantu itu dilepaskannya, lalu ia berjalan pulang datang ke tempat huma tuannya”.

(Ahmad, 2008: 48-49)

“The Tun Perpatih Pandak, having reached the boat, hence Benderang told Perpatih Pandak, “Do not to fight with Badang, if you are not keen, because he is just too formidable.”

(Ahmad, 2008: 53)

“Adapun Tun Perpatih Pandak, setelah sampai ke perahunya, maka Benderang berkata pada Perpatih Pandak, “Jikalau dapat dengan bicara tuan hamba, janganlah hamba diadu dengan Badang itu; jikalau tiada terlawan oleh hamba, kerana pada pemandangan hamba, ia terlalu perkasanya.”

(Ahmad, 2008: 53)

Some quotes above reflect the supernatural strength traits owned by Singapore's legendary figures, Badang. When given a deeper thought, the author of the *Sejarah Melayu* deliberately created such legendary figure as a mighty force to show the mental and physical strength of the Malays in Singapore compared to those from the continents of Perlak and Keling themselves. According to A.E Teeuw, such elements were deliberately created as a combat element of prestige in the local community (Iskandar, 1986: 162).

For Malacca, the glory of this legendary figure becomes prominent after the appearance of Hang Tuah. Hang Tuah is represented as a symbol of strength for the community in Malacca. He has managed to defeat a raging Javanese using his intelligence. As a consequence, Hang Tuah was promoted as Admiral in Malacca. The greatness of this figure in the public eye can be seen in the excerpt taken from the *Sejarah Melayu* as below;

“Wherever Admiral Hang Tuah goes, people make excited noise of his presence. Everyone including the ladies and maidens of Javanese does the same, if he goes to the market to get some goods, even married ladies will get up to see Hang Tuah ...”

(Ahmad, 2008: 105)

“Adapun akan Laksamana Hang Tuah barang tempat ia pergi, gegak gempita bunyi orang daripada hebat melihat sikap lakunya. Jika ia di panggungan, panggungan gaduh dan segala perempuan Jawa anak-anak dara, jikalau ia berjalan ke pasar atau barang ke mana, banyak-banyakanlah yang gila akan Hang Tuah itu. dan apabila Hang Tuah lalu, perempuan di dalam pangkuan lakinya itu pun bangun hendak melihat Hang Tuah...”

(Ahmad, 2008: 105)

Referring to the above excerpt, the author tried to highlight Hang Tuah's character and his good look that imitates exactly the same motive for Raden Inu in some Javanese literary discourses. This occurrence is not surprising as *Sejarah Melayu* is heavily influenced by elements and foreign literatures such as Islamic literature, Hinduism and Java (Iskandar, 1986: 162). It can be said that the greatness and strength of Melaka are due to the figure of Hang Tuah. The glorified supremacy done by the author of *Sejarah Melayu* is convincing as he tries to convince the audience that the man named Hang Tuah really exists in the history of Melaka. The presence of Hang Tuah in *Sejarah Melayu* reinforced the concepts of sovereignty, obey and treason in the Malay community. This was reflected in Hang Tuah's character; responsibility, loyalty and self-sacrifice. For example, Hang Tuah is willing to kill his own relative, Hang Jebat, as he was deemed to have disobeyed the sultan. In addition, Hang Tuah was able to prove his loyalty when he helped a royal horse that fell into the sewage even when it means to put himself in it.

If being observed in detail, the effort of author in the story of legendary figures appeared as if he was in favour of a personal nature. Connecting historic figures with the figures of ancient legend is not actually made by chance but rather it is said that the historical figures associated with this legend are the kings themselves. In a political context, this event indeed has a role and function. Generally, if the person's attitude is great, people will always say good things about them and vice versa. The elements of this legend is also found in almost all historical literary discourses such as *Tuhfat al-Nafis* associated with the legendary figure of Prophet Solomon and Balkis princess as well as the chronicle of Aceh with the character of Raja Iskandar Muda Mahkota Alam Shah.

3. Conclusion

Salatin Sulalatus is a testament to the foundation of human civilisation. It is undeniable that the majority part of the *Sulalatus Salatin* covers the stories of myths, tales and legends. However, these infused elements certainly have historical relevance based on a true event. Furthermore, elements of myth, folklore and legend have their specific functions. Among them are related to the Malay culture. For example, an author cannot overtly submit a negative outlook or dissatisfaction with the sultan. Thus, to tell the bad behaviour of the sultan, the author used the metaphor in the form of myths, tales and legends. This act requires an in depth understanding to convey to the readers. It is difficult to determine whether or not the facts of history existed in the days of old Malay literary tradition are objective. However, it is evident that not all the historical facts presented in *Sulalatus Salatin* have been certified for its validity since facts are always accompanied by interpretation and imagination of the authors.

In conclusion, it can be stated that although almost all Malay literary works of historical nature contain the elements of myth, fairy tale and legend; nevertheless, these elements have their own functions until infused into something in a historical reality. The functions also have close relationship with the values of Malay culture. It was then unacceptable for a writer to openly criticise kings although they are cruel and unjust. If the author wrote the story, overtly, there is a possibility of something bad is going to be imposed on them. Alternately, the author covertly expressed the kings' misbehaviour with figurative elements in the form of myths, tales and legends. This means that the myths and legends act as a tool to criticise the kings and sultans of the Malays. Moreover, the purpose of incorporating elements including allusion is to give guidance to the government on the viciousness and sense of irresponsibility to the people other than being lessons to kings and future generations.

References

- Ahmad, A. (1977). *Kajian Sejarah Melayu*. Kuala Lumpur: Fajar Bakti Sdn. Bhd.
- Ahmad, A. (1987). *Karya-Karya Sastera Bercorak Sejarah*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Ahmad, A. S. (2008). *Sulalatus Salatin (Sejarah Melayu)*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Carstens, S. A. (2009). From Myth to History: Yap Ah Loy and the Heroic Past of Chinese Malaysians. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 19(2), 185-208. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022463400000539>.
- Fang, L.Y. (1993). *Kesusasteraan Melayu klasik*. Jakarta: Erlangga.
- Hamid, I. (1987). *Perkembangan Kesusasteraan Melayu lama*. Petaling Jaya: Longman.
- Hassan, M. A., Salleh, M., Taib, M. K., Sanim, R. A., Maaruf, S., & Salleh. S. H. (1194). *Kesusasteraan Melayu mitos dan realiti*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Hoffstaedter, G. (2008). Representing Culture in Malaysian Cultural Theme Parks: Tensions and Contradictions. *A Journal of Social Anthropology and Comparative Sociology*, 18(2), 139-160. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00664670802150182>.
- Hooykas, C. 1967. *Perintis sastera*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.
- Ibrahim, M. Y. (1986). *Pengertian Sejarah*: Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa Dan Pustaka.
- Ibrahim, Z. (1986). *Sastera Sejarah: Interpretasi dan Penilaian*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Isa, M. M. (1999). *Sastera Melayu Klasik Bercorak Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publications & Distributors.
- Iskandar, Y & Rahman, A. 1986. *Sejarah Melayu: Satu Pembicaraan Kritis Dari Pelbagai Bidang*. Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Ismail, Z. (1971). *Unsur mitos dan Dongeng Dalam Sejarah Melayu*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Mo, B. (2002). Black magic and illness in a Malaysian Chinese community. *Social Science & Medicine Journal*, 18(2), 147-157. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-9536\(84\)90035-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-9536(84)90035-2).
- Mohd Noor, A. (2006). *Ilmu Sejarah dan Pensejarahan*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Osman, M. T. (1971). *Kesusasteraan Melayu Lama*. Kuala Lumpur: Federal Publication.
- Rajantharan, M. (1999). *Sejarah Melayu: Kesan hubungan kebudayaan Melayu dan India*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Samid, S. 1986. Misa Melayu Nilai Sejarahanya. In Zaharah Ibrahim (Peny.). *Sastera Sejarah: Interpretasi dan Penilaian*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

- Sharif, Z., & Ahmad, J. (1993). *Kesusasteraan Melayu Tradisonal*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Watson, C.W. (1996). Reconstructing Malay Identity. *Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 12(5), 10-14. DOI: 10.2307/2783543.
- Winstedt, R.O. (1965). *History of Malay Literature*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.
- Worden, N. (2001). 'Where it all Began': the representation of Malaysian heritage in Melaka. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 7(3), 199-218. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13527250120079300>.
- Yusuf, I. (2008). *Kesusasteraan Melayu Lama dan Baru*. Sintok: University Utara Malaysia.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).