



## Mythology in *Sulalatus Salatin* Manuscript

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### ABSTRACT

This research delves into the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript, exploring its historical context and content to identify and describe the myths embedded within, reflecting the Malay society around the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The study aims to deepen the understanding of the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript and the prevalent myths of that era. Utilizing the historical method, the research encompasses three stages: identifying the research problem, collecting data, and analyzing content through a textology approach to comprehend past societal views on mythology. Data collection involves library research to find relevant studies, skimming the text to examine each chapter, and documenting various sources such as documents, notes, and archives. The results reveal that the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript narrates the reigns of the Malay Sultanate of Malacca, depicting Malay values such as philosophy, ethics, leadership, aesthetics, language, and religion. The manuscript records events related to the rise, glory, and downfall of the Malay Kingdom of Malacca in 1511 CE, highlighting the introduction of Islam and Malacca's role as a center of Islamic education.

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## INTRODUCTION

The *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript, also known as Sejarah Melayu, is a masterpiece documenting the genealogy of the Malay Sultanate of Malacca from its early days to its downfall in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The term *Sulalatus Salatin* is derived from two Arabic words: *Sulalah*, meaning a series or chain, and *al-Salatin*, the plural form of al-sultan, meaning rulers or sovereigns (Bahaman, 2013). Thus, *Sulalatus Salatin* signifies "the chain of the genealogies of the ruling sultans." The original title was translated by the author as "the narrative of all kings." However, orientalists such as Blagden (1925), Winstedt (1938), Roolvink (1967), Brown (1970), and Shellabear (1977) preferred to title this work Malay Annals (Sejarah Melayu) in English rather than its original name, *Sulalatus Salatin* (Denisova, 2007).

The *Sulalatus Salatin* text belongs to the traditional literary genre of historiography. Like other historiographical texts, *Sulalatus Salatin* is regarded as a reflection of a civilization's image and a portrayal of Malay civilization. It is considered one of the texts that extensively discusses the origins and development of the Malay people, providing a clear depiction of the Malay community's background. The text also addresses the comprehensive lifestyle and conditions of the traditional Malay society, including the royal family's life and the common people's lives (Wulandari, 2017).

The *Sulalatus Salatin* text explains Malay cultural practices and serves as a reference for shaping Malay history. When narrated, the text encompasses historical aspects related to myths, legends, the memory of women and gender, kingdoms and neighbors, commerce and religion, ports and navigation, various clothing styles, and desires. Mythology refers to the study and collection of myths, legends, and traditional stories within a community. Myths in historical literature are stories believed by the local community to be true events that occurred in a region in the past. These mythical stories provide a foundation and answers to the curiosity of ancient societies (Abdul et al., 2022).

One of the myths in the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript includes a king named Raja Suran. He was the son of Raja Sulan from a kingdom in the Indian continent. The text narrates that Raja Suran wanted to know what was in the ocean, so he requested a glass box with a lock to be made. Raja Suran entered the ocean in the glass box, which was chained with gold. Underwater, Raja Suran discovered a land called Dika, inhabited by a people named Bu Sum, who were half Muslim and half infidel.

In traditional literature, literature is seen as a mirror and document of society. The role of mythical stories not only explains their functions to the community but also showcases the creativity of an author or storyteller. Qisthi (2022) states that myths are a type of folklore that tells stories about humans or creatures and extraordinary events beyond human comprehension.

According to Hooykaas, myths in the context of old Malay literature often take the form of divine stories driven by religious elements related to a king's origins and are often embellished with magical elements. The most popular myths involve bubbles, sunlight, wild animals, bamboo shoots, and others. Typically, animals appearing in origin myths are large, fierce, and strong, adding grandeur to the stories of origins.

According to Zenrif, myths are not merely reports of past events like the history of gods and the magical world; they also provide guidance on human behavior and serve as a kind of wisdom that humans can participate in, shaping events around them and responding to natural forces (Bakar et al., 2022).

These myths are not presented arbitrarily but are based on belief patterns reflecting the community's thoughts with animistic elements that preceded other beliefs. Myths in historical literature are stories believed by the local community as true events that happened in their region in the past. Additionally, myths correspond to "mythology," which in English means the study of myths or the content of myths. Today, myths are often seen as tales filled with falsehoods, superstitions, and irrationality (Jasni & Muhammad, 2018). Elements of myths in traditional Malay literature are sometimes considered irrelevant for teaching and learning today, as they may lead students to imagine illogical scenarios.

This research aims to study and understand the mythology in the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript and its role in Malay historiography. The primary focus is to identify the myths in the manuscript and describe how these myths reflect the worldview and cultural values of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Malay society. Additionally, the study aims to analyze the impact of mythology on identity formation and power legitimacy in Malay historiography and see how these mythological elements play a role in classical Malay historical narratives and literature. Through this research, it is hoped to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between mythology and history in the Malay cultural context and its contribution to the development of historiography in the region.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method with a historical approach relevant for comprehensively and deeply examining the past (Sjamsuddin, 2007). The historical method is chosen because the research topic focuses on Malay historiography and mythology in the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript, necessitating contextual analysis of past conditions. The transliterated manuscript studied is an edition edited by A. Samad Ahmad. Data collection involves library research and field observation. Data collection techniques include three main methods: library research to find previous relevant studies, in-depth reading of the manuscript text, and documentation through gathering data from various sources such as documents, notes, and archives. This approach aims to achieve a holistic and valid understanding of mythology in *Sulalatus Salatin*.

As part of the methodology, a textology approach is used to examine the manuscript's content in detail. Textology helps identify how past societies understood mythology through written language and text structure (Sudardi, 2021). This study includes analyzing written aspects such as spelling, words, sentences, textual variations, and possible copying errors. Textological principles, as proposed by Lichacev, are applied to ensure the text's accuracy and integrity (Fauziyah & Gantina, 2022). By using these principles, this research not only presents the text's content but also its history and evolution within the cultural and social context of 15<sup>th</sup> century Malay society. This approach aims to significantly contribute to understanding Malay mythology and historiography.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Tun Sri Lanang, whose full name is Tun Muhammad, was a Malay literati born in Bukit Seluyut, Johor, in 1565. Around 1613, or the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Tun Sri Lanang was appointed Datuk Bendahara (Prime Minister) of Johor. After Johor was conquered by Sultan Iskandar Muda, who reigned from 1607-1636, Tun Sri Lanang, along with two thousand other peninsula inhabitants, was taken to Aceh. Almost all Johor residents and officials migrated to Aceh, including Sultan Iskandar Tsani Alauddin Mughayat Syah (the thirteenth sultan of Aceh), Princess Kamaliah or Princess Pahang (known in Aceh as Princess Phang) (Adam, 2016).

Tun Sri Lanang's genealogy traces back to Mani Purindan: Tun Sri Lanang bin Tun Genggang bin Tun Jenal bin Tun Mad Ali bin Tun Hasan bin Tun Mutahir bin Tun Ali Sari Nara bin Mani Purindan. He married Tun Aminah binti Tun Kadut binti Seri Amar Bangsa Tun Ping and was titled Datuk Bendahara of Aceh. The genealogy written in the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript states:

“Seri Amar Bangsa Tun Ping had a child named Tun Esah, who married Megat Biajid and bore Megat Dollah; Megat Dollah begat Tun Tipah, who married Tun Mir Bendahara Perak now; another child of Seri Amar Bangsa Tun Ping was Tun Kadut, who married Tun Jalak, the child of Datuk Kilab, a sibling of Datuk Kala and Datuk Jembang, originating from the Raja Cempa. Tun Kadut begat a daughter, Tun Aminah, who married Bendahara Paduka Raja Tun Sri Lanang.”

Tun Sri Lanang had four children: Tun Anum, Tun Mat Ali, Tun Jenal, and Tun Gembuk. Besides being a government official, Tun Sri Lanang was also known as a Malay poet. His monumental work is the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript. According to Winstedt, the manuscript was written from February 1614 to January 1615 when Tun Sri Lanang was a captive in the Pasai region. This is evidenced in the introduction of the manuscript (Denisova, [2020](#)).

### Manuscript and Mythology

*Sulalatus Salatin*, also known as Sejarah Melayu, was authored by Tun Sri Lanang when he served as Bendahara Paduka Johor from 1580 to 1615. The work consists of fifteen chapters, narrating the era of the Malay Sultanate of Malacca until its fall. The work was produced so that future generations could learn from their ancestors.

Although this work narrates the reign of the Malay Sultanate of Malacca's kings, it remains a guide for living and educating the present society. Various Malay values depicted in this work include philosophy, ethics, leadership, aesthetics, language, religion, and others. The Malay society is portrayed as wise, religious, and emphasizing aesthetics, primarily from an etiquette and rhetorical perspective. Additionally, Malay values are reflected in ethics and leadership within Malay society (Sangidu, [2016](#)).

The content of the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript significantly influenced other texts like Hikayat Melayu, which narrates the continuity of the Malay kings' genealogy, such as Raja Kecil Siak, and several other historical literary texts. The *Sulalatus Salatin* is considered historical literature because it provides a view and perspective (worldview) of the Malay people on their surrounding world. Additionally, *Sulalatus Salatin* records the rise, glory, and fall of the Malay Kingdom of Malacca in 1511 CE. *Sulalatus Salatin* is not a single text, as it has been published in various narratives (English, French, and Chinese) and interests (Rusmiatiningsih, [2023](#)).

There are five versions of *Sulalatus Salatin* available today: Winsted Raffles Mss. No. 18, A. Samad Ahmad, Shellabear, Abdullah Munshi, and Hj. Pocut Haslinda Muda in Azwar. Munsyi and A. Samad published *Sulalatus Salatin* for Malay language learning purposes for children and students. Meanwhile, the more modern version of *Sulalatus Salatin* was published by Hj Pocut Haslinda Muda in Azwar in 2011. However, this last-mentioned version is a rewritten narrative by the eighth descendant of Tun Sri Lanang, based on the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript stored at Leiden University, Netherlands (Zakaria et al., [2013](#)).

In the A Samad Ahmad version of the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript, three old handwritten *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscripts, more commonly known as Sejarah Melayu, are mentioned. These manuscripts are named: (1) Munshi MoHarumad Ali cod DBP MSS 86A, referred to as manuscript A; (2) Hj. Othman Abdullah cod DBP MSS 86, referred to as manuscript B; and (3) DBP cod DBP MSS 86B, referred to as manuscript C.

Manuscript A was obtained in February 1977 by Tuan Omar bin Masajee, containing 418 pages, although some of the final pages are missing. On the first page, the original owner's name, Munshi S. Md. Ally, is written at the top. The manuscript's age is uncertain, but it is presumed to be over forty years old, dating back to 1856, as the "Introduction" was written in January 1896. Manuscript B is much older than manuscript A, evidenced by the time it was copied, with the last page dated 1223H (1856M), suggesting that manuscript A was copied from manuscript B (Sangidu, [2016](#)).

Manuscript B was acquired from Tuan Haji Othman Abdullah, former manager of a Kuala Lumpur newspaper agency, in January 1963. The last page of this manuscript is numbered 321. Several pages at the beginning are missing, and the initial sentences are faded and difficult to read. Despite the missing text, the manuscript is generally in good condition, with clear and legible writing.

Manuscript C does not contain where and from whom it was obtained. There is no record of the origin of the manuscript. The condition of manuscript C itself can be said to look very old. There are several pages that are already irregular. The overall condition of this manuscript is so fragile or as in the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript called “eating yourself”, the writing from the manuscript sheet penetrates into other sheets which causes the writing to become dark and unreadable (Rachman, [2021](#)).

Manuscript C is not paginated, unlike manuscript B. In manuscript C there is no record of when the copying of the manuscript was completed, the name of the copyist of the manuscript is also not mentioned, but judging from the writing style of manuscript C, it shows that the copyist was an expert in the field of copying manuscripts. Manuscript C ends with the story of Tun Ali Hati being killed. The sentence reads:

“... Then Sultan Mahmud ordered the killing of Tun Ali Hati, and he died. *Wa llahu a'lamu bis-sauiab wailaihil marji'u wal-ma'ab; tamat al kalam taas-salam*; and at the end, there is the letter "أ" (Isa, [2018](#)).

The *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript comprises 15 chapters, totaling 414 pages, excluding the introduction. Each chapter discusses various topics with different titles. The comprehensive discussion of the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript summarized by the researcher is as follows:

This narrative depicts the prosperity and decline experienced by kings and kingdoms. During the prosperous period, Raja Iskandar received extraordinary respect from other kings, ministers, warriors, priests, scholars, and wise men, who showered him with gold, silver, and jewels, piling them up like a mountain. Raja Kida Hindi also presented his child to Raja Iskandar, along with various inherited jewels as the child's attire. In return, Raja Kida Hindi was awarded a hundred sets of golden attire filled with precious jewels, a hundred horses with golden equipment encrusted with jewels, and other valuables.

Raja Suran's power was immense, with all Hindi and Sindi kings and other regional rulers submitting to him. However, decline also occurred. Forests turned into plains, the earth trembled like an earthquake, mountains moved, highlands leveled, rocks scattered, and rivers dried up, turning into mud. For two months of continuous travel, every kingdom encountered by Raja Suran was subdued and submitted to him.

The narrative also describes the prosperity and decline experienced by various kingdoms. During prosperity, Seri Teri Buana ruled Palembang with affection alongside his wife, making Palembang Darul Salam prosperous. Similarly, Singapore was built with moats, palaces, halls, houses, shops, and beautiful markets, making it prosperous under Seri Teri Buana's rule. Singapore became a bustling trade center with merchant ships from the Gulf of Tanjung Ru to the moats and surrounding villages. In Pasai, Raja Syahru'n Nuwi received reports that the city was bustling with merchants, showcasing the kingdom's greatness. Malacca also grew and prospered with many merchants settling there, expanding its territory from Bemas Ujung Karang in the west to Terengganu in the east (Musa, [2023](#)).

However, decline was inevitable. Raja Suran beheaded Raja Gangga Syah Johan, causing his death. The shores were flooded with Todak fish, slaughtered and piled up until the people could no longer consume them. The Siamese attack on Malacca brought many casualties, but Malacca withstood the assault, forcing the Siamese to retreat. Cau Panden's death from vomiting blood due to an arrow thwarted Siam's intention to attack Malacca again.

Other declines include the easy fall of Indera Pura. A palace burned down, leaving the king's treasures unsalvaged. The battle between Kampar and Malacca resulted in Maharaja Jaya and Tun Demang's deaths, forcing the Kampar people to flee while the Malaccans seized many treasures and burned the city. This narrative reflects the cycles of prosperity and decline experienced by various kingdoms, highlighting how power and wealth can shift over time. There were periods of prosperity and decline experienced by various kingdoms. During prosperity, Malacca grew more prosperous and renowned among traders worldwide, earning the name Malaqat from the Arabs. In Mengkasar, the Meluluki kingdom under Keraeng Majiko was powerful, with all Mengkasar territories under its control. Nakhoda Sayid Ahmad was awarded a title and a golden keris by the king, showcasing Malacca's prosperity and greatness at that time (Zakaria et al., [2021](#)).

However, decline was unavoidable. Semerluki attacked Java and Siam, causing significant damage and fear among the population. Many Semerluki supplies were damaged by the Admiral in Ungaran. In Pasai, people fled and many died when the Malaccans attacked, leading to Pasai's fall. Similarly, in Malacca, there was a fierce battle with the Siamese,

who eventually retreated after many deaths. In another incident, a palace burned down, leaving the treasures unsalvaged.

On the intellectual and cultural front, advancements were also made. In Pasai, Sidi Ali Ghiathu'd-Din and the ministers planned shipbuilding and trade with the Arabs, demonstrating their knowledge of the Arabic language. A servant of Allah from Pasai, Tuan Jana Khatib, famous for his magical knowledge, visited Singapore and Samarlanga. A ship from Jeddah brought Syed Abdul Aziz, who anchored in Malacca and prayed there. Tun Semendera from Pasai, due to his intelligence, was appointed as a herald with the title Seri Amerta.

Hang Tuah, while in Malacca, learned the martial arts and became renowned among the young people. The king of Majapahit praised the king of Malacca's intelligence compared to other kings. Sultan Mansur Syah of Malacca learned from Maulana Abu Bakar, gaining much knowledge later translated by Makhdum Patakan in Pasai. The Sultan of Pasai invited Makhdum Mua to discuss religious matters at the behest of the Great King, showcasing their intellectual prowess. This narrative illustrates how power, prosperity, and knowledge developed and shifted among various kingdoms in the archipelago, reflecting the complex historical dynamics (Aziz & Zakaria, [2021](#)).

In Terigah, there is a vast lake with a high island in the middle, emitting smoke. This lake is a habitat for various types of fish, and the island is planted with diverse fruits and flowers worldwide. Agriculture in Bukit Si Guntang: Wan Empuk and Wan Malini discovered rice in Bukit Si Guntang with golden grains, silver leaves, and copper stalks, showing the richness and wonder of agriculture there. Malacca as a Trade Center: Malacca became a bustling trade center with merchants from various countries, including Arab traders who called Malacca 'Malakat' or the merchant gathering center.

Economy in Singapore: A woman who made *bikang* in Singapore became wealthy due to Tuan Jana Khatib's blessed blood, causing her *bikang* to sell well and the *bikang* cover to turn into stone. Trade with the Indian Continent: Sultan Mahmud sent Hang Nadim to the Indian Continent to buy *serasah* cloth, showing trade relations with India. Arrival of Portuguese Ships: Ships from Goa (Portugal) came to trade in Malacca, and Portuguese traders saw Malacca as a very good and bustling city (Fauziyah & Gantina, [2022](#)).

War and Diplomacy in Southeast Asia: Raja Kida Hindi and Raja Iskandar: The war between Raja Kida Hindi's people and Raja Iskandar involved a marriage between Raja Kida Hindi's child and Raja Iskandar. Battle in Gangga Negara: Raja Suran besieged and fought with the city of Gangga Negara. Battle in Singapore: The war involved Javanese and Majapahit troops attacking Singapore with various battles and swordfish attacks. Diplomatic Marriage: Raja Kida Hindi and Raja Iskandar: The betrothal between Raja Kida Hindi's child and Raja Iskandar was conducted according to the Prophet Ibrahim's law. Sultan Mansur Syah: Sultan Mansur Syah did not submit to Siam, angering the King of Siam, who planned to attack Malacca.

War in Malacca: War between Malacca and Kampar: The battle between Malacca and Kampar resulted in many casualties on both sides. Portuguese Attack (Peringgi): The Portuguese attacked Malacca with cannons and guns, causing many casualties in Malacca. Raja Kassim: He is described as a very good king loved by his people, unlike Raja Ibrahim. Sultan Mansur Syah: Demonstrates firmness in defending Malacca's sovereignty from Siam's threats and maintaining diplomatic relations with Pahang. Origin of Place Names: Singapore: The name originates from Temasek, designated by the Sultan who saw a mighty beast there. Pasai: Sultan Malikus Saleh named this region based on a mystical event with his dog (Denisova, [2020](#)).

These stories depict the wealth and wonder of the economy in various regions, the importance of Malacca as a trade center in the past, and the role of politics and diplomacy in shaping power relations and conflicts. Each story underscores the close relationship between natural resource wealth, trade strategies, and political dynamics in the Southeast Asian region at that time. According to R. Roolvink, *Sulalatus Salatin* evolved from a genealogy or kinglist of Malay kings. This statement was made by R. Roolvink after researching a "Sejarah Melayu" manuscript written by Valentijn and Petrus van der Vorm in the early 18th century and another Malay Annals manuscript.

In 1726, Valentijn, in his book *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien*, mentioned owning a book titled *Soelalet Essalatina* written in Latin letters. Alongside, he presented a summary of the history of the Malays and a complete genealogy of Malay kings with corresponding Gregorian dates. Regarding the two manuscripts mentioned by Valentijn, Roolvink

found a manuscript with similarities to the previous ones at Leiden University. This manuscript, numbered Cod. Or. 3199 (3) in section iv, titled The Story of the Malay Kings' Origins.

The similarities between this manuscript and those mentioned by Valentijn and Van der Vorm pertain to the mention of the king's reign periods, accompanied by the Gregorian dates of their coronation and demise. Therefore, the manuscripts found and read by Valentijn, Van der Vorm, and Roolvink are the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscripts, which contain summaries of the Malay people's history and the genealogies of Malay kings, including the Gregorian dates of their coronation and death, rather than the "Sejarah Melayu" manuscripts (Griffiths, [2010](#)).

According to Fang, the Raffles 18 manuscript indicates the duration of a king's reign but does not mention the dates. Moreover, the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscripts of Shellabear and Abdullah do not mention either. Roolvink also stated that the current form of *Sulalatus Salatin* resulted from a multi-tiered development. Roolvink believed that the original form of *Sulalatus Salatin* was a kinglist indicating the duration of a king's reign along with the dates. This kinglist was later expanded with various stories, evolving into the Maxwell 105 version and further expanded into the Raffles 18 version, with the dates omitted in the final version (Fang, [2011](#)).

The story of the cordial relations between Sultan Mansur Syah of Malacca and the king of Goa in Sulawesi also shows unwritten differences in the Shellabear and Abdullah editions of the manuscript. This story is only written in two DBP manuscripts (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka), while the other DBP manuscript (manuscript C) has several missing pages coinciding with this history. Additionally, Tuhfatal-Nafis also briefly mentions the history of cordial relations between Malacca and Goa (Razak & Sujud, [2018](#)).

### Mythology in the Manuscript

According to Fang (2011), various myths in the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript are divided into several sections. Firstly, myths about the origins of the Malacca kings' lineage and other kings related to Malacca's rule, such as Champa, Pasai, and Muktabar. Secondly, myths about the origins of place names and countries. Thirdly, myths about the origins of Islam's introduction to Malacca and various parts of Sumatra. The fourth section includes myths serving as a tool to demonstrate Malacca's greatness, and the fifth section consists of symbolic myths.

Based on the text, the origins and lineage of Malacca's rulers are linked to one of the most famous figures in world history, Alexander the Great. According to the story, the Malacca kings' lineage is believed to originate from Alexander the Great, starting when he was in Macedonia, exploring and conquering Indian territories, and marrying the princess of a country named Shahrul Bahriah. From this marriage, Raja Suran, Nila Pahlawan, Nila Utama, and Raja Iskandar were born, becoming key figures in Palembang and the first kings of Malacca. Since then, to honor the Malacca kings, their descendants have narrated stories containing mythological elements (Zakaria et al., [2021](#)).

Iskandar Dzulkarnain, or 'Alexander the Great,' in world history, was a king or ruler of Macedonia, renowned for his wisdom, strength, and success in conquering nearly half of the world in the fourth century BC. Therefore, in the Malay Annals, the Malacca kings' lineage is believed to originate from Alexander the Great, as reflected in the following text:

"... Know you, in ancient times, the owner of the story was Raja Iskandar, the son of Raja Darab of Rome, a Macedonian by ethnicity, with Dzulkarnain as his title. Once, the king traveled to see the rising sun and reached the edge of the Indian land. There was a great king in the Indian land, whose kingdom extended over parts of India, named Raja Kida Hindi... Raja Kida Hindi was captured alive by Raja Iskandar; he was brought to faith and became Muslim in the religion of Prophet Ibrahim..." (p. 4).

Based on the above quote, the method of conveying historical facts through myths serves a specific function: connecting the origins of Malacca's rulers to the legend of Alexander the Great to elevate the status of Malacca's royal lineage, associating them with the highest-ranking kings of the world (Hamdan, [2021](#)).

This myth revolves around Raja Suran, the second greatest mythical figure after Alexander the Great, who supposedly dived into the sea and found a land named Dika, inhabited by the Bu Sum people, who were half Muslim. Raja Suran then married Princess Mahtabu'l-Bahri, the daughter of Raja A'ftabul-Ardh. From their marriage, they had three children: Nila Pahlawan, Kresna Pandita, and Nila Utama. The story is written in the text as follows:

"... Then Raja Suran entered the box, and everything outside was visible; the box was locked from the inside. The box was then lowered into the sea, and it sank, allowing Raja Suran to see various riches of Allah from inside the box, until, by divine power, the box fell into the land named Dika." (p.14)

"... Raja Suran entered the city and saw a community named Bu Sum, very numerous, of unknown quantity; they were half Muslim and half infidel." (p. 4)

"Raja Aktabu'l-Ard had a very beautiful daughter named Princess Mahtabu'l-Bahri. Raja Aktabu'l-Ard married Raja Suran to Princess Mahtabu'l-Bahri. After three years together, they had three sons." (p. 15)

"... Raja Aktabu'l-Ard named the three sons: the eldest, Nila Pahlawan; the second, Krisyna Pandita; and the youngest, Nila Utama..." (p. 19)

A similar story is found in Greek mythology, the tale of Danae and Perseus. Danae was the daughter of King Acrisius of Argos. A prophecy foretold that King Acrisius would be killed by his grandson. Fearing the prophecy, King Acrisius confined Danae in an inaccessible iron tower outside Argos.

However, Danae's desire to marry and have children grew stronger, and when Zeus, the king of the gods, saw Danae, he fell in love with her. Zeus transformed himself into a golden shower, entered the tower through a window, and impregnated Danae. Upon discovering that his daughter was pregnant, King Acrisius was enraged and felt betrayed by the gods. To avoid the prophecy, he decided to send Danae and her unborn child in a wooden box, casting it into the sea. Danae's child, Perseus, grew into a strong and brave hero (Rahman & Ahmad, [2017](#)).

"As an attempt to avoid fate, King Acrisius decided to send Danae and her unborn child in a wooden box and cast it into the sea. Danae's child was named Perseus, who grew into a strong and brave hero."

Returning to the mythology in the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript, Raja Suran's position was highly respected because it was believed that he emerged from the sea and flew in the air, riding a flying horse named Fara'ul-Bahri.

"... Raja Aktabu'l-Ard gave Raja Suran a stallion named Farasu'l-Bahri; Raja Suran mounted the horse, and it carried him out of the sea, walking on the sea's surface."

Moreover, Raja Suran's sons possessed special privileges. The three sons rode white cattle, sacred animals to Hindus, and went to Bukit Siguntang in the sea. Their grandeur was evident when Wan Empuk and Wan Malini harvested golden rice with silver leaves and copper stalks.

"... three young men sat on white cattle like silver." (p.20)

"... Wan Empuk said to Wan Malini, "Let's see what shines on Bukit Si Guntang last night." Wan Malini replied, "Let's go." They washed their faces, chewed betel, and walked. They saw rice with golden grains, silver leaves, and copper stalks." (p.20)

These myths infuse magical and legendary elements into conveying historical facts about the origins of Malacca's rulers and describe the grandeur and uniqueness of Raja Suran's descendants, closely associated with the legend of Alexander the Great. In the *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript, it is written that Raja Suran's three sons were taken by Demang Daun Lebar, and their cattle spewed bubbles, transforming into a boy.

"... the cattle the king rode spewed bubbles, and a man emerged from the bubbles." (p.22)

The boy, transformed from the bubbles, appeared fully dressed and stood, reciting as follows:

"... appeared fully dressed and stood reciting thus:

"Ahusta Paduka Seri Maharaja with Seri Sepah Buana suran bumi boji bala pikrama nakalang kama makuta and Buana ministers prasama Sakritbana Tanggadarma and busaya kuta and throne ranawikrama and Rawanaba Palawikasad dadi prabu in the early days mali mala ka Seri Darma Rajadiraja Raja Permaisuri." (p. 22)

Demang Daun Lebar named him Batala, meaning the person who reads the text.

"Demang Daun Lebar named him "Batala," meaning a person who reads the text. The descendants of Batala were the first people to read the text in ancient times." (p. 22)

The myth of Batala narrates the origin of Batala's creation, told through a legend that his children were born from ancient people with the ability to read. In Hindu culture, Batala plays a crucial role in the coronation ceremony of a king and ceremonial weddings. Batala recites holy scriptures during these ceremonies.

In the Malay Annals myth, Batala stands and praises Sapura with noble and kind words. These myths illustrate the greatness of Malacca's rulers over generations, associated with various mythical figures like demons, cattle, and Batala, including Princess Mahtabu'l-Bahri and Raja Aftabu'l-Ardh, and characters from the sea and sky.

These stories create a magical atmosphere and describe the noble lineage of Malacca's rulers, believed to have the highest status in Malay history. It is evident that the rulers had special privileges not possessed by commoners. These myths were intended to elevate the standards of Malay rulers, distinguishing them from nobility and commoners. The *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript also narrates that the first person to embrace Islam was the king, followed by the people. The king was said to have embraced Islam through a dream, encountering Islamic figures like Prophet Muhammad and several saints (Hamdan, [2018](#)).

This event is reflected in the Islamization of Merah Silu by Fakir Muhammad and Sheikh Ismail, who sailed to Pasai. During their journey, they met Merah Silu on the shore, Islamized him, and taught him Islam. That night, Merah Silu dreamed of Prophet Muhammad, who spat into his mouth, enabling Merah Silu to read the Quran fluently. Sheikh Ismail bestowed greatness and declared Merah Silu as Sultan Maliku'l-Salleh. The event is described as follows:

"In the latter days, there will be a land under the wind called Samudera. As soon as you hear of Samudera, go there and bring all its inhabitants to Islam, for many saints of Allah will arise there; but there will also be a notable king, whom you must bring along." (p. 55)

From this narrative, it is clear that each myth about the arrival of Islam, conveyed by the writer, differs but remains interconnected. The text indicates that a king's conversion to Islam was considered more special than that of the common people. Even rulers after the Islamization were believed to be descendants of Prophet Muhammad because they dreamt of meeting him.

This event was highly valued to emphasize the Malay rulers' noble position. Generally, the king was considered more special than the commoners, and this privilege reflected the social and political nature of the king's highest position in society. Historically, this proves that Islam's development in Malacca and Pasai began at the highest level, the king, followed by government officials, and then the people. It can also be understood that Islamic elements were subtly incorporated into the story, as if this religion was already known and practiced by the people as part of their lives. This indicates that the arrival of Islam was presented according to the people's conditions at the time. If the story was written after many people embraced Islam, it can be assumed that the writer included some religious teachings to strengthen people's faith or understanding of religion and self-awareness (Razak et al., [2019](#)).

Myths also serve as a tool to critique actions often taken by the king in a symbolic context. Although myths are stories or narratives that have circulated among people for years, they still represent certain values, beliefs, and norms of a specific era and culture. In the past, traditional societies could not openly accept criticism of the king, as it was considered betrayal of the government or officials. Writers used myths as a medium to subtly critique something (Syafiqha et al., [2017](#)).

One such myth is the 'Swordfish Attack' in Singapore Dilanggar Todak, which criticizes the cruel behavior of Paduka Seri Maharaja. In this story, Paduka Seri Maharaja orders his people to fight the swordfish attack with their calves, causing many deaths. The text describes:

"... swordfish attacked Singapore, swarming to the moat. Many people on the shore were killed by the swordfish, struck repeatedly. People could no longer stand on the shore. People ran in panic, saying, "Swordfish attack us; many have died being speared by them." (p. 68)

"... the king ordered people to use their calves as a barrier, but the swordfish pierced through, causing continuous deaths. Swordfish poured down like rain, instead of decreasing, killing more people." (p. 68)

Then, a young boy suggested using banana trunks to prevent more deaths. The text describes:

"... a boy came and said, "Why use our calves as a barrier? We are harming ourselves. Using banana trunks would be better?" (p. 68)

However, the king feared the boy would grow up to be a threat to his reign due to his intelligence. The text describes:

"Paduka Seri Maharaja returned to the palace. The nobles said, "Your Majesty, the boy is very wise. As a child, he is already so wise; how much wiser will he be when he grows up? We should kill him, Your Majesty." The king said, "You are right, kill him!"

This myth reflects Paduka Seri Maharaja's unjust behavior. Due to his cruelty, he eventually lost his throne when Singapore was attacked by Majapahit. The *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript also narrates a legendary figure named Badang, a legendary warrior during the reign of the Singapore kings (Aziz & Zakaria, 2021). Badang gained supernatural strength after consuming vomit given by a spirit while chopping wood. He was then appointed by the Singapore king as Raden (official) and became a commander. His success in defeating other figures like Paku Keling Nadi Bijaya and Perlak made Singapore renowned in the Indian subcontinent and Perlak. The text describes:

"Badang ate the spirit's vomit entirely and held onto its beard. After that, Badang tested various large trees near him, and with one push, they broke. He released the spirit's beard and walked back to his master's place." (pp. 48-49)

"Tun Perpatih Pandak, upon reaching his boat, said to Banderang, "If you can negotiate, do not let me be pitted against Badang; I cannot match him as he seems too powerful." (p. 53)

This story provides evidence of the supernatural strength possessed by a legendary figure in Singapore named Badang. According to sources found by the researcher, the *Sulalatus Salatin* writer deliberately created this legendary figure as a symbol of strength, demonstrating the mental and physical prowess of the Malays in Singapore compared to those from Perlak and Keling. According to A. E. Teeuw, these elements were intentionally presented as elements of martial prestige in the local community.

## CONCLUSION

The *Sulalatus Salatin* manuscript narrates the reigns of the Malay Sultanate of Malacca's kings, depicting various Malay values such as philosophy, ethics, leadership, aesthetics, language, and religion. The Malay society is portrayed as wise and religious, with this manuscript considered historical literature providing insights into the Malay nation. *Sulalatus Salatin* records the rise, glory, and fall of the Malay Kingdom of Malacca in 1511 CE. There are five versions of *Sulalatus Salatin*: Winsted Raffles Mss. No. 18, A. Samad Ahmad, Shellabear, Abdullah Munshi, and Hj. Pocut Haslinda Muda. After Malacca's fall, the Raffles 18 manuscript was taken to Goa and later returned by the Bugis to the Riau Islands in the 18th century, resulting in two versions: a short and a long version. The original author of the manuscript remains debated between Tun Bambang and Tun Sri Lanang, but A. Samad Ahmad asserts that Tun Sri Lanang is the primary author.

Mythology in *Sulalatus Salatin* is divided into several parts. Firstly, myths about the origins of the Malacca kings' lineage and related kings like Champa, Pasai, and Muktabar. Secondly, myths about the origins of place names and countries. Thirdly, myths about the introduction of Islam to Malacca and various Sumatra regions. The fourth part includes myths demonstrating Malacca's greatness, and the fifth part consists of symbolic myths. These myths study and collect legends and traditional folk stories, providing insights into Malay culture and history.

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