

MALAY MATERIALS IN THE HOUGHTON LIBRARY

by I. Proudfoot

The Houghton Library of Harvard University is the repository of the archives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. The ABCFM maintained a mission station in Singapore from 1836 to 1843. Among the mission personnel was the printer Alfred North, whose collaboration with Abdullah bin Abdulkadir would lead to some groundbreaking events in Malay intellectual history: the printing of *Sejarah Melayu*, the writing and printing of Abdullah's journal of his travels up the East Coast to Kelantan, *Pelayaran Abdullah*, and the writing of Abdullah's autobiography, which would be published later by another missionary, Benjamin Keasberry. The ABCFM archives have not yet been much exploited by historians of early nineteenth century Singapore and Malaysia.

Besides the missionary society archives, it was known that the Houghton Library had a small collection of Malay and Bugis manuscripts. In response to a request from Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia, the Malay manuscripts were microfilmed in 1989 and copies of the films were supplied to PNM.

In 1998, J.F. Coakley, a librarian at the Houghton Library, contacted Haji Ibrahim bin Ismail of the University of Malaya Library, knowing of Haji Ibrahim's specialist interest in the printing of the first edition of the *Sejarah Melayu*. He alerted Haji Ibrahim to the fact that, besides the Malay manuscripts, there was also a copy of the first edition of the *Sejarah Melayu* and some other rare Malay printed books. Some of these items were especially interesting because they included hand-written notes by Alfred North giving some information on how they came to be written. In particular these notes cast some light on the working relations between North and Abdullah.

In June 1999, I was fortunate to spend a week at the Houghton Library, during which I was able to look at some of this material in a rather cursory fashion. Feeling that it may be useful for other scholars if the Houghton Library's Malay materials were a little better known, I have prepared the following brief survey.

* * *

The Houghton Library's collection of Malay and Bugis material is closely related to another small collection in the Library of Congress.¹ Both derive mainly

¹ See descriptions by A. Teeuw, "Malay manuscripts in the Library of Congress", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 123.4 (1967), pp.517-520; Harun Mat Piah, "Manuskrip-manuskrip Melayu dalam Koleksi Library of Congress Amerika Syarikat", *Sari*, 5 (1987), pp.3-15. Asmah H. Ahmad, "Malay Manuscripts and Nineteenth Century Printed Books in the Library of Congress", *South-East Asia Library Group Newsletter*, 34-35 (December 1990): 4-8; & *Katalog Manuskrip Melayu di Library of Congress, USA*, Kuala Lumpur: Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia, 1993: "Jawi 7"; A. Kohar Rony, "Malay

from the ABCFM mission station in Singapore. Their materials were in both cases assembled by the missionary Alfred North between 1836 and 1842 or 1843. They came to the United States in two stages. The first transfer took place when Singapore was visited by the United States Exploring Expedition under the command of Charles Wilkes. At the end of their extensive explorations around the Pacific and Australasia, ships of the Expedition stopped in Singapore for a month in January and February of 1842. North assisted the Expedition by assembling some samples of literature in the Malay and Bugis languages to be taken back to Washington. These subsequently came under the control of the Smithsonian Institution, and in 1865 passed to the Library of Congress. The second shipment took place when the Singapore mission was closed in 1843, with the transfer of most of its staff to China. The mission library's printed books and manuscripts in Southeast Asian languages (Malay, Bugis and Iban) were shipped back to the ABCFM's main library at its Boston headquarters, where they were received in 1844. In 1942 most of these materials were passed from the ABCFM to Harvard University, with some printed Bibles and Gospels going to the nearby Andover Newton Seminary.

The collections in the Library of Congress and the Houghton Library are thus two parts of the same original collection. They have some printed books in common, but only one manuscript title is duplicated between them. That is *Hikayat Abdullah*, which was specially ordered by the Wilkes Expedition during its stay in Singapore and later sent on separately to Washington later in 1843. The manuscripts in the Library of Congress cover a wider range of subjects, while the Houghton collection is more focussed on religious topics. This is quite fitting, of course, since the Houghton collection comprises the manuscripts which were retained in the mission library.

The most significant manuscript in the Houghton collection may prove to be its copy of *Hikayat Abdullah*. The copies in the Library of Congress and the Houghton Library are the only two known texts of the autobiography in its original form, before it was revised for printing. Abdullah's own text is lost. A copy he gave to the surveyor J.T. Thomson was taken to New Zealand and has not yet undergone scholarly investigation.² The Houghton Library's copy seems to have been the copy kept in the mission library, or more likely North's personal copy. It was not sent back to the Boston headquarters of the ABCFM with the rest of the mission library in 1843, but was apparently kept by North and sent separately. Unlike the other manuscripts and most of the books, this one is specifically noted as having been 'Presented by Mr. A. North, 1845'. While further study of the Library of Congress copy is required, it seems that the Houghton Library copy may bring us close to the original text. It has a significant number of corrections made in a second hand, supplying missing words and restoring haplographies. This is evidence that this copy has been quite carefully checked against its original, which North tells us was Abdullah's own text.³

Manuscripts and Early Printed Books at the Library of Congress", *Indonesia*, 52 (1991), pp.123-134.

² A.H. Hill, *The Hikayat Abdullah, An annotated translation*, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1970, pp. 22-24. H.F.O'B. Traill, "The 'Lost' Manuscript of the Hikayat Abdullah 'Munsi'", *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 55.2 (1982): 126-134; and "A Note on the 'Lost' Manuscript of the Hikayat Abdullah 'Munsi'", *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 57.1 (1984), pp.67-69.

³ See North's note attached to MS Indo 23, below.

There follows a list of early Malay manuscripts and printed books held in the Houghton Library.

Manuscripts

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia has acquired microfilm copies of many of the Houghton Library's Malay manuscripts, and the PNM references are included where applicable.⁴

MS INDO 10: SYAIR IBADAT

current entry: [Sayar Ibádat]

title: Syair Ibadat [= Ballad on Religious Observance]

colophon: tammatlah surat harinya Sabtu | sahaya menyurat tiadalah tentu | susahnya banyak bukan suatu | menjadi pikir tiada bertentu.

101 pages, with 11 lines per page in parallel columns, with the first word of each quatrain rubricated.

incompletely dated.

microfilm PNM MS 1313

MS INDO 11: NABI ALLAH YUSUF

current entry: Nabi Allah Yúsup

title: Hikayat Nabi Allah Yusuf [= The Story of the Prophet Joseph]

144 pages, with 13 lines per page.

notable for 'rubrication' in both red and green ink: green is used for the names of prophets and kings, and for pointing rubricated Arabic text.

colophon: Maka tammatlah hikayat ceretera nabi Allah Yusuf anak nabi Allah Yaakub alaihi as-sallam pada hijrat al-nabi Muhammad al-mustafa salla 'llahu 'alaihi wa sallama seribu dua ratus lima puluh dua tahun pada tujuh likur hari bulan S[y]aaban hari Arba' tammat adanya. Di Singapura pada tujuh hari bulan Disember tahun sanat 1836 [Wednesday 27 Syaaban 1252, or 7 December 1836].

microfilm PNM MS 1311

MS INDO 12: BAB AL-NIKAH

current entry: Bab anikah

title: [Bab al-Nikah, = On Marriage]

text begins: Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim. Dan demikian lagi setengah daripada segala hukum yang seyogya diketahui oleh kadi akan dia hukum nikah dan segala yang takluk dengan dia yang lagi akan sebutnya insya Allah taala. [= Whereupon will be treated, God Almighty willing, certain of the laws which should properly be known by a Muslim registrar, the marriage law and additionally that which flows from it.]

431 pages, plus 4 pages interleaved between [183] and [184] containing a transcription of marginal notes found on those two pages.

in several hands, with corrections and marginal notes, many of which have been trimmed in the binding.

undated, lacks colophon.

microfilm PNM MS 1302

⁴ From *Manuskrip Melayu Koleksi Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia: Satu Katalog Ringkas. Tambahan Kedua*, Kuala Lumpur: Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia, 1993, pp.24-25.

MS INDO 13: KITAB FARAID / SYAIR SINDIRAN BADAN

current entry: Hukum müm-bhagi pusaka [= Law on dividing hereditary property]: *this title deriving from the cover annotation by North.*

The manuscript contains three texts, two on the law of inheritance.

A (i)

titles: Kitab Fara'id [:ht1, = Book on Inheritance]

Kitab pada menyatakan Pusaka [:bt1, = Book expounding Hereditary Property]

22 pages, with 12 lines per page.

colophon: tammam al-kitab fi syahr al-qa'dah ahad wa 'isyryna yaum fi yaum al-ahad waqt al-zuha wa fi 'l-sanat al-dal al-awwal sanat 1247 [= completed at the forenoon prayer on Sunday 21 Zulkaedah 1247 in a dal awal year, *i.e.* 22 April 1832].

A (ii)

no title; begins directly after the colophon of A (i).

text begins: Ini naskhanya [sic] yang dari Betawi [= This is the text from Batavia] 23 pages, *i.e.* [22]-[44], in the same format as A (i).

also dealing with the law of inheritance.

colophon: tammam al-kalam kepada duapuluh hari bulan Zulkaedah kepada hari Arba' waktu jam pukul sebelas sanat 1247 [= completed at 11 o'clock on Wednesday 20 Zulkaedah 1247, *but this date does not resolve; amended to 24 Zulkaedah it gives 25 April 1832*].

microfilm PNM MS 1312

B

title: Syair Sindiran Badan [:flyleaf, = Ballad of Self-Mockery]

36 numbered pages, in ruled double columns, with 12 lines per page.

a conventional plaint concerning the author's personal suffering and loneliness; the flyleaf also includes "Sayar Sindir-an Badan" in Roman script, probably an annotation by North;

the pages are numbered 1-37 in jawi numerals, but 20 is skipped; they were renumbered 1-36 in Western numerals, perhaps by North.

colophon: tersalin di negeri Singapura | kepada petang hari Selasa | ketika itu bulan Puasa [= copied in Singapore on a Tuesday morning during the Fasting month].

microfilm PNM MS 1313

MS INDO 14: COMMONPLACE BOOK

current entry: Commonplace book

In this notebook Abdullah bin Abdulkadir (A,B,C,G,H,I,J) and several other writers have made copies of letters, memoranda or historical notes. As a number of contributors are involved, one may assume that the book was kept by Alfred North. The dated contributions span the years 1837-1841.

A: CONCISE HISTORY OF MALAY-BUGIS RELATIONS IN RIAU

title: Bahwa ini suatu kitab pada menyatakan suatu perhubungan raja Melayu dan raja Bugis adanya [=An Exposition of the relationship between the Malay and Bugis princes]

8 pages, with 12-13 lines per page.

in the hand of Abdullah bin Abdulkadir.

an account of the agreements reached between the Malay and Bugis rulers of Riau

double colophon:

(a) tersalin dalam negeri Riau kepada dua hari bulan September tahun masehi sanat 1819 [= copied in Riau on 2 September 1819 AD].

(b) tersalin pula dalam negeri Singapura kepada sebelas hari bulan Marci tahun masehi sanat 1837 [= copied again in Singapore on 11 March 1837].
the first colophon probably refers to a copy made by Abdulkadir ; the second to the copying of the text into this book by his son, Abdullah bin Abdulkadir.

B: MALAY GENEALOGICAL CHRONICLE

title: Bahwa ini asal keturunan raja2 Melayu yang telah diringkaskan daripada kitab Sejarah Melayu [= The ancestry and descent of the Malay kings, summarised from the book 'Malay Genealogy']

8 pages, with 13 lines per page.

in the hand of Abdullah bin Abdulkadir.

The text is almost identical to Ceritera asal raja2 Melayu punya keturunan, Leiden University Cod.Or. 3199(3), of which R. Roolvink provides a transcription in "The Variant Versions of the Malay Annals", Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, 123.3 (1967), pp.301-324.

no colophon or date.

C: GENEALOGICAL CHRONICLE OF SUMENAP

title: Bahwa inilah menyatakan salasilah keturunan sampai kepada Sultan Sumenap [= An exposition of genealogical descent lines down to the Sultan of Sumenap]

8 pages, with 13 lines per page.

in the hand of Abdullah bin Abdulkadir.

genealogical history of Sumenap (on the island of Madura, East Java), from pre-Muslim times.

double colophon:

(a) tersurat dan dijadikan dalam istana keraton negeri Sumenap pada duabelas hari bulan Syawal al-mukarram hijrah sanat 1244 [= composed and recorded in the court of Sumenap on the 12 Syawal 1244 AH, i.e. 16/17 April 1829].

(b) tersalin dalam negeri Singapura kepada tujuh hari bulan Zulhijjah tarikh sanat 1252 [= copied in Singapore on 7 Zulhijjah 1252 AD, i.e. 14/15 March 1837].

D: LETTER FROM SAMBAS

title: Alamat surat daripada kita Pangeran Putera Negara bin Sultan Sambas barang disampaikan Tuhan 'inda 'l-Ghaffur datang kepada sahabat tuan Robin adanya [= Letter from us, Pangeran Putera Negara, son of the Sultan of Sambas, conveyed by the grace of God to our friend Mr. Robin]

1 page, with a heading of 2 lines and body of 8 lines.

in another hand.

concerning arrears of hire for a ship.

colophon: Tersurat kepada 22 hari bulan Zulhijjah kepada tahun 1256 [= written on 22 Zulhijjah 1256 AH, i.e. 14 February 1841].

E: LETTER TO THE RULER OF ACEH

begins: Bahwa ini surat kasih sayang tulus ikhlas yang tiada berkesudahan selagi ada peredaran cakerawala matahari dan bulan daripada beta Mister Walter Sul Krikraft [...] ... kepada sahabat beta Paduka Seri Sultan Alauddin Johar al-Alam Syah, Yang Dipertuan Aceh [= A letter of affection and sincere friendship which will endure as long as the heavens, the sun and the moon revolve, from me, Mr Walter Saul Greycroft [...] ... to my friend, his Majesty Sultan Alauddin Johar al-Alam Syah, Lord of Aceh]

3 pages, with 13-15 lines per page.

in another hand.

dated: [Ter]surat pada tujuhbelas hari bulan Jumadalakhir sanat 1235 tahun tammat [= written on 17 Jumadalakhir 1235 AH, i.e. 1 April 1820 AD].

F: SYAIR CINTA BERAHI (BALLAD OF PASSIONATE LOVE)

title: Inilah Syair Cinta Berahi dikarangkan oleh seorang Peranakan Keling di dalam negeri Melaka adanya. [= The Ballad of Passionate Love composed by a local-born Indian in Malacca].

7 pages, comprising 25 quatrains, the last seven being in pantun rather than syair style.

in another hand.

undated.

G MEMORANDUM FROM ADRIAN KOEK

text begins: Bahwa ini surat dari Tuan Raja Muda Adriang Kuk di dalam Melaka menyatakan bahwasanya maka adalah kita telah pohonkan kepada Tuan Raja Jan Samuel Timerman Tisan yang memerintakan takhta kerajaan di dalam kota negeri Melaka serta segala daerah takluknya akan Abdulkadir juru bahasa Melayu Tuan Residen yang di Riau ... [= Letter from Adrian Koek, senior councillor at Malacca declaring that a request has been made to His Excellency Jan Samuel Timmerman Thijssen, Governor of Malacca and Dependencies, concerning Abdulkadir, Malay translator to the Resident of Riau ...]

2 pages, with 13 lines per page.

in the hand of Abdullah bin Abdulkadir.

the letter authorises Abdulkadir to acquire manuscripts in Riau and Terengganu

date of letter: Termaktub surat ini dalam Melaka kepada tiga hari bulan April tahun Belanda sanat 1821 [= This letter written in Malacca on 3 April 1821 AD].

the letter concludes with an imitation of Koek's signature.

H: MEMORANDUM FROM ABDULKADIR

text begins: Bahwa ini dewasa pada menyatakan adalah sahaya juru tulis Abdulkadir mengaku di dalam surat ini adalah sahaya disuruh oleh tuan raja Jan Samuel Timerman Tisen ... [= Herewith I, the clerk Abdulkadir, acknowledge in this memorandum that I was ordered by His Excellency Jan Samuel Timmerman Thijssen ...]

6 pages, with 18-19 lines per page.

in the hand of Abdullah bin Abdulkadir.

a report on how the duties outlined in G were carried out, followed by an account of expenses incurred.

undated.

I: CONTRACT CEDING TANJUNG PINANG

text begins: Bahwa dewasa ini pada menyatakan ini surat perjanjian adalah tuan Sultan Abdulrahman ibn marhum Sultan Mahmud Syah serta Yang Dipertuan Muda Raja Jaafar memberikan tanah Tanjung Pinang kepada Gebernement Netherlandah ... [= Herewith an exposition of the contract by which Sultan Abdulrahman son of the late Sultan Mahmud Syah and the Viceroy Prince Jaafar ceded Tanjung Pinang to the Dutch Government ...]

3 pages, with 17 lines per page (40 lines in all).

in the hand of Abdullah bin Abdulkadir.

undated.

J: LETTER FROM SULTAN OF KEDAH TO GOVERNOR BONHAM

text begins: Surat kasih sayang tulus ikhlas muafakat yang tiada berkesudahan ... daripada Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Halim Syah ... kehadapan majlis sahabat beta tuan berhormat Gawernor Bonham [= A letter of affectionate, sincere and enduring

concord ... from Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Halim Syah ... to the esteemed presence of our friend His Excellency Governor Bonham]

1 page, of 18 lines including colophon.

in the hand of Abdullah bin Abdulkadir.

colophon: [Di]perbuat surat tigabelas hari bulan Rajab hari Thelatha tammat [sic] 1254 [= Done this Tuesday 13th day of Rajab 1254 AH, *i.e.* 2 October 1838].

K: LETTER FROM THE RULER OF KUALA BATU, ACEH

text begins: Inilah alamat tapak tangan Pocut Abdullah Raja Kuala Batu dengan Kemandur Rij karena perjanjian Pocut Abdullah ... [= A personal letter from Pocut Abdullah, ruler of Kuala Batu, to Commander Ridge / Rich [?] concerning my agreement ...]

1 page, of 14 lines including colophon.

in the same hand as L and M.

concerning problems with a payment of 2000 rial.

not meaningfully dated.

L: LETTER OF WELCOME FROM DATUK BESAR MAKA'I

text begins: Bahwa ini alamat tapak tangan Datuk Besar Maka'i kepada Kuamandur dalam kapal perang dan segala hulubalang dalam kapal perang tabiklah daripada hamba akan tuan2 semuanya dalam kapal perang ... [= A personal letter from Datuk Besar Makai to the Commander and ranking officers of the warship, greetings from your servant to all officers in the warship ...]

2 pages, of 33 lines in all.

in the same hand as K and M.

not dated.

M: LETTER OF WELCOME FROM THE RULER OF KUALA BATU

text begins: Bahwa ini alamat surat tandah tulis [sic] dan ikhlas yang terbit daripada hati yang putih dan muka yang amat jernih dan lidah yang fasih dan iktikad yang sah yang ialah datang daripada pihak Teuku Raja Kuala yang perintah negeri Kuala Batu kepada Kemandur dan segala yang patua2 yang dalam kapal perang semuanya [= A letter which is a token of sincerity arising from a pure heart, a clear countenance, an agile tongue and a legitimate intention, passing from Teuku Raja Kuala who rules the land of Kuala Batu to the Commander and all the officers of the warship ...]

2 pages, with 17 lines on the first and 1 line on the second.

in the same hand as K and L.

not dated.

N: LETTER FROM BONHAM TO CHAO PHRAYA PRAKASAN, SIAM

this letter begins on the same page as M ends

text begins: Bahwa ini surat kasih sayang tulus ikhlas yang tiada berkesudahan ... daripada kita tuan Bonham yang ada merintahkan Tiga Buah Negeri ... kepada sahabat kita Cau Paya Perakasan iaitu Bendahara Raja negeri Siam ... [= A letter of undying affection and sincerity ... from us, Mr Bonham, who governs the Straits Settlements ... to our friend Chao Phraya Prakasan, Chief Minister of Siam ...]

3 pages, of 51 lines in all, including colophon.

in another hand.

dated: Tersurat di negeri Pulau Pinang pada sembilanbelas hari bulan Desember 1839 [= Written in Penang, 19 December 1839].

MS INDO 15: HIKAYAT RAJA HANDAK

current entry: [Malay MS, unidentified text]

Hikayat Raja Handak [= The Romance of Raja Handak]

126 pages, 13 lines per page, with rubrication.
not dated.

microfilm PNM MS 1301

MS INDO 16: NABI MIKRAJ

current entry: Nabi maraj

title: Mikraj [= The Ascent, i.e. The Prophet's Ascent to Heaven]

the Prophet's night journey from Mecca to the site of the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem whence he ascended briefly into heaven; the narrative unfolds in alternating Arabic (rubricated) and Malay.

81 pages, with 13 lines per page.

colophon: Tammat Mikraj ini kepada sembilan hari bulan Jumadalakhir kepada hari Khamis kepada waktu lohor kira2 jam pukul satu di dalam tarikh sanat 12[0]4 [= This 'Ascent' was completed at the time of the noon prayer, about one o'clock, on Thursday 9 Jumadalakhir 1204, i.e. 22 February 1790; or alternatively 1240, about 27 January 1825].

microfilm PNM MS 1308

MS INDO 17: ARBA'IN

current entry: [Treatises on Mohammedanism]

Arba'in [= Forty Traditions of the Prophet, probably the Arba'in of Imam Al-Nawawi]

beautifully written in pointed Arabic, with rubrication.

incomplete; discontinuous pages; about a quarter of the original is present; pages are soiled and tattered through use.

? microfilm PNM MS 1313

MS INDO 18: HIKAYAT SI MISKIN

current entry: Si Miskin, 1828

title: Hikayat Si Miskin [= The Romance of a Poor Man]

secondary title: Cetera Maharaja Marakarmah [= Story of King Marakarmah]

copied by Muhammad bin Ahmad Abidin

164 pages, with 13 lines per page.

colophon: tammatlah ... kepada enambelas hari bulan Ramadan kepada hari Ahad dan jam pukul sepuluh pagi hari dan tatkala tarikh sanat 1252 tahun [= completed at 10am on Sunday 16 Ramadhan 1252 AH, i.e. 26 December 1836].

microfilm PNM MS 1306

MS INDO 19: SURAT AL-KIAMAT

current entry: [Malay MS, unidentified text]

title: Surat Ceretera Surat al-Kiamat [= Account of the Day of Judgement]

colophon: tammat al-kitab min al-tasnif fakir Sayyid Ahmad dikeluarkan daripada Kitab Nur al-Nabawiat dan Kitab Ajaib al-Malakut dan Kitab Kasyf al-'Ulum al-Akhirat dan Kitab Ihya 'Ulum al-Din dan daripada Tasnif Imam Ghazali ... [= Here ends the book compiled by Sayyid Ahmad from The Prophetic Light, The Wonders of the Realm, The Exposition of Eschatology, The Revival of the Religious Sciences and from the Digest of Imam Ghazali]

200 pages of very small and extremely neat and legible script, with 17 lines per page.
undated.

microfilm PNM MS 1305

MS INDO 20: HIKAYAT MUHAMMAD HANAFIAH

current entry: [Malay MS, unidentified text]

title: Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah [= The Romance of Muhammad Hanafiah]

in the hand of Husin Bugis.

192 pages, with 15 or 17 lines per page.

undated.

This unusual manuscript was prepared for transmission to the United States, where it would serve as an example of Malay writing. Three opening pages and a concluding page were written for this purpose by Husin Bugis, and used to enclose randomly assembled signatures from a manuscript copy of Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah also copied by Husin Bugis but in smaller script. The beginning of the enclosed text corresponds with II.10.197 of the edition published by L.F. Brakel (The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah: a mediaeval Muslim-Malay romance, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1975); the end of the enclosed text corresponds with II.9.404.

microfilm PNM MS 1303

MS INDO 21: BIBLE: NT: GOSPELS: JOHN

early chapters of the Gospel of John, in Latin script, perhaps by Alfred North.

microfilm PNM MS 1304

MS INDO 23: HIKAYAT ABDULLAH

current entry: Abdullah ibn Abd al-Kadir, [The Life of Abdullah]

title: Hikayat Abdullah [The Story of Abdullah]

author: Abdullah bin Abdulkadir Munsyi.

in the hand of Husin Bugis; occasional erasures and insertions usually made in a second hand, with rubrication.

276 pages.

dated: Singapore, 1843.

microfilm PNM MS 1307

*The following note in the handwriting of Alfred North is tipped in on two sheets of paper:*⁵

This work usually goes by the name of “The Life of Abdullah”. The name of the author is Abdullah ben Abdulkadir. His father was a respectable Malay scribe, employed by the Dutch government at Batavia to go on a tour among the Malay countries of the Archipelago and collect manuscripts, of which some account is given in this work. The son is now about fifty, a native of Malacca, his features Arab. He has a superior mind, and very minute and extensive knowledge of his mother tongue. For some thirty years he has been in the employ of Europeans, as a teacher of Malay. Sir Stamford Raffles, Crawfurd, Dr Morrison, Dr Milne, and other eminent men were his pupils. When I first suggested to him the idea of writing an auto-biography, he objected that he was an obscure person, and his life not eventful. I replied that a book made up of what he could recollect of Malay rajas, old pilgrims returned from Mecca, old Malay stories, customs, prejudices, superstitions, piracies, indeed anything about the Malay people would be interesting to Europeans. He began, soon after, to write an account of his father, the incidents of his childhood, his first introduction to Dr. Milne, and so on; and soon became deeply interested in the work. As he went on,

⁵ Compare the briefer information in North’s note attached to the Library of Congress manuscript of *Hikayat Abdullah*, published by C. Skinner, “Transitional Malay Literature: Part 1”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 134 (1978), pp.480-481. Only the latter half of this note deals with *Hikayat Abdullah*.

matter accumulated, and this volume is the result. It is a new thing in the Malay language, and in many respects exceedingly interesting. It contains many notices of Raffles, Morrison, and other Europeans. For example he says, "I noticed that if anyone desired to speak with Sir Stamford, he would open the door and seem to be at leisure; and after giving a gentleman a long and polite hearing (though in a great hurry when he was admitted) he would instantly fly at his work again with all diligence, seeming to regret the loss of time", or to this effect; I can now turn to the passage. Again: "I noticed that Lady Raffles was a woman of great talents, greater than her husband's. If any difficult matter was laid before him, he would go to her for advice, and abide by her decision." Again: "Sir Stamford, I observed, was a man exceedingly diligent in this world's affairs, but seemed to care nothing for the world to come." He has introduced many severe remarks about Mr. Thomsen's Malay version of the New Testament, in which he assisted him for many years. Abdullah complains that Mr. Thomsen compelled him to violate the Malay idiom, making nonsense to the Malay reader. The charge is undoubtedly true. Abdullah gives several ridiculous instances; for example, (Thomsen's Test. page 201) Luke 2:28, "And Simeon took up the child of Jesus in his arms and blessed," &c.⁶ The account of a dissipated Malay raja and his favorite is long & interesting. There are some notices of the Dutch rule at Malacca, and of Lord Minto's throwing into the sea of their instruments of torture, in the presence of the assembled natives. Abdullah was introduced to him by Raffles; he says: "I never in my life felt anything so soft as the hand of his lordship." The account of Raffles' labors in getting possession of the island of Singapore is but a partial one; he told me he was afraid to write a full account, for fear the English would be displeased to see Sir Stamford's underhanded doings brought to light. The book contains also some account of the savages of the interior of the Peninsula, the Jakuns. His own absurd opinion is that they are the descendants of the Indo-Portuguese! because they have borrowed the name for God, Dios! I thought it best to let him introduce this nonsense, since it can do no hurt; and I wished the book to his, and not mine. He has given an account of the Malays' ideas of ghosts and witches; of the barbarities practised in their schools; of the war at Malacca, and of many other things, all in a neat and correct Malay style. Indeed, all things considered, the work is of singular interest. This copy was taken from the autograph by Husin, a Bugis scribe. Many of the Bugis write Malay correctly.

Singapore, November, 1843.

A. North

Missionary of the ABCFM

MS INDO 27: HIKAYAT RAJA KULAWANDU

title: [Hikayat Raja Kulawandu = The Story of King Kulawandu]

Raja Kulawandu [?] is the king of a western country called Linggam Jaya. His famed generosity and justice attract traders to his country, but his majesty's kingdom remains incomplete because he is childless.

copied by Muhammad Ali bin Abdul Taif Munsyi.

293 pages, with 10 lines per page.

undated.

⁶ This is an accurate account of a passage in the later printed text of *Hikayat Abdullah*. The earlier examples are not found in the printed text in precisely the form North relates them.

MISS 881: HIKAYAT DARMA TA'SIA / SABIL AL-MUHTADIN

current entry: Unidentified volume in Malay (Arabic characters).

The bound volume contains two manuscripts. Formerly owned by Samuel P. Robbins, Bangkok, Siam.

A

titles: Hikayat Darma Ta'sia [:bt, = The Romance of Darma Ta'sia]

Hikayat Sultan Harun Rasyid [:col, = The Romance of Harun Al-Rashid]

130 pages, unnumbered, with 13 lines per page.

the story of a virtuous woman who, through many tribulations, remains faithful to her husband.

copied by Muhammad Ali bin Abdul Taif Munsyi.

colophon: tammat syahadan tersalin surat ini di dalam bandar negeri Singapura kepada tujuh likur hari bulan Zulkaedah iaitu kepada dua puluh dua hari bulan Februari tahun sanat 1838 dan hijrah sanat 1253 amin3 [= copying of this text completed in Singapore on 27 Zulkaedah 1253 or 22 February 1838].

B

[Sabil al-Muhtadin li 'l-Tafaqquh fi Amr al-Din = Way of the Guided in the Understanding of Religious Jurisprudence]

author: [Muhammad Arsyad bin Abdullah al-Banjari]

47 pages, incomplete, with 17 lines per page.

undated.

Printed books

EMPB = I. Proudfoot, *Early Malay Printed Books*, Kuala Lumpur: The Academy of Malay Studies and the Library, University of Malaya, 1993.

***42-5403 SEJARAH MELAYU**

EMPB Sejarah Melayu a [1842]

The following note in the handwriting of Alfred North is tipped in:

Sajarah Malayu

Known, in English, by the name of the Malay Annals.

This book is a collection of old Malay traditions mixed with fable, and except toward the latter part, not to be depended upon, as giving much light in Malay history. I printed this copy from a collation of six manuscripts, with the help of my very accurate moonshi Abdullah ben Abdulkadir. The first seven pages in fine print are a preface of my own, setting forth the reasons of the extreme inaccuracy of the Malay manuscripts in general, the necessity of collation, and the superiority of print to manuscript. There is a translation in English by Dr. Leyden the friend of Raffles, though it does not exactly correspond with this collation of mine.

Singapore 1843.

A. North

Missionary of the ABCFM.

There is a more extensive note in the copy of this book found in the Library of Congress. It is discussed in Ibrahim bin Ismail, "The printing of Munshi Abdullah's Edition of the Sejarah Melayu in Singapore", Kekal Abadi 5.3 (September 1986): 13-17.

***42-5404 SEJARAH MELAYU**

Another copy of Sejarah Melayu a [1842], without annotations.

***42-5440 PUJI-PUJIAN MASIHI**

catalogued as: 'Pujian orang mesehi ... Singapura. 1829 (2nd ed.)'
Not seen.

This edition not listed in EMPB. Cf. EMPB: Puji-Pujian 1823

***42-5866-5867 F SINGAPURA TERBAKAR**

Two contemporaneous versions, (A) in rumi (Romanised script), and (B) in jawi (Arabic script), are bound together. The two version correspond almost exactly page by page. Note the discrepancy in the dates in the heading: the Romanised version gives the year of the fire, the jawi version gives the year of the printing.

A

Shayar Singapura Tür-bakar [:tp];

Bahwa ini | Shayar Nügri | Singapura Tür-bakar [:ht1] Sanat 1244. Iya-itu pada Tahun Masihi 1828 [:ht2].

Bahwa tür-müktub Shayar Nügri Singapura Tür-bakar dalam nügri Singapura, pada anam hari bulan Ramlan, Yaum al-Ahad, sanat 1259. Iya-itu pada tiga puloh hari bulan September, tahun Masihi 1843 [:col]

63 pages (unnumbered), preceded by an introductory note; in typeset rumi script, in parallel columns on 22 x 17.5 cm pages in 15 x 12 cm frame, on unnumbered pages.

EMPB: Singapura Terbakar 1843.b

This may be the only surviving copy of this version of the work.

The printed introductory note reads:

A Malay Poem.

By

Abdullah

(A Malay Teacher)

Relating to the great fire which happened in this settlement in the year 1828.

This Volume is composed in an elegant Malay style, and presents, in a series of interesting and pleasing anecdotes, a very graphic picture of the scene during the conflagration. It will be found useful to those who study the Malay language, and amusing to those who know it already.

Singapore 3rd Oct. 1843

Printed at the Miss: Press.

To this North has added the annotation 'of the Lond[on] Mis[sion] Society'.

B

Bahwa ini Syair Negeri Singapura Terbakar [ht2] sanat 1259 iaitu pada tahun mesehi 1843 [ht3].

EMPB: Singapura Terbakar 1843.a, with details as noted there.

***42-5932 SINGAPURA TERBAKAR**

another copy of Singapura Terbakar 1843.a

MISS 875.2 VOCABULARY OF THE ENGLISH, BUGIS, AND MALAY LANGUAGES

A Vocabulary of the English, Bugis, and Malay Languages, containing about 2000 words.

EMPB: Vocabulary: Thomsen 1833

MISS 881.2 KISAH PELAYARAN ABDULLAH

Kisah Pelayaran Abdullah bin Abdulkadir munsyi, dari Singapura sampai ke Kelantan, terkarang olehnya

EMPB: Pelayaran Abdullah 1838

*The following note in the handwriting of Alfred North is found with the book:*⁷

Abdullah's Journal

Abdullah ben Abdulkadir, Moonshi, the author of this little work, was sent by the English Govt. at Singapore, as interpreter to a deputation to the raja of Kalantan about a vessel detained by him, belonging to some Singapore merchants. Having heard that European travelers keep "journals", it occurred to him that something of the kind would be acceptable to his Singapore friends, about his trip to the east coast. He brought me only a very dry outline, saying that he knew not what it was customary to introduce into such works. I gave him a general description of English books of travel, and a list of subjects concerning which he might recollect all that he saw on his tour. He re-wrote the whole, and produced the accompanying book, a new thing in the Malay language. It contains remarks on the people & customs of Pahang, Tranganu, and Kalantan, and a description of the dangers to which he was exposed by arriving at Kalantan during the bloody dispute about the succession. It is an interesting book, very popular among the Malays, and very useful to those who wish to obtain a knowledge of their language.

Singapore, Nov. 1843.A. North

WID 2234.22

Another copy of Pelayaran Abdullah 1838.

Not seen.

PACKET OF UNCATALOGUED PRINTED BOOKS

1

title page:

Bahwa ini surat pengajaran | * yang terbit daripada surat Allah * | iaitu | terkarang oleh seorang hamba Allah yang berkehendak kebajikan | * dan selamat segala manusia * | tercap | di bandar Melaka pada tahun 1819 | dan hijrah 1234

[= A lesson from holy scripture, written by a servant of God who wishes the welfare and salvation of all men, printed in Malacca in 1819 AD, 1234 AH]

author: [C.H. Thomsen]

place: Malacca

date: 1819

This is a later edition of EMPB: Pengajaran daripada Suruh Allah 1818. There is probably a mistake in EMPB, and Suruh Allah should, I now think, be Surat Allah.

2

front cover / title page:

The Substance of our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount ...

EMPB: Perkataan Isa 1829

3

first page begins:

⁷ Compare the briefer information in the early part of the note attached to the Library of Congress manuscript of *Hikayat Abdullah*, published by Skinner, "Transitional Malay Literature", pp.480-481.

Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim || No.7 || Perkataan Isa al-Masih | dikeluarkan daridalam Injil ||

[= Tract no.7. The words of Jesus Christ taken from the Gospel.]

EMPB: Perkataan Isa 1830

4

front cover / title page:

Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim || No.3 | Al-kisah maka tersebutlah beberapa pengajaran | Kitab Allah yang disebut | Agama Kitab

[= Tract no.3. Some teachings from God's Book which are called the Religion of the Bible]

EMPB: Agama Kitab 1835.a

5

another copy of Agama Kitab 1835.a

6

first page begins:

Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim | Adapun segala Surat al-Kitab itu dengan ilham daripada Allah dan berguna kepada pengajaran dan kepada teguran dan kepada nasihat ...

[= The Bible is inspired by God and serves as instruction, admonition and advice ...]

undated

EMPB: Surat al-Kitab a ±1840

7

first page begins:

Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim || Cetera hikayat Abdullah dan Sabat ||

[= The story of Abdullah and Sabat]

author: [Thomas Beighton]

EMPB: Abdullah dan Sabat 1837.a

8

first page begins:

Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim | Yahya Nil [in woodblock] | Al-kisah ini suatu hikayat Tuan Paderi Nil yang terlalu amat indah2 perkataan di dalamnya.

[= John Knill. This is a story about the Reverend Knill which comprises a fine narrative.]

EMPB: Knill 1837

9

front page begins:

Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim | Perumpamaan [in woodblock] | Dikeluarkan daridalam Injil ||

[= Parables. Drawn from the Gospels]

EMPB: Perumpamaan Isa 1838, but note that this should actually be 1837.

10

first page begins:

|| No. 2 | Bahwa inilah Sepuluh Pesanan yang diberi Allah kepada Musa dari atas Bukit Tursina ||

[= Tract no.2. These are the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai.]

contents: the ten commandments (pp.1-8); eighteen teachings of the Gospel (pp.9-16); four prayers: long, short, morning and evening (pp.17-28).

EMPB: Sepuluh Pesanan 1835.a; *note however that the Houghton Library copy (and I suspect the Library of Congress copy) has the full text, running to 28 pages, not 16.*

11

Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim | No. 1 | Bahwa hendaklah engkau menyembah Allah dan berbakti kepadaNya sahaja ||

[= Tract no.1. You should worship God and be faithful to Him only.]

EMPB: Hendaklah Engkau Menyembah 1835

12

another copy of Hendaklah Engkau Menyembah 1835

13

Pangajar | Agama Kristan | Jaran-A | Pamisik Jabbab | nyah Gawai-a Engangut Engangut

Singapore, 1845.

typeset roman script; 28 pages, 2-26 numbered, with 24 lines per page.

contents: pp.1-26, catechism; pp.[27-28], hymn.

not listed in EMPB, but cf. Pangajar Agama Kristan 1847

Although bearing a label "Malay | Singapore | 1845", this item is in a form of Iban or another Borneo language. It was received in the ABCFM library on 25 April 1846, and therefore may have been sent to Boston by North's successor at the Mission Press, Benjamin Keasberry, or by the missionary responsible for its translation.

14

first page begins:

Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim | * Surat ini pada menyatakan jalan keampunan dosa. Hendaklah ketahui sekalian orang bahwa tiap2 seorang di dalam dunia ini ada berdosa. ... [= This text expounds the way to forgiveness of sins. Know that every person in this world has sinned. ...]

lithographed; 54 unnumbered pages, with 12 lines per page

undated; no place of publication

not listed in EMPB.

15: MANUSCRIPT

Exercises in verbal roots and derived forms. Inside the cover, the common words *kerja* 'perform' and *buat* 'make' with all their derivatives. On the ruled page, part of what may once have been an alphabetic listing of roots with verbal and noun derivatives.

incomplete.