

Book Review ‘Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A General Traveler, Comprehensive Work, Revealing the Face of the World - Volume 1’ (Malay Version)

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Translated by Syed Nurul Akla Syed Abdullah and Adi Setia Mohd. Dom and edited by Ismail Haji Ibrahim dan Wan Roslili Abd. Majid, this book translation from Rihlah Ibn Battutah is the result of over ten years of persistent research-based benefits of treasures primary sources or from sources that are translated into foreign languages. No doubt that the series of complicated language and mawdū at lengthy fact has contributed to the reluctance of many Malay scholars working on translations of Rihlah Ibn Battuta al-Musammah Tuhfah al-Nuzzar fi Ghara'ib al-Amsar wa 'Aja'ib a-Asfar before this. Abu 'Abdillah Muhammad ibn' Abdilllah ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Lawati is better known as Ibn Battuta, born almost seven hundred years ago in the town of Banjar overlooking the Jabal Tariq sea. His adventure book was published for the first time in Malay complete with brief explanations and notes end by the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM) in 2003. Since then, it repeated its printing three times. But at this time, which is the fourth issue, IKIM had already recommended that it once again presented for the public reading.

This book will allow Ibn Battuta book essays be a useful reference and can lead to a clear understanding of the Malay world modern scientific generally, where Malay is the language of instruction. Rihlah work of Ibn Battuta is now almost seven centuries old. However, the longer its age prove that it is a work of classical Islamic heritage that is very special and important to the researchers, whether in the East or in the West. It is the work of a classic as it is recognized by the world as the work that has high quality and value as well as permanent in nature. This work has also become a symbol of the existence of a leading Muslim traveler in history.

For four centuries after Ibn Battuta died, Rihlah manuscripts has spread among the educated group in North Africa, West Africa, Egypt and in some Muslim countries using Arabic. However Rihlah work is just beginning known outside the Islamic state in the early 19th century, which is when two German scientists have published separately some parts of Rihlah translation from the manuscript obtained in the Middle East. In 1853 and 1858, C. Defremery and B.R. Sanguinetti published

an edition of Rihlah translation in French, complete with notes and a variety of readings. Since then Rihlah translations have been published in various languages, including Spanish, Italian, German, Russian, Polish, Hungarian, Persian and Japanese. In 1929, Sir Hamilton Gibb has produced a translation of the summary and he began trying to produce a complete Rihlah translation under the auspices of the Hakluyt Society. The translation was published in three volumes (The Travels of Ibn Battuta AD. 1325 to 1354 with revisions and notes translated from the Arabic text edited by C. Defremery and B.R. Sanguinetti, Volume 1, 1958; Volume 2, 1962 and Volume 3, 1971: Cambridge University Press), but unfortunately the Fourth Volume of Rihlah last section was unsuccessful finished.

Rihlah work is loaded with geographic information is also not escaped the attention of the National Geographic Society headquarters in Washington, D.C., United States. In the November 1991 issue, National Geographic published an article entitled “Ibn Battuta Prince of Travelers”, written by Abercombie as the main article of the issue. Indeed, National Geographic has taken initiatives that are global and so means the promulgation of Rihlah work. Abercombie noted, “Swayed by an overwhelming impulse, 21-year-old Ibn Battuta left Tangier for Mecca in June 1325. Over the next 29 years that impulse carried him to Islamic outposts from Sumatra to Mali and returned him at least four times to the sacred city. His journey totaled 75,000 miles, three times the distance logged by his European predecessor, Marco Polo.”

The truth that it is not easy to translate Rihlah work. Rihlah loaded with vocabulary covering a wide range of fields, idiomatic expressions, metaphors and Moroccan Arabic colloquial Arabic language. The terms in the original Arabic translation is maintained as much as possible because its value is so exotic. Indeed, the classic works like this Rihlah only survive if it continues to be translated and expanded discussions relating thereto. Rihlah translation is believed to contribute ideas and thoughts that can enhance the formation of community identity and viability.

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