

# ELEMENTS OF ISLAMIC HISTORY IN THE WORKS OF NUR AL-DIN AL-RANIRI

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## Abstract

*Al-Raniri (d. 1658) was a renowned and versatile scholar of Aceh during the rule of Sultan Iskandar Thani (1046-1050 AH/1636-1641 AD). He had authored 35 works on various disciplines of Islam specifically on tasawuf, theology, fiqh and history. The importance of history to al-Raniri is manifested not only in his largest work of history entitled Bustan al-Salatin fi Dhikr al-Awwalin wa al-Akhirin (known as Bustan) but also in numbers of his other works. Many scholars such as Voorhoeve, Winstedt, Drewes and Braginsky confine al-Raniri's work on history to Bustan. However, based on the content analysis of al-Raniri's works, the authors emphasize that there are actually six historical works of al-Raniri including Bustan that contains the element of Islamic history. Therefore, this article attempts to reveal al-Raniri's works on history and the element of Islamic history in his other masterpieces. It employed a qualitative research approach that entails the technique of documentation in collecting data while inductive approach to content analysis was utilized for data analysis. The main documents used were the three versions of the manuscript of Bustan (Raffles Malay 8, Raffles Malay 42 and UM 41). The outcome of this research reveals the element of Islamic history in other works of al-Raniri, indicates that history is the basic theoretical element of his works*

**Keywords:** Nur Al-Din Al-Raniri's Works, Classical Malay Literature, Islamic History, Historical Element

## Introduction

Nur Al-Din Al-Raniri was a learned and renowned Islamic scholar of Aceh and also a *sufi*, a theologian, a historian, a *faqih* (jurist) and a man of letters.<sup>1</sup> He was born into a diaspora *Hadhrami* family of Hamid clan in Ranir in Gujerat.<sup>2</sup> Pertaining to his complete name, in the introductory part of Book I of *Bustan*, al-Raniri referred to himself as “*Syeikh Nuruddin anak ‘Ali Hasanji anak Muhammad, Hamid nama bangsanya, Ranir nama negerinya, dan Syafi’i mazhabnya...*” (Nuruddin the son of ‘Ali Hasanji, the son of Muhammad, Hamid was his clan, Ranir was the place he belonged to and Shafi’i was his *mazhab* (sect)).<sup>3</sup> Al-Raniri arrived in Aceh during the rule of Sultan Iskandar Thani in 1047/1637.<sup>4</sup> Shortly after his arrival in Aceh, al-Raniri succeeded in gaining the patronage of the Sultan and was later appointed as *Shaykh al-Islam* (*Mufti* (chief jurist) and head of the *‘ulama* by the Sultan.<sup>5</sup> Al-

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<sup>1</sup> Azyumardi Azra (henceforth Azra). (2004). *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia*. Australia: Allen & Unwin, p. 65; Amirul Hadi (2004). *Islam and State in Sumatra*. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Academic Publishers, p. 153 & M. Hasbi Amiruddin. (2005). *The Response of the Ulama Dayah to the Modernization of Islamic Law in Aceh*. Bangi, Selangor: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Riddell, P. G. (2001). Arab Migrants and Islamization in the Malay World during the Colonial Period. *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 29 (84), pp. 116-117 & Azra. (2004). *op.cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> Raffles Malay 8 (*Bustan al-Salatin*), p. 3; Raffles 42 (*Bustan al-Salatin*), p. 3 & UM 41, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Voorhoeve. (1951). Van en over Nuruddin ar-Raniri. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI)*, 107(4), p. 357; T. Ito. (1978). Why did Nuruddin ar-Raniri leave Aceh in 1054 A.H.?. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI)*, 134(4), p. 489; Grinter, C.A. (1979). Book IV of the *Bustan Us-Salatin* by Nuruddin Ar-Raniri: A Study from the Manuscripts of a 17th Century Malay Work Written in North Sumatra. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, United Kingdom, p. 8; Suryadi. (2010). [Review of the book *Bustan al-Salatin: A Malay Mirror for Rulers*]. *Kajian Malaysia*, 28 (1), p. 124 & T. Iskandar. (2011). Aceh as A Crucible of Muslim-Malay Literature. In Feener, R. M., Daly, Patrick & Reid, Anthony (Eds.), *Mapping the Acehnese Past* (pp. 39-64). Leiden, Netherlands: KITLV Press, p. 57.

<sup>5</sup> Nur Ahmad Fadhil Lubis. (2000). *A History of Islamic Law in Indonesia*. Medan, Indonesia: IAIN Press, p.69; Ahmad Taufiq. (2003). *Negeri Akhirat: Konsep Eskatologi Nuruddin Ar-Raniri*. Solo, Indonesia: PT Tiga Serangkai Pustaka Mandiri, p. 5; Azra. (2004). *op.cit.*, p. 59; Amirul Hadi. (2004). *op.cit.*, pp.153 & 155; Sher Banu A. L. Khan. (2012). What Happened to Sayf al-Rijal?. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-*

Raniri made a great contribution to the development of Islamic sciences in the Malay World. As a scholar, al-Raniri had authored 35 works that cover the fields of *tasawwuf and kalam* (24 books), *fiqh* (3 books), history (6 books) and *hadith* (2 books). As a prolific writer in Malay and Arabic, al-Raniri wrote 14 books within his short period in Aceh (1047-1054 AH/1637-1644 AD) and 13 of them in Malay language.<sup>6</sup>

### Element of Islamic History in Al-Raniri's Works

Al-Raniri's works are in fact have been written by numerous scholar of the east and the west. Concerning the number of al-Raniri's masterpieces throughout his life, Voorhoeve, P. (henceforth Voorhoeve) listed 19 works of al-Raniri, Ahmad Daudy (henceforth Daudy) listed 29 works and Jelani Harun, 25 works.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, Wan Mohd Shaghbir Abdullah (cited hereafter Shaghbir), a prominent Malay manuscript collector and a prolific writer concerning the '*ulama*' of Nusantara had stepped forward by giving the complete list of al-Raniri's work consisting of 34 treatises.<sup>8</sup> Al-Raniri's works were mainly on *kalam* (Islamic theology) and *tasawwuf*, nevertheless, he also wrote on *fiqh*, *hadith* and history.

Al-Raniri made a great contribution to the development of Islamic sciences in the Malay World. As a prolific writer in Malay and Arabic, al-Raniri wrote 14 books within his short period in Aceh (1047-1054 AH/1637-1644 AD) and 13 of them in Malay language.<sup>9</sup> Among them were *Durr al-Fara'id bi Sharh al-'Aqa'id* (Precious pearls on the description of '*Aqidah*'), *Sirat al-Mustaqim* (The Straight Path), *Bustan al-Salatin fi Dhikr al-Awwalin wa al-Akhirin* (The Garden of the Kings on the Recollection of the Past and Present/ The Garden of Kings, showing forth the origin of all creation and the end thereof), *Hidayat al-Habib fi al-Tarhib wa al-Tarhib* (The Guide of lover about happiness and fearful) and *Akhbar al-Akhirah fi Ahwal al-Qiyamah* (The Account of the hereafter and the day of judgement) (cited hereafter *Akhbar al-Akhirah*).<sup>10</sup> If *Bustan* was al-Raniri's biggest and largest work as well as the only single work of the classical Malay literature under the genre of the history of the Islamic world and Islamic universal history, *Sirat*, on the other hand, represents the first Malay book in the Malay World Malay pertaining *salat* (prayer), fasting, *zakah* and *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Makkah).<sup>11</sup> Most of his writings aimed at refuting the concept of *wahdat al-wujud* of Hamzah and Shams al-Din.<sup>12</sup>

Concerning al-Raniri's works on history, many scholars recognized *Bustan* as al-Raniri's work on history and discussion on this matter are available in their writings on *Bustan* such as by Winstedt, R.O. (henceforth Winstedt), Voorhoeve, Drewes, G.W.J. and Jelani Harun. These scholars confine al-Raniri's work on history to *Bustan*, but the author's opinion differs from that of the aforementioned scholars. However, based on the analysis of the content of al-Raniri's work, the author would like to emphasize that there are actually six works of al-Raniri on history including *Bustan* and the other four al-Raniri's works on *tasawwuf* that contain historical element that will be explained in the following.

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*Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI)*, 168(1), p. 100 & Hermansyah. (2012). *Tibyan Fi Ma'rifat Al-Adyan: Tipologi Aliran Sesat Menurut Nur Al-Din Al-Raniri*. Jakarta, Indonesia: LSIP, p. 36.

<sup>6</sup> T. Iskandar. (1964, October). Nuruddin ar-Raniri Pengarang Abad ke-17. *Dewan Bahasa*, pp. 436-441; T. Iskandar. (1967). Three Malay Historical Writings in the First Half of the 17th Century. *Journal of the Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, 40 (2), p. 44 & Andaya, L. Y. (2001). Aceh's Contribution to Standards of Malayness. *Archipel*, 61, p. 50.

<sup>7</sup> Voorhoeve. (1955). Lijst der geschriften van Raniri en apparatus criticus bij de tekst van twee verhandelingen. (Zie nr. 1294). *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI)*, 111(2), pp. 153-158; Daudy. (1983). *Allah dan Manusia dalam Konsepsi Syeikh Nurudin Ar-Raniry*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Penerbit C.V. Bakawali, pp. 48-57 & Jelani Harun. (2009). *Bustan Al-Salatin: The Garden of Kings: A Malay Mirror for Rulers*. Pulau Pinang, Malaysia: Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia, pp. 19-21.

<sup>8</sup> Shaghbir. (1991). *Khazanah Karya Pusaka Asia Tenggara*, Vol. 2. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Khazanah Fathaniyah, pp. 4-152.

<sup>9</sup> T. Iskandar. (1964). *op.cit.*, p. 440, T. Iskandar. (1967). *op.cit.*, p. 44 & Andaya, L.Y. (2001). *op.cit.*, p. 50.

<sup>10</sup> *Durr al-Fara'id bi Sharh al-'Aqa'id* was written before 1045 AH/1635 AD, the writing of *Sirat al-Mustaqim* started in 1044 AH/1634 AD and completed in 1054 AH/1644 AD, *Hidayat al-Habib fi al-Tarhib wa al-Tarhib* was written in 1045 AH/1635 AD and *Akhbar al-Akhirah* in 1052 AH/1642 AD.

<sup>11</sup> Ronkel, P. S. V. (1943). Raniri's Maleische Geschrift: Expose Der Religies. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI)*, 102, p. 461; Voorhoeve. (1955). *op.cit.*, p.153 & Jihaty Abadi, Azran Rahman & Amida Abduhamid. (1979). *Sari Sejarah Kesustasteraan Malaysia-Indonesia (Tradisi - Moden)*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Penerbitan Abadi. p. 47.

<sup>12</sup> T. Iskandar. (1964). *op.cit.*, p. 440; Riddell, P.G. (1989). Earliest Qur'anic Exegetic Activity in the Malay Speaking States. *Archipel*, 38, p. 112 & Reid, Anthony. (2006). Introduction. In Anthony Reid (Ed.), *Verandah of Violence: The Background to the Aceh Problem* (pp. 1-21). Singapore: Singapore University Press, p. 45.

**Table 1: Six Works of Al-Raniri on History**

1	<i>Bustan al-Salatin fi Dhikr al-Awwalin wa al-Akhirin</i> (1048-1051 AH/1638-1641 AD) (Malay)
2	<i>Bad' Khalq al-Samawat wa al-Ard</i> (The Beginning of the creation of the heavens and earth) (Malay)
3	<i>Akhbar al-Akhirah fi Ahwal al-Qiyamah</i> (The Account of the hereafter and the day of judgement) (1052 AH/1642 AD) (
4	<i>Ayn al-'Alam Qabl 'an Yukhlaq</i> (A writing concerning the earth before creation) (Malay)
5	<i>Hikayat Iskandar Dhulqarnain</i> (Alexander Romance)
6	<i>Tibyan fi Ma'rifat al-Adyan</i> (The 'Explanation of faiths (1052-1054 AH/1642-1644 AD) (Malay) (henceforth <i>Tibyan</i> )

Sources: Winstedt (1920); Ronkel, P. S. V. (1943); Voorhoeve (1955); Daudy (1983); Shaghiri (1991); Azra (2004); Braginsky, V.I. (2004) & Ismail Hamid (2000)<sup>13</sup>

Based on the content of *Bustan*, it cannot be doubted that it is indeed a work on Islamic history as it includes the history of the creation of the seven layers of heaven and the seven layers of earth, history of the Prophets, ancient kings and pious saints. The concept of *tawhid* (the Oneness of Allah) is reflected in the content and structure of *Bustan*, its sources, themes and its purpose of writing. *Bustan* was written by al-Raniri in the year 1638 on the behest of Sultan Iskandar Thani.<sup>14</sup> It is the longest text and the biggest book written in the history of traditional Malay literature (consists of seven books (Book I, II, III, IV, V, VI and VII with the total of 60 chapters (based on Raffles 8) and the largest work of al-Raniri.<sup>15</sup>

Besides *Bustan*, *Bad' Khalq al-Samawat wa al-Ard* and *Hikayat Iskandar Dhulqarnain* are other works of al-Raniri that clearly deal with history as the first narrated the creation of the earth and the heaven and the latter relates the story of Iskandar Dhulqarnain, the great king of the past who conquered the world. Moreover, *Ayn al-'Alam Qabl an Yukhlaq* is also historical work as it narrates the universe before its creation. *Bustan*, *Bad' Khalq al-Samawat wa al-Ard* and *Ayn al-'Alam Qabl an Yukhlaq* relate on the creation of the universe which is obviously history as history begin with the creation and everything that happened in history is reflection of God's view which is explained in the Qur'an and Sunnah.

<sup>13</sup> Winstedt. (1920). *Bustan's-Salatin*: Its Date and Author. *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 82, 151; Ronkel, P. S. V. (1943). *op.cit.*, pp. 462-63; Voorhoeve. (1955). *op.cit.*, pp. 152-161; Daudy. (1983). *op.cit.*, pp. 53-58; Shaghiri. (1991). *op.cit.*, pp. 5-142; Ismail Hamid. (2000). *Kitab Jawi*: Intellectualizing Literary Tradition. In Mohd. Taib Osman. (Ed.). *Islamic Civilization in the Malay World* (pp. 195-243). Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, p. 214; Azra (2004), *op.cit.*, pp. 62-69 & Braginsky, V.I. (2004). *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature: A Historical Survey of Genres, Writings and Literary Views*. Leiden, Netherlands: KITLV Press, pp. 645-47.

<sup>14</sup> Raffles Malay 8 (*Bustan al-Salatin*), p. 5; Manuscript Raffles Malay 42 (*Bustan al-Salatin*, pp. 3-5; Kuala Lumpur UM 41 (*Bustan al-Salatin*), pp. 4-5; Winstedt. (1940). A History of Malay Literature. *Journal of the Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, 17 (2), p. 109; Raden Hoesein Djadjadiningrat. (1982). *Kesultanan Aceh*. (Teuku Hamid, Trans.). Jakarta, Indonesia: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. (Original work published 1911), p.136; Grinter, C.A. (1979). *op.cit.*, p. 10 & Jelani Harun. (2009). *op.cit.*, pp. 26 & 82.

<sup>15</sup> T. Iskandar. (1967). *op.cit.*, p. 52; Jones, Russell. (1974). *Nuru'd-din ar-Raniri Bustanu's-Salatin Bab IV Fasal I*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, p.2; Grinter, C.A. (1979). *op.cit.*, 12; Siti Hawa Haji Salleh. (Ed.). (1992). *Bustan al-Salatin*, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, p. xiv; Muhammad Yusoff Hashim. (1992). *Pensejarahan Melayu: Kajian Tentang Tradisi Melayu Nusantara*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka & kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, p. 235 & Jelani Harun. (1999). Nuruddin al-Raniri's *Bustan al-Salatin*: A Universal History and Adab Work from Seventeenth Century Aceh. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, United Kingdom, p. 13.

Besides the mentioned works of al-Raniri on history, the writer would like to stress that *Akhbar al-Akhirah* and *Tibyan* are also al-Raniri's work on history even though many scholars such as Voorhoeve, Winstedt and Jelani Harun classified *Akhbar al-Akhirah* as al-Raniri's work in the field of *usuluddin* (Islamic Theology).<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, *Tibyan* is recognized by aforementioned scholars in the east and the west as al-Raniri's sole work on comparative religion.<sup>17</sup> The author emphasizes that *Akhbar al-Akhirah* is obviously al-Raniri's work on history as it includes the creation of Adam, paradise, hell and others similar to that of *Bustan, Bad' Khalq al-Samawat wa al-Ard* and *Ayn al-'Alam Qabl an Yukhlaq*. Meanwhile, based on the evaluation on the content of *Tibyan*, the author would also like to stress that it is in fact a work of history as it describes the history of religion during the Prophets Idris and Nuh. Detailed historical element in *Akhbar al-Akhirah* and *Tibyan* is clearly shown in contents below:

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<sup>16</sup> Voorhoeve. (1955). *op.cit.*, p. 156; Winstedt. (1996). *A History of Classical Malay Literature* (Y.A. Talib, Ed.). Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: M.B.R.A.S., p. 100; Ismail Hamid. (2000). *op.cit.*, p. 214 & Jelani Harun. (2009). *op.cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>17</sup> Ronkel, P. S. V. (1943). *op.cit.* p. 462-463; Winstedt. (1996). *op.cit.*, p. 101; Ismail Hamid. (2000). *op.cit.*, p. 214 & Braginsky, V.I. (2004). *op.cit.*, p. 645.

**Table 2: The Content of *Akhbar al-Akhirah fi Ahwal al-Qiyamah* and *Tibyan fi Ma'rifat al-Adyan***

No.	BOOKS	CONTENT	HISTORICAL CONTENT OF THE QUR'AN
	<p><i>Akhbar al-Akhirah fi Ahwal al-Qiyamah</i> (Edwar Djamaris &amp; Saksono Prijanto (1995/1996), Harun Mat Piah (2006))<sup>18</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consists of seven chapters.</li> <li>• First chapter (The creation of <i>Nur</i> Muhammad)</li> <li>• Second chapter (The creation of the Prophet Adam and the story of Adam and Siti Hawa in the heaven, they were thrown out from the heaven to the earth and how they met in Arafah.</li> <li>• Third chapter (Concerning death and agony of death. Discussed the phases of facing the death and the role of the angels: Izra'il, Kiraman and Katibin also known as Raqib and Atid.</li> <li>• Chapter four (The signs of <i>al-Qiyamah</i> (The Day of Resurrection). Discussed the coming of <i>Imam Mahdi</i>, <i>dajjal</i> (Antichrist), the Prophet 'Isa, <i>Ya'juj</i> and <i>Ma'juj</i> (Gog and Magog), the people of Habshah (the Abyssinians) and the sun rises from the west).</li> <li>• Chapter five (Concerning <i>al-Qiyamah</i> and consists of the narration of the beginning of the destruction of earth after the angel Israfil blows the trumpet, the story of <i>liwa' al-Hamd</i> and others).</li> <li>• Chapter six (Concerning the hell and its inhabitants).</li> <li>• Chapter seven (The nature of heaven and the reality of its content).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The creation of earth and heaven is described in the Qur'an in many verses such as:<sup>19</sup> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Surah al-A'raf</i> (7):54 (Indeed, your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne.)</li> <li>2) <i>Surah Fussilat</i> (41): 10 (He placed therein (i.e. the earth) firm mountains from above it, and He blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four Days equal (i.e. all these four 'days' were equal in the length of time), for all those who ask (about its creation).</li> </ol> </li> <li>• The creation of Adam and Siti Hawa:<sup>20</sup> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Surah Sad</i> (38): 71-71 (Remember) when your Lord said to the angels: "Truly, I am going to create man from clay". So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him (his) soul</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> Edwar Djamaris & Saksono Prijanto. (1995/1996). *Hamzah Fansuri dan Nuruddin Ar-Raniri*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, pp. 27-32 & Harun Mat Piah, Ismail Hamid, Siti Hawa Salleh, Abu Hassan Sham, Abdul Rahman Kaeh & Jamilah Haji Ahmad. (2006). *Kesusasteraan Melayu Tradisional*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, p. 424.

<sup>19</sup> "*Surah al-A'raf*; *Surah Fussilat*", Retrieved from <http://www.noblequran.com/translation/>.

<sup>20</sup> "*Surah Sad* and *Surah al-Nisa*", Retrieved from <http://www.noblequran.com/translation/>.

			<p>created by Me, then you fall down prostrate to him.)</p> <p>2) <i>Surah al-Nisa'</i> (4): 1 (O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The narration concerning the Hereafter<sup>21</sup><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) <i>Surah al-Kahf</i> (18): 99 (And on that Day [i.e. the Day <i>Ya'juj</i> and <i>Ma'juj</i> (Gog and Magog) will come out], We shall leave them to surge like waves on one another, and the Trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them all together.)</li><li>2) <i>Surah al-Zumar</i> (39): 67 (They made not a just estimate of Allah such as is due to Him. And on the Day of Resurrection the whole of the earth will be grasped by His Hand and the heavens will be rolled up in His Right Hand.</li></ol></li></ul>
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<sup>21</sup> “*Surah al-Kahf, Surah al-Zumar and Surah al-Hijr*”, Retrieved from <http://www.noblequran.com/translation/>.

			<p>Glorified is He, and High is He above all that they associate as partners with Him).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The narration concerning the Heaven and Hell             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Surah al-Kahf</i> (18): 107 (Verily! Those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds, shall have the Gardens of <i>al-Firdaus</i> (the Paradise) for their entertainment).</li> <li>2) <i>Surah al-Hijr</i> (15): 43-44 (And surely, Hell is the promised place for them all. It (Hell) has seven gates, for each of those gates is a (special) class (of sinners) assigned).</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
2	<i>Tibyan fi Ma'rifat al-Adyan</i> (Hermansyah, (2012)). <sup>22</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Described all religions from the Prophet Adam until the Prophet 'Isa.</li> <li>• Mentioned about the creation of the Prophet Adam and his life in the heaven and on earth and the history of his descendants.</li> <li>• Contained the history of religion during the Prophet Idris, Nuh and Isma'il and the stories of the creation of statues resembling the five disciples of the Prophet Nuh.</li> <li>• The story of Iblis who mislead the descendants of the Prophet Idris from the religion of tawhid.</li> <li>• The story of the big flood during the period of the Prophet Nuh.</li> <li>• The story of the race of 'Atfan and the emergence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The History of Religion during the Prophets Idris and Nuh:<sup>23</sup> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Surah Maryam</i> (19): 56-57 (And mention in the Book (the Qur'an) Idris (Enoch). Verily! He was a man of truth, (and) a Prophet. And We raised him to a high station).</li> <li>2) <i>Surah Hud</i> (11):25-27 (And indeed We sent Nuh (Noah) to his people (and he said): "I have come to you as a plain warner. That you worship none but Allah, surely, I fear for you the torment of a painful Day. The chiefs of</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

<sup>22</sup> Hermansyah. (2012). *Tibyan Fi Ma'rifat Al-Adyan: Tipologi Ajaran Sesat Menurut Nur al-Din al-Raniri*. Jakarta: LSIP, pp. 67-162.

<sup>23</sup> "Surah Maryam, Surah Hud and Surah al-Ma'idah", Retrieved from <http://www.noblequran.com/translation/>.

		<p>of the three groups of polytheism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrated the history of the groups of <i>Tab'iyun and Tabi'iyah</i>, <i>Hukama Munajjim</i> (those who worship the seven stars), <i>Salawiyah</i> (those who worship <i>nur</i> and <i>Zhulmah</i>), <i>Majusi/Zoroastrianisme</i>, <i>Mulhid</i> (those who reject the existence of God), <i>Hukama Falasifah</i>, <i>Qibtiyah</i>, <i>Sufitaniyah</i> and <i>Tanasukhiyah</i>.</li> <li>• Described the ten groups of the <i>Ahlul kitab</i> including the Jews and the Nasara (Christians) and their stories.</li> <li>• Described the difference of all <i>madhhab</i> of the follower of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.).</li> </ul>	<p>the disbelievers among his people said: "We see you but a man like ourselves, nor do we see any follow you but the meanest among us and they (too) followed you without thinking. And we do not see in you any merit above us, in fact we think you are liars).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The narration about the Jews and Nasara             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Surah al-Nisa'</i> (4): 46                  (Among those who are Jews, there are some who displace words from (their) right places and say: "We hear your word (O Muhammad) and disobey," and "Hear and let you (O Muhammad) hear nothing." And <i>Ra'ina</i> with a twist of their tongues and as a mockery of the religion (Islam). And if only they had said: "We hear and obey", and "Do make us understand," it would have been better for them, and more proper, but Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so they believe not except a few.</li> <li>2) <i>Surah al- Ma'idah</i> (5): 14-15                  (And from those who call themselves Christians, We took their covenant, but they have abandoned a good part of the Message that was sent to them. So We planted amongst them enmity and hatred till the Day of Resurrection (when they discarded Allah's Book, disobeyed Allah's Messengers and His Orders and transgressed beyond bounds in Allah's disobedience), and Allah will inform</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
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			<p>them of what they used to do. ‘O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Now has come to you Our Messenger (Muhammad) explaining to you much of that which you used to hide from the Scripture and passing over (i.e. leaving out without explaining) much. Indeed, there has come to you from Allah a light (Prophet Muhammad) and a plain Book (this Qur'an)’.</p>
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Table 2 described the content of *Akhbar al-Akhirah and Tibyan*. Based on the table, it clearly indicates that many of the content of both works contain historical element. For example, the stories of the creation of the earth and heaven, Adam and Siti Hawa, the paradise and hell as well as the hereafter. Besides that, *Akhbar al-Akhirah* and *Tibyan* also narrate the stories concerning the Prophets in Islam, for instance, the Prophet Idris, Nuh and Isma'il. These three Prophets and many other Prophets such as Hud, Saleh, Ibrahim and Lut are also mentioned in the Qur'an. Last but not least, both works also relate the stories of the people of the past such as the people of 'Ad, Thamud, the Bani Isra'il and others. These stories are parallel to the historical content of the Qur'an as shown in Qur'anic verses in the above-mentioned table. The content of both works is referred to the Qur'an because the Qur'an is the main source of history in Islam. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of history and that is proven through the existence of about 1000 verses concerning history.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, based on the above explanation, the author would like to stress that *Akhbar al-Akhirah* and *Tibyan* are indeed the works of history.

Besides six al-Raniri's works that are basically history in nature, many of his other masterpieces on *tasawwuf* contain the historical element as below:

**Table 3: Some Historical Content in Al-Raniri's Works on *Tasawwuf***

NO.	BOOKS	HISTORICAL ELEMENT
1	<i>Jawahir al-'Ulum fi Kashf al-Ma'lum</i> (Shaghir, 1991: 66) the Jewel of knowledge for revelation of truth) (the writing started from 1052-1054/1642-1644) (Arabic & Malay) <sup>25</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The creation of the universe.</li> <li>• Concerning the Prophet 'Adam and creation of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.).</li> </ul>
2	<i>Fath al-Mubin 'ala al-Mulhidin</i> (the Obvious victory over heretics) (completed in 1068/1657) (Malay) <sup>26</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The history of the massacre of the followers of <i>Wujudiyah</i> and the incident where the books written by Hamzah and Sham al-Din were burnt.</li> </ul>
3	<i>Asrar al-Insan fi Ma'rifat al-Ruh wa al-Rahman</i> (the Secrets of man (revealed through) the cognition of the spirit and the merciful) (1050-1054 AH/1640-1644 AD) (Arabic & Malay) <sup>27</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The story of the creation of human being from <i>Durrat al-Baida</i> (jewels). This story is similar to that of <i>Bustan</i>.</li> <li>• A long narration on the story of the creation of the Prophet Adam similar to that of <i>Bustan</i>.</li> <li>• The creation of the ruh of the prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.).</li> <li>• The process of the creation of human from <i>nutfah</i>, <i>'alaqah</i>, <i>mudghah</i> until perfection.</li> </ul>
4	<i>Durr al-Fara'id bi Sharh al-'Aqa'id</i> (Precious pearls on the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <i>Mi'raj</i> of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), the angels (Harut and Marut, and</li> </ul>

<sup>24</sup> Mohd. Nasir Omar. (1986). *Tamadun Islam Dan Ideologi-Ideologi Masa Kini*, Selangor, Malaysia: Alam Makmur Sdn. Bhd., p. 40.

<sup>25</sup> Voorhoeve. (1955). *op.cit.*, p. 157; Winstedt. (1996). *op.cit.*, p. 101; Ismail Hamid. (2000). *op.cit.*, p. 214; Riddell, P.G. (2001). *op.cit.* p. 121; Jelani Harun. (2009). *op.cit.*, p. 20 & Wan Mohd Nor & Khalif Muammar. (2009). Kerangka Komprehensif Pemikiran Melayu Abad ke-17 Masihi berdasarkan Manuskrip *Durr al-Fara'id* Karangan Sheikh Nurudin al-Raniri. *Sari - International Journal of Malay World and Civilisation*, 27(2), 122.

<sup>26</sup> Voorhoeve. (1955). *op.cit.*, p. 158; Winstedt. (1996). *op.cit.*, p. 101; Daudy. (1983). *op.cit.*, p. 55 & Braginsky, V.I. (2004). *op.cit.*, p. 647.

<sup>27</sup> Edwar Djamaris & Saksono Prijanto. (1995/1996). *op.cit.*, pp. 32-39 & Braginsky, V.I. (2004). *op.cit.*, p.645.

	description of 'Aqidah) (written before 1045/1635) (Malay) <sup>28</sup>	<p>the physical of angels)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Described the signs of <i>al-Qiyamah</i> (the coming of <i>dajjal</i>, <i>Ya'juj</i> and <i>Ma'juj</i>, the appearance of fire from Yaman, etc.), the paradise and hell.</li> <li>• The story of <i>Imam Mahdi</i> and the Prophet 'Isa killed the <i>dajjal</i>.</li> <li>• The mentioning of the Caliphate of al-Rashidin (the Pious Caliphate).</li> </ul>
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Table 3 indicates the historical content of *Jawahir al-'Ulum fi Kashf al-Ma'lum, Fath al-Mubin 'ala al-Mulhidin, Asrar al-Insan fi Ma'rifat al-Ruh wa al-Rahman* and *Durr al-Fara'id bi Sharh al-'Aqa'id*. These books are generally about *tasawwuf* but al-Raniri inserted some historical content that depicts the importance of history to al-Raniri and that history cannot be separated from *tasawwuf*. The reason is that *tasawwuf* guides the human beings the way to seek the will of Allah and subsequently reach the final destination that is to return to Allah.

Besides that, it is clearly seen in the table 3 that majority of the mentioned books contain similar historical stories that are concerning the creation of the earth, the Prophet 'Adam, the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), the signs of *al-Qiyamah*, the death, the hereafter, the hell and heaven. In fact, these stories are also written and largely explained in *Akhbar al-Akhirah*. The repetition of similar historical stories mentioned above in at least eight works of al-Raniri (*Bustan, Akhbar al-Akhirah, Tibyan, Bad' Khalq al-Samawat wa al-Ard, Ayn al-'Alam Qabl an Yukhlaq, Jawahir al-'Ulum, Asrar al-Insan* and *Durr al-Fara'id*) does not only indicate that these stories are of paramount importance in Islam but simultaneously al-Raniri's purpose of writing these stories which is the reflection of al-Raniri's concept of Islamic history.

## Conclusion

Al-Raniri was a prominent scholar of Aceh and a prolific writer who had devoted his energies to writing works in various fields such as *tasawuf, kalam, fiqh*, and history. Al-Raniri had authored 35 books and the 19 of them was in Malay language. Al-Raniri's contribution to the field of history was no less profound. He was the first writer in the Malay-Indonesian World to initiate a new form of Malay historical writing and to introduce the concept of Islamic history in *Bustan*. Many scholars regarded *Bustan* as al-Raniri's work on history, however, the authors emphasize that there are precisely six al-Raniri's works on history including *Bustan* that are *Bad' Khalq al-Samawat wa al-Ard, Akhbar al-Akhirah, Ayn al-'Alam Qabl an Yukhlaq, Hikayat Iskandar Dhulqarnain* and *Tibyan*. Besides that, historical elements are largely existed in many of al-Raniri's works such as *Jawahir al-'Ulum fi Kashf al-Ma'lum, Fath al-Mubin 'ala al-Mulhidin, Asrar al-Insan fi Ma'rifat al-Ruh wa al-Rahman* and *Durr al-Fara'id bi Sharh al-'Aqa'id*. The historical elements specifically the element of Islamic history in al-Raniri's works indicates the importance of history to al-Raniri and consequently reveal that history is the basic theoretical element of al-Raniri.

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<sup>28</sup> Voorhoeve. (1955). *op.cit.*, p. 153; T. Iskandar. (1967). *op.cit.*, p. 43; Daudy. (1978), *op.cit.*, p. 19; Shaghir. (1991). *op.cit.*, p.5 & Jelani Harun. (2009). *op.cit.*, p. 20. According to Wan Mohd Nor & Khalif, Muammar, this book was completed in 1040/1630 (Wan Mohd Nor & Khalif Muammar. (2009). *op.cit.*, p. 122).

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