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I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of **Islamic Thought**.



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This dissertation was submitted to the Kulliyah of **ISTAC** and is accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of **Islamic Thought**.



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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Mohd Rushdan Bin Mohd Jailani

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AN ANNOTATED TRANSLATION AND TRANSLITERATION
OF *TIBYĀN FĪ MA'RIFĀT AL-ADYĀN*
OF NŪR AL-DĪN AL-RĀNĪRĪ

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT AND CIVILIZATION (ISTAC)
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY

MOHD RUSHDAN BIN MOHD JAILANI

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

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Dedicated to:

My Father, Haji Mohd Jailani; My Mother, Hajjah Faridah;

My Wife, Norhasilah;

and My Children, Sofiyah and Salman

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CHAPTER THREE

AN ANNOTATED TRANSLITERATION OF

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Praise belongs to Allāh, Who has taught us what we did not know, and praises and blessings be upon the seal of the Prophets and Messengers, Muḥammad, the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds, on his blessed and fortunate family, and on the chosen of his companions and whoever follows him and his correct path of behaviour until the final day.

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TABLE OF TRANSLITERATION

Consonants

Arabic Characters	English Transliteration	Arabic Characters	English Transliteration
ب	b	ص	ṣ
ت	t	ض	ḍ
ث	th	ط	ṭ
ج	j	ظ	ẓ
ح	ḥ	ع	‘
خ	kh	غ	gh
د	d	ف	f
ذ	dh	ق	q
ر	r	ك	k
ز	z	ل	l
س	s	م	m
ش	sh	ن	n
	al – regardless of the following consonant.	•	h
		و	w
		ي	y

initial : unexpected.
medial & final : ’

ah (final)
at (construct state)

Vowels

Short		Long		Diphthong
a	ا	ā	أ	aw
u	و	ū	و	ay
i	ي	ī	ي	iy (ī final form)
			و	uww (ū in final form)

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an annotated translation and transliteration of the 17th century Malay work namely *Tibyān Fī Ma'rifat al-Adyān* written by Rānīrī (d. 1666 C.E). The text of the *Tibyān*, which is the subject of our study represents a unique work of Rānīrī, the contents of which can hardly be found in any works of other Malay scholars. The uniqueness of the *Tibyān* can be seen from its contents. Even though the *Tibyān* was aimed at refuting the deviating *wujūdiyyah* positions which had become widespread during Rānīrī's time, the discussions raised were not exclusively aimed at refuting them. As a matter of fact, two different issues which outwardly seem not inter-related become the main contents of the work. The two main contents are the description of religions and beliefs before the coming of Islām, and description of various Muslim sects after the coming of Islām. It is also unique because the *Tibyān* is the only Malay work which dealt with the religions and beliefs before Islām before the 20th century.

Obviously in the 17th century, the *Tibyān* of Rānīrī represents a continuing discussion of scholars of the past since their works were source of reference for him. Thus, it is our aim to highlight such a work which can contribute to the study of Malay language and literature as well as to the study of religions. The *Tibyān* of Rānīrī, which was written in Malay, can also enrich the Malay-Jawī readers who do not have a good command of Arabic with regard to the above discussions.

This thesis is presented in three chapters with an introduction. By way of introduction, we will present the historical background of the text and introduce the basic ideas of the *Tibyān*. The method of our translation and transliteration of the text is also included in this introduction. Chapter one will deal with our observation on the contents

of the text, mainly with our summary of Rānīri's discussion on the religions and beliefs before Islām, Muslim sects and pseudo-ṣūfi groups. The second chapter is devoted to our critical translation of the text. In rendering the text, we have tried to be faithful to the text, hence producing a translation that is true to the text.

The third chapter is our annotated transliteration of the text to which we have tried to be as faithful as possible to the original text. It is aimed to present the style of the Malay language as used by the author which represented the style widely used during the relevant period. In this way also we can see the influences of some other languages especially Arabic on the Malay language, as evidence for the Islamization of this part of the world.

It is hoped that this thesis will provide the reader with a better understanding of Rānīri's religious views, particularly his view on religions and beliefs outside Islām, and encourage further research in the discipline of comparative religion.

INTRODUCTION

1. Notes on the *Tibyān*.

The text of the *Tibyān* is a 17th century Malay study of the religions of the world before the coming of Islām, and an exposition of religious groups and sects, and the pseudo-ṣūfīs among Muslims. The full title of the work is *Tibyān Fī Ma'rifat al-Adyān* or 'The Elucidation on the Knowledge of Religions'. This work is one of the famous writings of Rānīrī¹, a distinguished theologian, ṣūfī master, *mufti* of Aceh and a profound writer who produced a number of significant works. Even though this work is aimed at refuting the deviant *wujūdiyyah* position², it also deals with the root cause of deviations and heresies in religion before Islām and after Islām.

The above statement can be supported by looking at the contents of the *Tibyān*. The contents of this work can be divided into two main chapters. In the first chapter, Rānīrī deals with the religions or beliefs of the world outside Islām namely from the period of prophet Adam until prophet Jesus. In the second chapter, Rānīrī deals with the religious groups and sects, and the pseudo-ṣūfī groups among Muslims which he considers to have deviated from the straight path of The People of Tradition and Community (*Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*).

¹ For a detailed analysis of the biography of Rānīrī, see Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Rānīrī and the Wujūdiyyah of the 17th Century Aceh* (Singapore: Monograph of the JMBRAS, 1996), 12-17. Hereinafter cited as *Rānīrī and the Wujūdiyyah*. See also Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *A Commentary on the Hujjat al-Siddiq of Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī* (Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Culture Malaysia, 1986), 3-12. Hereinafter cited as *A Commentary*.

² According to al-Attas *Wujūdiyyah* refers to those who hold the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujūd* or unity of existence. There are two groups of the *Wujūdiyyah*. The one is the true (i.e. *muwahhidah*) *Wujūdiyyah*, and the other the false (i.e. *mulhidah*) *Wujūdiyyah*. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970), 35. Hereinafter cited as *The Mysticism*. They are called heretical because they claim that God's Being and the world are made out of to be on reality and one being. See al-Attas, *A Commentary*, 265.

As far as the first chapter is concerned, Rānirī elucidates on paganism namely such groups as the Naturalists (*Tabī'īyyūn*)³, Dualists (*Thanawīyyah*)⁴, Materialists (*Dahriyyah*)⁵, and Astrologers (*Hukamā Munajjimin/Falakīyyah*)⁶. Then Rānirī highlights the Metempsychosists (*Tanāsukhiyyah*)⁷, Philosophers (*Hukamā Falāsifah*)⁸, Sophists (*Sufastāi'yyah*)⁹ and Brahmin (*Barāhimah*)¹⁰. In addition to the above groups, Rānirī also

³ The acceptance of the four elements of nature (i.e heat, cold, roughness and smoothness) as the first principle and as primary substance from which all things come into being is the main idea of naturalists. See D.F. Pingree and S.Nomanul Haq, "Tabī'a", in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., vol. 10 (1991): 27.

⁴ This is the dominant idea in Persia in ancient and medieval time. This dualism should not be understood as the spirit and the matter, rather it is between two spirits; first, Ohrmazd or Ahura Mazda and second, Ahriman, see Gherardo Groli, "Dualism", in *The Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 7 (1985): 577.

⁵ It refers to the pagan Arab, the materialist philosophers and the atheist who believes that time is eternal and responsible for the misery or the happiness of mankind. See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, 4 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Hadīth, 1993), 4:153.

⁶ Traditionally, in Arabic and Persian there was no clear distinction between the term *munajjim* and *falakīyyah*. For example in most cases the term *munajjim* refers to both astronomers and astrologers. See Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Science An Illustrated Study* (World of Islamic Festival Publishing Company Ltd., 1976), 95. However some philosophers define 'ilm al-nujūm as the study of the significance of the movements and conjunctions of the stars and their influence on terrestrial affairs, While 'ilm al-falak refers to science of spheres or science of the heavenly configurations. See C.E Bosworth, "On the Sciences: AL-Khwarizmi's Keys of the Sciences," *ISIS* 54, no.175 (1963): 110. For others 'ilm al-nujūm refers to the knowledge of the effects of the powers of stars, at a given time, as well as the future time. See George Saliba, *A history of Arabic Astronomy* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 66. On the roles of astrologers, see T.Fahd, "Munadjjim" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., vol. 7 (1991): 558.

⁷ The word *tanāsukh* derives from the Arabic term n-s-kh which means to copy a writing and to suppress a thing in order to replace it by another. Transmigration of soul (*tanāsukh al-arwāh*) from one body to another in variation of pattern after death is the essence of the doctrine of *tanāsukh*. See D.Gimaret, "Tanāsukh", in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., vol. 10 (1991): 182.

⁸ They are the philosophers who have accepted uncritically the views of ancient Greek philosophers. In addition, these philosophers based their judgement on conjecture and speculation, unaided by positive inquiry and unconfirmed by faith. See al-Ghazālī, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, "Incoherence of the Philosophers" trans. Sabih Ahmad Kamali (Lahore: Pakistan Philosophical Congress, 1963), 4. Hereinafter cited as *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*.

⁹ Historically they can be divided into three groups. First, *al-lā adriyyah*; those who do not know whether or not a thing has a real existence. Second, is *al-'indīyyah*; the people who claim that there is no objective truth in knowledge. Third, *al-'inādīyyah*, those who resist any form of knowledge and deny the realities of things. For detail see Sa'd al-Dīn, al-Taftāzānī, *A Commentary on the Creed of Islām of Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī*, trans. with intro. and notes Earl Edgar Elder, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), 16 and 21, Hereinafter cited as *Creed of Islām*. Syed Muḥammad Naquib al-Attas, *The Oldest Known Malay Manuscript: A 16th Century Malay Translation of the 'Aqā'id of al-Nasafī* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya, 1988), 47-49.

¹⁰ The word *Barāhimah* seems basically to have been used to indicate the belief of those inhabitants of India who worship Brahma as their Prime God. They distinguish themselves from the rest of the Indians by wearing red and yellow threads from which they hang their swords. See Ghulam Haider Aasi, *Muslim Understanding of Other Religion. A Study of Ibn Hazm's Kitāb al-Fasl fi al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Nihal* (Islamabad: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1999), 195. Hereinafter cited as *Understanding*.

mentions the Zoroastrians (*Majūsī*)¹¹, Christians (*Naṣārā*) and Jews (*Yahūdī*). Only in a few sentences does Rānīrī relate the ideas of Hamzah Faṅṣūrī¹² and Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrā'ī¹³ to the beliefs of certain groups in Metempsychosists namely Manicheanism (*Mānawīyyah*)¹⁴. Generally, in this part Rānīrī starts his explanation with the religions that have no Holy Books and no basis in revelation, and concludes with the religions that have basis in revelation, which are the Christian and Jewish religions.

Meanwhile, as far as the second chapter is concerned, we can divide it into two main parts. In the first part Rānīrī makes an exposition of the religious groups and sects among Muslims which have originated basically from six major groups; they are *Rafīdiyyah*¹⁵, *Kharījīyyah*¹⁶,

¹¹ Zoroastrians are the adherents of Zoroaster (born around 660 B.C). They dominate the three great Iranian empires, namely the Achaemenian, the Seleucid and the Sasanian empires. See David S.Noss and John B. Noss, *A History of the World's Religions*, eight edition, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990), 356.

¹² Hamzah al-Faṅṣūrī of Barus (1550-1600) was the greatest Malay ṣūfī poet and the first man to expound the ṣūfī doctrines and metaphysics in Malay. For a detailed analysis of the biography of Hamzah al-Faṅṣūrī see al-Attas, *The Mysticism*, 3-30.

¹³ Shams al-Dīn ibn 'AbdAllah al-Sumatrā'ī (1575-1629) was the disciple of Hamzah al-Faṅṣūrī. Shams al-Dīn was *Shaykh al-Islām* of Aceh and an advisor of the Sultan Iskandar Muda (1600-1636). For a detail analysis on the biography of Shams al-Dīn see Van Nieuwenhuije, *Samsu L-Din Van Pasai* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1945), 6-27. See also al-Attas, *A Commentary*, 6.

¹⁴ The founder of *Manawīyyah* (Manichaeism) was Mānī, the son of Futtaq. He was born 215/216 and was executed by Bahram I, King of Persia. The Manichaean religion arose in Babylonia about the middle of third century A.D. See al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 2:1038. See also A.A Bevan, "Manichaeism", in *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, (1971-74), 8:396.

¹⁵ *Rafīdiyyah* is the term given to the people who reject the imamate of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. They believe that Prophet Muḥammad appointed 'Alī as his successor and imām as an appointment from God through His Messenger. See al-Imām al-Ash'arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt al-Islāmīyyin wa Ikhtilāf al-Muṣallīn*. 3rd. ed. Helmut Riter (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag. Gmbh, 1963), 16. Hereinafter cited as *Kitāb Maqālāt Rafīdiyyah* is the term given by the Shi'ites of Kufah to Zayd Ibn 'Alī Ibn al-Husayn and his followers when they recognize the possibility of a man of lesser excellence (*al-mafḍūl*) to be imām, even though there is to be found a man of greater excellence (*al-afḍal*). See Muḥammad 'Abdūl Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Muslim Sects and Divisions. The Section on Muslim Sects in Kitāb al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, trans. A.K Kazi and J.G Flynn (London: Kegan Paul International, 1984), 133. Hereinafter cited as *Muslim Sects*.

¹⁶ The term *Kharījīyyah* derives from the word '*kharaja*' which means 'went out' or seceded. *Kharījīyyah* are the group of Muslims who disagreed with certain decision of Caliph 'Alī. They then seceded from Caliph 'Alī's group after the battle of Ṣiffin. See al-Imām al-Ash'arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt*, 86. See also Muḥammad 'Abdūl Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, ed. Amir 'Alī Mahnā and 'Alī Ḥasan Fā'ūr. 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rīfah, 1997), 1:133. Hereinafter cited as al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*,

*Jabriyyah*¹⁷, *Qadariyyah*¹⁸, *Jahmiyyah*¹⁹ and *Murji'ah*²⁰. Rānirī deliberately does not count the *Mu'tazilah*²¹ as one of the six major groups for he discusses this group in his other work. In the second part, Rānirī discusses the positions of the pseudo-ṣūfis which in many cases he relates to the deviant wujūdiyyah position. In this part we can see Rānirī's destructive attack against Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's mystical philosophy. These pseudo-ṣūfis groups are as follows; *Ḥubbiyyah*, *Awliyā'iyah*, *Samrākhiyyah*, *Ibādiyyah*, *Ḥāliyyah*, *Hūriyyah*, *Wāqī'iyah*, *Mujāhiliyyah*, *Mukāsiliyyah*, *Ilhamiyyah*, *Ḥulūliyyah*, *Wujūdiyyah* or *Itihādiyyah* and *Mushabbīhah* or *Mujassimah*²².

Even though the description of religions or beliefs before the coming of Islām in the first chapter and the exposition of religious groups and sects among Muslims together with the pseudo-ṣūfis are the main gist of the *Tibyān*, the readers are exposed to many

¹⁷ Many writers considered Jahm Ibn Safwan was the founder of this sect without knowing that the idea that man has no control over his acts originated from Ja'd Ibn Dirham who had been influenced by the teachings of a Jew. Jahm Ibn Safwan was the student of Ja'd Ibn Dirham. See Muḥammad Abū Zahrah, *Tarikh al-Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyah* (Cairo: *Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabi*), 100. Hereinafter cited as *Tarikh al-Madhāhib*

¹⁸ Ghaylan al-Dimashqī is among the first person who affirms that the *Qadar* is in man's own and not God's, and that man himself determines (*yuqaddiru*) his acts and not God. See Morris S. Seale, *Muslim Theology, A Study of Origins with Reference to the Church Father* (London: Luzac and Company Limited, 1964), 17. Ma'bad al-Juhānī (d. 80/699) and Ghaylan al-Dimashqī (d.150/767) are two important persons related to the establishment of the Qadariyyah sect. See M. Abdel Haleem, "Early Kalām", in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman. 2 vols. (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), vol. 1 pt. 1, p.79. Hereinafter cited as *Early Kalām*.

¹⁹ The founder of this group is Jahm Ibn Safwan. Most of Baghdādī's explanation on Jahmiyyah beliefs are similar to the beliefs of Jabriyyah. See Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* (Beirut: *Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah*, 1985), 158. Hereinafter cited as *al-Farq*. Shahrastānī categorizes Jahmiyyah as one of the Jabriyyah sect. They are the followers of Jahm Ibn Safwan. See Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, 1:97.

²⁰ *Irjā'* means to delay (*ta'khīr*) because they (i.e. *Murji'ah*) consider works of secondary importance to faith. See al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, 151. *Murji'ah* originates from the term *irjā'* which has two meanings. First is postponement, it also includes to postpone the judgement of one who commits grave sin until the Last Day. Second is to give hope. See Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, 1:161.

²¹ *Mu'tazilah* in general is known as one of the major sect in the school of Islamic thought. They fall into various sects and several beliefs which are different to other muslim sects. The term *Mu'tazilah* is closely related to its founder, Wāsil Ibn 'Atā (d.131/749) who 'broke off' (*i'tazala*) from the circle of al-Hassan al-Basrī. For detail explanation regarding the various sects of *Mu'tazilah* and their beliefs see al-Ash'arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt*, 155-278, al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, 78-150, Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, 1:56-90, Abū Zahrah, *Tarikh al-Madhāhib*, 118.

²² Eleven of the pseudo ṣūfis mentioned by Rānirī in this work are similar to the list of al-Tahānawī in his *Kashāf*; there are, *Ḥubbiyyah*, *Awliyā'iyah*, *Shamrākhiyyah*, *Ibādiyyah*, *Ḥāliyyah*, *Ḥulūliyyah*, *Hūriyyah*, *Wāqīfiyyah*, *Mutajāhiliyyah*, *Mutakāsiliyyah* and *Ilhamiyyah*. Rānirī added two more groups to his list; *Wujūdiyyah* and *Mushabbīhah* or *Mujassimah*. See al-Attas, *A Commentary*, 216.

historical facts and stories, theological explanations, Qur'anic interpretations, Şufi beliefs and practices, and logical reasoning.

The *Tibyān*'s aim is to refute the deviant wujūdiyyah position as explicated in works such as *Asrār al-Ārifīn*²³ and *Muntahī*²⁴ of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī as well as *Mir'āt al-Muhaqqiqīn*²⁵ of Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrā'i. Rānirī had benefited much from many Arabic sources. Among the main sources that we are able to trace are '*Awārif al-Ma'arif*' of Abū Najīb Suhrawardī²⁶, *al-Mawāqif* of al-Jurjānī²⁷, *Latā'if al-I'lām fī Ishārāt Ahl al-Ilhām* of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī²⁸, *Imḥād al-Naṣīḥah* of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Mahā'imi²⁹ and *Kitāb Tamhid* of Shaykh Abū Shukūr Sālīmī³⁰. Obviously, for the 17th century, *Tibyān* of Rānirī demonstrates the continuing discussion of scholars of the past since their works are the sources of references for scholars of the Malay region.

Our study of the *Tibyān* is based on the facsimile in Voorhoeve's work, "Twee Maleise Geschriften van Nuruddin ar-Raniri". In this work Voorhoeve has reproduced in facsimile the original text of the *Tibyān*. In fact the text reproduced in Voorhoeve's book

²³ On an annotated romanized Malay version of *Asrār al-Ārifīn* and its English translation see *The Mysticism* of al-Attas. 233-296, [English translation, 354-415].

²⁴ On an annotated romanized Malay version of *Muntahī* and its English translation see *The Mysticism* of al-Attas. 329-353, [English translation, 448-472].

²⁵ Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrā'i's writing of *Mir'āt al-Muhaqqiqīn* is the continuity of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī theme of *wahdah al-wujūd* or *wujūdiyyah*. On brief explanation of the condition and the contents of the text. See Mahayudin Haji Yahaya, *Naskhah Jawi Sejarah dan Teks* (Kuala Lumpur, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1994), 1:291-292. Hereinafter cited as *Naskhah Jawi*.

²⁶ On partial translation of Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī in his '*Awārif al-Ma'arif*' regarding the characteristics of Qalandariyyah, see: J.Spencer Trimmingham, *The Sūfi Orders in Islām* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 267.

²⁷ He is Sayyid al-Sharīf 'Alī al-Jurjānī. He was born in 741/1340 at Gurgān, south-east of the Caspian Sea. He produced around twenty-five works in many fields of study, among them *Kitāb al-Ta'rīfāt*. But the most important work is his commentary on the *Mawāqif* of al-Ijī. He died in 816/1413 at Shiraz. See Henry Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, 272. Montgomery W. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 138.

²⁸ The full title of this work is *Latā'if al-I'lām fī Ishārāt Ahl al-Ilhām*. Two authors have been traced for this work. In one listing the author was 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī (d.1330), GALS 1, pp.280; in another the work was Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qunyawī (d.1263), GALS 1, pp 807-808. See al-Attas, *Commentary*, 94

²⁹ His full name is 'Alī Ibn Aḥmad al-Mahā'imi, the author of *Irā'at al-Daqa'iq bi Sharh Mir'āt al-Haqa'iq*. He died in 1432. See al-Attas, *A Commentary*, 19.

³⁰ There is no detailed description of this scholar. He is said to have live in 5th century A.H. See Voorhoeve, P, *Twee Maleise Geschriften Van Nūruddīn ar-Rānirī* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1955), 9. Hereinafter cited as *Twee Maleise*.

is the manuscript copy made around 1855 for Van der Tuuk, from an older copy in Aceh. It is the only complete copy of the *Tibyān*. Two other manuscripts exist which are incomplete; one of them is from before 1794 and the other is still older, from Aceh. Voorhoeve had also given his analysis of the *Tibyān*, particularly of its contents and sources. Our study of the *Tibyān* is also based on the Romanized Malay version of the *Tibyān* produced by Engku Mohd Anuar B. Wok in 1965³¹, which contains many misreadings of the Jāwī text. In our annotated transliteration, we have made corrections where necessary.

2. Notes on Rendering and Romanising.

The process of rendering and romanising the text of *Tibyān* is based on the facsimile compiled in Voorhoeve's work, "Twee Maleise Geschriften van Nuruddin ar-Raniri", which is considered the only complete copy of the *Tibyān*. In addition, the romanised version of the *Tibyān* produced by Engku Mohd Anuar B. Wok in 1965 is another source for the above process.

Regarding our method of translation, we have done our utmost to be accurate to the original text but at the same time idiomatic. For this purpose we have always stuck to the original text and present the ideas in a straightforward manner. This is aimed at achieving a translation as close as possible to the original text, and to avoid confusion. Recognizing the fact that translation cannot always apprehend the language and meaning of the original, we have tried to approximate the meaning intended.

At the same time we have arranged the text by dividing it into paragraphs and numbered the paragraphs in both the translation and the romanised edition in order to

³¹ Engku Mohd Anuar Bin Wok, *Versi Rumi Tibyān Fi Ma'rifati 'L-Adyan Karangan Shaykh Nūru 'L-Dīn Al-Rāniri*, unpublished B.A thesis (Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Malaya, 1965).

provide efficient cross referencing between them. Identification of figures, religious groups and sects, Muslim groups and sects, şûfi groups, and verification of most of the quoted verses of the Qur'ân and Ḥadith are rendered in our translation.

We have likewise in the translation process tried our best to be as faithful as possible to the original text in respect of romanising. The aim is to preserve the style of the Malay language as used by the author which represented the style used during his time. In this way also we can see the influence of some other languages especially Arabic on the Malay language as proof for the Islamization of the language and terminologies of the people of the Malay Archipelago. We have tried not to add any unnecessary additional words or phrases that we feel might be missing in the text, unless they are truly needed in order to facilitate our understanding. In places where the additional words are used in our translation and romanised edition, we have indicated those additional words in [] brackets.

CHAPTER ONE

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF *TIBYĀN FĪ MA'RIFAT AL-ADYĀN*

1. The Contents.

As we have mentioned earlier, even though the aim of the *Tibyān* is to refute the deviant *Wujūdiyyah*, it includes other discussions as well. The contents of the *Tibyān* can be divided into several main topics. These are as follows; religions and beliefs before the coming of Islām and Muslim divisions and sects, pseudo-ṣūfī groups and religious innovation (*bid'ah*); and each main topic is divided into several sub-topics.

In relation to religions and beliefs before Islām, Rānīrī focuses on the sects and groups of religions before Islām, their beliefs and ritual practices, their origins, including the historical facts regarding their emergence, and their arguments for affirming their beliefs and refuting others.

In the context of Rānīrī's description of Muslim divisions and sects, the focus is on the deviant beliefs of each sects that contradict the fundamentals beliefs of The People of Tradition and Community. In this part Rānīrī gives attention to the important beliefs of the seventy two sects of Muslims.

With respect to Rānīrī's description of pseudo-ṣūfī groups, the focus is on the deviant beliefs of each group that contradict the fundamental beliefs of The People of Tradition and Community. The exposition of the *Wujūdiyyah* beliefs and the response of learned Muslims to them constitute the other topic of this part.

With regard to the discussion on innovation (*bid'ah*), Rānīrī elucidates the types of innovation (*bid'ah*) as given by several Muslim scholars. In addition, the judgement by Muslim scholars against those who commit innovation (*bid'ah*) is another point

considered in this part. The last part of the *Tibyān* deals with Rānīrī's suggestion on how to distinguish the true People of God (*ahl Allāh*) from the People of Innovation (*ahl bid'ah*). At the same time he had also warned Muslims to avoid adhering to the teachings of the innovators (*ahl-bid'ah*). In sum, we can divide the contents of the work into five parts;

I. Prologue

II. On the Religions and Beliefs before Islām.

III. On the Muslim Sects

IV. On the Pseudo-Şūfis.

V. On Innovation (*Bid'ah*)

V. Conclusion

I. Prologue

Rānīrī begins the prologue by reciting God's name, the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate in giving sustenance and in being merciful to all mankind. Rānīrī, in his praises to God, refers to Him as the One Who reveals the Holy Qur'ān to Prophet explaining all things, as a guide, a Mercy and glad tiding to Muslims. All the doctrines, wisdom and knowledge, principles, laws, commandments and prohibitions of Islām are taught to God's appointed Prophet without anything left out. Rānīrī mentions that as the final revelation, the Qur'ān has abrogated the teachings of all previous books and religions. It differentiates between the truth which are firmly embedded in the Qur'ān from errors which are found in previous corrupted books.

Rānīrī also explains the role of Prophets and Messengers in disseminating God's guidance. It was through the Prophets and Messengers, that the principles of truth in

Qur'ān and previous books were conveyed to mankind. They guided mankind to the true path and forbade mankind from the path of the deviant and rebellious. This important role was then inherited by the learned (*'ulamā'*) among the people of illuminative knowledge (*ahl al-ma'rifah*). All these Prophets, Messengers and the learned had established proofs, arguments, and statements for refuting all unbelievers, polytheists and heretics.

Then Rānīrī mentions the situation of Aceh, referring to the time of Sulṭān Iskandar Thānī and Princess Seri Sulṭān Tāj al-Ālam. The deviant beliefs of the teachings of deviating *Wujūdiyyah* and the pseudo-ṣūfis had spread rapidly abroad and become widespread during these two periods. Rānīrī was engaged in polemics and debates for several days in the presence of the Sulṭān with the deviating *Wujūdiyyah*, especially among the disciples of Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrā'ī. In addition, most of the learned had pronounced upon the deviating *Wujūdiyyah* the *fatwā* of unbelief and condemned them to death. It was during the time of Princess Seri Sulṭān Tāj al-Ālam that Rānīrī was ordered to write a comprehensive book discussing the various sects and religions in order to cleanse the minds of the people from errors and deviation. As a result, Rānīrī composed the work, *Tibyān* which was like water that quenching the thirst of those who were seeking the true path of God.

II. On the Religions and Beliefs before Islām.

The exposition of other religions or beliefs before Islām in the *Tibyān* can be regarded as the comparative study of religions which our Muslims scholars in the past had worked out and compiled in various books. Rānīrī is the only Malay scholar who deals with this field of study before the 20th century. Rānīrī's method of dealing with the religions before Islām is closely related with the method used by the early Muslims

scholars in the tradition of comparative religions such as al-Bīrūnī (d. 442/1048) in his work *Kitāb al-Āḥbār al-Bāqiyah* 'an al-Qurūn al-Khāliyah¹, Ibn Ḥazm (d.456/1064) in his *al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥaḥ*², and Shahrastānī (1086-1153C.E) in his *Kitāb al-Milal wa al-Niḥaḥ*³.

Rānīrī in the *Tibyān* declared Islām as the only true religion. Hence, the deviation of other religions and beliefs is measured against the principles of beliefs in Islām. Religious sects or groups, beliefs and ritual practices, their origins, how they came to exist and where they were preserved and practised are the issues dealt with by Rānīrī in this chapter. In addition, Rānīrī gives his refutations of the beliefs and practices of the religions before Islām. Here we can get to the place where he relates the deviation of the religion before Islām to the teachings of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī and Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrā'ī.

Generally, Rānīrī divides all religions into three main groups. First, the religions that have revealed books. Jewish religion and Christianity are categorized under this group and the followers of both of these religions are known as the People of the Book (*ahl al-Kitāb*)⁴. Concerning the Jewish religion, Rānīrī divides its followers into two main groups the Uzairites (*Uzayriyyah*)⁵ and Samarites (*Sāmīriyyah*)⁶. The domination of

¹ This work was edited by E.C Sachau (Leipzig: Deutsche Morgen Landische Gesellschaft, 1923); E.C.Sachau (tr.), *The Chronology of Ancient Nations or Vestiges of the Past* (Lahore: Hijra International Publishers, 1983). See also Kamar Oniah Kamaruzaman, *Early Muslim Scholarship in Religionswissenschaft: A Case Study of the Works and Contributions of Abū Rayḥān Muḥammad Ibn Ahmad al-Bīrūnī*, unpublished Ph.D thesis (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1996).

² This work was edited by Muḥammad Ibrahim Nasir and 'Abd al-Rahman 'Umayrah, 5 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Jil, 1985).

³ This work was edited by Amir 'Ali Mahnā and 'Ali Hassan Fā'ūr, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rīfah, 1997).

⁴ The People of the Book (*ahl al-Kitāb*) are those who were given revealed scriptures from God, namely the Jews and Christians. The Jews hold the revealed scripture of the Torah (*Tawrah*) and the Christians hold the revealed scripture of the Gospel (*Injil*). Al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, 1:264.

⁵ The Qur'ānic verse "The Jews call Ezra a son of God" (al-Tawbah, 9:30) refers to this sect. They are the followers of prophet Ezra (Uzayr) who with the power of God, remembered or recovered the lost Torah. The other name for this group is Sadducees or Zadokites. They are the only sects in Jew who take Ezra (Uzayr) as the son of God. See Abū Muḥammad 'Ali Ibn Ahmad Ibn Hazm, *Kitāb al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥaḥ*, ed. by Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Naṣr and 'Abdul Raḥmān 'Umayrah. (Beirut: Dār al-Jil, 1985), 1:178. Hereinafter cited as *Kitāb al-Faṣl*.

Bukht Naşr⁷ over the Jews and the role of prophet Ezra⁸ in bringing back the Torah to the Jewish society after it was destroyed are the other important historical facts mentioned by Rânîri in the *Tibyân*.

Meanwhile Christians are divided into three main groups, namely the Malîkites (*Malkâniyyah*)⁹, Jacobites (*Mâri-Ya'qubiyyah*)¹⁰ and Nestorians (*Masturiyyah*)¹¹. Even though Rânîri did not mention clearly the name of the Jewish saint who destroyed the Christian teachings which resulted in the Christians being divided into three groups; he is

⁶ Samaritans (*Sâmîriyyah*) is a term used to denote a people who believe that Mt. Gerizim in Nablus as the holy city and as the navel of the world chosen by God for His worship. The Samaritans do not recognize any prophet except Moses, Aaron and Joshua. They also have a Torah which differs from the one in the hands of the rest of the Jews. See al-Shahrastâni, *al-Milal*, 1:261.

⁷ Bukht-Naşr (Nebuchadnezzar) was the king of Babylon. He assembled his armies entered Jerusalem, conquered Palestine, enslaved and killed the Israelites, destroyed the temples, took and burned the Torah. He brought with him seventy thousand youths to Babylon. For a detailed account of Bukht-Naşr see for instance: See al-Tabari, Abû Muḥammad Ibn Jarir, *History of Tabari*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989) 4:43-65 Hereinafter cited as *History of Tabari*. See also al-Rabghûzi, *Qisâs al-Anbiyâ'*, trans. H.E Boeschoten, M Vandamme (Leiden, E.J Brill, 1995), 2:759. Hereinafter cited as *Qisâs al-Anbiyâ'* al-Rabghûzi, *Qisâs al-Anbiyâ'*. It is said that all the events took place in the middle of the seventh century before the Christ. See al-Ṭabāṭabā'î, Muḥammad Ḥusayn, *al-Mizân fi tafsîr al-Qur'ân* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-A'lâmî lil Matbû'at, 1992), 14:358. It has been related there have been four person who ruled the entire world, two of them true believers and two unbelievers. The true believers were the prophet Solomon and Alexander; the unbelievers were Nimrod and Nebuchadnezzar. See al-Rabghûzi, *Qisâs al-Anbiyâ'*, 2:93.

⁸ In general prophet Ezra (Uzayr) was known in all major religion, Judaism, Christianity and Islâm as the reformer of prophet Moses's teaching particularly when he was able to memorize and recover all ancient divine scripture (i.e Torah) after it had been destroyed by the Babylonian invasion. Details, see Hava Lazarus Yafeh, "Uzayr", in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., vol. 10 (1991): 960, John Van Seters, "Ezra", in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 5 (1986): 242-244.

⁹ Since they originated from Rome, they are known as the Byzantine church. They affirm the trinity of God; that is Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. The unity of the God and Jesus is described as being like a mixture of water and milk. One is not different from the other. They also claim that Mary gave birth to both the divine and the human. See Ibn Hazm, *al-Faṣl*, 1:110-111. al-Shahrastâni, *al-Milal*, 1:266. al-Attas, *A Commentary*, 400-401

¹⁰ They are the group that the Qur'ân mentions as the people who believe that God is Christ, son of Mary. See *al-Mâ'idah*, 5:72. They are named after Ya'qûb al-Bardha'âni. Ya'qubiyyah believe in trinity, but they insist that Jesus himself is God. In other words, Jesus according to them is not man, but God appearing in the form of man. See: Ibn Hazm, *al-Faṣl*, 1: 111. al-Shahrastâni, *al-Milal*, 1:270. al-Attas, *A Commentary*, 400-401.

¹¹ Perhaps the term is Nasṭuriyyah or Nestorians. They are the followers of Nasṭûr or Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople. They like the others, affirm the trinity, but they incline to emphasize the humanity of Jesus at the expense of his divinity. For them, Mary did not give birth to the divine. Rather she bore only the man. Details see: Ibn Hazm, *al-Faṣl*, 1: 111. al-Shahrastâni, *al-Milal*, 1:268. al-Attas, *A Commentary*, 400-401.