

Book Review ‘Zheng He Sailing and the Malay World’ (Malay Version)

Iqbal U*

Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Malaysia, Malaysia

Written by Kong Yuezhi, this book is about a figure named Zheng He. He is a Chinese Admiral that successfully held a goodwill visit to Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean, East Africa and the Malay Peninsula more than 500 years ago. Zheng He (1371-1418) is a member of a large cruise not only in the annals of shipping China, but also in the history of world shipping. For 28 years (1405-1433) he led the fleet of monster visit to more than 30 countries and regions in Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea and East Africa.

Viewed in terms of time, Zheng He's voyages to the Western Ocean was far ahead of European seafarers as Christopher Columbus (1451-1506), Vasco da Gama (1469-1524) and Ferdinand Magellan (1480-1521). Zheng He's first voyage was in 1405. This means that each 87, 92 from 114 years earlier than sailors such as Columbus (who arrived in America in 1492), Gama (who arrived in Calicut, India in 1497) and Magellan (which started around the earth since 1519). Furthermore the voyages of Zheng He made seven consecutive times in the last 28 years. So long shipping time until unmatched by seafarers Europe at the time. In terms of scale, Zheng He's fleet is quite impressive. Zheng He's first voyage, there are 62 large vessels and crews of more than 27,800 people. On the 3rd voyage, there are 48 large ships with a crew more than 27,000 people. On the 7th voyage, there are 61 large ships and its crew are 27,550 people.

Each Zheng He's voyage provided an average of 60 vessels and a total fleet of more than 200 pieces, including small and medium-sized vessels. As one of the members of the voyage and the admiral, Zheng He overlooked by historians at the time of feudal China. This happens because Zheng He was castrated and castrated generally not very appreciated in China in the past. The lack of records of Zheng He in history books to some extent be offset by notes from clan or genealogy of Zheng He.

Zheng He's seven journeys to Asia and Africa in the early 15th

century is a glorious chapter in the history of the world. So far data such as navigation maps made by Zheng He is still very valuable to cruise between the countries of Asia and Africa. The map is then loaded in the history book namely Wu Bei Zhi (volume 240) edited by Mo Yuanyi in the Ming Dynasty with titles Map Cruises to Go Countries Foreign of Dock Inheritance and Departure from Sungai Naga City, who in short referred to as Zheng He's sailing map. Map of Zheng He's voyage not only a detailed map of the earth's Asia-Africa in China in the 15th century, but also a map of the Asian-African shipping earliest recorded in China. According to the China history book, goods brought into the Western Ocean by Zheng He's fleet included various silk fabric, embroidery, porcelain, musk, gold, silver, bronze, iron tools for prayer or cooking, rice, soybeans, orange, camphor and book. So that part of the roof of a foreign country palace was also prepared by Zheng He.

Brought home by Zheng He's fleet to China, among others, pearls, crystal, gem jewels, ivory, lion, giraffe, leopard, ingredients such as clove, frankincense, rhino horn, antelope horn, perfumes, spices, various types cloth and wood. The goods portion is the gift exchanged between the two governments and the other part of the business or barter. Zheng He has held many Islamic religious activities in China, his own country. As a pious Muslim admiral Zheng He certainly take the initiative to spread the religion of Islam in countries he visited. Already knew that Zheng He's voyages not intend to expand or conquer. A stark contrast to the voyage purpose from the famous Europe navigator. They are as precursor in an attempt to colonize the country colonialism. Zheng He's fleet never even an inch of land occupied by a foreign country. Visits by Zheng He and his crew always get a warm welcome in many countries. Zheng He's fleet that destroyed Tan Tjo Gi, pirates from Palembang showed evidence that Zheng He's fleet of armed force is only used for purely defensive.

*Corresponding author: Iqbal U, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Malaysia, Malaysia, Tel: +60389215555; E-mail: uqbah@siswa.ukm.edu.my

Received May 16, 2016; Accepted August 16, 2016; Published August 23, 2016

Citation: Iqbal U (2016) Book Review 'Zheng He Sailing and the Malay World' (Malay Version). J Tourism Hospit 5: 240. doi: [10.4172/2167-0269.1000240](https://doi.org/10.4172/2167-0269.1000240)

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