

Book Review ‘Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A General Traveler, Comprehensive Work, Revealing the Face of the World - Volume 2’ (Malay Version)

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Translated by Syed Nurul Akla Syed Abdullah dan Adi Setia Mohd. Dom and edited by Ismail Haji Ibrahim dan Wan Roslili Abd. Majid, response and interest in the book is so obvious starting on the day of its launch. Since published in 2003 and launched by the Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Alhaj on February 19, 2004 at the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM), this book proved to be gladdened the hearts of all walks audience of readers, whether from inside the country or from overseas. Publicity and promotion through electronic media such as television and radio, namely Selamat Pagi Malaysia (TV 1), Malaysia Hari Ini (TV 3) and most important, IKIM.fm apparently managed to bring this work so close to the reader, regardless of age, background or position. Summary of travel or adventure of this Islam’s great traveler is so effectively delivered in capsules in addition to talking in the “Book of My World” segment through IKIM.fm was able to push interest in this book.

Today, after almost seven centuries Ibn Battuta left us, his spirit and dogged still remain apart and seemed to be in anywhere. The contribution amount is fully utilized by those who know how to appreciate and serve as a catalyst for success in a similar but different. If he were alive, he would be surprised to see so many of the important work, especially by those who are not his countrymen to appreciate the invaluable contribution to world civilization in particular. For example on December 3, 2004, G.E. von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies, UCLA in collaboration with James Coleman African Studies Center has organized a symposium to commemorate the anniversary of Ibn Battuta’s 700th birth. Ibn Battuta was born on February 24, 1304 and died at the age of about 64 year old (1368/1369).

In a symposium held at the UCLA Faculty Center, Prof. Ross E. Dunn, Professor Emeritus of History from San Diego State University, who is also the author of *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the 14th Century* has delivered her keynote address entitled “Ibn Battuta: A 14-th Century Cosmopolite”. Honestly and sincerely, Prof. Dunn recognizes Ibn Battuta traveled as greater than Western traveler from Venice, Marco Polo (1254-1324). Calculated from any

aspect of anything, whether the distance nor the last, Ibn Battuta travel nearly as far as 75,000 miles for 29 years clearly overcome Marco Polo who travel nearly 25,000 miles in the last 24 years.

Another historian, Prof. Symcox also distinguishes this two travelers by emphasizing that each of them writes from a different perspective. Ibn Battuta wrote in his capacity as a scholar of Islam while Marco Polo provides insight as a trader, noting the price of goods, the availability of goods on the market and so on. Prof. Symcox also stated that Ibn Battuta move from a society of Islam to other Muslims, he engaged in a religious context, laws and customs of the usual and customary for him. This is in contrast with Marco Polo who does not have the same Christian community worldwide that allows him to move among them. Prof. Symcox also touched different fate suffered by the works of the two adventurers. Both are written with the help of laureates but Ibn Battuta work hidden from the Western world for centuries until rediscovered in the early 19th century, while the work of Marco Polo quickly became the best-selling and well-known in the West since the return of Marco Polo in Venice in 1298. Fate finally brings both original manuscripts from this two world famous adventurer in place it is stored now, namely in Bibliothque Library, Paris, France.

Other measures taken to appreciate the contribution of those deemed to be the man who never knew fear include the National Geographic Education Foundation in the United States that provide special funds for the students of primary school aims to give them the opportunity to learn the background of Ibn Battuta and his contributions and more importantly gain a real understanding of Islam. Also in 1976, the International Astronomical Union has paid tribute to Ibn Battuta to perpetuate his name on a lunar crater that is located close to a month and covers 11 kilometers. No exaggeration to say Ibn Battuta and his name will remain fresh in the memory and then traveled to meet demand around the world. This is the same with Ibn Battuta journey almost all his life and his tendency to not live a long time in one place only.

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