

**HIKAYAT HAMIM AL-DARI, A MALAY TALE  
FROM THE TIME OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD**

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**SINOPSIS**

*Tamīm al-Dārī adalah seorang sahabat Nabi Muhammad yang sangat berminat dalam bidang dakwah Islām. Beliau melakukan dakwah melalui penuturan cerita. Salah sebuah cerita yang dituturkan oleh Tamīm berkembang menjadi cerita fantasi dan Tamīm sendiri digambarkan sebagai heronya. Cerita yang berasal dari zaman Nabi itu kemudian telah dibawakan ke Alam Melayu dan dikenali sebagai Hikayat Hamim al-Dari.*

Tamīm al-Dārī was one of the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad. He is considered as one of the narrators of the Hadīth. Al-Bukhārī and Muslim have related about eighteen traditions from the Prophet through Tamīm al-Dārī.<sup>1</sup> Tamīm was a member of the clan Banū al-Dārī, a section of the tribe Lahkhm. He was the son of Aws bin Kharijah bin Sawad bin Jadhimah, nicknamed Abu Ruqayah, after his daughter. In the year 9 A.H. Tamīm al-Dārī accompanied by his brother Nuaim and other members of the clan Banū al-Dari met the Prophet Muhammad and embraced Islām. According to another report, Tamīm came to meet the Prophet at the head of ten of his relatives after the Khaybar campaign in 7. A.H. Tamīm was the first to introduce the oil lamp in the mosque. He was known to be a very pious Muslim and often wept while praying. After conversion to Islām he settled down in Madīnah. Shortly after the assassination of the Caliph 'Uthman he migrated to Palestine where it was said that he was given a fief by the Prophet Muhammad in the district where he lived, Hebron al-Khalil. The gift was said to have been given to Tamīm by the Prophet after he came back from the expedition of Tabuk. It was said that the Prophet had written it on a piece of leather of Ali's shoes. There is also a report that he had taken part in the conquest of Egypt. He died in the year 40 A.H.<sup>2</sup>

**The Original Source of The Story  
of Tamim al-Dari**

According to al-Bajawī, Tamim was well known as the first narrator of religious tales in Islam. He narrated to the Prophet Muhammad the story of the beast called al-Jassāsah and the stories about the end of the world and the coming of Antichrist (al-Dajjal). Al-Shābi had related that the Prophet Muhammad had mentioned about it in one of his speeches<sup>3</sup>. This story which was narrated by Tamīm during the time

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<sup>1</sup> Al Zerkly, *Al A'lam* (Beirut, 1970), p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> See Rene Basset, "Les aventures merveilleuses de Temim Ed Dari" *SAI* (1891), pp. 3-4.

<sup>3</sup> Ali Muhammad al-Bajawi, *Al-Isti'ab fi ma'arifah al-Ashab*, vol. 1, Cairo, n.d.

of the Prophet Muhammad was later developed into a form of hikayat. A story of Tamīm al-Dārī was composed by Sheikh Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Mahmud Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Muqaddisi in the year 665 A.H. entitled *Ifham al-Mannari bi Akhbar Tamīm al-Dārī*. Another version of the same story was related by Maqrizi in the year 845 A.H. of which the original copy is available in Leiden University Library, entitled *Dau al-Sari li Ma'rifah Khabar al-Dari*.<sup>1</sup>

A recension of the Arabic text was made by Rene Basset from a manuscript in Algiers. In his outline of the tale. Rene Basset summarized it in the following description: Tamim al-Dari was kidnapped by a genie who brought him to his country. A war broke up between the genies which resulted in the release of Tamīm al-Dārī from his captivity. Tamīm saw the palace of irem, the paradise and met with the martyrs. He also met with two archangels Gabriel and Mika'il and conversed with the Prophet Elias. Tamīm embarked a ship which later wrecked. He spoke to Prophet Khidr and confronted the Antichrist who asked him about the state of the world. Tamīm came to meet the hermits who were at their prayers, and met Harut and Marut. Finally two clouds brought him back to Madinah where he interrupted a marriage of his wife to another man.<sup>2</sup>

The story of Tamīm al-Dārī had developed since early Islām because the account about it is also found in the collection of the traditions narrated by Muslim, Abū Dawud, al-Tarmidhī, Ibn Majah and Ahmad bin Hanbal. The narrative about Tamim al-Dari mentioned that Tamim had seen the two apocalyptic monsters with his own eyes and spoken with them in an island situated at the end of the world, where a storm had thrown him on a voyage on the Syrian sea. On the island al Dajjal and al-Jassasah were kept await in order to be let loose on the world.<sup>3</sup>

According to G. Levi Della Vida the legend of Tamīm al-Dārī developed further as time lapsed; Tamīm who came to know about the mysteries of the other world was no longer involved in a shipwreck, he was carried away by a genie during the night from his house. In his adventure he travelled through a series of unknown countries inhabited by all kinds of fantastics beings. During the journey, Tamim met the Antichrist and the beast al-Jassāsah. Finally he was taken on a cloud by an angel who brought him back to Madinah. His wife thought he was dead and married to another man. The matter was communicated to the Caliph Umar, and he referred it to Alī who said that the Prophet had forseen all that would happen to Tamīm and left the wife to have her own choice between the two husbands. The wife however, decided to go back to Tamim al-Dari.<sup>4</sup>

An Arabic version of the story about Tamīm al-Dārī was first printed in Cairo. The story was translated in many oriental languages. A version of the story was translated into the Turkish language by Muhammad Affendi Sa'id Sekouti. The story

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<sup>1</sup> Rene Basset, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.p. 8-10.

<sup>3</sup> G. Levi Della Vida, "Tamim al-Dari" *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 4, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1934), pp. 646-647.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 647.

was also translated into Hispano-Arabic and later was published in Madrid in 1885-86 under the title *Leyenda de Tamim Addar*.<sup>1</sup>

According R.O. Winstedt the tale was also translated into Urdu, Afghan, Sundaese, Achenese, Bugis, Macassar and Malay. He says that the Malay version of the story about Tamim al-Dari had been derived from Arabic work called *Tarikh al Hijrat* which came from an Indian adaptation because the Malay version contains some Sanskrit and Persian words with an addition of an episode about the ship belonging to an Indian king.<sup>2</sup>

The Malay tale about Tamim al-Dari entitled *Hikayat Tamim al-Dari* can be epitomized in the following synopsis:

Wanting to take a bath, one night Tamim al-Dari asked his wife to accompany him to a well, but his wife Khaulān Ibn Halalan refused; instead bid a genie to run off with his coward husband. When Tamim was at the well, a genie called Afrit carried him off to the land of the infidel genies, where he helped the invading Muslim genies against the infidel ones. When the Muslim genies won the battle, Tamim was appointed as a teacher to the king's children. Later Tamim was flown by a genie called Ashhar towards his home at Madinah, but Tamim forgot to recite the prayer, and the genie was hit by an arrow from the angel. Tamim fell into a sea, and he swam to an island where he came to a country of Satans. After he met a one-eyed father of Satans, he immediately left the place. On his way he met a genie who gave him some bullets. They travelled together until they came to the country of the Prophet Sulayman. When the genie wanted to take the ring of Sulayman to give it to Tamim, he was bitten by two snakes who were guarding it. After the genie recovered, he made another attempt and he was again bitten by the snakes. When Tamim wanted to revive him, the snakes threatened him with death if he should try again.

Tamim left the place and met Antichrist who expanded his size on hearing about the Muslims' sin in the world. Then Tamim boarded an Indian ship to return to Madiinah, but the ship was wrecked. He swam to an island where he met a genie who brought him to the country of the Prophet Sulayman. The incidents of bullets and theft of Sulayman's ring are repeated. Tamim continued his journey until he came to a place owned by a woman who sent him back to Madiinah, but the genie who flew Tamim to Madinah was hit by a storm and again Tamim fell into the sea. He again swam to an island where he met a young man who brought him to the paradise which was sojourned by the martyrs. Thereafter he met two men who were riding horses and asked him to leave the paradise because the place was specially for those who had died. Tamim left the place, and at the end of his journey he reached a deserted town. When Tamim wanted to take some valuable thing from it, he was bitten by a snake. Fortunately he was saved by a young man. In his journey, Tamim met the Prophet Khidir (Khidr) who showed him many extraordinary things and

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> R.O. Winstedt, *A History of Classical Malay Literature* (K. Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 108.

finally sent him back to Madīnah via the cloud. After leaving his wife for four years, Khaulan remarried. When Tamīm returned home, they reported the matter to Caliph Umar. Ali was asked to judge the case. After Khaulan was given her own free choice, she decided to return to her former husband, Tamim al-Dari.<sup>1</sup>

### The Meaning Of The Hikayat

In spite of the tale of Tamīm al-Dārī being narrated with full of fantasy and marvellous scenes, the accounts given by the tale are of religious significance. The tale of Tamīm al-Dārī was written for the purpose of delivering Islamic religious messages. The tale stresses Islamic belief in supernatural beings as mentioned by the Qur'an such as the angels of Allah, genies, Satan and Antichrist. The readers are also reminded about the forthcoming of the resurrection and its consequences upon the sinners. Tamīm al-Dārī who had met with Antichrist and conversed with him was informed about the types of human sin which delighted the Antichrist, such as adultery, taking usury, false accusation against other people, killing human beings without justification, and so forth. Whenever such sins were committed by men in the world, the Antichrist would expand its size and became anxious for the day when he would be let loose to destroy the sinners. The above scene in the story symbolizes the fate that would fall upon sinners on the day of resurrection.

The tale of Tamīm al-Dārī is also intended to instruct the Muslim readers about Islamic family law. Whenever a wife is deserted by the husband without any maintenance, the wife is entitled to submit a petition to the Muslim judge and ask for separation as Tamīm's wife did when she complained about her husband's desertion to the Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab. Whenever a divorce is granted the woman has to wait the lapse of the period of *idah* for three months before she is permitted to remarry as happened to Khaulan when she was granted a divorce on the ground of desertion by Tamīm al-Dārī.

Finally the hikayat teaches us about the Islamic value of honesty. Anyone who is dishonest and commit theft, such as the genie who attempted to steal the ring of the Prophet Sulayman was fatally bitten by the snakes, the guardians of the ring, and so was Tamīm al-Dārī when he attempted to take a valuable thing left in a deserted town. The Indian ship which Tamīm boarded on his way home in Madinah met with shipwreck, because the owner failed to pay the Islamic tithe (*zakat*).

The journey of Tamīm al-Dārī to the world of fantasy is written symbolically to preach the faith of Islam and its creed. The meeting with Antichrist reminds the Muslims about the punishment which would be inflicted upon the sinners; the meeting with the hermit depicts the attributes of pious men and the ultimate journey to paradise exposes the lavish reward bestowed upon martyrs who believe in Allah and sacrifice their lives in the course of doing good deeds.

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<sup>1</sup>The above summary is made from *Hikayat Tamim al-Dari*, MS, MI 670 WIOI, Meseum Pusat, Jakarta; See also a synopsis made by S. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehese 2* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1906), pp. 177-178.

## Conclusion

The above Malay tale about Tamīm al-Dārī appears almost similar in plot to the Arabic version mentioned earlier. This is due to the fact the Malay hikayat had been derived from Arabic version as suggested also by Winstedt.<sup>11</sup> The Malay hikayat like its original source describes the adventure of a Companion of the Prophet Muhammad called Tamim al-Dari. Tamim who was originally the narrator of the story, was then described as the hero in the hikayat which narrates the author's adventure into various myterious lands where he met with many extraordinary beings.

The story which was originally narrated by Tamīm al-Dārī was passed through oral tradition. Through the process of its transmission recreation and innovations were added to its original account; subsequently the story of Tamim al-Dari was developed into a form of fantastic tale which potrays the adventure into various wonderlands. In spite of its fantastic potrayal, the story still serves to convey the message of Islam which calls upon the readers to devote their lives to the service of Allah and to bid the people to do good and forbid evil; that is the primary motive of a piece of Islamic Literature.

<sup>11</sup>R.O. Winstedt, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

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