

## Malay Text Reception among Sufi Orders in West Java: A Study on *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*

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**Published online:** 31 October 2022

**To cite this article:** Abdullah Maulani and Munawar Holil. 2022. Malay text reception among Sufi orders in West Java: A study on *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*. *KEMANUSIAAN the Asian Journal of Humanities* 29(2): 99–120. <https://doi.org/10.21315/kajh2022.29.2.5>

**To link to this article:** <https://doi.org/10.21315/kajh2022.29.2.5>

**Abstract.** The article discusses the active reception of Malay texts among members of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshabandiyah (TQN) Sufi order in West Java. It focuses on the text entitled *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*. The TQN members adapted the Malay *Cerita Siti Hasanah* and turned it into a *wawacan*, a narrative text in Javanese verse specific to West Java, from as early as 1792 up to the early 20th century. This article discusses the various TQN members' reception of the Malay *hikayat* (tales) from the end of the 18th century until the 20th century. Using a literary reception and literary anthropology analysis approach to the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, the analysis found that the text functioned as a didactic text to teach women that they must always obey their husbands. It also contains several Sufi values such as *ma'rifa* (mystical knowledge of the Godhead) and *Nūr Muhammad* (the essence of Muhammad). This article will also show that in the process of adapting the story to their wishes, the TQN members in West Java also turned it into a *wawacan* and changed the way it was used among the members of the Sufi orders and *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) communities.

**Keywords and phrases:** *wawacan*, literary reception, Qadiriyyah wa Naqshabandiyah, Sufi orders, West Java

### Introduction

The Qadiriyyah wa Naqshabandiyah (TQN) is an influential Sufi order with solid traditional roots in Nusantara (Bruinessen 1992; 2000; Widiyanto 2016) and West Java is no exception (Pujiastuti 2016, 75). Its members enact the order's rituals up to the present day. TQN ritual ceremonies in the archipelago include *talqin* (ordination of a student), *kataman* (completion of a student's mastering of the

remembrance practices dhikr) and *manakiban* (Aqib 2012, 97–115). Millie (2009) found that the *manakib*, *manakiban*, or *keramat* is a ritual enacted by the Sundanese TQN members in Bandung, West Java. The ritual consists of the recitation or chanting of the story of the life of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. AD 1166), one of the most prominent Sufis in the Islamic worlds (Malik 2018). TQN members in Cirebon, West Java, enact a similar ritual which is known there as *hadiwan* or *manakib* (Muhaimin 2006, 160). The ritual recitation of the story of this Sufi saint’s life is also done in Pandeglang in Banten. Setiawan (2019, 56) sees the ritual as a form of acculturation or blend between the Islamic tradition, and Javanese and Sundanese cultural elements. This may be seen, among others, by the mandatory presence of offerings (*sesaji*, *sajen* [Javanese]) each time the ritual is enacted. The ritual recitation of this text, which is written in the Javanese language, by the non-Javanese-speaking Sundanese community is a form of linguistic acculturation (Setiawan 2019, 61). In their findings on the *manakib* in Kunir, Blitar, East Java, Noorhidayati and Mahmud (2018, 216) state that the recitation of the story of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī can be seen as an effort to strengthen the synergy between Islam and the local culture. These studies show that TQN’s social and ritual tradition is firmly rooted in Java.

Various earlier studies on TQN rituals and traditions focus on texts that narrate the life story of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī and the influence its recitation exerts over the people who perform and attend the ritual in West Java. He is still the focus around which religious values are disseminated among TQN members. There are at least two reasons why TQN members glorify this Sufi master to this extent. Firstly, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī is considered a holy man capable to intercede with Allah SWT for the sake of TQN members. Secondly, the story of the Sufi’s life is considered sacred as it is full of miracles (*keramat* [Javanese]; *karama* [Arabic]) and it is for this reason that it has been preserved in many written and oral forms in the Islamic world (Millie 2009, 2). Nevertheless, often other texts are also used during the *manakib* ritual among the TQN and one of them is the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, the focus of this article. This text was written and reworked by various TQN *murshīd* (Sufi masters) in Indramayu, West Java, between the end of the 19th and the start of the 20th century. The colophon of both manuscripts used for this article state that the *wawacan* is an adaptation of a Malay story entitled *Cerita Siti Hasanah*.

The story of Siti Hasanah is one of the episodes of the frame story entitled *Hikayat Bayan Budiman*. This *hikayat* consists of 24 stories and was composed by Kadhi Hasan in AH 773/AD 1371–1372 (Iskandar 1999, 113). Winstedt (1985, v) states that the oldest manuscripts of this *hikayat* (tales) are kept in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and that they were copied in the 1600s. Braginsky (2015, 195) notes

that the *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* contains “salient features of the Turkish-Turkic theme” and is one of the texts typical for the initial stages of Islamisation of the Malay world’s literature. According to Winstedt’s inventory (1985, xvi), the *Cerita Siti Hasanah* is told in eight of the 10 manuscripts of the *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* he found. This being so, Winstedt did not make an inventory of other manuscript versions of the *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* while it is important to understand the wider context of the literary relations between Malay literature and that of other places in the archipelago.

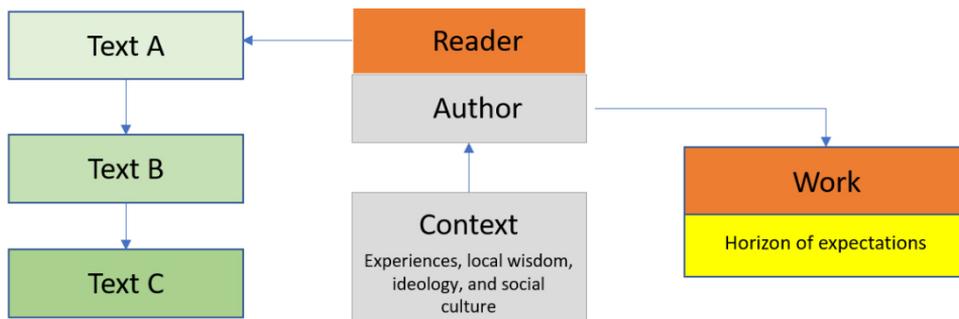
Ricci (2011, 2) argues that literary and library networks have an important role in the spread of Islamic teachings in South and Southeast Asia and the formation of Islamic identity in this region. This network includes the similarities of manuscripts, texts, stories, poems, genealogies, histories, and works that involve readers, listeners, writers, translators, adaptors, and scribes that transcend the boundaries of distance and culture. Through his research on the text of the *Kitab Seribu Masalah* (Book of a Thousand Problems) from Arabic sources to its translations and adaptations in Malay, Tamil and Javanese in the 16th to the 20th centuries. Ricci (2011, 7) concluded that the regions of South and Southeast Asia have a cultural node that connects each other in the process of Islamisation of society.

The article aims to present an analysis of the reception of the Malay hikayat entitled *Cerita Siti Hasanah* as it was changed into the *wawacan* form, a poetic *hikayat* written in *dangding* (Sundanese and Javanese poetic form) verse using specific poetic rules, entitled *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* by TQN members in Indramayu, West Java. We will see that Horace’s ideas apply also to the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*. In his work *Ars Poetica*, Horace says that a literary work has two characteristics, *dulce et utile* or “beauty and use” (Teeuw 2003, 183; Wellek and Warren 1993, 23). Indeed, the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* also has the same two characteristics: beauty and use. This article aims to reveal that *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* was not only changed from a prose *hikayat* into a verse *wawacan* but its function also changed among TQN members in Indramayu, West Java. The text became an important tool in the transmission of Islamic teachings, and we will focus on the way this text functions in the social life of the TQN members in Indramayu, West Java, at the end of the 20th century.

### **Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology**

The *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, as mentioned earlier, is an adaptation of the Malay *Cerita Siti Hasanah*. Jauss (1982, 23) says that a literary work never features something that is new or fills an information gap but, rather, that it is the product of predispositions gained from earlier readings that trigger memories

of what has already been read before which leads to certain expectations and standpoints about the work in front of them. These works are then either left unchanged, changed, adapted, or even significantly expanded following the genre of the text. Furthermore, Jauss (1982, 39) wrote that historical circumstances and background are fundamental to the creation of a literary work. He calls it the horizon of expectations which he sees as an important element in the relation between a literary work and a reading community so that literature's social function manifests itself because the reading public's horizon of expectations and experiences are incorporated into it. This horizon of expectations can consist of the readers experience has gained in life, local wisdom, and the specific views that direct their way of thinking.



**Figure 1.** The concept of text reception by Jauss (1982)

The *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* also gains meaning because of its readers' reaction to it as they try to make sense of it. This reaction can be passive, in the sense that the readers like it or not, or active by turning it into another text (Junus 1985, 1). Teeuw (2003, 171) explains that readers not only consist of real and experimentally tested individuals when confronted with a text, but also those who have represented in the text themselves. In this case, the readers change position and become authors and because they consume the text creatively a new text emerges (Teeuw 2003, 177). In the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*'s case, the readers reacted to the text of the *hikayat* actively which is evidenced by the fact that they turned it into a *wawacan*.

As a text that has lived among TQN adherents in the early 20th century in West Java, the literary anthropology approach is very important as a theoretical framework for the study of this *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* text. The study of literary anthropology in general covers the social life of literary practice through the study of reading and literary consumption, creativity, and literary production (Fagerlid and Tisdell 2020, 4). Meanwhile, Rapport (2012) revealed that literary anthropology consists of two fields of study, namely literary studies as part of

ethnographic writing and studies that focus on the relationship between literature and its reading community.

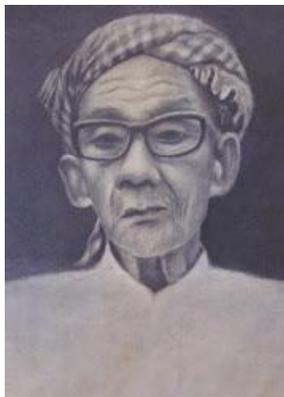
To find out the pattern of reception of the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* text by TQN followers in West Java, it is necessary to compare it with various versions of the text. Therefore, this study takes an inventory of three versions of the text written in different languages, namely the Javanese, Malay and Sundanese versions. The Malay version is the main comparative text because the manuscripts were copied in the 19th century, so they are considered older. According to the colophon, the story of Siti Hasanah has been told since the AD 14th century. The Sundanese version of the text was not compared due to the unreadable and damaged condition of the manuscript. In addition, the implementation of the theory of literary anthropology in the study of the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* text is applied by conducting interviews with Kiai Ibrahim Nawawi, and Ki Tarka as the owners and readers of the manuscripts who are adherents and practitioners of TQN teachings. This is done to find out more deeply how the background and social context of the owner and reader affect the reception and change in the function of the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* text.

### **TQN in Indramayu, West Java: Orders and Networks**

The spread of Islam in Indramayu followed the established Islamic practices in Cirebon. This is evidenced by the TQN genealogical records which show that the tariqah teachers in Indramayu were students of Shaykh Aḥmad Ṭalḥah from Kalisapu, Cirebon (d. AD 1935). He also taught the TQN order in Kalisapu, Cirebon, and various students from Indramayu joined him in spreading Islam in the region they came from. The members of the teachers of the TQN in Indramayu are written in manuscript LKK\_CRB2014\_TRK004 in Ki Tarka's collection in Indramayu. According to this manuscript, Shaykh 'Abd al-Manān introduced the TQN in Indramayu and he had been given TQN authority by Shaykh Aḥmad Ṭalḥah whose life story is yet still an enigma. However, he is thought to have lived contemporaneously with Shaykh Abdullah Mubarak (AD 1836–AD 1956), a TQN Suryalaya teacher from Tasikmalaya in West Java. Shaykh 'Abd al-Manān left behind various manuscripts which used to be preserved by his descendants. The texts in these manuscripts deal with the Quran, theology, Sufism, Arabic grammar and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). They are now preserved in Museum Bandar Cimanuk in the Indramayu regency. The texts include *Hāshiyah 'alā Sharḥ al-Ramlī al-Sittīn* by Aḥmad al-Nu'mānī, *Bahjat al-'Ulūm fī Bayānī 'Aqīdati al-Uṣūl* by Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Samarqandī, and *Kalimatay al-Shahadat* (anonymous), *al-Miftāḥ fī Sharḥ Ma'rifati al-Islām* (anonymous) and *al-'Awāmilu al-Mi'ah al-Naḥwiyyah fī Uṣūli 'Ilmi al-'Arabiyyah* by 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī

(AD 1009–1078/1081). He kept the manuscripts in Arabic on the religious subjects that were taught in the *pesantren* in his residence in Desa Paoman. Ibrahim Nawawi (*pers. comm.*, 2017), the manuscript owner, states that Paoman Village was the hub of TQN teachings in Indramayu.

One TQN teacher in Indramayu whose life can be followed is Kiai Abdullah (1870–1975). He lived in Mundakjaya in Indramayu and he copied various works such as the *Serat Pralayajati*, *Babad Dermayu*, *Babad Cirebon*, *The Story of Syeikh Madekur-Kasan Basari*, *Syeikh Jabar*, *Siti Maleha*, *Siti Ningrum*, *Manakib Syeikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani*, *Serat Yusuf*, *Ater-ater Kaulan*, *Kidungan*, *Primbong* and *Wejangan Mursid*. One manuscript of the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* is kept by Ibrahim Nawawi who got it from his grandfather, Kyai Kartawi who himself got it from Ki Masta. He had another one he received from Ki Masrinih who taught the TQN teachings after Kiai Abdullah's death (Christomy and Nurhata 2016, 14). We know of his active role in the TQN because of his productivity in copying manuscripts. This being so, he concealed his identity in all the copies he made of these works which are evident, for example, from his work entitled *Sedjarah Kuntjit* in which he used his alias, Jaka Sari. In this manuscript is explained that Kiai Abdullah was born in 1870 and that he studied Islam in various *pesantren* and with several religious teachers in Indramayu, Cirebon, Majalaya (Garut), Banten, Pasuruan and Madura (Nurhata 2020, 11). From all this, Kiai Abdullah hailed from a strong Islamic learned (*santri*) background.



**Figure 2.** Picture of Kiai Abdullah Munjul, a TQN teacher from Indramayu (collected and captured by Ki Tarka)

During Kiai Abdullah's life, the text of the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* was recited and sung during certain rituals and communal religious meals (*selamatan*) by his students who were TQN members in the sub-district of Cikedung in Indramayu. Usually, the text was recited after the *maca seh*, the reading of stories

of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (Ki Tarka, *pers. comm.*, 2020). Initially, the Javanese text was sung together with *manakib* texts in Arabic. The *manakib* text pointed to dhikr which was the core of the prayers and the ritual meal. However, starting in the 1970s, the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* and similar texts were no longer present in the TQN and during a *manakib*, only texts in Arabic were recited. That the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* was one of the texts that were recited before or after the *maca seh* at the end of the 19th and early 20th century shows that the tradition of the TQN followers in Indramayu differed from that of TQN followers elsewhere.

### **The *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*: Manuscripts and Contents**

The story of Siti Hasanah is found in three kinds of sources. The first are Malay texts studied by Winstedt (1985). The second is the lithographed edition of the *hikayat* published by the Dutch colonial government to be used as teaching material for Dutch scholars who wanted to study Malay literature. The third is the manuscript of the *wawacan* once owned by TQN followers in Indramayu at the start of the 20th century. The story is written in three different languages: Malay, Javanese and Sundanese as can be seen from the following table.

**Table 1.** The manuscripts of *Siti Hasanah* text

<b>Javanese</b>	<b>Malay</b>	<b>Sundanese</b>
<i>Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah</i> LKK_Cirebon 2015_TRK_01B, from the collection of Ibrahim Nawawi (Cikedung, Indramayu)	<i>Hikayat Siti Hasanah</i> Cod. Or. 1956, Leiden University Libraries, The Netherlands	<i>Carita Siti Hasanah</i> SD 57, National Library of Indonesia, Indonesia
<i>Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah</i> 73B/KNI/M/MJ/2015, from the collection of Masrinih (Mundakjaya, Indramayu)	<i>Hikayat Siti Hasanah</i> Cod. Or. 3208, Leiden University Libraries, The Netherlands	

(Continued on next page)

**Table 1** (*Continued*)

Javanese	Malay	Sundanese
<i>Siti Hasanah</i> 58/KNI/M/MJ/2015, from the collection of Masrinih (Mundakjaya, Indramayu)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Hikayat Siti Hasanah</i> Cod. Or. 3380, Leiden University Libraries, The Netherlands</li> <li>2. <i>Hikayat Siti Hasanah</i> Cod. Or. 6077, University Libraries, The Netherlands</li> <li>3. <i>Hikayat Siti Hasanah</i> Kl. 16, Leiden University Libraries, The Netherlands</li> <li>4. <i>Siti Hasanah</i> Br 102 collection, National Library of Indonesia, Indonesia</li> <li>5. <i>Cerita Siti Hasanah</i> Br 115 collection, National Library of Indonesia, Indonesia</li> <li>6. <i>Hikayat Siti Hasanah</i> Litograph by H.N. van der Tuuk (1868)</li> </ol>	

This article focuses on the Javanese *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* owned by Ibrahim Nawawi, of the village of Cikedung Lor, Indramayu, West Java, with the number LKK\_Cirebon2015\_TRK\_01B. This manuscript was digitised in 2015 by the Centre for Research and Development of Religious Literature and Heritage, Agency for Research and Development and Training, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The text is in Javanese and written in Arabic script adapted to the requirement of Javanese (*pegon*) in the poetic form of a *wawacan*. The text contains 627 stanzas in 30 cantos. The metrical structure is as follows: 5 *dangdanggula*, 5 *sinom*, 5 *kasmaran*, 4 *mijil*, 3 *pangkur*, 3 *pucung*, 1 *durma*, 1 *magatru* and 3 *kinanti*. According to the colophon, the writing was started in the village of Paoman in Indramayu on the evening of “Ahad Pahing, 27th Rabī’u al-Akhīr, AH 1345” which corresponds with 3rd November 1926. Unfortunately, the scribe did not clearly add his name. According to Ibrahim Nawawi, his grandfather gave it to him as a gift when he was teaching the TQN. The colophon sounds as follows:

1 / Kula mulahi nulis / dalu Ahad Pahing jam sawelas / tanggal pitu  
likur sasihé / sawal mulud puniku / tahun séwu telung atusnéki / punjulé  
patang puluh lima / ninggang ebé tahunipun / ingkang nulis tiyang  
Paoman / Inder / mayu kotané iki / panggonan padukuwan /.

(*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, 1)

Translation:

I / I started writing / on the evening of Ahad Pahing at eleven o'clock /  
on the twenty-seventh of the month / Rabiul Akhir it was / in the year one  
thousand three hundred / plus forty-five / in the year *Ēbe* / The writer is  
from Paoman / Indramayu is this town / where he lives.

Two other manuscripts of *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* are kept by Masrinih, a TQN order in the village of Mundakjaya in Indramayu. Christomy and Nurhata (2016, 148–50) gave them the code numbers 73B/KNI/M/MJ/2015 and 58/KNI/M/MJ/2015. The writing of the first manuscript was started on “Monday, 12 Sya’ban in the year 73” corresponding with 15 April 1954. However, added information related to the copying of *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* says that it is a Javanese rendition of a Malay text, as may be seen from the following quote:

Tur sinau artati / kang tiyasa amarta anggitan / dadi pustaka wiyosé /  
ya ing mula-mulanipun / basa Melayu babar Jawi / hujah saking negara  
Arab / kang ma’rifat wahu / kang diwaca mudawama / Haji Abdul  
Sapingi ingkang wewengi / Ing ara jaman kuna //

Dén anyarita ing rasa pati manis / teng bulan nem belas Dulhijjah / Sewu  
rongatus akhiré / Nem kalangkungipun / Tahun bé karihin / Ingkang  
pinurwa ing kanda / Duk kala ning wau / wonten putri satunggal /  
warnanira ayuné tan ana tanding.

(*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, 2)

Translation:

And study the verse *artati* / who can copy and write (the story of Siti  
Hasanah) / so that it can be material to be read / it originates from Malay  
and is retold in Javanese / it comes from Arabia / as we know / and is to  
be read again and again / Haji Abdul Sapingi has explained / that in the  
old days //

It was told in a beautiful way / on the sixteenth of the month Dzulhijjah  
/ in the year one thousand two hundred / and six / in the year Be in the  
past / In former days it is told / there was in the past / a princess / of  
unequalled beauty.

The text was thus told on “16th Dzulhijjah AH 1206” or 4th August 1792. The sentence *Dén anyarita ing rasa pati manis* shows that the text had already been turned into a *wawacan* and the word *manis* is often used as an indication of the poetic meter *dangdanggula* (*sasmita pupuh dangdanggula*). The quote also states

that the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* is an adaptation of a Malay text entitled *Siti Hasanah*. *Wawacan* composers often turned to *hikayat* as their sources to produce their own texts.



Figure 3. The *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* manuscript collection of Ibrahim Nawawi [LKK\_Cirebon2015\_TRK\_01B]

Source: Courtesy of Ministry of Religious Affairs Republic of Indonesia

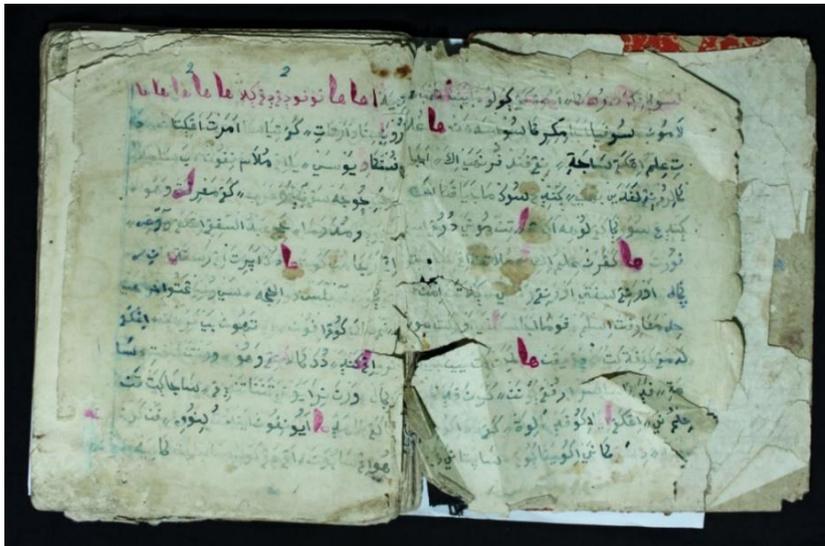


Figure 4. The *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* manuscript collection of Masrinih [73B/KNI/M/MJ/2015]

Source: Christomy and Nurhata (2016, 180)

The popularity of the story of Siti Hasanah can be traced back to colonial times. Tuuk (1868) published a lithographed edition of the *Hikayat Siti Hasanah* based on Raffles collection number 63 together with three other texts, the *Hikayat Raja Yaman*, *Hikayat Anak Raja Mengasihani Katak* and *Hikayat Seorang Raja yang Zalim Dimurkai Alah Subhānahu wa Ta'ālā* (Ricklefs, Voorhoeve and Gallop 2014, 141). These texts were copied from two manuscripts: *Hikayat Bakhtiyar* from the Raffles collection which is kept in the Royal Asiatic Society No. 63 and *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* (Tuuk 1868, i). In his edition, Tuuk also noted some corrections that were made in the manuscripts of the texts he published. The edition aimed to offer reading material to Dutch scholars who wanted to study Malay in the 19th century (Grijns 1996, 32). The publication of the *Hikayat Siti Hasanah* also shows that it was probably one of the most important and authoritative stories of the 24 episodes of the *Hikayat Bayan Budiman*. It is said that the *Hikayat Siti Hasanah* was told by Kadi Hassan in AH 773/AD 1371 (Fang 2016, 354; Winstedt 1985, 129).

Braginsky (2004, 418) revealed two factors that made Malay-framed tales such as the *Cerita Siti Hasanah* popular so that many of its transformations spread across the archipelago. First, the framed story has a balance between narrative and didactic aspects. Second, framed stories allow readers to more directly capture the message conveyed by the author without having to read a longer text. Thus, the format for presenting a framed story consisting of direct ideas and images greatly influences the reader's reasoning and imagination, so framed story texts are widely used for didactic purposes.

*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* tells the story of an 18-year-old woman named Siti Hasanah who was married to a merchant, Syaiful Yaman. She was not only very beautiful but also had a very noble character and she was devoted to Allah. Because of her piety, she reached the highest level of the most perfect (*kāmil mukammil*) saint and she also guarded her dignity. No man whosoever could ever hope to see the beauty of her face except her husband. Because she was so perfect, she fell victim to all sorts of tests and vicious slander. Abu Yamin, her husband's younger brother accused her of having committed adultery with a man after she had been unable to satisfy her sexual lusts. Because of this, the royal judge sentenced her to be stoned to death. After she had managed to escape death, she was slandered by Gosan to have murdered a small child who was the slave of a merchant who had helped her, and she was thrown out by him.

While wandering around in search of her husband, Siti Hasanah was sold to a cruel ship merchant as a slave by a thief whom she had helped. Because of her sincere prayers, she again was liberated from the ship merchant's cruelty and she landed

in Bani Israil. There she changed her name to Syarif Hasan and was adopted by the king. She taught the crown prince, Muhammad Tohir, about the Islamic faith, Sufism and jurisprudence. After a while, she succeeded the king to the throne after he died. She ruled over Bani Isra'il and it became flourishing, just and prosperous. One day, Abu Yamin, Gosan and various other false witnesses who had slandered Siti Hasanah arrived to ask for his prayers so that they might be cured of their terrible afflictions. Raja Syarif Hasan prayed for their health to return after they had acknowledged their mistakes.

### ***Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* as Malay Text Reception: A Didactic Tale for Female Sufis**

The following quotes from the start of the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* explain that Siti Hasanah was an extraordinarily beautiful woman who was faithful to her husband:

warnané sangayu mancur / ning wulan purnama / yan cinatur kurang  
papan luwi tulis / awasta Siti Hasanah //

(*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, 2–3)

Mangka garwanipun ayu / tur jatmi bakti ing laki / anut ing sapa  
kawinan /

(*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, 4)

Translation:

[s]he emitted a radiant spark / during full moon / and you could not  
describe her even if you wanted to / her name was Siti Hasanah /

In Malay literature, various texts were specifically written to explain the concept of the faithfulness of a wife towards her husband. Hijjas (2018, 233–235) mentions *Hikayat Darma Ta'sia*, *Hikayat Fatimah Bersuami* and *Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya Fatimah* as examples of texts that contain the lesson for married women that be faithful to their husband means being faithful to Allah. These Malay texts clearly state that the husband is the head of the family and that his wife must meet all his demands.

However, there is another portrayal of women in the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* and it does not exclusively focus on emphasising women's obligations as wives but also as female Sufi figures. This may be seen from the following quote:

Pan sinebut wadon kāmīl mukammīl / sang dinya ya waliyullah /  
 sinambadan sakarsané / sakéhé niyaté pan kinabul / kinasihan déning  
 yang widi / cinarita sang ratna / selaminé tumuwuh / tan wonten satunggal  
 pari'ya / kang uning ing warnané sang putri / liyan saking ingkang raka //

(*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, 5)

Translation:

We could call her a woman [who is] *kāmīl mukammīl* / a princess who  
 is a saint of Allah / Whatever she desires will come into being / Every  
 intention will be granted / and she will be cherished by God. / It is told  
 that the princess / as long as she lived / not even one man / knew what  
 she looked like / except her husband.

This quote clearly states that Siti Hasanah manages to keep her dignity and her devotion to her husband and will reach the highest level of perfection called *kāmīl mukammīl* (most perfect). Hijjas (2018) says that the concept of female Sufism in Southeast Asia and the Malay world differs from that in the Arab-Persian world. Her study of the Malay *Hikayat Rabi'ah* made her conclude that if a Malay woman wants to reach a high level in Sufism, she must marry first because then she would be devoted to God and her husband. Moreover, the term *kāmīl mukammīl* also has a link with Shaykh Ahmad Khatib Sambas who established the TQN in the Malay world. He obtained the title *kāmīl mukammīl* from Shaykh Shamsu al-Dīn because he was his best student (Mashar 2016, 236; Mulyati 2006, 175–177).

The Sufi element is found in the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* but not in any of the Malay versions of the tale of Siti Hasanah which, of course, is because of the background of each author and subsequent copyist of each version. The versions of the Malay *Cerita Siti Hasanah* and *Hikayat Siti Hasanah* we have found so far are expansions of the story made by Kadi Hassan in the 14th century while the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* is an adaptation made by various TQN teachers in Indramayu as part of their practice of Sufi teachings. Johns (1961, 14–15) emphasises that, from the 13th to the 18th century, the role of the Sufi movement was the most important in the Islamisation of the Malay world and that many Sufi elements started to become included in Malay and Javanese works.

The *wawacan* literary culture developed in West Java in the 17th century, also stories about female characters were included in the literary compositions of their authors and some of them became legendary among the people of West Java. They did not only feature in written and oral stories but were also influential in the people's ritual activities. For instance, the character Nyi Pohaci Sanghyang

Sri in the *Wawacan Sulanjana* was believed to be the goddess of fertility or the “Rice Goddess” and she was revered by various Sundanese adat groups in West Java by enacting the *sérén taun* ritual in her name (Holil 2020, 4). The *Wawacan Ningrumkusumah* is another text that was adapted from Malay into Sundanese (Ruhaliah 2020). The protagonist, Ningrumkusumah, is a princess from Banurungsit who was married to Suryaningrat. She was famous for her beauty, devotion, power, courage, leadership, and her faultless character and demeanour. This text was often read during *beluk* performances, a vocal art that originates from the Sundanese agricultural tradition. She also played a role as a healer who cured various of her husband’s diseases (Ruhaliah 2015, 251). These two characters lead us to think that it was mostly women from higher circles with power relations and linked to specific kingdoms who featured in texts in the eastern region of West Java.

That the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* as a text heavily laden with Sufi notions exists at all among the *wawacan* texts that were produced on West Java’s north coast is a phenomenon. So far, the texts we have present women as holy, single and with a high level of spirituality. However, in the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, Siti Hasanah tries to present a Sufi image in many *hikayat* on Malay women. This being so, as an Islamic didactic text for TQN followers in West Java in the 20th century, it is precisely this Sufi image that is the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*’s main asset, as will be explained in the next section.

### ***Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* as an Islamic Didactic Text for TQN Orders**

As a text that came up among TQN members, the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* quotes various sources to explain Islamic concepts that do not feature in the Malay version of the story of Siti Hasanah. This can be seen from the following quote:

Ngalap murād saking kitab *Zurah* / Mufid lan Talmasanī / saking murad-  
ira Fathul Mubin ika / kalawan kitab Sanusi / angalap wahu muradnya /  
saking kitab papat iki //

(*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, 98–99)

Translation:

Quoting the definition from *Kitab Zurah* / *Mufid* and *Tilmisānī* / from the definition of *Kitab Fath al-Mubīn* / and *Kitab Sanusī* / this definition is quoted / from all four *kitab*.

This quote narrates the scene where Siti Hasanah has disguised herself as a man called Syarif Hasan who is teaching Islamic knowledge to Muhammad Tohir, the son of the king of Bani Isra'il. Syarif Hasan quotes four *kitab* (Islamic references) to elucidate the definition of *Nūr Muḥammad* (the essence of Muhammad) and the various aspects of *tauḥīd* (unification or oneness of Allah as the God in Islam). *Kitab Tilmisani* is a commentary written by 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad bin 'Umar bin Ibrāhīm al-Tilmisānī (d. AD 1591) on the *al-Durra* by 'Abdullāh Muḥammad bin Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (d. AD 1486), a text well known among Islamic students in Java (*santri*) simply as *Kitab Sanusi* (Soebardi 1971, 337). The *Kitab Mufīd* in the previous quote is the *al-Mufīd* written by Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad bin Sulayman al-Jazūlī (d. AD 1465). In his catalogue of Malay manuscripts, Van Ronkel (1913, 86), noted that the text is entitled *Sharḥ Ummu al-Barāhīn*. The *Fathu al-Mubin* (The Victory beyond Doubt) in the quote is a work by Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Bājūrī (d. AH 1276/AD 1860) as a commentary on al-Sanūsī's *Umm al-Barāhīn* (Berg 1882, 554; Soebardi 1971, 338). Brockelmann and Lameer (2016, 435) noted the work composed by Aḥmad b. Ḥajar al-Haytāmī (d. AH 973/AD 1565) and classified as one of the *fiqh* of Shafi'i text. If viewed from the substance, the *Fath al-Mubīn* text referred to by the writer of the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* text is al-Bājūrī's work on the basics of divine science in Islam.

Each of the four texts is also mentioned in the *Serat Centini* that talks about the Islamic student Syaikh Among Raga. He taught his wife, Tambang Raras and her chaperone, Nyi Centini, about the contents of various texts on *tauḥīd*: *Kitab Asmarakandi*, *Kitab Durat*, *Talmisan*, *as-Sanusi*, *Patakul Mubin*, *Bayan Tasdik*, *Sail* and *Juahiru* which were well known and often studied in the 19th century by Sunni Muslims, especially in Javanese *pesantren* (Soebardi 1971, 337–338; 1975, 40). We may say that by quoting these textual sources, the composer of the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* must have studied these texts so that he could use them as his main references when in his explanations of Islamic theology and other elements of Islamic learning. This is more so for followers of the TQN who practised Sunni Islamic teachings.

### ***Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* as a Text on Islamic Jurisprudence**

In *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, teachings on *fiqh* can be found in scenes where Syarif Hasan has been given the task to teach the king of Bani Isra'il's son, Prince Muhammad Tohir who often gave a sermon after Friday prayers. In his sermons, Syarif Hasan stressed the importance to perform each of the five obligatory daily prayers and that anyone who would deliberately forsake them would be considered more ritually unclean than pigs and dogs, and that other Muslims would even be forbidden to eat with that person.

Carita hutbah jum'ah / manusa Islam puniki / lamon atinggal solat  
 / limang waktu ingkang wajib / ingaranan luwih najis / tinimbang  
 celeng lan asuh / manusa kang tinggal solat / cinegah dahar atunggalé /  
 babaréngan lan manusa tinggal solat. //

(*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, 92)

Translation:

The story of the Friday sermon / for the Muslim community / when they  
 forsake the salat / obligatory five times a day / it is said they will be more  
 ritually unclean / than pigs and dogs / the people who forsake the salat /  
 do not eat with / the people who forsake the salat.

To understand the scriptural sources used in the explanation about salat procedures,  
 the following quote may be illuminating:

Agé wunguwa wong ayu / sapanen si kakang parapti / agé marah  
 tampanana / kalangenanira rayi / Kitab Jubad Kitab Aqna' / kalawan  
 Kitab Insān Kāmil / Agé wacanen wong ayu / olih saking nigari Jabib /  
 pahos layan winarna /

(*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, 117)

Translation:

Rise quickly, my beautiful lady / and welcome the arrival of your older  
 brother / and quickly answer / his longing for you, my sister / *Kitab  
 Jubad Kitab Aqna'* and *Kitab Insān Kāmil* / Read them quickly, my  
 beautiful lady / as it comes from the land of Jabib / read them and tell  
 their contents.

This quote tells of Syaiful Yaman who finds his wife not at home and has been  
 punished and stoned because of Abu Yamin's slander. He mourns her and tells  
 the people that one of Siti Hasanah's favourite things to do was reading from  
 various *kitab*. He mentions *Kitab Jubad*, *Kitab Aqna'* and *Kitab Insān Kāmil*. The  
*Kitab Jubad* is *Matnu al-Zubad fī 'Ilmi al-Fiqhi 'alā Maḥabī al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī*  
 by Aḥmad bin Ruslān al-Shāfi'ī (d. AH 844/AD 1440). The *Kitab Aqna'* is the  
*al-Aqnā' fī Halli Alfāz Abī Shujā'* by Muḥammad Shamsu al-Dīn al-Khāṭib al-  
 Sharbīnī (d. AH 977/AD 1569) that deals with fiqh and is one of the works of  
 the Shafi'i school that is often quoted in explanations about how Muslims should  
 perform their religious duties (Iswanto 2013, 118). From both Shafi'i works we see  
 that, in general, TQN followers in Indramayu follow this school in the way they  
 perform their religious duties.

***Ma'rifa and Nūr Muḥammad: Sufi Teachings in Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah***

In the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, the explanations of Sufism and aspects of the faith are evident from the scene where Syarif Hasan instructs Pangeran Muhammad Tohir in Islamic teachings. Syarif Hasan explains that the teachings on *tauḥīd* can only be studied by someone who knows himself and God:

Kang rayi Thohir Muhammad / wong Islam mudu gaweruhi / badan mangka temen weruha / ing pangérané déwéki / man 'arafa nafsahu iki / faqod 'arafa rabbahu / élinga sira tetkala / lali rahina wanginé / karana yang widi ora lali ing sira. //

(*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, 92)

Translation:

*Kang rayi* Thohir Muhammad, / a Muslim has to know / himself and then he will surely know / his God / the meaning of *man 'arafa nafsahu* / *faqod 'arafa rabbahu* / you have to member the moment / you forget / what happened before / because God will not forget you.

In the Sufi world, the quote “*arafa nafsahu iki, faqad 'arafa rabbahu*” often features in Sufi texts and it is also often quoted as the foundation of the mystical knowledge of the Godhead (*ma'rifa*). For instance, Hamzah Fansuri understands it when he said that knowing oneself is not knowing one's organs like the heart and the lungs and body parts such as hands and feet, but rather knowing that God is *wujūd* (exist) is unique (Al-Attas 1970, 28). Syarif Hasan's explanation to Muhammad Tohir is a continuation of his discussion of the beginning of creation. He explains that the first thing Allah created was *Nur Muḥammad* and only after that did, He create the other creatures that originate in Him.

Wiwitanné sakabéh ingkang dumadya / enur kang ana rumihin / katah jejulukira / kang nama nur muḥammad / angyan sabita rumihin / kapindonira / jeju[lu]k adam mungkin / lan akéh arane rayi. //

(*Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, 98)

The origin of everything there is / *nur* as it was the first / it has many names / what is called *Nūr Muḥammad* / *a'yān thābitah* is the first / the second / is called *'adam mumkin* / and it has many names, my dear. //

This quote clearly states that Allah first created *Nūr Muḥammad* and subsequently Adam, and then *ruh idāfī* (spirit of relation), *ruh rabbānī* (the soul of God), *iman mubīn* (real faith), *17 hafīz* (17 rakats of salat), *dhū al-kaḥfī* (the cave occupant), *qalam ba'da kulli 'alam* (God's destiny for the creatures), the first Adam as a spiritual being, Prophet Muḥammad, *qalam* (the pen), *rasūl Allāh* (the messenger of Allah), *rūḥ raḥmānī* (the spirit of mercifulness), *'alam shaghir* (microcosm) and *'alam kabīr* (macrocosm). The concept of *Nūr Muḥammad* was first initiated by Abū Abdullāh Ḥusayn bin Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj (born AD 866) when he coined the term *al-ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadiyah* (the essential of Muhammad being) (Lutfianto 2019, 54). In the al-Ḥallāj view, everything in the universe that happens or that is created starts with *Nūr Muḥammad* because essentially, the Prophet Muhammad has two essences. The first is that he is the first (*qādim*), so he was there before anything else. Moreover, *qādim* is eternal. The second is *ḥaqīqat hadīthiyah* (the essential of creature being) which is that in essence, the Prophet Muhammad is a human being and the messenger of Allah. Therefore, as a person who is created, he is *fanā'* or non-eternal (Lutfianto 2019, 54–55; Maḥmūd n.d., 379–380). The concept *Nūr Muḥammad* is also used by Shaykh 'Abd al-Raūf Singkel (1615–1693), a Sufī from Aceh who was influential all over the Malay world and who said that everything that God created has its origins in the light of the Prophet Muhammad. By using the concept of *Nūr Muḥammad* in his *Tanbīh al-Māshī*, He wants to emphasise that Sufism must be based on the proper enforcement of Islamic sharia by following each command the Prophet Muhammad made and to stay far removed from all he has forbidden (Fathurahman 1999, 65–66). The *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* text contains three vital aspects which are not found in the Malay *Cerita Siti Hasanah*. Firstly, the text contains explanations on fiqh or Islamic jurisprudence. This is evidenced by the explanations of the five daily obligatory prayers and the fundamental principles of Islam people are obliged to live by. Secondly, the explanation of basic Sufī concepts. This may be seen from the quotes above that explain the concepts of *ma'rifa* and *Nūr Muḥammad*. Thirdly, for Muslims, the inclusion of Allah's attributes that consist of *iftiqār* (God's Most Sufficient) dan *istighnā'* (God's Needlessness) present an explanation of their basic beliefs. These findings show that the making and the content of the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* run parallel with the orientation that developed in *pesantren* circles. Text transformations that occur in *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* change the direction of text meaning. The story of Siti Hasanah in the Malay version emphasizes loyalty and devotion. On the other hand, the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* text focuses on a woman's complete achievement of a high degree in the sight of her God. The direction of this *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* text message is influenced by the concepts of *Nūr Muḥammad* and *ma'rifa*, which TQN orders taught.

According to Wahid (2007, 127), at least two main scholarly orientations developed in *pesantren* and other centres of Islamic learning in Nusantara; Sufism and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). The Sufi literature developed earlier in Nusantara at least in the 13th century ran parallel with the Islamisation efforts undertaken at the time. Texts on *fiqh* started to be studied seriously in the 19th century in various Islamic schools such as *pesantren*. Nevertheless, both Sufi literature and *fiqh* form a scholarly unit that people have to learn (Islam 2016, 31). This is clear in the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* because it contains all three Islamic elements, *fiqh*, Sufism and theology that coalesce in the narration of the plot. It is these elements that set the text apart from its source, either *Cerita Siti Hasanah* or *Hikayat Siti Hasanah*. It is this difference that proves that the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* was a medium for the transmission of the teachings adhered to by TQN followers in Indramayu at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

## Conclusion

A literary work is always closely linked to the background in which it was created and to other literary works before it. These elements create the memory of what was read before and cause the reader to take up a certain position towards and expectation of the work in front of him. These works are then preserved in their entirety, are changed, differently oriented, and even expanded significantly by their genre or what the text is. This is clear in the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* because it has incorporated various texts to be able to contain the message it wants to deliver. In general, the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* is the product of TQN followers' active reception of Malay texts such as *Cerita Siti Hasanah* and *Hikayat Siti Hasanah* so that it could become a textbook for women to teach them how to remain faithful and obedient to their husbands. The *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* added the notion that women also have to strive to reach the highest level at the side of God (*wadon kamil mukammil*) by understanding the concept of *ma'rifa* and *Nūr Muḥammad*. It means that the ideology of the writer and reader of the work influence the main messages of the text.

The copying and reading activities in TQN settings, even more, the emphasis on the *wawacan* texts, such as *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, played an important role in the transmission of Islamic values in Indramayu, West Java from the 18th up to the start of the 20th century. Those explanations about the obligation to perform the five daily prayers, *ma'rifa* and *Nūr Muḥammad*, and Allah's attributes were included in the text means that the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* is an adaptation of Islamic texts. In the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah*, these elements are the manifestations of Islamic teachings about Islamic jurisprudence, Sufism and Islamic theology. The transformation from prose Malay *hikayat* to poetic

Javanese *wawacan* means that the function of the *Wawacan Layang Siti Hasanah* became even more important as it functioned as an educational text especially for followers of the TQN in Indramayu, West Java, Indonesia.

### Acknowledgements

This research was supported by the University of Indonesia PUTI Grant (NKB-5024/UN2.RST/HKP.05.00/2020).

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