

in Indonesian might have been used. Then on page 163, there is mention of "toko P&D", which is from the Dutch *Provisiën en Dranken*, meaning a "store selling daily necessities and drinks". Today it is the equivalent to a small supermarket. Then there are a few more little things that still need to be looked into. On page 191, for *gadis Eurasia* it is more common in Indonesian to use *gadis Indo*; *pasangan penari*, should be *pasangan pedansa*

To conclude, this is a highly interesting book, telling in their own words the experiences of a variety of women who have one thing in common: they are, or are considered by others, ethnic Chinese in varying degrees, or as in Jane's case, closely associated with an ethnic Chinese. Basically, the book explores the problem of identity and Chineseness, a topic that has become very important in view of the spread (some people see it as the threat) of globalism. Studies on this topic abound and many more will probably be written. Dewi Anggraeni's book is a valuable contribution in this search for identity and I suggest a very readable one.

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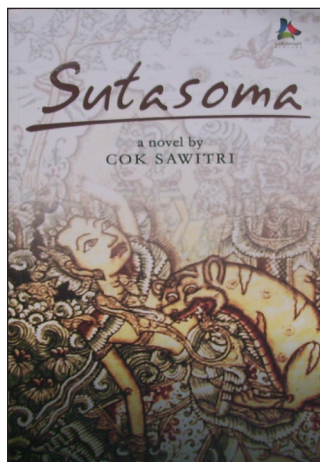
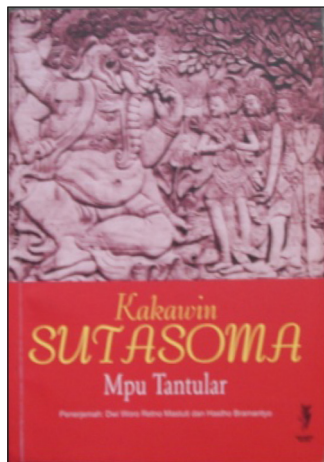
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The Old Javanese *Kakawin Sutasoma* was written by Mpu Tantular in the late fourteenth century during the heydays of the Majapahit Empire. So far, only few people have read this literary masterpiece because it is originally written in the Old-Javanese language. However, nowadays, a more extensive readership has access to the contents of the text thanks to Dwi Woro Retno Mastuti and Hastho Bramantyo's hard work as, together, they translated Tantular's poem into Indonesian. As the base for their translation, they used the transliteration of the *Kakawin Sutasoma* Soewito Santoso published in 1975. Readers who understand Old Javanese can check directly whether the

translation is correct or not, because the transliterated text and the translation are published on facing pages.



The *Kakawin Sutasoma* is also known under the title *Puruṣādaśanta* or *The Conquest of King Puruṣā* (see strophe 148, verse 1, p. 537) which is based on a story of the life of the Buddha. Tantular informs us clearly about this on page 5 in canto 1 verse 4:

Firstly, I need to say that the story I wrote derives from a story of Buddha's life. In the past, during the *dwāpara*, *tretā*, and *ṛtayuga* eras, *dharma* (duty) had been incarnated into three gods namely Brahmā, Wiṣṇu, and Īswara and they had become kings in the world of humans. However, in the present Kaliyuga era, Sri Jinapati or the Buddha has descended into this world to eradicate human crime.

This edition of the *kakawin* consists of 148 cantos and numbers 1209 verses. The number of verses per canto varies from 2 to 26. The story may be divided into three parts; 93 cantos tell about Sutasoma as the protagonist; 20 cantos tell about Jayāntaka as the antagonist; and 35 cantos relate the conflicts and the encounters between Sutasoma and Jayāntaka. Sutasoma has been afforded more space than Jayāntaka, who, in the narration is presented as the King of Ratnakaṇḍa who conquered one hundred neighbouring countries killing all their kings in order to comply with his vow to Kāla. In the meantime, Sutasoma is described in detail starting from his mother's pregnancy up to his re-transformation into a god. Readers who are interested in Jayāntaka may find a detailed depiction of him in a novel, which is also entitled *Sutasoma*, by the Balinese author Cok Sawitri and published by Kaki Langit Kencana in 2009. She based her novel on Tantular's *Sutasoma* as she mentions on the cover of her book.

The novel *Sutasoma* contains 27 chapters twelve of which relate the story of Jayāntaka. The remaining eight chapters tell about Sutasoma, three relate about Keśawa, and four narrate the conflicts between Sutasoma and Jayāntaka.

Both works tell of the conflict between their prominent characters, Sutasoma and Jayāntaka. Sutasoma is the King of Hāstina and the incarnation of the Buddha who has descended into the world in order to do away with human crimes. Jayāntaka who is also called the King of Puruṣāda, is the King of the Ratnakaṇḍa Kingdom. He is the incarnation of the giant Śuciloma who intends to destroy the world. In the *kakawin*, Sutasoma is the protagonist and Jayāntaka is the antagonist whereas in the novel, Jayāntaka is the protagonist while Sutasoma is the antagonist.

Both Sutasomas tell the history of human life, which may be divided into five episodes: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, period of authority, and death. In all five episodes, Jayāntaka is described as being the opposite of Sutasoma. Both are crown princess; Sutasoma is the son of King Sri Mahāketu and Queen Prajñādhari while Jayāntaka is the son of King Sudaśa and Queen Dewi Kalikā Śakti. When Sutasoma was a child, his parents and everybody else in the palace doted on him. By contrast, Jayāntaka grew up without parental care as his mother died when he was still a baby. He was raised and educated by his father's aunt, Ratu Kanyā, in a life of solitude and asceticism in the Angsoka Jungle.

The palace milieu in which Sutasoma spent his childhood contrasts sharply with Jayāntaka's childhood surroundings in the jungle; the quiet and calm palace environment is juxtaposed to the untamed jungle setting. As crown princess, both are portrayed as possessing a wide range of knowledge, abilities, talents, and skills. For instance, Sutasoma is a talented writer and versed in literature and etiquette and so is Jayāntaka. However, Jayāntaka attained these qualities through rigid practice and hard work while Sutasoma gained them effortlessly as Buddha's incarnation. Because of this, both develop into different characters. Jayāntaka is grumpy, which is in sharp contrast to the gentle Sutasoma. Consequently, Jayāntaka chose Śiwa to guide him in life while Sutasoma lives as the Buddha.

One of the important messages of the text is that, in essence, Buddha and Siwa share the same doctrine of truth. They are not different but rather form a unity in diversity (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika). Nonetheless, for Mpu Tantular, Sutasoma and Buddhism are the winners. He closes his *kakawin* by making Jayāntaka repented his mistakes and asked for Sutasoma to instruct him about Buddhism. Afterwards, he and Baṭāra Kalā resolve to become Buddhist priests. In his turn, after Sutasoma inaugurated Jayāntaka and his followers, he and his wife turned to a life of asceticism and they re-transformed themselves into gods. This signifies that Sutasoma's Buddha is more legitimate than Jayāntaka's Śiwa, which means that Buddhism is the true religion, as it originates from Buddha himself.

According to the *Nāgarakṛtāgama*, there were four sects of Hindu's priests one each devoted to Śiwa, Brahmā, Wiṣṇu, and Buddha in the Majapahit Empire when the *Kakawin Sutasoma* was written in the late fourteenth century. According to the *Nāgarakṛtāgama*, they represented the four religious currents in Hinduism, while Śiwaism was Majapahit's state religion. For this reason, Siwa had most devotees compared to the other three. As the official religion of the realm, Śiwaism was allowed to spread any place. Buddha's following were less in number due to suppression in the realm. Buddhism became the second religion in the Majapahit Empire and was not allowed to expand in the regions bordering the realm, except in the east, particularly in Bali and Lombok (see Mulyana 2006: 234-235). Therefore, it is legitimate to say that Tantular's *Kakawin Sutasoma* reflects Buddhism as the second religion in the Majapahit era.

For Sawitri, Jayāntaka - in Tantular's view a destroyer - was born in

response to the indecisiveness of the Gods and human beings about the state's structure and the order of religions. Only he was brave enough to believe that Śiwa's teaching were essential for tranquility in the Kali period. In his incarnation of Śuciloma, he completed his past existences. Therefore, he was open minded and intelligible, unhindered by prejudices and he never responded negatively. Since the day of his birth, he was a true tantric. On the other hand, Sutasoma as Buddha's incarnation also completed his past existences. His knowledge was all-encompassing and his birth as the Buddha's incarnation had been awaited for the salvation of the universe. According to Jayāntaka and his followers, Sutasoma was very egocentric. Sawitri seems to criticize the Buddhist leanings in Tantular's Sutasoma. She concludes her story with Jayāntaka taking leave of Sutasoma and his and his followers' return to Mount Mandara. He resolved not to become a Buddhist like Sutasoma, but firmly to hold on to Śiwaism. Although she did not place Śiwa and Buddha in equal positions, she does succeed to articulate religious freedom.

The *Kakawin Sutasoma* and *Sutasoma* should not only be read by literary researchers and students, but also by researchers on history of religion, particularly Hinduism and Buddhism, and by anyone interested in these subjects.

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