

THE STUDY OF TRADITIONAL MALAY LITERATURE

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I WOULD LIKE FIRST OF ALL TO THANK THE PRESIDENT of the Royal Asiatic Society Malaysian Branch and the Society itself for the invitation to give the Annual Lecture this evening. I propose to spend this one hour or so to talk about some general problems regarding the study of Malay literature, in particular the older or traditional literature. It is a subject which is very close to heart for the Society for it was in the pages of this Society's journal that early attempts were made to study this interesting but very much neglected literature. And it was in the pages of this Society's journal that the most important work on Malay literature was published, that is, Richard Winstedt's *A History of Malay Literature* (1940), an extremely important work that created such a demand that, in 1960, it was found necessary to reprint it. When the Malay Studies Department was established in the University of Malaya in 1953, Richard Winstedt's work became the basis and the starting point for the study of Malay literature. As one reads and rereads the book one could not but admire the extensiveness and the depth of Richard Winstedt's understanding of Malay culture. Although later in this talk I shall give some criticisms of Richard Winstedt's work, they are criticisms directed more towards the weaknesses of his time rather than his personality. Anybody writing at the time that Richard Winstedt was writing, with all the shortcomings of his period, would probably have fallen into the same error, if one may call it an error at all.

The present interest of the Malay people towards their own traditional literature has been very mixed. On the one side there is the group of ardent nationalists who are eagerly grabbing anything that come in their way and trying to reconstruct it into a glorious cultural past at the expense of precision and historical accuracy. A member of this group will tell us of the rich literary heritage of the Malay people, but the probability is that he himself has not read four texts of this heritage and can hardly name twenty titles of that rich literature. On the other side, there is the group of young forward-looking people who are interested only in the present and the future, who are anxiously trying to forget the past, because the past has brought them nothing but embarrassment. Their literary

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past for example which was built upon the feudalistic contrast of the unquestioned power of the court and the subservient position of the masses can no longer give them any meaning in their struggle for human dignity. They seem to agree wholeheartedly with the German Malayologist Hans Overbeck who at the beginning of this century cried "Malay literature is dead!" — although "dead" to them here in the sense of its irrelevance to modern life. Also included in this group is an extreme case related to me by a Dutch friend. After Indonesia's independence this friend went to Sumatra with the intention of collecting old Malay manuscripts. He entered a remote village, met a young man, and he told him of his search for Malay manuscripts. The young man sensitively replied "Kami sudah tidak ada itu tuan, kami sudah pandai!" — "We no longer have those manuscripts Sir, we have become clever!" Clever in the sense that we no longer live in those fairy worlds of magic and beautiful fantasies, of captivating princesses and all-powerful princes!

But the study of a literature does not depend upon the sentimental need of its people. The Malay language after the war has become the national language of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, and our attention is naturally focussed on the historical development of this language. For the linguists the older literature is perhaps the only medium by which they can get a view of the structure of the language in the past. Also the study of the national language in schools and colleges, both practical as well as scientific, created the necessity for a better knowledge of Malay literature, and this interest is supplemented by the deepening historical and cultural awareness among the general public at large. But the attention towards this old literature is not confined to this area alone. The growing importance of our region has stimulated Malay Studies in other countries, especially in Australia, the United States, England and Russia. A growing number of university students take Malay as an academic subject; as a consequence, there is a growing interest in Malay literature. Also part of this literature has a strong historical, religious and sociological interest, so that students of history and the social and cultural development of South-east Asia will pay increasing attention to it.

Although the Europeans came to our region from early in the 16th century, there was practically no interest shown towards the study of the indigenous culture and literature for the first three centuries. The Portuguese and the Spanish who occupied the Straits of Malacca and some parts of Nusantara, that is the Malay Archipelago, for more than a century, at a period when Malay culture was supposed to have had, and was having, its bloom, left us no trace of the richness of the literature of the time. In recent years much search has been carried out in the libraries and the museums of the Iberian peninsula to find out if there

were any manuscripts from the Portugo-Spanish period, but so far only one manuscript had been found. Equally true too was the interest of the Dutch and the English colonialists during the 17th and the 18th centuries, although here we have some remarkable exceptions in the fact that from early 17th century some manuscripts were brought back to Holland and England, the most important of which are the half dozen manuscripts that are now being kept in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Any mention about the presence of Malay literature during this period was purely incidental. The earliest note we got was from Francois Valentijn, the Dutch missionary-historian, in the fifth volume of his gigantic book *Nieuwe en Oude Oost India* published in 1726. While describing Malacca Valentijn mentioned some Malay literary works that were in his possession, three of them, that is, Taju's-salatin or Mahkota Segala Raja² (the Crown of Kings), Misa Gomitar, probably the text known to us now as Misa Kumitar, a Panji tale, and the third, Kitab Hantoewa or Hang Tuah, which according to Valentijn was also known to Malay scholars of the time by the name of Sulalatus-Salatin. This is an obvious confusion on the part of Valentijn because Sulalatus-Salatin is just another title for Sejarah Melayu. Perhaps his Hikayat Hang Tuah was just a copy of Sejarah Melayu, which is not improbable because Sejarah Melayu contains chapters on that Malay hero.¹ The next and perhaps the most important note about the presence of this literature came ten years later, in 1736, when the Swiss scholar G.H. Werndly published his *Maleische Spraakkunst* or Malay Grammar. As an appendix to his grammar he gave a list of 69 texts which he noted as being written by the Malays. This list is of importance to the Malay literary historian because, as I shall describe later, the majority of the Malay manuscripts that are available to us have been collected or copied during the 19th century and all these texts never indicated the dates and the places where they were first written. Thus this incidental mention made by Werndly gives us the important information that at least these 69 texts had been written by 1736.

The general lack of interest towards the indigenous cultures that was evident before the end of the 18th century was not only due to the deep preoccupation of the colonialists in commercial enterprises, or to the somewhat contemptuous attitude of the Europeans towards the inferiority of native culture as a whole, but was also an extension of the mood that was prevalent in Europe during those times. In Europe itself there was general neglect for the provincial and the dialect cultures. It was generally accepted that Greek and Latin were the purest and the noblest of the European languages, in fact, of all the languages in the world. The

¹ A. Teeuw, "Tentang penghargaan dan pentafsiran Hikayat Hang Tuah," *Dewan Bahasa*, Vol. VIII, no. 8, 1964, pp. 339-54.

modern European languages, be it French or Spanish or Dutch, were thought of as mere corruptions of Latin and, as very few people were interested to study corrupted cultures, they naturally went back to the purest vehicles of human civilisation, that is, the classical languages. It was only with the romantic mood that swept through Europe at the end of the 18th century that the interest shifted to the neglected cultures that developed outside the classical languages. In Europe this attitude was symbolised by the Grimm brothers who brought to the amazed attention of the Europeans and the world at large the rich and beautiful culture that was present in the neglected German dialects. The extension of this romantic mood in Asia, a mood that eagerly searched for the new, the unknown and the so-called exotic, was symbolised in the person of Warren Hastings in India. During Hastings' tenure of office in the third quarter of the 18th century, there were many Englishmen in India who not only did their service in the political and administrative sphere, but also in scientific fields. These Englishmen besides discharging their duties as civil servants kept their eyes and their minds wide open to the remarkable wealth that nature, society and culture offered there. Hastings himself, in addition to having great talent for administration, paid great interest to the study of all sorts of sciences. He was competent in Persian, Bengali and other native languages, he was a student of natural history, of geography and art, and he was a patron of the study of native law. He was always trying to understand the native culture. It was largely through his instigation that the Asiatic Society, later the Asiatic Society of Bengal, was formed by Sir William Jones the Chief Justice of India in 1784, in which the study of Sanskrit and Indian culture became the focal point of interest. A great part of this study was in the hands of lawyers, civil servants, doctors and officers, who devoted their free hours to knowledge. Jones himself was a lawyer, Colebrooke who laid the foundation of Sanskrit Philology did several administrative functions, Wilkins who was dubbed as the "Sanskrit-mad Gentleman" was a writer in the East India Company's Civil Service. Wilkins as an older friend, and later the father-in-law, of William Marsden who extended the activities into Malay language and history.² It was this group of scholars which shocked Europe with the discovery that Sanskrit (the inherited language of the colonised people then) was related to the European languages and that it was, in the words of Sir William Jones, "more perfect than the Greek and more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either." A discovery that awakened the Europeans from their long illusion that theirs was the most perfect

² J. Gonda, "William Marsden als beoefenaar der taalwetenschap," BKI 98, 1939, pp. 517-28.

language of all. With this began a furious age of Indo-Germanic comparative and historical linguistics.

While all this was happening that great scholar-administrator in Nusantara history Stamford Raffles was growing up. By the beginning of the 19th century, he was to be the shining example in scholarship and administration, not only to his generation but also to the generation that followed, not only to his English compatriots but also to his Dutch rivals. Raffles marked the beginning of an active century in the study of the culture and sciences of our area, as seen in the founding of several academic societies to which we are forever indebted for the knowledge that we now have. It was in this century that the *Bataviaasche Genootschap*, that is, the Batavian Society for Arts and Sciences of which Raffles himself was a one-time president, was founded. In the middle of the century we saw the foundation of the Royal Institute of Language, Geography and Ethnology of the East Indies and then during the 3rd quarter this Royal Asiatic Society of ours in the Malay Peninsula. For Malay literature, it was above all an age of intensive collection of Malay manuscripts. Some two thousands Malay manuscripts of all sorts flowed to Europe, the main collections in British and Dutch libraries now originated from the collection of this period, inherited from the possessions of private collectors such as Raffles, Farquhar, Maxwell, Klinkert, van Ophujsen, Snouck Hurgronje and Roorda van Esynga. I shall show here just one example of the rate of growth of Malay manuscripts in Leiden University Library during this time. In about 1850 there were only 7 Malay manuscripts being kept there, in 1864 there were 107, in 1899 when the first catalogue was published by Juynboll there was a total of 401 manuscripts. At the beginning of the 20th century with the death of several 19-century collectors whose collections were donated to the university, this number grew almost three times. In 1921, when a supplementary catalogue was published by van Ronkel, the total collection was 1168. The number has been increasing steadily after that date.

This interest towards native literature created the need for a handbook on the subject. In 1845 Dr. J.J. de Hollander, a professor at the Royal Military Academy in Holland wrote a book in Dutch which he called *Handbook for the Study of the Malay Language and Literature*. It was a thick book of 706 pages, divided into 3 parts — the first part of 276 pages was devoted to the grammar of the Malay language, the second part of 114 pages devoted to the discussion and description of Malay Literature, and the third part was an anthology of extracts of all sorts of Malay Literary works covering 315 pages. What de Hollander did in the literature section was to give 5 short discussive chapters giving a short survey of the history of the Malay people, a short survey of the history of the Malay language, on the distinction between high and

low Malay — a subject apparently important in the 19th century because of the indecisiveness of the church which of the two forms to use for their preaching — on the Malay dialects, and on the division of Malay literature into periods. De Hollander was a specialist in handbooks, and three years later he published an equally thick book on the study of Javanese language and literature. But in both his handbooks, he had nothing important to say; most of the contents were mere collections of extracts of what other people had said on the subjects, and what people had said on Malay literature at that time was very little indeed. The way de Hollander divided Malay literature into periods is what one would expect — Malay literary history was put into two compartments: the pre-European period and the European period. What comprise the first period no mention was made. The rest of the literature section was devoted to the enumeration of the various titles of Malay literary works known to him. Under each title a short note was given, mostly one or two sentences, translating what the title means, some titles receive notations of one or two paragraphs to give summaries of the contents. The titles were grouped into topics: the poetical works (115 of them), the prose writings of which 41 Islamic religion and legal works, 44 muslim legends, 98 titles of myths and other fiction, 47 historical works and travels, 12 philosophical and ethical works, 24 titles on law, and 16 varia — making altogether a total of 398 titles of Malay literary works known in Europe in the middle of the last century. De Hollander's handbook became a very important guide for Malay literature, by the end of the century 6 editions were made, and the book became the sole authority for 92 years until C. Hooykaas published his *Over Maleische Literatuur* in 1937. But between the 92 years between the first edition of de Hollander and the new book by Hooykaas a lot of things happened to Malay literature. In the first place there was the work of consolidating the manuscript collections in European and in Jakarta libraries. Many devoted scholars spent their time on the tedious job of classifying and cataloguing them, and throughout this period a stream of lists and catalogues of Malay manuscripts were printed, these catalogues and lists give details of each text, its condition and content and possible relationship with some other texts — information which give us an increasingly clearer picture of the wealth of this literature. While this was happening the Department of Malay Language & Literature at Leiden University set up in 1877 was stabilizing itself. Between 1895 until 1938 twelve students did their doctoral dissertations on Malay literature, or using materials from Malay texts. This was a very small number of students, a rate of one student in 3½ years, but their contribution has brought us a step forward in our understanding of this literature. During these years a considerable number of articles on the literature were published in the journal of the Royal

Asiatic Society, in *Bijdragen* of the Royal Institute, in the *Tijdschrift* of the Batavian Society, in the journal *Djawa* and many others. Many texts of Malay works were published too for use in schools and for the study of the language. Nearly all of these are imperfect texts but from them we can get a rough picture of the works.

Dr. C. Hooykaas who next wrote a book on Malay literature is a professional scholar. Hooykaas studied Indonesian languages in Leiden University, graduated in 1929 with a dissertation on *Tantri*, the Middle-Javanese version of the Indian Panchatantra. For some years he was a teacher in high schools in Java before becoming a professor in Jakarta, it was during his high-school years that he wrote this book and several other less important introductory guides to Malay literature, mostly based on his class-room notes, and intended for the use of the school students. The title of the book reflects his unassuming personality, he calls his 300-page work *About Malay Literature*. The 22 chapters in this book follows no consistent order of chronology or topic, the whole book is in fact a collection of interesting essays with titles such as "Shair, the rhyme that is used for everything," "Hikayat, the book with Indian fantasy," "Amir Hamzah, the muslim knight without fear or blame" and such-like catchy captions. Each independent chapter is charmingly written and highly readable, but this work is somewhat lacking in depth compared to Winstedt's work. When Winstedt's work appeared 3 years later, Hooykaas in the introduction to his 2nd and last edition expressed the doubt whether his book still had reason to exist side by side with the work of such "a well-seasoned expert." Hooykaas's venture into Malay literature had been brief but intense. Later he admitted to me of his early fascination with Nusantara folklore, thus Malay literature, after he had been working on the Javanese Panchatantra, but because of its unsurmountable difficulty he had to abandon it. He reverted to the Javanese language and his succeeding years have been spent very fruitfully in the interpreting of that very old and very difficult Javanese text, the *Kakawin Ramayana*.

So we come to the most important work of all by Winstedt published in the journal of the Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society in 1940. But I am not going to say anything about it now, here I wish only to state that Winstedt was the only man who had the courage to call his work a history.

Let us for the moment go back to a more basic problem, what is it that I call Malay traditional literature? The traditional literature in my sense is all those literary phenomena, be it written or oral, that existed or might have existed about the middle of the 19th century. My simple dividing line is the printing press which had changed completely the role of the Malay literator, and has revolutionized the concept of Malay

literature. I can just mention to you that great controversial literary pioneer of the last century Abdullah Munshi who was the first person to write for a printing press, who in his writings offered the first serious criticism against the Malay feudal structure on which Malay literary culture had existed for centuries. One of the most interesting characteristics of the new literature of the Malay people in the peninsula is the quick defeudalization of that culture. Within decades that literature changed from the preoccupation of the kings and the feudal lords to become the effective tool of the struggling masses, so that in 1950 literary life was not even participated in by the Malay middle class. So this traditional literature is essentially a feudal literature and it reflects the sharp contrast of the feudal social structure between the *raja* and the *rakyat*. On the one hand there is the written literature of the court, sophisticated and cosmopolitan, reflecting the international cultures that the Malay courts along the Straits of Malacca were constantly exposed to. On the other hand there is the literature of the rakyat, the folk literature, mostly an oral tradition. Feudalism in Nusantara gives us the impression that there is a great deal of autonomy at the village level due to the stability of its economy. There were times when this autonomy became so strong that the peasants could overthrow a king, but it was only due to the lack of a new social concept on the part of the peasants, that the vacant throne was reoccupied by another king. Because of this autonomy, it was possible for the folk culture and literature to have an independent growth and life of its own. The wealth of this folk literary tradition has never been estimated. Before World War II and after independence some colonial scholars including Winstedt and Sturrock, and then the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, attempted to document these stories of the penglipur laras, but so far only less than ten have been printed and about ten are being kept in the form of tapes in the library of the Dewan Bahasa. Last year I sent out five of my students to make a preliminary survey of the penglipur lara stories in 5 villages, and what I got was the summaries of some 30 long stories, and hours and hours of tape-recordings.

So in actual fact what we are facing now when we talk about the Malay traditional literature is that group of written literature which was largely cultivated in the Malay courts or in the homes of the Malay feudal elites. The whole of this literature is embodied in the handwritten manuscripts that we have inherited from the 19th century and before. I have distributed to you the printed lists and catalogues of Malay manuscripts that are being kept in the various libraries in Europe and in the Jakarta Museum. The biggest single collection in all these is the collection in Leiden University where 1168 items were recorded in 1921, and which I now estimate to be something like 1,500 items. The next biggest collection is that of the Jakarta Museum which in its printed catalogue of 1909

recorded 919 items but the present stock may exceed that of Leiden University. Most of these catalogues and lists were compiled several decades ago and since then many additions have been made. In my visits to the various libraries in Europe and the United States I tried to make an assessment of the wealth of this treasure. There are unknown collections in the smaller provincial museums in Holland such as those in Deventer and Groningen. There is a probable unrecorded collection in Vienna, in the National Library of Austria. The Malay manuscripts in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris are mixed up with other unclassified Arabic manuscripts. There is the interesting discovery of about two dozen Malay manuscripts being kept in the John Rayland Library in Manchester. A dozen manuscripts in the Library of Congress are of no importance because they are recent copies of manuscripts that we already have. And the remarkable thing about the printed information that we have is that there is no news whatsoever of the manuscripts in the home area of the Malay language itself — in the Malay Peninsula and in Sumatra. Some 50 manuscripts are kept in the National Library in Singapore, in the University of Malaya Library and in the Dewan Bahasa and there is no indication of the number that might still be available. As one travels in the countryside one continuously hears of the sacred *pusakas* in several homes jealously stored and guarded not to be seen or lent to other people. And above all these, there are rumours of some Malay manuscripts in India, and one never knows what may come up one day from some libraries in Taiwan and Japan. Working on the data that I have collected I made an estimate of the quantity of this literature, and it comes out something like this: there are a total of about 5,000 Malay manuscripts that are available for our consultation now, these 5,000 manuscripts are made up of 800 titles, so each title has roughly about 6 manuscripts or versions. These 800 titles can be put roughly into these provisional categories: 150 prose fiction works of all sorts, 46 Muslim legends, 47 historical, 41 law, 116 poetic works, 300 theological writings and the remaining 100 under miscellaneous.

The term literature that I have used all along is in no way synonymous with the concept Literature with capital L in Europe. Literature in the Malay or Nusantara concept includes everything that uses words or language in a creative way, creative in a very broad sense. There is no boundary between mythical fiction and a historical description for example, and there is sometimes no boundary between an enumeration of the adat law with a love poem. Some of the most serious theosophical expositions have been put into beautiful poetry, in the shair form, because poetry is much more easily retained by memory and much more pleasant to hear. Many European scholars who are embedded in the prejudices of the aesthetic values of their society, failed or refused to recognise this charac-

teristic of the local literature, as a result they created many unfounded assumptions. These scholars failed to notice for example that the Malay literary work was never written, until late last century, for a commercial motive, so its creation was not conditioned by the changing needs and tastes of the audience—a factor which played an important part in the English literary development since the 16th century. In a society where literacy has been extremely restricted the man with the knowledge of the letters plays a much wider role than the literate man in European history. In the Nusantara cultural history we often find the writer as synonymous with the scholar, the priest, the magician and the divine. The traditional Malay word for literature was “persuratan”—whatever was placed on paper. It was only after the War that the word “kesusasteraan”—the refined artistic writings—came into use.

This traditional literature that we have, written in a Persian form of the Arabic alphabet, comprises of works that extends back to the 15th century, although no actual dates can be ascertained. Not an inconsiderable part certainly came first into being during the Hindu-Malay period, which can be traced back to the 7th century A.D., the oldest Malay inscriptions found so far being dated about 686 A.D. I wish I could discuss here the interesting but still complex questions as regards the original homes of the Malay language and the Malay people, but as it would take too much time, I will leave it at this point. I would prefer to make some remarks on the study which had been made so far on Malay literature.

In the first place, most of these studies we have seen were made by European scholars, both amateurs of the civil servant group such as Richard Winstedt, and professional scholars such as Dr. C. Hooykaas and all those who graduated in Indology at the University of Leiden. As we can see from the list of philological studies done, the pre-war period was dominated by Dutch students of Leiden University. Oriental Studies in Leiden University, which began in earnest during the 2nd half of the last century had been dominated by two gigantic figures. One of them was Hendrik Kern, a Sanskritist and a student of Indian civilization of tremendous magnitude, who extended his interest successfully into the civilization, especially of language and literature, of the East Indies. The other was an Islamologist in the person of Snouck Hurgronje, a small man in size, but so dominant a personality in Leiden academic life that his successors could live but under his shadow. Snouck Hurgronje was not only a scholar of religion, but a sociologist and a linguist of the first order. One need only look at his analysis of the Achehnese language and the orthography prepared by him, to realize that even in this field of a subsidiary interest to him he achieved a perfection much above his time, analysing a language phonemically and structurally even before phonemics and structural analysis found a firm basis. These were the two men who

set up the tradition of studies of Indonesian languages and cultures, a tradition based on two civilizations, Islamic and Indian, very much in parallel to the study of a Dutch culture for example based on two great civilizations of Greek and Latin. The model was the case in actual fact and this created some misunderstanding in later decades even to the present time. The relationship of Dutch or French to Greek and Latin can in no way be compared to the relationship between Malay or Javanese to Arabic and Sanskrit, the former all three are genetically related while of the latter none is genetically related to the other. The twin relationship between Greek and Latin cannot be found in the relationship between Arabic and Sanskrit. So in later years successive students of Indonesian civilization attempted to look at problems of cultural decadence and innovation, as one would look at the cultural development of Europe in the context of Latin and Greek, creating thus a body of presumptions which are far from needed. Malay grammar, for example, had been continuously written in the terminology and the classification of the Latin model. The Old Javanese language for many years had been looked upon as an extension of the Sanskrit language simply because of the large number of Sanskrit lexical items present in the language, whereas in actual fact these two languages belong to completely different language families. How this misunderstanding arose in the study of the local literature I shall discuss further later.

So a prospective student of Indonesian language and literature in Holland spends some six years in the secondary studying among other things, Greek and Latin. The first 3 years of his university life are spent exclusively on Arabic and Sanskrit and their civilizations. It is only during the next 3 years that he is brought in touch with Indonesian culture, studying the Malay language, a Sumatran language, in most cases the Batak language, and the Old and New Javanese, at the same time Indonesian comparative linguistics seen in the light of Indo-Germanic philosophy. The sum total of this rigorous classical training has a strong historical and comparative tone, and it is no wonder then that the researches carried out by these students have been strongly of a comparative and historical nature. The European orientalists in Europe during the last century have been preoccupied mainly with Sanskrit, because of its relationship with the Germanic family, and Arabic because of the challenge it offered to Christian civilization. Everything else is subsidiary to these two preoccupations and is seen only in the light of these two civilizations. So the studies of Malay and Indonesian culture in general have always been somewhat like the studies of Greater-India culture and Greater-Arabia culture. Successive students of Malay literature and culture spent their time tracing the sources of foreign elements in Malay culture. Ronkel and Van Leeuwen who worked on the Amir Hamzah and the

Malay Alexander stories were students of Persian and they were interested in Persian influences on Malay literature. Stutterheim and Poerbatjaraka traced the myths of the Rama and the Agastya legends in the local literatures as part of their Indian cultural studies. Pijper was a student of Islamic theology and he was interested to compare that famous Kitab Seribu Masa'il with its Arabic source. The resultant effect of all these activities is that we know much about the cultures of India, of Iran and of Arabia and almost nothing about Malay culture. Anyone who is involved in the study of the structure of society, be it linguistic or social or cultural, will see that here we are faced not with the problem of cultural transplantation but with the problem of foreign elements being brought into an existing local structure and system. A fruitful study would be to look from within the system and to see the syncretization of non-local elements. Another side-effect of this type of academic orientation was to arouse interest in historical studies. If we look at the philological studies done as dissertations and theses, and if we subtract from this list the Indian-influenced and Persian-influenced works, and also the theological Hikayat Seribu Masa'il, we would find that nearly all the rest of the literature which received attention was of the historical type. These historical texts have been worked upon purely from historical interest, nowhere was a literary treatment made in spite of the fact that the Malay historical text is as much part of literature as of history. Even the interest towards local sufistic writings was largely historical. The purely historical interest has diverted the attention of a great number of first rate scholars from Malay to the Javanese language, because the Javanese language, offered extensive literature from the Pre-European period on which the European scholars totally lack materials.

Secondly the study of Malay literature has been somewhat like the saying, 'putting the cart before the horse.' Before an attempt has been made to study and understand each individual text in culture, one already makes a general historical survey of the literature, as Winstedt tried to do. I am not contending here the need for a general handbook to give a picture of the scope of the subject, but I would object to any pretension of calling it a *history*. A history needs chronology, and it is obvious there is no chronology as yet in the development of the Malay texts. When one goes through some of these texts one sometimes wonders whether there will ever be a chronology at all. For each Malay text is not the work of one individual of a particular time, but the common creation of a community. And the community of each succeeding generation felt it his right, and sometimes even his duty, to modify, alter or improve the text according to the taste and need of his time. Thus most of the texts we have now originated from copies made during the 19th century and they are the 19th century versions of the much older texts.

To turn back to Winstedt, here we must admit that Winstedt's concept of Malay history is somewhat different from ours. One could just look at his book *The Malays: A Cultural History* and wonder whether it can be called a history at all, for it is a mere topical discussion of the various aspects of Malay cultural life. Winstedt apparently had a very clear-cut idea of the cultural development of the Malay people as expressed in the title of one of his other books *The Malay Magician* and its subtitle "Shaman, Saiva and Sufi." In Winstedt's mind the Malay people pass through three distinct phases in their history: the primitive stage symbolised by the Shaman, the Hinduistic stage symbolised by Saiva and the Islamic stage symbolised by the Sufi. And to Winstedt if one could clarify the various interlocking elements within the three stages one would be justified to call the work a history. This is of course partly true, but the danger in this is that this strict compartmentalisation would compel one to look at the whole development as problems of clear borrowing and adaptation, and in many cases to emphasize this borrowing and adaptation at the expense of admitting the obvious creative ingenuity of the native people.

So in his history of Malay literature Winstedt places the whole development of the literature into his distinct compartments: the first is the folk-literature, most of which represents the primitive, pre-hinduistic literary development, but even here emphasizing the non-native elements, reminding the readers all the time of the occurrence of the various motifs of the Malay folk-literature in other cultures, not only in India, but also in other parts of the world. And then comes immediately the Hindu period, a discussion of the epics in direct relationship with the epics in India. This is a totally unacceptable approach to me because the development of Ramayana and Mahabharata must be seen in the context of Nusantara first, before one shifts to India. The Malay Ramayana and Mahabharata must be seen in its relation to the development in Java where Hindu-Buddhistic civilisation found its highest expression, where the first traces of the epics found in written form from the 9th century, and where the wayang culture developed and probably was its original home. The role that Java played in the propagation of Hindu culture to the surrounding area cannot be neglected. I would just draw your attention to the large number of Javanese who were ever present in the Malay courts along the Straits of Malacca. Winstedt's attempt to escape from this Nusantara-centric treatment compels him to put a separate chapter on what he calls "A Javanese Element" to treat the large number of Panji stories present in Malay. And the most shocking thing he did to the sentiment of the modern Malay nationalist is to treat in this chapter that most Malay of Malay writings the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* as a Javanese-inspired piece modelled upon the Panji tales and supplemented by Indian

elements, and in the whole discussion of the work, he treated it accordingly. After this Winstedt gave a clear transition chapter "From Hinduism to Islam" followed by four chapters on the various groups of the Islam-inspired literature. The more Malay part of this literary history is given at the end of the book under the titles "Malay Histories," "Codes of Law" and "Malay Poetry." These are very short and rather dull discussions compared to the non-indigenous parts, very often nothing more than short descriptions of the texts and summaries of their contents. In the chapter on the Malay histories he treated that very old text *Hikayat Raja2 Pasai* at the same time as the very recent text *Tuhfat-al-Nafis*, thus in the end giving the general impression that the whole book treated the history of Malay literature not in any chronological sense but in arrangement of topics, and even the arrangement of topics does not follow a logical order of history.

As one reads Winstedt's book one becomes painfully aware of the tremendous amount of philological spadework that has yet to be done before one can talk in a general way about the totality of the Malay literature, what more to discuss it in its historical sequence. Out of the possible 800 texts in Malay literature which I had earlier mentioned there are only 25 texts, that is about 0.03% of the total, which had been edited in a scientific way and which are reliable to be used for all purposes. Besides this there are now about 100 other texts which have been printed, both in Jawi and Rumi, but nearly all these texts are imperfect editions from imperfect manuscripts, and thus they are not at all authoritative. By the philological work which I am proposing here, I mean largely textual reconstruction, interpretation and analysis. Each of the Malay text, by using all its available versions, must be reconstructed to its nearest original form and proper interpretation has to be given in the context of the culture of the time in which it was written. Fortunately here we can follow safely the methodology that has been so well developed in the study of the classical literature of Europe, that is of Greek and Latin, although here the problems faced are somewhat different—Malay philology for example lack most of the supplementary data from archaeology and historical remnants and records of all sorts which the classical philology in Europe is so rich of. And this Malay philology has an added difficulty by the fact that the texts were all written in the Arabic script, and this Arabic script generally does not show proper vowelings so that the lexical items are open to various interpretations. Most of the philological works we have so far, have been produced by European students in European libraries, that is worked by people who live outside the Malay culture and whose knowledge of Malay culture was entirely gleaned from books and publications. Any philological work of my language done in this way is open to serious disadvantages.

The ideal workers for this task are therefore the Malaysian scholars who live right inside the homeland of Malay culture. Aside from this the documentation of Malay folk literature is of no less importance, if not extremely urgent, because of its progressive disappearance. As I said earlier there are only about 10 Malay folk stories which have been printed so far, mostly collected by Winstedt and Sturrock, but these two scholars have been extremely normative in their concept of the Malay language and literature. Their approach rendered their works practically useless for academic purposes. In nearly all their introductions of these folk-tales we read lines such as "I had this folk-tale put into literary Malay or this folk-tale has been touched and enlarged by another hand" or "we had put the shapeless colloquial passages into grammatical prose" — showing an abhorrence for dialect and folk-art. Therefore nearly all their printed texts are modern and sophisticated transformations of the folk-literature which make them useless for comparative purposes.

Thirdly in all these studies done so far there is a very clearcut picture what Malay is. For a long time people have accepted as a matter of course the myth that literary and standard Malay belongs to the Johor-Riau dialect and that Malay literature is essentially the literature of the Peninsula Malays, quoting as examples that *Sejarah Melayu* and *Tuhfat-al-Nafis*. This assumption that literary Malay originated from the Johor-Riau dialect is still very much a myth. Closer comparison does not indicate that these two forms are synonymous. And to confine Malay literature in such a restricted geographic boundary is both unreal and un-scientific. The danger in this sort of confinement is to make one look at the whole development of Malay literature as a complete entity within itself, oblivious of the actual role that the Malay language has played during the centuries, and oblivious to the close interlinguistic and intercultural relationship between this Malay and the other speech communities within these islands of the south. This division actually has been done with a clear political motive, for the colonial scholars have always been conscious of the political divisions they were in, and have continuously defended their colonial political interests. Although the Dutch officially tried to encourage the use of Malay, they were secretly envious of the great role that the Malay language might assume and so were reluctant to give their full unrestrained support. The British scholars were afraid to look over across the Straits of Malacca for fear of broadening the base of Malay nationalism. And besides all these there was constant rivalry between Dutch and British scholars, each was reluctant to accept the other. One could look through the work of Winstedt and discover his neglect of the tremendous amount of work on Malay literature which had been produced by Dutch scholars by 1940.

The fact is that Malay, because of its base along the critical Straits of Malacca, has become somewhat like a no man's language, it is the language of everybody and nobody. Forgetting our norms of what standard Malay or literary Malay should be, for centuries this language has been used equally well and efficiently as a medium of communication in this region of some 250 mutually unintelligible languages, whether in the Moluccas, or in New Guinea or in Aceh. The culture that has been embodied in this language too has become somewhat like a no-man's culture, one can just look through the catalogues of Malay manuscripts available, side by side with the Malay Annals, or the Johor Annals; there is the *Hikayat Ternate* of the *Moluccas*, *Hikayat Mengkasar* of Celebes, *Hikayat Raja2 Banjar dan Kota Waringin* of Southern Borneo, *Hikayat Jawa*, *Hikayat Riau*, *Undang2 Menangkabau*, *Hikayat Aceh* of Sumatra and *Hikayat Raja2 Siam* of Thailand. The type of style and language used in these texts and other texts are variable, sometimes one can recognize readily that this is written by a Minangkabau man, that is written by a Malay man but copied by a Jakarta man, and some other texts done in Aceh. The Malay language because of the intermediary role it had to play has become a very assimilative and flexible language, and the culture that it has accumulated has lost the distinctive character that one might call Malay, as one might readily recognize the Javanese culture for example. It was because of this vague characteristic of the Malay language and the Malay literature, that the linguistic and the literary study of Malay has been very much neglected. For example, even though Malay has assumed such an important position, no scholar has ever yet attempted a structural study of the language, whereas Javanese has received extremely good structural descriptions in recent years. So is it in the case of literature, as I have pointed out earlier. A student who is interested in the literature of this area would automatically focus his attention on Javanese literature first, if he has a choice, because besides other reasons, there is a distinct Javanese character as different from the character of the surrounding dialects.

In my contact with the various languages in Nusantara and in my casual survey of the various traditional literatures in these languages, I realize how impossible it is to treat Malay literature outside the cultural context in which it had become an integral part. Malay literature must first of all be looked upon in the context of the cultural development of Nusantara, it must be studied in the light of the traditional literatures in the various Sumatran languages and the languages of Java and even of Borneo and Celebes. It is only after we have proper perspectives of the development of Malay literature within its world that we can undertake the comparative study of this literature with other foreign literatures from which it has gained inspiration. Looked at from this point of view

one realizes how distorted the picture can be when Winstedt from the first page of his book took an element in Malay literature and then compared it directly with the corresponding or similar element in India or in Persia or Arabia. For that element in Malay literature might not have come direct from India at all, but might have undergone successive stages of borrowing in the other languages of Nusantara before it was assimilated into Malay.

What is this Nusantara literature? Nusantara, the Intermediate Islands, intermediate between China and India, is a term I have personally chosen because of its non-geographic, non-political and non-ethnic connotation to indicate this very big area variously called the Malay Archipelago, the Indonesian Archipelago and, in linguistics, the Western Malayo-Polynesia. Nusantara is basically a linguistic grouping which forms an important part of that huge family of languages called the Austronesian, formerly termed as the Malayo-Polynesian. Nusantara languages have been popularly believed to be the earlier root of the Polynesian, Micronesian and Melanesian speech-forms. Anyone who comes into touch with the cultures of these thousand islands of Nusantara would be endlessly fascinated by Nusantara's continuous variations — the variety of its music, dances, and sculptorings makes it something like an earthly paradise for the ethnologists. But underneath this eternal variety there is a line of unity all along, due to the similar ethnic characteristics and geographic conditionings, to the similar foreign cultural influences that it had undergone, and to the great mobility of most of the inhabitants. Thus there has always been constant inter-insular and inter-dialect contacts. In traditional literatures this tone of unity is more emphasized. Each literary form and motif recurs again and again in the differing islands but always with fascinating modifications.

Our present knowledge of this Nusantara literature is satisfactory although by no means sufficient. The data that we have gained about these various traditional literatures have been largely incidental, mostly subsidiary data collected at the beginning of this century by missionaries, grammarians, sociologists, ethnologists and travellers. Only Javanese literature received the undivided attention of literary scholars and so it is the literature that we know best although this knowledge is still insufficient for the writing of a literary history. We have sufficiently good information on the Achehnese literature published in Snouck Hurgronje's sociological study *The Achehnese*. We know much about the literatures of the Sundanese people, of the Balinese, the Bataks, the Minangkabaus and have some haphazard data on the Maccassarese and the people in the Lesser Sundas and Moluccus. I am not able to say anything here about the traditional literatures of the Filipinos not because of any lack of publications but due to the unavailability of those materials in our

libraries. Some of the literatures of the more primitive people in the area have been very well described, I take as an example here the description of the Torajas in Middle Celebes by N. Adriani.

It would be impossible for me here to describe with detail the characteristics of these various literatures, although that would be best in order to understand this relevance to the study of Malay literature. I shall just take here the examples of two extreme cases, the first is what one might call the most primitive form, and the other the most developed and the most sophisticated stage.

In 1914 N. Adriani and A.C. Kruyt published their ethnographic study of the Bare's-speaking Torajas in the Middle Celebes, an extremely important study, because for the first time we have a complete picture of the life of a very primitive community in the Nusantara area, primitive in the sense that it shows very restricted influences of the numerous cultural waves that the coastal areas are so much exposed to. In the third volume of this study Adriani gives us a very faithful and valuable description of the literature of this community, literature in a very special sense and this description caused Adriani great difficulty because literary practice there was a taboo, associated with magic and religion, which would in no way be revealed to outsiders. The literature of the Bare's-speaking people indicates that sympathetic magic and analogic-action play very important roles. This can be seen in the labour songs, the war songs, and in the song which people recited on religious occasions. The intention of such songs, which are usually sung with refrain, seems to be that by describing an action in the song one stimulates and promotes the action itself, that when one mentions success in the song, success itself in a magical way will be forced to appear. In the feast of the dead, for example, one describes the journey of the dead through the other world, because when the description has been completed, through that description the dead is assisted to get to his destination. In this society the recitation of such poetry has a definite intention and purpose, and so it speaks for itself that it is not proper, and can even be dangerous, to recite such poetry outside the occasion of which it forms a part. A remnant of the command that literature may not be recited at specific times is seen in the fact that its recitation and practice can only be carried out at a very specific period. In nine out of the twelve months of the Toraja's calendar year no literature in any form may be practised. The present literature of the Toraja people has developed out of this primitive stage. The Torajas have now a wealth of stories, some of them for recitation and some of them for singing. Every Toraja knows the stories and he can recite them in a very capable way. Story telling occurred also as a community practice, thus a sort of community singing.

At this primitive stage a great deal of the stories are fairy tales and myths and we can imagine that when the society reaches a higher level of development these fairy tales and myths will grow to become epics and historical writings. And when there appears the professional story-tellers, such as the Penglipur Laras in Malay, then the society will have reached a still much higher stage of development. The stories of the Penglipur Laras have become more complicated, they are no longer easy to be retained by memory. In the end they were transferred into writing.

At the opposite pole of this Toradja culture is the literature of the Javanese people, the biggest single speech community in Nusantara, and the people with the longest history and the most brilliant civilization in the area. Whereas most written records in other areas in Nusantara began after the coming of Islam, the record of written literature in Javanese goes back several centuries before that, the earliest stone inscription found was dated 732 A.D. and the earliest work in Old Javanese, the *Kekawin Ramayana*, was written in Central Java in about 925 A.D. The early civilization of Java was inspired from India, that is Hinduism. But one of the most remarkable characteristics of the cultural history of Old Java has been the Javanisation of the Hindu-Javanese culture. Through this Javanisation, that is the adaptation of the Indian culture to the primitive culture, the theoretical system of Hinduism lost its basis.³ Many Sanskrit texts in which this theoretical system was embodied, that is the *upanishads* and the *sutras*, are not found in Java. Through the literature of the religious-philosophical type that is present in Java and Bali we can follow this adaptation-process in a remarkably clear sequence. As has been shown by Prof. Hendrik Kern a long time ago, by the omission of this theoretical basis of Hinduism, the great contrast that is present between Hinduism and Buddhism is no more present, because the Buddhism that was known in Java, inspite of the Barabudur and Chandi Mendut, has been in its popular form. Hinduism and Buddhism came to terms with each other in Java in the form of Javanism. When Islam came to Java the same syncretism repeated itself during the early years.

So it was against such a cultural background that the Javanese literature was cultivated. At the height of the Javanism period from the reign of Erlangga early in the 11th century to the peak of the Majapahit empire in the 14th century, a wealth of literature grew, some of this was in the form of adaptations and redactions from Sanskrit literature, but most of it took only the Indian motifs on which were built a completely Javanese superstructure. This indicated a distinct local genius that has fascinated many a scholar in our century. Tantu Panggalaran and the poetical work of Prapancha called *Nagarakrtagama* written in 1365 dedicated to the Majapahit King Hayam Wuruk symbolized the height of

this Old Javanese literature. Through the succeeding centuries this literature grew, absorbing the Islamic traditions into its system, but as it approached modern times, the Javanese writers lost their creative force, their works became stereotyped and no longer susceptible to change. During the modern period it is the literature in Malay that crowns them all.

Between the primitive literature of the Torajas and the sophisticated literature of the Javanese people which I have described here in such a general way, perhaps we can hardly see a meeting point as to call these one type of literary culture. But this is only due to lack of time for details. In the intermediate literatures of the Archipelago, between these two extremes, we meet numerous points of similarity.

There is similarity in the existence of both oral and written forms in all of these literatures, and the sometimes blurring boundary between these two forms. Many of these literatures have a religious meaning, so that to study and understand them one needs the knowledge of the religion of the community and the social circumstances in which they were created. Individuality in these literatures has never come to the fore, literary works are created by and belong to the community as a whole. And many of the literary forms present in Malay, the *pantuns*, the *shairs*, the *hikayats*, the *adats* and the historical writings, are also present in the other literatures, at the same time many of these literatures have independent and distinctive forms of their own, such as the *Kidungs* in Javanese and the *Pantun Sunda* in Sundanese. Motifs in the folk-tales and the court literature keep recurring in the other languages, sometimes disguised under another name, sometimes transformed into different situations.

Here I will just quote a short example to show how the understanding of these regional literatures and cultures is important in the study of Malay literature. Since 1868 European scholars have been fascinated by that remarkable Malay folk poetry called *pantuns*, a quatrain where the first two lines seem to have no fixed function other than to give rhyme to the next two lines which contain the actual sense. The question that arose from the early days was whether there was any semantic relationship between these two parts of the *pantun*—it was such a fascinating question that it became the main preoccupation of the first Professor of Malay at Leiden, J. Pijnappel, and it became the subject of an inaugural lecture in 1904 by another Leiden professor Van Ophuysen, and yet another inaugural address by that great Indonesian academician Professor Hoesein Djajadiningrat in 1933. In the discussion which was participated in by many other Malayologists including Winstedt and Wilkinson, some interesting light was thrown on its possible solution, not by any feature in Malay cultural life, but by practices that are found in Sumatra and

Java, in the secret leave language among the Batak people and the magical practices among the Javanese and the other ethnic groups. I could quote to you numerous other examples how literary and non-literary features in Malay are inter-related to the other regional literatures. I have mentioned several times how impossible it is to study the Malay Ramayana outside the various versions that are found in Nusantara. And in the study of Javanese historiography made by Prof. C.C. Berg during his youth, he reconstructed that brilliant hypothesis regarding the literary magic practised in the Old Javanese Kratons, the presence of the poet-magician with whose creative force the power and the glory of the Javanese king can be enhanced. As one can readily see, this concept is a recurrence of the literary practice of the Toraja people which I have described in some detail. Besides the problem of the final validity of such a thesis, these findings in other regional literatures are very much relevant to the study of Malay literature, and it would be a great loss if one tries to neglect them purposely as Winstedt had done in his chapter on Malay histories. As Prof. Josselin de Jong suggested in his recent study on the character of the Malay Annals,⁴ the incident in *Sejarah Melayu* where the Malacca warriors read the Persian inspired classics the *Hikayat Amir Hamzah* and the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah* on the night before the start of their war—this particular incident might in fact represent a literary *rite*, a remnant of the Javanese practice.

My fourth and last remark is perhaps the most important criticism one can make on the past study of this literature. Malay literature has been studied by everybody except by a literary scientist, and it has been studied for all sorts of purposes except for a literary purpose. This statement is equally true too with the study of many other Nusantara literatures. We have seen the activities of the students of the Greater India and Greater Arabia civilizations whose motives in the study of Malay literary phenomena was to trace the sources to the original homes. W.H. Rassers who studied the panji stories was essentially a cultural anthropologist, and the most important result of his study was his famous theories on the primitive tribe or clan organization based on totemistic system of thinking—and this has nothing to do with literature. G.A. Hazeu who worked on the *wayang* culture lived in an age (half a century ago) when the theory about ancestor-worship of the earlier Nusantara people was in vogue, and Hazeu proved that wayang was a form of that ancient ancestor-worship rite. Richard Winstedt was essentially a historian and his main preoccupation with Malay literature had a strong historical motive, largely to supplement data from Malay sources to his history of Malaya. This is seen in his editing of the Malay texts *Sejarah Melayu*, *Misa Melayu*, *Tuhfat-al-Nafis* and *Hikayat Johor*. And looked in the context of his other books, his history of Malay literature is in

fact a sort of appendix to his other book: *The Malays, A Cultural History*—his interest was more focussed on the general cultural development of the Malay people, and not in their literary *genre* and thinking. One could just look at his treatment of the *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, perhaps the best representative of the novel form in Malay traditional literature. Winstedt's norms were completely historical. He considered the novel as an "uncritical farrago of legends" and many of the characters and events as "irrelevant and inconsequent" and then he accused the writer for his "disregard for history and chronology". This is something, as Prof. A. Teeuw has rightly asserted, like trying to evaluate Shakespeare's *Hamlet* on its historical authenticity.⁵ Whereas if we look at *Hikayat Hang Tuah* as a piece of literary creation, forgetting our desire for historical truth, we would see its unity and obvious logical structure. It is a structural study that is most needed in Malay literature. Each text must be seen as a unit in its own right, not to be prejudiced by our outside norms, and it is only in this way that this study can contribute to the general theory of literature and to our general knowledge and understanding of world literatures. In this lies the great importance of the pioneering works being done by Prof. A. Teeuw in the field of Malay literature. In the papers he presented to the Congress of the Dutch Orientalists Society in 1959⁶ and 1960⁷ he tried to examine systematically the nature of Malay fiction-writing, taking as his point of departure the *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. Equally important is his comparative study of the *Hikayat Raja2 Pasai* and *Sejarah Melayu*⁸, which in all provide very sound research models for future students of Malay literature.

The whole study of Malay literature during the last one century then has been non-literary, it was comparative, historical and ethnological. And perhaps it would be worthwhile here to draw your attention to the latest development in this study made during our decade—by the addition of two more approaches, one based on nationalistic motives and the other on ideological considerations. After the War, with the growth of nationalism, many young Malays moved by the passion of patriotism and anti-colonialism took up the study of their past literature in the light of their new world. The favourite theme naturally falls upon the *Hikayat Hang Tuah*—this time as a symbol of Malay glory and greatness. One of these young scholars is Kassim Ahmad, a student of our university. In his study on the characterization of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* in 1959 Kassim rightly rejected Winstedt's assertion that the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* must be looked upon as history. Kassim insisted that the characters in the book "have assumed a new artistic life of their own, quite independent of their original historical one." Then after examining the various characters Kassim projected not Hang Tuah as the hero of this epic, but his opponent Hang Jebat, on the ground that Hang Jebat represents the revolutionary, the

character that lived on his own personal conviction and fought against whatever was wrong and unjust, even though it be his king or his close friend. It is a highly acceptable analysis of the 16th century work in the light of our 20th century nationalistic need, but the scientific study of a literary creation should not be in the terms of the changing social needs, but in the terms of the society and the time in which it was written. And there is no way to prove that Hang Jebat was the hero in 16th century Malay society.

The ideological touch to this study was made in 1961 by a young Russian scholar from Moscow University by the name of J. Parnickel. He again chose the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* as his point of departure. This time not because of any nationalistic motive but simply because the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* was the product of a feudal society and so it is the most convenient target for a Marxist. Parnickel gave a familiar Marxist analysis. He considered that the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* was originally a people's epic, Hang Tuah represented the hero of the Middle Class who was struggling against the oppressive king. But this original folk epic fell into the hands of the feudal class, it was revised by the writer of the court and adapted to feudal needs. Hang Tuah who originally was a hero for democracy fighting against the feudal system now was changed to become a hero who was ever loyal to his master and who defended the old system against the attack of the revolutionary. This is again a good example of how a non-literary theory is applied to a literary text. I shall not make any comment on it. Ideology is the sacred task of its believers.

I hope that by this talk I have been able to convince this society of the need to continue its contribution in the field of Malay literature, to encourage its documentation and research, and above all to continue to give space, as it has always done, to Malay philological works, most of which could not possibly find sufficient commercial importance to merit publication by ordinary publishers. After the War there has been a growing number of departments of Malay and Indonesian Studies being established in foreign universities, particularly in Australia, the United States and in Russia. But these departments more often than not have been formed merely to cater to the needs of state departments and foreign offices; thus they are interested primarily in contemporary problems. The Indonesian scholars have been emphasising again and again that the history of Bahasa Indonesia began only in 1928, or even in 1945, and thus de-emphasising the interest and the study of its earlier development. Even though the Indonesian scholars are interested in these problems, the number of students who have been following courses in Indonesian linguistics and literatures have been frightfully small, about a dozen per year. They would not have enough *capacity* to concentrate

upon this subject in an effective way, what more with the attraction of other traditional literatures that their country has so bountifully inherited. It is therefore the responsibility of the Malay Studies Department in Kuala Lumpur, the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka and with the assistance of such a society as this, that this great task which has been so well begun should be continued.