

# Bubat War in *Gajah Mada* Novel Series by Langit Kresna Hariadi

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**Abstract.** A historical novel can act as a reinforcement of mainstream interpretation or it can reject discourse. The novel *Gajah Mada Sanga Turangga Paksowani* related to the Bubat War in 1357 which killed all entourages from the Galuh Pasundan by the Majapahit is an affirmation of mainstream discourse. Even so, this novel also has a counter discourse aspect in it. The counter's aspect in history was in the form of telling about the battle of the Galuh group over Majapahit in Bubat square led by Diah Pitaloka herself. In addition, the daughter of king Pasundan was also described as having a special man before leaving for Majapahit to be married to King Hayam Wuruk. In this novel by Langit Kresna Hariadi, Gajah Mada is blamed for the Bubat War. This historical novel by Langit Kresna Hariadi, is still considered a literary work that confirms the dominant version of the story.

**Keywords:** Indonesian novel; Bubat War; Gajah Mada; Majapahit; new-historicism

## 1. Introduction

Almost everyone knows that Raden Wijaya is the founder of the Majapahit kingdom. But not many people know for sure how the end of the largest kingdom in the Nusantara archipelago. Is it true that Brawijaya V was the last king of Majapahit who was succeeded by Raden Patah, the sultan of the kingdom of Demak, whose nota bene was his own son? That is, the Syiva-Budhist kingdom was overthrown by the first Islamic kingdom in Java? Damar Shashangka put it in the story in his novels, at least in the series (six books) *Sabda Palon* from *Tonggak Bumi Jawa* <sup>[1]</sup> until *Sandyakala Wilwatikta* <sup>[2]</sup>. Of course, this received a rebuttal from the mainstream who stated that Demak was not the cause of the collapse of Majapahit. Sanusi Pane in the 1920s had written this in his play entitled *Sandyakala Ning Majapahit* (Pujangga Baru, 1933).

Not only the Majapahit kingdom, contemporary events also contain debates including the G-30-S/PKI incident in 1965. Various history books have been published to discuss this, both at Indonesia and from abroad. Not only domestically, not only in the West, too. A past event in addition to being reconstructed through history, is also often reconstructed through works of fiction such as films or novels. Events related to secret societies such as the Illuminati, Priory of Sion, Masonry, Kaballah, Templar, and others are widely raised through literary works such as Dan Brown's works <sup>[3]</sup>, Michael Baigent, Lynn Picknett and Umberto Eco <sup>[4]</sup>, including a number of films such as Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom (1984) and National Treasury (2004). Often literary works such as fictional novels that are opposed to factual history, even become their own advantages when they will be

tested for the level of factuality can excuse their fictional nature, even though in fact these fictional stories are equally effective in constructing an event, including historical events.

The number of recent Indonesian literary works that raise past events in addition to enriching the treasures of Indonesian literature, is also a phenomenon in itself when a number of these works of fiction have their own narratives, have a discourse that is different from mainstream discourse, in the context of this study, namely the construction of the figure of Gajah Mada from the Majapahit Kingdom, the largest kingdom in Indonesia or Nusantara.

This kind of event is not only a contemporary phenomenon. In the old Malay tradition when the stories of a kingdom were conveyed through stories of old consolation, through pantun, or other literary traditions, often literary works became a tool of succession to power. The figure of Hang Tuah is said to have been created by the Malay kingdom when the Nusantara region was dominated and hegemonized by Majapahit in Java with its hero named Gajah Mada. Is it true that his statue is stocky as it is circulating today? Did Gajahmada's Bubat war against the group from Pasundan really happen and as read today? Recent Indonesian literary works reveal many such historical events.

## **2. Research Methods**

The study of the historical reconstruction of Gajah Mada from the Majapahit focuses on the Bubat War through the latest novels by Langit Kresna Hariadi. In this study, an analysis of the role of discourse or construction of these novels was also carried out in the form of narratives about the character of Gajah Mada, from the largest kingdom of Nusantara, from the Majapahit.

The object of this study is the latest Indonesian novels about the Gajah Mada series by Langit Kresna Hariadi with discourses and narratives surrounding them. This study is limited to five novels in the Gajah Mada series entitled: (1) *Gajah Mada Makar Dharmaputra*,<sup>[5]</sup> (2) *Gajah Mada Takhta dan Ankara*,<sup>[6]</sup> (3) *Gajah Mada Sumpah di Manguntur*,<sup>[7]</sup> (4) *Gajah Mada Sanga Turangga Paksowani*,<sup>[8]</sup> and (5) *Gajah Mada Hamukti Moksa*<sup>[9]</sup>. The data collection technique used in this study is in the form of reading and recording techniques.

For the validity of research data, semantic validity techniques are used. Semantic validity is by analyzing the context of meaning of the text or manuscript. Meanwhile, for data reliability, intrarater techniques and interrater techniques are obtained, namely in the form of discussions with research members: Nurhadi, Wiyatmi, and Moh Rasyid Ridlo, the three lecturers of the Indonesian Literature Study Program, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta. This research fosters its analysis by applying the strategy of new-historicism.

## **3. Results of Research and Discussion**

### **3.1 The Role of Gajah Mada from Majapahit Kingdom**

Broadly speaking, the story in the five novels of Langit Kresna Hariadi about Gajah Mada is parallel to the official version of conventional history. Acting as the guard of the king, Bhayangkara,

starting from the second king of Majapahit, Jayanegara, from various threats, undermining, rebellions. One of the most devastating rebellions was the Ra Kuti rebellion. Gajah Mada was still a bekel, an army rank below. But with this rank Gajah Mada occupied the position of leader of Bhayangkara, a special force that protected the palace, the king, and his family.

Victory was on Jayanegara's side. Bhayangkara's forces captured the palace and returned Jayanegara to become king of Majapahit. But then Jayanegara became ill, to cure his illness, a healer named Ra Tanca was brought in. This Ra Tanca is actually a person who still holds a grudge and hurt towards Jayanegara. With his cleverness in concocting medicine, he outsmarted Gajah Mada. Ra Tanca made poison as if it were medicine to drink to Jayanegara. At that moment the king died. Gajah Mada immediately sentenced Ra Tanca to death by pulling out the *keris* from his waist and thrusting it into Ra Tanca's chest.

Continued during the reign of the third king (queen) during the time of Tribhuwana Wijayatunggadewi (who in the novel is described as a queen along with her sister named Dyah Wiyat). It was during the reign of Tribhuwana Wijayatunggadewi that Gajah Mada was appointed *mahapatih* saying the Palapa Hamukti Oath which vowed not to enjoy a life of fun if he could not unite the archipelago (Nusantara) under Majapahit rule.

During the time of the fourth king, the reign of Hayam Wuruk, Gajah Mada's dream of uniting various other kingdoms in Nusantara was almost realized except the Sunda Galuh Kingdom. This is attributed as the reason for uniting Dyah Pitaloka, the daughter of the king of Sunda Galuh, to become the consort of Hayam Wuruk who is indeed entering the age of marriage. The massacre of the entourage of King Sunda Galuh (including Dyah Pitaloka who participated in defending death) in Bubat field placed. Gajah Mada as the party to blame for considering Dyah Pitaloka's marriage with Hayam Wuruk as a form of unification of Sunda Galuh against Majapahit.

Gajah Mada's ambition was quite obvious when Dyah Pitaloka's marriage plan with King Majapahit was a form of unification of Sunda Galuh against Majapahit. Until finally war was inevitable when third parties who increasingly muddied the atmosphere and high honor of the Sunda Galuh erupted the Bubat War. It is clear that all the atmosphere in this war is also depicted in the situation of Dyah Pitaloka by killing herself when she found out that her parents were dead.

The story ends with an atmosphere of grief that heard the news of the end of the Sunda Galuh army being fought by the Majapahit troops made the royal atmosphere become mourning instead of rejoicing in accepting victory on the Majapahit side. Until Gajah Mada finally had to accept his responsibility by resigning his position and exiled in Madakaripura.

### **3.2 The Story of the Gajah Mada in Langit Kresna Hariadi's Novels on Bubat War**

Gajah Mada is known as a figure who played an important role in the glory of Majapahit based on the oath he took when he was confirmed as *mahapatih*. The oath is known as the Palapa Oath. This story is contained in the book *Gajah Mada Sumpah di Manguntur*,<sup>[7]</sup> by Langit Kresna Hariadi is the third book in his series (sequel) about the figure of *Mahapatih* Gajah Mada.

The previous two books were titled *Gajah Mada Makar Dharmaputra*<sup>[5]</sup> and *Gajah Mada Takhta dan Angkara*<sup>[6]</sup>. While the next two series or the fourth and fifth series are titled *Gajah Mada Sanga Turangga Paksowani*<sup>[8]</sup> and *Gajah Mada Hamukti Moksa*<sup>[9]</sup>. The five books are new editions of books reissued by Tiga Serangkai, Solo. The five books experienced a slight difference in title from the previous edition's publication.

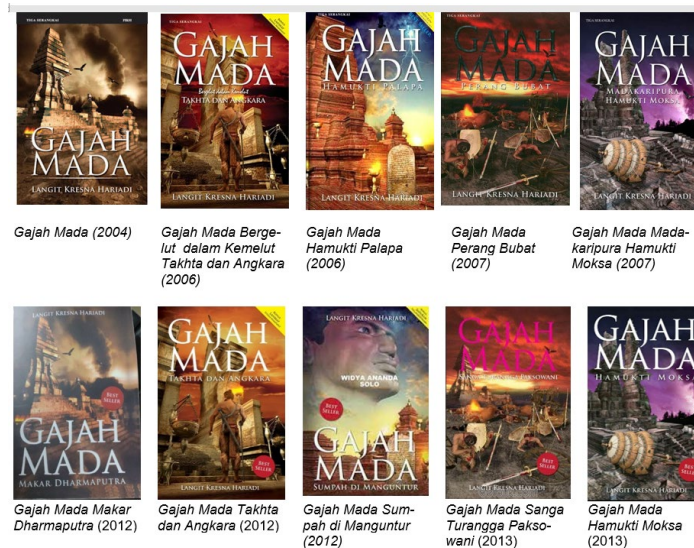


Figure 1. Changes in the title and cover of the Gajah Mada novel series

The previous edition of the five novels was entitled: (1) *Gajah Mada*, (2) *Gajah Mada Bergelut dalam Kemelut Takhta dan Ankara*, (3) *Gajah Mada Hamukti Palapa*, (4) *Gajah Mada Perang Bubat*, and (5) *Gajah Mada Madakaripura Hamukti Moksa*. All five have been published by Tiga Serangkai, Solo, since 2004. In the fourth novel, *Gajah Mada Sanga Turangga Paksowani*, a chapter of Gajah Mada's life is told in an event known as the Bubat War. The massacre of King Sunda Galuh's entourage (including Dyah Pitaloka who participated in defending death) at Bubat field in the Majapahit region near the king's palace placed Gajah Mada as the party to blame for considering Dyah Pitaloka's marriage with Hayam Wuruk as a form of unification of Sunda Galuh against Majapahit.

Gajah Mada's ambition was quite obvious when Dyah Pitaloka's marriage plan with King Majapahit was a form of unification of Sunda Galuh against Majapahit. When Gajah Mada began to express his desire to rule the land of Sunda which at that time was ruled by a king named Linggabuana in a government called Sunda Galuh. In the story of this fourth novel, it is still in harmony with the stories about the Bubat War as in the general version.

However, in some parts of the novel depicted a number that differ or deviate from the conventional story. Among other things, it is depicted that Dyah Pitaloka, who wanted to be married to be made empress by Hayam Wuruk, turned out to have a lover. The man was an artist who was able to paint Dyah Pitaloka's face and self perfectly. It was this man who expressed his admiration and love for the king's daughter while still living in the capital Sunda Galuh. The man's name was Saniscara who was apparently still a descendant of nobles from Majapahit. On the edge of Jalatunda lake, Sunda Galuh city park, Dyah Pitaloka found the man who painted herself perfectly [8].

The Saniscara painting was then conveyed to Dyah Pitaloka to his room in the palace by sneaking it. This painting was also used by the Majapahit entourage to be presented to King Hayam

Wuruk, because the person sent to paint Dyah Pitaloka could not do it. He felt that he would not be able to paint Dyah Pitaloka as well as Saniscara's.

In the Bubat War, which occurred due to a misunderstanding between Sunda Galuh and Gajah Mada who wanted the unification of Sunda Galuh against Majapahit, the name called Dyah Pitaloka before his death was the name of his lover: Saniscara <sup>[8]</sup>.

In this novel *Langit Kresna Hariadi*, Dyah Pitaloka is said to be appointed by his father King Linggabuana to replace him as king or queen of Sunda Galuh. The departure of the bridal party to Majapahit until it reached Bubat Square was led by herself as the king of Sunda Galuh. It was he who led the resistance against the Majapahit party or rather the *Mahapatih* Gajah Mada camp <sup>[8]</sup>.

The appointment of Dyah Pitaloka to be the king or queen of Sunda Galuh before leaving for Majapahit to hold a wedding with Hayam Wuruk and also being the leader of the resistance against Majapahit in Bubat Square until her death is a form of deviation from the story of the Bubat War from the conventional story. This is the author's interpretation (in this case *Langit Krishna Hariadi*) of this part of the Bubat War story.

Fragments such as the depiction of Dyah Pitaloka having a lover named Saniscara who was able to paint her face and herself very beautifully and the depiction of Dyah Pitaloka who was appointed king of Sunda Galuh before leaving for Majapahit and became the leader of resistance in the battle in the Bubat War as depicted by *Langit Kresna Hariadi*. In the sequel to the fourth novel entitled *Gajah Mada Sanga Turangga Paksowani* are forms of new-historicism over the mainstream discourse of the Bubat War story. Of course, this novel is still in line with the conventional or mainstream story of the Bubat War storyline.

### **3.3 Gajah Mada in Langit Kresna Hariadi's Novels as a Historical Construction**

This is the attitude taken by *Langit Kresna Hariadi* who tells the story of Gajah Mada in the form of a novel, part of a literary work that is contrary to historical writing. By mainstream academic groups, history is often categorized as fore-ground, while literary works (novels) such as these become the back-ground of an event. *Langit Kresna Hariadi* is still trying to put the story of Gajah Mada as part of historical events, he complements it with its detailed story which becomes part of the role of fictional works.

The author with a myriad of historical fiction writings has not gone too far in reconstructing historical facts. It may still be classified as a current of historicism compared to new-historicism. Although as explained at a glance in front he interpreted differently that the third ruler of Majapahit was not only Dyah Gitarja, but simultaneously between Dyah Gitarja and his sister Dyah Wiyat.

In addition, in another sequel, Dyah Pitaloka is told on her way to Majapahit to hold her marriage with Hayam Wuruk, her position is not as a princess but has been appointed king/queen of Sunda Galuh. It was she who refused Gajah Mada's request to unite Sunda Galuh against Majapahit, or refused to submit. Then led the bridal party against Gajah Mada's troops. Linggabuana was no longer king, and Dyah Pitaloka died by stabbing her kujang weapon.

In another part of the story, Dyah Pitaloka before leaving for Majapahit is said to have had a lover, an artist who had painted his face and herself named Saniscara. This point is of course a development of *Langit Kresna Hariadi* which is not found in the mainstream of Dyah Pitaloka's storytelling who proclaimed to become the consort of Hayam Wuruk, the figure who ushered in the

Bubat War, an event that became the culmination of Gajah Mada's role as a Majapahit *mahapatih* who had not been able to unite Sunda Galuh in the power of Majapahit that united Nusantara.

Affirmation of the mainstream discourse of history is also carried out in *Gajah Mada Sanga Turangga Paksowani* which tells that Dyah Pitaloka before the role of Bubad had been appointed as king or queen of Sunda Galuh and became the leader of the bridal entourage when fighting in Bubad Square until death. Also included is the story of Dyah Pitaloka who already has a lover, not Hayam Wuruk, the king of Majapahit who will make her as empress.

### 3. Conclusion

During the time of the fourth king, during the reign of Hayam Wuruk, Gajah Mada's dream of uniting various other kingdoms in Nusantara was almost realized except the Sunda Galuh Kingdom. This is attributed as the reason for uniting Dyah Pitaloka, the daughter of the king of Sunda Galuh, to become the consort of Hayam Wuruk who is indeed entering the age of marriage. The massacre of the entourage of King Sunda Galuh (including Dyah Pitaloka who participated in defending death) in Bubad field placed Gajah Mada as the party to blame for considering Dyah Pitaloka's marriage with Hayam Wuruk as a form of unification of Sunda Galuh against Majapahit. After the events of the Bubad War, Gajah Mada's career faded. After no longer serving as *mahapatih*, he spent his old age from the hustle and bustle of power to his death in Madakaripura. Gajah Mada died in 1364 at the age of 74.

As a fiction set in history, the Gajah Mada series by Langit Kresna Hariadi is one of the hegemonic sites or a kind of discourse that also enlivens the battle for interpretation of the role of a Majapahit *mahapatih*. Langit Kresna Hariadi which tells the story of Gajah Mada in the form of a novel, part of a literary work that is contrary to historical writing.

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