

ADAPTATIONS OF *HIKAYAT HANG TUAH* IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Sohaimi Abdul Aziz
soaazz@usm.my

School of Humanities
Universiti Sains Malaysia

Rohaya Md Ali
aya@uum.edu.my

Centre of Education and Modern Language Studies
Science and Literature College
Universiti Utara Malaysia

Abstract

Hang Tuah is a character in the epic *Hikayat Hang Tuah* which has become the pride of Malay Literature. The epic, and especially the protagonist of the epic, Hang Tuah, have been much discussed. This is also the case where children's literature is concerned, as the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* has attracted the attention of Malaysian authors to produce adaptations of stories from this epic. The stories linked to the character of Hang Tuah contain many elements of fantasy which makes them suitable for adaptation as children's literature. Establishing what types of adaptations have been made of these stories forms the core of this study. Also, the acceptance of Hang Tuah as a hero of the Malays has been challenged by movements, especially in social realism. As a result, the character of Hang Jebat has become accepted as a heroic figure instead. However, whether or not social realism has influenced adaptations done for children, and whether there has been a shift in the figure of hero as a result of social realism are still unanswered questions which this study addresses. This study has found that adaptations of stories about Hang Tuah for children are mainly partial adaptations, and that the stories chosen for adaptation are especially those containing strong elements of fantasy.

MALAY LITERATURE

Illustrations are also an element in these partial adaptations. The study has found no trace of the influence of social realism in the adaptations. Hang Tuah is still depicted as a heroic figure while Hang Jebat continues to be depicted as the traitor.

Keywords: children's literature, Hang Tuah, adaptations, social realism, illustrations

INTRODUCTION

Hang Tuah is a character who appears in two of the greatest works of Malay literature, which are, the *Sulalatus Salatin* (also known as *Sejarah Melayu*) (1612-1614) believed to have been authored by the 17th-century Bendahara (Prime Minister) of Johor, Tun Seri Lanang, before he moved to Aceh, and *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. *Hikayat Hang Tuah* is one of the great epic narratives of Malay literature. This epic narrative is of unknown authorship as it is based on oral sources. Both these great works contain stories about Hang Tuah. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that *Sulalatus Salatin* (1979) contains adaptations of stories about Hang Tuah based on the great epic narrative *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. The *Sulalatus Salatin* contains over 20 stories concerning Hang Tuah. However, while *Sulalatus Salatin* focuses on the origins and development of the Malacca Sultanate, *Hikayat Hang Tuah* focuses on its protagonist, Hang Tuah, and concerns itself with stories about him. *Hikayat Hang Tuah* can be considered as the biography of a person named Hang Tuah whose existence cannot be proven but who, according to the narrative, originated from Kampung Sungai Duyong in Malacca. The character appears both in *Sulalatus Salatin* and *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. However, there are several events that are mentioned in *Sulalatus Salatin* which cannot be found in *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. In other words, there are two sources in which the character of Hang Tuah appears, namely *Sulalatus Salatin* and *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. However, *Hikayat Hang Tuah* appears to be the more authentic source as it is in this work that stories about Hang Tuah's early life are told in greater detail than in *Sulalatus Salatin*. Because of this, the version of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* edited by Kassim Ahmad was used as the reference for this article.

Hikayat Hang Tuah highlights the greatness of the Malays through depictions of its Sultans and their territories, as well as displaying its ability to maintain diplomatic relations with the great powers of that time: China, India and Turkey (referred to as *benua Rum*). This work records

the rise, climax and fall of Malacca, which is closely connected to Hang Tuah. While Malacca is portrayed as a great power, he is one of the key people in its administration, together with the Bendahara. He has the final say in the country's security issues. When he falls ill, Malacca is attacked by the Portuguese and when he leaves the service of the state, Malacca is completely defeated. Hang Tuah is no less than the symbol of the power and greatness of Malacca. His life is a reflection of the Malacca Sultanate as well as of the feudal Malay society of the past (Kassim Ahmad, 1992: xvi). *Hikayat Hang Tuah* depicts the heroism, bravery, wisdom and loyalty of Hang Tuah towards his king and country. His heroism is well-known and has even caused disagreement among various factions in society. Kassim Ahmad (1969) explains that Hang Tuah is as follows:

Dia telah dikenali oleh sebab keberanian dan kepahlawanannya yang luar biasa. Sifat-sifat dirinya yang inilah yang selalu memainkan peranan yang penting. Dia tidak takut kepada apa-apa pun dan tidak dapat menolak sesuatu cabaran untuk berlawan. Telah menjadi suatu pegangan hidupnya yang dia tidak tunduk kepada sebarang ugutan mahupun yang dibuatnya sendiri. Dan dia tidak dapat dihalang oleh sebarang kesulitan.

(He is known for his extraordinary bravery and heroism. These characteristics always play an important part. He is completely fearless and cannot turn down any challenge to fight. It is his philosophy of life, and he refuses to submit to any threat, even his own. He also cannot be stopped by any kind of difficulty.)

(Kassim Ahmad, 1969:41-42)

The heroic qualities of Hang Tuah are the reason this character is still discussed from time to time. Abdul Rahman Napiah (1994:10-11) explains that Hang Tuah is a warrior who knows many strategies to defeat his enemies. As a warrior, Hang Tuah is described as perfect in terms of his physical appearance, spirit, his thinking and his etiquette in combat. In each conflict, Hang Tuah emerges the winner and each time he experiences problems, he is able to overcome them. Hang Tuah also receives many special things such as the magical *keris* Taming Sari which also becomes a motif in many of the fantasy stories found in children's literature. Children's literature consists of works written from a child's perspective to be read by children (and some adults). The plot is simple and focuses on the action, with a tendency to

combine fantasy and reality. The language is simple and easy to understand. This kind of literature projects self-confidence and always has a happy ending. A number of these elements can be found in the stories about Hang Tuah and with appropriate form of adaptation, stories from *Hikayat Hang Tuah* can be turned into traditional fantasy tales. Traditional fantasy tales contain certain element that are repeated such as bravery, adventure and extraordinary events which can also be found in the stories about Hang Tuah.

LITERARY ADAPTATION

Adaptation is a kind of modification of form, structure or function in order to suit a certain purpose or situation. Adaptations can be found in several fields including biology, physiology and art. One of the arts in which adaptation is frequent in literature, as literary genres such as novels and short stories are often adapted as films, theatre and drama. There are also adaptations from one type of literature into another such as the adaptation of the epic *Hikayat Hang Tuah* into children's literature. Literary adaptation is the adaptation of a literary work into another form of art such as film. Literary adaptation links certain features of literature with other arts. For example, narrativity which can be found in literature, is also present in film and theatre, through action and event (McFarlane, 1996).

Alan Rosenthal (in Julie Sanders, 2006), opines that the concept of adaptation means changing, correcting, forming and simplifying. He further states that shortening and creating (of a new product) is an art and one of the aspects of the process of adaptation. He also suggests two main approaches in the process of adapting, that is, to follow the original or to create something completely new. In his view, adaptations that follow the original are inferior to those made using the second approach, in which something completely new is produced. However, the new product has to remain faithful to the spirit and emotion of the original work even though presented in a different medium or technique from the original.

Adaptation is a creative process. According to A. Wahab Hamzah (2009), in producing an adaptation, a writer is free but at the same time burdened with having to produce a work that is better than the original. The adaptation should explain and should be faster-paced; if it is a comedy, it should be funnier than the original. In fact, the action should be more condensed, more exciting and the conflict more interesting than the original text. A good adaptation will not contain all the elements of the original novel,

therefore one has to make judicious choices when filtering or distilling the plot. However, even though many elements will have to be omitted in the process of adaptation, the audience must still be able to experience the original story without hindrance. In fact, any shortcomings in the original could be improved upon.

Basically, there are three main types of adaptation in literature, that is, minor adaptation, partial adaptation and full adaptation. In minor adaptation, the original work is largely retained and there is very little or almost no addition to or omission of the original material. What is adapted is the medium of presentation and the title which is changed or replaced with something else. Partial adaptation is when a part is taken from the complete plot and is made into something new by omitting some of the events from the original. In a full adaptation, a lot of the original material is omitted and a lot of new material is added in order to produce a new work while still adhering to the spirit of the original.

This article will discuss literary adaptation only. Literary adaptation has raised the question of faithfulness to the original. Does a film have to be faithful to the novel that is its source, for example? There are those who agree that it should, but there are also those who reject this idea. Like it or not, a faithful adaptation is difficult to produce because there will definitely be some retention, addition and deletion of the original material. The issue is only whether there is a little or a lot of it.

ADAPTATION OF THE CHARACTER OF HANG TUAH IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The adaptation of a work from one genre into another indirectly leads to giving it greater popularity or to extending its lifespan. This is also true of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* which has been adapted as children's literature. *Hikayat Hang Tuah* has undergone adaptation into a new form in order to provide the audience with a new experience, not only for children but also the general readership. The original manuscript of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* received recognition from UNESCO as a World Heritage work in 2001 under the Memory of the World programme. According to Muhammad Haji Salleh (in Noor Suraya, 2012), this work is a display of literary genius par excellence; displayed through its plot, conflicts, values, and inner voice, and also its theme which shows the division in the Malay soul—on the one hand it is that of a loyal follower or servant, on the other it rebels against a cruel ruler.

Contemporary writers adapt *Hikayat Hang Tuah* as children's literature by modifying, adding and omitting certain elements in order that the work continues to appeal to children. Among the adapted works of children's literature based on the original text of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* are *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (Noor Suraya, 2012), *Hang Tuah Bergelar Biduanda Raja* [Hang Tuah in the King's Service] (Halim Shah, 2009a), *Hang Tuah Melawan Hang Jebat* [Hang Tuah Duels with Hang Jebat] (Jamaliah, 2004), *Hang Tuah* (Abdullah Mustappa, 1977), *Hang Jebat Menderhaka* [The Treason of Hang Jebat], *Hang Tuah Laksamana Melaka* [Hang Tuah, Admiral of Malacca], *Fitnah Datuk Kerma Wijaya* [Datuk Kerma Wijaya Slanders Hang Tuah] (Abdullah Ishak, 1993), *Hang Tuah Pahlawan Raja Melaka* [Hang Tuah, the Royal Warrior of Malacca] (Abdul Jalil Haji Noor, 1963), as well as other, more recent adaptations from *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. These adapted texts highlight the heroic characteristics of Hang Tuah, whether as a warrior of Malacca or as a diplomat, and his loyalty to the king, as well as other aspects of his character which could serve as examples for children today.

Literary adaptation occurs because the source material is extraordinary in such a way that it invites adaptation into another form. The original *Hikayat Hang Tuah* is an interesting text because it is a great and important epic narrative in Malay literature which is still popular among the Malays. Therefore, it is not surprising that this epic has received much attention from all levels of Malay society, including children. As an epic, *Hikayat Hang Tuah* is focused on one main character, which is Hang Tuah himself. The character is central to the action which is reminiscent of the kind of fantasy stories that children are drawn to, such as adventurous journeys and heroism. The study found that many of the adaptations of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* are stories concerning his heroism and wisdom in simplified form. Aspects of Hang Tuah's heroism are highlighted in these adaptations in order to inculcate a sense of responsibility towards the nation and to present Hang Tuah as an icon to be emulated by children. According to Nik Safiah Karim (1992), small children believe wholeheartedly in the characters of outstanding and popular heroes and heroines, and sometimes these characters become role models for them. The character of Hang Tuah appeals to this tendency in children.

Adaptations that focus on some features of Hang Tuah's character are the main kinds of adaptations that can be found in children's literature. Children are exposed to Hang Tuah's characteristics such as his courage even as a child, through stories such as Hang Tuah and his friends defeating pirates at the tender age of ten. They are also told that he is knowledgeable, smart,

brave, efficient, unselfish and loyal. *Hikayat Hang Tuah* depicts the socio-cultural situation in 15th century Malay society, which was centred around feudalism and in which heroic qualities such as those possessed by Hang Tuah were valued by the community. Today, stories about Hang Tuah are widely discussed whether in scholarly articles or in the print and electronic media, in seminars and conferences, and can be found in children's books.

Most of the texts adapted for children highlight the heroic aspects of this legendary character. The kinds of adaptations of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* found in children's literature can be divided into two main types, that is, minor adaptation and partial adaptation. Minor adaptation involves slight adaptation of the original text while retaining the original structure of the text such as the theme, plot, character, language style, point of view and so forth. If there is any alteration, it is minor, such as simplifying the language used, sentence structure and diction as well as changing the title, place names and character names, and some other minor changes. Noor Suraya's *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (2012) is an example of minor adaptation based on *Hikayat Hang Tuah* by Kassim Ahmad (1964). This adaptation maintains the original structure of the text but uses simplified language.

Table 1 Hang Tuah's Heroism.

Original text: <i>Hikayat Hang Tuah</i>	Adapted text: <i>Hikayat Hang Tuah</i>
<p><i>Berapa antaranya maka dilihat oleh Hang Tuah dari jauh, maka kata Hang Tuah, "Hai handaiku keempat, ingat-ingat kita, perahu musuh rupanya yang datang kelihatan tiga buah itu." Maka dilihatnya benarlah seperti kata Hang Tuah itu. Maka kata Hang Jebat, "Perahu musuhlah lakunya. Apa bicara kita sekalian?" Maka sahut Hang Kasturi, "Apatah yang kita endahkan? Yang kita kehendak pun bertemu dengan perahu musuh."</i></p> <p>(Kassim Ahmad, 1992:24)</p> <p>(For some time Hang Tuah beheld the boats from a distance. Then he cried, "My four dear friends, let us be wary, for here come three enemy boats." And they saw that Hang Tuah was right. Then spoke Hang Jebat, "Surely, they are enemy boats. What say you, my friends?" And Hang Kasturi answered, "Of what concern is that? Is it not what we wished, to meet enemy boats?")</p>	<p><i>Hang Tuah pun berkata, "Eh, cuba lihat di depan sana. Berhati-hatilah, nampak macam musuh tu."</i></p> <p><i>Mata keempat-empat sahabat segera memandang ke depan tanpa berkelip. Lanun?</i></p> <p><i>"Memang kapal musuh tu. Apa pendapat kalian?" Soal Hang Jebat.</i></p> <p><i>"Apa yang kita hendak takutkan, bukannya itu yang kita harapkan? Supaya kita dapat bertemu dengan musuh," balas Hang Kasturi dengan beraninya.</i></p> <p>(Noor Suraya, 2012:15)</p> <p>(... The eyes of the four friends were directed forward without blinking. Pirates?</p> <p>"Those are definitely enemy boats. What do you all say?" asked Hang Jebat.</p> <p>"Why should are we fear? Isn't this what we were looking for, to meet enemy boats?" Hang Kasturi replied boldly.)</p>

Table 2 Hang Tuah’s qualities as a hero, shown through ability to speak foreign languages.

Original text: <i>Hikayat Hang Tuah</i>	Adaptation: <i>Hikayat Hang Tuah</i>
<p><i>Telah sudah tamat pengajiannya, maka ia berkata kepada bapanya, “Ayuh bapaku, pada bicara hamba, hendak mengaji pada lebai Keling pula, supaya hamba tahu pula bahasanya.” Maka kata Hang Mahmud, “Benarlah seperti bicara anakku itu.” Maka Hang Tuah pun mengajilah pada seorang lebai Keling. Hatta berapa lamanya, tamatlah dengan bahasa Keling itu, habislah diketahuinya. Maka Hang Tuah pun berkatalah kepada bapanya hendak mengaji kepada lebai Siam pula supaya diketahuilah akan bahasanya. Setelah sudah diketahuinya bahasa Siam, maka Hang Tuah pun mengaji pula pada seorang lebai Cina. Dengan tiada berapa lamanya, maka tamatlah ia mengaji bahasa Cina itu. Maka Hang Tuah mengaji pula pada lebai Jawa hendak diketahuinya akan bahasa Jawa itu. Kalakian, setelah habislah rata diketahuinya dua belas bahasa itu, maka Hang Tuah pun pulanglah ke rumahnya bersama-sama dengan ibu bapanya mencari makan setiap hari.</i></p> <p>(Kassim Ahmad, 1992:23)</p> <p>(Upon completion of his studies, he said to his father, “Dear father, it is in my thoughts that I now wish to study under a Tamil teacher, so that I may learn his language.” To which Hang Mahmud replied, “What you say is true, my son.” Thus Hang Tuah studied under a Tamil teacher for a time, until he had learnt the Tamil language in its entirety. Then Hang Tuah asked to be taught by a Siamese teacher to learn that language. After learning Siamese, Hang Tuah studied under a Chinese teacher. Not long after, he had learnt the Chinese language. Then, Hang Tuah studied under a Javanese teacher to learn Javanese. Over time, Hang Tuah had learnt twelve languages and he returned home with both his parents to seek his livelihood.)</p>	<p><i>Tidak lama kemudian dia pun khatam. Lalu Hang Tuah berkata kepada Hang Mahmud, “Ayah, izinkan saya belajar bahasa Tamil pula supaya saya memahami bahasa itu?”</i></p> <p><i>“Ya eloklah seperti katamu, Hang Tuah.” Jawab Hang Mahmud menyokong hasrat anaknya itu. Maka Tuah pun belajarlah bahasa Tamil daripada seorang guru. Tidak berapa lama selepas itu fasih dan fahamlah dia dengan bahasa itu.</i></p> <p><i>Seterusnya Hang Tuah berguru pula dengan seorang guru bahasa Cina. Lalu dia cekap dan pandai sekejap sahaja bahasa Cina. Hang Tuah terus mempelajari bahasa Siam, Jawa dan akhirnya dia dapat menguasai 12 bahasa semuanya.</i></p> <p>(Noor Suraya, 2012:8-9)</p> <p>(Not long afterward, he had completed his studies. The Hang Tuah said to Hang Mahmud, “father, allow me to learn Tamil so that I may understand that language.”</p> <p>“Yes, what you say is fine Hang Tuah,” said Hang Mahmud in support of his son’s intention. Then Tuah learn Tamil from a teacher. Not long after that he had learnt the language. After that, Hang Tuah studied under a teacher of the Chinese language. He became proficient in Chinese in just a short while. Then, Hang Tuah learnt Siamese and Javanese and in the end mastered a total of 12 languages in all.)</p>

The adaptation by Noor Suraya shows Hang Tuah as a heroic Malay figure, an ideal human being according to the standards of Malay feudal society of the 14th/15th century; as someone who stands by every word and unwritten principle of the time (Muhammad Haji Salleh, 2003:3). Hang Tuah's heroism is evident from young, when he and his friends defeat pirates who attack them.

Table 1 shows the bravery and strong character of Hang Tuah and his friends. They dare to confront as many as twenty pirates, and in the end, the pirates are overcome and sentenced.

Apart from this, aspects of Hang Tuah's qualities as a hero can also be seen when he acts as a diplomat for Malacca, where he is able to learn twelve languages, which enables him to deal easily with the countries he visits, namely Siam, India, China, Arabia and the Byzantine Empire (benua Rum). Hang Tuah's ability to learn languages is also shown to be a talent he has possessed from young.

Table 2 shows Hang Tuah's willingness to acquire all kinds of knowledge even while he is still young. The adaptation maintains the aspects of the character found in the original text. This also shows that the adaptation focuses on a protagonist who is an ideal character in all his actions, struggles or contributions as the hero of this children's book. According to Hadijah Rahmat (2006:124), the hero serves as the "historical ideals of life". Several terms have been used in children's literature to refer to the hero such as *sateria* (knight), *pahlawan* (warrior), *pendekar* (man-in-arms), *pejuang* (fighter), *wira* (hero), *tokoh* (personality) and *serikandi* (woman warrior). She also explains that an analysis of children's literature shows that feudal personalities are often highlighted as heroes and presented as ideal characters or characters who can be considered excellent and praiseworthy.

Hang Tuah's loyal nature is another aspect that is focused on in adaptations of *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. His undivided loyalty towards the king is shown in that Hang Tuah is willing to sacrifice the friendship of his best friend when the latter commits treason.

Table 3 shows that Hang Tuah is so loyal to the king that he is even willing to kill his traitorous best friend. If Hang Jebat's offence were anything other than treason against the king, Hang Tuah would not have killed him. This is an example of how much emphasis Hang Tuah places on loyalty towards the king. The adaptation retains the core element of the text and the values contained in it. Hadijah Rahmat (2006) explains that complete and utter loyalty towards the Sultan is considered as positive and a noble value that should be encouraged in the reader.

Table 3 Hang Tuah’s loyal nature.

Original text: <i>Hikayat Hang Tuah</i>	Adaptation: <i>Hikayat Hang Tuah</i>
<p><i>Maka kata Laksamana, “sungguh seperti katamu itu; pada hatiku pun demikianlah. Sayang engkau berdosa. Jika lain daripada dosa ini, tiada engkau mati, barang tipunya dayaku pun kuperlepaskan juga engkau daripada mati.” Maka Hang Jebat pun menangis mendengar kata Laksamana demikian itu. Maka Laksamana pun menangis kasihan hatinya akan Hang Jebat. Maka kata Hang Jebat, “Aku pun kerana melihat engkau dibunuh oleh bendahara tiada dengan dosanya; sebab itulah maka sakit hatiku. Akan istimewa aku pula orang permainan tiada akan dibunuhnya, kerana raja itu membunuh tiada dengan periksanya.</i></p> <p>(Kassim Ahmad,1992:387)</p> <p>(Then spoke the Laksamana, “It is true as you say, in my heart I know it. It is a pity that you have committed a sin. Were it any other sin, I would not have killed you for it. I would have used my wiles to allow you to escape death.” Hang Jebat wept at the Laksamana words. Then the Laksamana too wept out of pity for Hang Jebat. Then spoke Hang Jebat, “I saw you killed by the <i>Bendahara</i> without blame, and was sick at the heart for it. And I did not seek revenge on the man who did merely as he was bid, but on the king who kills without cause.”)</p>	<p><i>Maka kata Laksamana, “Sungguh seperti katamu itu. Hatiku pun berkata begitu. Sayang engkau berdosa. Jika lain daripada dosa ini, tidak engkau mati, aku akan menggunakan tipunya dayaku untuk melepaskan engkau daripada mati.”</i></p> <p><i>Maka Hang Jebat pun menangis mendengar kata Laksamana. Maka Laksamana pun menangis juga, hati menjadi kasihan pada Hang Jebat. Maka kata Hang Jebat, “Aku pun derhaka kerana melihat ketidakadilan raja membunuhmu tanpa usul periksa. Betapa besar jasmu pada raja, tetapi dilupakan baginda.”</i></p> <p>(Noor Suraya, 2012:325)</p> <p>(Said the Laksamana, “It is as you say, in my heart I know it. It is a pity that you have committed a sin. Were it any other sin, I would not have killed you for it. I would have found any excuse for you to escape death.”</p> <p>Hang Jebat wept at hearing the Laksamana’s words. The Laksamana wept too, out of pity for Hang Jebat. Then, Hang Jebat said, “I became a traitor to the king because I saw that he killed you without further investigation. How great are your deeds for the king—and how easily forgotten by him.”)</p>

Apart from minor adaptation there are also partial adaptations of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* in children’s literature. Partial adaptations refer to adaptations in which only a part of the text is used to produce a new text. A complete original text has a beginning, complication and a resolution. A partial adaptation is when an author takes only a certain incident from the complete text and shapes it into a new work, with a new title and a new audience in mind. This is because in a complete literary work, there are usually several incidents or events. Most often the partial adaptation is simpler for children to read. A partial adaptation may or

may not involve minor alterations to the incident or event taken from the original text. For example, in the adaptations titled *Hang Tuah Laksamana Melaka*, *Fitnah Datuk Karma Wijaya* and *Hang Jebat Menderhaka*, each refers to one specific incident in the original text. These titles were published by Penerbitan Jaya Bakti in 1993 as part of a series called *Siri Aneka Kisah Kesultanan Melayu* (Diverse Stories from the Malay Sultanate Series), which consisted of retellings by Abdullah Ishak. Apart from this, there is another book titled *Negeri Melaka* (Malacca State) by Haji Buyong Adil in a series called *Siri Tawarikh Malaysia* (Malaysian History Series), which focuses on the Malay warriors of Malacca, published by Penerbit Titiwangsa Sdn. Bhd. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP) also published stories about Hang Tuah in 1989, written by Mahani Che Ibrahim. All the stories focused on Hang Tuah's character and dealt with his bravery and heroism, especially in his childhood when Hang Tuah fought pirates and captured men who ran amok in order to save the Bendahara. The story ends when Hang Tuah is made one of the palace soldiers.

Partial adaptation requires selection of only one incident or event, which makes the text easier for children to understand, especially when the language is simplified and accompanied by illustrations that can aid the reader's understanding. Adaptations of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* for children also expose children to the epic heroes of whom the Malays are proud.

Adaptations for children that include the character of Hang Tuah are also a part of a series of books named *Siri Hikayat Hang Tuah* (The Epic of Hang Tuah Series) written by Hakim Syah and published in 2009 by Media Ink Publishing. These stories are partial adaptations that deal with certain events in the original *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. Among them are *Hang Tuah Bergelar Biduanda Raja* (Hang Tuah as the King's Man), *Hang Tuah Pahlawan Hebat* (Hang Tuah, the Great Warrior), *Nasib Hang Tuah Difitnah* (Hang Tuah is Slandered), *Hang Tuah dan Empat Sahabat* (Hang Tuah and his Four Friends), *Hang Tuah di Majapahit* (Hang Tuah in Majapahit), *Hang Tuah Memperdaya Taming Sari* (Hang Tuah Outsmarts Taming Sari) and *Hang Tuah diserang Buaya Putih* (Hang Tuah is Attacked by the White Crocodile). All of these stories are based on events contained in the original *Hikayat Hang Tuah*.

These adaptations for children highlight Hang Tuah's characteristics of bravery, courage, intelligence, cunning, loyalty and sense of fraternity. The positive values in Hang Tuah's character are conveyed as closely as possible using language and illustrations that are interesting for children. Many of the events taken from the original text of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* use separate titles based on each and are published according to the chronology of events.

For example, Hang Tuah's quick thinking and cleverness can be seen in *Hang Tuah Memperdaya Taming Sari*. Here, it is due to Hang Tuah's clever thinking that he is able to outsmart his opponent when he realizes that his weapon is unable to stab the famous Javanese warrior Taming Sari. Hang Tuah realizes that his strength and bravery are insufficient to deal with his opponent. The quick-thinking Hang Tuah then manages to get Taming Sari to switch weapons with him, with the result that he is able to overcome Taming Sari. Indirectly, this tells children that in doing anything, even something difficult, one must use one's intelligence, and not merely physical strength.

Apart from this, Hang Tuah's qualities as a warrior are often included in adaptations for children, where he is shown to be exceptionally skilful with his weapons. In *Hang Tuah* by Mahani Che Ibrahim, for example, Hang Tuah is depicted as a person who is able to defeat men who run amok and want to kill the Bendahara. This incident presented in the Table 4.

Table 4 shows Hang Tuah and his friends' extraordinary skill at duelling with the men who are running amok. The skill of Hang Tuah and his friends in defending the Bendahara and defeating the men saves the Bendahara's life. This event leads to Hang Tuah and his four friends becoming the King's men at the royal court. Hang Tuah and his friends become famous Malay warriors who are feared and respected by friend and foe.

Partial adaptations also include Hang Tuah's duel with Hang Jebat, titled *Hang Tuah Melawan Hang Jebat* (by Jamiliah, published by Pustaka Mawar in 2004 as part of a series titled *Kisah Legenda Melayu Klasik (A Collection of Ten Well-known Classical Malay Texts)*). The account of the duel between Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat is shown in Table 5.

The duel between Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat is an important event which is often used in adaptations by authors of children's books because it is full of action, and makes reading interesting for children.

Aspects of Hang Tuah's as a warrior play an important part in exposing children to elements of a perfect character. As an epic hero and a legend, Hang Tuah's character is detailed in adaptations in the best way possible in order to expose children to this great Malay hero. Apart from building an interest in the pleasures of reading, it also encourages feelings of pride in the heritage of one's culture among children while at the same time inculcating a love for one's country. Apart from this, the adaptations also encourage such positive values as courage, love for one's country, loyalty, patience, while showing the dangers of slander and greed, among others.

Table 4 Hang Tuah's skill as a warrior.

Original text: <i>Hikayat Hang Tuah</i>	Adaptation: <i>Hang Tuah</i>
<p><i>Demi didengar oleh orang empat itu kata Hang Tuah demikian, maka ia pun terlalu marah, serta diusirnya Hang Tuah dan Hang Jebat, ditikamnya berturut-turut. Maka Hang Tuah dan Hang Jebat pun melompat ke kiri dan ke kanan menyalahkan tikaman orang itu. Setelah lalu, ditikamnya orang itu: maka melompat Hang Tuah dan Hang Jebat, ditikamnya seorang; itupun rebah lalu mati. Maka melompat pula Hang Kasturi dan Hang Lekiu, lalu ditikamnya, rebah pula lalu mati. Maka yang dua orang itu pun bertikam dengan Hang Tuah. Maka keduanya mati ditikam oleh Hang Tuah.</i></p> <p>(Kassim Ahmad,1992:37)</p> <p>(Upon hearing Hang Tuah's words, the four became angry and chased Hang Tuah dan Hang Jebat, stabbing at them with their weapons again and again. Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat jumped to the left and to the right to escape the stabs. After a while, Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat leapt and stabbed one of the men. After he had fallen and died, Hang Kasturi and Hang Lekiu leapt out and stabbed another. Upon which the other two battled with Hang Tuah, who stabbed them both to death.)</p>	<p><i>"Cis budak kecil, lari kamu dari situ. Kami nak hapuskan bendahara!" marah salah seorang daripada orang mengamuk itu.</i></p> <p><i>"Kami tak akan berganjak. Walaupun empat puluh orang seperti kamu. Kami hulubalang Melaka, kami tidak gentar!" kata Hang Tuah.</i></p> <p><i>Maka terjadilah pertarungan antara Hang Tuah dan rakan-rakannya dengan orang mengamuk itu. Dengan senang Hang Tuah dan sahabat-sahabatnya berjaya menewaskan keempat-empat orang mengamuk itu.</i></p> <p>(Mahani Che Ibrahim, 1989:32-33)</p> <p>("Run, little boy, get away! We want to kill the <i>Bendahara!</i>" said one of the men who was running amok.</p> <p>"We will not stir! Even if there were forty of you. We are warriors of Malacca, we are not afraid!" said Hang Tuah.</p> <p>So Hang Tuah and his friends battled the men who were running amok. Hang Tuah and his friends easily overcame the four men.)</p>

Illustrations in children's literature

Illustrations are a main element in children's literature. Illustrations add fun and character to a book. The illustrations may seem small and simple, yet they can improve the layout and style of a book. According to Md Sidin Ahmad Ishak (2008:45), full-page illustrations about a fictional character can create a "sense of familiarity" and add credibility to the development of a character. He also elaborates on the types of illustrations, among others painted pictures, line drawings, maps, pictograms and symbols. However, where reproduction is concerned, illustrations are usually either line drawings or half-tone illustrations. Line drawing are produced in pen, pencil, ink,

Table 5 The duel between HangTuah’s and Hang Jebat.

Original text: <i>Hikayat Hang Tuah</i>	Adaptation: <i>Hang Tuah Melawan Hang Jebat</i>
<p><i>Arkian maka laksamana pun segera berbangkit berdiri, serta katanya, “Cih, mati engkau olehku!” Maka laksamana pun melompat serta ditikamnya dada Hang Jebat, kena dadanya terus bayang-bayang ke belakangnya.</i></p> <p>(Kassim Ahmad,1992)</p> <p>(The <i>Laksamana</i> immediately got to his feet and cried, “Fiend, you shall die at my hands!” . And the <i>Laksamana</i> leapt and stabbed Hang Jebat in the chest, all the way through to the back.)</p>	<p><i>Hang Jebat berasa amat terkejut apabila mendapati Hang Tuah masih hidup. “Kamu sudah menjadi penderhaka terhadap raja!” marah Hang Tuah. Lantas Hang Tuah pun bertarung dengan Hang Jebat yang juga sahabat baiknya. Kedua-dua mereka amat lincah dan sukar ditewaskan. Namun Hang Tuah lebih handal daripada Hang Jebat. Akhirnya Hang Tuah berjaya membunuh Hang Jebat dengan Keris Taming Sari.</i></p> <p>(Jamaliah, 2004: 25-29)</p> <p>(Hang Jebat was surprised that Hang Tuah was alive. “You are a traitor to the king!” Hang Tuah cried angrily. Then, Hang Tuah sparred with Hang Jebat, his best friend. They were both equally skilled and it was difficult for either to defeat the other. But Hang Tuah was more skilful than Hang Jebat. In the end, Hang Tuah succeeded in killing Hang Jebat with the keris, Taming Sari keris.)</p>

paint, charcoal, colour pastels or using computer graphics. Whereas half-tone illustrations are classified according to the medium used to produce them such as ink, technical pen, airbrush, brush paintings, calligraphic paintings and so forth.

In adaptations of stories from *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, apart from using sentences and words that can be easily read and understood by children, illustrations also play an important role. Illustrations have many functions in children’s literature, for example to create a setting (time, culture and place), develop the character, emphasize the text, develop the plot to build mood. According to Lynch-Brown and Tomlinson (1999:32):

They convey meaning and feeling by helping the reader to visualize the physical settings and characters’ appearance and actions. They also provide an aesthetic dimension to books by offering readers additional pleasure and insights beyond the message with text.

Illustrations not only enhance the reader's understanding and appreciation of the text but also add aesthetic value or beauty through the drawings or photographs. Apart from this, educationists are also of the opinion that one effective way of exciting children's interest is by adding something that would attract them. Thus, in order to appeal to young children, interesting books, with interesting pictures will surely attract them more than a book that is merely filled with words. Children are attracted to the pictures first before they are attracted to the text. Illustrations related to the character of Hang Tuah are shown below.

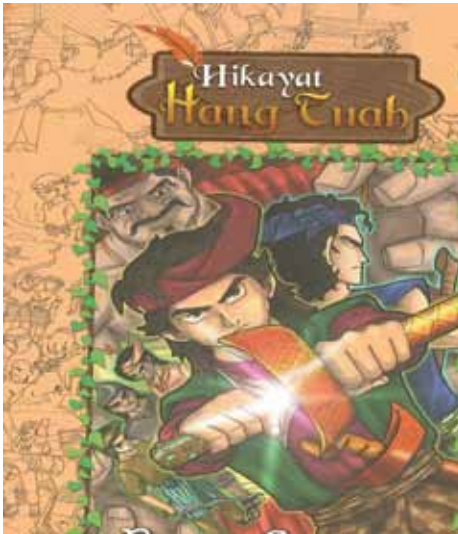


Figure 1 Illustrations of book covers of adaptations of *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. (Source: Noor Suraya, 2012. *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. Bangi: JS Adiwarna Publications & Distributors).

Illustrations of the cover of the adaptation of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* by Zaid Fadli in Figure 1 show Hang Tuah and his friend Hang Jebat up against men running amok. The illustration is done in a modern comic-book style which at the same time retains traditional elements, as can be seen from the clothing of the characters. Indirectly, the illustration gives an idea of the complete plot of the story. Molina S. Nijhar (1993:6) explains that children generally prefer bright illustrations that have simple lines and are realistic in nature. Therefore, if a text has interesting illustrations, it will indirectly influence children's interest in reading.

Figure 2 shows the event in which Hang Tuah and his friends defend the Bendahara from an amok. The five friends are depicted with fierce features,

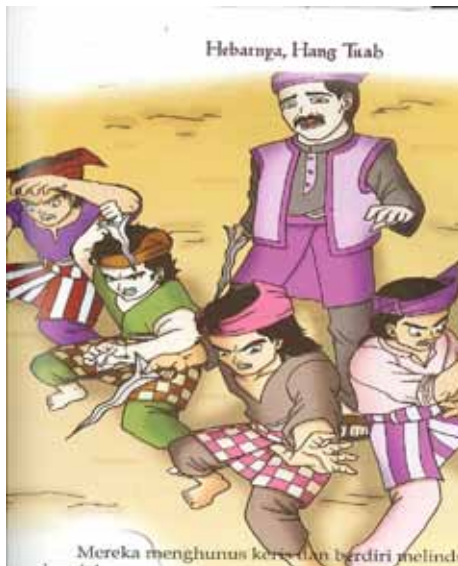


Figure 2 Illustration showing Hang Tuah and his friends defending the Bendahara from the amoks.

(Source: Noor Suraya, 2012. *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. Bangi: JS Adiwarna Publications & Distributors, p. 49).

holding their *keris* and defending the Bendahara. The illustration, which takes up a full page, is done in a comic-book style and very little text can be found on the page. This explains how an illustration can actually be used to support the story and act as a guide to the fictitious world created by the author.

Figure 3 is an illustration of the character Hang Jebat in a text titled *Jebat Derhaka* (Jebat the Traitor). Hang Jebat's face is drawn in such a way that suggests he is a fierce person as befits his nature as a traitor. The colour illustration has an emotive effect on the reader. A good children's book exploits such emotions through strong images (Md Sidin Ahmad Ishak, 2008:53).

Figure 4 is an illustration of the duel between Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat which ends with the death of Hang Jebat at the hands of Hang Tuah. This illustration actually intensifies the dramatic element of the two duelling characters and attracts the children's attention in this illustrated adaptation.

Figure 5 shows an illustration from the text entitled *Hang Tuah* by author Mahani Che Ibrahim and illustrated by Abdul Rahman Khalid. The illustration shows Hang Tuah and his friends defeating pirates. Several of the pirates are shown dead and some who have survived are being bound and handed over to

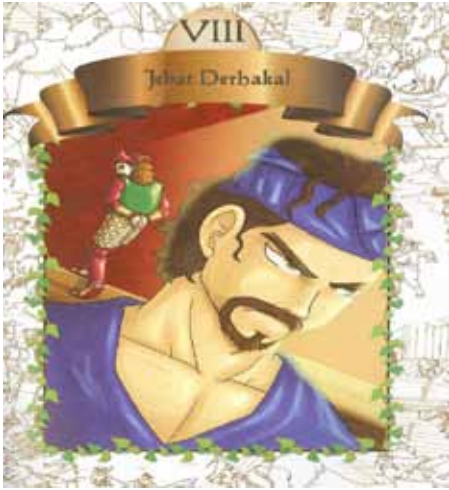


Figure 3 Illustration of the text *Jebat Derhaka* (Jebat the Traitor) adapted from *Hikayat Hang Tuah*.
(Source: Noor Suraya, 2012. *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. Bangi: JS Adiwarna Publications & Distributors, p. 253).



Figure 4 Illustrations of text in partial adaptation titled *Hang Tuah Melawan Hang Jebat*.
(Source: Jamiliah, 2004. *Hang Tuah Melawan Hang Jebat*. Selangor: Pustaka Mawar, p. 28).

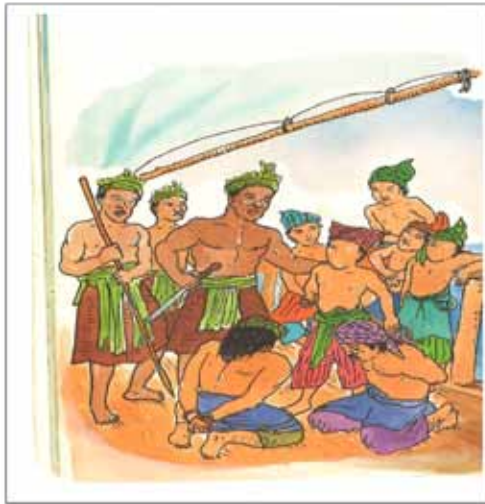


Figure 5 Illustrations accompanying the text titled *Hang Tuah* by Mahani Che Ibrahim with illustrations by Abdul Rahman Khalid (Source: Mahani Che Ibrahim, 1989. *Hang Tuah*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. p. 20).

Batin Singapura. These illustrations further strengthen the idea that Hang Tuah was a heroic character before he became Laksamana (Admiral) of Malacca.

In general, the use of illustrations in adaptations plays an important role in attracting children to a book. The illustrations showing a character also depend on the creativity of the illustrator. Md Sidin Ahmad Ishak (2008:53) explains that text and illustration combine to form a greater meaning than if they are used separately. The text tells one story while the pictures amplifies.

THE LOYAL HANG TUAH AND THE TREACHEROUS HANG JEBAT

In the 1970s, Malay Literature became influenced by a movement in the arts that is known as social realism which has its roots in the Depression-era society of the United States in the 1930s, and which advocated against social and racial injustices. This movement has similarities with socialist realism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. However, the two movements are not the same because the social realism movement allowed subjectivity. In other words, social realism as a movement in the arts discussed social injustices and permitted authors greater freedom in producing their works.

Among the authors who were influenced by the social realism movement in Malaysia was Usman Awang. His play titled *Matinya Seorang Pahlawan* [Death of a Hero] (1987) was an adaptation of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* in which he advocated the rights of those who are treated unjustly, in this case, Hang Jebat. In traditional feudal Malay society, the monarchy and aristocracy had a strong grip on the lower classes and ordinary citizens did not dare to go against the injustices that occurred (Cheng Boon Kheng, 1994). The coming of the British loosened this grip somewhat. Instead, the English were promoted as a power that could not only rival the Malay Sultans but also overcome them to the extent of making a Sultan abdicate. From the point of view of social realism, the character of Hang Jebat is more powerful than that of Hang Tuah because Hang Jebat opposes the Sultan who acts against Hang Tuah without further investigation. In this matter, Haron Daud (2001:108) explains that the image of Hang Jebat in Malay society has changed according to the times and social attitudes. Society began to question social injustices in a system that was based on feudalism and the power of the aristocracy. In more feudal times, Hang Jebat was despised for his treachery.

However, in the 1960s and 1970s (and perhaps even now), it was without doubt Jebat who was the National Hero of the Malays and not Tuah. In fact, Kassim Ahmad (1969:37), explains that the failure of Hang Jebat is a result of the time in which he lived. He wanted to dedicate himself to two ideals, that is, loyalty to his master and loyalty to his friend. Loyalty to one's master was highly prized at that time while loyalty to a friend had its limits. Jebat's mistake was that he attempted to stand by his friend till the end, which was unheard of at the time.

However, what is clear in adaptations of hero stories in children's literature is that Hang Jebat is a character as important as Hang Tuah. While Hang Jebat is an important character in *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, he is not featured in adaptations of the text for children. According to Kassim Ahmad (1969:36):

Perwatakan Jebat sepanjang peristiwa yang agong tetapi yang menyedihkan ini adalah baik sekali. Dia muncul sebagai sinaran cahaya matahari yang memancar di kala senja. Dalam tiga daripada dua puluh empat bab Hikayat Hang Tuah ini "pengarangnya" membentuk watak Jebat dengan lukisan-lukisan yang tidak dapat dilupai. Sejauh yang kita ketahui, dalam seluruh kesusasteraan Melayu klasik tidak terdapat satu penggambaran watak yang dapat dibandingkan dengannya.

(The character of Jebat throughout this great but tragic episode is very good. He appears like a ray of light that shines at dawn. In three of the twenty chapter of *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, the "author" paints an unforgettable picture

of the character of Jebat. As far as we know, there is no other character in classical Malay literature whose depiction can be compared with his.)

Kassim Ahmad (1969:36)

The excerpt from Kassim Ahmad above explains that the character of Hang Jebat is as important as that of Hang Tuah in *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. However, the events in which Hang Jebat is featured in children's literature only concern his treachery against the Sultan, unlike the heroism and warriorship of Hang Tuah which is celebrated throughout these adaptations. The negative aspects of Hang Jebat's character are used by authors of these adaptations to impart some moral lessons concerning the ills of treason and rash judgement. For example, in Abdullah Ishak's *Hang Jebat Menderhaka* (1993a), published under the series titled *Siri Aneka Kisah Kesultanan Melaka*, the focus is on the duel between Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat.

Table 6 shows the duel between Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat in the original text and the adaptation, which focuses on Hang Jebat's treachery. Because he commits treason against the Sultan of Malacca, Hang Jebat receives his just deserts by dying at the hands of his best friend in the end. The adaptations do not show Hang Jebat's heroic characteristics because of the negative aspects of his character.

Apart from this, *Hikayat Hang Tuah* has also been adapted as a drama by Syed Alwi al-Hadi in 1965 under the title *Hang Tuah Pahlawan Melayu*. This play also highlights Hang Tuah's heroism (in Abdul Rahman Napiah, 1994:24). He emphasizes Hang Tuah's heroism as follows:

Cerita Hang Tuah ini telah terkenal di kalangan orang-orang kita sejak zaman purba hingga ke hari ini. Bahkan di kalangan bangsa-bangsa asing juga beliau telah lama mendapat tempat, sama ada melalui bahasa Melayu, mahupun dalam bahasa asing. Kemasyhuran Hang Tuah ialah kerana sifat kepahlawanannya sejati dan luar biasa, kisah sejarahnya yang mengandungi serba peristiwa yang berlaku pada zaman raja-rajanya dahulu kala itu memang tidak menjemukan.

(Stories about Hang Tuah have been famous among our people since ancient times. In fact, they are also known in other countries, whether in the Malay language or in other languages. Hang Tuah's fame rests on his authentic and extraordinary heroism, and the stories about him abound with events that happened in the time of long-ago kings which have not lost their appeal.)

In addition to the above, Abdul Rahman Napiah (1994) explains that the choice of Hang Tuah the warrior has gained wide acceptance as a Malay hero.

Table 6 The duel between HangTuah's and Hang Jebat.

Original text: <i>Hikayat Hang Tuah</i>	Adaptation: <i>Hang Jebat Menderhaka</i>
<p><i>Maka oleh Hang Jebat maka dipertubinya tikam akan laksamana, kena talam itu terus tiada bertahan. Maka Hang Jebat pun lelah, tetapi sungguhpun laksamana berguling, mata kerisnya ke atas juga. Syahadan keris Hang Jebat pun sebagai lekat pada talam itu. Arakian maka laksamana pun segera bangkit berdiri, serta katanya, "Cih, mati engkau olehku!" Maka laksamana pun melompat serta ditikamnya dada Hang Jebat, kena dadanya terus bayang-bayang ke belakangnya.</i></p> <p>(Hikayat Hang Tuah, 1992:391)</p> <p>(Hang Jebat stabbed repeatedly at the <i>Laksamana</i> but he stabbed at the metal tray, which could not withstand it. And Hang Jebat became tired but even though the <i>Laksamana</i> fell, his keris was pointed upwards. Soon, Hang Jebat's keris stuck in one of the metal trays. The <i>Laksamana</i> immediately got to his feet and cried, "Fiend, you shall die at my hands!" . And the <i>Laksamana</i> leapt and stabbed Hang Jebat in the chest, all the way through to the back.)</p>	<p>"Tuan hamba tidak patut menderhaka Jebat. Sekarang hamba datang untuk menghukum tuan hamba", jawab Hang Tuah. Hang Tuah melompat naik ke atas istana. Berlakulah pertarungan yang sengit di antara mereka. Dalam pertarungan itu, Hang Tuah berjaya merampas keris Taming Sari. Hang Jebat menjadi lemah dan akhirnya dapat dibunuh oleh Hang Tuah.</p> <p>(Hang Jebat Menderhaka, 1993:21-22)</p> <p>("You should not have committed this treason against the king, Jebat. Now I have come to mete out your punishment." said Hang Tuah.</p> <p>Hang Tuah leapt up to the palace. A fierce duel took place between them. In the course of the duel, Hang Tuah was able to wrest the Taming Sari from Hang Jebat. Hang Jebat became weak and was finally killed by Hang Tuah.)</p>

He further states that there is no warrior who can rival Hang Tuah as a hero or warrior who has gained a special place in the hearts and souls of the Malays.

In conjunction with this, although there are those who have promoted Hang Jebat as the hero, such as Ali Aziz in his play *Hang Jebat Menderhaka* (Hang Jebat Rebels) in 1960, this is a new interpretation in which opposition to the legend is a sign of free thought by modern local authors (Abdul Rahman Napiah, 1994:82). Similarly, Usman Awang's play *Matinya Seorang Pahlawan* promotes Hang Jebat as the hero figure. Even though the play is based on the original *Hikayat Hang Tuah* in which Hang Jebat is the traitor and Hang Tuah carries out the king's command, Usman Awang interprets this differently by making some alterations, additions and modifications which show Hang Jebat as the ultimate hero. However, in adaptations in children's literature, Hang Tuah is strongly emphasized for his heroism and loyalty instead of Hang Jebat.

Adaptation texts in children's literature still retain Hang Tuah as the legendary hero of Malay society. Even though there are disputes whether the true hero should be Hang Tuah or Hang Jebat, there still is no clear evidence that supports the idea that Hang Jebat is the hero. The clearest aspect that places Hang Tuah in the position of hero other than his qualities of hero and warrior is his undivided loyalty towards the monarch of Malacca which he values above friendship. This loyalty is not found in the character of Hang Jebat, whose treachery and cruelty for the sake of friendship limits his heroic qualities.

This is also in line with the statements by Ismail Hussein in his essay *The Study of Traditional Literature* (in Kassim Ahmad, 1992: xxiv), where in the introduction to the text of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* he explains the conflict concerning the hero-figures of Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat as follows:

Kita memang mudah menerima analisis karya abad ke-16 ini dari sudut keperluan kebangsaan abad ke-20, tetapi kajian sastera yang saintifik tidak wajar dilakukan dari segi keperluan sosial yang berubah-ubah, tetapi dari segi masyarakat pada masa ia ditulis. Dan tidak ada kaedah yang boleh membuktikan bahawa Jebat itu wira dalam masyarakat Melayu Melaka abad ke-16.

(It is easy for us to analyse this 16th-century work from the point of view of the requirements of the 20th century, however, scientific literary study should not be based on the capricious requirements of society but should be made from the point of view of the society of the time during which it was produced. And there is no method that can prove that Jebat was considered a hero in 16th-century Malacca.)

The great thinker, that is, the author of the work whose identity remains unknown to us foregrounded a hero who was to be an example for all Malays especially, and people from other ethnic groups in general. Children's texts that foreground Hang Tuah as the great hero continue in this vein so that this legendary character may live on in the minds of children in times to come.

In new works produced for children, the image of Hang Tuah as the hero and Hang Jebat as the traitor persist. This shows that the feudal idea of Hang Tuah as the hero loyal to his king is still being promoted. From the angle of psychology, this is maintained in order that the children continue to be cocooned in the thinking of Malay feudal society, which is indeed on the agendas of the education system in Malaysia. As the country is still based on a monarchical system, loyalty is much emphasized, albeit being a constitutional monarchy the king has no political power and only acts a religious and ceremonial figurehead.

The children's literature of today clearly shows that the idea of Hang Tuah as the hero and Hang Jebat as the traitor continues to be upheld.

CONCLUSION

Hikayat Hang Tuah is an important and popular epic in Malay society. As an epic hero, Hang Tuah has gained a place of priority in traditional children's fantasy tales adapted from *Hikayat Hang Tuah* as they contain important motifs that attract children to these fantasy tales. The motif of the warrior, for example, is highly influential on children. The epic hero has been depicted in many adaptations in children's literature which focus on his extraordinary skills such as in *silat* and other martial arts, in armed combat, and so on. Partial adaptation is the preferred method of adaptation where *Hikayat Hang Tuah* is concerned as the focus is on the heroism of Hang Tuah in his duel against Hang Jebat who is deemed to be a traitor. The duel between Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat is an interesting motif for children. *Hikayat Hang Tuah* has now been adapted into versions more interesting for children using colourful illustrations. In terms of development of the character of Hang Tuah, this study finds that in its development since the beginning till now, there are still no works that depict Hang Jebat as the hero. The influence of social realism is unnoticeable. Up till now, no author has shown enough daring to change the perceptions of children towards the character of Hang Tuah. It is indeed easier to expose children to the adventures of Hang Tuah which are filled with elements of fantasy that children enjoy, compared to dealing with his shortcomings such as his total loyalty to his king.

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(Translated by Tanja Jonid)