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# AL-SHAJARAH

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# THE MALAY EPISTEMOLOGICAL BACKGROUND IN THE ISLAMIC WRITINGS OF HAMZAH FANSŪRĪ

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## Abstract

*The study of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings has long been focused on understanding its connection to Islamic philosophy rather than its indigenous philosophical origins. The objective of this study is to identify and expose the traditional Malay epistemological background behind Hamzah Fansūrī's writings. This objective is achieved through the evidence and analysis methods of historical linguistics on the one hand, and by judging these analytical conclusions based on Buddhist Yogācāra's epistemology of Śrīvijaya on the other hand. Three important research findings are as follows: 1) the overall style of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings is the logical tradition of Dignāga, 2) all the metaphors of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings, which are of the type of pariṇāma theory, can be understood in the epistemological tradition of Vasubandhu, which was influential in the writings of Śrīvijaya from the end of the seventh century to the beginning of the eleventh century, and 3) Hamzah Fansūrī's works are also influenced by the recent Malayu-Singapura philosophy of Saṃkhyā, mainly the distinction between śabda and katā, which is used to receive the new Islamic epistemological distinctions and traditions. In other words, to say that the Śrīvijaya period had no major impact on philosophy, and that pre-Islamic Malay mind was more aesthetic than philosophical cannot be supported by the writings of Hamzah Fansūrī.*

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## Background of Research: Study on Islamic Sources of Hamzah Fansūrī's Writings

Hamzah Fansūrī is a familiar philosophical figure known to Malay-Indonesian Islamic scholars in history. Hamzah Fansūrī's writings and thought not only influenced his birthplace from Aceh region, but also to southern Sumatra region of Palembang as well as the island of Java, Kalimantan and Sulawesi.[2] Today he is also better known to Islamic scholars outside the Malay-Indonesian region, especially from the Persian-speaking world in which three of Hamzah Fansūrī's outstanding writings (*Asrāru'l-'Ārifīn*, *Sharābu'l-'Āshiqīn*, and *Al-Muntahī*) have been translated into and for Persian readers in 2018.[3]

One of the dominant trends of recent study on Hamzah Fansūrī's writings is to trace the Islamic sources as per quoted in his treatises on Sufi doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd*. Scholars have reached a consensus that Hamzah Fansūrī owed his understanding mainly to the Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240 CE) school with its Persian members like Fakhr al-Din Iraqi (d. 1289 CE), Abd al-Rahman Jami (d. 1492 CE), Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 1273 CE), Sa'di-e Shirazi (d. 1291 CE), and Mahmoud Shabestari (d. 1340 CE). In fact, Hamzah Fansūrī's writings are only an example of Persian phase of Islamization in Malay-Indonesian region from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century.[4] However, the Persian phase of Islamization seems to have quickly dwindled after the time of Hamzah Fansūrī as his works were officially classified as heresy by the Aceh kingdom.

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[2] For Hamzah Fansūrī's influence in Malay-Indonesian archipelago in history, see Miftah Arifin, *Wujudiyah di Nusantara: Kontinuitas & Perubahan* (Yogyakarta: STAIN Jember Press & Pustaka Pelajar, 2015).

[3] See Amir H. Zekrgoo and Leyla H. Tajer, "An introduction to Ḥamzah Fanṣoūrī's asrārul 'arifīn, sharābul-'ashiqīn, al-muntahī: a translation project in progress," Syed Farid Alatas & Abdolreza Alami eds., *The Civilizational and Cultural Heritage of Iran and the Malay World: A Cultural Discourses* (Kuala Lumpur: Gerakbudaya Enterprise & Cultural Center Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2018), 107-118.

[4] See Paul Wormser, "The limits of Persian influence in the 17th century Malay World', *International conference of The Frontiers of Persian learning: testing the limits of an Eurasian lingua franca*," University of California Los Angeles, 16 October 2015.

Under this trend of the current study, the scholars' concern is always on exploring Hamzah Fansūrī as an Islamic philosopher purely and not a Malay-Islamic philosopher. Their scholarly exploration so far does not help us understand the Malay philosophical background of Hamzah Fansūrī. [5] To recognize Hamzah Fansūrī as the first Islamic philosopher in Malay language is probably a doubtless claim, but scholars seldom realize (and seldom discuss) that it was made possible only on the shoulders of Malay language from the philosophical tradition especially. Hamzah Fansūrī used to cite his predecessors from Pasai kingdom (ca. 1250 CE-1524 CE) in support of his new Sufi metaphysics of *waḥdat al-wujūd* which was also in Malay, with a favorite analogy of the seed and the tree ("*biji dan pohon*"). [6] But the Malay language (and the seed-tree analogy) was not invented by the Pasai kingdom; it was already the administrative language of Śrīvijaya in the seventh century. If we consider that the word *biji* in Malay is borrowed from Sanskrit (*bijā* /बिजा, also *bija* in Malay) and has been used by the seventh century Śrīvijaya philosopher Śākyakīrti (शाक्यकीर्ति, ca. 650 CE-693 CE) to convey the same analogy of the seed and the tree, [7] does this have nothing to do with Hamzah Fansūrī linguistically and analogically for the philosophical purpose at hand?

One weakness of the current Islamic study on Hamzah Fansūrī's treatises is to attribute their content to the Islamic sources without their possible local contribution. The analogy of the ocean and the waves ("*laut dan ombak*") in Hamzah Fansūrī's treatises, for

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[5] For more recent examples, see Amir H. Zekrgoo and Leyla H. Tajer, *Tracing Persian Sufi Literature In Hamzah Fansuri's Writings* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2023), 2; Thibaut d'Hubert and Alexandre Papas, *Jāmī in Regional Contexts: The Reception of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī's Works in the Islamicate World, ca. 9th/15th–14th/20th Century* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2019); and Imtiyaz Yusuf, *Measuring the Effect of Iranian Mysticism on Southeast Asia* (Bangkok: Cultural Centre, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2004).

[6] See Hamzah Fansūrī, *Al-Muntahī*, in Syed Muhammmad Naguib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malay Press, 1970), 558.

[7] See Tee Boon Chuan, "*Hastadandaśāstra* (Naskah Tertua Kerajaan Śrīwijaya) dalam sejarah logik dan metafizik Melayu," in Ros Mahwati Ahmad Zakaria, Ahmad Bazri Mokhtar, Muhamad Shafiq Mohd Ali eds., *SEMALU 2022: Prosiding Seminar Antarabangsa Manuskrip Melayu* (Bangi: ATMA-UKM, 2022), 19-40.

another example, has been usually attributed by many scholars as "the analogy…favourite of Ṣūfīs generally in their attempt to describe their conception of Being."[8] In the reality, the analogy was also a favorite analogy between Śākyakīrti (a Buddhist Yogācāra philosopher earlier cited) and his unnamed opponent (a Buddhist Mahīśāsaka [one of Hinayana schools] philosopher) when they were debating the philosophical proposition of Vasubandhu (वसुबन्धु, ca. $4^{th}$ to $5^{th}$ century) in seventh century Śrīvijaya. The analogy appeared in verse 15 of Vasubandhu's fundamental writing on *Thirty Verses of the Consciousness Only* (*Triṃśikā-kārikā* / त्रिंशिकाकारिका) that:

> [15] In the root-consciousness (*mūla-vijñāna*), the arising of the other five takes place according to conditions, either all together or not, just as waves (*taraṅga*) in water (*jala*).[9]

The root-*vijñāna* that gave rise to the five *vijñānas* was analogous to the ocean and the waves, and both were consciousness in nature in terms of describing the Buddhist Yogācāra's the-consciousness-only metaphysics ("the unity of consciousness"). Does this ocean-waves analogy of Hamzah Fansūrī, along with other analogies in his treatises, come from an earlier time other than the coming of Islam to the Malay-Indonesian region?

## Objective of Research: "Becoming Malay" ("Masuk Melayu") or the Domestication of New Islamic Philosophy in Hamzah Fansūrī's Writings

Based on the above examples of analogy, we believe that Hamzah Fansūrī and other Malay intellectuals in his times were already familiar with their pre-Islamic Malay versions. Just like the Malay language, these analogies were not invented by the Pasai kingdom nor by Hamzah Fansūrī. It was already there even before the Pasai

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[8] See Syed Muhammmad Naguib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 160. See also Abdul Hadi W. M., *Tasawuf Yang Tertindas: Kajian Hermeneutik Terhadap Karya-Karya Hamzah Fansuri* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2001), 94.

[9] See Vasubandhu, "The thirty verses: 15," adapted from Stefan Anacker, *Seven Works of Vasubhandu: the Buddhist Psychological Doctor* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2005), 187.

kingdom was founded in 1250 CE. To say Hamzah Fansūrī was the first Islamic philosopher to write in the Malay language might sound plausible based on received evidence, but to claim that Malay language did not become a literary vehicle of philosophy until the writings of Hamzah Fansūrī appears to be an exaggeration.

In Hamzah Fansūrī's writings, for example, divine and prophetic sources of knowledge were referred to as *sabda* (from Sanskrit, śabda / **शब्द**) which were to be distinguished from the category of sayings known as *kata* (from Sanskrit, kathā / **कथा**). Hamzah Fansūrī used the latter word *kata* when referring to the works of all members of the Ibn ʿArabī school as well as other Islamic philosophers, theologians and any wisely sayings before him. This epistemological distinction between *śabda* and *katā* is also true in the earlier Islamic writings prior to Hamzah Fansūrī, such as the `Aqāʾid al-Nasafī* (1590 CE), *Hikayat Amir Hamzah* (ca. 1380 CE), and *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah* (ca. 1380 CE) and in the Hindu writings such as *Hikayat Seri Rama* (no latest by 1633 CE), *Hikayat Pandawa Lima* (ca. 1525 CE), and *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* (1371 CE).

In other words, we cannot simply regard Hamzah Fansūrī's writings as a pure translation work in Malay. It is true that Hamzah Fansūrī has mentioned at the beginning of *Sharābu'l-ʿĀshiqīn* that he is writing it in Malay for those "who do not understand Arabic and Persian."[10] However, when we consider that Hamzah Fansūrī's writings employ the same epistemological distinction between *śabda* and *katā* as other writings from 1371 CE up to his times, using a number of analogies that may or may not be found in Islam, including the analogy of milk and butter ("susu dan minyak sapi") which is well known not only in Hindu *Bhagavad Gīta* but also in Javanese Hindu *Arjuna Wiwāha* as pointed out by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas,[11] it is quite clear that he was adopting what is now called the domestication of translation approach in writing his three treatises on Sufi metaphysics of *waḥdat al-wujūd*.

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[10] See Hamzah Fansūrī, *Sharābu'l-ʿĀshiqīn*, in Syed Muhammmad Naguib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 297.

[11] See Syed Muhammmad Naguib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 160.

The domestication of translation is a translation strategy that makes the text conform to the reader's culture. In contrast, the foreignization of translation is to retain original information from the source text and culture. So, when Hamzah Fansūrī categorised the sayings of God and the Prophet as *śabda*, and everything else as *kata*, he was in fact observing the Malay epistemological tradition of distinguishing between sources of knowledge. Also, when Hamzah Fansūrī explains the Sufi metaphysics with many Sanskrit-based analogies, it means that the reader is assumed to be aware of the earlier metaphysical background that employed those analogies. In a nutshell, the works of Hamzah Fansūrī contain the metaphysical traditions of Malay society that had existed for generations, which made his domestication of translation possible.

However, the objective of this paper is not to expose the Malay metaphysical tradition entailed in the writings of Hamzah Fansūrī. Rather it is to highlight on the Malay epistemological ideas used by Hamzah Fansūrī in his writings in Malay language on the sources of knowledge, the kinds of (religious) knowledge and even the way he argues for the epistemological propositions along with his domestication of translation for his new Sufi metaphysics of *waḥdat al-wujūd.*

## Statement of Problem: Malay Epistemological Background in Hamzah Fansūrī's Writings

As mentioned above, the language domesticated by Hamzah Fansūrī is in Malay, and it was not invented by him or the Pasai kingdom. He must use the habits or the practices of Malay language in order to make his translation understandable by Malay readers. In this case, his works retain the epistemological tradition of the readers at that time. The research problem of this article may be hence described as follows based on Hamzah Fansūrī's three prose writings of *Asrāru'l-ʿĀrifīn*, *Sharābu'l-ʿĀshiqīn* and *Al-Muntahī*:

First, what was the intellectual background when Hamzah Fansūrī differentiated between the epistemological significance of *sabda* and *kata* viewed as sources of knowledge? For example, Hamzah Fansūrī in *Asrāru'l-ʿĀrifīn* referred to the sayings of Allah

as "*śabda* Allāh", "lagi *śabda* Allāh" ("again the word of Allāh") [12]
and the those of prophets as "seperti *śabda* Nabī" ("like the words of
the prophet"), "*śabda* Rasūlu'Llāh" while for other sayings the word
kata was used such as "*katā* Shaykh Junayd Baghdādī" ("Shaykh
Junayd Baghdādī said") and "*katā* Lam'at" (the *Lam'at* said).
Considering that both *śabda* and *katā* are Sanskrit loanwords, does
such usage have something to do with the pre-Islamic Sanskrit's
epistemological tradition from which Malay literary history
originated?

Second, Hamzah Fansūrī expounded the Sufi theory of "the
unity of being" *(Waḥdat al-Wujūd)* on the basis of the sources of
*śabda* and *katā* in *Sharābu'l-'Āshiqīn*. In the theory he used the
analogy of *biji-pohon* ("seeds and trees") and other equivalent
metaphors and mentioned that unity can be achieved by human
*berahi* ("love") and not *buddi* ("reason") as mentioned in the seventh
and the last chapter of *Sharābu'l-'Āshiqīn*. It is to be noted here
that not only are *biji*, *berahi*, and *buddi* Sanskrit loanwords, but
*biji-pohon* is also a popular metaphor in the philosophical works of
the Śrīvijaya period since the late seventh century. Are these terms
and metaphors as used in the *Sharābu'l-'Āshiqīn* traceable to the
epistemological tradition of Śrīvijaya kingdom?

Third, an attentive reader would be able to feel the elaboration
style of Hamzah Fansūrī's works, which abundantly use the words
*seperti*, *ibarat*, *tamsil*, *misal* ("like, example" in English) to clarify
his epistemological thesis. At the beginning of *Asrāru'l-'Ārifīn*, for
example, Hamzah Fansūrī expounds that Allāh is the transcendental
possessor of Essence *("Dhāt")* and the essence was the necessary
being *("wājibu'l-wujūd")* like the sun and its light *("mithal matahari
dengan cahayanya")*. This way of exposition, which consists of
thesis, reasons and examples, is very similar to the genre of writings
from the Śrīvijaya period, not to mention that *seperti* is the Sanskrit

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[12] For the sayings of Allāh, Hamzah Fansūrī also used the Arabic word *"firmān"*,
meaning that it is equivalent to *sabda*. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas has edited
all the *"sabda"* into *"firmān"* in his romanized texts, see his *The Mysticism of
Hamzah Fansūrī*, 382-561. Sangidu, the author of *Tugas Filolog: Teori dan
Aplikasinya dalam Naskah-Naksah Melayu* (Yogjakarta: Gadjah Mada University
Press, 2016) has also replaced all *"sabda"* into *"firmān"* in his edited texts of
Hamzah Fansūrī

loanword and these analogues examples (sun-light, seed-tree, water-waves, etc.) may also be found in the Śrīvijaya epistemological works. In other words, does the elaboration style of Hamzah Fansūrī's works betray an influence of the Śrīvijaya intellectual tradition?

In view of the above epistemological features, coupled with other metaphysical features in Hamzah Fansūrī's works, the influence of the Śrīvijaya intellectual tradition is quite apparent. In *Asrāru'l-ʿĀrifīn*, Hamzah Fansūrī argues that Allah created the world with two aspects of *nama* and *rupa*:

> Know, O sons of Ādam who are Muslims, that God the Glorious and Exalted creates us; from being nameless, He bestows upon us names ("*nama*"); and from being formless, He fashions for us a form ("*rupa*") complete with ears, hearts, soul and intellect. [13]

Actually, the words *nama* (nāma / नाम) and *rupa* (rūpa / रूप) are of Sanskrit origin and the *nāmarūpa* (नामरूप) theory or "name and bodily-form" of creationism conformed to the Buddhist Yogācāra theory of the Śrīvijaya period. Therefore, the research questions posed in this article are meant to raise the issue of the possibility of the Śrīvijaya's Buddhist Yogācāra epistemological tradition being the source of influence on Hamzah Fansuri's epistemology.

## Methodology of Research: A Study on Historical Linguistics of Buddhist Yogācāra's Epistemological Links to Hamzah Fansūrī's Writings

So far, based on the Malay linguistic expressions in Hamzah Fansūrī's works, we may infer the surviving epistemological tradition of the people at that time. The keywords used by Hamzah Fansūrī in Malay to translate the new Islamic Sufi metaphysics of *waḥdat al-wujūd* were almost all Sanskrit loanwords. The metaphor of *biji-pohon* used in the Pasai kingdom must have been older than the foundation of the kingdom itself because the word *biji* was not an

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[13] See Hamzah Fansūrī, *Asrāru'l-ʿĀrifīn*, trans. by Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, in *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 355.

Arabic or Persian loanword. Then there is the concept of *berahi*, which is a more advanced theory of knowledge than *buddi*; also expressible through Sanskrit equivalences is the *nāmarūpa* theory of creationism, and even the elaboration style of writings itself may also be seen in Śrīvijaya's works. The evidence, according to our understanding of the Śrīvijaya epistemological tradition, points to the domestication of Buddhist Yogācāra epistemology in Malay language.

Therefore, to expose fully the epistemological background of Hamzah Fansūrī's domestication of translation works in Malay language, through the answering of three research questions mentioned above, two research methods will be used as follows:

First, the method of historical linguistics. Historical linguistics is a study on how language like Malay could change over time from, say, the Śrīvijaya kingdom from the seventh century up to Hamzah Fansūrī's Acheh kingdom in the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century. According to this research method, in the case of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings, we are not just concerned with how he changed sometimes *śabda* to *firmān* (فرمان) to match the Arabic word for Allah's sayings, but also with why he still retained *śabda* to refer to the sayings of God in the Islamic context? In other words, the method is concerned with why the keywords, metaphors, theories, and the elaboration style of writing of Buddhist origins were retained by Hamzah Fansuri for the purpose of the new Malay Islamic discourse?

Second, the method of Buddhist Yogācāra's epistemology. According to our understanding of Malay dynastic history and from the general knowledge of philosophy, the keywords, the metaphors, the theories, and the elaboration style of writing mentioned above are very consistent with the characteristics of Śrīvijaya's language from its official Buddhist Yogācāra philosophical tradition. As we all know, in the Malay speaking world after the end of Śrīvijaya in the thirteenth century, except for a small area that entered into the Islamized Pasai kingdom, the rest of the area were still under the jurisdiction of the Malayu-Singapura kingdom. In the latter era, not only the inscriptions of the king of Ādityavarman (**आदित्यवर्मन्**

1294 CE-1375 CE) were in Sanskrit mixed with Malay,[14] but the oldest book written in Malay *Nītisārasamuccaya* (**नीतिसारसमुच्चय**, in the fourteenth, previously known as *Kitab Undang-Undang Tanjung Tanah*) still recognized five Vedas ("*pancaweda*") as the *śabda* or testimonial knowledge at that time.[15] So it is not at all surprising if Hamzah Fansūrī 's epistemological background can be traced back to Malayu-Singapura kingdom and earlier Śrīvijaya kingdom based on the writings' features and evidence mentioned above.

In a nutshell, this article argues that the epistemological background of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings derives from Śrīvijaya's Buddhist Yogācāra epistemological tradition. Therefore, a study of historical linguistics shall be carried out on Hamzah Fansūrī's writings for its epistemological background from the Śrīvijaya period.

## Finding of Research: The Evidence of Śrīvijaya's Buddhist Yogācāra Epistemological Background in Hamzah Fansūrī's Writings

## On the background of Hamzah Fansūrī's epistemological distinction of *śabda* and *katā*

As we have pointed out earlier Hamzah Fansūrī based his sources of knowledge on *śabda* and *katā* in writing his three outstanding works, namely *Asrāru'l-'Ārifīn*, *Sharābu'l-'Āshiqīn*, and *Al-Muntahī*. The main difference between *śabda* and *katā* is that the former is an authoritative testimonial knowledge that cannot be debated ("tiada dapat dibicarakan") while the latter is the perceptive and inferential knowledge by wise men which is falsifiable hence debatable. In some cases, Hamzah Fansūrī also distinguishes *firmān* (79 times in total) from *śabda* (94 times),[16] the former referring to the saying of God

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[14] See "Delapan belas Prasasti Adutyawarman sebagai benda cagar budaya peringkat nasional," (Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan), 2019.

[15] See Kuja Ali, "Nītisārasamuccaya," in Uli Kozok, ed., *A 14th century Malay Code of Laws: The Nītisārasamuccaya* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2015), 69.

[16] In this paper, all textual statistics were taken from *Malay Concordance Project*,

that is Allāh, and the latter to the sayings of the Prophet. Such a *firmān*, *śabda*, *katā* trichotomy already appeared in the earliest Islamized text in Malay *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* in 1371 CE (provenance in Singapore or Malacca) in which the *śabda* also includes the saying of the king. Other Islamized Hindu or Islamic texts before Hamzah Fansūrī like *Hikayat Pandawa Lima*, *Hikayat Seri Rama* and *Hikayat Amir Hamzah*, *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah* also have the same trichotomy of sources of knowledge. Even the works of Nuruddin al-Raniri (d. 1658 CE), the opponent of Hamzah Fansūrī, are no exception as indicated by his *Hujjat al-Siddīq* and *Bustan al-Salatin*.

However, other more philosophical texts before or during Hamzah Fansūrī's time, such as *`Aqā´id al-Nasafī* (possibly in 1590 CE), appear to use *śabda* solely (the word *firmān* has not appeared yet) in reference to Allah's sayings as in Hamzah Fansūrī's works. Two examples from *`Aqā´id al-Nasafī* are as follows:

i)   "dan sesungguhnya ber*śabda* Allah Ta`ala" ("and verily Allah Ta`ala said")

ii)  maka ketahuilah olehmu bahwa Allah Ta`ala menyuruhkan NabiNya, salla Allahu `alayhi wa sallam, menanyai Dia penunjuk akan Islam. Maka ber*śabda* Ia (ya`ni: *Kata* olehmu, ya Muhammad: "Tunjukkan aku jalan yang betul") (the last sentence, "So He said (i.e.: Say by you, O Muhammad: "Show me the Right Way")[17]

Three conclusions may be drawn here from the historical linguistics' viewpoints: 1) the existing testimonial knowledge was identified as *śabda* in Malay and it was a Sanskrit loanword, 2) when Arab-Persian sources of Islam became widespread, testimonial knowledge was still identified as *śabda* but the sayings of God are now attributed to the new coming religion of Islam, and 3) when translated into English in modern times, *śabda*, *firmān*, and *katā* all become "say", losing its receiving function as identifier in

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https://mcp.anu.edu.au/Q/mcp.html.

[17] See *`Aqā´id al-Nasafī*, a16, b2, in Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, ed., *The Oldest Known Malay Manuscript: a 16th century translation of the `Aqā´id of al-Nasafī*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya, 1988.

epistemology. Based on Hamzah Fansūrī's writings and `Aqā´id al-Nasafī, we can probably be sure that prior to them Malay society not only had testimonial knowledge but also identified it as *śabda* in Malay language which was Sanskrit in origin.

When did such epistemological distinctions between *śabda* and *katā* exist in Malay society? Why are these distinctions made with Sanskrit loanwords? From what Sanskrit epistemological traditions might these distinctions come? From the general viewpoint of Sanskrit philosophy, it should come from the Saṃkhyā (**संख्या**, both *sangka* and *angka* are its loanwords in Malay) philosophy of the Malayu-Singapura period, not Śrīvijaya because its official Buddhist Yogācāra philosophy did not recognize the authority of the *śabda* as a source of knowledge.[18] There is no doubt that in *Saṃkhyā Kārikā* (verse 4) and *Saṃkhyā Sūtra* (verse 101 of part I), *śabda* is clearly identified as a source of valid knowledge in addition to perception and inference. But the Saṃkhyā philosophical text from the Malayu-Singapura kingdom has unfortunately not survived like *Tutur Aji Sangkya* in Jawa and Bali area,[19] but the surviving evidence of *sangka* and *angka* loanwords and its *śabda-katā* distinction doubtlessly points to the influence of Malay language and civilization.

Malay has two other Sanskrit loanwords, *sisa* and *purba* which people today do not know that they were, in fact, two kinds of inference of Saṃkhyā, namely *śeṣavat* and *pūrvavat*.[20] The *śiṣa*-inference is inferring the cause – *kāraṇa* (**कारण**, *kerana* in Malay today) through the remains, residue or effect, which is termed *kārya* (**कार्य**, *karya* in Malay today). The *pūrba*-inference, on the other hand, is an inference of effect through the cause that has been previously seen. The Saṃkhyā uses *śiṣa*-inference to demonstrate that this material world ("*śiṣa*") has a cause called *prakṛti* (**प्रकृति**, *pekerti* in Malay today), and this article may also use Malay

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[18] See Richard King, *Indian Philosophy: An Introduction to Hindu and Buddhist Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 128-130.

[19] For its modern transliteration and translation version, see I. Wayan Sukayasa tr., *Aji Sangkya: Suntingan Teks, Terjemahan dan Analisis Isi* (Denpasar: PT Mabhakti, 2017).

[20] See Swami Virupakshananda, *Sāmkhya kārikā of Iśvara Kṛṣṇa with the Tattva-kaumudi of Vācaspati Miśra* (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1995), 17-18.

civilization ("*śiṣa*") to prove the historical influence of Saṃkhyā, especially from the Malayu-Singapura period.

The Saṃkhyā *śiṣa* or remains in Malay civilization includes lingual, literary, thinking, and ethical evidence which are still clearly recognizable in Malay society. Due to length limitations, this article can only briefly explain the *śiṣa* of Saṃkhyā in Malay civilization as follows:

i. Saṃkhyā loanwords in Malay - If we read the original Sanskrit texts of Saṃkhyā *kārikā* and *sūtra*, we would be able to see their connection to the loanwords in Malay: Iswara (*Īśvara* / ईश्वर, the personal god in epic Saṃkhyā) is the creator of material cause of *pekerti* (also named *perdana*, *pradhāna* / प्रधान) and spiritual cause of *puruṣa* (पुरुष, no corresponding loanword). The *pekerti* comprises three *gunas* (*guṇa* / गुण) and its imbalance leads to the creation of the physical world, first *budi* (*buddhi* / बुद्धि) followed by *ahaṃkāra* (अहंकार, probably translated as "perangai" in Malay) which comprises *pancaindera* (*pañcendriya* / पञ्चेन्द्रिय) and many other constituents. With the help of the Saṃkhyā texts in Sanskrit, the Saṃkhyā philosophy as the source of these loanwords in Malay is traceable.

ii. Saṃkhyā literature in Malay – the above *Iswara* or theistic epic Saṃkhyā texts like *Hikayat Pandawa Lima*, *Hikayat Seri Rama*, which were not Islamized until Nuruddin Raniri in 1644 CE as per observed in his *Sirat al-Mustaqim* (الصراط المستقيم) that "it does not contain the name of Allāh".[21] For *Hikayat Seri Rama* (MS Laud Or. 291, Bodleian Library, Oxford), its plot is the cosmological and soteriological interpretation of Saṃkhyā philosophy in terms of *puruṣa* represented by Rama and Sita while *pekerti* by Rawana (with two brothers Bibasenam, Kambakarna constituted tri-*gunas* of *rajas*, *sattva* and *tamas*). Rawana abducts Sita and leads to displacement, symbolizing the creation and suffering of the world. Sita's return to Rama and separation from Rawana ended displacement and suffering so that peace could be born.[22] It should be noted that these *hikayat*s

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[21] See Nuruddin Raniri, *Sirat al-Mustaqim*, in Siti Chamamah Soeratno, *Memahami Karya-Karya Nuruddin Arrarini* (Yogyakarta: FS & K Gama, 1982), 132.

[22] See Swami Krishnananda, *A Short History of Religious and Philosophic Thought*

are epic or theitic Saṃkhyā, which is different from the generally known atheistic classical Saṃkhyā whose spread in the Malay world is not very clear because of the lack of localized Saṃkhyā *kārikā* and *sūtra* text.[23]

iii. Saṃkhyā thinking mode in Malay – The influence of Saṃkhyā on Malay thought has been fitted into idiomatic thinking. Malay proverbs related to *budi*, for example, *budi pekerti* (personal habit, behavior) resulting from its combination with *pekerti*, *budi bicara* (mind, reasoning), which is combined with *bicara*, and *budi bahasa* (polite, elegant) that results from its combination with *bahasa*, and so on. These idioms are composed of Sanskrit loanwords with very positive connotations and are still commonly used in Malay society today.

iv. Saṃkhyā ethical thought in Malay – the proverb *budi pekerti* also has an ethical meaning, that is, a person's temperament and character depends on his or her *budi* cultivation as argued by Za'ba (Zainal Abidin bin Ahmad, 1895 CE-1973 CE) that "behavior depends on oneself" ("perangai bergantung pada diri sendiri"), "the nurturing of *budi*" ("asuhan budi") and many others.[24] This is consistent with the Saṃkhyā cosmological thought that *ahaṁkāra* comes from *budi*, and *budi* comes from *pekerti*. In these writings, Za'ba specifically mentioned that "in order to make it easier for Malays to accept *budi* thought, it must be brought from the path of religion (that is to Islamize it)."[25] This is enough to show that *budi* ethical thought has an earlier

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*in India* (Rishikesh: Sivananda Ashram, 1994), 55-60.

[23] For the theistic and non-theistic development of Saṃkhya philosophy, see Anima Sen Gupta, *The Evolution of the Sāṃkhya School of Thought* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1986), 2nd edition.

[24] These books are different compilations of similar articles. Readers only need to *read Mencapai Ketinggian Dunia Akhirat* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2015) to know the general *budi* idea of Za'ba.

[25] Original in Malay, "jika ajaran-ajaran membaiki sifat-sifat perangai dan tingkah laku kehidupan (i.e. the *budi* cultivation) dibawakan kepada mereka menerusi jalan agama…nescaya boleh diharap mereka akan menerima dan berusaha mengubah diri mereka menjadi baik." See Za'ba, "Pendahuluan Pengarang", in *Asuhan Budi Menerusi Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Akademi Jawi Malaysia, 2020), 4.

source other than Islam, and it can be traced back to the Saṃkhyā philosophy of the Malayu-Singapura period.

Based on the above *śiṣa* or evidence, we may argue that there must have been a period in history when Saṃkhyā prevailed with a profound impact on Malay civilization. This period could have been either the Malayu-Singapura kingdom (1200 CE-1400 CE), or even the earlier Śrīvijaya kingdom (650 CE-1200 CE) because the atheistic and dualistic form of Saṃkhyā thought was already prevalent in Southeast Asia as attested by the chapter XII of Arāḍadarśano in Asvaghosa's *Buddhacarita* (बुद्धचरित) around 671 CE. [26]

As we all know, the Saṃkhyā of Hindu philosophy and the Yogācāra of Buddhist philosophy were intellectual rivals with each refuting the other in a way that helped preserve their respective systems of thought. It is more plausible that Malay society had become familiar with domesticated Saṃkhyā ideas during the Śrīvijaya period through the Arāḍadarśano chapter in *Buddhacarita*, rather than as late as the thirteenth century after the formation of the Malayu kingdom with its form of epic and theistic Saṃkhyā. From the evidence of *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* which was first Islamized and also the earliest Jawi manuscript in 1371 CE, it is not just common with Saṃkhyā loanwords mentioned above, but also the Saṃkhyā proverbs like *budi pekerti* (or budi perangai), *budi bicara* (or budi akal), *budi bahasa* as well as the epistemological distinction between *śabda* (appears 3 times) and *katā* (appears 710 times), how was it possible that these were achieved within 100 years after the establishment of Malayu kingdom? In fact, what we observe is that from the 1371 CE of *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* up to 1590 CE of *`Aqā´id al-Nasafī* and Hamzah Fansūrī's writings, the uses of Saṃkhyā loanwords and proverbs in Malay thought and the distinction of epistemological sources have been in currency

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[26] On the prevalence of *Buddhacarita* in Śrīvijaya and Southeast Asia around 671 CE, see Yi Jing (I-Tsing), *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago*, tr. J. Takakusu (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1896), 165.

throughout implying their probable domestication into the Malay language itself.

In other words, the distinction between *śabda* and *katā* was not unique to Hamzah Fansūrī's writings. It was already around in the Malay epistemological thought prior to 1371 CE. From the Saṃkhyā epistemological viewpoint, *śabda* refers only to the Vedic source of knowledge, [27] and the *Nītisārasamuccaya* a code of laws from Malayu kingdom around 1304 CE-1370 CE has also firmly claimed for the sacred, unalterable status of the "*pancaweda*" or five Vedas (four Vedas with *Mahabhrata*). This means that *śabda* at that time refers to the Vedic scriptures, which is different from the later use of it by Hamzah Fansūrī and `*Aqā'id al-Nasafī* to refer to the sayings of Allah. From the perspective of intellectual history, this epistemological distinction and background can only be attributed to Saṃkhyā philosophy which has been domesticated as Malay epistemological tradition as later shared by Hamzah Fansūrī and other subsequent Malay authors.

## On the *biji*-theory of Hamzah Fansūrī's Sufi metaphysics of "the unity of being"

If the epistemological distinction of *śabda* and *katā* was not necessarily related to Buddhist Yogācāra philosophy, then Hamzah Fansūrī's metaphysical system and his elaboration style of writings could be traced back to Śrīvijaya's intellectual tradition. This tradition is none other than the Buddhist Yogācāra philosophy of Vasubandhu-Dignāga which appeared in the writings of Śrīvijaya scholars like Śākyakīrti at the end of the seventh century. Just as we don't know why the writings of Za'ba today still have the *budi* ethical thoughts of ancient Saṃkhyā, we also don't know why Hamzah Fansūrī still retained the same ideas and style 900 years after their currency in the works of Śākyakīrti? The only plausible reason is that these traditions have become Malay domesticated with no longer any distinction being made between native and foreign long before Hamzah Fansūrī's era.

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[27] See Anima Sen Gupta, *Essays on Sāṃkhya and Other Systems of Indian Philosophy* (Allahabad: M. R. Sen, 1977), 181.

To understand the metaphysical system of Hamzah Fansūrī, the treatise of *Sharābu'l-'Āshiqīn* or *The Drink of Lovers* is a good example. In the first three chapters of this treatise, Hamzah Fansūrī expounds that the gnostic metaphysics of *waḥdat al-wujūd* or "the unity of being" can only be achieved through the stages of *sharī'at, ṭarīqat* and *haqīqat,* or the law, the (concentrative) way and the truth.[28] Such three stages of gnostic metaphysics are not unfamiliar to Śrīvijaya scholars. To reach the soteriological wisdom of *nirvāṇa* (निर्वाण), the Buddhist effort consists of three necessary steps of *śīla* (*sila* in Malay, but the loanword *susila* is closer to the Sanskrit meaning), *samādhi* (*semadi* in Malay), and *prajñā* (probably *pana* but mixed later with Arabic loanword *fana* [*fanāʾ* / فناء] in Malay) with its wisdom connotation being retained in another Malay loanword *sunyi*). Equivalently, the three stages are the moral conduct, the concentration, and the wisdom. A closer textual witness to Hamzah Fansūrī times is one of the main textbooks that Atiśa (अतिश, 982 CE-1054 CE) studied from Dharmakīrti (धर्मकीर्ति, ca. 986 CE-1025 CE) during period 1013 CE-1025 CE was *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (बोधिसत्त्वाचर्यावतार, "*A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*") of Śāntideva (ca. 685 CE-763 CE). The three paths of *śīla*, *samādhi* and *prajñā* of Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* have been revived in Atiśa's magnus opus of *Bodhipathapradīpa* (बोधिपथप्रदीप, "*Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*") which formed a fundamental text of Tibetan Buddhist philosophical tradition.[29] In other words, the three stages of *sharī'at, ṭarīqat* and *haqīqat* taught by Hamzah Fansūrī in his *Sharābu'l-'Āshiqīn* is nothing new to Śrīvijaya's soteriological tradition.

For the soteriological wisdom of *waḥdat al-wujūd* or "the unity of being," it was Hamzah Fansūrī's explanatory purpose in the second half of the treatise of *Sharābu'l-'Āshiqīn*. Our concern here is not the similarity between the new Islamic *waḥdat al-wujūd* and the indigenous Śrīvijaya's equivalent gnostic wisdom, but the way

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[28] This is a translation adapted from Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, in *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 418.

[29] See Atiśa, *A Lamp for the Path and Commentary of Ati*śa, tr. and annotated by Richard Sherburne (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983).

Hamzah Fansūrī explained the nature of the wisdom that enables us to have true knowledge about the new Islamic soteriological wisdom. Hamzah Fansūrī used a lot of metaphors to illustrate the nature of "the unity of being" including the less used of Hindu's milk and butter ("susu dan minyak sapi") pointed out by Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas above. In *Al-Muntahī*, Hamzah Fansūrī used four metaphors in a row to express the connotation of "the unity of being," namely sea and waves *("laut dan ombak"),* seed and tree *("biji dan puhun"),* rainwater and plants *("air hujan dan tanaman"),* and sun and heat *("matahari dan panas").*[30] Relatively speaking, the more commonly used metaphors are sea and waves, seed and tree, and sun and heat (or light) that are found in his three treatises of *Asrāru'l-ʿĀrifīn*, *Sharābu'l-ʿĀshiqīn* and *Al-Muntahī*. However, in these writings Hamzah Fansūrī does not indicate the source of these metaphors except for the sea and waves metaphor, which he attributed to *Al-Lama'at* (اللامعات) of Abd al-Rahman Jami.[31] Why did not Hamzah Fansūrī indicate the source for the two other metaphors but did for the sea and waves metaphor when it had already appeared in a popular work of Vasubandhu since the late seventh century in Śrīvijaya? One plausible reason, in our opinion, is that these are local metaphors, but it so happens that the sea and waves metaphor also appears in *The Lama'at* of Jami. The metaphors are all in authentic Malay terms, except *biji* in *biji-puhun* metaphor, which is a philosophical loanword from Sanskrit, revealing their possible origin in the Sanskrit epistemological tradition.

As mentioned before, in the Malay literature from 1371 CE to Hamzah Fansūrī's time, the word *biji* is generally used with a quantifier meaning such as "one grain" and "two grains," "engkaulah *biji* mataku" (you are the apple of my eye) quoted from *Hikayat Bayan Budiman*, "lalu jadilah empat *biji* ladam" (then become four horseshoes) quoted from *Hikayat Amir Hamzah*, and "dua *biji* diberikan kepada isterinya" (two seeds were given to his wife) quoted from *Hikayat Seri Rama*. But in Hamzah Fansūrī's

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[30] See Hamzah Fansūrī*, Al-Muntahī* (14-15) in Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 537-539.

[31] See the quotes in Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas*, The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 437 and 522.

writings and Nuruddin al-Raniri's *Tibyan fi Ma'rifat al-Adyan*, for example, the *biji* is used in a totally different sense, which is metaphysical, as in the seed-tree metaphor for the doctrine of "the unity of being." In this case, Malay has another way of writing *bija*, which was the original Sanskrit loanword from *bīja* (बीज), and it is more commonly used as personal name such as Sri Bija Diraja (Tun Hamzah) in *Sejarah Melayu* ( سجاره ملايو, *The Malay Annals*). The Sanskrit *bīja* or the Malay *bija* or *biji* has the same non-quantifier meaning for "seed" as expressed by seed-tree metaphor in Hamzah Fansūrī's writings.

His seed-tree metaphor means unity of being understood as non-duality between God and the world. From the phenomenal viewpoints, God and the world are different entities. But in reality they are one. Hamzah Fansūrī explained the metaphor as follows:

> The analogy is like a seed within which is a tree complete. At first there is only that one seed, but after the tree had grown out of it, the seed vanishes – only the tree is seen. [The tree grown] having different colours and is [productive of] varying tastes, yet originally it grows out of that one seed.[32]

From the ontological viewpoint, the component or determination (*"hukum"* as used in Malay by Hamzah Fansūrī) of the tree is already within the seed before it emerged out and both seed and tree are the same from that withinness.

Is Hamzah Fansūrī proposing a pantheistic teaching of Islam through this sameness of God and the world? Certainly not. For Hamzah Fansūrī, all of his metaphors have an essential cosmological difference of denotation between God and the world: the seed, the sea (or water), the sun, the rainwater, the milk and many others in the metaphor can refer only to God and not the world because they were the source to the tree, the waves, the light (or heat), the plants, the butter and many others. To say Hamzah Fansūrī is a pantheist is certainly a wrong interpretation of his metaphors of "the unity of being".

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[32] See Hamzah Fansūrī, *Al-Muntahī*, 15, translated by Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas in *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 458.

The second reason why we consider these metaphors are local is because Hamzah Fansūrī used them to interpret the *katā* of Shaykh Junayd, Shaykh Muhyī'l-Dīn ibn 'Arabī, Abd al-Rahman Jami (with *seed-tree* metaphor) and many others, and also the *śabda* of Allah and the Prophet as in *Al-Muntahī*. In a translation, the *interpreter* and the *interpreted* shall not be the same source. If these metaphors were originally Persian or Andalusian, that is, unfamiliar yet to the local people, then wouldn't it be strange that Hamzah Fansūrī was translating something that is not familiar to Malay readers? Therefore, he used the local metaphors instead of the foreign Persian or Andalusian ones when interpreting the doctrine.

The third and the strongest evidence that Hamzah Fansūrī's metaphors were local is that the meaning of *biji* and the metaphysical connotation of *biji* are completely consistent with the Buddhist Yogācāra theory of *bīja* since the seventh century of Śrīvijaya kingdom. As well-known, the *bīja* theory is a metaphor to refer to Yogācāra's metaphysical theory of *vijñāna* (विज्ञान, *bijana* or *jana* in Malay). The Malay loanwords *bijana* and *jana* still retain today the metaphysical meaning of the original Sanskrit words, that is, something that gives birth, life, or soul to others. In other words, it is *vijñāna* or human consciousness that gives birth to the phenomenal world, or the phenomenal world was determined by our human consciousness. Such a metaphysical position is usually described as subjective idealism (represented by George Berkeley, 1685 CE-1753 CE) in the Western philosophical world. This also means that Buddhist Yogācāra theory of *vijñāna* in the late seventh century Śrīvijaya was an epistemic idealism in favour not of "the unity of being", but of "the unity of consciousness."

The textual evidence above came from the late seventh century work of Śākyakīrti, *Hastadaṇḍaśāstra* (हस्तदण्डशास्त्र, "*A Treatise on Walking Stick*"), a famous Yogācāra master of Śrīvijaya. The original work (not sure if it was written in Sanskrit or Malay) was written prior to 693 CE but assumed lost in history while the classical Chinese translation completed in 711 CE still survived until today.[33] However, the work was studied seriously by scholars until the past

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[33] See Teuku Iskandar, *Kesusasteraan Klasik Melayu Sepanjang Abad* (Jakarta: Penerbit Libra, 1996), 9-10.

two or three years from the perspective of Malay intellectual history.[34] This work is not complicated. It was about Śākyakīrti and his opponents from other Buddhist schools debating a philosophical thesis of Vasubandhu consisting of seven debates with the fourth to the seventh being on *bīja* theory. *Bīja* theory is a metaphor theory used by Buddhist Yogācāra philosophers to explain the tenet of "the unity of consciousness." The analogy is that *vijñāna* is like a *bīja* ("storehouse consciousness") and the phenomenal world is the externalization of *bīja*'s inner quality or determination. The other similar metaphors used by Vasubandhu in his *Thirty Verses of the Consciousness Only* was that *vijñāna* is like a sea and the phenomenal world its waves. The waves are phenomenally different from the sea, being its fluctuations and hence different by nature. This work of Vasubandhu was still quoted by Dharmakīrti, Atiśa's master of Śrīvijaya, in his *Durbodhālokā* written around 991 CE-1005 CE at the capital of Śrīvijaya.[35] Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the *bīja* theory still existed in the eleventh century, and it served as the domesticated background of Hamzah Fansūrī's uses of metaphors in the late sixteenth century in the Aceh kingdom.

The metaphorical uses in Hamzah Fansūrī's writings are not the only evidence of the influence of Śrīvijaya Buddshit Yogācāra philosophy on him. As earlier mentioned the Buddhist Yogācāra's *nāmarūpa* (**नामरूप**) theory or "name and bodily-form" of creationism is another. Hamzah Fansuri understands *nama* and *rupa* as two aspects of created beings. More examples from *Asrāru'l-'Ārifīn*:

> That is to say, cast off your name and your form, for you possess no name and no form.

And,

> When your name and form are cast away, then you will be able to be "united" with the Possessor of the Name

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[34] See Tee Boon Chuan, "Hastadaṇḍaśāstra (Naskah Tertua Kerajaan Śrīwijaya) dalam Sejarah Logik dan Metafizik Melayu," 19-40.

[35] See Guan Di, *Abhisamayālaṃkāravivṛti and Its Commentary Durbodhālokā by Dharmakīrti of Suvarṇadvīpa: A Study on the Basis of Newly Identified Sanskrit Manuscripts* (in Chinese), unpublished doctoral thesis, Beijing University, 2019.

and Possessor of the Form.[36]

Also, from *Al-Muntahī*:

> His self, although it has acquired name and form, in its reality has no form and name. It is just the reflection in the mirror; it has form and name, [but it has no reality].

And,

> Though its name and forms and colours are variegated, [its] reality is one.[37]

The expression above is a perennial form and pattern for a *nama* and *rupa* theory of creationism. It is hard for us to say that this is Hamzah Fansūrī's personal creativity, rather than a fixed and domesticated tradition with a certain mode of understanding and expression of a creationism in history. Strictly speaking, this is not a creationism but a transformation theory or *pariṇāma* (परिणाम, *peri-nama* in Malay) theory named by Vasubandhu in his *Thirty Verses of the Consciousness Only* (verses 1, 17, and 18). Whether it is Hamzah Fansūrī's "the unity of being" in Aceh kingdom or Śākyakīrti's "the unity of consciousness" in Śrīvijaya kingdom, they are not the mode in which A creates B, but the transformation of A into B as seen in the metaphor of seed-tree, sea-waves, sun-light and many others. That was *pariṇāma* theory as it is an ontological theory believing that the source is "changing into (another form)" to become beings. Therefore, Hamzah Fansūrī's metaphorical uses of the change of seed into the form of tree (so are other kinds of metaphor) with each tree (separate being) having its own name and form, appeared to be influenced by the *pariṇāma* theory that can be traced back to Vasubandhu's Yogācāra tradition in Śrīvijaya period.

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[36] See Hamzah Fansūrī, *Asrāru'l-'Ārifīn*, 48, translated by Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas in *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 453-454.

[37] See Hamzah Fansūrī, *Al-Muntahī*, 4, translated by Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas *in The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 524, 526.

## On the Dignāga's elaboration style of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings

Another apparent feature of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings that could be related to Śrīvijaya epistemological tradition is his exemplary style of argumentation. All the metaphors mentioned above are used as examples in Hamzah Fansūrī's writings. The first metaphor in *Al-Muntahī* is the seed-tree metaphor, for example, which consists of three parts as follows:

1. Thesis: "He who knows his self knows his God" (a *śabda* of the Prophet)
2. Reason: the Self of the Hidden Treasure is [none other than] his self, and everything is in God's knowledge.
3. Example: like the seed and the tree; the tree in that one seed, although not seen, yet exists within the seed.[38]

To be noted here is that the word "like" or *seperti* in Malay here was a Sanskrit loanword from *sa-prati* (स-प्रति) meaning likeness and resemblance. Hamzah Fansūrī also used Arabic loanwords *tamsil* (*tamthīl* / تمثيل, 16 times), *misal* (*mithal* / مثال, 15 times), *ibarat* (عبارات, 52 times) for its equivalent, but the most frequent word is still *seperti*, which was mentioned 269 times throughout his three treatises. A more complex example from *Al-Muntahī* is the following:

1. Thesis: "the existence (when you [still think that you] are one being and the Truth is another being) is a sin which no other sin can be compared." (a *katā* of Shaykh Junayd)
2. Reason: "'there is no partner unto Him', and this mean that there is no other being than That of the Truth" (a *śabda* from the *Qur'an*)
3. Example: 1. *seperti* the sea and its waves, 2. *tamthīl seperti* the seed and the tree, 3. *tamthīl seperti* rainwater in a growth of plant, and 4. *tamthīl seperti* the sun and its rays.[39]

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[38] See Hamzah Fansūrī, *Al-Muntahī*, 1-2, translated by Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas *in The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 448.

[39] See Hamzah Fansūrī, *Al-Muntahī*, 14-15, translated by Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas *in The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 457-458.

In the same way as the usage of the metaphor above, it does not seem to be Hamzah Fansūrī's personal style of elaboration. This *seperti*-style of elaboration is very reminiscent of the same style in Śākyakīrti's writings from the late seventh century Śrīvijaya.

As we have pointed out before, the *Hastadaṇḍaśāstra* is a work written by Śākyakīrti against the opposite interpretation on the same thesis of Vasubandhu. It is rather surprising that the arguments of both sides are the same as what we have seen in Hamzah Fansūrī's writings:

Table 1: The Argumentation Between Śākyakīrti and His Opponents[40]

| Inference | | Śākyakīrti | The Opponent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Thesis | | Vasubandhu: "The Buddha appeared to enlighten the creatures. But the enlightenment did not end." | |
| Reason | | Because there are too many | Because there is a new creature |
| Example | Same example | Like the sky (no boundaries) | Like a tree (grows back) |
| | Counter example | - | Like sesame (decreasing if not added) |

This was exactly a logico-argumentative tradition of Dignāga (दिग्नाग, ca. 480 CE-540 CE), a Buddhist logician as well as a Yogācāra philosopher, as exposed by Bochenski for its structure of inference as follows:

Table 2: Reasoning Structure of Dignāga's Tradition [41]

| Structure | | Example |
|---|---|---|
| Thesis (*sādhyá*, *sedia* in Malay) | | The hill is fiery |
| Reason (*hetu*, *liṅga*, *lingga* in Malay) | | Because it smokes |
| Example (*pakṣa*, | Same example | Like a stove, everything that smokes are fiery |

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[40] See the details of Tee Boon Chuan, "Hastadaṇḍaśāstra (Naskah Tertua Kerajaan Śrīwijaya) dalam Sejarah Logik dan Metafizik Melayu," 23-24.

[41] See Bochenski, I.M., "The Indian Variety of Logic (1956)," in Jonardon Ganeri ed., *Indian Logic: A Reader* (London & New York: Routldege, 2008), 136-137.

| *paksa* in Malay) | Counter example | Like a lake, all that is not fiery because it is not smoky |
|---|---|---|

By the way, there are many proverbs of *smoke-fire* in Malay idioms, and it seems that the logic of Dignāga proved to be effective in Malay intellectual history.[42] If the works of Hamzah Fansūrī can also be regarded as adopting the logical style of Dignāga, then it may be regarded as a real textual evidence.

   In other words, neither the Śākyakīrti of the seventh century, nor the Dharmakīrti of the tenth and eleventh centuries are not isolated examples. Their works demonstrate that the philosophical influence of Vasubandhu-Dignāga has become a tradition of Malay philosophy until the early seventeenth century as revealed in Hamzah Fansūrī's writings. This was the philosophical background of Hamzah Fansūrī that could be attributed to the Buddhist Yogācāra philosophy of Śrīvijaya.

## Conclusion: Revisiting Al-Attas' Theory of Islamization in Malay Archipelago

According to the above analysis results, we can firmly identify the traditional epistemological background of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings as the Buddhist Yogācāra tradition of Vasubandhu-Dignāga in the Śrīvijaya period. The Malay epistemological background of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings can be pointed out in the following three points:

1. The overall style of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings is the logical tradition of Dignāga, which is the same as the *Hastadaṇḍaśāstra* of Śākyakīrti at the end of the seventh century.

2. All the metaphors of Hamzah Fansūrī's writings, which are of the type of *pariṇāma* theory, can be understood in the epistemological tradition of Vasubandhu, which was influential in the writings of Śrīvijaya from the end of the seventh century to the beginning of the eleventh century.

3. Hamzah Fansūrī's works were also influenced by the more recent Malayu-Singapura philosophy of Saṃkhyā, especially

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[42] See Tee Boon Chuan, "Keberkaitan mantik Sriwijaya dengan pepatah asap-api Melayu," *Kesturi*, vol. 32, nos. 1 &2 (2022), 149-182.

on the distinction between *śabda* and *katā*, which he used extensively in his new Malay Islamic epistemological discourse.

The above epistemological background may be observed in Hamzah Fansūrī's works. These backgrounds were not formed in one day but they were accumulated through several periods from Śrīvijaya to Malayu-Singapura, and they were also the epistemological tools for Islamization in the Pasai and Aceh eras.

What is the significance of such research findings on our long-standing research on Hamzah Fansūrī's philosophy and the understanding of Islamization in the Malay world? In the light of such findings, we find that the influential Islamization theory of Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, for example, needs to be re-examined. The style of Al-Attas' works differs from that of Hamzah Fansūrī in that its arguments have no examples and thus have no connection with the logical tradition of Dignāga from the Śrīvijaya period. Two of Al-Attas' theses related to, but cannot be supported by, Hamzah Fansūrī's writings and philosophy may be inferred from his theory of Islamization in Malay-Indonesian Archipelago:

1. The first thesis is on the Buddhist intellectual impact on Sumatra / Malay society in which Al-Attas believes that "yet the influence of the Buddhist clergy in Sumatra did not seem to have made itself felt in realm of philosophy, but again in that of art," and "it is strange and surprising that Buddhist philosophy did not flourish as well in Sumatra itself." [43] As an expert in the study of Hamzah Fansūrī's works, it is unfortunate that Al-Attas did not realize that his object of research was itself an example of the influence of Vasubandhu-Dignāga's philosophy from the Śrīvijaya period as we have exposed above.

2. The second thesis is on the nature of pre-Islamic Malay mind in which Al-Attas claims that "the people of the Archipelago (in pre-Islamic times) were more esthetic than

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[43] See Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, "On Islamization: The Case of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago," in *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1993), 172.

philosophical by nature," and "Islam came to the
Archipelago…through *tasawwuf* the highly intellectual and
rationalistic religious spirit entered the receptive minds of
the people, effecting a rise of rationalism and
intellectualism not manifested in pre-Islamic times." [44]
The problem is that *the interpret* of Hamzah Fansūrī's
works comes from the pre-Islamic tradition and is able to
meet the translation and interpretation needs of *the
interpreted* (Islamic), how can we say that only the latter is
"rationalism and intellectualism" by nature in this case?

It is obvious that our understanding of Hamzah Fansūrī's philosophy
and the Islamization of the Malay world has always been based on
insufficient understanding of the traditional background of Malay
philosophy. Therefore, it is not only necessary to understand the
traditional background of Hamzah Fansūrī's philosophy, but also to
conduct serious research on the history of philosophy in various
periods of Malayu-Singapura and Śrīvijaya especially.

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[44] See Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, "On Islamization: The Case of the
Malay-Indonesian Archipelago," 173.

# TRANSLITERATION TABLE

## CONSONANTS

Ar=Arabic, Pr=Persian, OT=Ottoman Turkish, Ur=Urdu

| | Ar | Pr | OT | UR | | Ar | Pr | OT | UR | | Ar | Pr | OT | UR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ء | , | , | , | , | ز | z | z | z | z | گ | — | g | g | g |
| ب | b | b | b | b | ڑ | — | — | — | ṛ | ل | l | l | l | l |
| پ | — | p | p | p | ژ | — | zh | j | zh | م | m | m | m | m |
| ت | t | t | t | t | س | s | s | s | s | ن | n | n | n | n |
| ٹ | — | — | — | ṭ | ش | sh | sh | ş | sh | ه | h | h | h¹ | h¹ |
| ث | th | th | th | th | ص | ṣ | ṣ | ṣ | ṣ | و | w | v/u | v | v/u |
| ج | j | j | c | j | ض | ḍ | ż | ż | ż | ى | y | y | y | y |
| چ | — | ch | çh | ch | ط | ṭ | ṭ | ṭ | ṭ | ة | -ah | | | -a² |
| ح | ḥ | ḥ | ḥ | ḥ | ظ | ẓ | ẓ | ẓ | ẓ | ال | al³ | | | |
| خ | kh | kh | kh | kh | ع | ' | ' | ' | ' | | | | | |
| د | d | d | d | d | غ | gh | gh | ğ | gh | | | | | |
| ڈ | — | — | — | d | ف | f | f | f | f | | | | | |
| ذ | dh | dh | dh | dh | ق | q | q | k | q | | | | | |
| ر | r | r | r | r | ك | k | k/g | k/ñ | k | | | | | |

¹ – when not final
² – at in construct state
³ – (article)  al - or 1-

## VOWELS

| | | Arabic and Persian | Urdu | Ottoman Turkish |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Long | ا | ā | ā | ā |
| | آ | Ā | Ā | — |
| | و | ū | ū | ū |
| | ي | ī | ī | ī |
| Doubled | يّ | iyy (final form ī) | iy (final form ī) | iyy (final form ī) |
| | وّ | uww (final form ū) uvv (for Persian) | uv | uvv |
| Diphthongs | و | au or aw | au | ev |
| | ى | ai or ay | ay | ey |
| Short | َ | a | a | a or e |
| | ُ | u | u | u or ü / o or ö |
| | ِ | i | i | i |

## URDU ASPIRATED SOUNDS

For aspirated sounds not used in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish add h after the letter and underline both the letters e.g.  جھ  jh      گھ   gh

For Ottoman Turkish, modern Turkish orthography may be used.

# AL-SHAJARAH

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