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JAMES T. COLLINS

J. KATS AND INDONESIAN STUDIES: ACQUAINTANCESHIP

In 1984 *De wajang poerwa; Een vorm van Javaans toneel* by J. Kats, originally published in 1923, was reissued with the full panoply of a foreword, biographical introduction, annotated bibliography and period photographs (Ras and Poeze (eds) 1984). This rich assemblage not only has provided easy contemporary access to an important work on Javanese puppetry and art, but it also constitutes a fitting tribute to an indefatigable scholar and teacher who worked for more than forty years studying and explaining Indonesian languages and cultures. Although Grijns (1991:54) suggested that 'Indonesianists know Kats best through his... book [of 1923] and his writings on Javanese music, dance and theatre, mainly published in *Djawa*, and also through his edition of the Old Javanese *Sang hyang Kamahayanikan*, in this brief note another route of acquaintance is described – a route which was definitely not through Kats’ work on Javanese literature and the performing arts. These rather autobiographical anecdotes are offered to emphasize another aspect of Kats’ contribution to Indonesian studies, to supplement in an indirect way Poeze’s bibliography (Poeze 1984) and to respond to Grijns’ statement that ‘Kats’ textbooks have been widely used’.¹

Twenty years ago I undertook a shelf-by-shelf survey of the then meagre resources for language and linguistic study in Ambon’s public library.

¹ I would like to express my thanks to C.M. Hogewoning of the KITLV library and Lan Hiang Char of the University of Hawai’i Hamilton library, who assisted me in obtaining some of the Dutch and Indonesian references needed for this note. I am grateful too to H. Maier, who lent me a pre-publication copy of Grijns’ paper, and to Dr. C.D. Grijns, with whom I was able to consult after I had finished this brief note. In the published version of Grijns (1991), as Grijns wrote me (23 June 1992), page 57, line 7, should read: ‘The planned wordlist was probably never realized, but Kats’ textbooks have been widely used’ (instead of: ‘The planned wordlist was realised, but Kats’ textbooks were probably never widely used’).
Besides an incomplete collection of Medan Bahasa, very little was available—except the fifth edition of Sabaruddin Ahmad’s Seluk-beluk Bahasa Indonesia (1953). This otherwise commonplace textbook written in Medan for use in secondary schools contained an unexpected treasure of dialogues written in ten different dialects of Malay: Deli, Bukittinggi, Jakarta, Banyumas, Yogyakarta, Manado, Ambon, Sambas, Palembang, and Payakumbuh. Such a collection of Malay language variants would even today be remarkable, but in 1972, before the revival of Indonesian linguistic research, it was an unbelievable windfall to have found Seluk-beluk; indeed, I copied each dialogue by hand and have had that manuscript since then. It contained the first published Ambonese Malay dialogue since Van Hoëvell’s (1877) twenty-nine sentences. The data in Seluk-beluk are limited to modelled dialogues\(^2\), but the information they contain, especially about the Malay of Yogyakarta, Banyumas, Palembang and Sambas, has seldom—if ever—been matched.

It was not until some years later that I realized that the dialogues of Sabaruddin’s textbook had been extracted from Kats’ Malay dialect materials, apparently from his anthology of Malay readings, Warna Sari Melajoe, first published in 1922. In fact, in the fourth edition of Seluk-beluk (Sabaruddin 1950) the source of the dialogues was briefly, if obscurely, acknowledged.\(^3\) Sabaruddin had enlarged the earlier versions of Seluk-beluk (for example, the second edition of 1948) by expanding and revising his notes on Djenis kalimat dalam bahasa Indonesia (Sabaruddin 1948:140-144) into a full chapter, Gaya bahasa (Sabaruddin 1950:177-194), and by adding another new chapter, (Fasal VIII) Dialect (1950:195-207). Following three introductory paragraphs, the chapter contains shortened extracts from Warna Sari (Volume I), each about two-thirds the length of the original. There is also a one-page résumé by

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\(^2\) Most of the ten dialogues were based on a single model conversation which was translated into the other variants with appropriate changes in vocabulary, orthography and syntax while maintaining the same story line.

\(^3\) Sabaruddin (1950:195) wrote: 'Dibawah ini kita dapat memperhatikan beberapa ijorak dialect itu, yang dikutip dari Kumpulan J. Kats II. Kata “Melaju” kita ganti dengan kata “Indonesia”.’ [Below we can observe several kinds of dialects, which were taken from the Anthology of J. Kats II. The word ‘Malay’ we replace with ‘Indonesia(n).’]

Although in Seluk-beluk Sabaruddin never clarified the ‘Kumpulan’ to which he referred, another of his books, Sari Paramasastera Indonesia (1958), included a brief bibliography (on the inside of the back cover) which cited ‘J. Kats Spraakkunst en Taaleigen van het Maleisch deel I, II Vile druk 1941’. However, according to Poeze’s notes (1984:xxxviii-xxxix), beginning in 1927 with the second printing of Volume 2 of Spraakkunst, the materials on language variants were moved. Certainly the only post-1928 edition of Spraakkunst available to me (Third edition, 1930) does not contain the dialogues in question, some of which were published in the first edition of Volume 2 (1921). (By an oversight this first edition of Volume 2 is cited as ‘Deel I’ in Poeze’s bibliography (1984:xxxviii); it should read ‘Deel II.’) Moreover, several of the original 1921 dialogues are not included in Seluk-beluk, while other dialogues published in Volume 1 of Warna Sari (Kats 1930 and 1934) are found in Seluk-beluk. It is likely, then, that, although Sabaruddin may have had Spraakkunst Volume 2, he relied heavily on an edition of Warna Sari Volume 1, from which he drew all but one of his dialogues. Thus, by J. Kats II’ Sabaruddin may have meant the second printing of Warna Sari Volume 1 (1928), of which Poeze noted: ‘Geheel herziene herdruk, waarin de afdeeling over de taalschakeringen in het Maleis, eerst behandeld in de eerste druk van deel II van “Spraakkunst en taaleigen van het Maleisch” in sterk gewijzigde vorm werd opgenomen’. 

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Sabaruddin about the differences in pronunciation and vocabulary, as well as a reminder about errors in syntax and morphology in some of those dialects (in particular Manado, Java, and Jakarta). The chapter ends with three pages of lexical footnotes, also extracted from Kats.

Sabaruddin's use of Kats' material is not simply mechanical copying of the dialogues. First, he edited the presentation of the materials by extracting them in a non-sequential order from various parts of Kats' book, displaying a certain regional loyalty by giving first and second positions to Deli (Medan) and Bukittinggi Malay. (The Javanese, Manado, Ambon and Jakarta examples are found in Kats' section in Chapter 1 on 'Vreemdelingen Maleisch' (Kats 1934:146-195), and all the remaining dialogues (but Bukittinggi) in Kats' Chapter 3, Streek-schakeering (Kats 1934:200-212).) Second, Sabaruddin did not include any of Kats' dialogues in Malay dialects from the Malay peninsula or of Kats' materials for Dutch, Chinese and Malay variants of Malay. Third, Sabaruddin apparently did not agree with Kats' classification of Minangkabau variants (Bukittinggi and Payakumbuh) in the category of 'zustertaal' (Kats 1934:209). In fact, in his introductory notes Sabaruddin (1950:194) states that 'Dialek Minangkabau tidak berapa bedanja dari pada dialek Melayu Riau' (The Minangkabau dialect is not substantially different from the Riau Malay dialect).

Fourth, the Bukittinggi dialogue of Seluk-beluk (1950:196) does not appear to have been extracted from Kats. Rather, it seems to be a new dialogue written (by Sabaruddin?) on the basis of the Deli model found in Kats (see Kats 1930). Fifth, of course Sabaruddin's explicit decision to write Indonesiain place of Melayu reflected the fervent patriotism of that era; see the publisher's foreword as well as Madong Lubis' appreciative letter (Sabaruddin 1950:[4-5]). Sabaruddin reworked and incorporated the Kats material into his book, both in this chapter of Seluk-beluk and elsewhere in his work.

Through Seluk-beluk's turnings and reworkings, Kats' Malay dialect materials have survived even beyond their own impressive publishing history (see Poeze's bibliography, 1984). Moreover, through the medium of Sabaruddin's work these dialogues have surfaced once more, across the straits in Malaysia. In 1960 Arena Wati, the Sulawesi-born Malaysian novelist, published in Dewan Bahasa an article in which the dialogues of the fifth edition of Seluk-beluk (Sabaruddin 1953) were reprinted with acknowledgements of Sabaruddin. However, like the latter, Arena Wati was moved to add more dialogues of his own creation, one in Makassarese, the other in (Pare-pare) Buginese – each modelled after the chief conversation of Kats' collection.

4 For example, in Seluk-beluk the sample text of what Sabaruddin called 'bahasa jap jai' (Sabaruddin 1950:176) in Chapter 6 was extracted from Warna Sari (Kats 1934:157). Again, Sabaruddin's classification of language types ('tjorak atau djenis') in Sari Paramasastera Indonesia (Sabaruddin 1958:5-6) was drawn in large part from Kats' notion of the various taalkringen of Malay discussed in Spraakkunst and sketched in the table of contents of Warna Sari (Kats 1934:vii-xv); see Grijns 1991:55 for a discussion of Kats' classification. Among the changes to the Kats material used, we note that the Jakarta dialogue of Seluk-beluk (Sabaruddin 1950:197) was slightly revised from the Warna Sari (Kats 1934:164-165) version; kagak, 'not', replaced Kats' 'ngga', and abeh, 'father', Kats' bapa. (But Sabaruddin's glossary is not consistent with those changes.)
Far from being forgotten, as Grijns (1991) implied, Kats' collection of Malay dialect dialogues lived a useful second life in Indonesia's secondary schools in the 1950's, influencing students beyond the lifespans of 'de aanstaande Indonezische elite [welke] op ontvankelijke leeftijd werd onderricht volgens zijn normen' (Poeze 1984:xxi). Furthermore, after 1960 Kats' dialogues became part of Malaysia's lore of Malay dialectology, not simply passed on like an inherited heirloom but enhanced and expanded, capable of inspiring more dialogues, like a hikayat revised by generational layers of the Malay scribal tradition. Moreover, Kats, Sabaruddin, and Arena Wati have been dutifully cited here and there in recent Malaysian bibliographies (Kee Kum Ping 1981; Idros 1985; Collins 1990). Indeed, even in the Netherlands one of Kats' Malay dialogues, the Ambonese Malay variant, was reprinted in an abbreviated facsimile version with a full citation of the 1921 source in Komunikasi (1984:44), a journal published by the Netherlands Moluccan community, in the same year the Royal Institute reissued De wajang poerwa.

The interest of Dutch scholars and officials in the social and regional variants of Malay has been a constant feature of publications about island Southeast Asia since the appearance of De Houtman's dialogues in 1603. Kats' work reflected this interest and, furthermore, extended the dialogic method of presentation to encompass a wide range of variants presented within the framework of a tightly structured classification system. After his death, Indonesians and Malaysians as well as Moluccans living in the Netherlands have preserved his work and kept it in print. Having republished De wajang poerwa, perhaps the Institute will consider republishing Kats' Warna sari. In the fifty years since its last impression, a new community of Indonesianists, dialectologists and language pedagogy specialists would welcome Kats' vision and appreciate the acquaintance.

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A.H. JOHNS

TUHFAT AL-NAFIS: NOT A PRECIOUS GIFT?

For G.W.J. Drewes
In Grateful Memory

The Toyota foundation has an excellent record of support to academic research and publishing, particularly in relation to Southeast Asia. A recent addition to its program is the generous support it gave to the publication of the facsimile edition of a remarkable Ms. of an important 19th-century Malay history, the Terengganu Manuscript of the work known as Tuhfat al-Nafis, with an excellent introductory essay by three scholars, Shaharil Talib, Ismail Hussein and Michiko Nakahara. This introduction, a valuable study of the work in its own right, is presented in Japanese, English and Malaysian. It draws attention to the fact that the existence of this Ms. of the Tuhfat only came to light in 1986, and gives an account of its history. The authors' conclusion is that the Ms. offers a new and fascinating perspective on the history of the Malay states by highlighting the importance of Terengganu, and so 'negating the historical myth of Johor being the resting place of the great Malay Melakan Empire' (p.xxx).

It is not the purpose of this note to explore at greater depth the historical importance of the Ms. Other scholars are more qualified to explore its value from this point of view. Rather, it is to discuss the meaning of its Arabic title, Tuhfat al-Nafis, which this facsimile reproduction offers a new opportunity of considering in context. At least since the time of Winstedt's publication of the Jawi text of the work together with an English summary under the title 'A Malay History of Riau and Johore' (JMBRAS X-2, 1932,