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# The Connection of Klenteng Talang with Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai and Its Role in the History of the Cirebon Kingdom in Chinese Records

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ABSTRACT Many people ignore two Chinese Muslim figures (Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai) and their relationship with the Klenteng Talang is because there are not many local ancient texts that contain them or tell about them. The only text that contains the existence of these two figures and their relationship with the Klenteng Talang is the Klenteng Talang China News. To be able to reveal again the two figures mentioned above and the Klenteng Talang, we need to look again at the Chinese news about the Klenteng Talang, Cirebon. This research aims to rereveal the role of Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai in the history of the Cirebon Kingdom based on the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang and its current relationship with the Chinese temple in Cirebon. Using intertextual approach with historical method was used in four stages of work, namely heuristic, criticism, interpretation, and historiography to the writings of the Chinese News text of Klenteng Talang. Our informants consist of care takers of Klenteng Talang and official of Harbourmaster and Port Authority Office in Muara Jati. The findings indicate that there is an influence of Chinese Muslims in the history of Cirebon, one of the archaeological remains of which is the *Klenteng* Talang building in Cirebon. *Klenteng* Talang, Tan Eng Hoat, and Tan Sam Tjai had a very close relationship in the history of the Cirebon Kingdom in the Chinese news about the Chinese Temple. Although Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai were Muslims who converted to Confucianism, their relationship with Klenteng Talang cannot be ignored. Tan Eng Hoat played a significant role in the early establishment of the Cirebon Kingdom. Even the idea of establishing the Cirebon Kingdom came from Tan Eng Hoat, who conveyed it to Sunan Gunung Jati. Tan Sam Tjai, who was younger than Tan Eng Hoat, also played a significant role in helping to finance the Islamic kingdom of Cirebon until the end of his life, in spite of the fact he left Islam.

# 1. Introduction

So far, not many people know about the Cirebon Talang Temple (*Klenteng* Talang), Chinese News *Klenteng* Talang and two Chinese Muslim figures named Tan Sam Tjai and Tan Eng Hoat in the history of Cirebon. Moreover, knowing its position in the historical development of the Cirebon Kingdom. In fact, the *Klenteng* Talang and these two figures apparently had quite an important role in the history of the development of the Cirebon Kingdom, especially in the spread of Islam in Cirebon.

The important role of the *Klenteng* Talang building was actually revealed by Iwan Satibi (2005a) with the title Tiao Kak Sie Temple, *Klenteng* Talang and Tan Sam Cay. However, Satibi did not connect it with the role of Tan Eng Hoat, just connected it with Tan Sam Tjai. For this reason, it is necessary to reveal the three again in this article.

Many people ignore these two figures and their relationship with the *Klenteng* Talang is because there are not many local ancient texts that contain them or tell about them. The only text that contains the existence of these two figures and their relationship with the *Klenteng* Talang is the *Klenteng* Talang China News. To be able to reveal again the two figures mentioned above and the *Klenteng* Talang, we need to look again at the Chinese news about the *Klenteng* Talang, Cirebon.

As mentioned above, the only ancient manuscript that writes about Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai is the ancient Chinese News manuscript Talang Temple which was found in the *Klenteng* Talang, Cirebon. In fact, Chinese News Talang Temple was first discovered by Poortman around 1928 at the same time as the previous discovery, namely the discovery of Chinese News Sam Po Kong Temple in Semarang. People who already know about Chinese News Sam Po Kong Temple and *Klenteng* Talang and the two figures Tan Sam Tjai and Tan Eng Hoat usually know about the works Parlindungan (1964) and Slamet Muljana (1968). Poortman's writing from a copy of the Chinese news had been included as a preamble to suggest part of a report to the Governor General by Poortman which was confidential and should only be read in the office (Muljana 1968:65). Poortman's writings published in Parlindungan's book entitled Pongkinangolngolan Sinambela Gelar Tuanku Rao and in Slamet Muljana's book entitled Runtuhnja Keradjaan Hindu-Djawa dan Timbulnja Negara Negara Islam di Nusantara (The Collapse of the Hindu-Javanese Kingdom and the Rise of an Islamic States in Nusantara) have caused endless controversy. Even though De Graff and Pigeaud have intervened by researching the ancient manuscript and publishing it as a book with the title Chinese Muslims in Java in the 15th and 16th Centuries, the controversy continues to this day. The controversy occurred because many people thought the article was fake or written by Poortman.

While the controversy over the two Chinese news stories had not yet ended, it turned out that there was a copy of Poortman's report on *Chinese News about the Klenteng Sam Po Kong* and *Chinese News about the Klenteng Talang* which was found in Cirebon in 2007 (Nugrahanto, 2020). The author took a photo of the ancient copy of the manuscript found in Cirebon. This Chinese News of the Sam Po Kong

and Talang Temples was later called the *Colonial Version of the Chinese News of the Klenteng Sam Po Kong and Klenteng Talang* to differentiate it from what was included in the Parlindungan and Slamet Muljana's books. It is through Chinese news found in Cirebon that we will review its contents, especially regarding the history of the *Klenteng* Talang and its relationship with the figures Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai (Afif,2012:80).

These two figures, namely Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai, are only listed in the *Chinese News of Klenteng* Talang. In *the Klenteng Sam Po Kong Chinese News* there is no writing about these two figures. Therefore, we focus only on Chinese News about Talang Temple to discuss it. What is unique about this manuscript is that it was produced by Klenteng, but it tells the story of Chinese Muslims in the early period of the Cirebon Kingdom, especially two figures named Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai. We apply principles *Argumentum Ex Silentio* in the Talang Temple manuscript because this is the only manuscript that talks about the roles of Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai. In Historical Science, *Argumentum Ex Silentio* is defined as a source containing data considered as fact, if there is no contradiction or opposition to the data (Gottschalk, 1975).

The first work is entitled "*Colonial Version of The Chinese Chronicles from Sam Po Kong Temple as a Historical Evidence*" by Widyo Nugrahanto, et al. (2022) This work discusses a manuscript called the Chinese Chronicles from Sam Po Kong Temple in a manuscript obtained from the city of Cirebon and how the manuscript is used as a historical source for Cirebon Historical research. It is estimated that it was copied during the Dutch Colonial period after 1928. The content of the Chinese News of Sam Po Kong Temple is the life of Chinese Muslims in the archipelago, especially on the island of Java after Cheng Ho's voyage to the archipelago when the archipelago was still under Majapahit rule.

The second work is entitled "*Muslims in the Early Days of the Cirebon Islamic Sultanate in the Colonial Version of the Chinese News of the Talang Temple*" by Widyo Nugrahanto, et al. (2022). This work discusses the followers of Islam or the first Muslims in Cirebon, West Java. In this case, this research answers the question of who the first Muslims in Cirebon are, West Java. Indeed, in this article the names Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai are mentioned as the main Chinese Muslim figures who played an important role in establishing the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon and spreading Islam to Galuh, after their arrival after Cheng Ho's voyage to the archipelago. However, the discussion of the relationship between these two figures and the *Klenteng* Talang and their role in the history of the Cirebon Kingdom is based on the *Klenteng* Talang Manuscript.

The third work is entitled "Reconstruction of Islamic Glory in Cirebon: Historical Study during the period of Syarif Hidayatullah (1479-1568)". Mahrus El-Mawa's work (2012). This article focuses on Syarif Hidayatullah's influence on Islamic civilization in Cirebon from 1479 to 1568.

The fourth work is entitled A Brief History of the Cirebon kingdom by Erwantorot in 2012. This article talks about After reformation, some regions that were previously kingdoms claimed their status for province. First, Banten in the Province of West Java has succeeded in doing it and Cirebon is following to do the same. This is very interesting: claims for separation emerged from regions that were previously great, independent kingdoms. What is really happening? The author conducted history method to seek solution for this problem. The result shows that the elites of Cirebon court want to revive old glory of their kingdom when it experienced many great achievements in almost every area of life. Those glorious time become model for them to build future Cirebon. This romanticism has been driven by political situation, especially reformation and regional autonomy.

## 2. Method

Using interttextual approach with historical method which consists of stages of work, namely heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography (Sjamsuddin, 2007: 85-190 and Gottschalk, 1975: 18-19).

Heuristics is an activity of searching and collecting sources. Heuristics are carried out in two stages, namely the first stage of collecting written sources such as the Talang Temple manuscript which is the primary source in this research. In addition, secondary sources were also used in the form of scientific articles published in journals and books relevant to this research. The second stage is field research conducted on May 24-25, 2024, in several places in Cirebon such as Panjunan Red Mosque, Cipta Rasa Great Mosque, Pangeran Kejaksan Great Mosque, Pejlagrahan Mosque, Cirebon Harbor (Muara Jati), Chinatown, Talang Temple, Tiao Kak Sie Temple. At these locations, we conducted interviews as a secondary source collection technique. Then, they are tested through the criticism or source verification stage. Verification of historical sources that have been obtained is carried out to determine whether the sources are authentic and credible.

Testing the authenticity of the source was carried out on the Talang Temple manuscript by looking at the number on the manuscript, paper material (folio size factory paper). The manuscript was written on a typewriter. Furthermore, testing the credibility of the source is carried out to check the truth of the information from the interviewed informants using several indicators, namely the credibility of the informant based on competence, expertise, and the willingness of the informant to provide information. In this research we interviewed three informants. First, Teddy Setiawan, the caretaker of Klenteng Talang, on the roles of the two figures (Tan Sam Tjai and Tan Eng Hoat). Second informant was Sukaesih, the caretaker of Mesjid Merah, who provided the tales of the coming of Islam in Cirebon. The third informant was Iman, an official in Harbourmaster and Port Authority Office in Muara Jati, who provided information about the whereabouts of Cheng Ho's landing in Cirebon mentioned in the manuscript. The verbal consents from the three informants were obtained. Apart from that, the author also carried out corroborated (supporting one source with another source where there is no interest between these sources) between the contents of the Talang Temple manuscript and the Chinese News of the Sam Po Kong Temple. As a result, there is support for the events written in the Chinese News Talang Temple from the Sam Po Kong Temple Chinese News. Based on the results of this corroborated, we found facts about the roles of Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai.

Furthermore, after the authenticity and credibility of the source are determined, the next is interpretation. in Historical research there are several types of interpretation, namely verbal, technical, logical, psychological, and factual interpretations. This research uses verbal interpretation because it relates to information in the Talang Klenteng manuscript which states that the name Tan Eng Hoat appears in the *Klenteng* Talang Chinese News as an Islamic Imam in Sarindil and Talang, an area that later became part of Cirebon. Meanwhile, the name Tan Sam Tjai in the Chinese News of the Talang Temple is written to be the temporary ruler of Cirebon who left Islam and returned to his ancestral religion. He got power in Cirebon because he had such strong finances. Cirebon received large funds for the management of the kingdom from Tan Sam Tjai's financial contributions (see also Al Qurtuby, 2003: 116).

Furthermore, historiography or historical writing is compiled based on sources that have gone through the criticism and interpretation process in the title of the article "The Connection of Klenteng Talang with Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai and Their Role In The History Of The Cirebon Kingdom In Chinese Records" using intertextuality in *the Chinese news* of *Klenteng* Talang. This manuscript is a copy of the manuscript that was first shown by Sofjan (almarhum) to the author in Cirebon in 2007. The late (*almarhum*) Sofjan is a Chinese who lives in Cirebon. Sofjan obtained the manuscript from his grandfather. The author suspects that his grandfather copied the manuscript. Currently the manuscript is kept in the Sofjan family. The manuscript was copied using a typewriter around the 1930s, using a mixture of Malay, Dutch, a little English and French with the spelling Van Ophuijsen (colonial spelling).

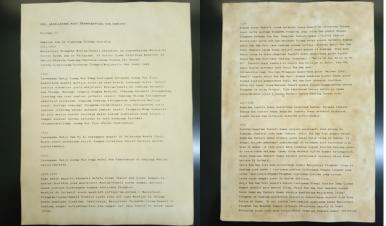


Figure 1. The first and second page of *Klenteng* Talang manuscript

Source: Personal Documentation

This descriptive analysis method is carried out to be able to interpret the content of *Chinese news* of *Klenteng* Talang, especially on the history of the Chinese temple and its relationship with two Chinese figures named Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai in their role in the history of the Cirebon Kingdom. At the same time, the intertextual method was used to examine the writing contained in the Chinese news of *Klenteng Talang* and to understand it further, mainly to connect texts from the past with present texts (Nugrahanto et al., 2022).

Other literature sources were also used to corroborate the content of writings about *Klenteng* Talang, Tan Eng Hoat, and Tan Sam Tjai in the Chinese news about *Klenteng* Talang. It is aimed to strengthen the notions about the relationship between the Chinese temple and the existence of two Chinese figures in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang, Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai, in their role in the history of the Cirebon Kingdom.

## 3. Result and Discussion

## • The *Klenteng* Talang

*Klenteng* Talang is one of the oldest Chinese temples in Cirebon. This Chinese temple is near the Port of Cirebon, behind the British American Tobacco office. The official colonial reports often mentioned the dynamics of the Chinese and the elites in big port cities (Winarni, 2009:4). This building might be the result of the interaction between the two sides.

Many Cirebon residents believe that when *Klenteng* Talang was built, it was initially a mosque where Muslims in the Talang area of Cirebon prayed. This Chinese temple is very different from the current situation; it is a building for Confucian worship. It turns out that the data source stating that *Klenteng* Talang was a mosque when it was founded was a record in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang itself. For this reason, we must first discuss the contents of the Chinese news about *Klenteng* Talang to learn about its early history.

According to the Chairman of the Confucian Ulama Council of Cirebon, Ciu Kong Giok, the origin of the name Talang is an opinion that it comes from the phrase *Sam Po Toa Lang*, which means great people or significant figures. The name honours the three Ming Dynasty envoys who landed in Cirebon: Cheng Ho, Kung Wu Ping, and Fa Wan. Because the phrase *Toa Lang* was complex for Cirebon natives to pronounce, the phrase *Toa Lang* was changed to Talang (INews Cirebon, 2023). The idea of changing the words *Toa Lang* to *Talang* makes perfect sense. Indeed, if the phrase *Toa Lang* is spoken repeatedly from generation to generation, the word could become Talang.

*Klenteng* Talang's Chinese news mentioned that Chinese community villages were established in the Nusantara archipelago after Cheng Ho's voyage to the archipelago. One of them was around Cirebon. Precisely written in 1415, the villages of Talang, Sembung, and Sarindil were established near the coast of Cirebon (Nugrahanto, 2020:87). The Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang is written as follows:

Laksamana Hadji Koeng Woe Ping, toeroenan daripada Koeng Hoe Tjoe, mendirikan menara mertjoe soear di atas boekit Goenoeng Djati. Deket2 kesitoe dibentoek poela masjarakat Moslim/Hanafi, di Sembong, Sarindil, dan Talang. Masing2 lengkap dengan Mesdjid. Kampong Sarindil ditoegaskan levering van teak oentoek perbaiki kapal2. Kampong Talang ditoegaskan onderhoud pelaboean. Kampong Sembong ditoegaskan onderhoud Mertjoe Soear. Bertiga kampong2 Tionghwa/Islam/Hanafi itoe, ditoegaskan poela oentoek levering bahan2 makanan oentoek kapal2 Tiongkok/Ming Dynastie. Di itoe waktoe, daerah Cheribon masih kosong pendoedoek, akan tetapi: Sangat soeboer karena terletak di kaki Goenoeng Tjeremai (Nugrahanto, 2020:87).

It indicates that in 1415, Admiral Hadji Koeng Woe Ping, a descendant of Koeng Hoe Tjoe, built a lighthouse tower on the hill of Gunung Sembung. Nearby, Muslim/Hanafi communities were also established in Sembong, Sarindil, and Talang. Each village had a mosque. Sarindil village was assigned to prepare teak wood for ship repair; Talang village was assigned to port maintenance; Sembong village was commissioned for lighthouse maintenance. The three Chinese/Islamic/Hanafi villages were also assigned to send foodstuffs to Chinese/Ming Dynasty ships. At that time, Cirebon was still unpopulated. However, the area was very fertile because it is located at the foot of Mount Ciremai.

It can be ascertained from the report that in 1415, the questioned Talang building was built in Talang village. When it was first built in Talang village, the building was still a mosque because the people who built or established the community in Talang were Chinese Muslims, and Cheng Ho was assigned to take care of the port. Then, together with the Chinese Muslim community in Sembung village and Sarindil village, the Chinese Muslim community took care of shipping needs for sailors who sailed to Nusantara from outside the archipelago, especially from Mainland China.

It was written in the Chinese news that Sembung village was assigned to guard the lighthouse, and Sarindil village prepared wood and supplies for the voyage. It also says the three villages were built complete with their prominent mosques. Presumably, one of the mosques established in the community, namely precisely in Talang village, has now been turned into a Chinese temple called *Klenteng* Talang.

However, there is an opposing opinion that *Klenteng* Talang used to be a mosque. Iwan Satibi (2005a), a docter who researched *Klenteng* Talang, said he did not believe that *Klenteng* Talang was initially built as a mosque. Satibi argues that the original mosque was built in *Klenteng* Tiao Kak Sie, now called Wihara Welas Asih. The current *Klenteng* Talang is an ash house that was built later. Ash house was initially located at *Klenteng* Tiao Kak Sie but was later moved to the Jalan Talang area, where it is now. Still, Iwan Satibi used a compass to determine the direction of *Klenteng* Talang. It turns out that, according to him, *Klenteng* Talang faces northeast, so it cannot be a former mosque because the Qibla direction is not correct (Satibi, 2005a:3).

Therefore, Satibi believes that the building that used to be a mosque is *Klenteng* Tiao Kak Sie. Finally, Iwan Satibi concluded that *Klenteng* Talang was initially built as an ancestral ash house, not a mosque. The current *Klenteng* Talang is a building that has been moved intact from the Tiao Kak Sie temple grounds (Satibi, 2005a:3). Still, according to Satibi, there is no record of the founding year of *Klenteng* Tiao Kak Sie, but a wooden board called *pay* was found which has the AD year 1658, meaning by 1658, the temple had become a place of Confucian worship rather than a mosque. This Tiao Kak Sie Chinese temple has undergone renovations three times, namely in 1791, 1829, and 1889, so the building differs from the mosque (Satibi, 2005a:1).

## • From a Mosque to a Chinese Temple (*Klenteng*)

Most people believe *Klenteng* Talang, or the ancestral ash house on Talang Street, was originally a mosque. Even the Chinese living in Cirebon still believe that *Klenteng* Talang was the former Chinese Muslim Mosque left by Cheng Ho because there is a data source for the Chinese news manuscript about *Klenteng* Talang. After knowing that *Klenteng* Talang was initially intended as a mosque, it is necessary to know when the building turned into a Chinese temple. To find out, we need to try to refer back to the Chinese news about *Klenteng* Talang.

In Chinese news about *Klenteng* Talang, an article explained the changes in Chinese Muslim villages in Cirebon. The change occurred due to the breakdown of relations between Mainland China and Nusantara. The writing in the Chinese news is as follows:

#### 1450-1475

Sama sadja seperti di pantai Oetara Djawa Timoer dan Djawa Tengah, di daerah Cheribon poen masjarakat Moslim/Hanafi soeda sangat merosot, sebab poetoes hoeboengan dengan vasteland Tiongkok. Mesdjid di Sarindil soeda mendjadi pertapa'an, karena: Masjarakat Tionghwa/Islam/Hanafi di sitoe soeda tida ada lagi, Mesdjid di Talang soeda mendjadi Klenteng. Sebaliknja: Masjarakat Tionghwa/Islam/Hanafi di Sembong sangat berkembang/biak, dan sangat ber-Iman Tegoeh di dalam Igama Islam (Nugrahanto, 2020: 87)

The quote indicates that in the Cirebon area, the Chinese Muslim community had lost its dominance in the area between 1450 and 1475. It happened because of the break in relations between mainland China and Nusantara. As a result of the breakup, the Sarindil Mosque turned into a hermitage. Meanwhile, the mosque in Talang was turned into a Chinese temple. However, there is no definitive year for the mosque's conversion to a Chinese temple, but it was between 1450 and 1475 (INews, 22 Januari 2023:2 and Warmad, 2019:1).

The Chinese people also believe that one of the figures contributing to rebuilding *Klenteng* Talang into the current one is Tan Sam Tjai (Warmad, 2019:1, INews, 22 Januari 2023:2, Ashri, 2022:2) because he served the Chinese Temple and the lives of the Chinese people in Cirebon, a tribute was made to Tan Sam Tjai at *Klenteng* Talang as Sam Tjai Kong, who was worshipped and honoured at the temple (Nugrahanto, 2020: 93) (see Figure 2 below).



Figure 2. A photo of *Klenteng* Talang in the Early 20th Century<sup>1</sup>

Source: Tropenmuseum, between 1920 and 1933

According to Iwan Satibi (2005a), the current *Klenteng* Talang was originally an ash house called Yi Ci, which functioned as a house for storing ancestral ashes. In 1889 *Klenteng* Talang was managed by the Kong Ju Kwan Foundation. Then, Tan Sam Tjai's descendant, Major Tan Tjien Kie, converted this temple into a place of Confucian worship by changing its name to *Klenteng* Khong Kao Jiao in 1937. In that year, he bought a Khong Hu Cu prophet statue in Singapore (Satibi, 2005a:3). Since then, *Klenteng* Talang, an ancestral ash house, has become a Chinese temple for worship.

## • Tan Eng Hoat, a Chinese Muslim in Cirebon

In the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang, it was mentioned that there is a Chinese Muslim figure who spread Islam in Cirebon, namely Tan Eng Hoat. The figure of Tan Eng Hoat is fascinating because it is not found in other texts. He also had a considerable role in conquering the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon and transforming it into the interior of *Tatar Sunda* (Sundanese land). The year of Tan Eng Hoat's birth is not found in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang. It is possible that he was not born in Cirebon, but in Mainland China and then moved to Java Island because he followed Cheng Ho's voyage. He probably settled in Cirebon in 1415.

The first time Tan Eng Hoat appeared in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang was as an Islamic Imam in Sarindil and Talang, an area that later became part of Cirebon. The Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang is written as follows:

#### 1526

Armada serta Tentara Islam daripada Demak, mampir di pelaboean Talang. Ikoet serta seorang Tionghwa Pranakan jang Islam dan pandai Bahasa Tionghwa, bernama Kin San. Panglima Tentara Demak (=Sjarif Hidajat Fatahillah) serta Kin San, daripada Talang pergi kepada Sarindil dimana Hadji Tan Eng Hoat, Imam Sembong, sedang bertapa. Bersama Hadji Tan Eng Hoat, Tentara Islam Demak setjara damai masoek di Sembong. Atas nama Radja Islam di Demak, Panglima

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> <u>Babad Cirebon' Versi Catatan Klenteng Talang - Cirebon Cakrabuana</u> melalui <u>https://cireboncakrabuana.blogspot.com/2014/09/</u>, accessed on 24 May 2024.

Tentara Demak memberikan gelar kepada Hadji Tan Eng Hoat/Imam Sembong. Boenjinja: "Mo La Na Foe Di Li Ha Na Fi". Tentara Demak kembali ke kapal2 dan berlajar ke Barat. Kin San satoe boelan mertamoe pada Hadji Tan Eng Hoat.

Veronderstelling: Soeltan Trenggono memberikan gelar "Molana Ifdil Hanafi" kepada Hadji Tan Eng Hoat. Dengan demikian Djafar Sadik gelar Soenan Koedoes mengizinkan Hadji Tan Eng Hoat didaerah Cheribon, tetep ber-Igama Islam/Madzhab Hanafi dengan teroes menggoenakan Bahasa Tionghwa di dalam Fardhoe. Tida dipaksakan haroes switch ke Igama Islam/Mazdhab Sjafi'i, dimana Fardhoe haroes didalam Bahasa Arab (Nugrahanto, 2020:89).

The translation is more or less as follows: In 1526, an Islamic fleet and army from Demak visited Talang Harbor. Along for the ride was a *Peranakan* Chinese who was Muslim and spoke good Mandarin Chinese named Kin San. The commander of the Demak Army, Syarif Hidayat Fatahillah, and Kin San of Talang went to Sarindil, where Haji Tan Eng Hoat, a priest, was meditating. Together with Haji Tan Eng Hoat, the Demak Islamic army peacefully entered Sembung. On behalf of the Islamic King of Demak, the commander of the Demak Army gave the title Haji Tan Eng Hoat or Imam Sembung; it reads "Maulana Ifdil Hanafi." The Demak army returned to the ships and sailed westward. Kin San has been visiting Haji Tan Eng Hoat for a month. Sultan Trenggono allegedly gave the title "Maulana Ifdil Hanafi" to Haji Tan Eng Hoat. Thus, Djafar Sidik or Sunan Kudus allowed Haji Tan Eng Hoat to remain a Hanafi school of Islam while still using Chinese in *fardh* (religious duties commanded by God). It does not have to change to the Shafi'i school of Islam, where *fardh* must be spoken in Arabic.

In the above review, Tan Eng Hoat appears to be a respected figure in the Sembung area. He was a high priest of the Chinese Muslim community in the former three villages of Sembung, Sarindil, and Talang, which Cheng Ho founded on his voyage to Nusantara. In his work, Djajadiningrat argues that Sunan Gunung Jati was the same person as Fatahillah (Djajadiningrat, 1983). Fatahillah was the commander of the Demak Army who founded the Kingdom of Cirebon and the Sultanate of Banten. Furthermore, in the Chinese news about *Klenteng* Talang, it is also said that Tan Eng Hoat gave Sunan Gunung Jati the idea to establish a kingdom like Djin Boen did in Demak, as written in the news about the Chinese temple as below:

Hadji Tan Eng Hoat mentjeriterakan bahwa: Masjarakat Tionghwa Islam di Sembong poen soeda 4 toeroenan, poetoes hoeboengan dengan Joennan jang Islam. Sebaliknja: Orang2 Tionghwa toeroenan Hokkian jang boekan Islam, soeda sangat koeat di daerah Cheribon.

Hadji Tan Eng Hoat sendiri, adalah toeroenan Orang2 Hokkian jang tjoema sangat sedikit maoe masoek Islam. Hadji Tan Eng Hoat meminta kepada Bekas Panglima Tentara Demak soepaja membimbing Masjarakat Islam/Tionghwa di Sembong, mendirikan sesoeatoe Kesoeltanan seperti Djin Boen dahoeloe di Demak. Ta ada djalan laen, oentoek mendjamin bahwa Masjarakat Tionghwa dan Madzhab Hanafi terpaksa dilepaskan seperti di Demak. Walaupoen soeda toea, akan tetapi: Bekas Panglima Tentara Demak: setoedjoe. Veronderstelling: Bekas Panglima Tentara Demak adalah Soenan Goenoeng Djati jang berasal daripada Ta Tjih (Nugrahanto, 2020: 89).

The translation is more or less as follows: Haji Tan Eng Hoat recounted that even the Islamic Chinese community in Sembung had lost contact with Islamic Yunan for four generations. In contrast, the non-Muslim Hokkien Chinese were already very strong in the Cirebon area. Haji Tan Eng Hoat was a descendant of the Hokkien people who had few converts to Islam. Haji Tan Eng Hoat asked the former commander of the Demak Army to guide the Chinese Muslim community in Sembung to establish a sultanate like Djin Boen had in Demak. There was no other way to ensure that the Chinese community and the Hanafi Mazhab would be forced to let go, like in Demak. The commander of the Demak army agreed. It is suspected that the former commander of the Demak Army was Sunan Gunung Jati, who came from the Ta Tjih area.

In the story above, we know that the idea of establishing a kingdom like Demak came from Tan Eng Hoat, who expressed his opinion and was approved by Sunan Gunung Jati. Then Sunan Gunung Jati realized Tan Eng Hoat's idea until the kingdom's establishment centred on the Pakungwati Palace in the Kasepuhan Cirebon Palace complex today. The China news about *Klenteng* Talang wrote:

#### 1552-1570

Dengan bantoean daripada Masjarakat Tionghwa/Islam di Sembong, Bekas Panglima Tentara Demak mendirikan Kesoeltanan Cheribon. Berpoesat di tempat Kraton Kasepoehan jang sekarang. Sembong ditinggalkan, dan mendjadi pekoeboeran Islam. Pendoedoek Sembong bojong sadesa, dan dengan nama2 Islam serta nama2 boemi poetra, pindah ke kota Cheribon. Soeltan Cheribon Jang Pertama tentoelah bekas Panglima Tentara Demak sendiri. Ia segera membentoek Tentara Islam, daripada bekas pendoedoek Sembong. Orang2 Tionghwa jang boekan Islam terpaksa toendoek, kepada Tentara Tionghwa Islam Cheribon bentoekan baroe itoe (Nugrahanto, 2020:91).

It means more or less that between 1552 and 1570, with the help of the Islamic Chinese community in Sembung, the former commander of the Demak army established the Kingdom of Cirebon, centred on the current Kasepuhan Palace. Of course, this refers to the Pakungwati Palace because it is the oldest building in the Kasepuhan Palace complex. The people of Sembung left Sembung in droves and moved to Cirebon, changing their names to Islamic and indigenous names. The first sultan of the kingdom was the commander of the Demak Army. He formed an Islamic army from the displaced Sembung residents. The non-Muslim Chinese were forced to join the Islamic Chinese army of the newly formed Cirebon Kingdom.

The establishment of the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon in the colonial version of the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang is somewhat different from the opinion of Erwantoro (Erwantoro, 2012:172-173). According to Erwantoro, the Cirebon Kingdom was established after separating from the Sunda Kingdom (Erwantoro, 2012:172). Sunan Gunung Jati led the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon after Prince Cakrabuana handed over the reins of power to Sunan Gunung Jati. It differs from what is contained in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang mentioned above. Erwantoro used the primary source of other local Cirebon ancient manuscripts,

namely the Babad Tanah Sunda/BabadCirebon and the Masa Kejayaan Kerajaan Cirebon: Kajian dari Aspek Politik dan Pemerintahan instead of Chinese news about Klenteng Talang.

In addition, Tan Eng Hoat was Sunan Gunung Jati's father-in-law because he married off his eldest son to Sunan Gunung Jati, the commander of the Demak Army. It is written in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang as follows:

#### 1553

Soepaja ada vorstin di Kesoeltanan Cheribon jang baroe, maka: Soeltan Cheribon Jang Pertama (jang soeda landjoet oesianja) kawin dengan seorang Poetri daripada Hadji Tan Eng Hoat alias Molana Ifdil Hanafi. Daripada Sembong kepada Kraton, "Poetri Tjina" itoe diberangkatkan dengan oepatjara Kebesaran. Se-olah2 daripada Kraton2 Keizer2 Tiongkok/ Ming Dynastie di djaman Laksamana Hadji Sam Po Bo. Dikawal oleh haar jonge neef ja'ni Tan Sam Tjai.

Veronderstelling: Poetri Tjina adalah Poetri daripada Hadji Tan Eng Hoat bernama Tan Ong Tien (Nugrahanto, 2020:91).

The translation is that in 1553, to have a queen or empress in the new Kingdom of Cirebon, the first Sultan of Cirebon (who was already old) was married to one of Tan Eng Hoat's daughters. From Sembung to Cirebon Palace, Haji Tan Eng Hoat's daughter was paraded like a princess of the Chinese palace with lavish ceremonies in the style of the Chinese emperors of the Ming Dynasty and the era of Sam Po Bo or Cheng Ho. She was escorted by her cousin Tan Sam Tjai, who is Tan Eng Hoat's nephew. The alleged Chinese Princess is Tan Eng Hoat's daughter, Tan Ong Tien.

One of the legends of Putri Cina in Keraton Cirebon in some ancient Cirebon manuscripts may be derived from this story. It turned out that the Chinese princess was the daughter of Tan Eng Hoat, who was mythologized as coming from Mainland China and married Sunan Gunung Jati.

In addition to the story above, it turns out that Tan Eng Hoat's services are pretty significant. Tan Eng Hoat was not a Sunan or Wali but had an essential role in spreading Islam in Cirebon to East Priangan as far as Garut, as written in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang. He was also given the title of Adipati Wirasenjaya, domiciled in Kadipaten (a district in Majalengka Regency), a relatively high position in a kingdom.

## 1553-1564

Hadji Tan Eng Hoat alias Moelana Ifdil Hanafi dengan gelar Pangeran Adipati Wirasendjaja, mendjadi Vice Roy bawahan Kesoeltanan Cheribon, de-jure berkoeasa sampai ke Samodra Hindia, de-facto berkedoedoekan dideket Kadipaten. Dari sitoe ia sangat besar berdjasa, mengembangkan Igama Islam/Madzhab Sjafi'i didalam Bangsa Soenda dibinnenland Priangan Timoer, sampai ke Garoet (Nugrahanto, 2020:91).

It means that between 1553-1564 Haji Tan Eng Hoat or Maulana Ifdil Hanafi, with the title Prince Adipati Wirasenjaya became a subordinate ruler of the Kingdom of Cirebon. De-jure ruling as far as the Indian Ocean, de-facto domiciled near Kadipaten. From there, he made a significant contribution, developing the Shafi'i School of Islam in the Sundanese Nation's interior of East Priangan as far as Garut.

Perhaps since Haji Tan Eng Hoat took up residence there, the place changed its name to Kadipaten. Kadipaten until now still exists as the name of a sub-district in Majalengka Regency. Tan Eng Hoat later died on an expedition to conquer the hinterland of East Priangan. He was buried on an island in the middle of a lake in East Priangan. Unfortunately, the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang does not contain the name of the lake or island in the middle of the lake in East Priangan as written below:

1564

Hadji Tan Eng Hoat wafat di dalam militaire expeditie, mereboet Keradjaan Galoeh jang ber-Igama Hindoe. Djenazah daripada Hadji Tan Eng Hoat dikoeboerkan di daerah Galoeh, diatas sesoeatoe poelau, didalam sesoeatoe danau.

Veronderstelling: Nama daripada itoe danau tida ada di Annalen van De Klenteng Talang. Itoe koeboeran ada di salahsatoe danau2 ketjil, jang djoemlahnja sangat banjak didaerah Garoet dan Tjiamis (Nugrahanto, 2020:91).

It means that in 1564 Haji Tan Eng Hoat died on a military expedition to capture the Hindu Kingdom of Galuh. Tan Eng Hoat's body was buried in the Galuh region on an island in a lake. Conjecture: The lake's name is not in *Klenteng* Talang's annual record. The grave is in one of the many small lakes in Garut and Ciamis.

In contrast to Ekadjati's opinion (2005) in his work *Sunan Gunung Jati: Penyebar dan Penegak Islam di Tatar Sunda,* Sunan Gunung Jati was the one who spread Islam to East Priangan or Galuh Kingdom. Ekadjati did not mention Tan Eng Hoat's name in his work because Ekadjati did not use the Chinese news about *Klenteng* Talang as his data source. Ekadjati use local ancient manuscripts in Cirebon; *Babad Tjerbon* and *Babad Cirebon* (Ekadjati, 2005:12-18).



Figure 3. Photo of the altar honouring Tan Eng Hoat next to the altar honouring Gus Dur inside *Klenteng* Talang

Source: Personal Documentation

Tan Eng Hoat's name is honoured in *Klenteng* Talang (see Figure 3 above). His name is enshrined on the altar inside the Chinese temple. According to the management of *Klenteng* Talang, his name was placed next to Gus Dur because he was considered a fellow Muslim figure who contributed to the Chinese people.

# • Tan Sam Tjai, a Chinese Figure in Cirebon

Apart from Tan Eng Hoat, another figure is mentioned in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang. This figure is Tan Sam Tjai. When it is written in the current Indonesian spelling, the name becomes Tan Sam Cay.

Tan Sam Tjai is an exciting figure to talk about. He was initially a Chinese Muslim. However, it is told in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang that he was apostatized from Islam and returned to Confucianism. Although the year of his birth was unknown, Tan Sam Tjai was estimated to be younger than Tan Eng Hoat. It is written that she was Tan Eng Hoat's niece and cousin of Tan Ong Tien, Tan Eng Hoat's daughter who was married to Sunan Gunung Jati and is often called *Putri China* (Chinese Princess) in other local ancient manuscripts in Cirebon.

Satibi (2005b) argues that from the cemetery records of Bong Pay Tan Sam Tjai in Sukalila, Tan Sam Tjai was a Chinese Muslim named Muslim Mohammad Syafi'i. His family is from Long Xi village, Zhang Zhou County, Fu Jian Province. His wife was Loa Li Ay, a Chinese Muslim woman named Nur Laila binti Abdullah Nazir Loa Sek Tjong. His sons were named Jiu Zu and Tian Song (Satibi, 2005b: 2).

It is written in the colonial version of the Chinese temple that Tan Sam Tjai was the brother of the Chinese princess married by Sunan Gunung Jati. It is written in the Chinese news of *Klenteng Talang*, as follows:

## 1553

Soepaja ada vorstin di Kesoeltanan Cheribon jang baroe, maka: Soeltan Cheribon Jang Pertama (jang soeda landjoet oesianja) kawin dengan seorang Poetri daripada Hadji Tan Eng Hoat alias Molana Ifdil Hanafi. Daripada Sembong kepada Kraton, "Poetri Tjina" itoe diberangkatkan dengan oepatjara Kebesaran. Se-olah2 daripada Kraton2 Keizer2 Tiongkok/Ming Dynastie di djaman Laksamana Hadji Sam Po Bo. Dikawal oleh haar jonge neef ja'ni Tan Sam Tjai (Nugrahanto, 2020:91).

The translation is more or less that in 1553 to have an empress or queen in the new Kingdom of Cirebon, the first Sultan of Cirebon (Sunan Gunung Jati), who was already elderly, married a daughter of Haji Tan Eng Hoat (Maulana Ifdil Hanafi). From Sembung to the palace, the Chinese princess, daughter of Haji Tan Eng Hoat, was dispatched with a grand ceremony as if from the palaces of the Ming Dynasty Chinese Emperors in the time of Admiral Haji Sam Po Bo (Cheng Ho), escorted by her nephew, Tan Sam Tjai (see also Wahid, 2009:53).

In the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang, it is written that Tan Sam Tjai also became the temporary ruler of Cirebon. He left Islam and returned to the religion of his ancestors. He gained power in Cirebon because he had such strong

finances. Cirebon received significant funds for the kingdom's management from Tan Sam Tjai's financial donations, as follows:

1569-1585

Tan Sam Tjai jang ta soeka memakai namanja Mohammad Sjafi'i, dengan gelar Toemenggoeng Arja Dipa Wiratjoela mendjadi Mentri Kewangan Kesoeltanan Cheribon. Tan Sam Tjai moertad. Ia sangat satia mengoendjoengi Klenteng Talang membakar hio. Walaupoen demikian, Tan Sam Tjai sangat besar berdjasa financieel memperkoeat Kesoeltanan Cheribon, sehingga ia tetep mainted. Lagipoela: Tan Sam Tjai seperti Soeltan Turks mendirikan harem, tempat simpanan ratoesan Goela2 Kaki Doea, Ja'ni: di Soenjaragi (Nugrahanto, 2020:93).

The meaning is more or less that between 1569 and 1585, Tan Sam Tjai did not like to use his Muslim name, Muhammad Sjafi'i, with his title Tumenggung Arya Dipa Wiracula as Minister of Finance in the Kingdom of Cirebon. Tan Sam Tjai apostatized. He often visited *Klenteng* Talang to burn *hio* (incense). Despite this, Tan Sam Tjai contributed so much to strengthening the Cirebon Sultanate that he was retained. After all, Tan Sam Tjai, like the Turkish Sultan, had built a harem where hundreds of "two-legged sweets" (probably meaning mistresses) were kept at Sunyaragi.

In the colonial version of the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang, it is said that Tan Sam Tjai died because he was poisoned by people who did not like his actions in the palace. It is written in the news as follows:

#### 1585

Tan Sam Tjai wafat, termakan ratjoen di harem Soenjaragi. Djenazahnja ditolak oleh Hadji Koeng Sem Pak daripada pekoeboeran Pengeran2 Kesoeltanan Cheribon di Sembong. Didalam oedjan lebat, terpaksa kembali ke Cheribon. Atas permintaan Istrinja (=Noerleila binti Abdoellah Nazir Loa Sek Tjong), maka: Djenazah Tan Sam Tjai setjara Islam dimakamkan di pekarangan roemahnja sendiri.

Walaupoen ia dikoeboerkan setjara Islam, akan tetapi Atas permintaan pendoedoek Tionghwa jang boekan Islam, di Klenteng Talang diadakan poela oepatjara Naik Arwah oentoek Mendiang Tan Sam Tjai. Namanja ditoeliskan dengan toelisan Tionghwa atas kertas merah, soepaja disimpan di Klenteng Talang oentoek selama2nja. Tan Sam Tjai mendjadi Demi God dengan nama Sam Tjai Kong. Mendjadi Saint jang mengkaboelkan do'a, djika ia tjoekoep dipoedja dengan bakar2 hio (Nugrahanto, 2020:93).

It is translated that in 1585, Tan Sam Tjai died from eating harem poison in Sunyaragi. His body was rejected by Haji Kung Sem Pak from the cemetery of the princes of the Kingdom of Cirebon in Sembung. In the pouring rain, the body had to be brought back home. At the request of his wife (Noerleila binti Abdoellah Nazir Loa Sek Tjong), Tan Sam Tjai's body was Islamically buried in his yard. Although he was buried in Islam, the request of the non-Muslim Chinese population at *Klenteng* Talang also held a ceremony of *naik arwah* (spirit ascension) for the late Tan San Tjai. His name was written in Chinese script on red paper and was to be kept in *Klenteng* Talang forever. Tan Sam Tjai became a

Demi-God named Sam Tjai Kong, becoming a Saint who grants prayers if he is worshipped simply by burning a *hio*.

According to Satibi (2005b) in his work entitled *A Glimpse of Chen San Say* (Tan Sam Cay), Tan Sam Tjai's tomb is in the Sukalila area of Cirebon. Tan Sam Tjai's tomb is still in the city of Cirebon. His burial place certainly used to be his yard. It is written in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang as follows:

Atas permintaan Istrinja (=Noerleila binti Abdoellah Nazir Loa Sek Tjong), maka: Djenazah Tan Sam Tjai setjara Islam dimakamkan di pekarangan roemahnja sendiri.

From the above statement as written in the news, it can be ascertained that Tan Sam Tjai's house is located in the Sukalila area of Cirebon. Apart from *Klenteng* Talang and the tomb in the Sukalila area, Tan Sam Tjai's other legacy is Sunyaragi Park, the creation of which he pioneered. Sunyaragi Park is still in the city of Cirebon (see Figure 4 below). It has now become a cultural heritage building.



Figure 4. Tan Sam Tjai's grave in Sukalila Cirebon

Source: Personal documentation

These are the two Chinese figures who were told in *the Chinese news of Klenteng* Talang. Both had a considerable role in the history of the Cirebon Kingdom in its early days. At present, many Chinese people in Cirebon believe that Tan Sam Tjai is a figure who has merit in developing *Klenteng* Talang in Cirebon.

# 4. Conclusion

*Klenteng* Talang, Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai had a very close relationship in the history of the Cirebon Kingdom in the Chinese news about the Chinese Temple. Although Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai were Muslims who converted to Confucianism, their relationship with *Klenteng* Talang cannot be ignored.

Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai lived when *Klenteng* Talang was established as a mosque for Chinese Muslims in Talang, Cirebon. Thus, *Klenteng* Talang was a mosque for Chinese Muslims in the beginning. Tan Eng Hoat was associated with *Klenteng* Talang when the building still functioned as a mosque for the Chinese Muslim community. At that time, Tan Eng Hoat was the Great Imam of the Chinese Muslim community in Cirebon, so he could undoubtedly pray in the Talang Mosque because when the Cirebon Kingdom was not yet established, there were only three mosques there, namely the Talang Mosque, Sarindil

Mosque, and Sembung Mosque. Once again, Tan Eng Hoat had contact with *Klenteng* Talang when it was still functioning as a mosque.

Meanwhile, Tan Sam Tjai, as written in the Chinese news about *Klenteng* Talang, was the Minister of Finance of the Cirebon Kingdom; he often visited the Chinese temple to worship burning *hio* there. Even when Tan Sam Tjai died, he was revered at *Klenteng* Talang as Sam Tjai Kong. Thus, Tan Sam Tjai was associated with *Klenteng* Talang when the building changed its function to a Chinese temple. It proves there was a close relationship between the three of them (Tan Eng Hoat, Tan Sam Tjai, and *Klenteng* Talang) regarding the existence of *Klenteng* Talang in the past.

In addition, in the figures of Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang, we found their significant roles in the early establishment of the Cirebon Kingdom. Tan Eng Hoat played an important role in the early establishment of the Cirebon Kingdom. Even the idea of establishing the Cirebon Kingdom came from Tan Eng Hoat, who conveyed it to Sunan Gunung Jati. Tan Sam Tjai, who was younger than Tan Eng Hoat, also played an important role in helping to finance the Islamic kingdom of Cirebon until the end of his life, in spite of the fact he left Islam.

As the Great Imam of the Chinese Muslim community in Cirebon before the establishment of the Cirebon Kingdom, Tan Eng Hoat must have had concerns for his people when the relationship between the Ming Dynasty and the regions in Nusantara was severed. Therefore, he had the idea of creating a kingdom just like Djin Boen or Raden Patah used to establish the Demak Kingdom.

After the establishment of the Cirebon Kingdom, Tan Eng Hoat still had a significant role by becoming a subordinate leader of Sunan Gunung Jati, whose title was Adipati Wirasenjaya and was based in Kadipaten. In addition, he led the conquest of the Galuh kingdom in the interior of West Java until the end of his life. This role was significant and cannot be overlooked.

Another essential role of Tan Sam Tjai was when he became the Finance Minister of the Cirebon Kingdom with the title Tumenggung Arja Dipa Wiracula. Another critical role of Tan Sam Tjai was when he became the Finance Minister of the Cirebon Kingdom with the title Tumenggung Arja Dipa Wiracula. In addition, he was the initial founder of the Sunyaragi Park, which is still in Cirebon today. As written in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang, he founded Sunyaragi for a harem called "two-legged sweets."

The role of the two Chinese Muslim figures seems to need to be raised again because of the importance of their role in the history of the Cirebon Kingdom, especially in the period before the establishment until the early days of the Cirebon Kingdom. All of this is written in the Chinese news of *Klenteng* Talang.

There needs to be further research on the life of contemporary Chinese Muslims in the Nusantara with the story of Tan Eng Hoat and Tan Sam Tjai in Chinese News Talang Temple.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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