

From Chronicle to Screen: Reimagining Untung Surapati Across Literary and Visual Narratives

Syiva Amalia

Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: syivamaliaaa299@gmail.com

Siti Gomo Attas

Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: tigo.attas@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

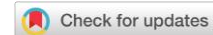
This research consists of two objectives: (1) to examine the characterization of Untung Surapati in the media of an ancient manuscript (babad), a novel, and an animation; and (2) to analyze the process of alih wahana (media transformation) on the characterization elements of Untung Surapati across these different media. The main theoretical frameworks applied are Nurgiyantoro's theory of characterization to dissect the character structure and the theory of alih wahana to analyze the transformation process through the concepts of convention, deviation, and innovation. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method, in which data were analyzed through five stages: character identification, role analysis, analysis of characterization dimensions (physic, psychological, sociological), character development in relation to the plot, and classification as a round or static character. The results indicate that although Untung Surapati is consistently portrayed as a round character, a significant transformation occurs due to alih wahana. This transformation encompasses three main aspects: (1) adherence to the conventions of each medium; (2) deviation in the character's identity, such as the name change to "Jaka Untung" and the addition of visual attributes in the animation, as well as the addition of the character Robert in the novel which deepens the psychological conflict, and the reduction of characters in the animation; and (3) an innovation that explores Untung's vulnerable side, revealing his personal vengeance and doubts, alongside the addition of another female character besides Nona Gendhak in the novel. It is concluded that each medium not only reproduces but also reconstructs the characterization of Untung Surapati according to its specific conventions and communicative goals, thus proving the dynamic nature of a historical narrative.

Keywords: *Alih wahana, Animation, Babad, Characterization, Novel, Transformation*

ARTICLE HISTORY

Published

April 26th 2026



ARTICLE LICENCE

© 2026 *Semiotika Urban dan Budaya* (Urban and Cultural Semiotics)

Under the license CC BY-SA 4.0



1. Introduction

A historical figure such as Untung Surapati, who became a national hero after being officially recognized by the second President of the Republic of Indonesia, Soeharto, on November 3, 1975, based on Presidential Decree No. 106/TK/1975, holds an important place in the narrative of struggle. His life journey can be described as heroic, making him an interesting figure to be continuously represented across various media.

It is told that Untung, a slave, was bought by the family of Edele Heer Moor at the age of seven from Captain van Berber from Makassar. As a teenager, Untung developed feelings for Edel Heer Moor's daughter, Suzzane, which led to his imprisonment. Together with other slaves, Untung managed to resist and escape from prison and the VOC, fleeing to the Cirebon region. According to Achmad in his book, in his strategy against colonial forces, Untung sought protection from the Sultan of Cirebon. However, this effort was obstructed by Prince Surapati, which led to a battle between Untung and the prince (Achmad, 2020). Ultimately, his struggles led him to become an adipati (duke/regent).

In line with this, literature—in this case, a literary work—does not emerge on its own. In the humanities, the results of human thoughts, feelings, and experiences expressed through language are referred to as literary works. According to Pradopo, a literary work is an outpouring or manifestation of the author's feelings, thoughts, and experiences (in a broad sense) (Pradopo, 2020). Literature can serve as a medium for conveying issues, emotions, events, historical facts, or anything present in society. Through narrative, literature is capable of stimulating imagination and helping to unravel complex depictions of events (Mahdori et al., 2025; Weda et al., 2022; Jumriati et al., 2021). This is also supported by Kochhar, who states that history always goes hand in hand with literature: "Historical events, without the literary elements contained within them, would only become empty and meaningless facts. It would be very difficult, even impossible, to narrate historical events without using our imagination" (Kochhar, 2008).

Interestingly, there are literary works in which the process of character creation is complex and intricate, as seen in novels. A novelist certainly has specific intentions and purposes when creating characters in a story. Quoting an article from haibunda.com, it is stated that writers need to conduct in-depth research as an effort to create characters in their works. The article mentions that inspirational stories of real-life figures can inspire the creation of characters in literary works. This aligns with Pratiwi and Andalas (2020), who argue that characters in literary works often represent real-life individuals or other fictional characters.

The relevance of the connection between reality and story characters is intended so that real-life experiences can be used to navigate the fictional world. The presence of characters is a crucial element in literary works because the narrative unfolds through their portrayal. In this context, characters in novels are created for the needs of the story

but are also connected to conveying moral messages to readers (Nurgiyantoro in Fadhillah et al., 2024).

In novels or ancient manuscripts, characterization is presented through descriptions or characters' speech. As stated in the book *Bedah Sastra dengan Teori Fiksi Robert Stanton* (Fadhillah, 2024), Sumardjo and Saini (1997) identify five ways to understand a character: through the character's actions in critical situations, as such moments require immediate decision-making; through dialogue; through the author's description of the character's physical condition; through the character's thoughts in responding to reality; and through direct narration by the author. When these five methods complement each other, they result in a comprehensive and profound portrayal of the character.

The characterization of Untung Surapati is not only depicted as that of a hero with a background as a slave but also as a symbol of resistance by the common people who successfully overcame structures of power. Achmad (2020, p. 22) explains that Untung Surapati's fighting spirit against colonial forces in the archipelago never diminished, even extending to his descendants. It is known that his four children continued to fight against the VOC alongside the King of Kartasari. This reflects social criticism and awareness embedded in the story of Untung Surapati, whether in manuscripts, novels, or animation, as a representation of the social realities of that time.

This makes the transformation of manuscripts into novels and then into animation an important process, ensuring that manuscripts are not only accessible to philologists and academics but also to the wider public, especially children (Rahman, 2024; Abbas et al., 2022; Sosrohadi & Wulandari, 2022). More broadly, the outcomes of transformation extend beyond knowledge development, cultural preservation, and character education for future generations. The process also contributes to economic development through creative products. According to Suryanto (2020), the creation of creative products resulting from philological research can bridge the gap between academia and industry. Examples of such creative products include film scripts, animation, comics, batik design motifs, and others.

In understanding a literary work, one must not only read it linguistically but also comprehend the underlying principles and other aspects involved (Sosrohadi & Luthfu, 2022; Junaid et al., 2025; Haryanto & Sosrohadi, 2023). This is because texts or excerpts undergo transformation that must be analyzed and described both synchronically and diachronically (Khomsiah, 2024). Understanding should not focus solely on the original text or solely on the transformed version; rather, both must be examined so that the intended meaning can be clearly conveyed.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Ancient Manuscripts

A babad is an ancient manuscript belonging to classical Nusantara literature that functions as a record of history, genealogy, and moral teachings. Ricklefs (2008) explains that babad texts combine historical facts with mythological and symbolic elements, making them important as cultural representations rather than purely objective historical records. Likewise, Teeuw (1984) states that traditional literary works reflect collective memory and ideological perspectives of their societies. Babad generally narrates the origins of a region, royal histories, or heroic figures who are often portrayed in an exaggerated manner. Structurally, a babad contains elements such as theme, plot, characters, and setting, with a chronological (forward-moving) plot.

Meanwhile, a novel is a long work of fictional prose that emphasizes character development and the complexity of human life in a realistic way. Watt (1957) argues that the novel is closely associated with realism and individual experience. In a more contemporary perspective, Nurgiyantoro (2013) explains that novels consist of intrinsic elements (theme, plot, character, setting, and style) and extrinsic elements (social and cultural background). Novels may also function as a medium for authors to convey ideas, criticism, and reflections on life.

2.2. Characterization Elements

Characterization refers to how authors present characters and their traits so that they are understandable to readers. Nurgiyantoro (2013) states that characterization includes personality, role, and the way characters are depicted in the narrative. Characters can be classified into main and supporting characters, protagonists and antagonists, as well as flat and round characters.

This classification is rooted in Forster (1927), who distinguishes flat characters (simple and unchanging) from round characters (complex and dynamic). In terms of technique, Abrams (1999) explains that characterization can be presented through expository (direct) and dramatic (indirect) methods. These techniques influence how readers interpret characters and engage with the story.

2.3. Characterization and Plot

Characterization and plot are closely interconnected. Aristotle (1961) states that plot is the arrangement of events, while character determines the actions that shape those events. This indicates that characters are the driving force behind the narrative (Cahyani et al., 2025; Junaid et al., 2026; Suma et al., 2024).

Furthermore, Chatman (1978) explains that narrative consists of story (events and characters) and discourse (how the story is told), meaning that characterization and plot cannot be separated. Conflicts in the plot often arise from differences in characters'

traits or interests, creating a cause-and-effect relationship that makes the story coherent and dynamic.

2.4. Animated Film

An animated film is the art of creating the illusion of motion through a sequence of images displayed rapidly. Furniss (2008) defines animation as a medium that constructs movement frame by frame. In general, animation uses around 24 frames per second to create smooth motion.

Animation can be divided into 2D and 3D forms. Williams (2001) explains that 2D animation tends to be simpler and stylistically flexible, while 3D animation offers more realistic and detailed visual representation. Additionally, Wells (2013) emphasizes that animation combines narrative elements (characters, conflict, space, and time) with cinematic techniques (lighting, camera, editing, and sound) to produce engaging storytelling.

2.5. Conceptual Framework

Adaptation theory is used as the main framework to understand how a story transforms across media. Hutcheon (2006) explains that adaptation is both a product and a process involving reinterpretation and recreation. This means that each medium reshapes the story according to its own characteristics.

This research applies Nurgiyantoro's (2013) theory of characterization to analyze the elements that construct the figure of Untung Surapati. Furthermore, adaptation concepts such as convention, deviation, and innovation are used to identify changes across media. To interpret these changes, intertextuality is employed. Kristeva (1980) argues that every text is a mosaic of quotations, meaning that texts are interconnected and influence one another. To facilitate the research process, the following is the conceptual framework of this study:

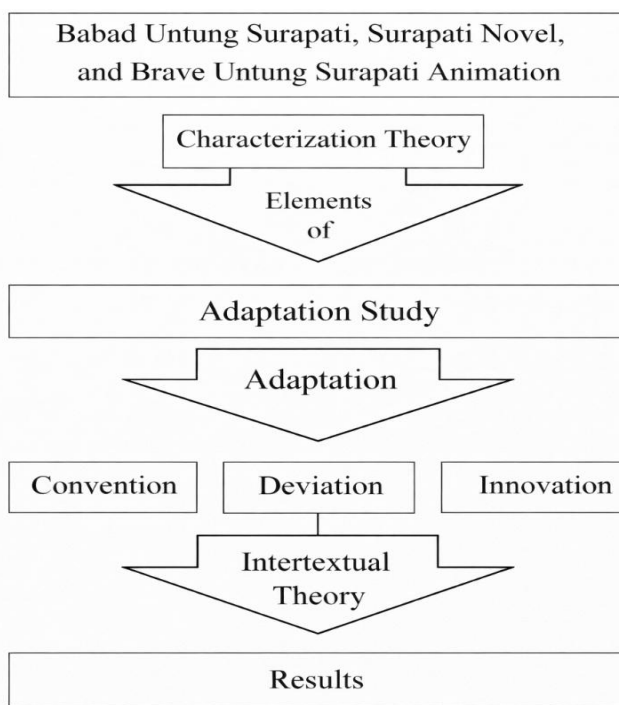


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

3. Method

3.1 Research Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using a library research method. This approach is chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of meaning and interpretation from literary works without manipulating variables. The data are obtained from books, journals, articles, and related documents, and then analyzed inductively with an emphasis on interpretation. This approach is considered the most appropriate for examining literary phenomena that are complex and interpretative in nature.

3.2 Time and Place of Research

This research is not strictly bound to a specific place and time; however, it was conducted in Jakarta from November 2024 to January 2026. This flexibility enables the researcher to focus on data processing without spatial limitations. Thus, the research process can be carried out more optimally and continuously.

3.3 Research Procedure

This study aims to describe the transformation of Untung Surapati's characterization in ancient manuscripts, novels, and animation. Data are collected through document analysis using reading and note-taking techniques, then coded and analyzed using adaptation (*alih wahana*) theory. The analysis process is carried out in

stages to align with the research objectives. Each stage is conducted systematically to maintain the validity and accuracy of the research findings.

3.4 Data and Data Sources

The data consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data include words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs from ancient manuscripts, novels, and animation, while secondary data are derived from other sources relevant to the character of Untung Surapati. The selection of data sources is carried out selectively to ensure alignment with the research focus. This is intended to ensure that the data used effectively support the analysis.

3.5 Data Collection Techniques

Data are collected using observation and note-taking techniques through repeated reading and examination of the data sources. Relevant data are identified, categorized, and documented, including through screenshots of the animation as well as notes on visual and audio elements. This technique helps the researcher obtain detailed and structured data. In addition, this process facilitates the subsequent stages of analysis.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is conducted by examining characterization based on physiological, psychological, and sociological dimensions. In addition, a comparative analysis across media is carried out to identify character transformation using an intertextual approach, leading to conclusions regarding changes in characterization and narrative structure. The analysis process is conducted inductively to identify patterns and meanings from the data. Thus, the findings are expected to provide a comprehensive understanding.

4. Results and Discussion

This section provides a brief overview of the data to be discussed, presented in the form of tables. The following tables contain data derived from the research problems, namely the characterization of Untung Surapati in the babad, novel, and animation, as well as the transformation (*alih wahana*) of characterization elements across different media. The representation tables are described as follows:

4.1. Identification of Characters in Three Media

In this section, the characters in the story of Untung are limited to those who have a direct connection to the development of Untung Surapati's characterization. The following is the table of character identification across the media:

Table 1. Character Identification

| No. | Babad | Novel | Animation |
|-----|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Untung / Surapati | Untung / Surapati | Jaka Untung |
| 2 | Tuan Deler | Tuan Moor | Tuan Deler |
| 3 | Nona Gendhak | Suzanne | Nona Gendhak |
| 4 | Ki Embun Jaladrya | Kiai Ebun | Amral |
| 5 | Amral Abdulwelbeh | Raden Gusik | Surapati |
| 6 | Prince Surapati | Robert | Sultan of Cirebon |
| 7 | Kanjeng Sultan | Commissioner Tack | — |
| 8 | Captain Etak | Surapati | — |
| 9 | — | Sultan of Cirebon | — |

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that each medium presents both similarities and differences in naming and the presence of characters related to Untung Surapati. These variations indicate an adaptation process in which certain characters are modified, merged, or omitted to suit the narrative structure and audience of each medium.

Table 2. Roles of Characters in Three Media

| No. | Media | Character Name | Frequency of Appearance | Inter-Character Relations | Role Indication |
|-----|-------|-------------------|--|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Babad | Untung | Appears dominantly from beginning to end | Central figure in character relationships | Main protagonist |
| | | Tuan Deler | Appears at the beginning | Untung's master; a Dutch figure | Supporting main character |
| | | Nona Gendhak | Appears at the beginning | Untung's master; daughter of Tuan Deler; love interest; Dutch | Supporting main character |
| | | Ki Embun Jaladrya | Appears from beginning to | Untung's companion in | Supporting main |

| | | | | | |
|----------|-------|-------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| | | | end | struggle | character |
| | | Amral Abdulwelbeh | Appears during conflict | Agent of the VOC (Dutch East India Company) | Supporting character |
| | | Prince Surapati | Appears in the middle | Adopted son of Sultan of Cirebon; enemy of Untung | Major supporting character |
| | | Kanjeng Sultan | Appears in the middle and end | Sultan of Cirebon; father of Prince Surapati; ally of Untung | Major supporting character |
| | | Captain Etak | Appears in the middle and end | Dutch agent; enemy of Untung | Supporting character |
| 2 | Novel | Untung Surapati | / Appears dominantly from beginning to end | Central figure in character relationships | Main protagonist |
| | | Tuan Moor | Appears in the beginning and middle | Untung's master; Dutch | Supporting main character |
| | | Suzanne | Appears at the beginning | Untung's master; daughter of Tuan Moor; Untung's wife; Dutch | Supporting main character |
| | | Kiai Ebum | Appears from beginning to end | Untung's spiritual teacher; companion in struggle | Supporting main character |
| | | Raden Gusik | Appears from middle to end | Untung's second wife; a princess; companion in struggle | Supporting character |
| | | Surapati | Appears in the middle | Prince of Cirebon | Major supporting character |
| | | Sultan of | Appears in the | Father of Surapati; | Major supporting |

| | | | | | |
|----------|-------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|------------------|
| | Cirebon | middle | assists Untung | character | |
| | Robert | Appears in the middle and end | Son of Untung and Suzanne; Dutch; enemy of Untung | Supporting character | |
| | Commissioner Tack | Appears at the end | Dutch figure; enemy of Untung | Supporting character | |
| 3 | Animation | Jaka Untung | Appears dominantly from beginning to end | Central figure in character relationships | Main protagonist |
| | Tuan Deler | Appears at the beginning | Untung's master; Dutch | Supporting main character | |
| | Nona Gendhak | Appears at the beginning | Untung's master; lover of Untung; Dutch | Supporting main character | |
| | Amral | Appears in the middle | Dutch agent; enemy of Untung | Supporting character | |
| | Surapati | Appears at the end | Prince of Cirebon; enemy of Untung | Major supporting character | |
| | Sultan of Cirebon | Appears at the end | Father of Prince Surapati | Major supporting character | |

Based on Table 2, it can be observed that the roles of characters across the three media generally remain consistent, especially in positioning Untung Surapati as the central protagonist supported by both allies and antagonists. However, there are notable differences in the frequency of appearance and relational dynamics, indicating a process of simplification and adjustment in the animation compared to the more complex character structures found in the babad and the novel.

4.2. Character Description Across Three Media

After identifying the roles and relationships among characters, it is found that Untung serves as the main character. However, there are differences in how the main character—Untung—is portrayed across the three media.

The following analysis is based on three dimensions that shape characterization: **physical, psychological, and social dimensions**. The table below presents the description of the main character:

Table 3. Description of the Main Character Across Three Media

| No. | Media | Physical Dimension | Psychological Dimension | Social Dimension |
|-----|-----------|---|---|---|
| 1 | Babad | Able to carry sacks filled with weapons | Charismatic, intelligent and adaptive, religious, romantic, caring, mentally strong, fights against injustice | Slave of Tuan Deler; commoner |
| 2 | Novel | Broad shoulders, well-built body, well-proportioned arms and legs | Intelligent, charismatic, conflicted, fortunate, vengeful, caring, religious, fights against injustice | Slave of Tuan Moor; commoner; robs people's property; adheres to Islam; adopted child of Tuan Moor |
| 3 | Animation | Wears all-white clothing | Brave, charismatic, intelligent, strong, caring, fights against injustice | Slave of Tuan Deler; commoner; wears traditional Balinese headgear (<i>udeng</i>); fights against injustice |

In addition to the main protagonist, supporting main characters whose presence consistently appears throughout the story also have dimensional portrayals based on physical, psychological, and social aspects. The following table presents the description of supporting main characters across the three media:

Table4. Supporting Main Characters' Dimensions Across Three Media

| Media | Character Name | Physical Dimension | Psychological Dimension | Social Dimension |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Babad | Tuan Deler | Dutch | Generous, helpful, views slaves as commodities, trusts Untung, firm | VOC member, slave trader, Dutch master, Untung's owner |
| | Nona Gendhak | Dutch, beautiful | Obedient, fond of Untung | Dutch lady, Untung's mistress |
| | Ki Embun Jaladrya | Tall and large like a giant | Supportive of Untung, friendly, wise, resilient | Hermitage teacher, weapons expert |
| | Amral | Intimidating physical | Brave, resilient | Betawi soldier |

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------------------|--|--|--|
| | Abdulwelbeh | appearance | | |
| | Prince Surapati | — | Brave | Prince of Cirebon |
| | Kanjeng Sultan | — | Wise | Sultan of Cirebon |
| Novel | Tuan Moor | Dutch | Firm, cruel | VOC official (Edeleer rank), Untung's adoptive father and master, slave trader |
| | Suzanne | Dutch lady, fair-skinned, beautiful | Fond of Untung, obedient | Untung's mistress and wife |
| | Kiai Ebum | Elderly | Wise, supportive of Untung | Untung's spiritual teacher |
| | Prince Surapati | — | Jealous of Untung, arrogant, conceited | Prince of Cirebon, adopted son of the Sultan |
| | Sultan of Cirebon | — | Wise | Sultan of Cirebon, adoptive father of Prince Surapati |
| Animation | Tuan Deler | Well-built, blond hair, firm and sharp gaze | Generous, firm | Slave trader, wears full VOC attire with gloves |
| | Nona Gendhak | Very beautiful, blond hair, sharp nose, braided hair | Obedient, fond of Untung | Wears soft pastel dress |
| | Amral | Blond hair, well-built, firm face | Brave, selfish | Wears VOC uniform |
| | Surapati | Well-built | — | Wears traditional royal attire and headgear |

Additionally, there are supporting characters who appear only in certain media, which also influence the development of the main character, Untung. The following table presents the description of these additional characters:

Table 5. Description of Additional Characters Across Three Media

| Media | Character Name | Physical Dimension | Psychological Dimension | Social Dimension |
|-------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Babad | Captain Etak | Physically | Brave | Dutch soldier |

| | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|--|---|---|
| | | strong, has thick and well-groomed sideburns | | without rank |
| Novel | Raden Gusik | Beautiful, native | Brave, fond of Untung | Former wife of a prince; Untung's wife |
| | Robert | Brown-skinned | Temperamental, prefers to identify as Dutch | Son of Untung and Suzanne; temporary corporal in the Dutch army |
| | Commissioner Tack | Handsome | Easily trusting | VOC military officer |
| Animation | — | — | — | — |

it can be seen that additional characters are more fully developed in the babad and the novel, where they are described through physical, psychological, and social dimensions. In contrast, the animation does not present these additional characters, indicating a reduction of narrative complexity and a focus on the main storyline.

4.3. Changes in the Main Character's Portrayal (Based on Plot Elements)

Plot elements also influence the characterization of a character in a story. This is because characterization and plot are part of the factual structure of the narrative (Nurgiyantoro, 2017). As the plot develops, it contributes to the development of characterization as well. The following table presents the changes in the portrayal of the main character:

Table 6. Changes in the Main Character's Portrayal

| No. | Media | Orientation | Conflict | Resolution |
|-----|-------|--|--|---|
| 1 | Babad | A purchased slave who is obedient and diligent, gaining favor from Tuan Deler but falling in love with Nona Gendhak. Reconnects with Ki Eburn. | Tuan Deler imprisons Untung. He is tortured and saddened by the suffering of other slaves under Dutch ظلم. Untung incites rebellion and, through his intelligence, escapes prison and seizes | Seeks refuge in Cirebon but is blocked by Prince Surapati, leading to a duel. He is later granted the title "Surapati" by the Sultan. Travels to Mataram to seek allies, fights the Dutch again, nearly loses but receives help; Entak dies and Untung's forces win. He |

| | | | | |
|---|-----------|---|---|--|
| | | | Dutch weapons. | returns to Mataram and is appointed as a <i>tumenggung</i> . |
| 2 | Novel | A slave adopted by Tuan Moor; obedient, diligent, and religious, with a spiritual teacher (Kiai Ebon). Befriends other slaves and marries Suzanne, his master's daughter. | Tuan Moor imprisons Untung after discovering Suzanne's pregnancy. Untung develops resentment and vows to fight the Dutch. He causes unrest in prison, gains trust, and escapes with weapons. Later, he and his troops loot civilians, causing hatred. | Seeks refuge in Cirebon but duels with Prince Surapati. Receives the title "Surapati" from the Sultan. Marries Raden Gusik, creating a moral dilemma. Continues fighting the Dutch with his descendants, though his son Robert sides with the Dutch. Eventually reunites with his son. |
| 3 | Animation | A purchased slave owned by Tuan Deler; obedient and diligent, and attracted to Nona Gendhak. | Tuan Deler imprisons Untung, sparking his desire for revenge. Untung unites the slaves to fight the Dutch and escapes using seized weapons. | Travels to Cirebon but encounters Prince Surapati, leading to conflict. The Sultan punishes the prince and grants Untung the title "Surapati." Due to his sacrifice, Untung is given authority as a regional leader (<i>bupati</i>). |

It observed that the core narrative structure of the main character—orientation, conflict, and resolution—remains relatively consistent across the three media, emphasizing Untung Surapati's transformation from a slave into a powerful leader. However, the novel presents a more complex and morally nuanced portrayal, while the animation simplifies the storyline, focusing on key events and heroic elements.

4.4. Classification of Characterization Across Three Media

After identifying and analyzing the characters using characterization dimensions, this table presents characters from the *babad*, novel, and animation who experience dynamic characterization and are categorized as either **round characters** or **flat characters**.

Table 7. Classification of Characterization Across Three Media

| Media | Character Name | Character Dynamics | Character Classification | Description |
|-----------|-------------------|---|--|--|
| Babad | Untung / Surapati | A purchased slave who is obedient to his master, resists colonial injustice, becomes an enemy of the Dutch, and eventually serves as a regent (<i>bupati</i>) | Round character | Undergoes character development due to story conflicts |
| | Tuan Deler | A kind and generous man who becomes cruel after his daughter falls in love with a slave | Round character | Undergoes character development due to story conflicts |
| | Nona Gendhak | Obedient | Flat character | Static character; portrayed as an only child |
| | Ki Embun Jaladrya | Supports Untung | Flat character | Static character symbolizing friendship and struggle |
| | Amral Abdulwelbeh | Brave in opposing Untung | Flat character | Traits maintained for easy recognition |
| | Prince Surapati | Jealous of Untung | Flat character | Traits maintained for easy recognition |
| | Kanjeng Sultan | Wise | Flat character | Static character symbolizing morality |
| | Captain Etak | Brave in opposing Untung | Flat character | Traits maintained for easy recognition |
| | Novel | Untung / Surapati | A slave who is adopted, becomes resentful toward his master and the Dutch, fights colonial power, and becomes a regent | Round character |
| Tuan Moor | | Firm and cruel | Flat character | Traits maintained for easy recognition |

| | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Suzanne | Obedient | Flat character | Traits maintained for easy recognition |
| Kiai Ebum | Wise and supportive of Untung | Flat character | Traits maintained for easy recognition |
| Raden Gusik | Brave and fond of Untung | Flat character | Traits maintained for easy recognit |

It can be seen that Untung Surapati is consistently portrayed as a round character across the three media, as he undergoes significant development influenced by various conflicts. In contrast, most supporting characters are classified as flat characters, indicating that their traits remain relatively stable and function mainly to support the progression of the main narrative.

4.5. Discussion

Based on the data presented in the tables above, it can be seen that there are both similarities and differences in the characterization of Untung Surapati across the three media: *babad*, novel, and animation. In the stage of character identification, all three media consistently position Untung as the central character, although there are differences in naming and variations of supporting characters. For example, in the animation, the name Jaka Untung is used, while in the *babad* and novel, the name Untung or Surapati is retained. In addition, some characters undergo name changes or variations in their presence, and some appear only in certain media, indicating an adaptation process based on narrative needs and the characteristics of each medium.

In terms of character roles, Untung consistently serves as the main protagonist who dominates the storyline and becomes the center of inter-character relationships. Other characters such as Tuan Deler/Tuan Moor, Nona Gendhak/Suzanne, and Ki Embun/Kiai Ebum function as supporting main characters who influence the development of Untung's character. Meanwhile, additional characters such as Amral, Captain Etak, or Commissioner Tack act as triggers of conflict. This shows that despite the change in media, the structure of character roles remains relatively consistent with certain adjustments.

From the perspective of character portrayal, Untung in all three media shares similarities as a strong, intelligent figure who resists injustice. However, there are differences in emphasis: the *babad* highlights his heroic and religious aspects; the novel presents a more complex characterization with internal conflicts such as revenge and moral dilemmas; while the animation portrays him in a simpler, braver, and more accessible manner. These differences indicate that each medium has its own way of constructing character according to its target audience and mode of presentation.

In terms of plot development, changes in events also influence Untung's characterization. All three media begin with Untung as a slave, followed by conflict with Dutch masters, and ultimately his rise as a leader or important figure. However, the novel offers a more complex plot with additional conflicts such as family relationships and personal dilemmas, while the animation simplifies the storyline to make it more concise and communicative. This demonstrates that plot and characterization are closely interconnected in shaping the narrative.

In the classification of characterization, Untung in all three media is categorized as a **round character** due to his significant character development resulting from conflict. Meanwhile, most other characters tend to be **flat characters**, with relatively fixed traits. This indicates that the main focus of the story lies in the development of Untung as the central character, while other characters function as supporting elements to strengthen the plot.

Overall, the findings show that there is a transformation of characterization through the process of adaptation (*alih wahana*) from *babad* to novel and animation. This transformation is reflected in changes in names, characterization, complexity of conflict, as well as the simplification or enrichment of certain elements. Nevertheless, the essence of Untung as a figure who fights against injustice is consistently maintained across all three media, demonstrating continuity of values throughout the adaptation process.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the characterization of Untung Surapati in the *babad*, novel, and animation consistently positions him as the main character with a **round character type**, marked by significant character development. However, each medium presents a different representation according to its characteristics. In the *babad*, Untung is portrayed as a heroic figure with mythical nuances and natural leadership; in the novel, he is depicted as more psychologically complex with inner conflicts such as revenge and moral dilemmas; while in the animation, his characterization is simplified into a patriotic and educational heroic figure.

Furthermore, the transformation of characterization occurs through the process of adaptation (*alih wahana*), which involves **convention, deviation, and innovation**. Convention is reflected in the alignment with the characteristics of each medium; deviation appears in changes of names, attributes, and the addition of characters; while innovation is seen in the enrichment of heroic meaning and narrative complexity, particularly in the novel. Thus, despite various changes, the essence of Untung Surapati as a symbol of resistance against injustice is preserved across all three media.

References

1. Abbas, A., Pattu, M. A., Rahman, F., & Pammu, A. (2022, December). Gender Relations in O'Pioneers! Novel by Willa Cather. In *Sixth International Conference on Language, Literature, Culture, and Education (ICOLLITE 2022)* (pp. 3-9). Atlantis Press.
2. Abrams, M. H. (1999). *A glossary of literary terms* (7th ed.). Heinle & Heinle.
3. Achmad, S. W. (2020). *Untung Surapati: Melawan VOC hingga menjadi adipati*. Sociala.
4. Aristotle. (1961). *Poetics* (S. H. Butcher, Trans.). Hill and Wang. (Original work published ca. 335 BCE)
5. Aulia, N., et al. (2025). Interdisciplinary research approaches in humanities.
6. Cahyani, A. D., Nahdhiyah, N., Taufik, M., & Andini, C. (2025). Evolution of Emotions from the Movie Matilda 1996 to the Movie Matilda 2022 (Comparative Analysis Study). *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 8(2), 611-621.
7. Chatman, S. (1978). *Story and discourse: Narrative structure in fiction and film*. Cornell University Press.
8. Fadhillah, N., et al. (2024). *Bedah sastra dengan teori fiksi Robert Stanton*. [Publisher not specified].
9. Forster, E. M. (1927). *Aspects of the novel*. Edward Arnold.
10. Furniss, M. (2008). *Art in motion: Animation aesthetics* (2nd ed.). John Libbey Publishing.
11. Haryanto, D. A., & Sosrohadi, S. (2023). Self-Actualization of The Main Character Gadis: a Case Study at Liye's Novel Sesuk. *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 6(2), 364-375.
12. Hutcheon, L. (2006). *A theory of adaptation*. Routledge.
13. Jumriati, Rahman, F., & Lewa, I. (2021, November). The Potential of Children's Literature in Education and Environmental Ethics: Linguistic and Literary Approaches. In *The 1st International Conference on Research in Social Sciences and Humanities (ICoRSH 2020)* (pp. 1054-1058). Atlantis Press.
14. Junaid, S., Andini, C., & Junaid, K. U. (2025). The Role of Illustrations in the Fictional Picture Book The Little Red Hen for Developing Visual Literacy in Early Childhood. *Dialectica Online Publishing Journal*, 1(1), 64-71.
15. Junaid, S., Andini, C., Nahdhiyah, N., & Maimun, A. M. (2026). Intertextual Transformation of Intrinsic Elements of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in the Webtoon Dorm Du. *Dialectica Online Publishing Journal*, 1(2), 173-181.
16. Khomsiah, S. (2024). *Kajian transformasi teks dalam perspektif sastra*. [Publisher not specified].
17. Kochhar, S. K. (2008). *Teaching of history*. Sterling Publishers.
18. Kristeva, J. (1980). *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art* (T. Gora, A. Jardine, & L. Roudiez, Trans.). Columbia University Press.
19. Mahdori, M., Rahman, F., Faisal, R., Aditya, T. P. M., Sosrohadi, S., & Sachiya, F. (2025). *Revealing aspect of culture through literature: Learning from Sutan Takdir*

- Alisjahbana. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10(3), 1211-1216.
20. Nurgiyantoro, B. (2013). Teori pengkajian fiksi. Gadjah Mada University Press.
21. Pradopo, R. D. (2020). Pengkajian puisi: Analisis strata norma dan struktural dan semiotik. Gadjah Mada University Press.
22. Pratiwi, Y., & Andalas, E. F. (2020). Representasi tokoh dalam karya sastra dan kaitannya dengan realitas sosial. *Jurnal Sastra Indonesia*, 9(2), 123–130.
23. Rahman, F. (2024, May). Cyber Literature and ChatGPT in the Global of IoT Connectivity. In *4th International Conference on Linguistics and Culture (ICLC-4 2023)* (pp. 344-348). Atlantis Press.
24. Ricklefs, M. C. (2008). A history of modern Indonesia since c. 1200 (4th ed.). Stanford University Press.
25. Suma, M., Misbah, I., Sosrohadi, S., & Dalyan, M. (2024). The Influence of Language Use toward the Implementation of Public Service Ethics. *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 7(4), 626-633.
26. Sumardjo, J., & Saini, K. M. (1997). Apresiasi kesusastraan. Gramedia.
27. Suryanto. (2020). Produk kreatif berbasis filologi sebagai jembatan antara akademik dan industri. *Jurnal Humaniora*, 32(1), 45–56.
28. Sosrohadi, S., & Wulandari, D. (2022). Character discrimination analysis in the novel Maryam by Okky Madasari. *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 5(2), 187-197.
29. Sosrohadi, S., & Lutfhu, M. (2022). The Inner Conflict of the Main Characters in the Novel Conspiracy of the Universe by Fiersa Besari: A Review of Literature Psychology. *International Journal of Arts and Social Science*, 5(6), 53-67.
30. Teeuw, A. (1984). Sastra dan ilmu sastra: Pengantar teori sastra. Pustaka Jaya.
31. Watt, I. (1957). The rise of the novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding. University of California Press.
32. Weda, S., Rahman, F., & Sakti, A. E. F. (2022). The Use Of Literature In The Language Classroom At A Higher Education Institution In Indonesia. *Asian Journal of Advances in Research*, 5(1), 490-494.
33. Wells, P. (2013). Understanding animation. Routledge.
34. Williams, R. (2001). The animator's survival kit. Faber and Faber.