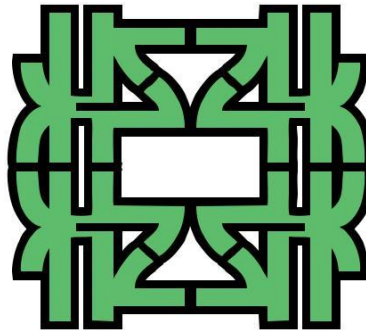


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Norbidayat

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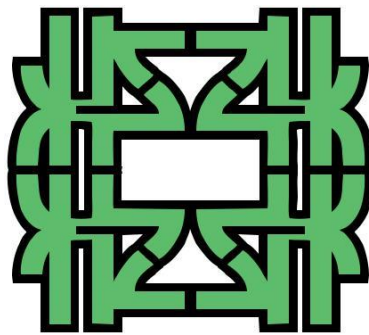
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Table of Contents

- 1 *Norbidayat*
THE ORIGIN OF WOMEN CREATION IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF SUFI
COMMENTARY
- 23 *Asty Wulandari*
NAFS IN SUFISM PSCHOLOGY: ROBERT FRAGER'S PERSPECTIVE
- 35 *Hajriansyah*
IBRAMSYAH AMANDIT'S SUFISM POEMS: STUDY OF SUFI AESTHETICS
- 53 *Mujiburrahman*
URGENSI MEMAHAMI BANUA MELALUI KAJIAN SOSIOLOGI AGAMA
- 67 *Sabbuddin*
KONSEP PENDIDIKAN HATI AHMAD FAHMI ZAMZAM
- 95 *Ilham Masykuri Hamdie*
KONSEP TASWIYAH AL-NAFS DALAM PENGEMBANGAN PRIBADI
MANUSIA

IBRAMSYAH AMANDIT'S SUFISM POEMS: STUDY OF SUFI AESTHETICS

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Abstrac: *This paper discusses Sufism in the context of art, especially through the poems of the Poet Ibramsyah Amandit. Beauty (al-jamâl), as an aspect of the divine is the attention of Sufis. With the sensitivity of Jamâl, which represents the attribute of God, they then express their inner experiences, thus becoming the forms of artwork that inspire others to get closer to the Creator (Allah). This research is a descriptive qualitative study that reviews some poems of Ibramsyah Amandit in "Badai Gurun dalam Darah". The theoretical approach applied in this study is hermeneutics of Sufi Aesthetics. Ibramsyah's poems represent spirituality experience with mystical symbols that are taken from the sufism tradition or from local and his personal thought with the awareness of divinity.*

Keyword: *Poems, Ibramsyah Amandit, Sufism.*

Abstrak: *Tulisan ini membahas tasawuf dalam konteks seni, terutama melalui puisi Sastrawan Ibramsyah Amandit. Keindahan (al-jamâl), sebagai aspek ilahi adalah perhatian para sufi. Dengan kepekaan mereka terhadap al-Jamâl yang mewakili sifat-sifat Tuhan, Para Sufi mengungkapkan pengalaman terdalam mereka, kemudian menjadikannya sebagai bentuk karya seni yang mengilhami orang lain untuk mendekati Sang Pencipta (Allah). Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif yang mengulas beberapa puisi Ibramsyah Amandit dalam "Badai Gurun Darah". Pendekatan teoritis yang diterapkan dalam penelitian ini adalah hermeneutika estetika sufi. Puisi Ibramsyah mewakili pengalaman spiritualitas dengan simbol mistik yang diambil dari tradisi sufisme atau dari pemikiran lokal dan pribadinya dengan kesadaran akan ketubuhan.*

Kata kunci: *Poems, Ibramsyah Amandit, Sufisme*

Introduction

Sufism is a doctrine that emphasizes the purifying of the soul, aimed at achieving *ma'rifa*t (true knowledge of God). This teaching is certainly based on the source of the Qur'an and the Hadith. Practically, it refers to the hadith of the Prophet about *Ihsan*, the attitude in worship that attaches to the inner awareness of God's presence. As the Prophet said, "You should worship as if you see God, and if you can not, at least you feel he always looks at you."

By having a deep awareness of the presence of God, the Sufis live in this world as if they live in the front courtyard of a paradise garden. They breathe the air in a spiritual atmosphere, where beauty radiates from all their words and deeds. Islam itself calls one of important aspects of the Divine as beauty (*jamal*). This character is particularly emphasized in Sufism, which is naturally arising from Islam and contains the essentials.¹

¹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Tasawuf Dulu dan Sekarang*, (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2002), p. xxiii.

In the Eastern Tradition,² art is seen as a part of intellectual and spiritual virtues. The art of Islam, like any other form of Islamic spirituality, is a witness (*shahādah*) or vision (*mushahadah*) of the unity of God. Its manifestation is a formal beauty. That is why the awareness of the unity and love of beauty are very close to the gnosis of Islam (*ma'rifah*).³ Imam al-Ghazali said that the effects of art on the human psyche are enormous, therefore it determines their religious morale and appreciation.⁴

From the twelfth until seventeenth centuries, with the beginning and increasing prominence of the Sufi role in Islamic civilization, it began and became even more prominent in their role in cultural life (art), as embodied in works expressing their mystical experiences which are considered to high have aesthetic qualities. Among these were Fariduddin 'Aththar (w 1220), Jalaluddin Rumi (1273), Mahmud Shabistari (1340), Abdurrahman Jami (w 1492), to Hamzah Fansuri (17th century) in the Malay Archipelago. In addition, among the figures who discuss much aesthetics in their Sufi treatises are al-Ghazali, Ibn 'Arabi, Nizami, 'Aththar, Ruzbihan Baqli, Suhrawardi, Rumi, Sa'di, 'Iraqi, Qunawi, Haidar Amuli, Shabistari, Jami, and others.⁵

In Indonesia, in the 1980s until 1990s, there was discourses about sufistic tendencies in the poetry of poets in Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Bandung, to Banjarmasin. Among those sufistic tendencies are Abdul Hadi W.M., Sutardji Calzoum Bachri, Kuntowijoyo, Emha Ainun Nadjib, Ahmadun Y. Herfanda, Mustofa Bisri, Ajamuddin Tifani, and so on.⁶ Among these names, which have not been widely discussed nationally, whose poetry works also have a sufistic tendency is Ibramsyah Amandit. In South Kalimantan, the name of Ibramsyah is very well known as a Sufi poet who is consistent in writing poems, even since the beginning of his career as a poet in the '70s. Thus, the author finds it quite appropriate to discuss his works in Sufi aesthetic reviews.

Aesthetic Sufism and His Book *Badai Gurun dalam Darah*

Aesthetics is a branch of Philosophy that observes (with sensory perception) the image as well as the meaning of beauty. The perceptible sensory perception in literary works, especially in poems, is related to sounds (caused by the structure of words), poetic elements, and the integration of sound with meaning. In this case,

² The tradition in Nasr's sense means something sacred, through transcendental revelation and disclosure, passed on horizontally and continuously in vertical chains that connect every perennial life of tradition. See Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam Tradisi di Tengah Kancab Dunia Modern*, translated from *Traditional Islam in the Modern World*, (Bandung: Penerbit Pustaka, 1994), pp. 3 & 17; juga *Spiritualitas dan Seni Islam*, (Bandung: Mizan, 1993), p. 100.

³ Titus Burckhardt, "Spiritualitas Seni Islam", in Seyyed Hossein Nasr (ed.), *Ensiklopedi Tematis Spiritualitas Islam: Manifestasi*, (Bandung: Mizan, 2003), p. 643.

⁴ Abdul Hadi W.M., *Hermenentika, Estetika, dan Religiusitas: Esai-Esai Sastra Sufistik dan Seni Rupa*, (Yogyakarta: Mahatari, 2004), p. 34.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

⁶ See Aprinus Salam, *Oposisi Sastra Sufi*, (Yogyakarta: LkiS, 2004), p. 19. Ajamuddin Tifani (Banjarmasin) is often also mentioned in some records of Abdul Hadi, for example in *Hermenentika, Estetika, dan Religiusitas*, p. 211. An in-depth study of Tifani's works can be seen through Jamal T. Suryanata, *Tragika Sang Pencinta, Gayutan Sufistik Sajak-sajak Ajamuddin Tifani*, (Yogyakarta: Akar Indonesia, 2010).

Jakobson emphasizes to more sounds and choice of words (diction), which will produce poetic structure on literary works. Such structures will have an impact on the meaning, content, or message of the work.⁷ The term *sufistik* itself is a category of dilation of the esoteric dimension of Islamic teachings, namely *tasawuf*.⁸

Associated with Sufism, Abdul Hadi mentions that in Sufi tradition the aesthetic is further attributed to the metaphysics and spiritual path they take on the path of Sufism.

What is spoken of in Sufi aesthetics is including the nature and function of art, its influence on psychology and spiritual life of man, the use of art in the growth of religious spirit and social solidarity, and ways of understanding art through the hermeneutical method (*ta'wil*). Sufis argue that all good works must be referred to verses of the Qur'an, and often their poems are actually spiritual interpretations of verses of the Qur'an transformed into poetry figurative language.⁹

In the Sufi tradition, aesthetic pronunciation in the form of literary works can be a spiritual path to the higher nature of life, to the transcendental world. As a spiritual way, aesthetic expression in literature and art functions, among others: (1) *Tawajjud*, that is bringing the connoisseur to a state of a peaceful soul and united with immortality, this is as recited by al-Ghazali; (2) *Tajarrud*, ie the liberation of the soul from the realm of things through something that comes from the realm of the thing itself, as Ruzbihan Baqli said it; (3) *Tazkiyat al-Nafs*, the purification of the idolatry of form, as Jalaluddin Rumi disclosed it; (4) as a Way of Transcendence, breaking through the world of forms through the formal forms themselves; (5) convey the Wisdom, as Ibn Sina disclosed it; (6) as a way of disseminating ideas and knowledge related to history, geography, law, adab, and others; (7) to convey the Praise to the One and as a Way of Contemplation.¹⁰

In Islamic hermeneutics (*ta'wil*), people attempted to find the suggestive meaning (*isyarah*). In Sufi poems, the meaning of *isyarah* is related to the ontology and cosmology, namely the order of being and the existence of life which is ranked and interconnected from the lowest to the highest.¹¹

In the context of this Sufi aesthetic approach, the author will discuss the poems of Ibramsyah Amandit, a poet who was born and work in South Kalimantan and is often mentioned in the modern literary discourse of South Kalimantan as a Sufi poet. Discussion of his work is mainly contained in the book of poetry collection, *Badai Gurun dalam Darab*.

The poem collection, *Badai Gurun dalam Darab* (hereinafter referred to as *Badai Gurun* saja) is the first collection of Ibramsyah poems, published by Tahura Media publishing. This book contains 97 poems by Ibramsyah Amandit written from 1973 to 2008, with remarks by Ir. HM. Said, as well as the introduction by the Abdul Hadi W.M., Burhanuddin Soebely and Poet Micky Hidayat.

⁷ Sophan Ajie, "Sastra Modern dan Aneka Perspektifnya", in Bambang Sugiharto (ed.), *Untuk Apa Seni?*, (Bandung: Matahari, 2014), p. 251.

⁸ See Aprinus Salam, *Oposisi Sastra Sufi*, p. 4.

⁹ Abdul Hadi W.M., *Hermeneutika, Estetika, dan Religiusitas*, pp. 37-38.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

Sainul Hermawan, an academic of Lambung Mangkurat University (ULM), who wrote many literary criticisms with the works of literature of South Kalimantan, commented *Badai Gurun*:

If this one hundred and forty-page book came to the hands of students familiar with the Qur'an, like the santri in my village fifteen years ago, this book could face two possible treatments. First, it will be placed in a higher place, among other books, at least parallel to the books of the scholars and the Sufis. [...] Secondly, if they do not intend to read it, they must burn it to protect the signs of God's holiness in this book. Melting all the signs in it with the air through the chemical event: the embers of love.¹²

In the process of understanding the work (with a Sufi aesthetic approach) the first stage that must be done is to determine a significant sign (*dilala*), including the parts of the symbolic or metaphorical text. Through these symbols then the process of meaning of Ibramsyah's poems will be done. In addition, one important principle in meaning is linking texts with the culture, religion and way of life and the worldview of poet. The author will present in advance a short biography of the poet Ibramsyah Amandit and an introduction of his poems in the collection of *Badai Gurun*.

The Profile of Poet Ibramsyah Amandit¹³

Ibramsyah Amandit bin H. Lawier is a poet from South Kalimantan.¹⁴ He was born in Tabihi Kanan village, Karang Jawa village, Kandangan, on August 9, 1943. For his primary education (SR), he spent a year in Kandangan, then continued to six years in Tamban-when his father, a member of the Army Police in the Division IV of ALRI, brought his family to move to this Barito river area. He then went to the First Islamic High School (SMIP) Banjarmasin and graduated in 1957, then forwarded to Senior High School (MMI) Yogyakarta until graduating in 1965. Ibramsyah studied at the Department of Administrative Sciences of IKIP Negeri Yogyakarta for his bachelor degree (1971). It was in Yogyakarta that he became acquainted with the writer Abdul Hadi W.M., and once joined the once phenomenal literary community in Gudeg City in the seventies, Persada Studi Klub led by poet Umbu Landu Paranggi.

In 1972, he returned to South Kalimantan and participated actively to send and recite his poems on the show "Untaian Mutiara Sekitar Ilmu dan Seni" RRI Banjarmasin, which cared by writer Hijaz Yamani. Since then he has been actively involved in literary activities and has focused on writing poetry, until now at the age of 74 years, he is known as one of South Kalimantan's respected poets not only in South Kalimantan but also in Indonesia in general. For his dedication and

¹² Sainul Hermawan, *Maitibi Sastra Kalimantan Selatan 2008-2011*, (Banjarbaru: Scripta Cendikia, 2011), p. 89.

¹³ This profile refers to the biographical section (About Poets) in the poem collection of *Badai Gurun dalam Darah* (pp. 117-119)

¹⁴ The name Amandit, according to the poet Burhanuddin Soebely, is added by Ibramsyah, and later became Ibramyah Amandit as the name of the inherent and recorded patrimony until now, in 1970 when he published his first poem "Sebuah Doa di Musim Hujan" in *Insani* rubric of *Mercu Suar* newspaper in Yogyakarta. See Ibramsyah Amandit, *Badai Gurun dalam Darah*, (Banjarbaru: Tahura Media, 2009), p. 120.

consistency in the literary realm, in 1990, he received a literary award from the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education and Culture of South Kalimantan, and then an art award from the Barito Kuala Regent in 2006 and 2009, as well as a Literary Arts Prize from the Governor of South Kalimantan in 2009 as well.

Ibramsyah acquainted with the world of Sufism in 1983, then in 1984 he performed the pilgrimage. Since he has admitted to the teachings of Sufism (1983-1992), he stopped writing. It was his spiritual journey. He does not simply read books on Sufism, but also learns directly from Sufism teachers such as KH. Gusti Abdussamad, KH. Ramli Tatah Daun, KH. Ahmad Arsyad, KH. Marzuki, KH. Muhammad Nur Takisung (Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah), KH. Sam'ani, Guru H. Basran Tinggiran, KH. Abdul Mu'in, KH. Abdullah (Tarekat Akhirul Zaman), and KH. Muhammad Zaini Abdul Ghani or known as Guru Sekumpul (who had done his bai'at in Tarekat Sammaniyah). In addition, he also took a wirid diploma to Dr. Mohammed A. Syafiq (advisor to Rabithah Alam Islami- an Afghan), whom he said deprived Islam of the "inner side", in Mecca in Ramadan in 1984.

After this long period of "*khalwat*", he wrote poem again, which some literary observers in South Kalimantan referred to as poem with sufistic tendencies. Now, he works as a farmer and bonsai lover to spend his retirement everyday. In the Bonsai Fan Association of Indonesia, Banjarmasin City, he became Vice Chairman. Ibramsyah lived and spent his old age in Sidorejo Village Km.7 RT.V No.129, Tamban Sub-district, Batola.

Ibramsyah Amandit's Poems in *Badai Gurun*

As already mentioned, the collection of *Badai Gurun* is the first book of Ibramsyah Amandit.¹⁵ This book itself collects poems written since 1973 to 2008, as many as 97 pieces of poem. Of the total number of poems, given that each poem is entitled (place and year of writing), the author divides it into two periods. The first period commences from the poem "Milik" (1973) to the poem "Tanya, 2" (1982), while the second period is composed of the poem "Puisi Kasih" (1993) to the poem "Petir Terbuang" (2006/2008). This periodization was made on the basis of Ibramsyah's claim that since learning the teachings of Sufism, as mentioned in the poet's profile section, he stopped writing poem. From this confession, it seems that Ibramsyah wanted to declare that during his spiritual journey, he totally absorbed in the study of Sufism.

Seeing the time records of each poem in the book of *Badai Gurun*, the poem "Tanya, 2" (page 31) is the last poem before beginning to seriously listen to the science of Sufism, then spliced the next page with "Puisi Kasih" (page 32) The first poem after the period of spiritual wandering. The next poem on page 33 entitled "Yogya" proved that the editor misplaced, since the record titled was "Tamban, March 1973". The first period contains 29 poems, while in the second period there were 68 poems

¹⁵ Furthermore Ibramsyah published his poem collection again *Tikar Pandan* in 2013 (Pustaka Banua), and in this year (2017) published his book *Emperan Tuban* (Scripta Cendikia).

The classification of these two periods does not mean that Ibramsyah's poems before his "khalwat" is not nuanced all the Sufi, even almost all of his poetry since "Milik" has been filled with Sufistic and divine idioms. The idiom, for example, is in the following order: "Tuhan bersandar/ sebelah dalam pagar/ di halaman" (the poem "Milik", 1973), "dari nikmat yang tiada mendekat/ dari hakikat yang tiada makrifat" (the poem "Lingkungan", 1973), "Pada segenap pinggiran pesiar-Mu/ makin daku menggila. Makin bahagia! Pada segenap pinggiran pesiar-Mu/ makin daku menggila. Makin bahagia!" (the poem "Berdoa", 1973), "dengan mesranya menghantar bau mawar/ di gerbang kelambu..." (the poem "Rumah", 1975), "Duhai, pewaris Nabi, sunnatullah berlaku;/ - musibah bagi yang kehilangan kunci dunia/ atau bagi sekadar fasih baca doa-doa!" (the poem "Ulama", 1979), "Duhai, Waliullah, duhai orang suci; ke mana saja Tuan dalam kubur" (the poem "Mengimbau Wali Syekh Abdul Qadir Jailani", 1980), and others.

The above phrases besides mentioning the word "Tuhan" (God) in the light (explicit), also have a double expression which has a symbolic meaning charge. The "pagar" (fence) and "halaman" (yard), for example, are not simply meant as they were when they became the sequence of the previous "Tuhan bersandar" (God leant) phrase. There is another awareness that does not merely represent the reality of what it is. This is in line with what Schimmel argues, in relation to Persian Sufi poem, that the dual meaning is deliberate, wobbling between two levels of existence that is consciously defended. Such lyrics would not have their distinctive charms without Sufi theories, because they are the underlying constructs of these poems. The tension between worldliness and religious interpretation is solved in such poem.¹⁶

Diction of "Tuhan" (God) as a word representing Allah in Ibramsyah's poems, according to Hermawan, seems more comfortable to use. In the collection of *Badai Gurun*, the word God is mentioned more (52 times, not including his derivatives like You and His) than the word of Allah which is only 9 times. This is because the poet is dealing with the Active, who turns to the creature, while calling Allah feels heavy for him. The poet feels there is a sacred "kabut" (fog) of secrecy. That is the word that often makes him crazy [drunk /sakt], holding back screams with tears hanging. With more diction of God (not Allah) the poet postpones to the moment of "keallahan" (godhead) so that he is not "conquered" completely [baqa'] by the divine power.¹⁷

In relation to the above statement, Sufi literature generally reveals the stages (*maqâm*, plural *maqâmat*) and mental or spiritual circumstances (*hâl*, plural *ahwâl*) which is the inner experience of the Sufis in the course of *sulûk* (spiritual path). The spiritual path in the science of Sufism was developed with the aim of bringing a *salik* to reach an inner enlightenment or secret union with the One, explaining that the basis of Sufism is essentially monotheism. If one's heart is enlightened, then it is possible to obtain (*maqâm*) *fana'* (secret union with the One or the Essential), and then it continues to experience the return of the soul into *baqa'* (the eternal ambience). It does not mean that a *faqir salik* (not owning and hoping for anything except God) has no concern for those other than Him-the surrounding world, the

¹⁶ Annemarie Schimmel, *Dimensi Mistik dalam Islam*, (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2000), pp. 365-366.

¹⁷ Sainul Hermawan, *Maitibi Sastra Kalimantan Selatan 2008-2011*, p. 90.

world and the other- but all of that is seen with the eyes of the heart that are attached to Him alone.¹⁸

FAKIR

Jangan ikuti aku
yang tak punya rumus
atribut dan kepangkatan
karena jalanku kuburan adat
mematah kebiasaan

Aku hidup di tangan anugerah
hatiku angin Sulaiman
yang membaca keadaan
juga aku tongkat Daud
yang kau lihat kerajaannya bertahan
padahal tongkat ditopang mayat

Bila telapak tangan membalik
di situ lahanku
gerak rodaku tanpa daya
karena makan disuapi Tuhan

Bila beduk surau berbunyi
atau lonceng gereja
jemaat buru-buru pergi
aku tak ke mana
karena dahiku di gerbang-Nya

Ketika fajar
orang-orang berebut pasar
mengapa si fakir harus bangkit
bila celenganku di pintu langit

Tambahan, 16 Juni 2006

Abdul Hadi himself in the introduction of *Badai Gurun* mentioned that the themes of the Ibramsyah poems in this collection are various from love, loneliness, household problem, religion, even social criticism.¹⁹ It can also explain that one of the important features inherent in the works of a mystical poet is the phrases containing paradox. As Hadi says, through a paradox, the poet insults those who seek beauty and truth outward from the divine truth itself. It is in this context that the wrath of Ibramsyah, according to Hadi, is understandable:

Syahdan, dari riwayat terpercaya
Muhammad menyerahkan warisan
kepada ulama. Sungguh, kepada ulama!

¹⁸ Abdul Hadi W.M., *Hermeneutika, Estetika, dan Religiusitas*, pp. 111 & 136-137.

¹⁹ Abdul Hadi W.M., "Nada Keras dan Garang Sajak-sajak Ibramsyah" in Ibramsyah Amandit, *Badai Gurun dalam Darah*, p. vi.

Semenjak itu ulama iman Nabi
semenjak itu ulama akal Nabi
semenjak itu ulama budi Nabi
semenjak itu ulama-umara, panglima, ahli agama iman Nabi

...
Duhai pewaris Nabi, sunnatullah berlaku:
musibah bagi yang kehilangan kunci dunia
atau bagi sekadar fasih baca doa-doa!²⁰

Moreover, according to Soebely, although Ibramsyah's poems are close to the question of tradition with appreciation as "orang desa" (villagers), it does not mean that he is unable to reach universal turmoil. Ibramsyah, in this case, for example, captures the mechanistic life of the workers of the timber companies in the poem "Jelapat" (2004), the other side of Kusni Kasdut's death in front of firing squads in the poem "Makam Kusni Kasdut" (1980), even the blood and spills tears until the turn of the President of the United States and his political perspectives in poems "Bosnia" (1993) and "Panen" (1993).²¹

In this context, the poet Micky Hidayat commented on Ibramsyah's intellectual:

A poet with a religious spirit certainly realizes that the symptoms seen by these eyes and minds-the reality of nature and cultural reality-are merely expressions of birth or symbols of a more essential reality. This outward phenomenon is the address (verse) of God, which must be read and lived intensely.

.....
.....

Observing the religious poems of Ibramsyah Amandit in this *Badai Gurun dalam Darah* has given me another freshness. Interesting impression not only in the ability of the poet to present the image or exotic pronunciation that stimulates the responsiveness, both visually and audibly, but especially in the thematic (religious) tendencies that appear as the building of the poetic world itself, so that his poetry can create full awareness of meaning of life.²²

As in its wider context, Sufi poem not only presents esoteric problems. This, for example, according to Abdul Hadi, can be seen in the work of Sa'di (13th-century Persian poet). In his work *Bustan* and *Gulistan*, Sa'di voiced social, political and governance matters in relation to morality and spirituality. Furthermore, Sufi writers not only commonly conveyed their social criticism subtly, but also sharply dived to the heart of the matter-as well as the works of Rumi (Jalaluddin Rumi). Even in the modern context, Sufism does not deal only with spiritual matters, as often accused by reformers and secularists. A more positive view shows that Sufism can counter

²⁰ See Ibramsyah Amandit, *Badai Gurun dalam Darah*, p. viii.

²¹ Burhanuddin Soebely, "4 Kaki di Bawah Tanah" in Ibramsyah Amandit, *Badai Gurun dalam Darah*, p. 123.

²² Micky Hidayat, "Eksotisme Kerinduan Spiritual Ibramsyah Amandit" in Ibramsyah Amandit, *Badai Gurun dalam Darah*, p. 133.

alienation and the loss of spiritual consciousness as characteristic of urban modern society.²³

Such are some brief accounts of Ibramsyah's poems in the collection of *Badai Gurun* and their connection with Sufism extensively. Then, the author will analyze his works which have a symbolic content within the aesthetic framework of Sufism.

The Review of Sufism Aesthetic

In addition to aspects relating to imagination and cosmology, spiritual experiences and symbols are important in the aesthetic view of the Sufis. For that, the author needs to explain in advance how the world of imaginary and cosmology of Sufi, before entering on the spiritual experience expressed through their symbolic artwork.

1. Cosmology dan Imagination

According to the Sufis, the universe was created according to the will of God and is a mirror of His presence. Everything other than God is the cosmos, yet everything that is in the cosmos has the form and properties of the divine nature. Chittick called it "the universe is He / not He". According to Ibn 'Arabi, the nature of "Him" is not clearly understood through imagination.²⁴

Segala cerap nur cahaya rohani
adalah dari ilmu tahu milik-Nya

Segala yakin batu-batu keyakinan
esa dari Zat, Sifat, Asma dan Af'al-Nya

Segala rupa tubuh lahir dan batin
ialah wujud *Hua* Kediaan

Segala apa pun milik pengakuan
adalah *tariqul-asrar*: jalan kerahasiaan
bayang-bayang cermin-Nya pula

(The poem "Selalu Dia", 2006)

In this poem, Ibramsyah declares that whatever form of confession is "jalan kerahasiaan" (the way of secrecy), whether it is related to *ma'rifat Allah*, belief in the unity of Allah (substance, nature, *asma* and *af'al*), *dhikr Allah* (*lâ ilâha illâ huwa*), basically all are just shadows of mirror of God. If the treasury of Sufi cosmology has been explored, term of *bayang-bayang* (shadows) has its own meaning.

The shadows are among the various images of how Ibn 'Arabi describes the contradictory situation of "Him / not Him" as mentioned above. Using the metaphor of "shadows" (*zhill*), Ibn 'Arabi expressed his view that "the universe is the shadow of the Absolute." As the shadow of the Absolute, the universe is one of His

²³ See Abdul Hadi W.M., *Kembali ke Akar Kembali ke Sumber: Esai-esai Sastra Profetik dan Sufistik*, (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1999), pp. 198 & 200; also Aprinus Salam, *Oposisi Sastra Sufi*, p. 148.

²⁴ See William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Tuhan Sejati dan Tuhan-tuhan Palsu*, (Yogyakarta: Qalam, 2001), pp. 311-317.

forms, but at a level below His level. Al-Qashani, as the interpreter of Ibn 'Arabi, makes it clear that "the shadows" are not directly biased in the cosmos, but on the archetypes of everything. Thus nature has manifested itself at a higher level than we consider to be generally the starting point of its manifestation. When the shadow of the Absolute refracts to these archetypes, nature is born, though those archetypes are essentially "containers of natural appearance" and not "nature" itself.²⁵

Ibn 'Arabi's doctrine of the imaginary world rests on the Qur'an and Hadith, without abandoning the meaning of their *harfiyah*. The imaginary world is a realm that has two sides at once; it is the realm between that which is between the physical and the spiritual realms, so that it has a likeness to both nature as well as different. Its reality in macrocosm is nature *barzakh*, whereas in microcosm (human) is similar to position of *nafs* (soul) -because in view of Sufi, study of soul and cosmology are not separated. Only people with high spiritual qualities can enter this imaginary realm. For the common people, the imaginary world can only be experienced through dreams.²⁶

Di ruang-ruang tunggu
ke bilik-Mu jua aku bertamu

Ke mana pun lariku
di napas-Mu dadaku

Apa pun obrolanku
bibir-Mu bercumbu lidahku

Jika aku lelap tertidur
ajaklah mimpiku berlibur

Ya, Tuhan; bila aku mayat
Engkau yang pertama melayat

(The poem "Ya, Tuhan", 1993)

2. Spiritual Experience and Symbols

Spiritual experience itself is a form of witness (*mushabadah*) of the appearance of God in the realm of *syahâdah*. To describe the spiritual experience is usually used symbolic forms (*tamsil*). Mystical drunkenness, for example, is described as wine; the journey up from the beginning to the next stage in Sufism is summed up as a journey up the hill to meet the Beloved, sometimes also imparted through aviation-as in the *Mantiq al-Thayr* by Aththar.²⁷

Ke langit terlempar di awang
mega-mega bukan bingkai melayang

²⁵ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufisme: Samudra Makrifat Ibn 'Arabi*, (Bandung: Mizan, 2015), pp. 103 & 105.

²⁶ Mujiburrahman, *Agama, Media dan Imajinasi: Pandangan Sufisme dan Ilmu Sosial Kontemporer*, (Banjarmasin: Antasari Press, 2015), p. 6. See also William C. Chittick, *Kosmologi Islam dan Dunia Modern: Relevansi Ilmu-ilmu Intelektualisme Islam*, (Bandung: Mizan Publika, 2010), p. 110.

²⁷ Abdul Hadi W.M., *Hermeneutika, Estetika, dan Religiusitas*, p. 111.

sayap-Mu padaku belum hilang

(The poem "Puisi Kasih", 1993)

Seseorang jatuh terkapar
dikait tangkai mawar
dan aroma keringatnya

Di kelopak; hinggap wewangi dunia
seribu ragam jadi yakut
bibir delima dan senyum nilam

Ketika perahu Nuh karam
Tuhan telah berfirman;
-- Jaga kemudimu!

(The poem "Mawar", 1993)

Roh-roh orang mati bicara
tentang Ibu Pantas
dan tebusan *sirham*—*sirr* hamba

Tapi bagaimana bisa;
ia pemabuk gila
lagi pula tak kau bahas soal batas
tepiian cinta wilayah napas
batas ombak dengan lautan lepas

Jadi di mana garis ketetapan itu
pemisah di dengan Tuhannya?

(The poem "Kaidah-kaidah, 1993)

In other statements, Ibramsyah also mentions this state (*hâl*) as a confusion, or farther in the state of *fana'* (mortal) and *baqa'* (eternal). This is, for example, as stated in the following "Pelabuhan" and "Maklumat" poems:

PELABUHAN

Ketika ngungun waktu
berantakan tangga datu-datu
dalam kabur legenda
gugur di tanah uluh
peristiwa demi peristiwa
menyuluh
Apa ia mengerti?

Kala subuh datang
kaki pertama diinjakkan
kehidupan dihembuskan
embun tergoncang

kapal dan *klotok* merapat
barang dibongkar diangkat
dari mana ke mana
Apa ia mengerti?

Bahkan; sejak pisang bertandan
baru keringat kuli bercucuran
setiap subuh di sawah dan pelabuhan
Ia tetap tidak mengerti

Pelabuhan, pelabuhan;
apa yang bisa kau pahami
padahal engkau tidak mengalami

Tamban, Oktober 1995

MAKLUMAT

Badai gurun dalam darah;
Ia petir terbang yang bertasbih
bukan mimpi:
Keinginannya mendobrak benteng syahadat
bukan sekedar milik keyakinan

Ia ingin lebih
ingin luluh
lebur dalam unsur
punah dalam La ilaha illa Allah
Muhammad Rasul Allah

Tamban, 15 April 1993

In the poem "Maklumat", Ibramsyah's metaphor is very distinctive, through the phrase "Badai Gurun dalam Darah" or "Petir Terbang yang Bertasbih". This is like referring to the condition of dhikr, when the heart pumps the blood very fast. In fact, when a *salik* recites slowly dhikr fervently, he will get an abundance that gradually takes away the selfishness and exudes the qualities of God in his heart. According to the Sufis, dhikr is a total and complete concern for God, he ignores everything other than God. Sheikh Javad Nurbakhsy said, dhikr is the light for the darkness of the heart. When the light of dhikr illuminates it, the heart becomes resurrected and slowly takes over the dhikr of the tongue, making dhikr Allah reigns in the heart.²⁸ In an anecdote (short story) narrated, Abdullah al-Jurairy recounts that among his disciples there was a man who always dhikr by saying "Allah, Allah." One

²⁸ Syekh Javad Nurbakhsy, *Belajar Bertasawuf: Mengerti Makna dan Mengamalkan Zikir, Tafakur, Muraqabah, Muhasabah, dan Wirid*, (Jakarta: Zaman, 2016), p. 54.

day, there was an accident, a branch of a tree broke and hit the man's head. His head broke and the blood flowed to the ground forming the words "Allah, Allah".²⁹

While “pelabuhan”, “kapal” or “perahu” (*kelotok*, Banjar language) - as in the poem "Pelabuhan" - is a similar imagery used by Hamzah Fansuri:

Kenali dirimu hai anak dagang
Jadikan *markab* tempat berpulang
Kemudi tinggal jangan kau goyang
Supaya dapat dekat kau pulang
.....
Jika hendak engkau menjeling sarang/ sawang
Ingat-ingat akan hujung karang
Jabat kemudi jangan kau mamang
Supaya betul ke bandar datang

Anak mu'allim tahu akan jalan
Da'im berlayar di laut nyaman
Markab-mu tiada berpapan
Olehnya itu tiada berlawan³⁰

With reference to the poem of Fansuri above, it is also noted on the poem “Bagai Perahu” (2006), “*Kusimak esensi yang hakiki/ segala sesuatu sesungguhnya/ guna bernaktu-waktu dengan-Nya/ Aduh; payah juga perahu dikayuh/ sebelum terlibat di pelabuhan/ sebelum tiba-tiba diikatkan/ di poros cinta-Nya*”; or on the poem “Doa di Kuala” (1996) “*Kekalkan, kekalkan .../ pemukim di kuala; Tuhan Maha Tabu/ dahulu aku baut berputar dalam mata bor waktu/ sekarang paku tidur dininabobokan sebuah palu/ Kekalkan, kekalkan .../ seribu tahun siap kutunggu/ aku tahu buih bermain di ombak-Mu/ Aku tahu, aku tahu/ Kekalkan aku di situ/ Amin.*”

In this case, it refers to a common form of symbolization (in the context of a Sufi poem) about the nature of *laut* (the sea), *buih* (froth) and *ombak* (waves), as well as boats.³¹ The parable of *laut*, Hadi said, is used to describe the journey of a Sufi to the One. In addition, the parable of *laut* is also used to describe the Sufi metaphysical teachings on the ranks (hierarchy) of being. The parable of *perahu*, as well as the parable of *kayu* (wooden), is used to give the physical self-ornament that is sailing towards its spiritual self. As for *laut*, it denotes unity, infinitude, and absoluteness of God's Being or His Knowledge.

Ibramsyah also labels himself as ‘petir terbang’ (the wasted lightning). In his earlier poem “Maklumat”, he declares himself to be a wasting, exalted glow, who wants to melt (*fana*) and dissolve (*baqa*) in the testimony. In the poem “Petir Terbang” (2006/2008) he continues: “*Di mata bor waktu ia bersimpul/ memutari daban bebayangan*”. Previously, in the poem “Doa di Kuala”, he claimed to be a rotating bolt (keep moving and searching) in the drill bit of time. Now he claims to have kneeled, resigned in the course of time, knowing that the nature of himself and his knowledge is only a shadow, as a branch (part) of a whole tree. The image of the tree itself is

²⁹ Imam al-Qusyairi an-Naisaburi, *Risalah Qusyairiyah, Induk Ilmu Tasawuf*, (Surabaya: Risalah Gusti, 2014), p. 267.

³⁰ Abdul Hadi W.M., *Tasawuf yang Tertindas*, p. 292.

³¹ Ibid., p. 290.

part of the treasures of Sufism. Ibn 'Arabi calls this universe (cosmos) entirely the Tree (*shajārat al-kauniyyah* or *shajārat al-wujūd*) growing from the word seed (kata) Kun. God is the root and we (beings) are branches of the root. The names of God are attached to this tree, and we are identical with the fruit.³²

From “*memutari dahan bebayangan*”, it continues “*sese kali ke kelopak mawar/ sebelum menggilir kebun melati*”. In the tradition of Sufism-rhyme, rose or jasmine, is a symbol of the majesty (and holiness) of God. The divine presence is as sparkly as an amazing red rose, which attracts the attention of lovers.³³ Ibramsyah concludes this poem with verse: “*Seperti petir terbang yang bertasbih* (this refers to a similar sentence in the [second array] of poem “Maklumat”)/ *ke mana lagi ia berlari/ ke dalam diri/ ke jauh tapi dekat sekali?* (this refers to the sentence *punah dalam La ilaha illa Allah/ Muhammad Rasul Allah*)”.

Ibramsyah also mentions the inspiration of his Sufi poems are transcendental. This is for instance contained in the following two poems:

Kubuang sebuah nama
ia menghela pemiliknya
hilang ke azali asal kata
napas puisi belum meragi
jiwa juga belum bernyanyi

Dalam tiga detik yang mengalir
-- puisi lahir
tiga detik ...
bila Tuhan berbisik
(Poem “Tiga Detik”, 2006)

Dan pada waktu ketetapannya
malam bagai didera sabda
Suara *yaasin* dan doa
bersanding sayang-sayap cahaya
keluar rumah-jasadnya
(Poem “Stempel”, 2008)

The momentum of spiritual experience is sometimes short, and it is commonly referred to as *hāl*.³⁴ This according to Ibramsyah can take place in just three seconds, and it is possible “*bila Tuhan berbisik*”. This temporary or short nature is similar to the nature of *petir* (lightning), which is a natural phenomenon of a momentary glare that dazzles in the cloudy sky. Al-Ghazali states, if a person has been established in a *maqām* (position), he will gain a certain feeling that is *hāl*, which seems to change quickly.³⁵ At such a time, according to Ibramsyah, the wings of light come out of the house of his body. The wing refers to the body part of the bird that makes it fly by flapping it. Bird itself is the imagery of the human spirit who always

³² See Ibnu 'Arabi, *Misteri Kun: Syajaratul-Kaun*, (Surabaya: Risalah Gusti, 2005), pp. 4-6; also Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, p. 278.

³³ Annemarie Schimmel, *Dimensi Mistik dalam Islam*, p. 379.

³⁴ See this meaning further (*hāl*) in Media Zainul Bahri, *Menembus Tirai Kesendirian-Nya: Mengurai Maqām dan Ahwāl dalam Tradisi Sufi*, (Jakarta: Prenada, 2005), p. 37.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

restlessly longing to return to his eternal home, the nature of lahut. Like birds, the soul flaps its wings to fly into the sky of the essence, the place of eternal light.³⁶

Thus are some symbolic meanings and interrelationships of meaning in the poems of Ibramsyah Amandit. The symbols themselves are a form of the poet's spiritual experience with respect to his divine consciousness.

Conclusion

Ibramsyah Amandit is a poet from South Kalimantan whose poems, according to the observers, of the religious nuances of Sufism. A deep awareness of the nature of self and divinity made him acquainted with the tradition of Sufism, so he had decided to stop writing poetry to delve deeper into this teaching. He studied to the known tasawuf teachers (in South Kalimantan), and practiced his own seclusion (from his favorite literary world) for up to nine years, until finally decided to write again with a new awareness. His poems not only reflect cosmological and divine consciousness, but also represent symbols that are part of the traditions of the Sufi poetic tradition. In addition to common symbols, he also uses some imagery (symbols) that are local or his distinctive personality.

³⁶ See also Abdul Hadi W.M., *Tasawuf yang Tertindas*, pp. 276 & 285.

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