

Available at:

<http://ejournal.unida.gontor.ac.id/index.php/tsaqafah>

<https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v20i1.10840>

ISSN: 1411-6334
e-ISSN: 2460-0070
TSAQAFAH
Jurnal Peradaban Islam

Serat Wulangreh: Islamization In Java Through Cultural Approach

Mustopa

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Syekh Nurjati, Cirebon, 45132, Jawa Barat, Indonesia
Email: mustopa@iainsyekhnrjati.ac.id

Moh In'ami

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kudus, Kudus, 69342, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia
Email: mohinami@iainkudus.ac.id

Minkhatul Maula

Al Mustofa Internasional University, Qom, 37137-44003, Iran
Email: minkhatulmaulah11@gmail.com

Abstract

Pakubuwana IV combined Islamic teaching and Javanese culture on Serat Wulangreh without eliminating the core value of Islamic teaching its result. Pakubuwana IV used the Javanese language as a communication tool to distribute his message of advice through The Macapat song. Substantially, Wulangreh is Islamic teaching taken from The Al-Quran and Hadith which cover the aspects of divinity, law, ethics, virtue, and social relationship aspect. Although Serat Wulangreh employs local language and culture, it displays identifiable pure Islamic teaching. The teachings on Wulangreh are the forms of acculturation of Islam and Javanese culture. They are applicable in a pluralistic society as a form of multiculturalism emphasizing equality and equity within a diverse and dynamic community (tribes, ethnicities, cultures, and religious beliefs).

Keywords: Serat Wulangreh, Islamization, Cultural Approach

Abstrak

Pakubuwana IV menggabungkan ajaran Islam dan budaya Jawa pada Serat Wulangreh tanpa menghilangkan nilai inti ajaran Islam pada hasilnya. Pakubuwana IV menggunakan bahasa Jawa sebagai alat komunikasi untuk menyebarkan pesan nasihatnya melalui lagu Macapat. Secara substansial, Wulangreh adalah ajaran Islam yang diambil dari Al-Quran dan Hadis yang mencakup aspek ketuhanan, hukum, etika, kebajikan, dan aspek hubungan sosial. Meskipun Serat Wulangreh menggunakan bahasa dan budaya lokal, ia menampilkan ajaran Islam murni yang dapat diidentifikasi. Ajaran tentang Wulangreh

merupakan bentuk akulturasi Islam dan budaya Jawa. Mereka berlaku dalam masyarakat majemuk sebagai bentuk multi-kulturalisme yang menekankan kesetaraan dan kesetaraan dalam komunitas yang beragama dan dinamis (suku, etnis, budaya, dan kepercayaan agama).

Kata Kunci: Serat Wulangreh, Islamisasi, Pendekatan Kultural.

Introduction

Referring to Azyumardi Azra's statement, Islam in Indonesia has historically received cultural accommodation. This occurs because Islam as a religion has contributed more norms and rules regarding life when compared to other religions. The relationship between Islam and culture¹ has produced at least two things, it is Islam as a socio-cultural concept (great tradition) and Islam as a cultural reality (little tradition, local tradition, and Islamicate).² One of the processes of cultural dissemination in which people adopt aspects of foreign culture is called acculturation.³

Clifford Geertz elaborates on religion as a cultural system since religion comprises a set of knowledge systems of beliefs, norms, and values that can't be separated from one another as they control and support each other. The knowledge system, beliefs, norms, and values cognitively conceived in religion, have only taken forms as abstract ideas; therefore need to be executed in a more concrete manifestation.⁴

Furthermore, Geertz explores the concepts of religion and culture in more detail and with in-depth descriptions as described by the British anthropologist Gilbert Ryle. Although culture tends to have a variety of meanings from anthropologists, yet the real keyword is meaning or significance. Geertz said that cultural analysis is not an experimental science that seeks rule, but an interpretive science that seeks meaning. Two of his well-known theoretical essays are: first, explaining his interpretive anthropology in general terms; second, directing him specifically to religion. It will then be possible to see a sample of where Geertz applied his perspective to actual religions.⁵

¹ B. Tibi, *Islam between Culture and Politics* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

² Azyumardi Azra, *Konteks Berteologi Di Indonesia: Pengalaman Islam* (Paramadina, 1999).

³ Koentjaraningrat, *Pengantar Ilmu Antropologi, Edisi Revisi* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2009).

⁴ Clifford Geertz, "Religion as A Cultural System," in *Anthropological Approaches to The Study of Religion* (Routledge, 1966).

⁵ V. Fitria, "Interpretasi Budaya Clifford Geertz: Agama Sebagai Sistem Budaya," *Sosiologi Reflektif*, 7, no. 1 (2012): 57–64; C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Vol. 5019) (Basic Books, 1973).

Geertz's theory describing that religion is part of cultural systems means that religion is used as guidance of interpretation framework for their acts.⁶ Religion is a system of symbols that serves to reinforce a strong and deep state of mind and motivation in humans by formulating general conceptions of existence and how to actualize those points until they move humans to act upon them.⁷

In his book *The Interpretation of Culture* chapter 4, Geertz wrote a subheading that stated *Religion as a Cultural System*. For Sutiyono, this statement displays that religious symbols formulate a fundamental congruence with particular types of life.⁸ This then created syntheses in the form of community ethos, traditions, aesthetics, and ideas appearing as forms of his views.

By the time Islam was spread across Java, it was subsequently followed by its literature works. Some of them were still written in Arabic while the rest were already translated and transliterated into the Malay language – the alphabets used at that time were called *Pegon* (Arabic-Malay alphabets).⁹ These works of Islamic literature brought a new genre of Javanese literature in the terms that they blended Javanese culture with Islamic teachings.¹⁰

During those years, the principles of Islam existed in Arabic Literature and Javanese Arabic (*Pegon*) literature, were composed into Javanese language, and writing to be then integrated with Javanese culture/thoughts. This acculturation or combination of Islamic and Javanese elements has led to new works such as *Serat Centhini* written by three poets, there are Yasadipura II (d. 1820), Ranggasutrasna, and R Ng Sastradipura, *Serat Wulangreh* written by Pakubuwana IV (d. 1820), *Serat Wedhatama* written by Mangkunegara IV (w.1881), and others.¹¹

Meanwhile, Simuh named the Javanese literature that brought together Islamic teachings with Javanese traditions, be they in the

⁶ J. Murphy, "Beyond 'Religion' and 'Spirituality': Extending A 'Meaning Systems' Approach to Explore Lived Religion," *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*, 39, no. 1 (2017): 1–26.

⁷ C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Book. Inc. Publishers, 1977).

⁸ Sutiyono, *Benturan Budaya Islam: Puritan Dan Sinkretis* (Jakarta: PT Kompas Media Nusantara, 2010).

⁹ M. Murtadlo, "Three Writers of Arabic Texts in Yogyakarta," *Heritage of Nusantara: International Journal of Religious Literature and Heritage* 3, no. 1 (2014): 107–28.

¹⁰ Poerbatjaraka, *Kepustakaan Djawa* (Jakarta: Penerbit Djambatan, 1952).

¹¹ Simuh, *Sufisme Jawa: Transformasi Tasawuf Islam Ke Mistik Jawa* (Yayasan Bentang Budaya, 1995).

form of *primbon*, *serat suluk*, or *wirid* as the Islam *Kejawen* literature.¹²

During the Mataram kingdom era, literature works, and literature of Islam *Kejawen* grew rapidly. The king and the rulers in the court were very enthusiastic about bringing together Javanese traditions with principles of Islamic teachings.¹³

Among those Islamic-Javanese literary works, *Serat Wulangreh* was chosen as the object of this research. The basis for the selection was because the advice and guidance conceived within this work are very well-known among the Javanese people. In addition, *Serat Wulangreh* was written at a time of the golden age of Javanese literary development. This work was written by Kanjeng Susuhunan Pakubuwana IV (1768-1820).

Linguistically, Prawiroatmodjo defines the Javanese words *serat* as letter or writing, *wulang* means lesson or teaching,¹⁴ and *reh* added by Andi Harsono means attitude.¹⁵ To summarize, *Serat Wulangreh* can be interpreted as writing about lessons of attitude. . On the other hand, the translator team of *Serat Wulangreh* defines the word *serat* as a book or essay, *wulang* as teachings, and *reh* as government. *Serat Wulangreh* by Pakubuwana IV was chosen based on the consideration that this work contains moral and divine messages.¹⁶

The Pigeaud, in terms of *Wulangreh* content, classified this work of Pakubuwana IV into *moralistic literature influenced by Islam*. This is supported by the fact that this work conceived Islamic values and principles taken from al-Quran for daily practices.¹⁷

Content/ Discussion

A. Biography and Works of Pakubuwana IV

Pakubuwana was a title for the king of the Surakarta Sunanate which is still preserved today. Pakubuwana IV was a title given after the son of Pakubuwana III ascended the throne to become king. When he

¹² Simuh, *Mistik Islam Mistik Islam Kejawen Raden Ngabehi Ranggawarsita: Suatu Studi Terhadap Serat Wirid Hidayat Jati* (Jakarta: UI Press, 1988).

¹³ Raka Revolta, *Konflik Berdarah Di Tanah Jawa: Kisah Para Pemberontak Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Bio Pustaka, 2008); Edhie Wuryantoro, *Sejarah Nasional Dan Umum* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1996).

¹⁴ S. Prawiroatmodjo, *Bausastra Jawa Indonesia Jilid II* (Jakarta: CV Haji Masagung, 1994).

¹⁵ Andi Harsono, *Tafsir Ajaran Serat Wulangreh* (Pura Pustaka, 2005).

¹⁶ Abdullah Ciptoprawiro, *Filsafat Jawa* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1986).

¹⁷ Theodore Pigeaud, *Literature of Java, Vol.1* (Leiden: The Hague Martinus Nyhoff, 1967).

was a child, Pakubuwana IV was named Raden Mas Gusti Sumbadya. Pakubuwana IV was born as the 17th son on Thursday *Wage* at ten o'clock in the evening on 18 *Rabiul Akhir*, *wuku Watugunung*, *Windu Segara* in *Je* 1694 (same as 1694 H), or to coincide with September 2, 1768.¹⁸

R.M. Gusti Sumbadya's mother was Kanjeng Ratu Kencana. She was an empress and a daughter of Raden Tumenggung Wirareja, an *abdi dalem* (courtier) at *Gedhong Tengen*. He was addressed as Ki Jagaswara.¹⁹ The empress family tree (from the mother's side) was connected to *Inggang Sinuwun Kanjeng Sultan Demak I* or Syah Alam Akbar.²⁰

Pakubuwana IV was crowned as king on Monday (*Pahing*) 28 (*Besar*) 1714 *Je* or to coincide with 29 September 1788 with the title *Sinuhun Kanjeng Susuhunan Prabu Amangkurat Jawa Senapati Ing Ngalaga Abdurrahman Sayidin Panatagama Khalifatullah Inggang Kaping IV Ing Negari Surakarta Hadiningrat*.²¹

In *Babad KGPAA Mangkunegara I* (Pangeran Sambernyawa) mentioned that his title was *Inggang Sinuhun Kanjeng Susuhunan Paku Buwana Kaping IV Senapati Ing Nagalaga Ngabdurakhman Sayidin Panatagama Kalifatullah Ing Surakarta*.²² The given title appreciated Pakubuwana IV as a devoted king to his religion. It was mentioned also that he was a gallant and handsome king.²³ He was also addressed as *Sayidin Panatagama* (Ruller who is obliged to handle religious affairs) for he was pious and loved to preach Islamic teachings in Surakarta.

As stated by Darusuprpto, Pakubuwana IV passed away on Monday (*Pahing*), the 1st of October 1820, or to coincide with 25 (*Besar*) *Alip* 1747, *sinengkalan Swara Suci Sabda Raja*, because of the illness he had suffered previously. The body of Kanjeng Susuhunan Pakubuwana IV was buried at Pajimatan Imogiri Kadaton Kasuargan.²⁴

¹⁸ Pakubuwana IV, *Serat Wulangreh* (Semarang: Dahara Prize, 1991); Harsono, *Tafsir Ajaran Serat Wulangreh*.

¹⁹ Darusuprpto, *Serat Wulangreh Anggitan Dalem Pakubuwana IV* (Surabaya: CV Jaya Mukti, 1992).

²⁰ Harsono, *Tafsir Ajaran Serat Wulangreh*.

²¹ Harsono.

²² Pakempalan Pengarang Serat ing Mangkunegaran, *Babad KGPAA Mangkunegara I (Pangeran Sambernyawa)* (Surakarta: Yayasan Mangadeg, 1993).

²³ Darusuprpto, *Serat Wulangreh Anggitan Dalem Pakubuwana IV*.

²⁴ Tim Penerjemah, "Pengantar," in *Pakubuwana IV, Serat Wulangreh* (Semarang: Dahara Prize, 1991).

Aside from being a king, Kanjeng Susuhunan Pakubuwana IV was also known as a poet who had written abundant works of literature. Some of his traceable works were stored in many libraries both local libraries and international libraries. In Leiden, Dutch for example, there are some Kanjeng Susuhunan Pakubuwana IV works related to nobility and morality influenced by Islamic teachings such as *Wulangreh* and *Wulangestri*.²⁵ There are also *Serat Piwulang Dalem Inggang Sinuhun Kanjeng Susuhunan Pakubuwana Kaping IV Maringi Pusaka Wangkingan Kaliyan Waos Dhumateng Para Putra Dalem Kakung Putri* in the library of Sono Pustoko kraton Surakarta. Meanwhile, *Serat Piwulang Putri*, *Serat Bratasunu*, *Serat Wulang Tatakrama*, and *Serat Wulang Sunu* were stored in the library of Sono Pustoko Kraton Surakarta. In the library of Radya Pustaka Sri Wedari Solo, there are *Serat Bratahutama*, *Serat Cipto Waskito*, *Serat Nawala Pradata*, *Serat Sasana Prabu*, *Panji Dhadhap*, *Panji Sekar*, *Panji Raras*, *Panji Blitar*, *Serat Manikmaya*. Finally, *Serat Piwulang Putra* and *Serat Wulangreh* were safely stored in the library of Rekso Pustoko Kraton Mangkunegera Surakarta. This list was never meant to limit the number of Pakubuwono IV traceable works; hence the list might continue and can be revealed by other researchers in another research.

B. The Significance of Serat Wulangreh

Komarudin Hidayat stated that to understand a text we shall assume a dynamic interaction between the socio-psychological variables appearing in the world of the author and the reader. Text is part of a living discourse; in consequence, there will always be a social-psychological chain that needs to be considered by the reader behind it.²⁶

At that time, the Mataram kingdom was in a war. Some parts of Mataram's territory were seized by the Dutch government and other European nations. This condition resulted in prolonged suffering for the people. The people suffered from the actions and cruelty of the oppressors. For example, in 1812, the colonial government established a small kingdom, Pakualaman in the Yogyakarta sultanate.²⁷

²⁵ Pigeaud, *Literature of Java*, Vol.1.

²⁶ Komarudin Hidayat, *Memahami Bahasa Agama: Sebuah Kajian Hermeneutika* (Bandung: Mizan, 2011).

²⁷ Simuh, *Mistik Islam Mistik Islam Kejawen Raden Ngabehi Ranggawarsita: Suatu Studi Terhadap Serat Wirid Hidayat Jati*.

On the other hand, Ricklefs stated that the Dutch government took advantage of the quarrels between Pakubuwana IV and Mangkunegara I.²⁸ The Dutch snatched the two kingdoms and in November 1790, Pakubuwana IV was forced to sign an agreement with the Prince of Mangkunegara I and Jan Greeve – a Dutch Governor, to legally divide important territory for each of the parties in Central Java.

The uncertain condition of the kingdom led to stagnation in economic growth and worsened social welfare. Under such conditions, Pakubuwana IV and several court poets decided to write advice through their writings. This was meant to spread messages for Javanese people hoping they could understand that life will never be free from challenges and obstacles. The writings taught the people to hold on to their faith firmly and always be kind (maintain a noble character). Thus, the sorrow and the suffering of the people would be slightly relieved.

As a king, G Moedjanto identified Pakubuwana IV as the delegated ruler of *Hyang Maha Agung*. A king should uphold law reinforcement and justice, in consequence, everyone was obliged to obey him and whoever dared to oppose the king's orders would mean that he dared to oppose God's will. The social conditions occurring at that time opened opportunities for the citizens, supporters, and even courtiers to commit treason or disobey Pakubuwana IV. However, all these parties were very aware of their obligation to defend the country through their obedience to the king (this was vital for him to be able to lead and maintain his authority). This kind of obedience was named *ndherek kersa dalem* which means to continuously follow the king's will.²⁹

The political system of a kingdom is often called patrimonial or monarchy, in which case the king is the ruler and protector just like a father in a family. The king was considered to hold full authority to decide anything, and everyone tried their best to obey him. In turn, the courtiers will often say *ndherek ngarsa dalem* (it's up to the king's will).³⁰

A year after being crowned as a king in Surakarta, Pakubuwana IV appointed his close acquaintances for strategist positions. They

²⁸ M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1200 Third Edition* (Jakarta: Serambi Ilmu Semesta, 2001).

²⁹ G. Moejanto, *Konsep Kekuasaan Jawa: Penerapannya Oleh Raja-Raja Mataram* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kanisius, 1987).

³⁰ Suwardi Endaswara, *Falsafah Hidup Jawa: Menggali Mutiara Kebijakan Dari Intisari Filsafat Kejawaen* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Cakrawala, 2018).

were religious leaders who urged the king of Surakarta to grow their kingdom's territory and authority by integrating all parts of Java under his government.³¹ Those advisors, according to Hamka, were mostly Arabs who tried to purify the religious teachings.³² They did not only preach their messages over court power but they also recruited native Javanese to deliver Islam.

Related to the late king's policy, Yasadipura II gave harsh criticism to it as well as to his political acts. He then expressed it in his works *Serat Wicara keras* and *Babad Pakepung*. Psychologically, Pakubuwana IV when he was crowned as a king was immature due to his young age. For that reason, Pakubuwana IV sought support from the local leaders to reclaim the Surakarta area which was handed over to the Yogyakarta Sultanate as the result of the Gianti agreement in 1755. This incident had almost cost Surakarta an attack from the Yogyakarta Sultanate and the Dutch.³³

The Dutch sent hundreds of Madura, Bugis, Malay, and European armies combined with Yogyakarta and Mangkunegara I to besiege Surakarta in 1790. They pressed Pakubuwana IV to remove his advisors before Surakarta suffered from destruction.³⁴

Due to various pressures, Pakubuwana IV was no longer able to protect his advisors. On 26 November 1790, Pakubuwana IV handed over his advisors to the Dutch. They were sent into exile in Ambon. Additionally, Pakubuwana IV asked for forgiveness from the Dutch government, and it was granted. With this incident, the princes and senior officials who opposed the Dutch no longer had any influence in Surakarta. For the Dutch, this incident cut their budget because they didn't have to pay war costs.³⁵

Purwadi saw these events as a loss for Pakubuwana IV. His dreams to restore the Mataram kingdom was running low, some *sinuhuns* had tried to include Pakubuwana IV in the Javanese war together with Pangeran Diponegoro. But the Dutch were too strong, Pakubuwana IV was caught when he was about to retreat on the beach of Parangtritis, he was then thrown into Ambon and died there. After

³¹ Mangkunegaran, *Babad KGPAA Mangkunegara I (Pangeran Sambernyawa)*.

³² Hamka, *Perkembangan Kebatinan Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: PT Bulan Bintang, 1990).

³³ Simuh, *Mistik Islam Mistik Islam Kejawen Raden Ngabehi Ranggawarsita: Suatu Studi Terhadap Serat Wirid Hidayat Jati*.

³⁴ Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1200 Third Edition*.

³⁵ Mangkunegaran, *Babad KGPAA Mangkunegara I (Pangeran Sambernyawa)*; Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1200 Third Edition*.

Pakubuwana IV's death, his name was then changed to *Susuhunan Bangoentopo*. It was suspected that Pakubuwana IV was killed. When they tried to move his skeleton from Ambon to Imogiri (the place for the tombs of the kings), there were gunshot marks on the Sinuhun's skull.³⁶

The author tends to side with Ricklefs's statement because the evidence stated that it was only the advisors of the late king who were sent into exile in Ambon. Aside from that, the Diponegoro war occurred in 1825 – 1830, whilst Pakubuwana died in 1820. There wasn't any clear evidence supporting Purwadi statement.

Ricklefs stated that in 1814 Pakubuwana IV joined with Indian Sepoy soldiers stationed in Java and wanted to destroy the government of the West and Yogyakarta with the coalition.³⁷ But then the coalition was uncovered and nearly 70 Sepoy soldiers were brought to the military court. 17 people were shot dead and the rest were sent back to India chained. Raffles took the decision not to remove Pakubuwana IV as the king, even though he was involved in the case, but only to remove an important prince who was involved in the incident.

The political situation at that time was undesirable for the whole society. However, this condition did not hamper the growth of literature works, especially Javanese literature. If Purwadi stated that literature can only grow if the political situation is steady, if the country is independent, prosperous, safe, and is not oppressed, then for Pakubuwana IV it was another case. The world of literature could thrive even though the state was oppressed at that time.

Referring to Ricklefs's statement, a massive growth in literature at that time happened because the elite saw the political condition in Surakarta as too difficult to control.³⁸ Thus, they maneuvered their effort from politics to literature. At this very moment, Pakubuwana IV wrote *Serat Wulangreh*.

With the support of literary works, Pakubuwana IV hoped that the people of Surakarta would have the strength to endure their lives no matter what and that they would be continuously reminded to seek knowledge, devotion to both God and the king, nobility, etc. The late king wished his people to live a peaceful life, obey the rules and

³⁶ Purwadi, *Falsafah Militer Jawa: Praktek Kemiliteran Ala Kerajaan-Kerajaan Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Araska, 2015).

³⁷ Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1200 Third Edition*.

³⁸ Ricklefs.

avoid all prohibitions so that they would be safe both in here and in the hereafter.

C. Serat *Wulangreh* as Da'wah Media

As previously mentioned, Pakubuwana IV was also addressed as *Sinuhun Kanjeng Susuhunan Prabu Amangkurat Jawa Senopati Ing Ngalaga Abdurrahman Sayidin Panatagama Khalifatullah Inkgang Kaping IV Ing Negari Surakarta Hadiningrat*, the word *Abdurrahman* means servant of God.³⁹ *Panatagama* means a person whose duty is to manage religious affairs, whilst the word *Khalifatullah* means the representative of Allah on earth. To serve his duty, *Serat Wulangreh* was the right tool to be utilized to spread Islamic teachings.

Serat Wulangreh was a very effective tool to convey the messages of Islamic teachings in general as it was written in the Javanese language. In every language and religious tradition, according to Komarudin Hidayat, there are always icons and symbols of Absolute Reality which are then presented in human language. Thus, whenever humans think, speak, and express their thoughts about God and abstract objects, humans would still use expressions that are familiar with the sensory world, figurative language, and secular symbols.

Additionally, Komarudin stated that religious language in historical anthropology is human language but theoretically it contains the *Kalam* (saying) of God which is why it's called *trans-historist*.⁴⁰ In terms of *Serat Wulangreh*, the use of language that is easy to understand is an important requirement in conveying messages of Islamic teachings. Although *Serat Wulangreh* is written in Javanese, it is substantially conveyed Islamic teachings originated from the Quran and Hadith.

Another form of the acculturation between Islam and local culture of Java that can be found in *Serat Wulangreh* is on *tembang macapat*. *Serat Wulangreh* became evidence that acculturation between religion and local culture is an accommodative relationship. Amir Rochyatno viewed *Serat Wulangreh* as *Serat Piwulang* was religious work of literature.⁴¹ Two features, namely religion and culture, are united in the results of literary work. Concerning the discussion of

³⁹ Harsono, *Tafsir Ajaran Serat Wulangreh*.

⁴⁰ Hidayat, *Memahami Bahasa Agama: Sebuah Kajian Hermeneutika*.

⁴¹ Amir Rochkyatno, "Sastra Wulang, Sebuah Genre Di Dalam Sastra Jawa Dan Karya Sastra Lain Sejalan," *Jumantara* 1, no. 1 (2010): 6–26.

the relationship between religion and culture, Eagleton explained it by using the term “literature and ideology.” Both literature and ideology are two separates but interconnected phenomenon. Literature is a medium for conveying or explaining an ideology or other ideas related to one’s beliefs, understanding, or thoughts about something.

Tembang macapat has been very well known among the Javanese people since the influence of Islam on the coast had become increasingly widespread. *Macapat* song is a Javanese literary genre in the form of poetry and is used as a medium of education in the daily life of Javanese people. Many writings of Javanese poets or kings were composed in the form of *tembang macapat*.⁴²

The art of *tembang* plays a very important role because many Javanese books filled with moral, ethical, or moral messages are written in the form of *tembang*, including *Serat Wulangreh*, *Serat Wedhatama*, *Serat Tripama*, *Serat Sanasunu*, etc on which contain the teachings of noble character.⁴³

Name of the Songs on *Serat Wulangreh*:

| No. | Name of <i>Pupuh</i> | Theme | Numbers of couplets |
|-----|----------------------|---|---------------------|
| 1 | Dandanggula | Human being shall seek knowledge | 8 |
| 2 | Kinanthi | Act for good deeds | 16 |
| 3 | Gambuh | Prohibition to commit bad deeds | 7 |
| 4 | Pangkur | Good and bad acts are shown on your gestures | 17 |
| 5 | Maskumambang | The only God worth the worships | 34 |
| 6 | Megatruh | The virtue of those who serves | 17 |
| 7 | Durma | Prohibition to denounce and to expose others to shame | 12 |
| 8 | Wirangrong | Be mindful in speaking and selecting friends | 27 |

⁴² P. Setiyadi, “Pemahaman Kembali Local Wisdom Etnik Jawa Dalam Tembang Macapat Dan Pemanfaatannya Sebagai Media Pendidikan Budi Pekerti Bangsa,” *Magistra* 24, no. 79 (2012): 71–76.

⁴³ Purwadi, *Seni Tembang: Rerancen Wejangan Luhur Dalam Budaya Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Tanah Air, 2006).

| No. | Name of <i>Pupuh</i> | Theme | Numbers of couplets |
|-----|----------------------|--|---------------------|
| 9 | Pucung | A notice for your acts and to preserve friendship | 23 |
| 10 | Mijil | To accept or to not accept destiny determines a person's quality | 26 |
| 11 | Asmarandana | Code of conducts for civil servant | 28 |
| 12 | Sinom | Sample of dreams | 33 |
| 13 | Girisa | Warnings and prayer for offsprings | 25 |

There were many poets and kings who used *tembang*/song as the media of education or messages for the Javanese people in the days of the *Kasunanan* Surakarta or Mangkunegaran palace. The education or message that was composed in the form of the song related to the formation of the nation's character, morals, or noble character in everyday life as well as in the life of the nation and state.⁴⁴

The terms *tembang* means poetry, song, or poem.⁴⁵ Saputra defined *tembang* or *sekar* as the arrangement of *titilaras*, a tool used to read traditional poetry especially *macapat*.⁴⁶

According to Karsonso H Saputra, *Macapat* is new Javanese poetry that counts online number for every couplet, syllables number for every line, dan vowel sound on each end of the line.⁴⁷ Both the number of syllables and the final vowel depend on the position of the line concerned in the *metrum* pattern used. Besides that, the reading also uses the tone composition patterns used in the gamelan. Traditionally, there are 15 *metrum* patterns of *macapat*; those are *Dhandhanggula*, *Sinom*, *Asmarandana*, *Durma*, *Pangkur*, *Mijil*, *Kinanthi*, *Maskumambang*, *Pucung*, *Jurudemung*, *Wirangrong*, *Balabak*, *Gambuh*, *Megatruh*, dan *Girisa*.

As works of literature that include *geguritan*, *Serat Wulangreh* has a structure as the other works do. If we look at the composition of the *pupuh*/song found in *Serat Wulangreh*, then Pakubuwana IV arranged them systematically, namely the distribution of themes and

⁴⁴ Setiyadi, "Pemahaman Kembali Local Wisdom Etnik Jawa Dalam Tembang Macapat Dan Pemanfaatannya Sebagai Media Pendidikan Budi Pekerti Bangsa."

⁴⁵ Prawiroatmodjo, *Bausastra Jawa Indonesia Jilid II*.

⁴⁶ Karsono H Saputra, *Puisi Jawa: Struktur Dan Estetika* (Jakarta: Wedatama Widya Sastra, 2001).

⁴⁷ Karsono H Saputra, *Percik-Percik Bahasa Dan Sastra Jawa* (Jakarta: Wedatama Widya Sastra, 2005).

adjustments to the song or stanza. What is meant by *pupuh* (*tembang/song*) is part of the discourse of poetry and can be likened to a chapter in prose.⁴⁸

In *Serat Wulangreh*, there are teachings related to ethics. Pakubuwana IV utilized the word *Budi*. *Budi* means character which in Islamic teachings is called *akhlaq*. The word *akhlaq* comes from Arabic word *al-akhlaq* which in its plural form is *al-khuluq*, which means temperament, behaviour, character, basic character, habits, custom, good civilization, and religion.⁴⁹

As for the terminology, the meaning of *akhlaq* is explained by several experts. Ibn Miskawaih stated that *al-Akhlaq* is a trait embedded in the soul that motivates him to perform actions without the need for thought and consideration.⁵⁰ On the other hand, Imam Al-Ghazali defines *akhlaq* as a trait embedded in the soul with which various kinds are born easily and easily without the need for thought and consideration.⁵¹ Furthermore, Ahmad Amin defines *akhlaq* or ethic as the knowledge that explains the meaning of good and bad, explains what some humans should do to others, states the goals that humans should aim for in their actions, and shows the way to do something that must be done.⁵² As for Ardani, he defines *akhlak* as noble and praiseworthy manners in society throughout the ages.⁵³

Pakubuwana IV's teachings highlighted nobility as an important role in ethical principles especially related to our role as God's servant and worshipper. Therefore, the teaching of virtue shall never be separated from the teachings of religion. As it means in having a relationship with God, it must be accompanied by noble acts. Noble acts or Nobility emphasize humans in their relation to society and the environment. While prayers, in general, emphasize humans' relationship with God.

One of the teachings of Pakubuwana's nobility in *Serat Wulangreh* is concerned with always be mindful in speaking and selecting friends.

⁴⁸ Saputra.

⁴⁹ Ibnu Mandzur, *Lisan Al-Arab* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikri, 1990); Luwis Ma'luf, *Al-Munjid Fil Lughah Wal Alam* (Darul Masyriq, n.d.).

⁵⁰ Ibnu Miskawaih, *Tahdzīb Al-Akhlâq Wa Tathhîr Al-A'raq* (Mesir: al-Maktabat al-Mishriyyah, 1934).

⁵¹ Imam Al-Ghazali, *Ihya Ulumuddin* (Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1995).

⁵² Ahmad Amin, *Kitab Al-Akhlaq* (Lajnat Al-Ta Lif Wa-Al-Tarjamah Wa-Al-Nashr, 1958).

⁵³ Mohammad Ardani, *Al-Quran Dan Sufisme Mangkunegara IV: Studi Serat-Serat Piwulang* (Yogyakarta: PT. Danabakti Primayasa, 1998).

In everyday life, humans always have a relationship with each other. He will not be able to live except in society.⁵⁴ In a community or group, even to its smallest degree, there must be interactions or reciprocal relationships. Pakubuwana IV taught us how to live side by side with others, including in terms of saying and choosing friends. In particular, Pakubuwana IV discussed this matter on *Wirangrong Song* and gave a central theme to the song with *Pangatos-atos ing pangandikan tuwin milih pawong mitra* (always be mindful in speaking and selecting friends).

Pakubuwana IV stated that when making friends, one needs to guard oneself and be careful, especially from what they say. Wrong words might cause conflict/ less harmony in relationships with friends. The spoken words shall concern the place, the interlocutor, the time, etc (context). This teaching can be found on *Wirangrong Song* verses 1, 2, and 3:

*Den samya marsudeng budi, wiweka dipun waspaos, aja dumen bisa muwusi,
yèn tan pantes ugi,
sanadyan mung sakecap, yèn tan pantes prentahira (verse1).
Kudu golek mangsa ugi panggonana, lamun miraos, lawan aja age sira muwus,
dununge den kesthi, aja gatwe kawedal, yèn durung pantes rowangnya (verse 2).
Rowang sapacapan ugi, kang pantes ngajak calathon, aja sok metuwa wong
calathu, ana pantes ugi, rinungu mring kathah, ana satengah micara (verse 3).⁵⁵*

Translation:

“Try to learn good manners; don’t pay attention to evil, as long as you can say if it’s not, it’s worth it even if it’s just a word if it’s not in the right place.”(verse 1).

“Seek for time too, a place if possible, and don’t rush to utter the words, concern about the place, don’t go out quickly, if you haven’t found a friend.”(verse 2).

“Friends to have a discussion are those who deserve to talk with, never talk carelessly, sometimes we just need to listen, when people are talking.” (verse 3).

We shall pay attention to how harmonious the topic of conversation, the place, the interlocutor, as well as the truth of what is said are things that must be taken into consideration in conducting verbal communication with other people.

To speak the truth is Islamic teaching can be found in the Quran, one of the related *surah* is *al-Ahzab* verse 70: “O you who have believed,

⁵⁴ Amin, *Kitab Al-Akhlaq*.

⁵⁵ IV, *Serat Wulangreh*.

fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice."

Shaykh Ahmad Syakir detailed that this verse was an order to submit to Allah with true piety and ordered us to worship Him as if we were seeing Him. Then after being pious, we must say the truth as the realization of our piety. True means straight, not bent or deviated.⁵⁶ The words spoken must always convey the truth.

Pakubuwana IV wanted to teach us to be mindful as we speak, and we need to be more cautious when adding an oath to the conversations. Oaths are usually made by someone in the hope that the other person will believe in the conversation being said. If we are not careful, it just might pollute/degrading our self, as it's written in *Wirangwong Song* verse 5:

*Lan maninge wong ngaurip, aja ngakehken supaos, iku gawe reged badanipun, nanging mangsa mangkin, tan kena etung prakara, supata ginawe dinan.*⁵⁷

Translation:

"And again the living, don't indulge your words with oath, it stains your body, Yet in the present, no case counts, faking oath is considered normal."

Pakubuwana IV taught people to be mindful when they utter words that might stain themselves, because of their words, not to mention if they go together with an oath. This value goes along with Quran surah *al-Qalam* verse 10: "*And do not obey the despicable, vain oath-taker.*"

This verse prohibits us to trust vain oath-taker. Faking an oath is a self-humiliating act. His faith is also considered a lie. Fake oaths whenever and wherever they are found, signifying the speaker as a liar.⁵⁸

As for selecting friends, Pakubuwana IV suggests us to always look for good friends, a person with a good attitude and wise, those who are virtuous or have a noble character, and uphold their principles firmly. Good friends shall inspire you to do good deeds, and vice versa. Thus, making friends with a bad attitude person shall be avoided. The late king taught us not to be friends with four groups of people who are a villain. This teaching can be found in *Wirangrong Song* (verse 10-11):

⁵⁶ Ahmad Muhammad Syakir, *Umdat Al-Tafsir an Al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir* (Kairo: Dar al-Wafa', 2014).

⁵⁷ IV, *Serat Wulangreh*.

⁵⁸ Syakir, *Umdat Al-Tafsir an Al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir*.

Ana cacad agung malih anglangkungi saking awon,apan sakawan iku kenipun, dhingin wong madhati,pindho wong ngabotohan, kaping tiga wong durjana (verse10)

kaping sekawane ugi, wong ati sudagar awon, mapan suka sugih watekipun, ing rina lan wengi, mung batine den etang, alumuh lamun kalonga (verse 11).⁵⁹

Translation:

“Such disgrace, uglier than its number, the four groups of people shall never befriend with, first those who are addicted to drugs, second those who gamble, third those who steal from others.” (verse 10)

“The fourth, greedy merchants, only wish to count profit at day and night, without ever wants to lessen any of it.” (verse 11).

Pakubuwana IV on the above song wanted to show 4 groups of people should be avoided, for they possess bad attitudes. Those four groups of people, the type of people we shouldn't make friends with, are drugs addicts, gamblers, thief, and greedy merchants. If those people possess those bad attitudes they are representing as Satan's accomplices and thus shall be avoided. This teaching goes along with Quran surah *al-Furqan* verse 28-29: “*Oh, woe to me! I wish I had not taken that one as a friend. He led me away from the remembrance after it had come to me. And ever is Satan, to man, a deserter.*”

This verse shows that we are prohibited from making friends with Satan including his accomplices who have done evil things such as gambling, drinking, stealing, etc. Satan has turned people away from the straight path, the teachings of the Qur'an, and even invites people to deviate. Satan is a traitor because he will always lead humans astray.⁶⁰

In the next song, Pakubuwana IV described the reasons why we should never befriend these four groups of people. First, the greedy merchants, for their greedy hearts only expect abundant profits. Day and night only thinking about how to gain as much as possible, so that they will become rich in a short period time, regardless of the way how it's done, is it lawful for them or not. No matter how others may suffer, they only care about how to gain benefits. This teaching can be found in *Wirangrong Song* (verse12).

Iku upamane ugi, duwe dhuwit pitung bagor, mapan nora marem ing tyasipun, ilanga sadhuwit,

⁵⁹ IV, *Serat Wulangreh*.

⁶⁰ Syakir, *Umdat Al-Tafsir an Al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir*.

*gegetun patang warsa, padha lan ilang saleksa.*⁶¹

Translation:

“let’s say one owns money, seven bags of money if not satisfied,
To lose a coin, earn him four years to grieve, as if he lost all his possession.”

Meanwhile, why thief shall be shunned because they can only think what belongs to others. In addition, thief wishes to own property which has become the property of others at all costs. His habit is to steal other people’s things. This evil character drives him to steal or take other people’s property by force. This teaching can be found on *Wirangrong* song verse 14.

*Dene wong durjana ugi, nora nana kang den batos,
rina wengi amung kang den etung,
duweking liyan nenggih,
dhahat datan prayoga, kalamun watek durjana.*⁶²

Translation:

“As for the thieves, it is unthinkable, how day and night they can only count the belongings of others, and it’s truly an evil character.”

Meanwhile, gamblers shall be avoided, because not only does gambling result in poverty, but it also usually prompts fighting and deceiving others. Gamblers consider gambling as a job and reject other jobs for it. Gambling prompts countless negative effects that may lead harm to everyone. This teaching can be found in *Wirangrong* Song verse 15:

*Dene bobotoh puniki, sabarang pakaryan emoh,
lawan kathah linyok padha padu, yen pawitan enting,
tan wurung anggampang, ya marang darbeking sanak.*⁶³

Translation:

“While gambling, he refused other works, prompting to cheat and to fight, with small treasures, of course, it is underestimating, and to other people’s property.”

Pakubuwana IV was very concerned about whom to befriend, as all the people we have around will inspire us to do good deeds or

⁶¹ IV, *Serat Wulangreh*.

⁶² IV.

⁶³ IV.

vice versa. The fourth group whom we should not befriend is drugs addicts. Pakubuwana IV defined drug addicts love to waste their time, they are lazy and spoiled. They indulge themselves in smoking a pipe. This teaching can be found in *Wirangrong Song* verse 18-19:

*Dene ta wong kang madati, kesede kamoran lumoh,
amung ingkang dadi senengipun, ngandhep diyana sarwi,
linggih ngamben jejeging, sarwi leyanggan bedudan (bait 18).
Yen leren nyeret andhidhis, netrane pan merem karo,
yèn wus dadi awake akuru, cahya biru putih,
nyalebut wedi toya, lambe biru untu pethak (bait19).⁶⁴*

Translation:

“Meanwhile, people who are mad, lazy, and spoiled; are only his favourite, facing the stove, while sitting on a couch astride whilst smoking a pipe.”
“When you stop looking for lice, your eyes are closed when your body is thin, blue and white, saggy, afraid of water, blue lips, and pale teeth.”

Pakubuwana IV also reminded that bullies should be avoided because their behaviour is very detrimental. This is because his thoughts are out of control. It was mentioned on *Wirangrong Song* (verse 24):

*Kalamun wong wuru ugi, ilang prayitaning batos,
nora ajeg barang pikiripun, elinge ing ati,
pan baliyar-baliyar, endi ta ing becikira.⁶⁵*

Translation:

“If the person is drunk too, loses his sense, abnormal thoughts, remember to yourself, only half-heartedly, which is the goodness.”

When a drug addict is drunk, he shall lose his sense (*ilang prayitnaning batos*), his thoughts weren't normal (*nora ajeg pikiranipun*), he's only half being conscious (*elinge ing ati pan baliyar-baliyar*).

These four groups, namely gamblers, drugs addict, thieves, and the fraudulent merchants shall be shunned. If they keep their evil conducts, we shall never befriend any of them, unless they have repented. Pakubuwana IV's advised us to never imitate any of their behavior as they are all detrimental behavior.

The above messages from Pakubuwana IV are harmonious with the message on the Qur'an surah *al-Ma'idah* verse 90: “O you who have

⁶⁴ IV.

⁶⁵ IV.

believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, (sacrificing on) stone alters (to other than Allah), and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful."

This verse strictly prohibits believers to consume intoxicants, gambling, offer sacrifices for idols, and divining arrows. Thus, all of those acts shall be avoided at all costs for the believers' benefit. To determine fortune with an arrow in Quran is called *al-azlam*.⁶⁶ *Al-Shawkani* stated that all those four forbidden acts are called as *rijs* or disgusting things. To avoid all those condemned acts, therefore, is essentially to preserve ourselves from evils.⁶⁷

Conclusion

Pakubuwana IV as a poet and as a preacher utilized Javanese language as a communication tool to distribute his messages and advice on Islamic teachings. Among the acculturation form of Islam and Javanese culture utilized by Pakubuwana IV was to construe Islamic teachings into Javanese language which later created *tembang macapat*. *Serat Wulangreh* was indeed written in Javanese language; yet it substantially conceived and delivered Islamic teachings taken from al-Quran and Hadith. *Serat Wulangreh* covers divinity, laws, ethics, nobility, and social relationships (*Mu'amalah*). *Serat Wulangreh* has philosophical principles in shaping morality on its basic level to be taught to all human beings. The morality shaping in the context of *Serat Wulangreh* teachings can be noticed in how it offered initial motivations to all humans. This motivation became a distinction for the students to accept all forms of examples and behaviour of kindness. The teaching on *Wulangreh* displayed easily identifiable pure Islamic teachings that suits for different communities from different nationalities, ethnics, culture, or even religion. *Serat Wulangreh* academically enriched the Islamic study in Nusantara since it was written and grew in Java – an island part of Indonesia. The study of Islam and local culture, especially in Indonesia need to be expanded for the local cultures in Nusantara are extremely rich and are awaiting further research to be conducted. The encounter of Islam and Nusantara culture is undeniable as diffusion, acculturation, and assimilation always naturally occur when two

⁶⁶ Syakir, *Umdat Al-Tafsir an Al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir*.

⁶⁷ Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad Al-Shawkani, *Fath Al-Qadir Al-Jami' Bayn Fannay Al-Riwayah Min Al-Dirayah Fi Ilm Al-Tafsir* (Dimashq: Dar al-Kalim al-Tayyib, 1994).

entities converge. Further research needs to be conducted to complete previous research. Various approaches from different disciplines to further analyse this study will make it even more comprehensive and enrich the scientific repertoire.

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