SUFISM MEANINGS IN THE BRAI ART IN CIREBON

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Abstract

Cirebon as we know for its commerce and name of the city of Wali. Commercially Cirebon is also famous called as the city of shrimp and geographically is labeled to as the center of the earth. Culturally Cirebon is recognized as an art city like other regions in Indonesia. This paper aims at analyzing one of the popular Cirebonese arts called Brai art containing sufistic messages. Brai art is the heritage of Cirebon containing messages of education in managing the mind. The message highlighted in the Brai arts was more on exoteric religious worship. Arts express a sense of aesthetics with God by dancing and praising in five rituals. Every single ‘raka’at’ designates ‘suluk’ to God. This Brai art proves that Cirebon is recognized as the central area for the spread and development of Islam and Sufism because Cirebon has a strategic area both of the Pacific as well as and the maritime area.

[Cirebon adalah kota yang terkenal dengan perdagangannya dan bumi Wali. Kota ini secara komersial juga terkenal sebagai kota udang dan secara geografis dilabeli sebagai pusat bumi. Secara budaya, Cirebon diakui sebagai kota seni yang terkenal dengan seni Brai.
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Keywords: Cirebon, Islam, Sufism, Brai Arts

Introduction

Art is believed not only as ceremonial things occurring in events or at parties, but also has its particular value and meaning. Art has a big contribution to refining minds and senses, even art can be as a medium of propaganda. History has proven that art is an important aspect of religious broadcasting. In its history, for instance, the entry and the spread of Islam into Indonesia were through the arts. In this sense, the art has a tight relationship with the spread of the entry of Islam in Indonesia and even in the history of spread and entry of Sufism in Cirebon which is inseparable from the genealogy of the introduction of Sufism to the Nusantara.

West Java, especially the Cirebon region has a variety of interesting art forms to be studied. This is a form of cultural diversity indeed a characteristic of the Cirebon, also has the nickname as a shrimp city on the coast of the northern part of West Java. One of the interesting arts is Brai art. Its art is an Islamic breathing art that grows around Cirebon and Indramayu areas. This art has the form of Shalawatan which is widely found among Muslims in the Nusantara.
According to Wahidin, Brai was thought entered the Nusantara around the 14th century, in the form of Shalawatan which is songs together by a group of people. This art itself is closely related to the spread of Islam because the lyrics of the song are full of praise for Allah Swt. The song was performed in tandem using Arabic and Cirebon. Poetry in the Brai arts itself is vocalized with accompaniment of Rebana, Ketipung, or Kendang. This art itself is carried out during the full moon light and is shown in the courtyard of the house.

In conducting this research, the author obtained several similar works that spoke about Brai arts in Cirebon, some of which were Deskripsi Kesenian Cirebon and Kompilasi Kesenian Tradisional Cirebon by Dede Wahidin, who describe Brai arts in Cirebon. In addition there are also several other works that discuss art, both in general and specifically within the scope of Cirebon region such as the book Hiburan Masa Lalu dan Tradisi Lokal: Kumpulan Esai Seni, Budaya, dan Sejarah Indonesia by Fandy Hutari.

Furthermore, these works show how the art context in Cirebon runs and gives its own style to the community, such as the work of Dede Wahidin, which provides an understanding of Brai art in the scope of his discussion, but same as the work reviewed by Fandy Hutari, the discussion of Brai art that are not fully explained, especially in relation with Islamic concepts that have taken root in Cirebon.

Thus, based on the empty sphere from prior research, this paper wants to present the mystical relationships that exist in the Brai arts in Cirebon. Through anthropological narratives approach, it is interesting to be able to see the developments of Brai arts and their relationship with mystical values in their performances. As one of the ways of preachers in the past, to spread Islam in the Nusantara, this research is dedicated in this way.

1 Dede Wahidin, Kompilasi Kesenian Tradisional Cirebon (Cirebon: Disporbudpar Kota Cirebon 2013), p. 32.
2 Dede Wahidin, Deskripsi Kesenian Cirebon (Cirebon: Disbudpar Kabupaten Cirebon, 2004).

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Culture as Theoretical Framework

In daily activities, everything we do cannot be separated from what is called culture. According to Koentjaraningrat, culture is the whole system of ideas, actions, and results of human work in the framework of the life of society that is made into human property by learning. The cultural aspects themselves are very diverse, encompassing the whole of human activities in carrying out their lives that are meaningful, as in this case are various kinds of knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and other abilities and habits acquired by man as social beings.

One of the interesting cultural concepts to be studied more deeply is a human expression in the form of art. Because as an intelligent living being, art is a skill that has become a human need after fulfilling his physical needs. The form of need, in this case, is psychological needs, which are as important as the other needs. Because man is not only just trying to fulfill physical needs, but also need to enjoy psychological needs such as beautiful natural scenery, melodious music, and all these things can be done through art.

Art is an inseparable part of the culture, and vice versa. This then makes art as something important for everyday human beings. Like a taste that is arranged in such a way that it becomes a form that can be given to one another and owned, art cannot work if there is no community or people who enjoy it. This then gives an anecdote that art is a representation of the style and culture of the people in that place.

As a religion, Islam views that art or art needs to be created, developed, and fostered in accordance with the guidance of Islamic teachings. So an art does not have to be destroyed, but it is directed to be able to provide beauty and an inner sense of satisfaction in accordance

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with religious guidance. As the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, which means “Indeed Allah Swt is all beautiful and likes beauty” (HR. Muslim)\(^8\). It can be interpreted that art is not a taboo thing in Islam and even created to express the imagination of the world and life of its creator, namely Allah Swt.

In the context of people in Java whose majority is Muslim, various arts that breathe Islam are very easy to find and various kinds, including the art of dance, music, and theater such as Barzanji, Shalawatan, Emprak, and Srandul.\(^9\) One of the Javanese arts which breathes Islam is the discussion in this matter is Brai arts.

Brai art is a song originating from the Indramayu and Cirebon regions, West Java. A type of Shalawatan or development that also exists in various Muslim societies in the Nusantara. Brai himself comes from the word “baroya” and “berahi” which means the peak of pleasure between human relations with the creator. The form of this art activity is singing solo, or together with religious poems in Arabic or in the local language. The influence of Islam is very thick in Brai art, this can be seen from the actors, Waditra (instruments of Karawitan musical arts), song lyrics and various kinds of norms that bind them, in view of that at the beginning of the spread of Islam on the north coast of West Java. Brai arts serves as a medium of preaching to the community which at that time was dominated by Hindu-Buddhist beliefs under the kingdom of Galuh.\(^10\) In its development later, it was apparently effective as a means of communicating the spread of Islam. This is what then the arts continue to be developed and preserved until now and become one of the cultures of the West Java coastal communities, especially in the Cirebon, and Indramayu regions.

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\(^8\) Ibid.,


The Spread of Sufism in Cirebon

Cirebon is one of the significant areas for the influence of the spread and development of Nusantara Sufism, especially from Sumatera. Cirebon is seen by the region as the center of the spread and development of Islam and Sufism because has a strategic area both geographic and as a maritime area. Therefore, Cirebon is considered the center of the earth for the spread and development of Islam and Sufism. One of sufi

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11 Writing about the history of the development of Cirebon Islam has been done a lot as mentioned by Didin Nurul Rosidin with his assessment and view of books about Cirebon, including Sharon Joy Siddique, The Relics of the Past: a Sociological Study of the Sultanates of Cirebon, West Java. This sociological study rests on the theory developed by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, namely social interaction in the process of institutionalizing Islam in the Islamic Sultanate of Cirebon. This book does not mention the name of Sheikh Nurjati et al. Dadan Wildan, Sunan Gunung Jati: Petuah, Pengaruh dan Jejak-Jejak Sang Wali di Tanah Jawa. This book originated from his dissertation at the Department of Philology, UNPAD. The author reveals the identity of Sunan Gunung Jati, which has been identified with Fatahillah. The data used by Dadan Wildan comes from oral traditions and literacy traditions in Cirebon. This book does not cover much about the initial Islamization process, including the figure and role of Sheikh Nurjati. Zaenal Masduqi, Cirebon dari Kota Tradisional ke Kota Kolonial (2011). This book reviews much about the development of the city of Cirebon during the Gemeente administration. Although previously discussed briefly about changes in the status of Cirebon from the beginning of a respectable and sovereign region, it then became the arena for the struggle of the influence of three major powers in Java at that time, namely, Mataram, Banten and the VOC to become a self-governing city that governed their lives from 1906-1942. Because of its focus on the transformation of political institutions in Cirebon, this book does not discuss much about the figure and role of Sheikh Nurjati in the Islamization of the Cirebon region. A. Sobana Harjasaputra and Tawaluddin Haris et al., Cirebon dalam Lima Zaman (2011). This open attempt seeks to uncover the development of Cirebon in five epochs which began in the seventeenth century mid-XX century. This book reveals the history of politics, economics, socio-culture that occurred at that time. As a book with big ideas and for a long period of time, this book failed to comprehensively describe the dynamics that occurred in the early history of Cirebon.

Zaenal Masduqi, et al., Islamisasi, Suksesi Kepemimpinan, dan Awal Munculnya Kerajaan Islam Cirebon: Kajian dan Penulisan Sejarah Kesultanan Cirebon. The results of this study a lot about the process of Islamization in the Cirebon region. Although many mention of the figure and role of Sheikh Nurjati, this study did not focus on the figure but on the initial succession process in the political structure of the Cirebon Islamic kingdom.

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scholars who influence the spread of Islam and Sufism is first Sheikh Nurjati Cirebon. Didin Nurul Rosidin explained that he is believed to be the founder of the first Islamic education institution of a kind of boarding school in Bukit Ampanan Jati. One important argument of study regarding the figure of the preacher is his figure explaining the process of the initial Islamization of the Nusantara. Comparing with other figures such as Haji Purwa and Pangeran Cakrabuana, Sheikh Nurjati represented a medieval Islamic cosmopolitanism movement dominantly in the context of the international trade economic movement. Sheikh Nurjati did not come from the West Java region alike the two figures but he came from Malacca before traveling to Mecca and Baghdad until they landed at the Port of Muara Jati. The study of Sheikh Nurjati contributed much in tracing the origins of Islam, the time of arrival, the carriers and characters of Islam particularly to the inhabitants of Cirebon and its surroundings.12

Another figure introduced Islam to the Cirebon area not stated from Zaenal Masduki’s research mentioned the younger brother of Sheikh Nurjati himself, namely Sheikh Bayanullah (also known as Sheikh Maulana Akbar) spreading Islam in the Kuningan area, south of Cirebon. According to Zaenal Masduki in this framework, it is certainly very possible to state that Sunan Gunung Jati played a significant role to the consolidation of Islamization movements. This occurred there before being carried out by his followers to become a massive movement as well as the founder of the first Islamic Kingdom in Cirebon to be independent from the Kingdom of Pajajaran held by his grandfather, Bambang Irianto and Siti Fatimah, *Sheikh Nurjati: Perintis Dakwah dan Pendidikan* (2009). This book in detail explains various things related to the figure of Sheikh Nurjati. But this book does not do much elaboration seriously by placing Sheikh Nurjati in a broader context such as the Islamization of the archipelago. See Didin Nurul Rosidin, *Sheikh Nurjati: A Driving Figure for Islamization of Pra Wali Songo in 15th-century Cirebon*, p. 16-19.

Sri Baduga Maharaja Prabu Siliwangi.\textsuperscript{13}

The next figure who developed Islam and \textit{Sufism} in Cirebon was Sheikh Syarif Hidayullah or Sunan Gunung Djati, Cirebon. Sunan Gunung Djati was an Islamic propagandist in West Java. In his activities he undertook \textit{dakwah} trips to residents of the western part of Java to embrace Islam starting from Cirebon and its surroundings as \textit{panatagama}.\textsuperscript{14} Syarif Hidayatullah was a \textit{Sufism} figure and at the same time had an inheritance because he attained \textit{ma’rifah} status. Therefore, other trustees in the land of Java confirmed and assumed that Syarif Hidayatullah or Sunan Gunung Djati were \textit{Wali Qutb} (its the center of the \textit{Walis}). One of the characteristics inherited by Syarif Hidayatullah perfected it at the stage of his \textit{ma’rifah} in order to attain his position as \textit{An-Nubuwat al-Warisah} (Prophetic Prophethood). Until Sheikh Syarif Hidayatullah or Sunan Gunung Jati recognized as the successor to Prince Cakrabuana held the title “Sinubun Ingang Kanjeng Susunan Jati Purba Panetep Panatagama Ania Allah Kutubizaman Kholifatur Rosulullah Shallollahu Alaihi Wassalam”.

Sheikh Syarif Hidayatullah in this case considered that it is important that in the midst of society still needed the role of the \textit{Wali} who had prophetic values and morals marked by the sincerity of obedience and devotion to Allah and His Messenger to spread Islamic preaching. The methods used by Sheikh Syarif Hidayatullah in spreading the teachings of Islam and \textit{Sufism} are not only through doctrines, but also towards friendly culture or tradition even alike Buddhism and Hinduism. Religious traditions through acculturation of the religion and culture of the Cirebon community are still preserved, such as \textit{Slametan},


Sedekah Makam, Memitu, Marawis, Sufism, etc.\textsuperscript{15} These types of cultural arts resulted Cirebon culture were through originally preaching media, the condition of the art currently feared and eroded by global culture with the presence of pop arts from the West or from Indonesian pop. In this paper, the authors intend to revive the unique culture of Cirebon art focusing on Brai art which has more shades of Sufism as well as an overview of its Kejawen values. This indicates that Sufism is very familiar with tradition and local art.

The Islamization of culture occupied the central aspect of each art explained the process of its realization needs involving fundamental questions whether or not it is realized through the eviction of other cultures. This subject matter is clarified by the truth containing other existing cultures without considering such aspects of religious or cultural concretism. This result indicates a rough road if not deadlocked in describing a culture in tandem. The emphasis of this study is the adoption of other cultural elements and the emphasis of Islam the experience of reality with mysticism or mysticism carried out by Wali Cirebon as a spiritual need and strength of social orders.\textsuperscript{16} Tradition is an instructive discourse that connects with the past and the future through the present. In addition, tradition is also a divine norm that safeguards the permanence and continuity of certain people maintaining it. It connects with the whole life with certain principles transcending the “standard of living” of mans. He repeats, remembers, recollects basic patterns or divine ideas.\textsuperscript{17}


Regarding previous issues, it indirectly confirmed again on the historical aspects of its appearance. We might be able to assert easily, if what being discussed is about the epics of Walang Sungsang and Sunan Gunung Djati or other guardians concerning the Cirebon chronicle and the expansion area both politically and ethically meaning the expansion of Islam can be widely accepted. This is merely a small part from the deepest core to the essence of art accompanied with the success of the Cirebon Empire in the past developed their culture. In the fact, the indications of nicknames attached to the Wali as the nickname or the Old Javanese Hindu-Buddha opened up the simple assumption of assimilating but elaborately explained relationships, especially when it is presented through art whether it is in the form of stories through writing and stage scenes which essentially spoke. Therefore, the present in the practice of life became a real part of the historicity of the past. The symbolism was not changed but the presence of the Wali in Cirebon reaffirmed the actuality of the mind of how God revealing and pervading the consciousness. Thus, the present unity belongs to other religious traditions with different rites.

**Sufistic Values in the Brai Arts Cirebon**

As a medium for the spread of Islam, these fine art forms are all contrasted with rough art like Ludruk and so on. At night Syawalan was sung in the middle of the Danalaya community, and by the Bayalangu community during the night of Sedekab Bumi Nadran. Paseban Soko is a place commonly used for Brai Art performances. Hence Paseban Soko is also commonly called Paseban Brai. Aside from the Sedekab Bumi Nadran and Syawalan traditions, Brai also plays with the Mauludan tradition. In this context, Slametan is an affirmation and reinforcement of the general cultural order of his power to eliminate the disruptive forces. Slametan concentrates, organizes, and reinforces the general idea of abangan about their “pattern of life”.
This less dramatic form expresses values animate traditional Javanese peasant culture; adjusting to each other a variety of interdependent wills, refraining from expressing feelings and carefully arranging outward behavior. Slametan tends to take place at such points that value reaches its peak, and when the subtle creatures and the inhumane chaos that they represent very threatening.\(^{18}\)

Art Brai, seen from the ontology aspect of praise is nothing yet representing the imagination of the oneness of Nyai Brai. Teak emission is a cosmic macro, a space caused by emotion that is generated by the experience of the essence of God which is a wide-spread beauty meeting the Amparan Teak seen in terms of the aesthetics of the place becomes beautiful. The name of art regarding the historical aspect of the creator of art itself is probably underlying the birth of opinion if you take from the meaning/meaning of the word passion (spirit). If someone is following Brai’s ritual activities, then arousal (enthusiasm) to get closer to the Almighty will be undergoing a ritual full of speciality.

Brai’s art form was expressed in terms of the ruling which each raka’at had movement and praise as a reflection of longing for God, under five raka’at in Brai art by using Java langgam.

First Raka’at

By reading prayers with the Javanese Cirebon dialect:
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\begin{align*}
YA NABI SALAM ALAIKA YARASUL SALAM ALAIKA IKABIBI SALAM ALAIKA SOLAWATULAH ILAIKA 6x.
\end{align*}
\]

In the great zikir delivered are: greetings, basmalah, istigfar, salasilah, syahadatain (thoyibah sentence), and prayer. Basically, Brai follows the teachings of Sufism inviting people to always remember Allah Almighty, anytime, and anywhere. The aspect of Sufism lies in the attribute of the zikir which is presumably impossible to explain one by one, but the abstraction and experience of reality attributed to the name of

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the *zikir* through ritual including the process of physical emptying, concentration directed towards it. *Salam* (*selamet*) prophets and prophets are thus understood as substance, intermediaries for artists to project themselves with Allah.

**Second Raka’at:**

... *padang wulan ambil geni dedamara ILALA, lingangangsu mboten wulan mari, lunga ngangsu mboten-mboten wulan mari, durung solat durung sadat toli mati ILALA, ya solata sembayanga mumpung urip ILALA, mbesuk mati menawa ragane awor lan sukmah ILALA, ya solata semhayanga mumpung urip mbesuk mati menawa pengelbur dosa, bisa solat bisa sadat toli mati mbesuk mati ragane awor lan sukmah. 6x (Kelayon)

... *HU takibul para wali para rosal tak nutub nabi, ala tuban kesang pundi, kesang mekah lan madina, andon solat lan sebayang, yebut SUBAKANALAH ALA ALA ALAILA ILA HA ILALA HUALA ALAILA..6x* 19

*Hu*—it is usually in the mystical tradition—symbolizes ‘breathing’ the deepest feeling of essence, perhaps inheriting, respected mediator as a genealogy of living history, the formulation of the essence of the relationship with the ancestral history of this ancestor is explained by the expression of the nature of the question of god where, go Madinah and Makkah just ride *salat.* *Subhanallah* explaining the virtue that in the phrase *Hu,* Allah represents the breath. The result of Allah is life itself ... the smallest slope of the slopes, the waterpark, the hot spots, the less sunny, the sunshine, the sunshine for a night, the sunshine. 20

**Third Raka’at :**

*Nur ya ngalanur Sheikh, nabi, wali-wali, ala Muhammad ala nuryangalanur, saya nelangsa (bapak) yani awak ingsun, ala yamuhammad ora bisa bangsa iman nur ya ngalanur. 6x.* Raga ika sengendi asale dadidadi, saking iman mulane pandadi anak-anak saking iman tokid enang muling kujrate, tokid enang kujrate ramyang-ramyang, sukmane kaulandara, tinggalane wong ning dunya-dunya saking iman,

It tells how God is reality, the pre-creation of the body, yet the body here is affirmed as a servant of God, the soul above the affirmation to experience Allah or He in the mind and heart is called sukma. Which takes the kaula, but the kaula and because karma is no other experience with God, the affirmation of the state’s copy is because both the king and the king lost their power in the hands of God, that is what is meant by the state, which actually rationalizes obedience to the norms that must be carried out by society.  

Then in Brai art, you can read compliments with the Cirebon dialect:

YUTE YULAILA YUTE LAILALA YUTE MUKAMADUNYUTE ROSULILA MADUN MUKA ANA KAKANG MAJALALA...6x.

Ronggowarsito in his work, Purwaning Ajisaka, Prophet Moses, Isa and Muhammad were equated with Shiva, Allah and the Holy Spirit. In Pustaka Raja Suya, pepadhaning angen-angen is called Narayana (Krishna), The Teacher of the Universe, Moses, Christ, Muhammad, the Buddha, and the Brahma.

In Brai art, a sentence of weteng suci kangge naburmbismila asale dingin, it is mandatory that tempele sewiji2 be read 6x (lung gadung). The meaning of the sentence shows the problem of the attitude of asceticism in physical terms so that it is clear the desire for things outside of one self, of course meant by tempele sewiji-wiji is God. A universal knowledge achieved by means of immanence is seen through looking into oneself, God existence in terms of the sensory world.

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Fourth Raka’at:

Ado katon neng ngesan ajo lali, ala wetan pawangenang pareke ora ketilang, in gulati parek bae, anae neng sadat selawe, ALAILA LAILA ILAHAILA LA ALA ALAILA LAILAHA ILA ILALA (6x). Then read, soli wasalim ala sayidinumbakamadin wa ala ali mukamad, hu ala YAMBISMILA nirokman nirokim soli wasalimala sayidina mukamadin wa ala ali mukamad (6x).

The praise explains the deep message about God existence which can let oneness with God meaning that the essence of Allah can be confirmed exactly where it is, not in the east and far or near which is invisible, and seen close to the sabadat 25.

Fifth Raka’at:

SUBAKANALAIH ALA YAHU YAHU IMAN ALA SUBAKANALAIH IMAN IMAN PRASTULILLAH ALA TAKGONJAN GANJEN (6x) [5 of raka’at] ...rubana ya rubana dolam enaan pusana wa ila tagipirina watarkamna lana kunana minak kosirin. sources of time do not sleep, there is a fire in the world of sin is not old enough to burn, there is fire in the world, in which case the death of the body of the deceased, the body of the body, which is old, miserable, mutawadisi kiyamuhu binapsihi (6x). [Syair Wabdatullah Sifating Ilmu].

ALA ALA ALAILA ILAHAILALA HU ALA ALAILA, ALA UMBUL UMBUL GUNUNG JATIDEGUNG BANTEN RAJA KENE, ALA ALUN ALUN KESEPUEAN LEMAH DUVUR PANGAJARAN SUARANE GELAP SEWU yen isun lanang sejati, ALA ALA ALAILA ILAHAILALA HU ALAALAILA (6x).

The Brai’s praise above is similar to poetry, (kawi) a kind of yoga. Kawi, a yogin is a person who practices yoga or certain spiritual practices. In the Hindu-Javanese, yoga is a human effort to achieve unity with the God, and through religious unity mans finally reach muksa, the release of final deliverance from the chain of existence. For some people, yoga is usually a spiritual effort (devotion to the God through tapa-brata, fasting,
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Through a variety of activities, people must try to bring down the God to the earth so that man can unite with Him. In the poetry of Old Javanese vision for poets or *kawi* poetry is a means to achieve the ultimate goal: poetry is his religion. The God who wants to get incarnate as the God of Beauty (*Kalangvan* in Old Javanese) becomes *tarekat*, a way to achieve it.\(^{22}\)

Without discussing about the history of Cirebon art emerged from where his birth was, it is very difficult to validate, the traditional art that exists is not suddenly present by itself without the background of the underlying myth. Regarding what exist in arts; people living in the middle of the modern age are not easy because the beauty of the art is wrapped in foreign symbolism.\(^{23}\) As the only cultural events made, traditional art survive until now. The authenticity of his artistic value must also be taken into account in the midst of widespread Javanese culture and other heterogenic cultural complexities, in which Islam as a migrant culture is adapted to the surrounding cultural context.

Actually the existing traditional art is a palace idea about morality. Then the art developed in the Village Bayalangu Cirebon Regency and its surroundings. This can be characterized by the transformative nature of Sheikh Datul Kahfi and Sunan Geseng representing spiritual figures and Pangeran Cakra Buana as the king of Panembahan proposed a Babad in Gegesik Village. In Bungko Kapetakan Village, Adipati Danaruda, son of Sunan Panjunan whose charisma influenced the emergence of Bungko Angklung and Wayang art represented by Suta Jaya and Serabaya. Those who indirectly in the palace of Cirebon can be considered a stage of artistic creation that accommodates outsiders to become *orang dalem* by means of marital relations. For instance, Serabaya is a descendant of Sunan Kalijaga who married Sekar Lelangu daughter Ki Ageng Sumerang from Pajajaran which became *kuwu* Gegesik at the time and

\(^{23}\) Andrew Beatty, *Variasi Agama...*, p. 4.
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gave permission for the children of Sunan Geseng to bloom in the village on the advice of Sunan Gunung Djati. 

Therefore, without taking into account as stated by Stewart that concretism is a concept that directs our attention to “the issue of accommodation, contest, feasibility, indigmentation and a place for dynamic intercultural processes” it will obscure the substantial subject of traditional art which has remained as a part which has been claimed to be the original tradition of Cirebon, it is relatively easy to talk about traditional Cirebon art from material that is seen to be celebrated by existing traditions, but without seeing historical issues and philosophical thinking that underlie them, can lead one to fatal simplification and careless claims about the authenticity of tradition if you do not consider the evidence you are trying to question it as fairly as possible in explaining the artistic content inspiring Cirebon people for long time. That art is used only at the level of fixing the problem of destruction of mentality yet not to change the culture or traditions and ritualistic of other religions to the prearrangement that has preceded inter-government warfare in which the present-day abusers may be overwhelmed by the ruin and injustice of the ruler. 

Cirebon art tends to be associated with the spirit of Islamization. This thesis seems to complicate the art’s authenticity from its original function, even though the literature also explains the issue of rebellion occurring among the empires. Therefore, I discuss the functions of traditional arts. First, religious function. Second, transmission of the inner world from within the rite. Third, the symbolism that covers the heritage of the courtiers, besides being sacred, also describes the beauty and structure of cosmology.

The language used in Brai shows that the attributes of the existence of the mind (soul) with God, as well as the Wayang. The stage scenes from the characters trigger emotions that bring feelings not only mastermind, but also the audience as well. Thereby explaining their differences with
rough art is a palace practice that spread widely when the expansion of village chronicles was promoted which contained an affirmation as in the Balinese kingdom of its time. The overall dynamics of the Balinese hierarchy involved efforts to approach, by imitating, higher levels, and away, with no imitate, lower levels.\textsuperscript{24}

The attempts to avoid low things (such as instincts in worship) and to imitate high levels can be seen. In fact, the explorations dating from the palace of the massacre in disseminating ethical issues with the aesthetic assistance that their efforts with the discipline of the body which initially practiced Cirebon’s palace. Even if we draw the general conclusions, the mentioned attitude occupying Greertz’s views, art-Javanese-like the etiquette, is seen as one that gives the physical form to the essentially inner content of an outside embrace of the inner sense.\textsuperscript{25}

Alike mystics, religious mans in general, according to Mircea primitive mans live in a continuous present, and in this sense that religious man can be said to be a “primitive” man; he repeats cues from other people (ancestors), through this repetition, his life is always in the present. Hindu-Buddhism does not exist in the developing regions of traditional art but its ritualism mingles with Islamic elements.\textsuperscript{26} Traditional rites and rituals remain in the midst of society. Even if one of these cults is said to be able to survive for certain reasons when the religious unit which shelves them is extinct, then its ability to survive is only in the form of fractions. This is what happens in most agrarian worship that lives in folklore. In certain cases, the only thing that survives is not worship, but only a certain ceremony or rite.\textsuperscript{27}

“Spiritual thing” is defined as a minimum definition for religion. “Spiritual thing” must be understood as a conscious subject who has the

\textsuperscript{24} Clifford Geertz. “Abangan, Santri, Priyayi”..., p. 360.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., p. 443.
\textsuperscript{27} Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of The Religious Life, trans. Inyak Ridwan Muzir (Jakarta: IRCiSoD, 2001), p. 73.
ability to exceed ordinary man abilities. Therefore, what is known as the spirits of the dead, *jin*, *setan* and gods can enter into this definition. What needs to be considered is the particular idea of religion covered by this definition. The only thing that can connect us with something spiritual is only what mans have attached to it. Spiritual is conscious thing that we can influence on it. As we influence consciousness in general by using psychological means, by trying to convince and by raising it with words (*mantra* and prayers) or with offerings and sacrifices.

Therefore, *Brai*’s art is known as a medium of Islamic *dakwah*, as it is commonly known as a *dakwah*, which is related to bad problems. Then, the reaffirmation of experiencing God known to Javanese people with the term feeling through someone through choir is an aspect of Islam. J Gonda explains the two meanings of feeling—“the highest meaning” or the most important hidden value “and” sensory sensation “*, taste (tongue)*” or “inner feeling”—which is actually taken from the Sanskrit different yet as it is also stated, in modern Java. “The last word is true has been mixed up with the first one.

*Gamelan* tones and praise verses consisting of Arabic combinations namely; the Qur’an and Javanese praise reflect on the issue of divine experience. It departs from an empirical basis when the sound of music touches the senses, which then the mind and heart are centered on God which becomes a matter of taste. The above combination is clearly visible, only when we recall the story of the arrival of Sheikh Dzatul Kahfi from Baghdad to Gunung Djati which eventually assimilated to aspects of Javanese aesthetics as in the case of music and praise of *Brai* whose material was combative between Arabic and Javanese poetry.  

For most Javanese, the Qur’an is also not very meaningful, because they do not understand Arabic because many learn to read it without understanding. In this case, of course there is no needs to tell the “reader” to give meaning. The interpretation is irrelevant and inappropriate for

\[\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 56-57.}\]
Javanese. On the other hand, finding meaning by “reading their own newspaper” is through introspection. The messages contained in it are stated to be “written without a place”: a concept covering both symbolistics and the mystery of Cungking culture. The interpretation is not considered as subjective action, a fantasy projection but illumination coming from inner reality that produces material forms.  

Nyai Brai in this respect is a material requirement that must exist for the reality of God as a mode of being, you could say Nyai Brai the embrace of the Prophet Muhammad on the Qur’an. The sound of gamelan bringing feelings closer to God is of course commensurate with revelation, as well as the Nyai Brai itself is aligned with the Prophet Muhammad. Andrew Beatty stated that Wali means “God’s messenger” which is analogous to “polab” which means “do”, so that its meaning becomes “teaching by example”. The pastor (from the ancient Javanese word “pandita”) described as “education-kang-real”, means “direct and concrete education, similar to the epigraphy I listed above:” There is no idea except in action”. Music as a means of approaching the guardian in educating the people of Cirebon at that time was very effective transforming into the vision of Islam because it was difficult to understand the verses of the Qur’an, then by cooperative action or practice itself by means of introspection.

Music is used as a medium of dakwah such as used by other special groups who play an important role in the tombs throughout India musicians. They are hierarchically subordinate to the khuddam group; social status is very low because they come from a Hindu caste consisting of pariah musicians. The music played is a good sign of music which increases the passion of the ceremony. These so-called qawwal (singers) as heirs of a vast repertoire of sacred music which is able to express and give rise to mystical conditions and conditions (things) for pilgrims.

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who want to achieve ecstasy. Under the influence of the mystical music scene (*qawwali*), the followers of the ceremony experience the trance and are united for a moment with God. In the case of the issue, the *Brai* arts are so diverse. The explanation above occupies the category of the first opinion which says that art is taken from the meaning of the word *bra* which means (*bera*) neglected from Javanese. Meaning that if someone is participating in *Brai* ritual activities, they will forget the work or other activities so that the activities or other jobs will become neglected (fallow). By carrying out *Brai* ritual activities, it will provide another work. Because they are so fervent, the only the Almighty that they remember and forget the others.

The birth, (such as music, dance, and drama) is a part covering the mind, so only those who were born with patience and order can choose and get a “feeling” that is subtly covered through it. Music is offered to the ancestors but the emotional arousing tones affirm the feeling of God in consciousness. Ancestors thus describe the only spirit substances correlated with the body in the Javanese tradition of ancestors called great-grandparents. The great-grandfather is “pure” and cannot be used to harm others or to obtain selfish personal gain. His strength and creatures are trained to be “good”, even though their manifestations are sometimes frightening.

The Wali have created the *dakwah* method for the importance for spreading the Islamic Religion in Java through artwork. It was done by Sunan Kalijaga with *Gamelan Sekaten* or *Syahadatain* (two sentences of key Islamic testimonies). In addition, Sunan Kalijaga also composed puppet performances in places of worship with two sentences of creed. This was done by Sunan Kalijaga that occurred directly as his mastermind.

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32 Interview with Among, Karmina, and Dakina, November 23, 26, 28, 2015 in the Bayalong Village.
Conclusion

The influence of Sufism in form of field of art had influenced art and music. The form and pattern in art and Sufism was developed based on the theoretical spiritual values. The inner meanings in the art of Sufism have a variety of meanings and all propped up to the divine values and as the center of the imagination and inspiration of the arts in Islam.

Art in Sufism is a part of Islamic culture that should be proud of. The pride in the sense of art and Sufism spread across the Islamic world to Cirebon has taken an important role in the development of Islam and culture. This high quality is recognized as an extraordinary media of civilization. The art of Sufism is not only merely an art value or a called “art for art” but also art in Sufism has intuitive meanings or in the terminology of Sufism called batiniyah symbolized in forms of full meaning and imagination. Spiritual values in Sufism-style art are usually synergistic with their aesthetic values. A good collaboration between outward beauty and inner values contain in art thus making Sufism-style art one of the best media in Islamic transmission in the Nusantara, especially in Java.

Brai art as one of the Cirebon arts that has a sense of Sufism is still developing today. Brai arts began as entertainment in the Palace and at the same time as a media of propaganda as well as social binders from various elements of society. It has full of meaning illustrating the love of God with full hydration and devotion. Brai as a form of expression of beauty in feeling God’s presence is inherent and deep in the mind.
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