

JAVENESE POETRY AS DA'WAH PACKAGING IN THE BOOK *RIAYATAL HIMMAH* OF KH AHMAD RIFA'I

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Abstract

Riayah al-Himma is a book containing an Islamic teaching Islamic Cleric written by a Javanese, KH Ahmad Rifa'i. This is the source of data used in this research. It is interesting to inquire since it is presented in a form of lyrics from its Rhyming and the clustering of four lines in verse Click or call now. Such writing is made to the make the teaching easy to remember by reciting the verses together. The objective of the study is to find out the poetics of the book. The study applied a semiotic-poetic approach, identify the elements in the text. From the analysis, it was found that the book has the features of a modern Javanese poem and poem. In terms of Javanese poems, it has components of *Guru Lagu* (the rhymes), *Guru Gatra* (number of lines in verse), and *Guru Wilangan* (number of syllables in line). In terms of the modern poem, the text in the book has versification, tone, rhythm, and musical devices, but it has no figurative languages.

Keywords: poetic elements, Islamic books, Javanese poem, lyrics.

A. INTRODUCTION

KH Ahmad Rifai was a figure of national struggle against the colonialism especially in the district Kalisalak, Batang Regency. He is one of the freedom fighters who has been recognized as one of the national heroes by President SBY. His pure struggle against the invaders was based on the spirit of *Amar ma'ruf amar nahi munkar*, or the Islamic teaching to campaign the right things and fight against the evil. He was one of the characters who were not only against the Dutch colonization, but also did not agree with the local clerics and religious leaders who had been underbowed of the Dutch colonists, as mentioned by Azzumardi Azzra (2002) ,

.... tokoh-tokoh seperti Kyai Ahmad Rifa'i dari Kalisalak Pekalongan, yang ini juga merefleksikan sebuah dinamika Intelektual. ... Kyai Ahmad Rifa'i saya kira mewakili perlawanan terhadap mungkin bisa kita sebut sebagai Islam birokratik. ... Islam birokratik yaitu Islam yang sudah dijinakkan dan kemudian dijadikan sebagai bagian integral dari birokrasi Pemerintahan Belanda. Dan ini melalui penghulu melalui peradilan agama dsb.

One of his strong and most prominent characteristics is his writing talent. He liked to write a lot, a literal habit which is obviously scarce at his time. His works are hundreds of manuscripts on Islamic teaching. Many of them, not to say most, were brought by the Dutch colonialists. Some of them were studied by a Japanese researcher for her dissertation (*Ukhurwah*, June, 2002).

His Activeness in writing the book that spawned hundreds of works to review all aspects of Islamic religiosity in detail, as revealed by Rifan (2004):

Kitab-kitabnya itu ditulis dengan huruf pegon, huruf Arab dengan bahasa Jawa yang sering dicampurkan dengan bahasa lain. Selain bahasa Jawa, dalam penulisan kitabnya KH Ahmad Rifa'i juga menggunakan bahasa-bahasa lain yang ada di nusantara atau bahkan bahasa Arab sendiri. Penggunaan berbagai bahasa dalam karangannya tidak lepas dari pengalamannya menjelajah wilayah, termasuk negeri berbahasa Arab, sehingga bahasanya pun banyak terwarnai oleh bahasa Arab. Selain itu, bahasa Melayu juga turut mewarnai bahasa kitabnya. Petualangan kehidupan ke berbagai wilayah ini secara gamblang diungkapkan oleh Syadirin Amin (via Rifan, 2004:3).

Their books were written with *pegon* (Arabic) letters. It used Arabic alphabet but in Javanese language, sometimes is often mixed with other languages, like Malay and Arabic. The use of some languages in the books is due to the author's experience in exploring Islamic knowledge and spread it to many regions. The adventures of different areas of life are reported in detail by Syadirin Amin (via Rifan, 2004: 3).

In addition to the mixed language elements are mixed, the Islamic books are also written in the form of poetryies which are easily chanted. The chanting of the verses in the books has been a

long-standing tradition for his followers. They usually chant them before doing the five prayers. This way makes them easy to understand and remember the teachings in the books. Considering the unique of the book, the paper discusses the poetic elements in one of his books, *Ri'ayatal Himmah*.

The phenomenon highlighted in this study is the language in the book. It will be used as the sole material in research studies to be conducted, a single case study (Heath: 2002). Data collection methods applied are reading and recording. This option was taken given the data source is the archives (Myers, 2004: 7). From the readings, the researchers took the data considered to represent the information on their poetism as the objectives of the study. In line with the approach used, the researchers took a semiotic analysis model. This model is one way we can choose among many options. This is similar to what Myers (2004: 8) explains, "although there are many models in the analysis of qualitative research ... only three of which we apply here: hermeneutics models, semiotic and narrative and metaphor. "

B. POETRY

Poetry is a form of literary work as an expression of the author's imagination. It is a matter which is long contemplated in the author's mind on what he/she observes in the reality. This also can be sensed in the songs, for example those created to respond on a disaster of tsunami in Aceh. The verbal expressions, expressed in the song, are products of blend of the real phenomenon and the inner process of thinking, resulting in a great misery echoed in them.

Reuben (2003) describes the poem as a kind of language that can express something more and more powerful than the language in general. While William Wordsworth (via Reuben) defines poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings, recollected in tranquility." It is a spontaneous flow of powerful feeling, and manifest in sincerity and purity. Poetry is a form of densed-meaning literary works in least of words.

Waluyo (1987: 25) summarizes the limitations of the various notions of poetry as follows:

- a. Poetry concentrates or condenses any element of the power of language

- b. The elements are arranged in a neat language, refined, and arranged as such that it makes rhythm and sound
- c. The poem expresses the thoughts and feelings based on mood or experience and the imagination
- d. The language used is connotative, characterized by concrete words and figurative language
- e. Physical form and inner unity of poetry are bounded and cannot be separated.

Looking at the above definition of poetry, the book taken as the source of data in this study clearly is not a poem. Its language is not connotative because it functions to explain the Islamic teaching. Its content or material is not something created from the author's imagination or fantasy. However, it is packed using the elements of poetry, i.e. rhythm and sound. The author has made use of the poetic words to evoke the meaning, but it has to be clear and understandable for the target readers.

1. Javanese Poetry

The Javanese-book, though not in Javanese script, is written in verse. Thus it may be reflected in the forms of Javanese poem or song of Java. Javanese poetry is a means of expression of the soul that conveys the message not only through words, but also delivered in a tone for the deepening of the meaning conveyed. Therefore, each Javanese song, known as *macapat*, has a special delivery role or different from each other, for example *Asmaradana* is a song to express the sadness of love—an expression of love that can be conveyed because of the strains wrapped in a lilting tone. Meanwhile, a taste of cheerful, witty humor can be heard from the song *Pucung*. Through this song, a dynamic tone, a light and humorous message are disclosed to the audience (Waluyo, 1987: 12).

Poetry has the requisite physical structure of Java, which is a sound rule, *guru lagu*, i.e. final sounds of the line in verse. It also has *guru gatra*, a number of lines in each song, stanza. Another one is *guru wilangan* referred to as "the number of syllables in each line" (Waluyo, 1987: 13). All three of these rules still apply. Each song has a fixed rule of the number of lines, the final sound of the line and the number of syllables per line. Thus,

when a poet wants to express his love sorrow, then he must take and follow the rules in *Asmaradana*.

C. Findings and Discussion

The book of *Riayatal Himmah* consists of 259 pages. Each page presents the 11 lines, with two verses in each; the verses are arranged in two column pages. The only different page is the first page with 7 lines. Thus the number of lines in the book is 5690.

Here's an example of the lines in the book.

^{A1}*Utawi rahmate Allah lan salame
Allah*

²*Mugi wuruwuh atas utusane
Allah*

May bless and mercy of Allah

Bestowed unto His messenger

^{B3}*Nabi kita Muhammad kang wus
kalenggah*

⁴*Lan atas kawula wargane lan
sahabat genah*

Prophet Muhammad that had
passed away

and alsosurely for his family
and apostles.

The stanza above consists of two lines A and B, and two columns, 1 and 2. Of the 5690 lines, all are arranged in such a way to form stanzas, each consisting of two lines and four verses. In the book, the first word of each stanza is always marked with red print. Thus in the book, the word “utawi” is in red. The use of red print is also applied to the quotations of Qur’an, Hadist and also the Moslem ullemas.

1. The Poetics of *Riayatal Himmah*

Poetic characters in the book can be seen from the Javanese song rules. As mentioned before, the rule of Javanese song determined by fixed elements of *guru lagu*, *guru gatra* and *guru wilangan*. Seeing the stanzas of the book making the characters of Javanese song, these elements need to reveal what kinds of patterns, which make it different from the fixed rule of the Javanese traditional songs.

a. Guru Gatra (Number of lines in the stanzas).

Guru gatra or the number of lines in a single poem. Java has a fixed amount. Javanese poetry, in this case *macapat*, always

has a rule that does not change, and should always be obeyed. Viewed from this point, the book is hardly a Javanese poem, because it does not follow the rules. The number of the lines in the text is just too if it is considered as a whole as a single poem. However, if it is taken as stanza, it always has four lines in each. This is evident from the same final sound, *guru lagu*. For example:

*Utawi rahmate lan salame Allah
Nabi Muhammad kang wus kalenggah*

*Mugi wuwuh atas utusane Allah
Atas kawula wargane lan sahabat genah*

In the stanza, all the lines end with the sound 'ah'; they form a unity of verse. From the 259 existing page, all the lines are written in stanzas, each of which consists of 4 lines. Thus, the *guru gatra* of the book manuscript number four lines in each stanza.

b. *Guru Lagu* (Final Sound)

From the results of a thorough and in-depth reading and analysis of the teacher of the songs on the book manuscript, it appears that there is a pattern of sound that is highly variable end. There are 37 (thirty-seven) types of *guru lagu* used by the author to convey religious ideas. The variety of *guru lagu* in the book is below.

No	Code	<i>Guru lagu</i>	Examples
1	1:1b	An	Sarta nebut asma Allah murah kadunyan
2	1:5a	Ne	Utawi sekeh puji Allah kagungane
3	2:2a	Ur	Allah kang agung kang maha luhur
4	2:4a	Hi	Wajib pangestune ing Allah dikekahi
5	2:11a	Ah	Maka ikilah kitab nadzam tarajumah
6	3:3a	Ra	Ing dalem nyatakaken ngilmu telung parkara
7	9:5-6	In	Ikilah panggerane bangsa ngaklin
8	16:4-5	Am	Ikulah mukalp arep tinemu paham
9	16:6-7	Ma	Ghalib ngalin tan paham ukarane agama
10	16:8-9	Im	Nyata sasar satengahe wong ngalim
11	17:3-4	Ang	Maring ngalim ngadil bener hujah menang
12	20:10	La	Ikilah kur'an dalil maknane kapartela
13	22:10-11	At	Sekabehe dedalane seton jelunat
14	24:10-11	Ru	Aja pisan laku kufur cilaka tiniru

15	25:3-4	Ta	Kaya wong bodo solat batalan kalunta
16	25:7-8	Ka	Senadiyan siniksa lawas ning neraka
17	25:11-26:1	Sa	Ing dalem dlohire mungguh manusa
18	43:5-6	Ud	Satengah ngalim lan haji imane mardud
19	46:6-7	Na	Akeh wong pada nduwe Kur'an kang ana
20	56:4-5	As	Maka liwate iku luwih gelis lepas
21	62: 2-3	Ung	Kang manjingaken Allah ing neraka agung
22	62:6-7	Ba	Nyata banget kaduwung kapis gedhe coba
23	66:8-9	Pa	Ikilah kalam ngulama pahame idepa
24	81:5-6	Ri	Lamon tan jazem, maka kelangan lari
25	95:3-4	Al	Kang agawe sawiji-wiji kang katingal
26	96:10-11	Ya	Kang dadi neka'aken pangaweruhe iya
27	113:7-8	Um	Wong ikhlas dzikir iku akeh ma'lum
28	118:10-11	Ar	Uga anut ing wong bid'ah sasar
29	123:3-4	Lu	Wajib nuli ngaweruhi aja belilu
30	126:9-8	Uh	Kang dadi panutan wajib diluruh
31	128:10-11	id	Ikilah kalam ngulama tinemu warid
32	133:11-134:1	ut	Luwih akeh wong tuku kemrubit
33	135:9-10	Em	Pangestune ing syara' atine tan jazem
34	179:1-2	Ku	Aja kaya wicarane kang wus kelaku
35	189:11-190:1	ik	Nyata ekeh wong anut ing ngalim fasik
36	190:4-5	Wa	Tinemu satengahe wong ngalim aweh pituwa
37	236:4-5	il	Iku kabeh nyelayane saking ngalim ngadil

Thus, the book has 37 variants of final sounds in the stanzas. The similar sounds (the rhyme) or the same *guru lagu* is the key to make the texts in the book is easy to chant. This way will be easier for the readers to remember the teaching like the procedures of daily rituals in Islam.

c. *Guru Wilangan* (Number of Syllables)

The number of syllables in each line varies. The authors found six patterns of the number of syllables contained in the text of the book, those are:

No	Code	Text	Number of Guru Wilangan
1	1:1a	Miwiti hamba ing nadzam iki tarajumahan	15
2	9:10b	Artine wajib tan tinemu kenadzarane	14
3	9:2b	Ikulah wadok-wadoke hukum syariat	13
4	9-3a	Artine sah iku lulus lestarine	12
5	9:1a	Maring ngibadat dadi hasil kuwat	11
6	2-2a	Allah kang agung kang maha luhur	10
7	14:10b	Mungguh syara' kang tinutur	9

Guru wilangan or the number of syllables like above colors all the pages in the book manuscript. The number of syllables is not so varied; it has a function to ease the chanting. The most frequent number of syllables is between 15-12 syllables. In chanting the stanza with various number of *guru wilangan*, the moslem community usually modifies the tempo, either by increasing or decreasing it accordingly.

2. Discussion

The text of the book *Riayah Tal Himmah* like one long poem divided into stanzas of four lines. The four lines that make up the temple is marked by the end of the same sound, the teacher called Javanese poetry convention songs. When viewed from the rules of poetry Java, it can be said that the book manuscript can be said to diverge. The text of the book does not follow the fixed rules of poetry Java standard.

Seen from the content, the stanzas in the book contains teachings on religion to tell people how to be a good human being in life or even deeper meaning -content wrapped in the form of diversification (Waluyo, 1987). It is a religious doctrine for Moslem. Such a content should be submitted via *Dhandanggula*, in Javanese poetry convention .

Using this formula, the composer of Javanese songs usually deliver advice, speech, or storytelling. *Dhandanggula* has a fixed number of 10 lines, or 10 guru gatra, and the fixed guru wilangan in each line of 10, 10, 8, 7, 9, 7, 6, 8, 12, 7 and the fixed

guru lagu of each line is i, a, e, u, i, a, u, a, i, a (Mulyani, 2002). Compared to the Javanese song or poem, the book manuscript is obviously very different.

Seen from the modern poetry, the script of *Riayat al-Himmah* book can be regarded as a long poem like *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran. This comparison is only valid on the fact that the manuscript book from beginning to end, over a hundred pages, makes one unity. In terms of the elements of the poem, the manuscript only has the musical and tone and rhythm and meter, and does not contain any element of imagery, figurative language (metaphor, personification, metonymy, symbol and allegory, paradox), which are all elements of poetry (Reuben, 2003). Of course it is impossible to convey the teachings of the symbols contained in those elements of poetry, as it will expense element of clarity and will only create confusion for the target readers. After all, the main central objective of the author to write the book is to help people understand the teaching of Islam in Java, a community speaking Javanese.

The elements of poetry in the book, in the form of musical devices, tone and rhythm, have a goal to facilitate the easy chanting and memorizing. With them, the people can easily make it like a song to chant to remember and understand the principles and rules in Islam. In addition to the element of the poem, an attempt to bring forth the musical tones and rhythms leads to create the dictions (Waluyo, 1987) which are carefully sorted to produce a uniform sound in every line of all stanzas.

The text of the book clearly cannot be said to be a poem. However, it is undeniable that the manuscript has most of the elements contained in the Javanese poetry and modern poetry. Through the translation of Islamic teachings from Arabic sources into Javanese texts of stanzas, Ahmad Rifa'i has great expectation that the Javanese people at the time can understand the true teachings of Islam. The move was a major contribution at the time, when Islam is always presented in the written Arabic language that would be difficult for Javanese people.

D. Conclusion

The book of *Riayatal Himmah* some elements of Javanese poetry and modern poetry. It has *guru gatra*, *guru lagu*, and *guru wilangan*, but it does not follow the rule of the common Javanese poetry. It has stanzas marked by the same final sound, *guru lagu*. Each stanza contains four lines with various number of syllables (*guru wilangan*) in it. The text of the book also has a diversification, tone, rhythm and musical devices, like modern poetry, but the elements like figurative language and other figures of speech are not there. The language used is clearly more straightforward, because the goal is to provide a clear explanation. Units of the sentence in the text book is not limited by the stanzas are arranged. In other words, there is no linear relationship between the unit and the sentences in the stanzas, each of which does not necessarily represent a complete sentence.

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