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## Kiai Masykur's teaching of Sambelun (1860-1960) as a model of sufistic da'wah

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## **Keywords**:

Sufistic Da'wah, Sambelun, Kiai Masykur, Cirebon.

#### **Abstract**

**Purpose** - literature of Sufism in the archipelago showed that Islamic doctrines that have been preached in society have been dialectic with local developments and culture. This assumes an unique yet effective form of da'wah. The purpose of this study is to explain the core teachings of Sambelun as a model of da'wah used by Kiai Masykur to spead Islamic teachings and doctrines among his surroundings.

**Method** - This paper is based on library research related to the points of Sambelun's teachings. In dissecting and uncovering Sambelun's teachings, three stages of data collection techniques are used, namely the orientation stage, the data collection stage and data analysis.

**Result** - *Sambelun* teachings presuppose a human journey that must be forged and trained strictly and continuously with *mujahadah* and *riyadhah* in order to obtain the status of *insan kamil* (perfect/universal man).

**Implication** - *Sambelun* teachings are combination of Sufism and local culture which made a distingtion of Javanese Islam, including in Cirebon. Sambelun introduces the essence of man which is the ultimate goal for every *salik* of God's path.

**Originality** - This research is a study of local Sufism in Cirebon by exploring the core of the character's thinking, Furthermore, this study aims to take a deeper look at the role of da wah of kiai masykur in speading Islam among his surroundings.

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#### Kata kunci:

Da'wah Sufistik, Sambelun, Kiai Masykur, Cirebon.

#### **Abstrak**

**Tujuan -** literatur tasawuf di nusantara menunjukkan bahwa ajaran Islam yang diwartakan di masyarakat telah berdialektika dengan perkembangan dan kebudayaan setempat. Ini mengasumsikan bentuk da'wah yang unik namun efektif. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menjelaskan inti ajaran Sambelun sebagai model da'wah yang digunakan Kiai Masykur untuk menyebarkan ajaran dan doktrin Islam di lingkungannya.

**Metode -** Tulisan ini berdasarkan studi kepustakaan terkait dengan pokok-pokok ajaran Sambelun. Dalam membedah dan mengungkap ajaran Sambelun digunakan tiga tahapan teknik pengumpulan data yaitu tahap orientasi, tahap pengumpulan data dan analisis data.

**Hasil -** Ajaran Sambelun mengandaikan perjalanan manusia yang harus ditempa dan dilatih secara ketat dan berkesinambungan dengan mujahadah dan riyadhah untuk memperoleh status insan kamil (manusia sempurna/universal).

**Implikasi** - Ajaran Sambelun merupakan perpaduan tasawuf dan budaya lokal yang menjadi pembeda Islam Jawa, termasuk di Cirebon. Sambelun memperkenalkan hakikat manusia yang merupakan tujuan akhir dari setiap salik jalan Tuhan.

**Orisinalitas** - Penelitian ini merupakan kajian tasawuf lokal di Cirebon dengan menggali inti pemikiran tokoh. Selanjutnya, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat lebih dalam peran da'wah kiai masykur dalam da'wah Islam di lingkungannya.

#### Introduction

As a divine teaching that contains the value system of life, Islamic doctrines will only become a unconventional concepts if it is not applied in real life. Society will sink into a misguidance and remain in darkness if it is not illuminated by the light of Islam. Man will live in confusion and vacillation if he lives without a firm grip on God's teachings (Arief Rahman et al., 2021). Da'wah, or Islamic preaching, as an effort to spread the teachings of Islam in the community is absolutely necessary. The goal is to create an individual, a family (*usrah*) and society (*jama'ah*) that cosider Islam as a way of thingking and a way of life to achieve a happy life in the afterlife (Nasution, 2020).

The effectiveness of this preacing certainly requires a dynamic approaches in accordance with the social and cultural conditions of the people it targets. The success of the Islamic *da'wah* carried out by Wali Songo according to Alwi Shihab, especially on the island of Java, cannot be separated from their consideration of appreciating deep-rooted indigenous traditions or cultures, by not destroying them and replacing them with an Arab culture (Saumantri, 2022). The Islamic teaching that brought by those saints was Islamic sufism and mysticism.

According to Alwi, the spread of Islam in the archipelago thanks to the role and contribution of preacher of mysticism mode of *da'wah*. This is also acknowledged by most historians and researchers, one of which is Martin Van Bruinessen. According to Martin, the success was due to the more compromising and compassionate traits and attitudes of the Sufis. Sufism does have a tendency to form an open and cosmopolitan-oriented human being (Bruinessen, 1995).

In the archipelago, the Sufis introduced their teachings in a way that is adapted to the development and dynamics of local culture in each region, where each region has different traditions and cultures adapted to the circumstances of the area, such as Sufism in Aceh, Palembang, Makasar, Banten, Cirebon and others. In Nusantara, various *da'wah* movements through the development of art and culture were carried out persuasively and systematically, where at that time, the influence of Hindu-Buddhist religious elements that had long developed in the Cirebon and Pasundan areas has been abundance. However, Sunan Gunung Jati did not eliminate these cultural elements, but integrated them harmoniously with Islamic teachings, which caused Islamic teachings to develop and acepted by the people of Cirebon and Pasundan (Hajam, 2021; Karim et al, 2021).

Sunan Gunung Jati has succeeded in positioning religion and culture as two things that are inseparable. Religion and Culture in Cirebon until now always exist and appear together in public, that is shown by local celebrations and events which show that religion and culture are not separate. Cirebon is a city rich in culture and traditions. The integration of religion and culture become an icon of Cirebon as city of *walis* and cultured city (Suryaman, 2015). In his seminal work of religion, Daniel L. Pals quoted Geertz that religion has cultural dimension. With Geertz idea about cultural system on religion, anything that carries and conveys to people an idea, like a Buddhist prayer wheel, or in this case a Sambal that is made by various ingredients, is characterized as a system of symbols which is embedded in a religion (Pals, 2015).

One of the models of *da'wah* of Sufism that synergizes religion and culture is the teachings of Sambelun or Sembayun. Sambelun's teachings were originally initiated by Kiai Masykur (1835-1961 AD) from Karangsari Weru Village, Weru District, Cirebon Regency, West Java. Sambelun

teachings contain very complex Islamic teachings derived from the book of stanza 12 (bait 12) that compiled by Sheikh H.Moch.Noer RA from the Kemuningsari Lor area, Panti district, Jember Regency. Sambelun introduces the essence of man who has a sense of spirituality of suluk (path's towards) to his God (Amal, 2014).

Sambelun is combination of Sufism doctines and local culture which is became a distingtion of Islamic Java, including in Cirebon. As a product of local culture, Sambelun does not abandon the local factors that developed in the area where Kiyai Masykur lived and preached. Sambelun is filled with strict sufistic teachings dan doctrines. The combination of Islamic teachings and Sufism towards locality and culture in Cirebon, as reflected in Sambelun, confirms the so-called pribumization of Islam (Indiginization of Islamic doctrines). Kiyai Masykur's role in spreading JID | 209 Islam in the Cirebon can still be seen in its legacies, including: the establishment of the Mosque as a place where he delivered his doctrines, and also the establishment of the Pesantren Mukasyafah Arifin Billah as a centre of education.

Based on those unique facts about Islamic da'wah in Cirebon that is shown by sambelun, this paper will explain the values of Sufism in sambelun which is considered as typical da'wah of Sufism that comes into contact with local culture and history, which has nothing to do with animism, dynamism, or the influence of Hindu-Buddhist traces.

### **Research Methods**

This research uses library research related to the points of Sambelun's teachings. Qualitative methods are also included, where the elements in qualitative type research include an open analysis with a research focus that can change and cause a lot of attention to the process of use during an indepth interview with K. Maskur's family to explore the content of Sambelun's teachings and understanding.

Qualitative research will use a natural paradigm which this research assumes that empirical realities occur in a socio-cultural context that is interrelated with each other. Therefore, according to the scientific paradigm, any social phenomenon must be revealed holistically. Therefore, the results of this study are verifiable (proving the theory). The nature or type of this study is descriptiveanalysis-explanatory. Research will try to explain the understanding and teachings of local Sufism through Sambelun as a model of Islamic da'wah used in spreading Islamic law and doctrines.

To dissect and uncover Sambelun's teachings, three stages of data collection techniques are used: First the orientation step, which carried out by looking for information from various sources. At this stage, researchers also ask for input from other figures or scholars around Cirebon, either in Islamic boarding schools or MUI who have scientific capacities that are in accordance with local Sufism studies. Secondly, the data collection, At this stage, the researcher uses the method of documenting data to gain specific data, both from primary and secondary sources. The data was collected with the intention of answering the things that are the focus of the problem in this study. At this stage, the researcher will also select the data found to be precise and focused. Third step is data analysis. The data will be analyzed qualitatively using deductive and comparative analysis instruments so that it is expected that this research will have academic quality. Deductive is a step of data analysis by explaining some data that is specific to form a generalization. The comparative method explains the relationship or relation of two phenomena or systems of thought.

#### **Results and Discussion**

The Core Teachings of Sambelun

Linguistically, sambelun is taken from the local language combined with the linguistic system in Arabic, namely *sambel* and the suffix "un" (*tanwin*), a kind of diacritic or harakat at the end of Arabic writing which indicates that the letter sounds as if it meets a dead *nun*. This merger is strongly suspected to familiarize the sufis teachings of Islam to local people who are more familiar with regional languages. In the teachings and traditions passed down by Kiyai Masykur in the Karangsari Weru community, there are many mergers of the two linguistic traditions to familiarize the teachings of Islam to the local community. This phenomenon of language assimilation also occurs in Persian which adopts the Arabic system, such as the Persian suffix *-idan* which is merged into the Arabic word found in *fahm-idan* (Perry, 2002).

The word *sambelun* itself does not have a reference to the terminological definition used by the Islamic teaching and scientific system. In the Islamic tradition in the archipelago, the adoption of the local language and its culture in Islamic teachings is often encountered and often used as a form of *pribumization* of Islamic *da'wah*. Sambelun is an effort from Kiyai Masykur to promote Islamic and spiritual teachings that emphasizes the moral and ethical development of Muslims. Regarding the substance of the teachings of *sambelum*, there is not much literature inherited by him except in the form of oral traditions, preserved teachings, and some spiritual interpretations of sufism that view *sambelun* as a form of sufism doctrine.

The word *sambel* itself refers to a sambal, which is a kind of flavoring food or spicy condiment that complements food. Sambal is usually made from chili peppers that are ground, mashed, and added with other ingredients such as onion, shrimp paste, orange leaves, and so on. According to the tradition of *sambelun* teachings as spoken orally by Wagimin Nurullah; the son-in-law of Kiai Masykur family, sambel became a symbol that depicts the perfect human event after being forged by trials and a long process.

According to the teachings of Kiai Masykur, man must be forged by trials, hard work, obedience, and a long process to become a human being who has the perfection of taste as the enjoyment of food perfected by a sambal. Sambal is made with aids such as *ulekan* (pestle) and *cobek* (mortar). The symbol pestle and mortar in the *sambelun* doctrine indicates the process of human development that is inseparable from the participation of others and the process that surrounds it. Pestle became a symbol of the *riyadah* and *mujahadah* process. Whereas mortar is a container in which humans are forged to get better. Pestle can be interpreted as a person's position when in the natural world (Syafa'ah, 2015).

The significance of food and culinary tools used as symbolization of a teaching seems to refer to the value found in food itself. In culinary and food history, seasonings are among those that have great value in the currents of historical movement. In the centuries-old history of European discoveries, European travelers and sailors traveled to Far Eastern region in order to find spices. Big names in this era such as Da Gama, Magelian, Drake, Columbus and others are considered Asian spice hunters. Maro Polo for example, the Venetian traveler, is referred to as a spice agent and makes millions of money as a result of his travels to the Asian region (Ritchie, 1981).

Sambal is symbolized as part of the spiritual teachings by Kiai Masykur because it can represent the noble values of human being, namely spiritual perfection and stability of faith after going through the process of forging. Sambal shows the qualities of a complete human being after going through a process of spiritual cleansing through the suluk of sufism and total obedience to God. This is in accordance with sambal as a food seasoning which is not only a complement to the aesthetic side of food, but also one of the most important factors in determining the quality of food (Setiawan, 2016)

If the Persian Sufi, Fariduddin Attar, describes the spiritual journey of a salik who wants to find his God by the journey of birds (Almascaty, 2017). Then Kiai Masykur uses the symbol of food and it tools to describe the process of a spiritual journey by salik that boils down to the purification of JID | 211 his soul and morals. This shows the depth of thinking of Kiai Masykur and his intelligence in adopting local culture to embed Islamic doctrines in society that seem to require simplification of Islamic teachings in the form of cultural adaptation and symbolization. Because of the symbolization of this teaching as well, sambelun has diverse interpretations by its adherents and devotees. Sufism is more "personal" and "direct" impregnated by disciples and saliks who accept the teachings and doctrines of sufism (Beyers, 2017).

Departing from this argument, sambelun teachings are not written by default in Islamic doctrinal books. Titus Burckhardt writes that writing in the Sufism tradition plays only a second role as a preparation, complement, or helper of memory (Burckhardt, 2008). In the tradition of Islamic Sufism, symbolization and the use of certain likes, parables, or symbols to illustrate the depth of the spiritual experience are often encountered. The use of parables in delivering a message is among the methods of da'wah by the prophets to their people. Al-Ghazali wrote, "What we mean by parable is to convey a meaning in a form. If one sees it into its meaning, then he finds the truth, but if he looks only at its form, it gets a lie. [....] The Prophets never left parables when talking to men because they were assigned to talk to others based on their level of intellect" (Al-Ghazali, 2011).

In Cirebon, especially in Weru region, Sambelun are taught by Kiyai Masykur not only as a guide for his students who are on their path toward sufism, but also as a sufistic method and pattern of da'wah that attracts a lot of public attention because of its symbolization that is close to the culture of the community. Da'wah using Sufism doctrines also seems to be more acceptable to the public because Sufism tries to meet human needs both physically and spiritually (Sukardi, 2015). The discussion below is a study of the dimension of da'wah in the sufistic teachings of Sambelun passed down by Kiyai Masykur.

Homever, teachings of Sambelun did not always get the same response from the community in its sorroundings. Many of them accepted it, but also not a few who rejected it. For some people, Sambelun does not represent strong Islamic aspects because Sambelun uses local culture and mixes it with Islamic religious doctrines. In the religious tradition in the Archipelago, teachings or doctrins of kebatinan and spirituality are often associated with teachings outside the mainstream of Islam, because the terms spiritual and spirituality refer to the teachings of Javanese Kabatinan (Kejawen) which considered occult. Ahmad Muttagin said that the position of the so-called spiritual groups outside of religions which were formalized by the state, experienced a problematic situation, not only in their relation to the state, but also to other official religions (Muttagin, 2012).

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The Sufistic Value of Sambelun

Sambelun is taught by Kiyai Masykur as a sufistic doctrine related to the ideal attainment of a god's servant and salik, that is to be a perfect human being (insan kamil). Based on the explanations about sambelun written in this study which come from various figures who have a relationship with Kiai Masykur, such as his grandson named Zakaria, Setianata, and Wagimin Nurullah, it appears that Sambelun has a da'wah dimension that leads to the achieving certain spiritual degree of human beings in the eyes of God.

Sambelun presupposes the journey (*suluk*) of a believer to reach the level of *insan kamil*. In this regard, it seems that it is also necessary to emphasize that Wagimin's explanation is the most comprehensive and profound explanation of Sambelun because of his emotional closeness to the children and grandchildren of Kiai Masykur, as well as his educational background in Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia which teach the doctrines of Sufism in depth.

Based on Wagimin's presentation, Sambelun has the teachings of Sufism which aims to the formation of complete human beings spiritually. Sambelun presupposes a human journey that must be forged and trained strictly and continuously with *mujahadah* and *riyadhah* in order to obtain the status of *kamil* (perfect/universal man). For Wagimin, symbols such as shrimp paste, salt, chili, and other condiments indicate that humans are composed of various elements that if put together and processed using *cobek* (mortar) and *ulekan* (pestle), it will produce chili sauce which shows that all humans must unite (Syafa'ah, 2015).

Wagimin seems to interpret Sambelun as a moral doctrine that emphasizes the unity and union of man with nature and God. In other explanations. Wagimin also referred to Sambelun as a teaching that builds man up to his spiritual perfection thus making him a universal person who acquires a wise attitude as a blessing (rahmah) to the universe. If Sambelun does teach the process of how man attains universal human status which must go through a forging process of mujahadah and riyadah, then this picture has a strong tradition in the doctrines of classical Islamic sufism such as in abdul Karim al-Jili's concept of  $insan\ kamil\ (w.\ 1424\ M)$ , a famous Sufi from Jil, Baghdad. Among the many Sufis and philosophers who discussed the concept of  $insan\ kamil\$ , al-Jili seems to be among those who completed his discussion specifically and systematically in his book entitled al-Insan al-Kamil  $fii\ Ma'rifat\ al$ -Awail  $wa\ al$ -Awakhir.

In the tradition of Islamic sufism, *insan kamil* itself is the highest *maqam* (position) of stability that an *istikamah* salik might achieve. When he reaches it, the *inayah* (Lord's attention) will "catch up" with him and then he will relate to Him. When a sufi achieves that goal, then his soul becomes the perfect soul. This position is certainly inseparable from obstacles. To achieve this, a salik needs to do the *mujahadah* (hard work) that the *shiddiqin* (those with kindhearted man) do (Kiki Muhamad Hakiki, 2018).

In the al-Jili view, the degree of *insan kamil* must be passed by practicing the pillars of Islam plenary, observing the pillars of faith steadily, and then entering the *ash-shalah* (piety) phase. In this phase, one practices worshiping of Allah with fear and hope (khauf and rajaa). After that, it will enter the *al-ihsan* phase which includes various *maqams* (spiritual stations) such as; *taubat*, *inabah*, *zuhud*, *tawakal*, *rida*, *tafwidh*, and *ikhlas*. In the *tawakkal* phase, a Sufi has actually touched the *maqam* of the *insan kamil* because another meaning of this concept is the *tajalli* 

(embodiment) of God on the certain form. Tawakal represents god's tajalli of His af'al (deeds) (Adenan & Nasution, 2020).

If it refers to this meaning, then the teachings of Sambelun which presuppose the formation of a perfect human being forged through mujahadah processes symbolized by mortar and pestle seem to have something in common, although the differences in depth of understanding and spiritual absorption between the two concepts as well as their practice in the life of a believer, will be expressly different.

Tracing to the teachers of Kiai Masykur, it seems that Sambelun doctrines are a form of projection of the spiritual teachings he received while study in Pesantren and his relationship with many Sufi teachers in Java. According to Wagimin's explanation, Kiai Masykur was once a student  $\overline{^{
m JID}\mid_{213}}$ at the Pesantren Nahdhatul Arifin under the care of the charismatic Jember cleric, Kiai Moeh Noer. Based on his religious knowledge, Kiai Noer or better known as Kiai Kemuning, is a figure of ulama (Islamic scholar) who struggles in the field of Sufism to get a degree of guardianship and exposure to inspiration directly from God.

On the other hand, writers such as Muhammad Ardiansah who researched the bait 12 of Kiai Noer's legacy, mentioned that Kiai Masykur, whose real name is Muhammad Ishaq, was a friend and caliph (successor) of sheikh Kemuning for the Cirebon region and its surroundings. Kiai Ishaq (or referred by Ardiansyah as Kiai Sambelun) gained the authority to teach the *suluk* of the *bait 12* teachings in his pesantren (Mukasyafah Arifin Billah, Weru Cirebon) (Ardiansyah, 2015).

The ideas of sufism that have a trace in tradition of philoshopy are indeed found in the work of Kiai Noer Jember. In his monumental work, fath al-'Arifin 'Ilm al-Mukasyafah wa al-Ilham, Kiai Noer teaches Islamic ideas, divinity, morals, and the doctrines of sufism in the form of nazham (rhymes). One of the core teachings of Kiai Noer is the suluk of bait 12, which contains sufis doctrines that symbolized by certain numbers. Those numbers enclaves various instructions that must be carried out by those who want to reach the highest essence (truth) and know the secret of God through the path of makrifat (mystical knowledge). The theme of makrifat or knowledge of God is at the core of Kiai Noer's teachings. For Kiai Noer, makrifat is a path for a God's servant who wants to achieve the degree of a insan kamil or a perfect human being. In one of his stanzas (Noer, n.d.), Kiai Noer says:

"The 'arif (those who attained the makrifat) of Allah, the One

With the eyes of the heart

Then he is trully a wali (god's lover)

Also becomes fully a percet human being (insan kamil)."

The doctrines of sufism in this philosophical style were passed on to Kiai Masykur and had been taught at the Pesantren Mukasyafah Arifin Billah in Cirebon. In this pesantren, Kiai Masykur also teaches the *suluk* of the *bait 12* and other sufism doctrines that not only focus on moral formation, but also the deepening of the faith, sharp dzaug (taste), and mujahadah which aims to a true makrifat of Allah. The teachings of sambelun seem to hinge at the end of it, towards a true

knowledge of God. Because if a person already knows himself, through a heavy and hard forging process (symbolized by mortar and pestle), which turns into chili sauce and produces delicious and perfect "food" qualities, then in fact he has reached the the essence of knowing God.

In the doctrines of Kiai Noer, man must know himself. That is a condition of how makrifat of JID | 214 God achieved. The "self" in Kiai Noer's idea includes both physical and spiritual aspects, such as limbs and faith in God's name, nature, and deeds that are firmly embedded in the self. In the Book of Fath al-'Arifin for example, Kiai Noer says (Noer, n.d.),

> "wa qaala an-Nabiyyu saw. ujare hadis 'man 'arafa nafsahu faqad 'arafa rabbahu wa man 'arafa rabbahu laa yakhfaa 'alaihi syaiun', ya'ni kang aran ingsun (nafsahu) iku mata irung cangkem kuping tangan farji sikil dzate satu.."

Wagimin mentioned that the processes that need to be passed in Sambelun spiritual paths are through mujahadah and riayadah. Based on his interview with Suteja (Suteja, 2016), Wagimin explained that a person can achieve makrifat (spiritual aknowledment) over himself after going through forgings and suffrage in the form of *mujahadah* and *riyadhah*. Man will achieve his perfect "genesis" if he goes through the processes symbolized in the doctrine of Sambelun. To become chili sauce, it is necessary to provide salt, shrimp paste and chili, then everything is kneaded in a container called *cobek* (mortar). The perfection of sambal certainly comes from the *ulekan* and cobek so that the three main elements (salt, shrimp paste, chili) are perfected by two other elements (pestle and mortar).

This teaching presupposes a process of human perfection derived from three main elements perfected by the other two elements; that is, the seminal element of the male, the female egg, and the spirit blown into it, which is then perfected in the womb of a mother and the presence of a father. When in a mortar, humans (ingredients that make chili sauce) are equipped with three elements of lust, namely ammarah (chili), lawwamah (salt), and muthmainnah (shrimp paste). All those elements must be melted down by means of *mujahadah* (that is being mashed spiritually).

To describe the mean of mujahadah, sheikh al-Kalabadzi called it an effort to obey God without expecting anything in return. A salik who is undergoing a mujahadah must be able to reflect the word of God: "Indeed Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties (in exchange) for that they will have Paradise." (QS. At-Taubah: 111). Worshiping God must be clean from greed (of rewards). When reciting a dhikr, a salik must practice its essence, namely forgetting anything other than Allah, as Allah said: "But if your forget, then remember your Lord." (QS al-Kafh: 24). A God's servant must always be aware that Allah blessings are not achieved by deeds alone, but bu Allah gift to him. A kind of worship that still expects a reward means not fully practicing the word of Gad that says:: "And associate none in the worship of their Lord." (QS. Al-Kahf: 110). (Al-Kalabadzi, n.d.).

After looking at the various interpretations of Sambelun doctrines that can be attributed to insan kamil, it appears that this teaching is actually inseparable from the desired goals of doctrines of Sufism itself; both from it's falsafi and akhlaki (Sunni) patterns. Judging from the forging process of a salik that must be passed if he wants to be a human being; perfect in khalq (creation) and khuluq (moral), Sambelun aims to achieve a purified soul through tazkiyah an-nafs and a strong inner eye of heart in reaching makrifat of Allah through strong mujahadah and riyadah. Symbolization

related to Sambelun such as sambal, cowet, pestles, and other spices complementary to sambal may produce a variety of interpretations that continue to change and develop along with one's depth in capturing the spiritual messages contained in it.

#### Sambelun and Doctrine of Wahdah al-Wujud

In the tradition of sufism throughout history, the da'wah or preaching dimension of Sufism also leads to a universal, plural, and non-exclusive believer. This view certainly boils down to tolerant and open mindedness that are also praised by the religion and enssence of the Prophet da'wah. If you look at the doctrines of sufism related to this, it appears that the teachings of wahdatul wujud have a fairly strong relationship with the idea of inclusivity, openness, and a paradigm of thinking  $\frac{1}{\text{JID} \mid 215}$ that respects plurality. Departing from this assumption, another interesting interpretation of Sambelun is about the idea of unity and unification (Fuadi, 2013).

In one of Wagimin Nurullah's interpretations, it is said that Sambelun was taught by Kiai Masykur to affirm the unity of understanding of God even in different forms. Wagimin mentions that Sambelun is a symbolization of the ultimate goal of man's journey in the search for true truth. In that process of searching, human understanding cannot be forced into one path; But diverse, branchy, different, and even opposite each other. For Wagimin, these differences are symbolized by the ingredients that make chili sauce such as salt, shrimp paste, chili, pestle and mortar. All of those elements have their own duties that are different from each other, but they all have the same goal; that is to make a delicious chili sauce (sambal).

For Wagimin, Sambelun can be interpreted as such; that the diversity of human understanding in society should not be clashed with each other or even misled. Differences in interpretation in religious discourse, variety of expressions in the spiritual world, and differences in any sect in religion should be complementary to each other in the process of finding true truth (Sidik, 2022).

Diving into the tradition of *falafi* type of sufism, such an interpretation of Sambelun can be connected with the doctrine of wahdah al-wujud (Mustamain, 2020). This interpretation is also found in the teachings of the bait 12 of Kiai Noer Kemuning who became the teacher and predecessor of Kiai Masykur. According to the doctrine of bait 12, man reflects the unity of being in diversity; a concept strongly influenced by Ibn Arabi's tradition of sufism about wahdah al-wujud and insan kamil.

When discussing human substances for example, bait 12 describes them as anatomically related to the various organs of the human body that all form a complete whole. As Ardiansyah quotes, the perfect dzatul insan (human body) consists of 15 elements; i.e. (1) the head, which also consists of five parts; endas (head), moto (eyes), irung (nose), cangkem (mouth), ears (ears); (2) Body, which consists of five elements: endas (head), qulu (neck), awak (body), pukang (thighs), sikil (legs); (3). The element of human life consists of five elements: kulit (skin), daging (flesh), getih (blood), balung (bone), and nyowo (soul) (Ardiansyah, 2015).

In the teachings of bait 12, the doctrine of makrifat presupposes that man can know God, and then "merge" with Him. In Fath al-'Arifin (Noer, n.d.), makrifat is the first obligation that a human being must aim for. To describe it, Kiai Noer quotes the words of Abu Bakr ash-Shiddig who said,

ما رَأَيْتُ شَيْئًا إلا رَأَيْتُ الله قَبْلَهُ

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"I don't see anything without seeing Allah before." Umar also said,

ما رَأَيْتُ شَيْئًا إلا رَأَيْتُ اللهَ مَعَهُ

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"I don't see anything without seeing Allah after." Kiai Noer also recited one of imam Ali as. sayings,

رَ أَيْتُ الله تعالى بَعْدَ كُلِّ شيءٍ

"I see God after everything."

According to (Suteja, 2016), the arguments used by Kiai Noer contain the understanding that God with man is one. God is at the deepest part of man; i.e. on his mind. Therefore, whoever meets and merges with God, then he must dive into himself that is *ngaji awak lan ngaji rasa*. If Kiai Noer associates the words of the Prophet's companions with mysterious numbers containing physical elements, faith, and others, then Abdul Karim Jili also symbolizes these expressions in the system of laying dots on letters.

For al-Jili, the dot is a "taste" gesture towards Allah. Al-Jili says that among the letter forms, there is one dotted on it, which symbolizes the *maqam* (position) of the expression "I saw nothing but saw Allah before." Another letter has a dot at the bottom that represents the *maqam* "I do not see anything except to see Allah afterwards." There are also other letters whose dots are in the middle of the letters, such as the white dot found in the middle of the *mim*. For al-Jili, it represents the maqam "I see nothing but see Allah in it." (Devi Umi Solehah, 2021).

This doctrine leads to the "vision" that all that is seen in being is God. Al-Jili himself divides the being into two parts; (a) *wujud haq* and (b) *wujud khalq*. Based on this division, with the eyes of the *musyahadah*, the being of *khalq* is only a metaphorical being (*majaz*). It has no essence for sufis who have attained *maqam* of *musyahadah* and masters of *hakikat*. God's relationship with this multitude of beings is like water and ice, or like seed and it shell. For one who sees only the surface, he will see multiple appearances, while the sufis who attainted *maqam* of *hakikat*, what he sees are nothing but the *al-haq* (God). Al-Jili sees that the realm of this world is mere delusion, or the "shape" of one face. The reflection is vary dan different in a mirror, so that the face in it is thought to be different, even though that difference is the form of God's *tajalli* (embodiment) in the realm of being (Zaidan, 1998).

Although it sounds like philosophical sufism, the concept and doctrine of *makrifat* Kiai Noer still balances between the ideas of philosophical one and straight-line orthodox Sufism. This balancing seems to be also found in the teachings of Sambelun which not only contains a deep interpretation of the union of being, but can also be seen from the aspects of orthodoxy in Sufism that consider the importance of the physical life of believer. Orthodox Sufism emphasizes the importance of *kasb* (effort) as a counterweight to its concept of asceticism (*zuhud*). The doctrine of Kiai Noer *makrifat* not only aims at enjoying the spiritual attainment of believer by being one with his God, but also presupposes a human being who can work hard, obey Allah's commands in the Quran, follow the Prophet, the rightfull scholars, and obey the commandments of the state (Amal, 2014).

Based on the explanation above, it appears that the doctrine of wahdatul wujud has a dimension of da'wah that related to moral ideas, namely "taste" and love. Departing from wahdatul wujud, Ibn Arabi wanted to restore the "source of existence" to love; that is, love to come out of "oblivion." The view that only one "exists" essentially suggests that the maximum search of a believer is to the origin of that "exist"; that is, God. For Ibn Arabi, the process was enveloped by love. This idea is based on the Qudsi of prophet tradition which mentions that Allah said, "I am a hidden treasure. I love to be known so that I created people so that they might know me."

In sufism, love or mahabbah is one of the most culminating and essential purposes of the magam (spiritual dismissal) seek by a believer and a salik. Al-Ghazali writes that love is the ultimate goal of suffistic magam and the farthest end of the position (ahwal). There is no magam left after JID | 217 the mahabbah (live) except its fruit such as longing, tranquility, serenity and so on (Al-Ghazali, 2011).

Departing from this review, the teachings of Sambelun also seem to lead to a moral pattern that places love as the highest human character. Sambelun presupposes that human differences do not necessarily lead to division and hostility; It can actually be a strong capital for unity and togetherness. Sambal which is used as a symbol of the ultimate goal of the nyambel (proccess of making sambal) is a metaphor of the *mahabbah* itself; that is, a moral attitude that loves all of God's creatures regardless of differences. Based on the speech of the Weru people themselves, as stated by Wagimin, Sambelun's teachings want society to be adaptive to differences and not to be exclusive or reactive if it intersects with differences and diversity in aspects of life; especially with regard to faith and religious life.

### Sambelun and Wahdah al-Adyan (Unity of Religions)

The concept of wahdah (unity) presupposes the unity between God and His created nature, and the visible differences in this realm are only manifestations of God's substance. In line with al-Jili, Ibn Arabi also asserted that the essential being is only one, namely Allah. Nature and God are only two names or two sides to one essence. When viewed from the perspective of unity, it is called hagg (God), while viewed from the aspect of its diversity, it is called *khalq* (being). Both are only two designations for one essence (Afifi, 2020).

Departing from this concept, al-Jili saw that everything actually boils down to God. All of His different manifestations are actually purifying His name. Al-Jili quotes God's word: "There is not a single thing that does not glorify His praises." (QS. Al-Israa: 44). Based on this verse, all that exists in this (natural) being is a servant of God who glorify Him. All without exception, "drowned" in the tajalli (manifestation) of God. For al-Jili, it includes the worship of all the servants of Allah, even the worshippers of fire and stars. The difference is that they worship one form of the manifestation of God, or in other words, they worship God in a limited way whose consequences lie on shirk.

A true tawhid practitioner, for al-Jili, is one who worships Allah absolutely (Mukhlis, 2017). For al-Jili, it seems that the concept of wahdah can inspire the unity of religions which presupposes that all religious believers are in fact servants of God. All of them are equally towards one essence although in practical terms, religions that are outside of Islam unfortunately see only one form of manifestation of Allah that is bound, not absolute and free (Irfanullah, 2021).

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Looking at this concept, Sambelun ultimately leads to a universal perspective that presupposes the unification of these different manifestations of God, particularly regarding religion. According to Wagimin Nurullah's explanation, Kiai Masykur teaches Sambelun as a counterweight to the many different religious groups and organizations and even disputes with each other. Kiai Masykur wants that differences in Islamic movements and doctrines, problems of civility and politics should not cause disputes and mutual suspicions. Kiai Masykur wants that the symbols in Sambelun, namely sambal, salt, chili, and the tools of the maker show unity of purpose even though each has its own role.

Wagimin exemplifies it with differences in Islamic organizations such as Nahdatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, Persis, al-Washliyyah, and so on. According to Sambelun view, the variety of Islamic organizations is likened to the tools that must be present when you want to make chili sauce. All of them have different roles in society, even they may have sharp disputes with each other in matter of religious believes.

Nevertheless, everything must come together and establish harmonious relationships in order to produce a peaceful and quality life. Sambal will not be created if the ingredients are not put together and processed in a balanced manner. From here, Kiai Masykur wants to teach his community that being different in any case is not a problem. Human nature is different and no one can be forced to follow a different orientation by his choice.

The teachings of Sambelun are not only became spiritual path that a believer goes through if he wants to achieve a perfect human degree like sambal that perfects food, but also a movement of resistance to stigmatization, excommunication, hostility to differences, and other anti-unity attitudes dominated by self-righteousness.

Regarding the effort to unite these different groups, scholars have long been aware of and urged them. Al-Kalabadzi, for example, mentions that sufis (*fukaha*) always try their best to unite two different groups of Islamic jurisprudence schools. They view that the differences of the *fukaha* are truth and do not contradict each other. For them, each *mujtahid* made the right effort. Al-Kalabadzi, for example, exemplifies some Sufis who break their fast while on the way, and some other Sufis choose to fast (Hamdie, 2019).

This inclusive attitude of sufis seems to be deeply rooted in their doctrines of the unity of being, "divine love," and "religion of love" which presuppose that God is too great to be monopolized by a religious group or particular school (*mazhab*). Departing from one essential being, His manifestations in this diverse world are mere shadows; it's not real. That way, the differences in manifestation don't need to be bumped because it really all comes down to the One. Great Sufis from Baghdad such as al-Hallaj for example, who are accused of pantheism, consider the whole religion to belong to Allah. He asserts that religions such as Jews, Christians, Islam, and others are limited to different epithets and names and can be capricious, while their substance never changes or differs(Arroisi & Sari, 2021). In the following stanza, al-Hallaj describes it as such:

فألفيتها أصلاله شعب جمّا	تفكرت في الأديان جدّ محقق
يَصُدُّ عن الأَصْلِ الوَثْيُقِ وَإِنَّما	فلا تَطْلُبَنَّ لِلْمَرْءِ دِيْنًا فإنَّهُ
جَميع المَعالي و المعَانِي فيفُهما	يطالبه أصل يعبّر عنده

"I think seriously about religions as people who seek the truth, so I understand that religions are just one root that has many branches. Therefore look no one's religion, for he will hinder that one strong root, look for a root that can reveal to him, all the nobleness and meaning so that he understands it." (Louis Massignon, 2006)

Based on the wahdatul adyan doctrine that can be conceived in doctrines of Sambelun, Kiyai Masykur seems to be trying to indict the principles of tolerance in Islam to the people of Weru and its surroundings. For Kiyai Masykur, differences in beliefs do not have to cause suspicion and estrangement. In the context of society in Nusantara, especially the plural Cirebon, where historical capital about the diversity of beliefs is recorded in history, an attitude of openness and acceptance of differences is a moral capital that must be the principle of a believer and a good salik. Through JID | 219 Sambelun, Kiyai Masykur wants religious fanaticism based on the will to monopolize the truth to be immediately eliminated from the discourse of Islamic da'wah in the archipelago. But an inclusive attitude based on the doctrine of religious unity does not necessarily abandon the principles and beliefs of truth possessed by one's religion. The normative point of view on orthodoxy remains to be respected because it is an attempt to tie beliefs to evidence and a strong theological foundation (Miswari, 2018).

### Conclusion

This paper has shown that the teachings of Sambelun have strong mystical values and doctrines derived from Islamic Sufi figures in the classical period. The existence of the scientific sanad (transmition) and teachings contained in Sambelun not only denies the suspicion of its status as a foreign doctrine that was deliberately inserted to change Islamic orthodoxy as many people think, but also confirms that the sufistic pattern in Sambelun has a dimension of da'wah that is quite significant in bringing Islamic messages to the community. Sambelun does not stop at the will to obtain the spiritual taste that the saliks seek when using the path to attain high-level magams such as mahabbah and makrifah, but also touches on the humanitarian and societal dimensions that are presumed to have a high moral order.

As a doctrine that has the dimension of Islamic preaching, Sambelun teachings cannot be separated from the rejection of established religious orthodoxy because the later sees it as a teaching that is not only controversial from the aspect of sanad, but also contains teachings and doctrines that are alien to the understanding of Islamic orthodoxy in general. The challenge ahead lies in the revitalization of Sambelun teachings which are required to be adaptive to the needs of religious communities that are targeted by Islamic da'wah. Encapsulating teachings that actually contain high moral idealizations with doctrines that are far from the reach of understanding orthodoxy will actually hinder Islamic da'wah itself.

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