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## Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's Contextual Analogies: *Wujūdiyya* Teaching in Malay 16<sup>th</sup> Century

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**Abstract:** This article aims to analyse the context of the analogies used by Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī in teaching *wujūdiyya doctrine* in his work, *Asār al-ʿĀrifīn*. The importance of this study is to reveal how he easily taught complex metaphysical concepts in Sufism. He used objects easily recognised by the Malay community as analogies. This article is a literature study using an analytical-descriptive approach. This study found that the metaphors used by Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī in teaching the relationship between singularity and plurality in *wujūdiyya doctrine* were clay and earthen vessels, sun and its light, wood and chess pieces, and sea and wave. In comparison, secondary analogies such as fruit, seeds, mirrors, people, rivers, stones, and iron were used to explain the various dimensions of *wujūdiyya* teachings. His approach is therefore easy to understand.

**Contribution:** This article opens a new perspective in understanding Sufism, especially the *wujūdiyya doctrine* in Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's teaching. The analogies used are easy to understand. The analogy proposed by Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī can be used as a reference to reveal the metaphors used by other Sufis in teaching *wujūdiyya*.

**Keywords:** analogy; Malay; Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī; *wujūd*; *wujūdiyya*

## Introduction

*Wujūdiyya* is teaching compatible with every era because its teaching is full of fundamental values, such as divinity and humanity, so it can always be offered as an essential part of finding human similarities in the identity crisis and spirituality.<sup>1</sup> One of the teachers of *wujūdiyya* in the Archipelago is Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī. He lived and had a career around the 16<sup>th</sup> century during the development of the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam. At that time, the people of the Archipelago became very cosmopolitan. Cross-culture happened so fast. The various ethnicities became dissolved. The economy was growing fast. Interestingly, cosmopolitanism went hand in hand with the development of knowledge and science. This shows that the *wujūdiyya* taught by Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī could live and thrive in that cosmopolitan society. In fact, it might be the driving force behind that cosmopolitanism. Thus, to get to a new cosmopolitanism, the Indonesian people need to revive the value of the *wujūdiyya* teachings by Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī and other philosophical Sufism.

*Wujūdiyya* by Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī is a classic intellectual treasure with many wisdom values. *Wujūdiyya* by Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī, if explored again, can be expected to be a reference for the development of a cosmopolitan society as happened before. *Wujūdiyya* by Ḥamzah came to simplify a metaphysical idea considered complicated and dilemmatic in the Islamic intellectual tradition. Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī, in his works, has dialogued various thoughts by previous Sufis. Some of these ideas are considered highly controversial. However, Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī tried to make these ideas easily understood by the public by using beautiful language in poetry and prose. Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī uses various analogies that are close to the daily life of the Malay community so that the teachings of *wujūdiyya* can be accepted easily.

The significance of analysing Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī's thoughts is the need to find various perspectives on knowing God. The introduction of Allah through the teachings of *wujūdiyya* can make Muslims more tolerant. This is understandable because *wujūdiyya* uses an objective approach to introduce Allah to Muslims. Such an approach avoids competition between streams and does not corner specific streams. Suppose Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī's metaphysical views can be revived. In that case, it will open up the possibility that Ḥamzah Faṅṣūrī's thoughts can

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<sup>1</sup> Niyaz Ahmad Lone, "The Role and Significance of Taṣawwuf in Modern-Day Crisis," *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 11, no. 1 (2022): 83–96, <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v11i1.12030>.

be accepted as an alternative for humanity, especially Muslims, in knowing Allah. Knowing God through philosophical Sufism does not carry the principle of superiority to certain sects and religions in knowing God. Therefore, knowing God this way will not give rise to egoism for certain sects. This method can provide harmonisation between religious communities. This is what Muslims and all Indonesians need<sup>2</sup>. But *wujūdiyya* by Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī is still considered difficult to understand. Yet, he has used an easy way to explain the teachings of *wujūdiyya*. This article discloses the analogies used by Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī to make *wujūdiyya* easy to understand.

### Literature Review

Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's *Waḥdat al-Wujūd* or called *wujūdiyya* (teachings that believe in the unity of existence) in Malay literature, has been seriously studied by several scholars. Johan Doorenbos studied the poetry and prose of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī in his Ph.D. dissertation at Leiden University in 1933.<sup>3</sup> Doorenbos' research focuses on transliterating Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's poems into Dutch. Drewes and Brakel have researched Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's thoughts with a focus on the transliteration of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's poems that are found in several museums in Europe, such as in England and the Netherlands.<sup>4</sup> Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas translated Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's prose stored in English and Dutch.<sup>5</sup> Key concepts contained in Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's teachings, such as the concept of '*wujūd*,' 'being,' 'self,' and so on, were analysed using a semantic approach by Al-Attas. Abdul Hadi W.M. examines Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's poems collected at the Jakarta National Museum<sup>6</sup>. Research by Abdul Hadi W.M. uses spiritual hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*) to make Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's teachings conveyed through the symbolic language of poetry easy to understand. Vladimir Braginsky is also a

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<sup>2</sup> Mawardi, "Reaktualisasi Kerukunan Antar Umat Beragama dalam Kemajemukan Sosial," *Substantia* 17, no. April (2015): 55–66, <https://jurnal.ar-raniry.ac.id/index.php/substantia/article/view/4108>.

<sup>3</sup> Johan Doorenbos, *De Gefchriften van Hamzah Pansocri* (Leiden: Betteljee & Terpstra, 1933), 5.

<sup>4</sup> G.W.J. Drewes dan L.F Brakel, *The Poems of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī* (Dordrecht: Forish Publication Holland, 1986), 3.

<sup>5</sup> Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Faṣṣūrī* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970), xiii–xiv.

<sup>6</sup> Abdul W.M Hadi, *Tasawuf yang Tertindas: Kajian Hermeneutik Terhadap Karya Hamzah Faṣṣūrī* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2001), 190–91.

serious researcher on Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's thoughts, including writing a biography of Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī.<sup>7</sup> These studies have shown that Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's teachings contain various axiological benefits to overcoming various problems in religion and life. Ismail Fahmi Arrauf Nasution has written about Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's thoughts which include humanism values to be offered as a basis for educational values.<sup>8</sup> Ramli Cibro has shown that Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī' *wujūdiyya* can be an alternative paradigm for understanding the basics of religious practice.<sup>9</sup> Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad has shown that Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī' *wujūdiyya* can be the ontological basis for the development identity of Islam in the Archipelago (Islam Nusantara).<sup>10</sup>

In addition to Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, who has translated *Asrār Al-Ārifīn* from Arabic letters to Latin letters<sup>11</sup>, no research has been found on Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's thoughts in *Asrār Al-Ārifīn* which focuses on exploring the objects of analogies used to explain the teachings of *wujūdiyya*. The study of metaphor in *Asrār Al-Ārifīn* is a novelty in the study of the thoughts of Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī. This study aims to explore the socio-cultural context of the Malay community in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as a place for Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī to have a career and spread his teachings simply through analogies that are close to that community. We argue that the *wujūdiyya* teachings taught by Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī are not difficult to understand because he uses objects that are very close and easily accessible to Malay society as an analogy. Thus, only by knowing the nature of the objects that are used as analogies can the metaphysical teachings of Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī be understood.

## Method

This article is a library study that analysing the analogies used by Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī in explaining the teachings of *wujūdiyya*. This research method is

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<sup>7</sup> Vladimir Braginsky, *Satukan Hangat dan Dingin: Kehidupan Hamzah Fansuri Pemikir dan Penyair Sufi Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2003), 5.

<sup>8</sup> Ismail Fahmi Arrauf Nasution, "Humanisasi Pendidikan Islam Melalui Antropologi Transendental Hamzah Fansūrī," *Edukasia : Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 1 (May 29, 2017): 235,

<sup>9</sup> Ramli Cibro, *Aksiologi Ma'rifat Hamzah Fansuri* (Banda Aceh: Pade Books, 2017), 137.

<sup>10</sup> Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad, *Kontribusi Charles Taylor, Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, and Henry Corbin dalam Studi Metafisika & Meta Teori terhadap Islam Nusantara di Indonesia* (Banda Aceh: BandarPublishing, 2017), 204.

<sup>11</sup> Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*.

descriptive-analytical. Descriptive is trying to describe objects that are used as analogies by Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī. Analytical is trying to analyse the meaning of analogy as the teachings of *wujūdiyya*. The primary data of this research is the *Asrār Al-Ārifīn* manuscript which is the philosophical work of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī, which is attached to the work of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī*, and essential works on the study of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's thoughts, such as the work of Naquib Al-Attas, *Tasawuf yang Tertindas* by Abdul Hadi WM., and other references related to the research focus. The analysis steps are as follows; the authors analyse the cultural context in which Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī teaches his thoughts and then describe the analogies and objects used by Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī according to the context of 16th-century Malay culture.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's Contex: Malay 16<sup>th</sup> Century**

Analyzing the life and career of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī in Malay in the 16th century becomes essential when it comes to understanding the background of the analogies used in teaching *wujūdiyya*. Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī lives around a coastal port which is a common domicile for the Malay community. The city where Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī works and teaches *wujūdiyya* is one of the leading destinations and the most important transit point in the Strait of Malacca<sup>12</sup>. Ships from Europe, India, the Middle East, Africa, and so on that want to go to China, the Philippines, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Java, Maluku, Thailand, etc., and vice versa must make a transit on the Malacca peninsula. The history of the triumph of the Malay kingdoms along the coast of the Malacca Strait is the history of the success of attracting their territory to become the main destination and transit for Malacca Strait shipping.<sup>13</sup>

The progress and decline of the kingdoms in the Malacca Strait were one after another. Progress was experienced by the Lamuri Kingdom, and the Jeumpa Kingdom then turned to the Peureulak Sultanate. Then to the Sultanate of Samudra Pasai, then to the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam, and then to the Sultanate of Malacca and Aru. Every kingdom that dominates the transit and

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<sup>12</sup> C. Guillot dan Ludvik Kalus, *Enskripsi Islam Tertua di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2008), 85.

<sup>13</sup> Rasyid Asba, *Kopra Makassar: Perebutan Pusat Dan Daerah* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2007), 79.

destination of the Silk Road must, of course, be able to overcome the pirates of the Malacca Straits as a condition that its territory is safe.<sup>14</sup>

At the time Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī was born and raised, the Malay sultanates, Especially the Sultanate of Samudra Pasai, were in decline due to the Majapahit and Portuguese military attacks.<sup>15</sup> In those tragic times, Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī went on a journey to trade and study in Singkil and went to the Middle East. After returning from the Middle East, Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī had a career at Fansur. At that time, the sultan and businessmen succeeded in making the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam the primary trade destination and transit in the Malacca Strait.<sup>16</sup>

Ḥamzah Nin asalnya Fanṣūrī  
Mendapat wujud di Tanah Syahr Nawī.<sup>17</sup>  
(Ḥamzah is originally from Fanṣūr  
He acquired his existence in the land of Syahr Nawī)

Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas is right when he says that Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī was born in Syahr Nawī.<sup>18</sup> But estimates that Syahr Nawī was in Persia or Thailand do not have strong evidence. Because Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī said, “Ḥamzah Syahr Nawī Zahirnya Jawi” (Ḥamzah Syahr Nawī is clearly jawi). So, Syahr Nawī is in the Malay land called Jawi. Syahr nawī is also not a symbolic term for a spiritual journey, as argued by Drewes and Brakel.<sup>19</sup> According to Naquib Al-Attas, Syahr Nawī is not an analogy but has a literal meaning as the birthplace of Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī. Genius intellectuals like Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī indeed grew up in a place that had an excellent quality of education. Before the period of Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī, Zawiyah Cot Kala in Aramia, Bayeun, Peureulak was the best religious education institution in the Malay land. Then, a quality religious college is in

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<sup>14</sup> Daniel Perret, *Sejarah Johor-Riau-Lingga Schingga 1914: Sebuah Esei Bibliografi* (Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kebudayaan, Kesenian, dan Pelancongan Malaysia, 1998), 410.

<sup>15</sup> Mohammad Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad Vol. I* (Medan: Waspada, 2007), 101.

<sup>16</sup> A. Hasjmy, *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam Di Indonesia* (Medan: Pustaka Al-Ma'arif, 1981), 13.

<sup>17</sup> Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*; Drewes dan Brakel, *The Poems of Ḥamzah Fansūrī*; Hadi, *Tasawuf yang Tertindas: Kajian Hermeneutik Terhadap Karya Hamzah Fansuri*.

<sup>18</sup> Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*.

<sup>19</sup> Drewes dan Brakel, *The Poems of Ḥamzah Fansūrī*.

Pasai.<sup>20</sup> After the period of Ḥamzah Fansūrī, religious colleges developed in Singkil and Kutaraja<sup>21</sup>.

*Ḥamzah Gharib unggas Quddusi  
Akan rumahnya Bayt al-Ma'muri  
Kursinya sekalian kapuri  
Di Negeri Fansūrī min al-asyjar<sup>22</sup>  
(Ḥamzah the stranger but a holy bird  
His house is Bayt al-Ma'muri  
His chair is all camphor  
In the land of Fansūr from trees)*

The stanza above shows that Ḥamzah lived in Fansūr, but he was not from there. Fansūr is in *Bayt al-Ma'mūrī*, another name for Aceh Darussalam's Sultanate<sup>23</sup>. The Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam is the holder of a monopoly on natural wealth, including camphor which is generally found between Singkil and Tapanuli. These areas are included in the territory of the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam. At that time, Ḥamzah Fansūrī had a career in the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam.<sup>24</sup> As one of the busiest cities and ports, the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam, which includes Fansūr and is centred in Kutaraja,<sup>25</sup> is the site of the most significant economic activity in the Straits of Malay Land. Naquib Al-Attas said Ḥamzah Fansūrī had a career in Fansūr during the reign of Sultan Alauddin Ri'ayat Shah, who ruled between 1588-1604.<sup>26</sup> Al-Attas' statement needs to be reviewed when receiving Kersten's report; based on the findings of Guillot and

<sup>20</sup> Ismail Fahmi Arrauf Nasution dan Miswari, "Rekonstruksi Identitas Konflik Kesultanan Peureulak," *Paramita* 27, no. 2 (2017): 168–81, <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/nju/index.php/paramita/article/view/11159>.

<sup>21</sup> A. Hasjmy, *Bunga Rampai Revolusi Dari Tanah Aceh* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1978), 57–59.

<sup>22</sup> Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, 6 Bandingkan, Drewes and Brakel, *The Poems of Ḥamzah Fansūrī*, 74.

<sup>23</sup> Amirul Hadi, "Islam and State in Sumatra: A Study of Seventeenth-Century Aceh," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39, no. 3 (Agustus 2007): 485–86, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743807070717>.

<sup>24</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama: Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII & XVIII* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2013), 206–7.

<sup>25</sup> Amirul Hadi, "The Ṭāj al-Salāṭīn and Acehnese History," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 42, no. 2 (2004): 258–93, <https://aljamiah.or.id/index.php/AJIS/article/view/1057>.

<sup>26</sup> Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*.

Kalus, as presented on Archipel,<sup>27</sup> it can be stated that Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī died on April 1, 1527. Drewes and Brakel's arguments,<sup>28</sup> which said Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī had died before 1590, is valid. AH. John also said Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī had died before 1600 or even before 1590.<sup>29</sup> But the difference in estimates is too far. The latest data further strengthens the view of Abdul Hadi W.M.,<sup>30</sup> which opens up a great opportunity that during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1609-1636), Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī passed away a long time ago. Hence, the teachings of *Martabat Tujuh* (Seven Dignity) taught by Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatranī spread quickly.<sup>31</sup> Because of the influence of Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's *Martabat Lima* (Five Dignity) teachings has long since faded; it's been decades.<sup>32</sup>

Criticism of the actions of the trading mafia in the Bandar Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam, which involved dirty intrigue in the politics of the Sultanate, as reported by Lombard<sup>33</sup>, was launched loudly by Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī.

*Berahimu da'im akan orang kaya*  
*Manakan dapat tiada berbahaya*  
(Your desire to approach the rich  
It's impossible, not dangerous)

This practice has become a tradition in the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam, as recorded by Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī. Fierce trade competition directly has an impact on political intrigue. Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī easily records this phenomenon in his critique. Of course, it would be impossible if the location of dense trade

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<sup>27</sup> Claude Guillot dan Ludvik Kalus, "La stèle funéraire de Hamzah Fansuri," *Archipel* 60, no. 4 (2000): 3–24, <https://doi.org/10.3406/arch.2000.3577>.

<sup>28</sup> Drewes dan Brakel, *The Poems of Ḥamzah Fansūrī*.

<sup>29</sup> A.H. Johns, "The Poems of Hamzah Fansuri," *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde / Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia* 146, no. 2 (1 Januari 1990): 325, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-90003221>.

<sup>30</sup> Hadi, *Tasawuf yang Tertindas: Kajian Hermeneutik Terhadap Karya Hamzah Fansuri*.

<sup>31</sup> Faudzinain Badaruddin, "Tuhfah al-Mursalāh ila Ruh al-Nabiy as the Source of the Doctrine Seven Grades of Being in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago," *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 10, no. 1 (April 2021): 59–74, <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v10i1.8580>.

<sup>32</sup> M. Afif Ansori, *Tasawuf Falsafi Syaikh Hamzah Fansuri* (Yogyakarta: Gelombang Pasang, 2004), 108–11.

<sup>33</sup> Denys Lombard, "Le Sultanat d'Atjéh Sous Iskandar Muda (1606-1636)," *École Pratique Des Hautes Études. 4e Section, Sciences Historiques et Philologiques* 98, no. 1 (1965): 491–93.



transactions and fierce political discourse took place far from Ḥamzah Fansūrī's domicile<sup>34</sup>. Amirul Hadi said that Ḥamzah Fansūrī had a career and spread his teachings from a place not far from the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam<sup>35</sup>. So, of course, Fansūr and Ḥamzah Fansūrī were not far from the Dār al-Dunyā Palace in Kutaraja, the centre of the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam. According to Ikhwan Azhari, Fansūr is Ujong Pancu in Aceh Besar, a dense trading centre<sup>36</sup>. This finding needs more substantial evidence. Nevertheless, in the context of Fansūr, Ḥamzah Fansūrī used objects that were quickly recognised by the people there at that time in teaching *wujūdiyya*.

The analogies close to the Malay community used to teach *wujūdiyya* are clay and earthen vessels, the sun and its light, wood, chess pieces, the sea and the wave, fruits, seeds, mirrors, people, rivers, stones, and iron.

### **Analogies of the Relationship between the One and Plurality**

In *Asrār Al-Ārifīn*, there are four groups of metaphors used by Ḥamzah Fansūrī in explaining the relationship between The One and plurality in the *wujūdiyya* teachings are clay and earthen vessels, sun and its light, wood and chess pieces. And the sea and the wave. All objects used as analogies are very well known by the Malay community.

#### ***Clay and Earthen Vessels***

Around the 16<sup>th</sup> century, creating earthen vessels from the clay was the custom of the people. The luxury earthen vessels industry produces for the needs of elite groups and as an export commodity.<sup>37</sup> “*Seperti tanah; diperbuat kendi, atau periuk, atau buyung, atau tempat. Tanah itulah asal wujud sekalian bejana itu. Jika tiada tanah itu, di mana kendi dan periuk akan beroleh wujud.*” (The analogy is, as it were, clay fashioned into drinking vessels, water jars, or earthen containers; the clay is the original being of all the earthen vessels. Were it not for the clay, how can the drinking vessel or the cooking pot acquire existence?)<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Hadi, “The Tāj al-Salāṭīn and Acehnese History.”

<sup>35</sup> Amirul Hadi, *Acch: Sejarah, Budaya, dan Tradisi* (Jakarta: Obor, 2010), 89.

<sup>36</sup> Ichwan Azhari, “Kapur Dari Barus: Islam dan Jaringan Perdagangan Kuno” (Medan, 2019), 1–12.

<sup>37</sup> Claude Gullot, *Barus: Scribu Tahun yang Lalu* (Jakarta: KPG, 2008), 203.

<sup>38</sup> Hamzah Fansūrī, “Asrār Al-Ārifīn,” in *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*, ed. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970), 268.

Making clay into earthen vessels was a custom that not only happened in the elite group but was also a tradition carried out by all communities in Malay land at that time. Earthen vessels made of clay by the Malay people are very simple. They formed clay into drinking vessels, water jars, earthen containers, etc. Clay is an analogy for *wujūd* of all the earthen vessels, such as drinking vessels, water jars, and earthen containers, a metaphor for all creations. Various creations include earthen vessels such as drinking vessels, water jars, and earthen containers, all of which come from clay. Although earthen vessels have multiple shapes, it is clear that all earthen vessels are the clay. Such are the different shapes and colours of creatures; all of them are from The One, *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*. In Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's *Wujūdiyya*, *wujūd* considered as The One, *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*. Many colours and forms in the universe have other appearances due to the diversity of forms.<sup>39</sup> Only The One and The Absolute are real, attributed to *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*.

### ***Sun and Its Light***

Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī analogised *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā* to the light of the sun, and the creatures were analogous to the moon, which derives sunlight. As the moon only reflects light from the sun, the creatures gain existence (*wujūd*) from the Existence of The One (*Wujūd Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*). This analogy shows that creations (universes) are real but have no independent existence. The universe's existence comes from the Existence of The One, just as the light of the moon comes from the light of the sun.<sup>40</sup>

*“Wujūd Allah dengan wujūd alam esa. Wujūd ‘alam dengan ‘alam esa hukumnya. Seperti (matahari dengan) chahayanya, namanya jua lain pada haqiqat tiada lain. Pada penglihatan mata esa; pada penglihatan hati pun esa. Wujūd ‘alam pun demikian dengan Wujūd Allah: esa. Karena alam tiada ber-wujūd sendirinya. Sungguh pun pada zahirnya ada ia ber-wujūd, tetapi wahmī juga, bukan haqiqī.”*<sup>41</sup>

(The existence of Allah and the existence of the universe are one. The presence of the universe and the universe is one. Just as the sun and its light, different only in name but not in truth. To external perception, it is one; to the eye of internal perception, it is also one. So is the universe's existence about the Existence of God: it is one. For the universe considered independently does not exist. Although outwardly it exists, it is nothing but apparency, not reality.)

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<sup>39</sup> Fansūrī, “Asrār Al-‘Arifīn,” 302.

<sup>40</sup> Doorenbos, *De Gefchrieten van Hamzah Pansocri*.

<sup>41</sup> Fansūrī, “Asrār Al-‘Arifīn,” 242.

It may be surprising how Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī can share the same view with science today. Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī once lived in the Middle East<sup>42</sup> and, of course, interacted with Muslim scientists who very much adopted knowledge from Greek philosophy, including the idea of Parmenides, who claimed moonlight was from the reflection of sunlight. In addition, the sultanates in the Malay lands at that time followed the development of science. Ali Hasjmy argues that science has developed in Malay land since the Samudra Pasai Sultanate and the Aceh Darussalam Sultanate.<sup>43</sup>

Light is a simple analogy that is very easy for Muslims to accept. The analogy was made by God Himself in the Qur'an Surah An-Nur: 35, which states that Allah is the light of the sky and the earth. This statement is certainly not a description of the condition of the Essence of God but rather about how God gives existence to the universe. Light as an analogy to explain God has been done since the religions before Islam. Even the metaphor has been described in the Zoroastrian faith, one of the oldest religions. Other religions also never abandon the analogy of light which is generally oriented towards goodness and contrasted with darkness as an analogy for evil.<sup>44</sup>

When Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī describes how God's condition is through the analogy of light, of course, that analogy can be very easily understood by all levels of society. This again shows how Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī always uses simple metaphors in describing humans so that they are straightforward to understand.

*Maksud Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī menggunakan analogi kesatuan cahaya yakni cahaya matahari dan sinar bulan adalah berasal dari satu cahaya namun dalam pandangan seperti dua cahaya adalah untuk menjelaskan bahwa meskipun wujud Tuhan dan wujud makhluk pada pandangan manusia itu berbeda, tetapi hakikatnya adalah hanya satu wujud saja, yakni wujud Tuhan. Alam semesta memperoleh wujudnya dari wujud Tuhan. Dengan demikian, meskipun alam tidak memiliki wujudnya yang hakiki, tetapi ia memiliki wujudnya yang bersumber dari wujud Tuhan.*

(Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī uses the analogy of the unity of light, the light of the sun and the reflection of the sun's light on the moon is the same light, to explain that although the Existence of God (*Wujūd Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*) and the wujūd universe in the human view are different, the essence is one existence: God's Existence. The universe derives existence from God's Existence. So that even though it doesn't

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<sup>42</sup> Drewes dan Brakel, *The Poems of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī*.

<sup>43</sup> Hasjmy, *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia*.

<sup>44</sup> William C. Chittick, *Ibn 'Arabi: Heir to the Prophet* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005), 118.

have a fact, the universe still has a reality where that existence is from God's Existence).<sup>45</sup>

### ***Wood and Chess Pieces***

Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī also uses wood and chess pieces to analogize the relationship between *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā* and *makhlūqāt* (universe). In addition, the chess pieces in Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's analogy are also used to explain the authority of God compared to the desires of creatures. *Selanjutnya, buah catur juga menjadi analogi untuk menjelaskan bagaimana makhluk-makhluk memiliki nama-nama, tetapi tidak memiliki eksistensi yang hakiki. Pada buah catur, terdapat raja, menteri, gajah, kuda, benteng, dan pion, tetapi, semua itu hanya nama yang hakikatnya hanyalah kayu.* (Furthermore, chess pieces also become an analogy to explain how beings have names, but do not have true existence. On chess pieces there are 'king', 'minister', 'elephant', 'steed', 'fortress', and 'pawn'. But those are just names, actually just wood).

Although not everyone likes chess, the Malays who generally farm and go to sea still know it. Farmers have enough time to gather while waiting for the harvest season and planting season in the fields. Sailors wait for winds conducive to fishing and sailing. Of course, to avoid boredom, they can spend much time playing chess. Moreover, the tropical Malay land keeps people very close to wood. Many tools are made of wood. Of course, playing chess is very easy for them.<sup>46</sup> *“Adapun suatu tamthil lagi mithal [buah] catur. Asalnya kayu sepuhun jua. Maka dilarik berbaga-bagai; dinamainya raja, dan menteri, dan gajah, dan kuda, dan tir dan baidaq.”* (Another analogy is the similitude of the chess pieces. The wood originates from one tree. Then it is carved into many pieces and is called king, minister, elephant, steed, fortress, and pawn).<sup>47</sup>

Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī uses wood as an analogy for Wujūd for *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā* and various pieces of chess as an analogy for the existence of creatures (*mawjūdāt*). Although there are different forms of wood in chess pieces, the essence of each piece is wood. Being in various shapes and given multiple names is just a mention. Thus in the *wujūdīyya* teachings, although there are various forms in

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<sup>45</sup> Doorenbos, *De Gefchrieten van Hamzah Pansoeri*.

<sup>46</sup> Hamzuri dan Tiarna Rita Siregar, *Permainan Tradisional Indonesia* (Jakarta: Direktorat Permuseuman, 1998), 25–26.

<sup>47</sup> Fansūrī, “Asrār Al-‘Ārifīn,” 293–94.

nature, they do not have an independent existence; the only actual existence is the Existence of *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*.

Chess pieces also illustrate that all creatures have absolutely no power. God controls every creature. Just like chess pieces. They cannot move according to their will unless a chess player moves them. Through the analogy of chess pieces, it can also be shown how the universe is the actual name for it. As on a chessboard, there is no king, no minister, no elephant, no steed, no fortress, and no pawn. There is only wood carved into various shapes. Likewise, the universe is just a name because the only actual Existence is *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*.<sup>48</sup>

### ***Sea and Wave***

The Malay community dominates the coast. School textbooks are correct when they say that the ancestors of the Malays were sailors. Be it, traders or fishermen. There are even certain groups that only live in the sea.<sup>49</sup> By making the sea an object of analogy for his teachings, Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī has chosen a metaphor that is very close to the Malay community. The sea is analogous to *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*, while the wave is an analogy for creatures. The infinite sea is equal to God, whose substance, evil and power are unlimited. Waves are various forms that are constantly moving, never fixed, and have multiple shapes. But all the waves are the sea. Likewise, all creatures with different conditions, characteristics, and colours seem to have their existence come from the Existence of *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*. “*Allah Ta'ālā seperti laut. Sungguhpun ombak lain daripada laut, kepada haqiqatnya tiada lain daripada laut...*” (*Allah Ta'ālā is like the sea. Even though other wave are from the sea, for the truth it is none other than the sea*).<sup>50</sup>

The analogy of the sea and the wave is no less important to show that God and creatures are inseparable. “*Laut dan ombak keduanya bertautan, misalnya Tuhan dan hamba*”<sup>51</sup>. In this statement, Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī wants to emphasise that God is present in every creature. The existence of creations is from the Existence

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<sup>48</sup> Miswari, *Wahdat Al-Wujud: Konsep Kesatuan Wujud antara Hamba dan Tuhan Menurut Hamzah Fansuri* (Yogyakarta: Basabasi, 2018), 64–65.

<sup>49</sup> Benny Baskara, *Islam Bajo: Agama Orang Laut* (Pamulang: Javanica, 2016), 9–10.

<sup>50</sup> Hamzah Fansūrī, “Syarāb Al-Asyiqīn,” in *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*, ed. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970), 319.

<sup>51</sup> Doorenbos, *De Gefchriften van Hamzah Pansoeri*.

of God. Thus, the universe is neither nothingness nor God, but God is present in all composition by giving facts continuously.

*Baḥr ‘amīq*, or the deep sea, is an analogy for God's unreachable essence. God is analogous to the sea because the depths and secrets of the sea will never be fully understood by humans. Like the whole sea untouched by humans, so is God in the teachings of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī's *wujūdiyya*.<sup>52</sup>

### Other *Wujūdiyya*'s Analogies

Apart from lay and earthen vessels, the sun and its light, wood and chess pieces, and the sea and the wave, Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī also uses fruit, seeds, mirrors, people, rivers, stones, and iron to explain the various dimensions of the *wujūdiyya* teachings. To clarify that God is Eternal (*qadīm*), and has no beginning, so it has no consequences for an ending, Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī uses a round fruit as an analogy. In round fruit, it cannot be determined which is the beginning or the end. The round fruit has no beginning and no end. That's what Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī used to explain that God is *qadīm*. The meaning is that God has existed without a beginning limit and will not end.<sup>53</sup>

Seeds are used as an analogy to explain the content of God's knowledge in *a'yān thābita* (archetype) as a potential for the universe to be actual. The seed contains the fruit's full potential: stems, leaves, roots, branches, twigs, and fruit.<sup>54</sup> The shadows in the mirror seem to have an independent existence, but the existence is not independent, *wahmī*. But the meaning of *wahmī* in *wujūdiyya* teaching doesn't mean nothingness but real for itself (*nafs al-‘amr*)<sup>55</sup>. This analogy makes the relationship between God and creation easy to understand. The connection is like a person standing in front of a mirror and the image in the mirror. Creatures are like reflections in a mirror<sup>56</sup>. Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī uses the relationship between a person and his profession to explain the relationship between God and His Attributes.

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<sup>52</sup> Miswari, *Wahdat Al-Wujud: Konsep Kesatuan Wujud antara Hamba dan Tuhan Menurut Hamzah Fansuri*.

<sup>53</sup> Fansūrī, "Asrār Al-‘Ārifīn," 240.

<sup>54</sup> Fansūrī, "Asrār Al-‘Ārifīn," 246–47.

<sup>55</sup> Muhammad Nur Jabir, *Wahdah Al-Wujūd Ibn ‘Arabī Dan Filsafat Wujūd Mulla Sadrā* (Makassar: Chamran Press, 2012), 18.

<sup>56</sup> Oman Fathurahman, *Tanbih Al-Masyi: Menyoal Wahdatul Wujud: Kasus Abdurrauf Singkel Di Aceh Abad 17* (Bandung: Mizan, 1999), 17.

Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī uses the flow of the river as an analogy for the unity between God and creation. That God and creation are not dual. God and creatures are one unified whole, just like a river flow, not separated. Likewise, creatures get existence from God. The presence of the universe is continued from the existence of God.

Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī uses water from several perspectives as an analogy for several dimensions of his teachings. God Almighty, as the origin of all creation, is analogous to water which is the origin of the life of all kinds of plants. Although it grows in various shapes, various colours, and various types of plants, its head is from water. Likewise, the multiple universes originate from one God.<sup>57</sup>

In the context of the water analogy, God All-Knowing is called *qasīm*, divided or separated, and is also analogous to water. While the reality of the universe as an isolated part is called *maqsūm*, that is part. *Qasīm* is water, while *maqsūm* into various names as the multiple creations are separated by their names under different conditions. The water when it is in the ocean is called the sea; when it rises to the sky, it is called a cloud; when it comes down to the earth, it is called rain; when it flows over land, it is called a river, when it returns to the ocean, it is called a sea.

Likewise, the universe becomes various forms, various types, due to the tendencies of the essence that manifest it into multiple conditions<sup>58</sup>. Just as rivers, seas, and rain are also water. Hence, existence (*wujūd*) is a single reality, being a variety of shapes, all of which are water, just as the singular *wujūd* has a plurality. Thus, Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī wants to emphasise that creatures become diverse existence (*mawjūdat*) and a Single Existence (*Waḥdat al-Wujūd*), although the intellect perceives plurality.

Water is also analogous to God as a hidden treasure (*kanzan makhfiyyan*) who wishes to be recognized so that He created a universe similar to foam. Foam is the actuality of water that incarnates on the surface. The foam is the actuality of water in various forms. Likewise, God, as hidden, actualizes nature in multiple states. So that people know God through the universe.

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<sup>57</sup> Fansūrī, "Asrār Al-‘Ārifīn," 274.

<sup>58</sup> Bambang Irawan, Ismail Fahmi Arrauf Nasution, dan Hywel Coleman, "Applying Ibn ‘Arabī’s Concept of Tajallī: A Sufi Approach to Environmental Ethics," *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 10, no. 1 (22 April 2021): 21–36, <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v10i1.7204>.

Stone is also analogised in another way by Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī. Although not many have, almost everyone knows gold. It is also known that gold is a type of stone. Gold is analogous to God. At the same time, stones are similar to those other than God.

Iron and blacksmiths are used to explain the powerlessness of creatures before God. Of course, the analogy of iron and blacksmith is used because it is very close to people. There were blacksmiths in almost every Malay land at that time. Knives, machetes, sickles, hoes, and weapons were ordered from the blacksmith.

People know that iron has no will in the hands of a blacksmith. Iron is powerless against the will of the blacksmith. The blacksmith has absolute power in shaping iron. Likewise, when the iron is analogous to creations and iron artisans are equal to God, humans and all creations are utterly obedient to God's decree, will, and control.<sup>59</sup>

## Conclusion

Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī teaches *wujūdiyya* through a very easy-to-understand approach. He used objects easily recognizable to Malays around the 16th century as analogies to explain the teachings of *wujūdiyya*. He succeeded in explaining the complicated teachings of Islamic metaphysics in this way.

Chess pieces and the sea and the wave as an object of analogy to explain the relationship between the single *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā* and the plurality of *makhḷūqāt*. The round fruit becomes an analogy for God's eternity. Seeds become an analogy for the existence of potential reality (*a'yān thābita*) as the source of the actuality of the universe. The shadow in the mirror is an analogy for the state of existence of the universe. Humans and their attributes become an analogy to explain God, who is only recognized through His Attributes. The unity of the river flow becomes an analogy to explain the unity of existence between *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā* and *makhḷūqāt*. Stone becomes an analogy to explain the absence of the will of *makhḷūqāt* before the will of *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*. Iron becomes an analogy to explain the poverty of the existence of *makhḷūqāt* in front of *Ḥaqq Ta'ālā*.

These analogies are objects that are very close to the community in which Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī works and spreads his teachings. This shows Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī's ability to teach the complicated concept of *wujūdiyya* so that it becomes straightforward for the public to understand. Only by understanding the

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<sup>59</sup> Fansūrī, "Asrār Al-'Arifin," 287.



properties of the objects used as analogies can everyone understand *wujūdiyya* doctrine.

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