



## **Sêrat Bayanullah: Raden Panji Natarata's Theological Da'wah Rhetoric through Classical Javanese Literature**

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### **Abstract**

This study discusses the wise advice related to Sufism aspects conveyed by Raden Panji Natarata which is packaged in *Sêrat Bayanullah* based on the character of each *têmbang*. The purpose of this research is to describe Raden Panji Natarata's mindset as outlined in the rhetoric of *têmbang-têmbang macapat*. The method employed descriptive qualitative. The results showed that Raden Panji Natarata was quite skilled at mixing and matching his stories into a da'wah field according to the characteristics of the *têmbang*. Of the various *têmbang macapat* presented in this *Sêrat Bayanullah*, Raden Panji Natarata did not use *têmbang durma*. This was because *têmbang durma* has a character that tends to be harsh and angry so that it is not in accordance with the content of the da'wah proclaimed by Raden Panji Natarata. Thus, this locality nuanced da'wah element has an aesthetic and humanistic impression. As the title embedded in this literary work, *Sêrat Bayanullah* means the explanation of the chapter of Allah. Thus, it is hoped that this literary work can be a reference for understanding the nature of the chapter of Allah.

**Keywords:** Macapat; Sufism; *Sêrat Bayanullah*.

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini membahas tentang petuah bijak terkait dengan aspek tasawuf yang disampaikan oleh Raden Panji Natarata yang dikemas dalam *Sêrat Bayanullah* berdasarkan perwatakan masing-masing *têmbang*. Tujuan penelitian untuk menjabarkan pola pikir Raden Panji Natarata yang dituangkan dalam retorika *têmbang-têmbang macapat*. Adapun metode yang digunakan ialah kualitatif deskriptif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Raden Panji Natarata cukup piawai memadupadankan kisahnya menjadi ladang dakwah sesuai dengan karakteristik *têmbang* yang digunakan. Dari berbagai *têmbang macapat* yang dihadirkan dalam *Sêrat Bayanullah* ini, Raden Panji Natarata tidak menggunakan *têmbang* bermeturm *durma*. Hal ini disebabkan *têmbang durma* memiliki watak yang cenderung keras dan murka sehingga tidak sesuai dengan kandungan atau muatan dakwah yang dicanangkan oleh Raden Panji Natarata. Dengan demikian, unsur dakwah bernuansa lokalitas ini memiliki kesan estetis sekaligus humanis. Sebagaimana judul yang tersematkan dalam karya sastra ini, *Sêrat Bayanullah* berarti penerangan bab Allah sehingga diharapkan karya sastra ini dapat menjadi salah satu referensi untuk memahami hakikat bab Allah.

**Kata Kunci:** Macapat; Tasawuf; *Sêrat Bayanullah*.

## INTRODUCTION

Javanese literature is rich with products in the form of written traditions containing values from previous generations. This provides an opportunity for humanists or writers to convey these meanings and values into literary works based on the local context. Through this method, it is hoped that the concept of thought proclaimed by the author is more easily understood by the public, including religious concepts. This will stimulate the author's new creativity in conveying his advice (Susiyanto, 2018). One form of locality nuanced creativity that can be done by the authors is through *têmbang*. The delivery of the meaning and value of *têmbang* is usually also bound by the existence of a meter in the form of rules in the form of a *guru lagu*, *guru gatra*, and *guru wilangan*. Therefore, the poet or author must understand and master rhyming techniques related to the rules of the meter.

This study describes the contents of a literary work with Islamic nuances entitled *Sêrat Bayanullah*. In accordance with the title, namely *bayanullah*, etymologically the word *bayan* means 'illumination', while the word *Allah* means 'Allah' which refers to the God. *Sêrat Bayanullah* is a cultural product created by Raden Panji Natarata, a religious scholar (ulama) as well as a Muslim humanist in the Yogyakarta Sultanate. As we know, Yogyakarta and Surakarta are identical with the heirs of the Islamic Mataram tradition in Java. Thus, many scriptwriters were born from there (Rochkyatmo, 2010; Azca, Ikhwan dan Arrobbi, 2019).

*Sêrat Bayanullah* was packaged in a new Javanese language to support the Islamic da'wah efforts launched by Raden Panji Natarata. *Sêrat Bayanullah* reveals the long history or historicity of Raden Panji Natarata when he traveled to various places in Java to meet teachers and religious leaders for the mission of seeking knowledge about true perfection and glory (Tanaya, 1977). This is conveyed through several types of *têmbang* which are adapted to their respective characteristics. Therefore, the delivery of messages or discourses of Raden Panji Natarata's da'wah in each of these types of *têmbang* is quite interesting and needs to be studied further.

Basically, a lot of research on *macapat* has been done. Dede Burhanudin (2013) conducted research on the content and theme of the apocalypse or poetry by Haji Hasan Mustapa entitled *Guguritan Jalan Nuju ka Allah*. Broadly speaking, the content revealed in this research is related to the understanding of faith that goes beyond religious institutions which is not only in terms of formal legal and scriptural aspects, but also explores the deepest aspects of the religious messages that they believe in. In addition, the themes and messages contained through Haji Hasan Mustapa's recitation can be grouped into three groups. The grouping in question is the theme of groups of people who are more concerned with the concepts of penance, compassion, and parenting (natures and attitudes to care for each other, love, and share knowledge and experiences among others); the concept of *gemah ripah repeh rapih* (representation of a prosperous condition and not lacking in anything, but still simple and neat); and the concept of *mulih ka jati, mulang ka asal, ulah poho ka purwadaksina* (a reminder that human origin is from God and will return to God) (Burhanudin, 2013). Although the object of this research was regional literature, Burhanuddin's research data source referred to Sundanese literature, while this research used Javanese literature.

In addition, similar research using objects in the form of literary works, *têmbang*, has also been carried out by Zakiyah (2014), namely the literary work entitled *Makamat* Manuscript which thoroughly discusses the provisions of ablution, *taharah*, and prayer. In her research, Zakiyah explains that each provision was described based on the rules of *syara'* and each movement or prayer had philosophical meanings (Zakiyah, 2014). This is considered in detail for someone who wants to follow the Sufism. However, Zakiyah (2014) does not specify in more detail what *têmbang* is used in each explanation of the provisions of ablution, *taharah*, and prayer. In addition, there are some parts of the *têmbang* quote that do

not include a marker ( | ) as a separator between the *guru gatra* in each line so that the quotation does not clearly indicate what *têmbang* is used.

The research about *macapat* has also been carried out by Effendy (2015) and Susanto (2016). Effendy (2015) examines the values of local wisdom in *têmbang macapat* originally from Madura which represent two types of communication. The research findings indicate that there is communication within the family and communication between communities. Communication within the family sphere contains a moral message about the importance of thinking before acting, advice on the behavior of someone who abuses his mind to do bad things, and a moral message not to talk bad about other people. As for communication between communities, it shows that there are three *bhângsalan*, which are essentially suggestions for maintaining oral hygiene, the importance of spreading kindness, and a moral message to always behave honestly. Meanwhile, Susanto (2016) also examined the *têmbang macapat* in the Islamic tradition of the Madurese community. Referring to the results of his research, *têmbang macapat* can be used as a means of prayer to ask for safety. In addition, *têmbang macapat* for the understanding of the Madurese community has noble values that are relevant to the moral values of the local tradition so that it is attached as a good character for the community in living their life. The research conducted by Effendy (2015) and Susanto (2016) shows a fact that in fact there are only 9 types of *têmbang macapat* in the Madurese community, namely *artate (dhandhanggula)*, *maskumambang*, *senom (sinom)*, *kinanti (salanget)*, *mejil (mijil)*, *pangkur*, *durma*, *pucung*, and *kasmaran (asmaradana)*.

Based on several literature reviews that have been described, basically this research has a cognate research object, which is related to *têmbang macapat*. However, previous studies have largely focused on discussing the didactic and moral values contained in *têmbang macapat*. The reasons or background for the type of *têmbang macapat* used to convey these messages or values have not been disclosed. In addition, in the research of Effendy (2015) and Susanto (2016), there does not appear to be *gambuh* and *mêgatruh* effect on the Maduranese community, as in accordance with the theory presented by Sastrodiwirjo (2008). Meanwhile, this research refers to the theory of Padmoesoekotjo (1955) which classifies the *têmbang macapat* into eleven meters. The theory of *têmbang macapat* is used to describe the author's mindset in choosing the types of *têmbang macapat* in each of its *pupuh*. Therefore, this study does not only describes the message or value of the *da'wah* proclaimed by the author in the rhetoric of *têmbang-têmbang macapat*, but also the background or historicity of the author on the pattern of the *pupuh têmbang* sequence used in accordance with the *da'wah* material to be conveyed.

To obtain comprehensive research results, the researchers combined the theory of *têmbang macapat* and the theory of hermeneutics. Hermeneutic theory is used to interpret something that seems difficult to be clearer and easier to understand (Anshari, 2009). This is in accordance with the research objective that in understanding the text, it is necessary to interpret and know the overall meaning of *têmbang* correctly. On the other hand, efforts are also needed to understand the cultural context that developed around the time of writing the text (Teeuw, 1983). Thus, this research on the rhetoric of theological *da'wah* in *Sêrat Bayanullah* is expected to provide an academic contribution through efforts to preserve local literary works as a medium of *da'wah* based on the characteristics and background of using each *têmbang meter* to convey messages.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In terms of method, this research employed descriptive qualitative. Broadly speaking, the researcher carried out three research steps, namely 1) data collection, 2) data analysis, and 3) presenting the results of data analysis. The data source was a Javanese manuscript entitled *Sêrat Bayanullah* written

by Raden Panji Natarata version of the collection of the Reksa Pustaka Library, Mangkunegaran Palace, Surakarta with catalog number A-393. Meanwhile, the research data were in the form of discourses in of *têmbang* stanzas in accordance with the *têmbang meter* in each of its *pupuh*. In the data analysis stage, the researcher applied the theory related to the characteristics of the *têmbang macapat* to determine the character of each *têmbang*. Meanwhile, to dissect the use of *têmbang* presented by the author, the researcher used hermeneutic theory as a scalpel to interpret the author's mindset through the *pupuh* sequence pattern in *Sêrat Bayanullah*.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As the expression of literary works not born out of mere emptiness, through this *Sêrat Bayanullah*, the author wanted to describe his experience in the process of seeking religious knowledge in a more unique and interesting way. Thus, as an author who also played the position of a preacher, Raden Panji Natarata was quite creative in delivering his *da'wah* material so that it seemed more aesthetic. Broadly speaking, *Sêrat Bayanullah* consisted of 14 parts, namely 1 part as the opening and 13 parts as the content. Each *pupuh* has a characteristic meaning and character and describes a different story theme. The details of the parts in *Sêrat Bayanullah* are in table 1. As described in table 1, the rhetoric of Raden Panji Natarata's *da'wah* towards the historicity of his *da'wah* will be described through the pattern of the *pupuh têmbang* sequence as table 1.

Table 1. Order of Pupuh in Sêrat Bayanullah

Number	Name of <i>Têmbang</i>	Number of stanzas	<i>Pupuh</i>	Stories Contents
1.	<i>Gambuh</i>	17	Opener	Writing information of <i>Sêrat Bayanullah</i> .
2.	<i>Dhandhanggula</i>	31	Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Explanation of the main human conception (humans who are able to understand the nature of <i>sangkan paraning dumadi</i>).</li><li>The story of the author and the core teachings he received while studying with religious leaders in the archipelago.</li></ul>
3.	<i>Kinanthi</i>	30	Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The story of teachers who in giving teachings carelessly (do not understand the nature of science that should be).</li><li>Stories of teachers (religious leaders) who give teachings selflessly and expect something in return.</li></ul>
4.	<i>Asmaradana</i>	34	Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The story of a teacher who likes to act deceitfully and only talks without knowing the real truth.</li><li>The author's message to readers is to look for teachers who already understand a science.</li><li>Recommendations not to take being a teacher lightly because a teacher must really</li></ul>

				understand God's secret.
5.	<i>Sinom</i>	18	Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The author's suggestions regarding Sufistic questions that can be asked of the teacher.</li> <li>▪ The author's advice so that readers are not deceived by the words of teachers who use knowledge only to outsmart others.</li> <li>▪ The author's assertion that in fact the teacher is the one who explains based on the arguments of the Qur'an.</li> <li>▪ The author's satire to teachers who are thirsty for flattery.</li> </ul>
6.	<i>Mêgatruh</i>	39	Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The story of the teachings wander about death.</li> <li>▪ The author's assertion that the Qur'an has explained that people who lack their sense (digress) means that their thoughts tend to be misleading.</li> </ul>
7.	<i>Asmaradana</i>	37	Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Insinuating teachers who claim to be believers, but when answering questions from their students only guesswork.</li> <li>▪ Insinuating teachers who claim to be believers, but are arrogant (doesn't allow their students to study with others) because they feel that their knowledge is nothing more than that.</li> <li>▪ Describe the difference between a deceitful teacher and a truly expert (wise) teacher.</li> <li>▪ The author's advice to readers not to easily believe in strange teachings.</li> </ul>
8.	<i>Mijil</i>	38	Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The story of the author's experience when learning about death (in the eastern areas of Ponorogo, Pacitan, Blitar, Malang, Mojokerto), but the knowledge taught by these teachers according to the author is strange.</li> <li>▪ The story of the author while studying about the true nature of humans in the Cilacap area.</li> </ul>
9.	<i>Pucung</i>	53	Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The story of the author while wandering in search of the essence of the perfection of life and death in the Pekalongan area. The teacher said that in order to experience complete death, one had to be willing to silence his airway. According to the author, this is inconsequential science.</li> <li>▪ The author's advice that death is a big secret</li> </ul>

- so that to understand death one must learn from the dead so that everything is clear and does not cause misunderstandings or thoughts.
- The author's story about the teachings of attitudes and ways of living death that he received from a teacher in the Tegal area. According to the teacher, signs of death can be observed starting from 40 days, 7 days, three days, and one day before death. According to the author, these teachings come from the Sanskrit religion (Hinduism) and without a solid evidence base.
  - The story of the author while studying about death to one of the descendants of the Arabs in the Betawi area. The teachings of death that are preached are packaged in Arabic to make them look sublime so that many are tempted.
  - The story of the author while studying with a Christian in Betawi who teaches the science of death which is packaged in smooth Javanese. Therefore, many were tempted and eventually many changed their religion to Christianity.
10. *Pangkur* 32 Contents
- Affirmation that there is no religion that is not good. However, the best religion is Islam.
  - The author's story was suggested by one of the Chinese religious leaders who said that after death, 15 years later the person who died could be reincarnated. According to the author, this teaching is a strange teaching.
  - The story of the author when a teacher in Serang was advised by a teacher in Arabic, but the essence of his teachings is Buddhism which is a form of lying and mere fabrication.
  - The author's advice to the readers to be more careful and alert because in this day and age many people claim to have false knowledge (not really understanding and looking for income), but on the other hand many people are looking for it so they are deceived.
  - The author's opinion that people who are more concerned with seeking knowledge are better than people who are obsessed with
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11.	<i>Maskumambang</i>	31	Contents	wealth. ▪ The author's advice to the readers to use their mind and soul wisely, including understanding the nature of God's Essence as God with all the attributes attached to Him, so that the heart becomes clear; man needs to eliminate the doubts of the heart so that his mind does not wander and can plunge it; and don't feel arrogant about the knowledge you have because maybe when you give teachings to people who turn out to be more knowledgeable, it will embarrass yourself.
12.	<i>Dhandhanggula</i>	24	Contents	▪ Continuity of the odyssey of Raden Panji Natarata to seek knowledge of death to Betawi. ▪ The author's advice that life is always matched with death and death is always inherent in every life. ▪ The author's assertion that people who have understood the secrets of God, will not be influenced by satan's thoughts (misguided thoughts).
13.	<i>Gambuh</i>	33	Contents	▪ Advice from the author that believers who lack knowledge tend to follow their passions, namely fiddling with knowledge just to deceive. ▪ The author's opinion that people who really understand something that is subtle, means that they have understood the origin and purpose of life. ▪ Differentiating the definition of a safe person, namely a person who has the truth in belief, moves and acts always based on instructions, while a lost person has one of the characteristics that his movements and actions are considered to be on God. ▪ The author's advice to understand true science is to practice the taste and content of sentences, not just pay attention to the beauty of the sound and the arrangement of words.
14.	<i>Asmarandana</i>	26	Contents	▪ The main scholar is the person who gets instructions about knowledge that is smooth and straight and lives the goodness in his worship so that he is not careless in seeking knowledge and making use of it.

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- The author's advice to the reader is not to show off worship, his belief must be strong, and understand the arguments and the Shari'a.
  - The author's advice is that when the pillars of Islam have been fully interpreted, it will bring blessings, especially in prayer (human encounter with God). The essence of prayer is to bring taste.
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### **Opening Pupuh: Têmbang Gambuh**

The composition of the *Sêrat Bayanullah* begins with *têmbang gambuh*, which consists of 17 stanzas. Lexically, *gambuh* means jumbuh or 'fit'. Based on its character, *têmbang gambuh* describes the existence of harmony and wisdom, namely being able to place something according to its portion or need (Haidar, 2018; Sulisty, 2015). In this context, *têmbang gambuh* was chosen to initiate the delivery of a message or advice, especially related to the concept of the true nature of life and death.

Meanwhile, Padmoesoekotjo (1955) also argues that the character of *têmbang gambuh* is friendly and brave. Therefore, according to the researcher, Raden Panji Natarata as the author is quite careful and precise in using *têmbang gambuh* as the opening or beginning of *Sêrat Bayanullah*. *Têmbang gambuh* is a means or way for the author to introduce *Sêrat Bayanullah* which contains explanations related to writing information. As for the use of the variety of *têmbang gambuh* language in *Sêrat Bayanullah*, it is not completely *ngoko*, but tends to be *krama lugu* so that it still seems familiar and polite.

### **First Pupuh: Têmbang Dhandhanggula**

In the first *pupuh*, the author begins the content of the *sêrat* by using *têmbang dhandhanggula* in as many as 31 stanzas. This first *pupuh* tells the author's experience while studying with religious leaders in the archipelago. This is in accordance with the *têmbang dhandhanggula's* flexible character so that it is appropriate to convey the message of *da'wah* (Mahfud, 2013; Padmoesoekotjo, 1987). The process of achieving something beautiful definitely requires struggle and sacrifice. Thus, in this context, *têmbang dhandhanggula* can be interpreted as a hope for something beautiful or sweet (Haidar, 2018).

### **Second Pupuh: Têmbang Kinanthi**

The second *Pupuh* is delivered through a *têmbang kinanthi* of 30 stanzas. Linguistically, the origin of the word *kinanthi* is *kanthi* which means "guidance". (Poerwadarminta, 2015). Usually *têmbang kinanthi* tells the story of a person's journey who needs guidance to the right direction. The guidance in question is, for example, related to religious norms, customs, or even guidance from more expert people (parents, teachers, religious leaders, etc.) to achieve safety and happiness. Thus, *têmbang kinanthi* is often used to convey advice with compassion (Haidar, 2018).

In fact, in this *pupuh* the author narrates that during his wanderings and meetings with teachers (religious leaders), the teachers gave teachings carelessly since basically they did not understand the true nature of science. In addition, several teachers that Raden Panji Natarata met in giving teachings also acted selflessly and expected rewards. Teachers (religious leaders) who should guide students (Raden Panji Natarata) with the right knowledge, actually provide knowledge that is misleading. According to

researchers, the teachers who gave advice to Raden Panji Natarata actually had a purpose of guiding, but the knowledge taught was not in accordance with Raden Panji Natarata's view so he felt that the teachings of his teachers tended to be misleading.

### **Third Pupuh: *Têmbang Asmarandana***

The third *pupuh* consists of 34 stanzas whose contents are still about the teachings of the teachers that Raden Panji Natarata met during his wanderings. As for the use of *têmbang asmarandana* in delivering the message, it cannot be separated from the character of *têmbang asmarandana* which is usually related to matters of love. In this case, the advice delivered by the teachers to Raden Panji Natarata is a form of their love for the author. However, according to Raden Panji Natarata, the teachers like to act deceitfully and only talk nonsense so that the knowledge they convey seems a lie.

Through this *pupuh asmarandana*, Raden Panji Natarata suggests the readers should look for teachers who are qualified and understand physically and mentally towards a science. This is in accordance with the quote in the *têmbang asmarandana* third *pupuh* in the 11<sup>th</sup> stanzas.

*lamun ngguguru sujanming | upayaa kang wus pana | pana pramanêm tadhane | kawaca  
anèng wicara | pagracuting sasmita | Jawa Ngarab kang wus kaglung | duga prayoga wiweka  
| | (AS-III/1/1-7)*

Translation:

'If (you) learn from humans | look for (teacher) who already understands | understands  
with calm as a sign | his description of something that is implied | in Javanese or Arabic he  
has mastered | with all consideration, safety, and action. | |'

In addition, in the third *pupuh* of *Asmarandana*, the author also gives advice that being a teacher is not easy. The teacher referred to in this context is the teacher who teaches the nature of God, life, and death. Some of these matters have touched the realm of ontology so that it cannot be arbitrary in expressing opinions, conveying teachings, and teaching certain practices or rituals without a clear scientific basis.

### **Fourth Pupuh: *Têmbang Sinom***

Usually, *têmbang sinom* character tends to be happy so it is very suitable to be used in conveying advice. In this fourth *pupuh*, Raden Panji Natarata tells about the many teachers who use beautiful sayings when giving teachings, but in fact they are only pretending to deceive and outsmart others. Therefore, the author reminds that in fact the teacher is the one who explains the knowledge that comes directly from God, namely from the books that God sent down through the arguments of the Qur'an (Itti & Alif, 2017). The author also satirizes teachers who are thirsty for flattery. That is, the teacher expects other people (students who are studying at him) to acknowledge his intelligence. In this condition, the teacher expects the student to spend money in return for the teachings or teachings conveyed to him.

Raden Panji Natarata also likens the teacher's attitude to that of young people who only want to be flattered like wise people, but in reality their hearts do not understand for sure. Therefore, Raden Panji Natarata tells through *têmbang sinom* which is identical with the associative meaning of young people, especially in terms of their characteristics.

### Fifth Pupuh: *Têmbang Mêgatruh*

The origin of the word *mêgatruh* is *mêgat* 'separation' and *ruh* 'life' so it is often used in the context of death. In accordance with the associative meaning of *têmbang mêgatruh*, in this sixth *pupuh*, the author still recounts strange teachings he received from his teachers, namely about death. One of the peculiarities of this teaching is found in the sixth to eighth stanzas as the following quote.

*Kaelokaning ngagêsang kang kalantur | ana manèh ngulama di | ambaboni muruk  
kawruh | mruhkên trap pati patitis | soroging wayangan tinon | | (ME-V/6/1-5)*

Translation:

'The strangeness of life that wanders | there is another scholar who | masters and teaches  
knowledge | by explaining the correct way of death | that is by seeing the shadow and  
following it'

*Mahyèng wujud putih mawènès tur mulus | sarupa ingkang ndarbèni | gumawang cahya  
ngunguwung | nèng ngawang-awang kaèksi | ginulung parèk wignyanjong | | (ME-V | 7 | 1-5)*

Translation:

'His appearance is pure white and smooth | similar to (that person's) self | gives a sparkling  
light | floats in the air | then draws near to the person's self. | |'

*Jajar linggih iku dèn anggêp panutan | mring kamuksan kang patitis | titising tyas  
linalurut | kinarya gandhulan pati | manjingkên swarga kinaot | | (ME-V | 6 | 1-5)*

Translation:

'Then sit in a row next to him so that it is considered a guide | to the right way of death |  
mental accuracy that must be followed | used as a guide at death | as a guide to heaven. | |'

Through the quotations from the sixth to the eighth stanza, it is told that the author is taught to follow the correct process of death, namely according to what the shadow that resembles him does when the time of death has arrived. According to the teachings of the teachers, it is the shadow that will later show the way to heaven. However, Raden Panji Natarata did not believe this advice. He has a strong principle that to understand the nature of death, the way is to meet it (experience death itself). This is in line with his advice which is written in the following nineteenth stanza of *têmbang mêgatruh*.

*Yèn sujana nirdeya marang pakewuh | guruning pati wong mati | guruning urip wong  
idhup | adhêping kahanan jati | anane mêngku sapakon | | (ME-V/6/1-5)*

Translation:

'If one truly understands the true nature of death | that is, the teacher of death is the dead  
person himself | while the teacher of the living is a person who is still alive | so the way to  
believe in true death | is to meet it (experience it yourself) | |'

However, there are still many who doubt the certainty about the coming of the death so that many are still confused and vulnerable to believe the teachings that tend to be misleading. Therefore, to straighten out the misconceptions related to death, Raden Panji Natarata emphasized that the only way to believe in true death is to meet him (experience it yourself).

### Sixth Pupuh: Têmbang Asmarandana

Based on its character, *têmbang asmarandana* is used to describe everything related to love. The sixth *pupuh* in this *Sêrat Bayanullah* contains a satire about Raden Panji Natarata who claims to be a believer, but when he answers questions from his students, he only guesses. In addition, Raden Panji Natarata also quipped at the behavior of the teachers who felt that there was nothing beyond their knowledge and the teachers forbade their students to study with other people.

Therefore, in this sixth *pupuh*, the author gives advice in describing the difference between a teacher who only deceives and a teacher who is truly an expert (wise). This was conveyed by Raden Panji Natarata in the quote from the sixth to ninth stanzas of the *têmbang asmarandana*.

*Samare kalingan budi | budi tuna liwat salah | ngukuhi bènêre dhewe | pangrasane tanpa sama | yèn tinakon muridnya | ngèlmu ingkang ewuh-ewuh | cinakra nora pracaya | | (AS-VI/6/1-7)*

Translation:

'His confusion is due to a closed mind | loss of mind due to the wrong path | selfishness and feeling self-righteous | in his feelings there is no match | if he gets a question from his student | about difficult science | the answer is only guessed so that if reasoned it can't be trusted | |'

*Sêmu sengol amangsuli | yaiku wong mukmin mamak | muk-mukan pêtêng tyas èpèh | lawan malih asring ana | mukmin darbe papacak | marang putra wayahipun | tan parêng ngguguru liya | | (AS-VI/7/1-7)*

Translation:

'It is not friendly when answering it | that is a believer with approximate knowledge | stuttering because of dark thoughts | and also often there are | believers who have prohibitions | to their children and grandchildren | do not allow learning from others | |'

*Wus têrang tan ana ngèlmi | kang ngungkuli kawruhira | wong liya-liyane goroh | kadhang winastan kêlangkah | mukmin ingkang mangkana | angrasuk budining munyuk | samar lamun kaungkulan | | (AS-VI/8/1-7)*

Translation:

'Because they think that there is no knowledge | that exceeds their knowledge | other people are considered to be lying | sometimes accused of false knowledge | such believers | use their knowledge of monkeys | do not like their knowledge to be defeated | |'

*Kuwatir yèn tan pinundhi | tandha yèn ngèlmune tuna | dene mukmin kang caksanèng | kawruh dunarja mulyarja | tan sumêlang kasoran | lamun nyata ngèlmu putus | lir lisah kalawan toya | | (AS-VI/9/1-7)*

Translation:

'They feel worry if they are no longer respected | that is a sign that their knowledge is wrong | while a wise believer | his knowledge makes him safe and happy | not afraid of being defeated | if knowledge is the truth | like oil with water | |'

The quote from the *têmbang asmaradana* line is a proof of Raden Panji Natarata's love for his readers so that in the process of seeking true knowledge it is also necessary to choose and consider teachers carefully. Thus, readers can be selective in distinguishing which teachers only claim to be believers and which teachers are truly believers. One of the prominent characteristics of a teacher who only claims to be a believer is that he does not like it when his knowledge is defeated by others. This shows that his knowledge is wrong. Meanwhile, the true believer teacher has a wise attitude and is not worried if someone else has higher knowledge than himself.

### **Seventh Pupuh: Têmbang Mijil**

In this *pupuh*, the author tells about the nature of life and death which is described in the *têmbang mijil* in a total of 38 stanzas. According to its characteristics, *mijil* generally means 'to come out' or 'to be born'. Something new born definitely needs to adapt to the surrounding environment. In addition, in the process of adapting to the environment, it is necessary to have guidance from people who have existed or are more experienced. In this context, Raden Panji Natarata recounted his experience of studying in several areas in Java related to the nature of life which again received teachings that he felt were very strange and unreasonable. This is expressed in the seventh *pupuh* of *têmbang mijil*, in the first and second stanzas as follows.

*Ingsun uwis mlaya njajah bumi | ngalor ngidul ngulon | ngêtan têtung tanah Jawa  
kiye | muruita para wêgig-wêgig | lir critêngsun kang wis | para guru-guru | | (MI-VII/1/1-6)*

Translation:

'I have traveled all over the country | north south west | east around the Land of Java | to study  
with experts | as I told | teachers'

*Amimijang lir patraping jajil | kukutug kang elok | asêsaji barang rupa sajèn | pambêngate  
ngèlmu tanpa saksi | sinaksèn ing ati | ati kang kalantur | | (MI-VII/2/1-6)*

Translations:

'In teaching like the devil's attitude | burning incense strangely | making offerings in the form  
of offerings | descriptions of knowledge without evidence | only believed in  
hearts | abandoned hearts | |'

The strange teaching referred to by the author is the existence of practices as practiced in the animist dynamism era, namely the ritual of burning incense and making offerings. According to Raden Panji Natarata, these things are only the beliefs of the heart, the hearts of people who are neglected or lost, since the knowledge conveyed cannot be proven logically.

### **Eighth Pupuh: Têmbang Pucung**

In accordance with its associative meaning, *pucung* is commonly associated with the final stages of human life (Saddhono & Pramestuti, 2018). The last journey of man during his lifetime on earth is to meet death and experience death. The author recounts his experience with several teachings of death. The number of stanzas of this *pupuh pucung* is the highest among the other *pupuh*, which is 53 stanzas. Through this *têmbang pucung*, the author is more flexible in conveying his teachings because the characteristics of *têmbang pucung* are suitable for telling something witty or funny so that it can entertain

the heart. In addition, *têmbang pucung* also has flexible and straightforward characteristics so that it is suitable for conveying wise teachings or advice that is harmonized with the microcosm (Haidar, 2018).

The flexible and straightforward nature of *têmbang pucung* can be proven through Raden Panji Natarata's choice of words in recounting his experience when taught about death. In the eighth *pupuh* of *têmbang pucung*, the twenty-sixth stanza, the author begins the story that he studied with a person who is considered an expert in the Pekalongan area. One of the quotes from the line is as follows.

*Sun angrungu | ana sajuga wong putus | tatas kawruhnya trang | nuli sun maguru  
ngabdi | amiminta lumunturing kang wasita | | (PU-VIII/26/1-5)*

Translation:

'I also heard | there is someone who is already an expert | mastery of knowledge is very  
clear | then I serve to study | hope to be taught the truth | |'

If we look closely, the *têmbang pucung* in this eighth *pupuh*, the author uses Javanese words with a variety of *ngoko*. As stated earlier, as *têmbang* as it is, the author is very smart in using *têmbang pucung* to give advice with wise advice through a variety of languages that are more easily accepted by the readers. The use of the variety of *ngoko* is shown by the clitic on the word *kawruhnya* 'knowledge', which refers to the knowledge possessed by a third person, namely the teacher. If viewed from the perspective of uploading or language level, in this context the author seems impolite since socially the teacher must have a higher position than the author who is a student. In addition, the use of clitic has met the requirements of the song teacher at the end of the *têmbang* line, which is 6a.

### **Ninth Pupuh: Têmbang Pangkur**

The word *pangkur* is coming from the word *mungkur* which means 'to resign' (Haidar, 2018). Based on the context in this *Sêrat Bayanullah*, *têmbang pangkur* is used to convey Raden Panji Natarata's views regarding the religious teachings that he received during his wanderings. As a religious scholar who came from the base of the Islamic empire in the archipelago, Raden Panji Natarata gave an initial conclusion that in fact the best teaching was Islam. This is expressed in the following line of quotations.

*Marang agama Mukhammad | kang mangkono iku datan prayogi | awit ing  
sayêktinipun | sakabèhing agama | nora ana ingkang ala ingkang bagus | de anggêpe bangsa  
Islam | tan ana ingkang ngungkuli | | (PA-IX/3/1-7)*

Translation:

'Against Muhammad's religion | things like that (badmouthing) is not good | because in  
truth | all religions | nothing is bad, but the best (religion) is Islam | no one can surpass it | |'

The perspectives and opinions expressed by Raden Panji Natarata are in line with one verse in the Qur'an, namely QS. Ali-Imran verse 19, which states that the real religion with Allah is Islam (QuranBest Team, 2019). In accordance with his character, *têmbang pangkur* has a strong character. A strong impression can be interpreted to describe a firm attitude towards something that should be in accordance with rules or guidelines, for example the perspective of faith which in this case is related to Islam as the best religion.

### Tenth Pupuh: *Têmbang Maskumambang*

*Têmbang maskumambang* has the characteristic to express something that is sad or lost (Padmoesoekotjo, 1953). In the context of this *Sêrat Bayanullah*, Raden Panji Natarata uses *têmbang maskumambang* to convey advice about the need for humans to use reason and soul wisely, including understanding the nature of God's Essence as God and with all His attributes. This needs to be really understood so that humans are not confused in responding to the many thoughts about the nature of God that wander and can actually lead to error. Raden Panji Natarata expresses it in the nineteenth to twentieth stanzas.

*Marma sagung putra wayah sun prih wêgig | mumpung maksih gêsang | sirnakna mamanging  
ati | kapriye trapmu mumuja | | (MA-X/19/1-4)*

Translation:

'O all my children and grandchildren I give advice | while still alive | remove the doubts of the  
heart | about how you worship | |'

Through the quote from the *têmbang* stanza, the author advises *Sêrat Bayanullah* readers to eliminate heart doubts regarding worship since basically doubts in worship come from Satan who aims to disturb the solemnity of worship.

### Eleventh Pupuh: *Têmbang Dhandhanggula*

In this eleventh *pupuh*, the continuation of Raden Panji Natarata's odyssey in search of the perfect knowledge of death is told to one of the masters of Arab descent in the Betawi region. In this journey, Raden Panji Natarata did not mention clearly what teachings he got. This is stated in the seventh stanza as follows.

*Wusnya sun matur mring Tuwan Sayid | gya winêjang wijanganing sasmita | kang nyamut  
mêmêt umête | ing kêne tan kasêbut | awit walèh mèlèhkên kidib | manawa kawadaka  
wiwijanganipun | salah tampane kang tampa | tan prayoga nguculi ngèlmu ingkang  
wis | manawa kathèthèran | | (XI-DH/7/1-9)*

Translation:

'After I conveyed my meaning to the *sayid* | then I was given a teaching about a secret | which  
is very difficult and confusing | it is not mentioned here | because it will reveal the secret of  
knowledge that is wrong | if it is explained on its teachings | if it is misunderstood for those  
who hear it | not good revealing secret knowledge | perhaps only, still will not be able to  
understand it | |'

Through the quote from the *têmbang*, it appears that Raden Panji Natarata is actually flexible. That is, not all the teachings of death that he got from his teachers were conveyed clearly. In this case, it is evidenced by the confession of Raden Panji Natarata who said that the secret knowledge he obtained from a person with the title Mr. Sayid was very difficult and confusing. Thus, Raden Panji Natarata prefers not to convey the knowledge so as not to cause serious problems for misunderstandings caused by his carelessness.

This is in accordance with the flexible character of *têmbang dhandhanggula* so that the language used is more flexible and does not use too many arguments. This means that the author hopes that the advice from his experience can be interpreted more simply and penetrated into the souls of the readers.

### Twelfth Pupuh: *Têmbang Gambuh*

*Gambuh* lexically means to grow or fit. Based on its characteristics, *têmbang gambuh* is bold, firm, but also intimate. Meanwhile, the function of *têmbang gambuh* is usually to express advice that tends to be firm so that the dictions tend to use the *ngoko* language variety. As for this *Sêrat Bayanullah*, the *têmbang gambuh* consists of 33 stanzas. Raden Panji Natarata clearly and unequivocally explained the difference between those who were considered safe and those who had lost. This is expressed in the following quote from the twenty-eighth stanza.

*Mobah molah satuduh | ing pribadi marma bènêr luput | wus mangkono wong wicaksèng  
pambudi | seje lan janma kêpaung | polah tingkahing Hyang Manon | | (GA-XII/28/1-5)*

Translation:

'Move and act based on instructions | personal self understands what is right and wrong | that  
is a man who is wise in his mind | different from humans who are lost | movement and actions  
are considered to be God's destiny | |'

In general, the difference between the definitions of survivors and lost people according to the author lies in their behavior. Righteous people use their minds to behave in accordance with the instructions so that they can distinguish the commands or prohibitions of Allah. This has an impact on their caution in doing something so that it fosters wisdom in that person. Meanwhile, people who are lost in doing something are not based on wise reason and only assume that all movements and actions they do are destiny or provisions that God (Allah) has ordained. Such thinking is not appropriate because basically humans are gifted with reason, mind, and heart that can be used in harmony and balance (*jumbuh*).

### Thirteenth Pupuh: *Têmbang Asmaradana*

The thirteenth *pupuh* is the closing *pupuh* which contains the conclusions of Raden Panji Natarata during his odyssey in search of knowledge which is written in *têmbang asmaradana*. In accordance with its character, *têmbang asmaradana* contains nuances about love, not only love for a partner, but also love in a broader sense. In this case, Raden Panji Natarata gives a message of love in the form of advice to readers about the true nature of *sangkan paraning dumadi*.

This is in line with the big theme of Raden Panji Natarata's journey to find and straighten the understanding of the nature of life and death as the big theme discussed in this *Sêrat Bayanullah*. In connection with the many teachers who teach knowledge in a haphazard or rambling way, Raden Panji Natarata emphasizes that the main teacher should be someone who has received instructions for smooth and straight knowledge so that they do not act carelessly in conveying. This is stated in the second stanza *pupuh asmaradana* as follows.

*Lalakon kanggo ing urip | sampurnaning kauripan | saka jajah pangawruhe | sarjana susila  
tama | kataman ing sasmita | ing ngèlmu kang alus mulus | murtining rèh pudyèng taya | | (AS-  
XIII/2/1-7)*

Translation:

'Stories in life | about the perfection of life | from understanding many major  
sciences | scholars | will get directions | on knowledge that is smooth and straight | so that  
mastering goodness in doing worship'

That is, in carrying out a science or practice there must be a strong basis so that it is not careless in teaching. In this context what is meant is religious knowledge. A true teacher as a major scholar is described as a person who already has a strong religious scientific foundation so that in his behavior and actions he will always get instructions. It is through these instructions that people can tell which knowledge is good (smooth and straight) and which is not good (deviant). Thus, people who really understand the nature of science tend to behave towards goodness and all good behavior can become a practice that is included in worship. Usually, good people will also be seen in their speech, behavior, and worship. That is the result of the manifestation of straight knowledge.

### **Correlation of Literature and Theological *Da'wah* Mission**

*Da'wah* in literary works is generally closely correlated with matters of theology, the search for God, and beliefs. *Da'wah* is expected to be an aspect that must reach the target (the people being preached) with a good and correct understanding. A preacher or *dai* must be able to convey the mission of the *da'wah* in a creative and interesting way, in line with the religious values to be preached. Religious values brought by the preacher are part of the elements of the message of *da'wah*, while literary works are the medium of *da'wah* (Nurhayati, Junaedi, & Sahliah, 2019). For example, the Walis in Java tried to propagate Islam through tradition, so they needed to study the existing *kekawin* (classical literature) as well as various performing arts which later became the forerunner to the birth of various scriptures or scriptures (Astuti, 2017). Likewise with the mission of *da'wah* in introducing Islam in the archipelago, it is sought so that religion and culture do not defeat each other, but are conceptualized to bridge the contradictions between religion and culture which so far tend to be opposite. In this context, Raden Panji Natarata as a preacher and author of *Sêrat Bayanullah* seeks to carry out the mission of Islamic *da'wah* and combines it with local wisdom in the form of literary works in the form of *têmbang macapat* which contain noble, intellectual, and spiritual values (Storey, 2006). In the process of creating *têmbang*, Raden Panji Natarata synergizes the meaning of local culture and religious values that lead to servitude to God. In addition, the relationship between *da'wah* and local culture gives the impression that a religious teaching can be delivered wisely in accordance with the context of the community as the target of its *da'wah* (Effendi, 2019). This is expected to attract people's interest to learn more about Islam without elements of violence or coercion because the role of literature as a medium of local cultural *da'wah* is very vital for the sustainability and success of the *da'wah*.

### **CONCLUSION**

The researchers summarized the frequency of use of each *têmbang* meter as follows: *gambuh* (2x), *dhandhanggula* (2x), *kinanthi* (1x), *asmaradana* (3x), *sinom* (1x), *mêgatruih* (1x), *mijil* (1x), *pucung* (1x), *pangkur* (1x), and *maskumbang* (1x). In the summary, it appears that the frequency of *têmbang* which is quite often used by Raden Panji Natarata is the *têmbang asmaradana*, which is 3 times. This reality is in accordance with the character of *têmbang asmaradana* which can be used to tell all things related to love stories. In the context of *Sêrat Bayanullah*, the love story in question has to do with the ups and downs of the author during his wanderings in search of the true nature of life and death, as a form of proof of the author's love for God. The dictions used in *têmbang asmaradana* are Raden Panji Natarata's efforts in conveying the story with love so that readers can understand and absorb every message or advice conveyed. On the other hand, the researcher found a unique thing, namely Raden Panji Natarata as the author did not use *têmbang durma*. This is related to the content of *Sêrat Bayanullah* as a medium of *da'wah*

to straighten out various deviant understandings and thoughts so that the *têmbang* used tends to be firm and brave, but also friendly. Meanwhile, *têmbang durma* describes the form of anger, and rebellion so that the words used tend to be harsh. Therefore, *têmbang durma* character is considered less relevant if it is used to express a religious advice. As the understanding and thoughts of the teachers wandered away from the rules of the scriptures and hadith, Raden Panji Natarata still used polite language in his criticism. This is related to the concept of da'wah which is actually tolerant and pleasant, far from the impression of hatred.

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Sêrat Bayanullah: Raden Panji Natarata's Theological Da'wah Rhetoric  
through Classical Javanese Literature

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