Javanese Sex Spirituality on Serat Nitimani

by Suwito Suwito
Javanese Sex Spirituality on Serat Nitimani Written by Raden Harya Suganda (1887 AD)

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1. INTRODUCTION
Sex is one of the strongest instincts possessed by every human being [1]. For this reason, sexual needs are as important as other instinctive needs such as clothing, food and shelter. Due to its character as instinctive biological need, sexual activity becomes taboo and is rarely discussed in a sacred spiritual context, not like other human activities such as prayer. Most researches address sexuality in a reductive manner, linking it to the themes of biological action [4][5] gender [6], [7] and the furthest is to the concept of power [8] they do not view it as a sacred activity. In fact, sexual activity is a manifestation of god’s characteristic named Al-Khatiq in humans to preserve human life [9].

Piswulang Java (Javanese teaching) emphasized that sexual activity aside from being pure and sacred instinct also became a concept of parousing damadi (the nature of human creation) beginning with the existence of sexual activity which must be shown to God for judgment [10]. In other words, genitals are sacred mandares containing the meaning of God’s essence. Thus, anyone uses his/her genital to get biological pleasure without Sharia rules means that he/she has committed treason to God [11]. So that having sex spiritually leads a person to become a perfect human being who understands himself and his God.

This paper aims to find out the other side of sex which has been generally understood as biological behavior. In this context, Serat Nitimani by R. Harya Suganda 1887 AD is taken as the material object as possessing coherence in the process of finding new interpretations of sex spirituality.

2. RESEARCH METHOD
The main data of this study is the text of Serat Nitimani of R. Harya Suganda 1887 AD which were collected through documentation techniques. The text is interpreted hermeneutically using the theory of sexual spirituality in Islamic perspective.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION
3.1. Serat Nitimani and Its Scope
Serat Nitimani was written by R. Harya Suganda in 1887 AD. He is a descendant of Mangunegaran Surakarta, who at that time was the regent in Pasuruan. Serat Nitimani is a Javanese sex book containing text in the form of dialogue between a young man (juru puasa) and his teacher (sang nurwenggita) on how to acquire the perfection of knowledge and visibility of the real world through sex teaching (piswulang) for someone who wants to start marriage life.

Serat Nitimani consists of 32 chapters. In each chapter, there are sub-chapters as follows: first, manggola, which is the introduction of the author. Second, proverbs containing advice to everyone who reads the book. Third, piswulang (tenets) on how to choose a future wife. Fourth, piswulang on bad women who will cause misery in marriage life. Fifth, piswulang on the techniques to treat wife physically and mentally. Sixth, piswulang on techniques of sexual
intercourse between husband and wife. Seventh, *piwulang* on the origin of human semen. Eighth, *piwulang* on *Betal Mukadas* which is an explanation of God's substance placed on the testicles of man.

Ninth, *piwulang* on the *calil, haditus, ijmuk* and *qibah* as well as *waqf anumah dat* (whispers about the existence of *dat*). Tenth, *piwulang* wedsuran wakuman dat (the presence of *dat*). Eleventh, *piwulang* "buyan alilip" book containing a comparison with the book of "Wirid Hidayat Jati". Twelfth, *piwulang* gelaran kahumahing dat telling the existence of God's substance on the results of sexual intercourse. Thirteenth, *piwulang* on Betal Makmur explaining that fetus is the work of God that must be accounted for before God. Fourteenth, *piwulang* on Betal Mukaram which is God's prohibition places. Fifteenth, *piwulang* on the spread of Arabic science on the island of Java. Sixteenth, *piwulang* on the comparative phenomenon concerning *inam* (the determination of the tranquility of faith), which is the procedure for living life based on God's will. Seventeenth, *piwulang* of martyrdom exposing sexual activity as the first means of the birth of a human being (*sangkang paraning damuadi*). Eighteenth, *piwulang* on male and female genitalas as a sacred mandate from God and its relation to the concept of *sangkang paraning damuadi*. Nineteenth, *piwulang* on women ethics during intercourse. Twenty, *piwulang* on prohibition for woman from asking a shaman to perpetuate her partner's love. Twenty-first, *piwulang* on main behaviors and marital knowledge.

Twenty second, *piwulang* on the formation of a baby in the womb. Twenty third, *piwulang* on knowledge and appreciation practice to unite the mind with God. Twenty fourth, *piwulang* on body behavior in sexual intercourse. Twenty fifth, the technique of copulating. Twenty sixth, *piwulang* on intercourse technique with intermediate behavior (*laka madaya*). Twenty seventh, *piwulang* on the main practice and knowledge of perfection which includes: the *Serat* (which is in physical knowledge), the *Tarkat* (which is in the heart knowledge), the *Hakekat* (which is in the knowledge of life) and the *Mahfitan* (which is in the knowledge of *raksa* journey). Twenty eighth, *piwulang* physical action and spiritual purity in the spiritual journey through the tale of three birds. Twenty ninth, *piwulang* on the appreciation and *tapa brata* (meditation) performed by *jehung* eaterpillar and a snake. Thirtieth, *piwulang* on *pamca driya* (silence in the center of the mind or the human mind) and *pamca maha* (five pseudo things in human life).


### 3.2. Sexual Intercourse as the Top of Spirituality: Serat Nitimani Perspective

Comprehending sexuality on the spiritual viewpoint is not easy, that is because the common sense of sex is biological relationship [12][13]. Meanwhile, the object of spiritual study is coming toward appreciation of life in its relationship with God regardless of the teachings of any religions [14]. In the context of Islam, spirituality means something that refers to anything related to the spirit world, close to God, containing mysticism aspects and interiority that are equated with the core of things. This makes the terms of sexuality and spirituality look like in the opposite direction. In fact, sex and spirituality in the context of knowing self and God, also the efforts to unite one self with God are inseparable part.

The construction of sexual spirituality in Serat Nitimani is loaded with aspects of physical, psychological, and spiritual teachings. Some of these aspects form an integrated model of sexual spirituality construction that eventually ends with the origin of human life and self-union with God. The subject is explained as follows:


The aforementioned points were supported by Ronggowarsito in Serat Wirid Hidayat hat as follows: first, God truly has transcendent power emanated into humans (*kawula*). Through that emanation, immerged recognition that human radiates (*katipika*) fast *Jati* from within. The essence of life that comes from sexual intercourse between men and women is none other than radiating the Essence of God from the centrifugal point to the universal realm. The Essence of God experiences emanation through the process of disguising (*jagad wulkan*), animating the *kawula* as its *wara* at *velli*.

Secondly, the emanation process mentions God as the origin of mankind (*istik*). The process of God’s *jagad* into humans occurs through the dignity of seven, stating that God is emitted in the human race. This context of emanation is in line with the merging of pantheism, meaning that humans are part of the essence of God with monism, meaning that God dwells (lenggeh) inside humans.

Thirdly, the embodiment of God’s essence into human beings both in the form of fate or hidden face manifests the completeness of life for the *kawula* (myself) to be able to carry out the life process. Fourthly, the completeness of human life as a veil of *ijasun* (the emanating inside human being. *Ijasun*) who (lengkap) in the inner kingdom (*mahligai*) of a human will give him life perfection. God’s *jumeng* (stay) inside human being are in three *mahligai* namely the head (*guru loka* or *hail al - Makmur*), breast (*endra loka* or *hail al - muraham*) and genitals (*guna loka - hait al - *
Each part contains six elements and each part always has an element of *rahmat* as the essence of god who surrounds human life. The three sacred parts of *Mahligai* in human beings consist of the Three Realms (*Trilioka*). In *Trilioka*, *Jegan* builds *mahligai* and moves people’s lives. To be able to recognize self and be fully united (manungguli) with God, sex must be based on constant *dikhr* (prayer). In this context, *Dikhr* as the practice of *tarekat* means that sexual intercourse should be done through several stages, namely the pre-intercourse stage, the intercourse stage, and concluding stages.

In the pre-intercourse stage, *Serat Nittinani* requires a person to perform a procession of bathing and hair washing (*kamas*) using *kemang setanam* (assorted flowers) and spelling a mantra or prayer to God, and after that wear attractive clothes, this procedure should be done again after the intercourse. Next, the thousand parts of *Aji Kama* is used to cultivate a pure intention, opens *Aji Asmara Manao* (inner charm, cheerful heart, happy and accepting) or love lust, opens *Aji Asmara Manao* (visual charm, looking at the beauty of the partner’s face), *Aji Asmara Manao* (charm of hearing: listening to the request of the partner), *Aji Asmara Manao* (the small charm, charm preparation for kissing) and finally opens *Aji Asmara Manao* (love charm).

The spiritual dimension at this stage implies that the body of a partner and the semen coming out of the genitals of men and women are not considered *njai* (unclean) that the bodies must be purified. However, both are required to purify themselves because men and women will unite as manungguli with God symbolized in each body. Women are considered an emanation form of God for men, and vice versa. Men are for women. Thus, achieving a single unity between human and God through sexual intercourse. Honors to *Sang Hyang Utapat* or *Sang Hyang Dembira as the guardian of the musik* of ultimate pleasure must also be the basis of self-purifying before the intercourse.

The unity between *kawula* and *gasti* in this context is based on the profound teachings of pantheism, i.e. the unity between oneself and God in the forms of various creations. Besides that, men take an obligatory bath for giving respect to the descending process of *Johar*, water of living or sperm that falls into the womb which will later become the creation of a caliph by God. At the stage of intercourse, one can find true identity and be united with God if the process is carried out through deep appreciation, caution, patience, and optimizing the unification of the mind with feeling.

Lalon santhiwo, marsuda di ting tasar eging, namah eging, kang sanoet to tanaungking. *Ten anggarus, paraggarus nya sapunan kubrangke, danen awas, ing pamawas duan tubau. Lalon cowo, sampon kowicarang metaw, uruanana, ing sita dhanganan kuara, kang sapudha, datah mangilik ihugana, Laman gelo, prosing naka sampu digaha, sogedaya, langkung comdok ing wardena, pamerhina, kang pihandhe ban legewa* (*Serat Nittinani, Pupuk 2*).

The text above suggests that concentration during sexual intercourse is like the practice of meditation so that the pleasure of sex can be achieved like that of *dikhr*. Being cautious and vigilant during penetration maintains the spirituality to always be careful of the temptations of demons that tend to direct us to act arbitrarily in the process of penetration. Dissatisfaction with the partner’s sexual plays is not the end of everything. This suggests that patience is the main weapon in controlling dissatisfaction. Rushing in sexual intercourse is not a good thing to do. To rush means not to have good control. Moreover, the process of intercourse as a medium for meeting and being united with God requires several main practices.

The above process, borrowing the *Endraswara*’s terminology, is a stage of achieving a true feeling, which needs mystic behaviors as follow: a) *sameng*, holding the release of *rahmat* longer, calm so that one will get a long-lived sensen later. b) *beng*, more solemn in intercourse, so it is more enjoyable and useful. This taste will clear or purify Wiji (the seeds/the sperm), his/her child will later be intelligent. c) cautious, always curing, fulfilling the desires of the partner and be able to follow his/her expectations. d) *dulog* means always remembering the creator, remembering that he is carrying out holy *jihad* (battle) and remembering that he is performing a worship [15] This matter leads people to know the secrets of life, the secrets of sexual intercourse and the secrets of human relations with God along with the opening of the veil of mystery. So that through this stage a person is truly able to become a real human being. The veil of mystery is proved by a woman experiencing a phase of pregnancy. It is impossible for women to conceive without God’s intervention. Semen is merely a medium, while God has the sole role of creating humans through that medium.

The above concept takes someone to the maqam (level) of *miftat* i.e. to recognize, feel and meet with God through the results of His creation (birth of babies). The *miftat* of a person in the concept of sex spirituality makes him/her think more, feel and at the same time the inessig quality of his faith with *miftat* towards his creation. Therefore, the sexual spirituality in *Serat Nittinani* is divided into phases of *tarekat*, *hakekat* and *miftat* towards God as the sole creator and ruler. This leads to the understanding that sex is spiritually separated from the idea of genital intercourse between men and women. However, the meaning of sex becomes the essence of knowledge about the origin of human creation, knowing oneself, to establishing transcendental relationships through self-unification with God.

4. CONCLUSION

The creation of a true human being who has a true feeling and the essence of feeling is obtained through a united sexual intercourse with God. The spiritual attitude of being one with God becomes the greatest power to give birth to great and mighty caliphs. It is therefore not strange, if ascetics, clerics, and kings give birth to great descendants. Because, the “seeds” or genes that are planted are monitored and selected directly by God through the planter’s *riyash* and *mujahadah*. In this case, the bad luck of a descendant
begins with the process of intercourse that done without being unified with God. So, that the power of demon is more dominant to give birth to a generation of demon hearts.
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