

POETIC INTERPRETATION OF THE QUR'AN AND SUNDANESE
LITERATURE: PUPUJIAN POEM OF *WAL FAJR*/BY K.H.E.ABDULLAH

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Abstract

This article examines the poetic explanation of K.H.E. Abdullah (1918-1994) about time in Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 1-5. The poem K.H.E. Abdullah not only interprets Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 1-5 as a phenomenon of the circulation of time in the universe but also as a metaphor for the journey of human life. His interpretation was published in the *Iber* Sundanese magazine in the October-December 1970 edition in the rubric of *Tafsir Al-Qur'an*. E. Abdullah is the second generation activist of the Islamic Unity organization (PERSIS) after A. Hassan. Based on library research and the descriptive-analytical method, this article shows that the verse about the phenomenon of time in al-Fajr [89]: 1-5 is interpreted metaphorically as a description of human life in the world. The word *al-Fajr* means youth before *ruruntuk* (old age) comes. *Layāl 'asr* is interpreted as alternating nights describing the increasing age. *Al-syāf'* interpreted as a whole moon night, represents a perfect age as an adult. *Al-watr* interpreted when the night turns dark reflects the time of getting older. The passage of youth into old age means *wa al-layl iżā yasr* (by night when it passes). From the Sundanese literary approach, E. Abdullah's *pupujian* poem generally shows the works that refer to the rules of *pupujian*, as seen in the number of lines, syllables of arrays, and the final rhyme of each line (a-a-a-a). This *pupujian* poem emphasizes that although E. Abdullah is active in the modernist Islam movement, he still preserves the tradition of *pupujian* in his work to bring himself closer to the local culture.

Keywords: *Poetry, The Qur'an, E. Abdullah, Al-Fajr verse, Time*

Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji tentang penjelasan puisi K.H.E. Abdullah (1918-1994) tentang waktu dalam Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 1-5. Dalam puisi tersebut K.H.E. Abdullah tidak hanya dimaknai Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 1-5 sebagai fenomena peredaran waktu di alam semesta, tetapi juga sebagai

metafor perjalanan hidup manusia. Tafsirnya dimuat di majalah bahasa Sunda *Iber* edisi Oktober-Desember 1970 dalam rubrik *Tafsir Al-Qur'an*. E. Abdullah dikenal sebagai aktivis organisasi Persatuan Islam (PERSIS) generasi kedua setelah A. Hassan. Berdasarkan studi pustaka dan menggunakan metode deskriptif-analitis, hasil artikel ini menunjukkan bahwa ayat tentang fenomena waktu dalam Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 1-5 dipahami dengan makna kiasan sebagai gambaran kehidupan manusia di dunia. Kata *al-fajr* dimaknai dengan masa muda sebelum *ruruntuk* (tua) tiba; *layal 'asyr* dimaknai dengan malam yang berganti-ganti menggambarkan pergantian usia; *as-syaf'* sebagai malam bulan purnama menggambarkan usia genap saat dewasa; dan *al-watr* dimaknai saat malam berubah gelap mencerminkan masa semakin tua; dan berlalunya usia muda menuju masa tua menunjukkan makna *wa al-layl idza yasn* (demi malam apabila berlalu). Dilihat dari sastra Sunda, puisi *pupujian* E. Abdullah umumnya menunjukkan karya yang mengacu pada aturan *pupujian*, seperti terlihat dalam jumlah larik, suku kata perlarik dan rima akhir setiap larik (a-a-a-a). Puisi *Pupujian* ini menegaskan bahwa meski E. Abdullah aktif dalam gerakan Islam modernis, tetapi ia tetap mempertahankan tradisi *pupujian* dalam karyanya sebagai upaya untuk mendekatkan dirinya dengan budaya lokal.

Kata Kunci: *Puisi, Al-Qur'an, E. Abdullah, Surah al-Fajr, waktu*

Introduction

So far, there is an assumption that the Sundanese literary tradition only develops among traditional pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) circles. Literary works such as the poetry of *nadoman* and *pupujian* (Javanese: *syi'iran*) are often recited in mosques and pesantren, which are generally located in traditionalist Muslim society especially among Nahdlatul Ulama (N.U.)¹. Likewise, dimensional poetry such as *dangding* (guguritan) and *wawacan* are commonly also recited among Sundanese *ménak* with traditionalist Muslim backgrounds after studying Javanese culture². On the other hand, reformist or modernist Muslims such as Muhammadiyah and Persatuan Islam (PERSIS) are not prominent in expressing Sundanese artistic and literary expressions and even tend to keep their distance from the local culture³. This attitude is based on their critical view of local traditions, which are considered full of superstition, *bid'ah* (heresy), and *churafat* (T.B.C.), so they need to be cleaned up because they are not by

¹ Usep Romli, "Pesantren sebagai Pusat Budaya Orang Sunda," in Cik Hasan Bisri ed. *Pergumulan Islam dengan Kebudayaan Lokal di Tatar Sunda*, (Bandung: Kaki Langit, 2005), 151; Yus Rusyana, *Bagbagan Puisi Pupujian Sunda*, (Bandung: Proyek Penelitian Pantun dan Folklore Sunda, 1971), 1.

² Ajip Rosidi, *Guguritan*, (Bandung: PT. Kiblat Buku Utama, 2011), p. 14; Ajip Rosidi, *Wawacan*, (Bandung: PT. Kiblat Buku Utama, 2011), 11.

³ Mark R. Woodward, "Textual Exegesis as Social Commentary: Religious, Social, and Political Meanings of Indonesian Translations of Arabic Hadith Texts", *The Journal of Asian Studies* 52, no. 3 (1993): 565.

the purity of the teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet's hadith⁴. The tradition of reciting praise poems in mosques, for example, is considered sinful, apart from the fact that it is believed that there is no textual argument that forms the legal basis for it in the Qur'an and hadith⁵.

However, the assumption that reformist Muslims tend to be anti-expression of art and culture is not entirely true. They also use art and literature to express religious expressions⁶. This expression can be seen in the literary works that developed among Muhammadiyah and PERSIS activists. The literary works of a Muhammadiyah scholar, Hamka, are known to show a strong sense of Malay literature which is very high and appreciated by the public today⁷.

The same thing is also found in several literary works within PERSIS, although not as popular as Muhammadiyah scholars and not widely known. It is conceivably caused not only by the movement's tendency to display a puritanical character and the fiercest opposition to local religious practices and traditional Islam but also by the decline in literacy of PERSIS activists and their limited publication in Sundanese, as most of their supporters are Sundanese⁸. In fact, several PERSIS figures also published literary works, such as *Sjair*, the *Kitab Pepatah dan Tertawa* by the PERSIS central teacher, A. Hassan (1887-1958)⁹, *Hidup Bahagia* by M. Natsir (1908-1993) and Nasroen AS, *Tersesat* by Tamar Djaja, *Sajak Kebahagiaan* by Suraedi, *Cahaya di Atas Cahaya* (1972) by Endang Saifuddin Anshary (1938-1996), *Hariring Wangsiting Gusti Nu Maha Suci* by Muh. Syarief Sukandi, *Saha Nu Baris Melang* by Usman Sholehuddin, and many others¹⁰.

A work of Sundanese literature in PERSIS that has not been widely known so far is the poetic translation of the Qur'an in the form of a Sundanese *pupujian* poem or *nadoman* entitled *Walfajri* by K.H. Tjetjeng Abdullah (1918-1994). He was the younger brother of K.H.E. Abdurrahman (1912-1983), General Chairperson of PERSIS for the period 1962-1983 was a student of A. Hassan (1887-1958). Like his brother, E. Abdullah was also active in PERSIS and productively wrote Islamic themes in various books and magazines in Sundanese. He often used the pen name "Heab" (for Haji E.

⁴ Howard M. Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology in the Emerging Indonesian State: The Persatuan Islam (PERSIS), 1923-1957*, (Leiden-Boston-Koln: Brill, 2001), p. 73; Howard M. Federspiel, "Modernist Islam in Southeast Asia: A New Examination," *The Muslim World* 92, (2002):380; Howard M. Federspiel, "Islamic Fundamentalism in Late-Colonial Indonesia: The Persatuan Islam Revisited," *Al-Jami'ah* 64, no. 12 (1999): 44.

⁵ Howard M. Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology*, 148.

⁶ "Persis juga Memperhatikan Budaya Lokal," *Pikiran Rakyat*, Jumat 17 September 2010, 1.

⁷ James R. Rush, *Adi Cerita Hamka: Visi Islam Sang Penulis Besar untuk Indonesia Modern*, (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2017); Khairudin Aljunied, *Hamka and Islam: Cosmopolitan Reform in the Malay World*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2018), 12.

⁸ Mohammad Iskandar, *Para Pengemban Amanah: Pergulatan Pemikiran Kiai dan Ulama di Jawa Barat, 1900-1950*, (Yogyakarta: Matabangsa, 2001),170.

⁹ Akh. Minhaji, "Ahmad Hassan and Islamic Legal Reform in Indonesia," *Ph.D. Dissertation*, (Montreal: McGill University, 1997), 382.

¹⁰ Muhamad Ridwan Nurrohman, "Tentang Kita dan Sastra: Refleksi Budaya di Lingkungan Persatuan Islam (Persis)," unpublished paper, 21 Oktober 2016, 6.

Abdullah). E. Abdullah wrote a *pupujian* poem of the translation of al-Fajri/89: 1-5, published in the rubric of *Tafsir Al-Qur'an in Iber* magazine in 1970¹¹.

This translation of the Qur'an as a Sundanese *pupujian* is not the only poetic translation compiled by PERSIS activists. Moh. Syarif Sukandi, for example, once composed a poetic translation of the Qur'an, but in the form of a *dangding* or *guguritan*, not a *pupujian*¹². E. Abdullah's work is important to study because so far, poetic translations of the Qur'an in Sundanese are mostly composed by traditionalist Muslims, such as R.A.A. Wiranatakoesoema (1888-1965), K.H. Ahmad Dimiyati or Mama Gedong (1910-1946), K.H. Sirajuddin Abbas (d. 1995) from Cibiru Bandung, Enas Mabarti (1942-2014), Hidayat Suryalaga (1941-2011) and generally developed as an oral tradition in mosques of traditionalist Muslim circles¹³.

This study emphasizes that reformist Muslims also pay attention to the local culture through the development of literary works as long as they do not conflict with the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah they believe. Sundanese was used as an essential medium by activists of modernist organizations, such as E. Abdullah, to convey Sundanese literature's ideas and expressions in magazines in the 1970s. This does not mean that the use of Sundanese by PERSIS activists shows their concern for local culture, which is considered to have a lot of T.B.C¹⁴. PERSIS activists and modernist activists in Priangan generally use Sundanese only to communicate and facilitate the spread of their teachings to the Sundanese people in Priangan. They typically accept Sundanese culture as long as it does not contradict the Quran and Sunnah's teachings and will reject what contradicts them¹⁵.

There have not been many scholars' studies on Sundanese literary expressions in the form of a poetic translation of the Quran in reformist Muslim circles. Rohmana's previous studies, for example, were limited to works of poetic translations of the Qur'an in Sundanese in the form of *dangding* and *pupujian*, whether they developed among traditionalist and modernist-reformist Muslims¹⁶. Likewise, studies on poetic

¹¹ E. Abdullah, "Walfajri," *Iber Magazine*, Chusus anggota sareng simpatisan Persatuan Islam, No. 34 Th. IV Oktober 1970; E. Abdullah, "Walfajri," *Iber Magazine*, Chusus anggota sareng simpatisan Persatuan Islam, No. 35-36 Th. IV Nov/Des 1970.

¹² Aldy Istanzia Wiguna, "Ust. M. Syarief Sukandi: Hayat dan Perjuangannya," *Risalah*, No. 04 Tahun 58 - Juli 2020: 76-78.

¹³ Jajang A Rohmana, "Metrical Verse as a Rule of Qur'anic Translation: Some Reflections on R.A.A. Wiranatakoesoema's *Soerat Al-Baqarah* (1888-1965)," *Al-Jami'ah Journal of Islamic Studies* 53, no. 2 (2015): 439-467; Endang Baihaqie, "Kitāb al-Tabyīn al-Ajlā wa al-Ahlā fi Tafsīr Sūrah al-A'lā Karya KH. R. Ahmad Dimiyati: Edisi Teks dan Kandungan Naskah," *Tesis*, Bidang Kajian Utama Filologi Fakultas Sastra Universitas Padjadjaran, 2010.

¹⁴ Dadan Wildan, *Yang Da'i Yang Politikus: Hayat Perjuangan Lima Tokoh Persis*, (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 1999), 3.

¹⁵ Jajang A Rohmana, "Ideologisasi Tafsir Lokal Berbahasa Sunda: Kepentingan Islam-Modernis dalam Tafsir *Nurul-Bajan* dan *Ayat Suci Lenyepancun*," *Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 2 no. 1 (2013): 125-154.

¹⁶ Jajang A Rohmana, *Terjemahan Puitis Al-Qur'an di Jawa Barat*, (Garut: Layung, 2019); Jajang A Rohmana, "Terjemah Puitis Kitab Suci di Jawa Barat: Terjemah Al-Qur'an Berbentuk Puisi *Dangding* dan *Pupujian* Sunda," *Suhuf* 8 no. 2 (2015): 175-202; Jajang A Rohmana, "Muh. Syarief Sukandi's Hariring Wangsiting Gusti Nu Maha Suci: Poetic Translation of the Qur'an and the Reformist Muslim Ambivalence," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society* 5, no. 2 (2020): 125-58.

translations of the Qur'an in Indonesian have focused on studies of *Al-Qur'an Bacaan Mulia* by H.B. Jassin and the controversy¹⁷. There are also several studies regarding the rhymed translation of the Al-Qur'an in the Acehnese language¹⁸. Several studies on the interpretation of the Qur'an in PERSIS also have not related to E. Abdullah and his work, *Walfajr*¹⁹. Therefore, this study is essential to emphasize the argument for the creativity of Sundanese literary expression among reformist Muslims, which has been neglected. Furthermore, this study is expected to contribute not only to the study of PERSIS figures' thoughts but also to the study of local interpretations in Indonesia.

This study is critical because the majority of scholars still tend to ignore the phenomenon of interpretation in magazines that are published continuously rather than interpretations that are written and published in full²⁰. Several interpretation rubrics were published regularly in several Sundanese-language Islamic magazines, such as *Tjahja Islam*, *Al-Imtisal*, *Al-Mawa'idz*, *Almoechtar*, *at-Taqwaa*, *Bina Da'wah*, *Iber*, and others²¹. Tafsir in magazines is essential in forming Muslim understanding of the Quran with simple language and short-light discussions compared to thick volumes of commentary books. Therefore, this study attempts to analyze the other side of the interpretation phenomenon that accompanied the journey of Sundanese Islamic journalism in the 1980s.

K.H.E. Abdullah and His Works

K.H.E. Abdullah's full name is Tjetjeng Abdullah, and his favorite nickname is Enceng. Therefore, the K.T.P. (residence identification card) is shortened to E. Abdullah, not T. Abdullah. He was born in 1918 in Pasarean Cianjur village, approximately one kilometer east of the Cianjur Kaum Mosque. He was the youngest of 13 siblings. His parents named Rd. Muhammad Ghojali and Hafsoh. At age five, little Abdullah was often taken care of by his uncle, Rd. Toto lived opposite his parents' house. E. Abdullah's father, Rd. Ghojali was busy working as a tailor. He also

¹⁷ Yusuf Rahman, "The controversy around H.B. Jassin: a study of his *al-Qur'anul-Karim Bacaan Mulia* and *al-Qur'an al-Karim* Berwajah Puisi," in Abdullah Saeed, *Approaches to the Qur'an in Contemporary Indonesia*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 85-105; Moh. Zuhri, *Terjemah Puitis Al-Qur'an, Kritik Ilmu Ma'ani terhadap Al-Qur'anul Karim Bacaan Mulia Karya H.B. Jassin*, (Yogyakarta: Lintang-PPs IAIN Walisongo, 2012).

¹⁸ Bilmauidhah, "Puitisasi Terjemahan Quran: Studi Analisis Terjemahan Quran Bersajak Bahasa Aceh," *Indo-Islamika* 1, no.1(2011): 41-62.

¹⁹ Rizka Rahmaniah Sa'adah, "*Tafsir Surat Al-Fatihah* Karya Aceng Zakaria (Analisis Metodologi dan Corak Tafsir)." *Skripsi*. UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2018; Roni Nugraha dan Jajang A Rohmana, "Reformist Muslim Discourse in the Sundanese Commentary of the Qur'an: E. Abdurrahman's Commentary on *Surah al-Hujurat*," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 22, no. 2 (2021): 345-71; Jajang A Rohmana, "Muh. Syarief Sukandi's Hariring Wangsiting Gusti Nu Maha Suci: Poetic Translation of the Qur'an and the Reformist Muslim Ambivalence."

²⁰ Howard M. Federspiel, *Popular Indonesian Literature of the Qur'an*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1994); R. Michael Feener, "Notes Towards the History of Qur'anic Exegesis in Southeast Asia", *Studia Islamika* 5, no. 3 (1998): 47-76; Islah Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia*, Jakarta: Teraju, 2002; A.H. Johns, "Qur'anic Exegesis in the Malay World: In Search of Profile," dalam Andrew Rippin (ed.), *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'an*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

²¹ Jajang A Rohmana, "Print Culture and Local Islamic Identity in West Java: Qur'anic Commentaries in Sundanese Islamic Magazines (1930-2015)," *At-Tahrir* 19 no. 1 (2019):4.

becomes a farmer by renting *waqf* land for the al-'Ianah Cianjur Islamic Boarding School. Meanwhile, Hafsoh, Abdullah's mother, worked *ngabang* (making *sinjang* cloth from a shroud decorated with wax (*Malam*) made from flowers). In addition, Hafsoh also used to make traditional medicines, such as *balur hideung* (black *balur*), as a fever-reducing medicine whose ingredients come from burning durian skin. Both of E. Abdullah's parents mastered the reading of the Quran well. Therefore, every morning and evening, they always recited the holy verse and taught it to their children²².

At age five, E. Abdullah was educated at the al-'Ianah Islamic Boarding School led by K.H. Muhammad Nuh for six years (1925-1931). Muhammad Nuh is the father of Abdullah bin Nuh (1905-1987), the scholar known as Al-Ghazali from Sunda²³. In that place, it is possible that E. Abdullah studied with his brother, E. Abdurrahman. After that, he continued his education to *şanawiyah* level for about two years in Jalan Jakarta, Cianjur. When he graduated in 1933, E. Abdullah was invited by his uncle to Cipayang, Depok. He became a teacher at the Islamic Madrasah. Because he was still very young (about 13 years old), he was nicknamed *ustaz şagīr* (little *ustaz*). However, he became a teacher in Depok for just one year because he didn't feel at home.

E. Abdullah decided to go to the city of Bandung to follow his older brother, E. Abdurrahman. At that time, E. Abdurrahman was still the "golden child" of Mr. Al-Katiri, a rich man who established the *Majelis Pendidikan Diniyah Islam* (MPDI) school²⁴. At that school, E. Abdullah and his brother were neighbors with Ilyas, an egg trader who was active in PERSIS. They then joined the PERSIS community, which was still strange and considered a new religion. Since then, his brother was known to have taught at H.I.S and MULO and received guidance from M. Natsir, Fakhruddin, and A. Hassan. E. Abdullah and his brother later joined PERSIS. When Mr. Al-Katiri found out that they joined PERSIS, which he considered Wahhabism, they were expelled and no longer permitted to teach at MPDI. E. Abdullah then moved to Rais' house on Kompa street, in front of the governor's office, with his brother on the condition that they teach religion to his children, who had a westernized lifestyle then. They felt unable to do so, then they stopped and moved to Pangeran Sumedang street (now Oto Iskandar Dinata street), where PERSIS administrators lived. In this place, they held a *pesantren Kecil* (for children) in the afternoon. Meanwhile, in the morning, it was used for *pesantren besar* (for adults) led by A. Hasan. In these *pesantren* activities, E. Abdullah devoted himself as a teacher to PERSIS activists, such as E. Abdurrahman, O. Qomaruddin Shaleh, M. Rusyad Nurdin, and I. Sudibya²⁵.

As he got older, E. Abdullah felt uncomfortable if he had to keep following his older brother, E. Abdurrahman. He decided to move to the Kebon Jati area and live at

²² Redaksi, "K.H.E. Abdullah," *Iber Magazine*, No. 327, April 1995, 38.

²³ Gausulfardi Hakim, "K.H.R. Abdullah Bin Nuh dan Karya-Karyanya." Skripsi, Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia, 2009.

²⁴ Roni Nugraha dan Jajang A Rohmana, "Reformist Muslim Discourse in the Sundanese Commentary of the Qur'ān: E. Abdurrahman's Commentary on *Surah al-Hujurat*," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 22, no. 2 (2021): 345-71.

²⁵ Redaksi, "K.H.E. Abdullah," *Iber Magazine*, No. 327, April 1995, 39.

the Enceng's close friend's house. In this place, E. Abdullah began establishing religious courses and taught at Madrasah Al-Balaagh. In 1935, E. Abdullah began writing a small book, *Wanita Islam*. In the same year, E. Abdullah moved to Bogor with the elder PERSIS Bogor, R. Winata. He taught at the Bogor Branch of Islamic Education Institute on Museum street. He then published the monthly Sundanese magazine, Al-Balaagh, but it was published in a few editions.

On December 31, 1943, at the age of 23 years, E. Abdullah then officially married Lyena Qomariyyah, daughter of Rd. Ajeng Amity and R. Somamiharja who was a finance officer. In the same year, when the Japanese occupation occurred, all schools had to be closed, including where he taught in Bogor. Finally, E. Abdullah returned to Bandung to teach at the *pesantren besar* with his older brother, E. Abdurrahman.

During the revolution in 1945, E. Abdullah joined the Sabilillah troops led by Isa Anshary, a PERSIS activist. At that time, E. Abdullah served as part of the secret police. He then joined Hezbollah, led by Muhammad Shah, and served as Head of Information for Hezbollah. In 1947, when educational institutions were re-opened, E. Abdullah also taught at the PERSIS Islamic Boarding School at Pangeran Sumedang street. He was appointed a teacher at the People School (S.R.) at the Religious Education Institute of West Java Province between 1953-1956. In 1958, E. Abdullah finally decided to leave the military with the rank of Second Lieutenant. He focused on serving at the PERSIS Islamic Boarding School until the end of his life. In 1962, he was appointed as a lecturer in Arabic at the Islamic College (PTI) Bandung, which has now changed to UNISBA. He then decided to stop teaching in 1965²⁶.

In the PERSIS organization, E. Abdullah has served as the Head of the Education Division of P.P. PERSIS based on PERSIS VII congress in Bangil; Chairman of the Hisbah Council at the X Congress in Garut in 1990; *Mudfir 'Am* Pesantren PERSIS Pajagalan Bandung in 1983, and other activities. He passed away on December 12, 1994, in Bandung²⁷.

E. Abdullah was a productive scholar, especially in writing religious works in Sundanese. The following are his published works: *Rasih Shabar*, *Palajaran Netepan jang Barudak*, *Tauhid*, *Jenazah*, *Tamattu*, *Urusan Haji*, *75 Do'a Rasulullah Saw*, *Tahlil*, *Bid'ah dina Netepan*, *Carita Ibu Idah*, *Sidakep dina I'tidal*, *Bahan Khutbah*, *Qiyammu Ramadhan dan Shalat Malam*, *Surah Al-Fatihah* dan lain-lain. A number of his writings have also been published in various magazines, such as *Iber*, *Risalah*, *at-Taqwaa* and the others²⁸.

Walfajri Poems of Praise K.H.E. Abdullah in *Iber* Magazine

As a PERSIS scholar, E. Abdullah has written a lot of Islamic studies using Sundanese in various magazines. He often uses the pen name "*Heab*" (for Haji E.

²⁶ Wawancara dengan Lilis, putri K.H.E. Abdullah pada tanggal 27 April 2021 jam 16.25 di Bandung.

²⁷ Dadan Wildan, "Pergulatan Persatuan Islam (Persis) dalam Dakwah di Tatar Sunda (Kajian Terhadap Majalah Sunda "Iber" Sebagai Media Dakwah Berbahasa Sunda)" Konferensi Internasional Budaya Sunda II, Gedung Merdeka, 2011.

²⁸ Redaksi, "K.H.E. Abdullah," *Iber* Magazine, No. 327, April 1995, 40.

Abdullah). In Sundanese, the word *heab* also means feeling in the heart after hearing or seeing something²⁹. In 1937, he started by publishing the Sundanese magazine, *Al-Balaagh*, while in Bogor, it was published in a few editions. In 1949, E. Abdullah often wrote articles for another Sundanese magazine, *at-Taqwaa*, which E. Abdurrahman led until 1957. When the *Risalah* magazine was published in 1962, E. Abdullah was also one of the writers of the Sundanese language rubric. The existence of the rubric did not last long. It only lasted until 1965. In August 1967, with personal capital, E. Abdullah published an Islamic magazine in the Sundanese language, *Iber*³⁰. As a *da'wa* medium, *Iber* is managed by Persis activists for reading materials of their members and sympathizers who are generally spread across the Sundanese region. Although the magazine format is simple, *Iber* has a vital role in distributing modernist Islamic ideas through the easy-to-understand Sundanese language. Not only to develop Islamic insight but also to be used as material for sermons, lectures, chats, and debates³¹. At the beginning of its publication, *Iber* was still in the process of finding form. Therefore, the rubrics often change. In 1970, E. Abdullah, editor (*ais pangampih*), created a rubric for interpreting the Qur'an in *Iber* magazine.

The rubric of the interpretation of the Qur'an contains the writings of E. Abdullah regarding the discussion of certain verses of the Qur'an. The verses chosen for performance are not only related to the *fiqh* theme of worship, as is often discussed by PERSIS activists. E. Abdullah often also discusses verses related to the reflections associated with daily events. In addition to the usual form of prose interpretation, E. Abdullah also uses the structure of the *pupujian* poem to explain his understanding.

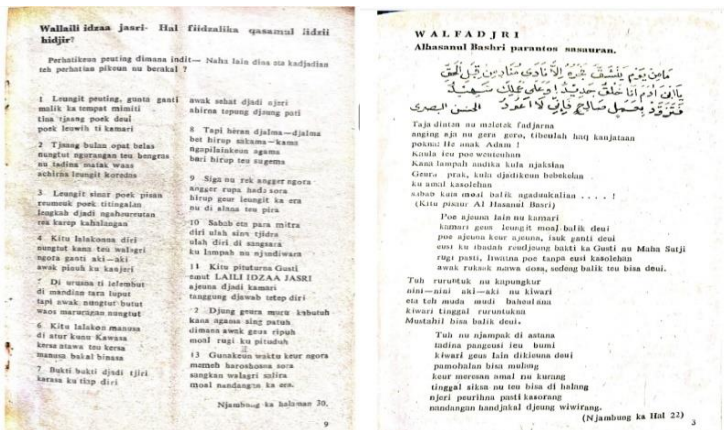
In a rubric on the interpretation of the Qur'an, E. Abdullah used the poem of Sundanese *pupujian* or *nadoman* of Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 1-5, which was published in three editions of *Iber* magazine No. 34-36 October-December 1970. The interpretation of the al-Fajr verse is probably not complete. It is not confirmed why E. Abdullah did not complete it. Possibly, it was because he was concerned with the messages related to the time markers; dawn (*wa al-Fajr*), ten nights (*wa al-layāl 'asyr*), even (*wa al-saf'i*), odd (*wa al-watr*), and the night passed (*wa al-layl iżā yasr*). E. Abdullah begins by quoting the words of Imam al-Hasan al-Basri, a famous classical Sufi. Then, he compiled a translation of the terms of the Sufi scholar, explaining the interpretation of *al-Fajr* [89]: 1-5 in the poetic form and ends with a quote from the famous hadith of the Prophet about the preparation of five things before five things come. In general, E. Abdullah's poetic interpretation contains the meaning of al-Fajr [89]: 104, which is

²⁹ R. Satjadibrata, *Kamus Basa Sunda*, (Bandung: Kiblat, 2005), 154.

³⁰ Emon Sastranagara, "Pait Peuheurna Ngokolakeun Majalah Basa Sunda," dalam Perhimpunan Keluarga Besar Pelajar Islam Indonesia (Perhimpunan KB-PII), *Ngamumule Budaya Sunda Nanjeurkeun Komara Agama*, Lokakarya Da'wah Islam Napak Kana Budaya Sunda, Bandung: Perhimpunan KB-PII, 2006.

³¹ Howard M. Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology in the Emerging Indonesian State: The Persatuan Islam (PERSIS), 1923-1957*. Leiden-Boston-Koln: Brill, 2001; Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Moderen Islam Di Indonesia 1900-1942*. (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1996).

interpreted in factual meaning as a natural phenomenon and symbolic of the journey of human life.



Poetic Interpretation in *pupujian* poem of *Walfajri*

This section will explain E. Abdullah's interpretation of al-Fajr [89]:1-5. In the beginning, he quoted Imam Hasan Basri's words about the importance of time awareness. Then, he interprets the word "wa al-Fajr contextually." He does not explain it literally. The explanation refers to the meaning of zahir and also the symbolic meaning of the word dawn (*al-fajr*). He understands it as a natural phenomenon and a metaphor for the journey of human life in youth. E. Abdullah composes his explanation in the form of a *pupujian* poem, a form of Sundanese literature that developed in the community and is often recited in mosques. The general form of poetry is four lines in a stanza, eight syllables in each line, and the same ending rhyme (a-a-a-a) in each line. However, in the first part of his poetry, he uses various rules of the *pupujian* poem. The following is a *pupujian* poem of E. Abdullah that explains *al-Fajr* [89]: 1-5.

وَالْفَجْرِ ﴿١﴾ وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ ﴿٢﴾ وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ ﴿٣﴾ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسْرِ ﴿٤﴾ هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِي حِجْرٍ ﴿٥﴾

Translation: "By the Dawn. And ten nights. And the Even and the Odd. And the night when it departeth. There surely is an oath for thinking man". (Q.S. Al-Fajr [89]: 1-5)

The Meaning of *wa al-Fajr*

E. Abdullah begins his explanation by quoting a poem by Hasan Bashri (642-728), a well-known Sufi from Basra, about the importance of dawn:

ما من يوم ينشق فجره إلا نادى مناد من قبل الحق يا ابن آدم أنا خلق جديد! وعلى
 عملك شهيد فتزود بعمل فأني لا أعود —الحسن البصري

<i>Pisaur/ucapan Hasan Basri</i>	Terjemahan
<p><i>Taya dinten nu meletek fajarna, anging aya nu gera gero, ti beulah haq kanyataan, pokna: He anak Adam! kaula ieu poe weuteuhan, kana lampah andika kula nyaksian, geura prak, kula jadikeun bebekelan, ku amal kasolehan, sabab kula moal balik ngaduakalian...³²</i></p>	<p>No day rises its dawn, apart from someone calling from the other side of the truth, he said: O son of Adam! I'm a new day, I watched your behavior, then, make me provisions, with good deeds, because I won't be back a second time.</p>

A piece of advice on the importance of dawn. This quote explains the importance of dawn, quoted from a famous Sufi, Imam Hasan Basri, and then translated by E. Abdullah into a Sundanese pupujian poem. He made a personification of how dawn speaks to the son of Adam to remind him of his presence. The light that comes every morning is like greeting the son of Adam that he will always be new and be a witness to human actions. Therefore, dawn reminds us that the time should be equipped with good deeds because he does not return a second time. Then E. Abdullah wrote a *pupujian* poem explaining the al-Fajr [89]:1.

وَالْفَجْرِ (الفجر: ١)

Puisi Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 1	Translation
<p><i>Poe ayeuna lain nu kamari, kamari geus leungit moal balik deui, poe ayeuna keur ayeuna, isuk ganti deui, eusi ku ibadah reujeung bakti ka Gusti nu Maha Suci, rugi pasti, liwatna poe tanpa eusi kasolehan, awak ruksak mawa dosa, sedeng balik teu bisa deui.</i></p>	<p>Today is not yesterday, yesterday is gone, it won't happen again, today, for now, tomorrow will change again, fill it with worship and worship the Most Holy God, must lose, the day passes without the content of purity, The body is destroyed carrying sin and can no longer return.</p>
<p><i>Tuh ruruntuk nu kapungkur, nini-nini aki-aki nu kiwari, eta teh muda mudi baheulana, kiwari tinggal ruruntukna, mustahil bisa balik deui.³³</i></p>	<p>Look at the former past, grandparents living today, they were young all that's left today are traces, It is impossible to be young again.</p>
<p><i>Tuh nu nyampak di astana, tadina pangeusi ieu bumi, kiwari geus lain di kieuna deui,</i></p>	<p>Look at the inhabitants of the graves, originally human inhabitants of the earth,</p>

³² E. Abdullah, "Walfajri," *Iber Magazine*, Khusus anggota sareng simpatisan Persatuan Islam, No. 34 Th. IV Oktober 1970, 3.

³³ E. Abdullah, "Walfajri," *Iber Magazine*, Khusus anggota sareng simpatisan Persatuan Islam, No. 34 Th. IV Oktober 1970, 3.

<p><i>pamohalan bisa mulang, keur meresan amal nu kurang, tinggal siksa nu teu bisa dihalang, nyeri peurihna pasti kasorang, nandangan hanjakal jeung wiwirang.</i></p>	<p>today is gone, can't go back, to improve the practice of self that is lacking, all that remains is an unstoppable torment, painful pain must be felt, feel regret and shame.</p>
<p><i>Sabab eta... eusi menit ku lampah nu merenah, nu hade nu matak tumaninah, nu mawa genah betah kana manah, walfajri eusi ku lampah hasanah.</i></p>	<p>That's why... fill the minutes with worthy charity, which is good again makes tumaninah, that brings peace to the heart, walfajri, fill it with hasanah charity.</p>
<p><i>Jung mitra geura miang, sing awas kana jurang, nu diajar ulah kapalang, nu didamel sing tenang ulah curang, nu dagang ulah ngalanggar nu dilarang.</i></p>	<p>O viewers, go soon, beware of the abyss, who learn not to bear, those who work calmly don't cheat, those who trade do not violate the prohibition.</p>
<p><i>Jung... bismillah dijadikeun wiwitan, dina tiap amal perbuatan, aos bari nyanding kasadaran, lain ngaos sakadar aosan, jadikeun bahan emutan, walfajri—mangga bismillah³⁴.</i></p>	<p>Come on... bismillah is made as the origin of departure, in every deed, read and use mindfulness, not reading just reading use it as reflection, walfajri—come on bismillah.</p>

E. Abdullah's poem shows dawn (*al-Fajr*), which is not only interpreted physically as a natural phenomenon but also contains a symbolic meaning that shows that young age is like a new dawn. That young age will not continue to last. It will change as the planets travel in the universe. Dawn will continue to run until the time turns to even. Such is the journey of the dawn of human beings. Every second will shift slowly until finally, the age of light is only a memory of the past. E. Abdullah called it *ruruntuk* (used). In the Sundanese dictionary, the word *ruruntuk* is translated by obsolete (*urut*)³⁵. This word usually indicates an item that is no longer functioning correctly. Like the expression "*ruruntuk bedog*," a machete that is no longer sharp and deformed. When the machete has become a *ruruntuk*, it is no longer used as a weapon. Even if it is still used, it is usually only used to tidy up the coals in the furnace.

Humans who are old are like *ruruntuk* because the various functions of their bodies have decreased. Today's young people will turn into "obsolete" young people when the time changes them to become grandparents. When you are old, it is

³⁴ E. Abdullah, "Walfajri," *Iber Magazine*, Khusus anggota sareng simpatisan Persatuan Islam, No. 34 Th. IV Oktober 1970, 22.

³⁵ R. Satjadibrata, *Kamus Basa Sunda*, 333.

impossible to be young again. As it advanced into the evening, it was impossible to be like at dawn. The current condition of aging is now depressing. The burly body turned into a hunchback. Tight skin becomes loose and wrinkled. Black hair turns white. The mustache and beard are less and sparse. Those are the picture of an older man when he is past the age of dawn. Youth at birth is only one time. If it has been passed, it is impossible to get it back. What remains is only the image of the experience stored in memory. Now, all that is left is a weak and suffering body, cough, and joint pain. Sometimes, it comes to be a real sign that he has changed from his dawn age. E. Abdullah reminds the readers that the presence of dawn is limited by age, and he hopes to raise awareness to take advantage of young age by increasing knowledge and noble character.

In addition, to strengthen this awareness, in the third stanza, E. Abdullah reminds the readers to pay attention to the graves inhabited by previous ancestors. He invites the readers to reflect on the evidence that seems natural in life, the grave. All of this is proof that no human is eternal. Grandparents will not last forever, slowly and surely moving closer to the time limit of parting from the world. The inhabitants of the grave remind us that they are the same as humans who are still alive, but death has separated them from the world. When they are separated from the grave, no one has ever returned to being an inhabitant of the earth. Even though they plead with a tone of regret so that God will return them to the world to improve their deeds, they will still not be able to return. What is left is only regret and torment that continues to be felt.

The poem verses above contain advice to do everything in their power to take advantage of their dawn age with good deeds, the charity that will cause inner peace in devotion to Allah. Awareness of the reality of the human journey that leads to death is not meant to prevent Muslims from fulfilling their daily needs. Islam encourages humans to give their best efforts as long as they are always vigilant to avoid the abyss of disobedience. Specifically, E. Abdullah advises those at their dawn age to study seriously, not just to abort religious obligations. Do not let cheating twist your soul while working. When destiny takes you to become a trader, God's rules must guide you to avoid cheating, not to reduce the dose. Any work must be intended for Allah Ta'ala to be of value to Him. Mentioning the name of Allah (*basmalah*) must be used as the basis of all deeds, not just the reading. *Basmalah* should be used as a starting point in conducting all affairs.

The Literal Meaning of *layāl 'asyr, al-syaf,'* and *al-watr*

After giving an interpretation of the word *al-Fajr*, E. Abdullah then explains the following verses, al-Fajr [89]: 2-3, including *layāl 'asyr, al-syaf,'* and *al-watr*. As a Sundanese '*ulamā'*', he initially interpreted the verse as the phenomenon of alternating nights and moon phases in literal meaning. It states:

وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ (الفجر: ٢-٣)

Puisi Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 2-3	Translation
<i>Leungit peuting gunta ganti, malik ka tempat mimiti, tina caang poek deui, poek leuwih ti kamari.</i>	Nights pass alternately back to the place of origin, from light, back to darkness, dark, more than yesterday.
<i>Caang bulan opat belas, nungtut ngurangan teu bengras, nu tadina matak waas, ahirna leungit koredas.</i>	The light of the moon 14 (full moon), slowly diminishes, not bright, was enchanted, finally disappeared without a trace.
<i>Leungit sinar poek pisan, rumeuk poek titinggalan, lengkah jadi ngaheureutan, rea karep kahalangan³⁶.</i>	The light disappears into darkness, faint dark vision, steps become limited many wishes are blocked.

In these three stanzas, E. Abdullah interprets the three sentences in al-Fajr [89]: 2-3: *layāl 'asyr*, *al-syaf*, and *al-watr*. The word *layāl 'asr* (ten nights) is interpreted in the first stanza, namely the reality of changing atmosphere at night, which is not fixed. The nights come alternately, varying from light to darkness. In the second stanza, E. Abdullah interprets the word *al-syaf*'(the true night). He interprets it as the night of the full moon or the night of 14. An even night marks the perfect peak of the moon's shape at night every month. Then, in the third stanza, E. Abdullah interpreted the word *al-watr* (odd) as a night that lost its light, from a perfectly even night to a strange night when the light was lost and turned dark.

The first stanza shows the reality of alternating nights, from the first night to the tenth night, then reaching the full moon on the fourteenth night, before gradually the shape and light of the moon diminishes until its light is fading. This is the literal meaning of the verse about *layāl 'asr*, *al-syaf*, and *al-watr*.

The figurative Meaning of *layāl 'asyr*, *al-syaf* and *al-watr*

After explaining the literal meaning of the three words, E. Abdullah then gave a symbolic meaning that the three are a description of the journey of human life. E. Abdullah expressly states the comparison of human journeys in his *pupujian* poem:

وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ (الفجر: ٢-٣)

Puisi Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 2-3	Translation
<i>Kitu lalakon diri, nungtut kana teu walagri, ngora ganti aki-aki, awak pinuh ku kanyeri.</i>	Such is the journey of the self, slowly goes to weakness, young turns old, body full of pain
<i>Diurusna ti lelembut,</i>	Being cared for since childhood,

³⁶ E. Abdullah, "Walfajri," *Iber Magazine*, Chusus anggota sareng simpatisan Persatuan Islam, No. 35-36 Th. IV Nov/Des 1970, 9.

<i>dimandian tara luput, tapi awak nungtut butut, waos maruragan nungtut.</i>	Being bathed never miss, but the body keeps falling slowly, teeth fall out slowly
<i>Kitu lalakon manusa, diatur kunu kawasa, kersa atawa teu kersa, manusa bakal binasa³⁷.</i>	Such is the human journey, arranged by the Almighty, like it or not, Humankind will perish.

For E. Abdullah, the phenomenon of the moon's phases, which is visible in everyday life, is also a figurative picture of human's inner and outer atmosphere. The dark atmosphere of the night in the first ten nights (*wa layāl 'asr*) and the night after the full moon indicates an inner mood full of turmoil, while the night of the full moon (*al-syaf*) indicates an inner spirit full of peak joy. However, the rage after the full moon nights until the odd nights full of darkness (*al-watr*) will be felt much more disturbing than before. Such is the inner atmosphere of man in his journey of life.

In the first phase of his life, he will feel worried about his future. However, the worry will be much more deemed after he passes the full moon when he is at the peak of his youth and slowly moves towards the final phase of his life journey (old). The atmosphere of the full moon nights that look so beautiful will disappear like a human's young age, which finally only lives in memories. When the moon turned dark again, it was difficult for anyone to see things as they were. This is how a person will feel when he is old, his body's weaknesses will hinder his desires, and his various efforts will be hampered by many.

Such is the journey of human life in this world. The journey of his life will lead him to life's difficulties. Young age will be left and turned by old age, marked by various pains that come and go. When humans are born into the world, they are cared for with love and bathed so that they are clean and healthy. However, in the end, the body constantly being cared for will gradually break down, and the teeth will fall out with age. Humans cannot create their life journeys. The destiny of the Almighty arranges his journey. Feel it or not. Eventually, humans will come to perdition (death).

<i>Bukti-bukti jadi ciri, karasa ku tiap diri, awak sehat jadi yeri, ahirna tepung jeung pati.</i>	Evidence characterizes Felt by everyone, The healthy body turns sick, Finally, met the death.
<i>Tapi heran jalma-jalma, bet hirup sakama-kama, ngapilainkeun agama, bari hirup teu sugema.</i>	Yet strangely, humans, live on their own, forget religion, Even though life is not happy.
<i>Siga nu rek angger ngora, angger rupa hade sora,</i>	Like feeling will stay young, face, look, good voice,

³⁷ E. Abdullah, "Walfajri," *Iber Magazine*, Chusus anggota sareng simpatisan Persatuan Islam, No. 35-36 Th. IV Nov/Des 1970, 9.

<i>hirup geus leungit ka era, nu di alana teu pira</i> ³⁸ .	life is lost its shame, What is looked for is worth nothing.
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Although humans do not believe in the reality of the journey of life they will go through, the evidence looks natural and is experienced and felt by every human being. The body will not always be healthy. This is an undeniable fact until finally, death comes to pick humans up. This is an unavoidable provision of Allah. Humans have no authority to regulate His destiny. However, death as the end of the journey of human life on earth sometimes does not become advice. Death is often forgotten.

According to E. Abdullah, forgetting about death will cause a person to fail his religion and worship his passions, leading him to suffer. When a person dedicates lust, he will judge himself to be always young, feeling that his appearance and sound will remain the same. That feeling will cause the loss of shame from his consciousness. As a result, he will exceed the limits of his humanity according to the direction of lust to obtain false happiness. However, that feeling will not be able to go against the provisions of Allah in the universe (*sunatullah*). The self will turn old until death finally comes to pick it up.

The meaning of *layal idza yasr* and *hal fi żālik qasam liżī hijr*

After elaborating on the literal meaning of alternating nights as a natural phenomenon and its symbolic meaning as a description of the journey of human life, E. Abdullah describes the meaning of the following verse:

وَالَيْلِ إِذَا يَسْرَ هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِذِي حِجْرٍ (الفجر: ٤-٥)

<i>Wallayli idza yasr. Hal fi dzalika qasamul lidzi hijr?</i>	
<i>Perhatikeun peuting di mana indit. Naha lain dina eta kajadian teh perhatian pikeun nu berakal?</i>	
Watch the night as it passes. Wasn't that incident a cause for concern for the wise?	
Puisi Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 4-5	Translation
<i>Sabab eta para mitra, diri ulah sina cidra, ulah diri disangsara, ku lampah nu nyandiwara.</i>	Therefore, my friend, don't hurt yourself, don't be tormented by theatrical behavior.
<i>Kitu pituturna Gusti, emut layl idza yasri, ayeuna jadi kamari, tanggung jawab tetep diri.</i>	Such is the advice of Allah, remember <i>layl iżā yasr</i> , now so yesterday, responsibility remains with ourself.
<i>Jung geura muru kabutuh, kana agama sing patuh, di mana awak geus ripuh, moal rugi ku pituduh.</i>	Please look for the necessities of life, to religion must obey, when the body is helpless, nothing to lose with guidance.

³⁸ E. Abdullah, "Walfajri," *Iber Magazine*, Chusus anggota sareng simpatisan Persatuan Islam, No. 35-36 Th. IV Nov/Des 1970, 9.

<i>Gunakeun waktu keur ngora, memeh haroshosna sora, sangkan walagri salira, moal nandangan ka era</i> ³⁹ .	Take your time while you're young, before it is hard to speak, to be healthy, (you) will not feel shame.
<i>Dawuh Rasul:</i>	اغتنم خمسا قبل خمس : شبابك قبل هرمك وصحتك قبل سقمك وغناك قبل فقرك وفراغك قبل شغلك وحياتك قبل موتك (رواه البيهقي والحاكم)
<i>Gunakeun</i>	Use
<i>Riksa lima perkara, memeh datang lima perkara:</i>	Take care of five things before coming five things:
<i>Riksa kangoraan anjeun, samemeh datang karopohan.</i>	Take care of your youth before weakness comes (in old age).
<i>Jeung riksa kasehatan anjeun memeh datang mangsana gering.</i>	Take care of your health before coming sick.
<i>Riksa kaboga anjeun, memeh datang mangsana kamiskinan.</i>	Take care of your wealth before the time of poverty comes.
<i>Jeung riksa kasalsean anjeun, memeh datang karepotan.</i>	Take care of your opportunity before the rush comes.
<i>Jaga hirup anjeun, memeh datang mangsana ajal.</i>	Take care of your life before the time of death comes.
<i>(R. Baihaqi-Hakim)</i> ⁴⁰ .	(H.R. Baihaqi-Hakim).

Awareness of the reality of the alternating nights and the phases of the moon is interpreted as a figurative picture of the reality of the journey of human life. It requires awareness to always try to avoid injury marked by living in pretense. E. Abdullah reminded us always to remember the reality of changing age, as *layli iżā yasri* (the night when it passes). Today will turn into yesterday. Every move will be held accountable while filling the days of life's journey. However, that fact is not a barrier to meeting the body's needs. E. Abdullah reminded us that humans are ordered to fulfill their needs on the condition that they do not forget their religion. When the body is powerless, it still has guidance that will lead to happiness. Therefore, humans must use their youth before the weak voice when old comes. That effort will keep them in a healthy state of mind and gain glory. He then closed the explanation of *al-Fajr* [89]: 1-5 by quoting a famous hadith of the Prophet about the importance of preparing five things before Allah asks about them in the hereafter.

³⁹ E. Abdullah, "Walfajri," *Iber Magazine*, Chusus anggota sareng simpatisan Persatuan Islam, No. 35-36 Th. IV Nov/Des 1970, 9.

⁴⁰ E. Abdullah, "Walfajri," *Iber Magazine*, Chusus anggota sareng simpatisan Persatuan Islam, No. 35-36 Th. IV Nov/Des 1970, 30.

The explanation above shows that E. Abdullah uses the form of a *pupujian* poem in explaining the symbolic meaning of *al-Fajr* [89]: 1-5. The *pupujian* is oriented to praise the majesty of God, and it is hoped that it will increase the reader's awareness of his position as a servant of God as he is always required to be aware of the natural law of human life, birth-death-resurrection. This fact is emphasized by the slogan of *Iber* magazine "*kanggo bahan nageuing ati sangkan diri jadi walagri aya dina karidoan Gusti Allah*". The *pupujian* interpretation of Surah al-Fajr uses a pattern of four lines in one stanza, eight-syllable lines, and the same final rhyme for each line (a-a-a-a). He seems consistent in using the rules of the poetry, as seen in the Sundanese *pupujian* tradition in general⁴¹. This form of *pupujian* poem forms song lyrics so they can be sung. This confirms that although E. Abdullah is active in the modernist Islamic movement, he still maintains the tradition of praise in his works to bring himself closer to local culture. His tendency to use Sundanese literary traditions cannot be avoided because he has long been formed in the Sundanese community, which developed Sundanese literary traditions such as *pupujian*.

In addition, E. Abdullah, born in Cianjur, was also educated at the Al-I'ناه Islamic Boarding School in Bogor, so he grew up in a traditionalist Islamic tradition that accepts Sufism teachings, as seen in the Hasan Basri's words that he quoted. Then, this shaped him to express his Islamic works in the form of these Sundanese literary works. Therefore, the tradition of *pupujian* is not only a medium for preserving the Sundanese language among modernists but also a space for cultural negotiation between Islam and Sundanese⁴². Although he was later active in the modernist movement, Sundanese culture was used to express his works as an effort to get closer to the rural Sundanese people. This was not only done by E. Abdullah but also by several other modernist activists, for example, Muh. Syarif Sukandi made a poetic translation of the Qur'an in the form of a *dangding* poem⁴³. This shows that there is a tendency that the early generation of modernist activists who were formed in the traditionalist Muslim tradition generally used a traditional Sundanese literary approach to compose their works as an effort to get closer to the Sundanese people in terms of spreading their ideas.

Conclusion

The explanation above shows that E. Abdullah's poetic interpretation of al-Fajr [89]: 1-5 in the form of a Sundanese *pupujian* uses literal and figurative meanings. The literal meaning of the verse concerning the markers of dawn, the tenth night, even times, odd times, and elapsed time are understood literally as the change of time in the

⁴¹ Yus Rusyana, *Bagbagan Puisi Pupujian Sunda*, Bandung: Projek Penelitian Pantun dan Folklore Sunda, 1971, 3.

⁴² Neneng Yanti Khozanatu Lahpan, "Nadoman sebagai Ruang Negosiasi dalam Pertemuan Islam dan Budaya Sunda," *Lopian* 1, no. 1 (2021): 1-23.

⁴³ Jajang A Rohmana, "Muh. Syarief Sukandi's Hariring Wangsiting Gusti Nu Maha Suci: Poetic Translation of the Qur'an and the Reformist Muslim Ambivalence," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2020): 125-58.

universe. However, the symbolic meaning is associated with the picture of changes in human life from youth to old age and death; from dawn (young age), the evolution of age, the peak period of age like a whole night, to old age before death like a night. E. Abdullah's poetry shows his efforts in expressing the interpretation of the Qur'an into Sundanese literary form, a Sundanese *pupujian* poem. In writing poetry, he followed the rules of four lines for each stanza, eight syllables for each line, and the same final rhyme letter in each line (a-a-a-a). E. Abdullah seemed to realize that he was born and educated in a Sundanese Islamic boarding school in Bogor and then lived in a Sundanese community in Bandung. He could not escape the influence of the tradition of *pupujian* that has developed and been sung in mosques. Hence, his attempt to use the form of the *pupujian* poem in interpreting al-Fajr [89]: 1-5 shows his aesthetic reception of the Sundanese literary form. This is the other side of the interpretation of the Qur'an in Indonesia, which is built in a variety of ethnic cultures so that it is heavily influenced by the linguistic and literary expressions that develop in each ethnic group.

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Interview

Lilis, daughter of K.H.E. Abdullah, on April 27, 2021, at 16.25 in Bandung.