

The Character of Salik in the Novel by Candra Malik: A Psycho-sufistics Study

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Abstract

In Sufi literary works, symbols, metaphors, and allegories are often presented that describe the relationship between humans and God, as well as human efforts to overcome the ego (nafs), achieve wisdom, and purify the soul. This study aims to describe the character of a Salik. This type of research is descriptive qualitative with the category of library research. The data sources for this study are two novels by Candra Malik (CM), namely (1) Layla A Thousand Nights Without You and (2) Majnun Because You Meet Layla. The data used in this study are in the form of words, phrases, paragraphs, discourses that indicate the author's narrative, dialogue between characters, and setting paintings. The data collection method is a literature study. The data obtained are read, listened to, recorded, concluded, and studied written sources that serve as a theoretical basis and reference in their relationship to the object being studied. The data analysis technique in this study is phenomenological hermeneutics initiated by Paul Ricoeur. The data validity test process uses multimethod triangulation. The research results show that a spiritual seeker possesses character formed through his or her inner journey toward God. The Salik's characteristics identified in this study are humility, patience, humility, sincerity, and obedience.

Keywords: character of a Salik ; psycho-sufistics study; spiritual character



INTRODUCTION

Sufi literature is a genre of literature that focuses on themes of spirituality, mysticism, and Sufism—the teachings or practices of Sufism in Islam. This literature typically depicts inner exploration, spiritual journeys, mystical experiences, and the search for the meaning of life and closeness to God. Sufi works often feature symbols, metaphors, and allegories that depict the relationship between humans and God, as well as human efforts to overcome the ego (nafs), attain wisdom, and purify the soul. Sufi literature also flourished in Indonesia, particularly through the works of local Sufis such as Hamzah Fansuri, Syekh Siti Jenar, and Nuruddin Ar-Raniri. Some of them used Malay in their mystical poetry, combining Islamic teachings with local mysticism.

In the modern era, Sufi literature remains alive through works such as *Layla* by Candra Malik, which explores themes of spiritual journey and self-reflection based on Sufi teachings. Sufi literature is a genre that seeks to express spiritual and mystical experiences through the medium of literature. By combining themes of divinity, divine love, and the human struggle to achieve spiritual perfection, these works offer readers the opportunity to reflect on their existence and relationship with God and the universe.

In Sufi literature, two main themes serve as central themes: advice and love. This advice can manifest in religious messages such as spiritual values, ethics, and morals, as well as humanitarian messages such as respect, appreciation, and mutual assistance, among others. Second, love is a natural quality bestowed upon humans with the aim of calming and reconciling one another, not the other way around. Without love, it would be impossible for God to create humanity. In this regard, love occupies a central position in Sufi studies.

Candra Malik is a writer who focuses on Sufism, which is reflected in each of his works (Lestari et al., 2017). Candra Malik's novels have several characteristics that make them unique and memorable in the world of literature, especially Sufism. Candra Malik is known as a writer who emphasizes the teachings of Sufism in his works. One of the main features of his novels is the use of Sufistic concepts, such as *zuhud* (simplicity of life), *sincerity*, *tawakkal* (surrender), and *muhasabah* (introspection). These concepts are not only presented explicitly but also experienced through the inner experiences of the characters. Malik presents the profound spiritual journey of a *salik* (spiritual wanderer), taking readers through the process of cleansing the soul, the struggle against the ego, and the search for *makrifat* (knowledge of God).

The uniqueness of Candra Malik's novels lies in the depth of spirituality they convey through poetic language, thoughtful characterizations, and Malik's ability to bridge Sufism with everyday life. His novels not only present compelling stories but also invite readers to reflect on



and deepen their relationship with God and the meaning of life.

One of his works that expresses his Sufism is the novel Layla A Thousand Nights Without You and Majnun Since Meeting Layla. Both novels tell the story of love and a spiritual journey in getting closer to Allah (Aisyah, 2020; Malik, 2015, 2017; Rahman, 2018) . The novel Layla tells the story of Wallili Wannahar who chooses the path of life as a salik. Salik is a person who undertakes a spiritual journey to get closer to Allah.

Research on Sufism has been conducted before. Sufi education according to Ibn Atha'llah is an effort to transform the values of Sufism in the journey of human life towards Allah SWT by strengthening the qualities of his servanthood and absorbing the divine qualities of Allah for him (Fauzi, 2018) . The similarity of this research is the theory used is the same , namely psychosufism, while the difference lies in the material object, Fauzan's research material object is in the form of Ibn Atha'llah's thoughts while this research is Candra Malik's novel.

The mystical journey of seeking God must go through seven levels according to the Sufi concept of Fariduddin Attar, namely the level of search, the level of love, the level of realization, the level of oneness, the level of freedom, the level of wonder, and the level of nothingness (Rahman, 2018) . The similarity of this research is the material object, namely the novel Candra Malik and the difference is the theory used by Rahman, namely the Sufi theory of Fariduddin Attar, while this research uses the psycho-Sufi theory.

Loneliness Personality of the Main Character in the Novel Majnun Since Meeting Layla by Candra Malik (Aisyah, 2020) . The study examines the emotional loneliness personality of the main character which is shown by feelings of sadness, difficulty , grief, disappointment, despair, loneliness, restlessness and anxiety. The similarity of this study is the material object, namely Candra Malik's novel and the difference is that Aisyah's research uses Peplau & Perlman's Loneliness theory while this study uses psychosufi theory.

Layla Novel by Candra Malik: A study of literary psychology and religious values that produce: (1) the behavior of the main character in this novel responds to the stimulus given by the supporting character, namely positive responses in the form of joy, admiration, respect and love while negative responses are in the form of anger, disappointment, sadness and despair. (2) the religious values contained in the novel include aspects of the dimensions of belief, worship, appreciation, knowledge and experience (Sanditama, 2019) . The similarity of this research is the material object, namely the Layla novel by Candra Malik and the difference is that Sanditama's research uses the theory of literary psychology while this research uses the psychosufi theory.



OVERVIEW OF PSYCO-SUFISTICS

According to the idea of constructivism, people learn through observation and research. By engaging in life

To analyze the research subject, the author uses the mystical and Sufi approaches of Javanese psychology and Rabiah al-Adawiyah's theory of mahabbah. This interdisciplinary method is the foundation of psycho-Sufi epistemology commonly developed and used by Sufis to describe the expression of the soul and its love for God.

In Sufism, Sufis and scholars define Sufism differently but basically complement each other such as Imam Al-Qusayri, Al-Ghazali, Al-Junaid, Al-Isbahani, Al-Syarwani, Al-Kalabadzi, Fariduddin Attar to contemporary intellectuals interested in Sufism issues such as William Chittick, Sayyed Hossein Nasr, and others (Bagir, 2006; Riyadi, 2014, 2016) . From the definition of Sufism, the author concludes that Sufism is a discipline for Salik (followers of Sufism) to purify their souls and minds through the process of riyadhah and mujahadah so that they are closer to God (Muaz & Ahmad, 2019) . Suluk itself is a process of undergoing Sufism practices by Salik whether done through the tarekat or not. However, in the process of suluk it is highly recommended through the guidance of a teacher (mursyid/sheikh).

One of the important methods of suluk is dhikr. It is not surprising that in the tarekat tradition (school of Sufism), regular dhikr or wird is recommended by Sufism teachers (*mursyid*). Before performing certain dhikr and wird, (prospective) salik must go through stages of suluk. This process is called maqamat, which is the stages or stages of Sufism to draw closer to God (Nasution, 1993) . Maqamat includes, among others, the stages of repentance, asceticism, patience, gratitude, trust, blessing, mahabah, and makrifat. Sufis explain that these stages are not uniform. Some even include more varied stages in a large number. Even so, there are general criteria for maqamat that serve as guidelines, such as repentance, asceticism, patience, gratitude, trust, and acceptance (Nasution, 1993) . Meanwhile, in the psychological approach, this research focuses more on the Sufi psychological method, but to sharpen the analysis, the author also complements it with the Javanese psychological paradigm of Suryomentaram and Rabiah al-Adawiyah's Mahabbah Sufism.

Broadly speaking, there are three schools of thought in psychology: psychoanalysis, behaviorism, and humanism. Psychoanalysis (Freud, Mesmer, Charcot, Janet, Adler, etc.) and behaviorism (Pavlov, Thorndike, Watson, Skinner, etc.), according to Abraham Maslow, were the two dominant schools of thought in the first half of the 20th century that dominated science (Hanurawan, 1999; Nasution, 1993) . Both psychoanalysis and behaviorism reveal human



psychological symptoms in an atomic, reductionistic, deterministic, materialistic, and mechanistic manner. If psychoanalysis believes that a person's behavior can be read through his childhood psychic experiences and subconscious forces within him, then behaviorism believes that human behavior can be examined through the influence of his environment (Jalaluddin, 2003) . For Maslow, these two schools of thought are what cause humans to lose meaning in their lives; experiencing worthlessness (Maslow, 1981) . Maslow then divided the levels of human needs using the Hierarchy of Needs theory which consists of five levels: physiological needs, safety, love and belonging , esteem , and self-actualization (Maslow, 1981) .

Of these five stages, psychosufi theory can accommodate the human aspect of humans and then prevent humans from a number of current pathological diseases (despair, alienation, emptiness, mental emptiness, etc.). Moreover, the stage of self-actualization can unleash the miraculous potential of humans, which then manifests in everyday life. This psycho-Sufi concept is what the author will use and combine with Suryomentaram's Javanese psychology and Rabiah al-Adawiyah's mahabbah Sufism to capture the true literary narrative of Citra Salik in Candra Malik's novel Layla Majnun.

METHODS

This research is a qualitative descriptive research. This research is also included in the library research category , namely research whose data sources are taken from published writings or reading sources to obtain a theoretical basis for solving a problem that arises. The data sources for this research are two novels by Candra Malik (CM), namely: (1) *Layla, A Thousand Nights Without You* and (2) *Majnun Since Meeting Layla*. The data used in this study in the form of words, phrases, paragraphs, discourses that indicate the author's narrative, dialogue between characters, and depictions of settings. To collect data , the author uses library techniques. The data analysis technique in this study uses phenomenological hermeneutics initiated by Paul Ricoeur. Phenomenological hermeneutics initiated by Paul Ricoeur reconstructs and suspects meaning as practiced in ideological criticism (Hardiman, 2015) . Hermeneutics is not limited to focusing on how to read texts in a position of understanding, explaining, distance from texts, and partitioning texts in dialectical relationships, but there are other stages that must be passed in detail. The analysis steps use five stages, namely: (1) conducting careful reading of research data sources; (2) selecting data sources as research data; (3) collecting additional data that supports the research; (4) conducting careful analysis of research data; and (5) formulating conclusions from the research that has been carried out.



RESULTS

A salik (spiritual traveler) has a character that is formed through his inner journey towards God. These characteristics usually reflect deep spiritual values. In the novel by Candra Malik, several characters reflect Salik's character.

The characters in Candra Malik's novel Layla, such as Abah Sudira, Djamil, Kiai Anwar Sanusi, and Lail, reflect the characteristics of a seeker on a spiritual path. They live simple lives, filled with contemplation, self-control, and strive to free themselves from worldly attachments to achieve spiritual enlightenment. The novel depicts how a seeker's life is filled with trials and sacrifices, yet with the ultimate goal of achieving closeness to God and a more meaningful life.

The character of a salik in the novel Layla, A Thousand Nights Without You and Majnun Since Meeting Layla is as follows.

1. Humility (Tawadhu')

A seeker is generally humble, recognizing that the spiritual journey is an ongoing process and that everything comes from God. He avoids arrogance and always looks down on himself before God.

Lail, as the main character, goes on a spiritual journey in this novel. She experienced various inner turmoil and life challenges that brought her closer to her search for true meaning and spirituality. Lail's frequent meditation, or self-reflection, indicates that she was on a path of piety, striving to achieve spiritual enlightenment through a deeper understanding of life and her relationship with God.

Layla's character as the main character in this novel is in accordance with the concept of tawadhu' (humility) in Sufism, where a seeker avoids the desire to be seen or recognized by others, but only seeks recognition from God.

The character of humility found in the novels Layla, A Thousand Nights Without You and Majnun Since Meeting Layla, is seen in the following data.

- (1) "No, ma'am. God is the one who called you and Mas Kanigara, God is also the one who will take care of everything." (Malik, 2019 : 28)

According to Al-Ghazali, a salik has three stages of journey: fear of God (khauf), love of God (mahabba), and hope for His mercy (raja'). In the data above, you can see the stages in depicting the character Layla.

Other data that shows the humble character in the novel is as follows.



- (2) Under an oath of allegiance to Allah and the Prophet Muhammad SAW, in the hands of Abah Suradira in Sukosari that night, two years ago, I also pledged allegiance. (Malik, 2017 : 39)

The quote above can be interpreted as a form of the main character's attitude of *tawadhu'* (humility). *Tawadhu'* is one of the important characters in Sufism, which reflects an attitude of humility, submission, and obedience to God, without boasting about the spiritual achievements that have been achieved.

Bai'at as a Sign of Submission: The characters in this novel bind themselves in a bai'at, which is an oath of allegiance to Allah and the Prophet Muhammad. Bai'at is a symbol of a *salik* (spiritual seeker)'s total devotion and submission to God. Through this oath, the characters demonstrate their readiness to follow the spiritual path with complete loyalty, without feeling superior to others. This bai'at also depicts humility before a spiritual teacher (Abah Suradira) who guides them on their spiritual journey.

The use of the phrase "I also bind myself" indicates a sense of resignation and an awareness that one is not the center of this spiritual journey. A humble person realizes that the journey toward God cannot be undertaken with arrogance, but rather with a sense of powerlessness before Divine power. This is in accordance with the teachings of Sufism, where a seeker must let go of his ego and acknowledge his limitations as a human being. By swearing allegiance to Allah and the Messenger, the figure also expresses his awareness of a higher connectedness—that he is only a small part of the whole of creation and is under God's guidance. This attitude reflects the humility of Sufism, where one does not consider oneself superior to others but completely submits to God's will.

From a psycho-Sufi perspective, this humility can be seen as a crucial aspect of spiritual development. In the psychological process of a seeker, *tawadhu'* not only calms the ego but also helps the seeker let go of worldly attachments and focus on spiritual goals. This experience of taking oath of allegiance and surrendering oneself completely is part of an inner transformation that allows the seeker to draw closer to God.

A quote from the novel *Layla* describes humility through the act of bai'at carried out by the main character. This pledge of allegiance is not just a symbolic ritual, but is an acknowledgment that he is only a servant who submits to God's authority, with an attitude of humility and submission to Divine will. This attitude of humility is one of the keys in a seeker's journey towards spiritual enlightenment.



2. Patience (Patience)

A salik is very patient in facing tests, worldly temptations, and life's difficulties. For him, difficulties are a means to get closer to God. Patience is the main capital for these figures to face trials, life tests, and challenges in their spiritual journey.

The character of a salik who reflects a patient nature can be seen from how he lives a simple life, without worldly ambitions, and always refrains from luxury and material temptations.

The following is an example of data that illustrates Salik's patient character.

- (3) O Allah, astagfirullah, allow me to gift Al-Fatihah, the parent of the Koran, to Abah Anom, the ruler of all the saints in this country, at this time. Accepted, thank God. You can hang out, thank God. Even expelled, thank God. I surrender to You. (Malik, 2017 : 51)

This quote can be interpreted as a depiction of the main character's patient attitude, emphasizing total submission to God's will, both in accepting positive and negative outcomes. Patience here isn't just the ability to restrain anger, but also the acceptance of all circumstances with sincerity and gratitude, regardless of whether they're pleasant or unpleasant.

Layl, one of the figures who experienced spiritual development, had to face various life challenges and a difficult inner journey. Learning from mentors like Abah Sudira and Kiai Anwar Sanusi, Djamil had to develop patience in the face of uncertainty, sadness, and inner turmoil. His patience was tested as he waited for enlightenment through a long process of dhikr, worship, and self-control. Djamil learned that patience is key to overcoming worldly temptations and achieving inner peace.

In this quote, the main character says the sentence "Accepted in, thank God. May I bow down, thank God? Even if he is expelled, thank God," which shows an attitude of full acceptance of all the circumstances he faces, whether he is well received by Abah Anom or if he is expelled. In Sufism, this attitude is a manifestation of patience and acceptance (total acceptance of God's destiny). The person does not rebel or become angry at the outcome, but rather remains patient, believing that whatever happens is God's best will for them.

Apart from that, the sentence "I surrender to You" reflects sincerity and patience in

dealing with situations. The character does not try to impose his desires, but accepts whatever happens as God's decree. In a psychosufistic context, patience here is not only seen as emotional resilience, but also as the ability to let go of one's desires and completely surrender the results of every action to God. This sincerity is a sign of the greatness of the soul of a salik who has passed through inner tests.

In Sufism, one of the greatest tests for a seeker is rejection. The figure here has mentally prepared himself for the possibility of being expelled, yet he remains patient and unaffected emotionally. Patience in the face of rejection is a form of spiritual maturity, reflecting the awareness that everything, including rejection, is part of a test given by God to test one's steadfastness on the spiritual journey.

The word "astagfirullah" shows that the character is saying istighfar, asking forgiveness from God. Patience in Sufism is often associated with the awareness that humans are weak creatures and always need God's grace and forgiveness. This request for forgiveness reflects a humble attitude and self-awareness that in facing every test or rejection, a seeker must remain fully dependent on God and be patient in accepting whatever happens.

From a psycho-Sufi perspective, this attitude of patience can be seen as deep self-control and the ability to accept reality without excessive emotional resistance. Psychologically, patience is a form of adaptive mechanism used by salik to maintain inner balance and peace of mind in various situations. Patience associated with an attitude of gratitude in various conditions (both accepted and rejected) is a sign of mature spiritual transformation.

Lail also shows extraordinary patience in living his life. As someone who struggles with various inner conflicts and trials in life, Lail must be patient in the process of searching for the meaning of life and relationship with God. His patience is shown through struggle in contemplation, facing inner turmoil, and learning to accept all life's trials sincerely. Through this patient process, Lail slowly approaches the spiritual enlightenment he seeks.

Each salik character in this novel faces trials that test their patience, whether it's life's hardships, uncertainty, or inner challenges. Patience is key for them to overcome these trials and continue on their spiritual path.

Patience is a very dominant trait in a seeker's character, demonstrating how patience is fundamental to navigating a spiritual life filled with trials and tests. Through patience, they learn not to rush in their search for meaning, but to follow the natural process of achieving closeness to God and inner enlightenment.



This quote from the novel Layla can be interpreted as a reflection of the main character's profoundly patient character. She accepts all the fruits of her efforts with open arms, whether accepted or rejected, and maintains a grateful and patient attitude in any situation. Patience in the face of fate is a crucial part of a pilgrim's spiritual journey, illustrated by the sincerity with which she accepts rejection and the ability to fully surrender to God's will. This patient attitude shows the spiritual maturity of a figure who has gone through various inner tests, and is also an exemplary example of how a devotee responds to life with calm and deep conviction.

3. Sincere

One of the important characteristics is sincerity, where every action, worship, and life is done selflessly, solely for God. The sincere character found is depicted in the following data.

- (4) "Yes. Even a single rupiah, if given sincerely, has unimaginable blessings. That one sincere rupiah will invite friends to join. Don't be surprised, trucks carrying materials come from who knows where. It must be from Allah, but the drivers don't dare to be that honest in answering. They only say that their employers told them to deliver either cement, bricks, or sand." (Layla, Malik, 2017: 49)

This quote can be interpreted as a depiction of the character of sincerity through a spiritual perspective on the power and blessings of actions performed with sincere intentions. Sincerity, in the context of Sufism, refers to actions performed solely for God, without expectation of material reward or recognition from others.

The statement, "Even a single rupiah, if given sincerely, has unimaginable blessings," emphasizes that even the smallest act done with sincerity has extraordinary power. Sincerity in doing good yields immeasurable blessings, even in something as seemingly simple as a single rupiah. Sincerity here is described as the main trigger for abundant blessings. From a Sufi perspective, these blessings are manifestations of God's mercy given to those who are sincere in their actions.

The phrase "One sincere rupiah will invite its friends to join" metaphorically illustrates that actions carried out sincerely will not only benefit the individual but will also trigger the arrival of other good things. Symbolically, this shows that sincerity has a unique appeal that



invites God's help. In the context of the novel, this could be interpreted as meaning that when someone is sincere in their actions, God will send help in unexpected ways.

The connection with God's will is also visible in the data above. The statement "It must be from God, but the driver didn't dare to be that honest in answering" shows that the character has an awareness that everything that happens comes from God's will. In sincerity, a person does not claim the results of his efforts as his own, but rather realizes that everything comes from God. This is a form of high sincerity and humility, where a person does not feel that his success is the result of himself, but rather part of God's intervention.

The phrase "trucks carrying materials came from nowhere" is a concrete illustration of how God's help comes through unexpected channels when someone does good with sincerity. In the context of Sufi psychology, sincerity is a state in which the heart completely surrenders and does not expect worldly rewards. However, in that surrender, God's help comes in unexpected ways, such as the arrival of trucks of materials to assist in the construction process, without anyone knowing who directly ordered it.

From a psycho-Sufi perspective, sincerity is a psychological quality that helps individuals achieve inner peace. A sincere person is not troubled by expectations or anxiety about the results of their actions. In this novel, the character's sincerity is described as a source of spiritual strength that invites blessings and help. Psychologically, sincerity helps a person to let go of emotional attachment to the end result, which is often a source of stress. The character shows inner maturity by understanding that everything depends on God's will.

This quote from the novel Layla illustrates the character of sincerity through the view that even the smallest act done with sincerity can bring great blessings. Here, sincerity is seen as an inner strength capable of inviting God's help, even through unexpected channels. Sincerity is the key in a salik's spiritual journey, where he surrenders everything to God without expecting anything in return. This attitude reflects spiritual maturity and a sense of complete surrender to Divine will.

4. Self-awareness

Salik has a high inner awareness, understanding who he is in relation to God. He always tries to improve himself and directs his life towards a search for deeper spiritual meaning. The description of Salik's character in the novel can be seen in the following data.

In the following quote:



- (5) "Suddenly, between being sure I heard and doubting my own hearing, I caught the voice of Abah Anom, who was always giving praise. I nodded my head, and apologized for only being able to speak so early." (Layla, Malik, 2017: 52)

This quote is interpreted as a depiction of self-awareness through the main character's reflection on her situation, both physically and mentally. Self-awareness refers to a person's ability to introspect, understanding their feelings, thoughts, and actions, and how they impact themselves and others.

The phrase "Slowly, between being sure of hearing and doubting my own hearing" indicates that the character is aware of his own confusion and doubt. In this situation, the character realizes that he is not entirely sure whether the voice he heard came from Abah Anom or from his own personal perception. This indicates a high level of introspection, where the character is aware of his own vulnerability in distinguishing between external reality and his own inner state. This self-awareness is important in the spiritual journey, because individuals are expected to be able to identify their doubts and confusion before reaching a deeper understanding.

The sentence "apologizing for only being able to visit so early" indicates that the character is aware of his lateness. His apology demonstrates his humility in acknowledging his mistake. Self-awareness in this context is evident in the character's ability to recognize a less-than-ideal situation—arriving late—and take full responsibility for it without making excuses. This is a sign of personal maturity, where someone understands their own limitations and has the courage to admit imperfections to others.

The character also shows social and spiritual awareness in his interactions with Abah Anom. In the Sufi tradition, the figure of the teacher (mursyid) has an important role in the spiritual journey of a student (salik). By nodding and apologizing, the character demonstrates respect and social responsibility for the student-teacher relationship. This demonstrates that he is not only aware of his position as a student but also recognizes his responsibility to attend wholeheartedly and observe etiquette when visiting Abah Anom.

The sentence "I heard the voice of Abah Anom, who was always chanting the tasbih" indicates an awareness of both external conditions (Abah Anom's voice chanting the tasbih) and internal conditions (doubt of his own hearing). The character is able to distinguish between what he feels and what is happening outside himself. This awareness is important



in the context of psycho-Sufism because individuals are required to align inner experiences with external reality without being trapped by illusions or misperceptions. The character does not immediately jump to conclusions, but remains calm in the face of his doubts, while still trying to understand the situation clearly.

In the psycho-Sufi context, self-awareness is an important element in a seeker's spiritual journey. This awareness helps individuals to be aware of their inner state, understand their limitations, and navigate the outer world with a calm heart and a clear mind. Self-awareness is also linked to humility and a willingness to accept shortcomings, as the character in this quote recognizes his delay and his hesitation and immediately acts by apologizing. Self-awareness helps the character better understand his place on the journey toward God and how he interacts with others along the way.

This quote illustrates the main character's strong self-awareness, both in recognizing his own doubts, understanding his delay, and how he interacts with others, especially his spiritual teacher, Abah Anom. This self-awareness, demonstrated through introspection, a sense of responsibility, and humility, is a sign of profound spiritual maturity. The character is not only aware of what is happening outside himself but also acknowledges his own feelings and limitations, an essential quality in living a spiritual life.

Other data that shows the character of self-awareness is as follows.

- (6) "Lail Ngungun on the mosque terrace. He wondered to himself, Could it be that Mbah Benu deliberately installed so many mirrors in his mosque to remind the congregation, whoever they are, that humans can actually divide themselves? Or, to remind us to always look in the mirror. Reflect on ourselves. Be self-aware. Because, isn't it only then that humans realize their existence as the center of all directions?" (*Layla*, Malik, 2017: 67)

This quote is interpreted as a depiction of deep self-awareness through the character's reflection on the symbolism of the mirror installed in the mosque. The mirror in this case is used as a metaphor for introspection, namely contemplating and examining oneself, which is an important aspect of the spiritual journey and self-awareness.

The character Lail Ngungun reflects on the meaning of the mirror installed by Mbah Benu in the mosque. The mirror here symbolizes self-awareness, which encourages people to constantly reflect on themselves. This self-awareness requires individuals to engage in deep reflection, recognize their strengths and weaknesses, and understand what needs to be



improved. This process, in a spiritual context, is one of the primary steps in cleansing the heart and soul of all forms of ego and arrogance.

The sentence "Looking at yourself. "Self-awareness." shows that the character is aware of the importance of self-awareness, namely monitoring and understanding his behavior and intentions. Self-awareness is a crucial element of self-awareness, as one not only needs to reflect on past actions but also be constantly aware of any emotions and motivations that may arise. High self-awareness allows individuals to control themselves, understand what they are feeling, and how those emotions influence their actions and relationships with others.

In the reflective question "Isn't it only then that humans realize their existence as the center of all directions? ", the character realizes that humans are the center of their own experience. This leads to the concept of self-awareness as a center where every human action and thought originates from their own awareness. This awareness confirms that only by understanding oneself deeply can one understand the world around him. In the Sufi tradition, self-awareness is also considered an important step in knowing God, because "whoever knows himself, he will know his God."

The character's thoughts about why Mbah Benu installed so many mirrors in the mosque show social and spiritual awareness. Lail Ngungun pondered that the mirrors might have been installed to remind the congregation to always introspect. This shows that self-awareness is not only related to oneself, but also to how one interacts with one's spiritual community. By reflecting, humans are expected to be able to realize their mistakes and improve themselves before socializing or playing a role in their social life.

From a psycho-Sufi perspective, self-awareness is the foundation of the spiritual journey. Through the process of self-awareness, a seeker of the spiritual path seeks to eliminate the ego and pave the way to deeper self-understanding. This process involves constant introspection, where the individual must remain aware of their intentions, actions, and impact on their surroundings. This self-awareness opens the way for spiritual cleansing, allowing one to draw closer to God with a purer heart.

This quote from the novel shows how self-awareness plays an important role in the characters' spiritual lives. The symbolism of the mirror installed in the mosque by Mbah Benu encourages both the characters and readers to constantly reflect on themselves and engage in self-introspection. This process allows one to better understand themselves, overcome weaknesses and ego, and become the center of their own understanding of the world. Self-



awareness not only aids personal development but also plays a vital role in social and spiritual interactions, as only by understanding oneself can one live a more balanced and harmonious life.

5. Self-Control (Mujahadah)

A seeker struggles hard against worldly desires and lusts, trying to control himself to always focus on spiritual goals. The data found regarding the depiction of this character is as follows.

- (7) " He farmed, mingled with the common people, no longer talked about politics and power, and studied religion with his teacher in Bogangin, namely Kiai Hasan Tasari." (Layla, Malik, 2017: 64)

This quote is interpreted as a depiction of mujahadah, or self-control, carried out by the character in facing worldly temptations, such as power and politics, and choosing to live simply and deepen his religion. Mujahadah is a concept in Sufism that refers to a person's inner struggle to control the desires and temptations of the world, and remain focused on spiritual goals.

In the sentence "no longer talking about politics and power", it is clear that the character has chosen to leave the matter of politics and power . This is an example of mujahadah, where the character is able to control himself from temptations that might bring him status and influence, but potentially distance him from spiritual life. The character's self-control here shows that he is aware of the negative impact of engaging in temporary worldly affairs, and prefers to seek peace through spiritual paths.

The sentence "He cultivated, mingling with the common people" illustrates the character's choice of simplicity. In this case, he refuses to live in luxury or seek high social standing, even though he may have the ability to do so. Simplicity and mingling with the common people demonstrate humility and the ability to restrain oneself from the desire to be superior to others. Mujahadah is also seen here, as self-control over desires often requires the ability to live a life of simplicity and without excessive ambition.

The figure chose to "learn religious knowledge from his teacher in Bogangin, namely Kiai Hasan Tasari". This shows the character's commitment to getting closer to God through spiritual guidance from a teacher. Mujahadah in this context is an inner struggle to continuously improve oneself, fight worldly tendencies, and remain steadfast on the spiritual



path. By gaining religious knowledge, the character tries to cleanse himself of all forms of temptation and maintain purity of heart, which is an important aspect of self-control in Sufism.

The character's decision to abandon discussions of politics and power and choose a simpler life reflects the inner transformation carried out through mujahadah. This process involves a constant struggle against lust, ego, and worldly desires. The self-control that the character exercises is not only about restraining himself from physical desires, but also from ambitions for power and influence that can damage his spiritual balance. This inner transformation is the main characteristic of mujahadah, where a person continues to fight against lust in order to achieve purity of soul.

From a psycho-Sufi perspective, mujahadah is an important part of the spiritual journey of a salik (seeker of God). Strong self-control is necessary to maintain balance between the physical and spiritual worlds. In this context, the character tries to control the lusts that may arise from involvement in politics, power, and personal ambition. By choosing a simpler life and focusing on religious learning, the character shows a deep mujahadah attitude. In Sufism, this inner struggle is considered the key to getting closer to God and achieving spiritual enlightenment.

This quote from the novel Layla describes the character of self-control (mujahadah) demonstrated by the character through her choice to leave politics and power behind, and live a simple life with the common people. By gaining religious knowledge from his teacher, the figure tries to strengthen his spirituality and protect himself from worldly temptations. Mujahadah in this context is a continuous inner struggle to fight against lust, ambition, and worldly desires, in order to achieve a deeper spiritual life. The character demonstrates a strong commitment to maintaining self-control, which is one of the main elements in achieving purity of soul and closeness to God.

DISCUSSION

In Candra Malik's novel, the main character is described as someone who leaves worldly life in search of inner peace and a deeper relationship with God. He may often display humility in social interactions, refrain from worldly temptations, and always feel unworthy before God.

The main character's character aligns with the concept of tawadhu' (humility) in Sufism, where a seeker avoids the desire to be seen or recognized by others, but instead seeks recognition only from God. According to Al-Ghazali, a seeker has three stages of journey: fear of God (khauf),



love of God (mahabba), and hope in His mercy (raja'). We can see how the characters in the novel go through these stages. When a character in a novel isolates himself to perform dhikr in a remote place, this can be associated with uzlah, or exile from the physical world to contemplate spiritual life.

According to Sufi theory, a **seeker** is an individual who undertakes a spiritual journey to draw closer to God. This journey involves certain stages known as *maqamat* (spiritual stations) and *ahwal* (spiritual states), as described in the works of Sufi figures. In the context of **Candra Malik's** novel, the seeker's character can be analyzed based on how the character demonstrates spiritual development through these stages. For example, a salik character may face life trials that test his patience or show depth of *sincerity* in his actions and thoughts.

The character of a salik can also be analyzed using transpersonal or spiritual psychology theory, which views the spiritual journey as part of human psychological growth. Maslow developed the idea of *self-transcendence*, the human need to transcend oneself for something greater. Salik's character reflects this stage, in which he seeks meaning in life through a relationship with God. Jung's process of individuation, in which one finds balance between the conscious and the unconscious, is similar to Salik's spiritual journey, which seeks harmony between the mundane and the supernatural.

In novels, these psychological aspects can be observed through the characters' internal conflicts, struggles against lust, or symbols that depict spiritual transformation. The image of the Salik in Sufi literature is often depicted as a figure full of **trials and suffering**. A seeker is often tested with physical and mental suffering to measure the strength of his faith. In addition, Salik is a symbol of individuals who uphold values such as love (*mahabbah*), sincerity, and universal compassion. In literature, physical journeys often symbolize spiritual journeys. This can be compared to works such as *Thariqah* or other Sufi tales.

Candra Malik's novel reflects profound Sufi values, from theological, psychological, and literary perspectives. Theories such as the *maqamat* and *ahwal* from the Sufi tradition, *self-transcendence* in transpersonal psychology, and Jung's concept of individuation can be used to analyze the spiritual journey of Salik, thus yielding a comprehensive understanding of spiritual values relevant to modern life.

CONCLUSION

A salik (spiritual traveler) has a character that is formed through his inner journey towards God. The salik characters found in this study are humble, patient, humble, sincere, and obedient.



This research contributes to several theoretical aspects: It can enrich the body of interdisciplinary studies, particularly in psychosufism, the study of connecting psychological and Sufi dimensions. This opens up opportunities for the development of theories on how spiritual experiences within the context of Sufism can provide a deeper understanding of human personality, values, and the meaning of life. This study provides a new perspective on how the salik (spiritual path seeker) character is depicted in literary works. These findings can be used to expand theories about the representation of spiritual figures and themes in contemporary Indonesian literature. This research offers a theoretical discourse on how literary works with Sufi themes can be used as a medium for character education based on spiritual values. This is relevant in developing a curriculum based on local and universal wisdom.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This novel can be used as teaching material to develop students' understanding of spiritual, moral and social values. Teachers/lecturers can use it as teaching material for discussions on ethics and meaningful life. The findings of this study can be the basis for designing a more holistic curriculum, especially in the subjects of Indonesian Language, Religious Education, or Character Education.

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