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## The Aesthetic Dialogue between Arabic Sufi Literature and Hans Bague Jassin Qur'anic Poetry: An Intertextual and Spiritual Study

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### ABSTRACT

This study seeks to delineate the aesthetic interplay between classical Arabic Sufi literature and H. B. Jassin's Qur'anic poetry, emphasizing the evolution of Qur'anic aesthetic values from Arabic to Indonesian poetic expression. The primary emphasis is to elucidate the intertextual interactions between the spiritual beauty represented in Sufi literature, particularly the works of Ibn al-Fāriḍ and al-Junaid al-Baghdadi, and H. B. Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* (1978). This study utilizes an interdisciplinary methodology that integrates Kristeva-Barthes intertextuality, Islamic aesthetic hermeneutics (Gadamer, Ricoeur), and the Qur'anic concepts of *balāghah* and *i'jāz*. The analysis encompasses textual and spiritual interpretations of two primary corpora: classical Arabic Sufi poetry and Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān*. The results indicate that Jassin does not solely translate Qur'anic verses linguistically; he constructs a spiritual conduit that integrates the aesthetic essence of revelation into the Indonesian Islamic cultural framework. The research concludes that *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* embodies a transnational Islamic aesthetic form, wherein divine beauty, originating from the Arab Sufi tradition, is reinterpreted through the language and culture of the Nusantara. Consequently, this study broadens the discourse of Indonesian Islamic literature as a domain for spiritual interpretation that links Arab heritage with Indonesian modernity.

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## INTRODUCTION

The conversation between the *Qur'ān* and literature has always been a big part of the intellectual history of Islamic aesthetics. Since the beginning of Islamic civilization, poets, philosophers, and mystics have tried to put into words the indescribable beauty of divine revelation. The *Qur'ān*, as the foundational text of Islam, serves not only as a source of theology and law but also as the ultimate exemplar of eloquence (*balāghah*) and rhetorical miracle (*i jāz*). Its linguistic harmony and rhythmic intensity have motivated numerous writers to emulate, translate, and reinterpret its aesthetic influence within their respective cultural frameworks (Abdel Haleem, 2011; M. Sells, 1999). In the classical Arabic tradition, Sufi poets like Ibn al-Fāriḍ and al-Junayd al-Baghdādī turned the images and symbols in the *Qur'ān* into ways to express their spirituality. Their works demonstrate that the Qur'anic text, though divinely revealed, perpetually produces infinite layers of meaning through human poetic interpretation, a phenomenon the Sufis frequently refer to as *tajallī*, the continuous manifestation of divine beauty.

In the Indonesian literary realm, the tradition of interacting with the *Qur'ān* through poetry attains a distinctive zenith in the oeuvre of H. B. Jassin. Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* (1978) is one of the most ambitious and controversial attempts to turn the *Qur'ān* into poetry in the Indonesian language. He is known as the "Pope of Indonesian literature." Jassin didn't want his work to be a translation or a paraphrase; instead, he wanted it to be a *puitisasi*, a new way of expressing divine revelation in the rhythm and imagery of Indonesian verse. This project was not just about language; it was also about spirituality, as it aimed to let the *Qur'ān* "speak" to the aesthetic consciousness of Indonesian Islam. By choosing poetry as his medium, Jassin joined a long-standing tradition of mystical poetry that aims to show the *jamāl Allāh* (divine beauty) through the act of creation by humans. In this context, the Qur'anic statement "*Allāhu jamīl wa yuḥibbu al-jamāl*" ("God is beautiful and loves beauty") becomes not only a theological statement but also an aesthetic principle that brings together divine and human creativity (Nasr, 1987).

The convergence of Arabic Sufi poetics and Jassin's Qur'anic poetry constitutes a fertile ground for the examination of transnational Islamic aesthetics. For a long time, Arabic Sufi literature has been seen as an extension of Qur'anic aesthetics, where poetic language becomes the medium of mystical union (*wasl*) and annihilation (*fanā*). Jassin's adaptation, on the other hand, brings these ideas into conversation with the language and culture of the Indonesian archipelago. This movement of aesthetic translation poses significant inquiries. What changes happen to the rhetorical and spiritual structures of Qur'anic discourse when they are expressed through the rhythms of the Indonesian language? How can the spiritual depth of Sufi poetry, based on the Arabic language structure, be reinterpreted in contemporary literature? What does this process demonstrate regarding the universality of Islamic aesthetics transcending linguistic and cultural boundaries?

Scholars of comparative Islamic literature have commenced to examine such inquiries within the expansive context of transnational Islamic aesthetics, a notion that signifies the dissemination of Qur'anic and Islamic aesthetic paradigms across languages, geographies, and historical epochs (Behl, 2012; El-Tobgui, 2021). In this context, H. B. Jassin's work exemplifies aesthetic mediation, wherein the Qur'anic discourse, initially articulated in Arabic rhetorical frameworks, is refracted through the lens of contemporary Indonesian poetics. This act of rearticulation changes the *Qur'ān* from a holy Arabic text into a living aesthetic experience in the Indonesian language world. It also illustrates the concept of intertextuality as defined by Kristeva (1980), which refers to the dynamic network of textual reverberations and transformations that generate new meanings. Intertextual theory posits that each text constitutes a mosaic of quotations that assimilates and reconfigures the voices of preceding discourses. In *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi*, the voices of the *Qur'ān*, classical Arabic poetics, and Sufi mysticism come together in a complicated aesthetic conversation. Jassin's

poetic language and rhythm remind me of the *Qur'ān's* Arabic rhythm, but they also touch on the emotional and spiritual levels that Indonesian readers are used to. Barthes' (1977) notion of the "writerly text" (*texte scriptible*), which encourages active reader engagement in meaning-making, offers a valuable framework for analyzing Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* (Barthes, 1977). His work does not aim to establish fixed meaning but rather to create interpretive space, facilitating the aesthetic engagement with the *Qur'ān* as an act of spiritual participation. In this context, Jassin's poetry exemplifies what Gadamer (1975) termed the fusion of horizons (*Horizontverschmelzung*), signifying the convergence of the historical and linguistic realm of the *Qur'ān* with the contemporary awareness of Indonesian Islam (H.-G. Gadamer, 1975).

The Sufi view of poetic language as a reflection of divine reality adds to this aesthetic experience. In Ibn al-Fāriḍ's writings, poetry serves as a form of *dhikr*, or remembrance of God, through which the poet perceives the unveiling (*kashf*) of divine beauty. The famous beginning of his *Tā'iyyah al-Kubrā* says that the lover's words are not his own, but a reflection of the Beloved's essence. In al-Junayd's aphorisms, language serves as a veil that simultaneously obscures and unveils the ineffable presence of God. When Jassin turns the *Qur'ān* into poetry, he takes part in the same process of covering and revealing, turning divine revelation into the artistic expression of Indonesian spirituality. His poetic rhythm does not imitate the Arabic meter of the *Qur'ān*; instead, it reflects the internal cadence of revelation, the pulsation of meaning that, in Sufi terminology, corresponds to the *nafas al-Raḥmān* (the Breath of the Merciful).

This intertwining of linguistic, aesthetic, and spiritual dimensions positions Jassin's project within a more extensive hermeneutical continuum that spans from Qur'anic rhetoric (*balāghah*) to contemporary literary expression. The classical theory of *i'jāz al-Qur'ān* posited that the Qur'an's inimitability is rooted in its distinctive amalgamation of meaning and form, enabling it to convey divine truth in human language without descending into imitation (Abdul-Raof, 2003). In transforming this principle into poetic creation, Jassin embodies what Ricoeur (1976) referred to as the surplus of meaning, wherein interpretation serves as a generative act that revitalizes the original text (Ricoeur, 1976). His poetic *Qur'ān* should not be perceived as a substitute or simplification of revelation; rather, it should be regarded as an interpretive endeavor that revitalizes the Qur'anic essence within the ongoing tradition of Islamic aesthetics.

Even though *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* is a very interesting work of art, not many scholars have written about it. Most studies look at either the language debate over whether poetic versions of the *Qur'ān* violate the sanctity of revelation or the literary form as an experiment in modern Indonesian poetry (Fathurahman, 2019, Hadi, 2014). Few scholars have examined its profound intertextual connections with the Arabic Sufi tradition or its ramifications for comprehending the spiritual continuity between Arab Islamic and Indonesian Islamic cultures. This study aims to address that deficiency by contextualizing Jassin's work within the tradition of Sufi aesthetics that originate from Qur'anic revelation. This research explores the dialogical interaction between Jassin's poetic expressions and the mystical poetics of Ibn al-Fāriḍ and al-Junayd, revealing how divine beauty is translated, not only linguistically but also ontologically, across different cultural contexts.

This study is novel due to its threefold contribution. Theoretically, it presents the notion of a transnational aesthetic dialogue within Islam, highlighting that the Qur'anic aesthetic transcends the Arabic language and continues to evolve across cultures. Methodologically, it synthesizes intertextual analysis (Kristeva, Barthes) with Islamic aesthetic hermeneutics (Gadamer, Ricoeur) and the Sufi concept of *tajallī* as a framework for interpreting both texts. In terms of context, it puts *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* back in the middle of Islamic aesthetics, which connect Arabic Sufi poetry and Indonesian literary spirituality. This research enhances the field of Islamic literary studies by illustrating that the aesthetic energy of the *Qur'ān* transcends linguistic barriers, perpetually inspiring

novel expressions of beauty across various cultural contexts.

In short, this study looks at the aesthetic conversation between Arabic Sufi literature and H. B. Jassin's Qur'anic poetry from an intertextual and spiritual point of view. It aims to elucidate how Jassin's poetic interaction with the *Qur'ān* contributes to the longstanding Sufi tradition of transmuting divine beauty into human artistry. The subsequent sections delineate the methodological framework of this study, offer comprehensive analyses of both Arabic and Indonesian texts, and culminate in a contemplation of the implications of this discourse for comprehending the global and transhistorical aspects of Islamic aesthetics.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative interpretive framework that integrates intertextual analysis with hermeneutic and aesthetic interpretation. The study's main goal is to find out how Arabic Sufi poetry and H. B. Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* talk to each other, as shown in *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* (1978). The methodological foundation is derived from three interconnected frameworks. The first is Kristeva's (1980) and Barthes' (1977) theory of intertextuality, which sees every literary text as a place where different discourses meet and change each other. The second is the hermeneutics of aesthetics put forth by Gadamer (1975) and Ricoeur (1976), which offers methodologies for deciphering the emergence of meaning through language, symbolism, and the reading process. The third is the Islamic aesthetic framework based on *balāghah* and *i'jāz al-Qur'ān*, along with the Sufi idea of *tajallī*, which says that divine beauty is always present in human perception.

There are two sets of texts that make up the main data. The first group of texts includes some Arabic Sufi poems, mostly from Ibn al-Fāriḍ's *Tā'īyyah al-Kubrā* and al-Junayd al-Baghdādī's aphoristic prose. The second corpus is H. B. Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi*, which is looked at as a modern Indonesian take on Qur'anic aesthetics. There are three steps in the analysis. To find themes of divine love, unity, and light in the Sufi works, the first step is to look at their textual structures and rhetorical patterns. Second, we look at the parallel themes and language tools in Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* to find aesthetic and spiritual connections. Third, the hermeneutic circle is used to read both corpora and find the spiritual meanings that link revelation, poetic imagination, and cultural change. The goal of the analysis is not to compare languages, but to find out how divine aesthetics goes beyond language and is expressed in different ways in Islamic spirituality across cultures.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Qur'anic Aesthetic Paradigm in Arabic Sufi Literature

The Qur'an is where the idea of aesthetic experience in Arabic Sufi literature comes from. The way the Qur'an is written is both a revelation and a work of art; it shows divine truth through the beauty of sound, rhythm, and metaphor (Borg, 1970). Classical *balāghah* scholars like 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī and al-Zamakhsharī thought that the beauty of the *Qur'ān* came from the harmony between meaning and expression, which they called *nazm* (Key, 2019). The verses of the *Qur'ān* have a complex relationship between semantic accuracy and phonetic resonance that turns everyday language into a means of transcendence. The Qur'anic assertion *wa in min shay'in illā yusabbiḥu biḥamdih* ("there is nothing that does not celebrate His praise," *Qur'ān* 17:44) elucidates a cosmos permeated with rhythm and significance, wherein beauty itself transforms into a form of worship. In this way, the *Qur'ān* sets up an aesthetic model in which form and content are always connected to the divine (Harb, 2015).

Sufi writers made this model their own by turning Qur'anic images into symbols that talk about union, destruction, and the presence of God. Ibn al-Fāriḍ thought of the *Qur'ān* as more than

just a book to read; it was a universe to be felt through the soul. His *Tā'īyyah al-Kubrā* shows how Qur'anic words for light, love, and revelation change into mystical symbols. In the *Qur'ān*, the word *nūr* (light) comes up a lot, especially in *āyat al-nūr* (*Qur'ān* 24:35). In Ibn al-Fāriḍ's poetry, *nūr* becomes the very essence of life. He talks about the Beloved's light, which reveals and hides the truth at the same time. This is like the divine paradox in *Allāhu nūru al-samāwāti wa al-arḍ* ("God is the light of the heavens and the earth"). In Ibn al-Fāriḍ's poetry, divine light is not a fixed symbol but a living force that brings all things to life. The poet copies the rhythm of the *Qur'ān* in his verses, which creates a sensory experience that is like revelation itself (Lowry, 2019).

The Sufi idea of *tajallī*, which means that God reveals himself through creation all the time, is the main aesthetic idea behind this change. Al-Junayd al-Baghdādī says that *tajallī* happens when the beauty of God shows itself in the mirror of the human heart. The poet becomes the witness (*shāhid*) who sees this beauty and puts it into words. In al-Junayd's mystical writings, language goes back and forth between being clear and being quiet, because the divine reality is beyond what people can say. There is a tension between what can be seen and what cannot be seen. This creates what could be called an aesthetic of concealment, where poetic language acts as a veil (*hijāb*) that hides and reveals divine truth at the same time. The *Qur'ān* itself does this aesthetic movement because its metaphors make you think instead of taking them literally. The *Qur'ān* talks about the heart that sees more than the eyes (*fa-innahā lā ta'mā al-abṣār wa-lākin ta'mā al-qulūb allatī fī al-ṣudūr*, *Qur'ān* 22:46). This sets up a way of understanding inner vision that later becomes a key part of Sufi poetry (Noy, 2019).

In the Sufi way of thinking about aesthetics, beauty (*jamāl*) and majesty (*jalāl*) are two aspects of how God shows himself. The rhythm of creation and art is made up of the right amount of these traits. In his book *Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam*, Ibn al-'Arabī called this balance the interaction of mercy and strictness, as well as growth and shrinkage. This study doesn't really focus on Ibn al-'Arabī, but his ideas help us understand the Sufi aesthetic paradigm in a broader philosophical context. Like Ibn al-'Arabī, Ibn al-Fāriḍ and al-Junayd see beauty not as decoration but as theophany (*zuhūr al-ḥaqq*) (Meyer, 2019). The beauty of language is a part of the beauty of God's act of creation, which is shown in the Qur'anic word *kun*, which means "Be." Every poetic line reflects this creative need. The Sufi poet doesn't make beauty; he shows it to us, just like the divine word keeps coming through in human expression (Yalnız, 2022).

This comprehension alters the role of poetry within Islamic civilization. While Arabic poetry before Islam praised human bravery and passion, Sufi poetry turns these feelings into metaphors for spiritual longing. The classical ode (*qaṣīdah*) becomes a way to think about mystical things, with the beloved, the wine, and the journey through the desert representing steps the soul takes to get back to God. The intoxication of love in Ibn al-Fāriḍ's *Khamriyyah*, or "Wine Ode," is like the Qur'anic image of being close to God. The poet's use of paradox, in which the lover and the beloved become one, is like the Qur'anic idea of unity (*tawhīd*). In this way, the aesthetic experience of poetry becomes a form of remembrance (*dhikr*) and a spiritual discipline. As al-Zamakhsharī said, the Sufi poem is not just something to read; it is also something to recite as an act of worship. The sound and rhythm of the verse recreate the cosmic harmony of the *Qur'ān* (al-Zamakhsharī, 1987).

The Qur'anic aesthetic paradigm presents a novel interpretation of language as a site of divine presence. Sufi hermeneutics says that words have an inner dimension (*bāṭin*) that goes beyond their outward form (*ẓāhir*). The *Qur'ān* itself says that its verses are both clear and metaphorical (*muḥkamāt wa mutashābihāt*, *Qur'ān* 3:7). This idea is like that. When poetic language lives in this duality, it becomes a way to understand the spiritual world. Ibn al-Fāriḍ believed that every word is a spark from the divine light and that writing is a way to relive revelation (Y. S. Ali & Huran, 2021). His verse *mā ra'aytu shay'an illā ra'aytu Allāha fīh* ("I never saw anything without seeing God

within it") sums up the Sufi way of knowing beauty. This statement is not a metaphor; it is an ontological statement that reflects the idea that all beauty in creation is a trace of the divine (M. Ali, 2018). Al-Junayd's writings focus on a different aspect of this experience, which could be called the ethics of aesthetics. He thinks that seeing beauty makes him humble instead of self-indulgent.

The poet who sees the beauty of God must also see his own death (*fanā'*). When the *Qur'ān* says "*kullu man 'alayhā fān wa yabqā wajhu rabbika dhū al-jalāl wa al-ikrām*" ("all that is on earth will perish, but the Face of your Lord will remain," *Qur'ān* 55:26–27), it supports this spiritual movement. So, beauty is now linked to death and memory. The Sufi aesthetic doesn't look for forms that last forever; instead, it looks for ways to be part of the eternal act of divine self-disclosure. The poem isn't finished; it keeps revealing new things through reading and thinking about it (Abdel Fatah & Mahmoud, 2023).

Arabic Sufi literature gives rise to an aesthetic paradigm based on three interconnected ideas. The first is that language, when filled with divine remembrance, becomes a way to show the truth instead of just talking about it. The second is that beauty is a way of knowing, a way of connecting the mind and the heart. The third is that making art is a continuation of revelation, a way for the divine *kun* to show itself in human consciousness. Together, these ideas make up what could be called the Qur'anic aesthetic paradigm, which says that poetry is part of the cosmic rhythm of creation.

This model gives us the ideas we need to understand later works of literature that deal with the *Qur'ān*, like those by H. B. Jassin. The Sufi poets showed that the *Qur'ān* could inspire forms of beauty beyond its literal language, leading to new ways of showing devotion and awe. Their writings show that aesthetic experience is not a minor part of spiritual life in Islam, but a major one. The Sufis turned art into a kind of theology by connecting beauty to revelation and made poetry a continuation of the Qur'anic miracle. This study looks at Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* as a modern example of the same desire to make divine beauty heard and seen in the living languages of the Muslim world.

### **H. B. Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* and the Indonesian Literary Context**

H. B. Jassin is a unique figure in the world of Indonesian literature. He was a respected critic, editor, and literary guardian, and he had a big impact on the intellectual direction of modern Indonesian letters in the middle of the twentieth century. His work *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* (1978) signifies the zenith of his literary career and a significant spiritual endeavor aimed at reconciling revelation and art (Jassin, 1978). To comprehend this project, it is essential to situate it within the broader development of Indonesian literary modernism, the Islamic reform movements of the twentieth century, and the aesthetic changes that transpired as Indonesia navigated its identity between tradition and modernity.

In Indonesia, the years after independence were marked by a strong desire to find cultural authenticity. Writers and intellectuals examined methods to harmonize traditional Islamic values with contemporary artistic expressions. Jassin, whose earlier works focused on literary criticism and narrative analysis, gradually shifted towards the moral and spiritual aspects of literature (Kurnia & Tasnimah, 2022). For him, literature was not just a mirror of society, but a way to find the ultimate truth (Lukman, 2015). His involvement with the *Qur'ān* through poetry naturally evolved from his belief that art should convey the profound dimensions of human spirituality (Santosa, 2017). In the introduction to *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi*, Jassin said that his goal was to show "the face of the *Qur'ān* as poetry," or that divine revelation has an aesthetic and emotional side that can touch the soul through rhythm and imagery (Saifullah, 2019).

Indonesian intellectuals were once again interested in Islamic aesthetics when Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* came out. People like Hamka and A. A. Navis had already tried to put Qur'anic stories into

literary forms, but Jassin's way was much more radical. He didn't just write about the *Qur'ān*; he tried to rewrite it in the style of Indonesian poetry. This project caused a lot of debate because many traditional scholars saw it as a breach of the sanctity of revelation. But from a literary point of view, Jassin's project is a moment of creative synthesis in which the sacred text becomes art without losing its spiritual authority. His work exemplifies what Ricoeur (1976) termed the "surplus of meaning," the ability of a text to produce new interpretations beyond its original linguistic structure (Delpech, 2022).

When Jassin translated the *Qur'ān* into poetic Indonesian, he had to deal with the conflict between being faithful to the language and making it spiritually resonant. He turned down literal translation because he thought it couldn't capture the emotional power of the Arabic original. Instead, he tried to recreate the Qur'an's aesthetic energy through rhythm, sound, and repetition. For instance, his version of *sūrah al-Raḥmān* turns the phrase "*fa-bi ayyi ālā`i rabbikumā tukadḍibān*" ("Then which of your Lord's favors will you deny?") into a refrain that sounds like the rhythm of Indonesian music (Nuraeni et al., 2019). The result is a text that is better for reading aloud and thinking about than for analytical reading. This performative aspect places Jassin's work within the tradition of Qur'anic orality, wherein sound serves as a conduit between meaning and emotion. His adaptation keeps the ritual closeness of Qur'anic recitation while adding the expressive options of modern verse.

Sufi ideas about beauty and Jassin's aesthetic philosophy are very similar. Even though he didn't call himself a Sufi, his idea of divine inspiration is like the Sufi idea of *tajallī*, which is God's self-disclosure through art. In interviews, Jassin frequently described poetry as a gift that befalls the writer, an echo of revelation that necessitates receptivity rather than dominion. This is like what Sufis believe: that the poet's job is to be a vessel for divine beauty to show itself. In *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi*, Jassin takes on this exact role, seeing himself not as the author but as a medium through which the *Qur'ān* expresses its aesthetic essence in a new linguistic form. The humility inherent in this position corresponds with al-Junayd's doctrine that authentic art emerges from *fanā`*, the obliteration of the self within the divine act (Zaleski, 2021).

The Indonesian language makes this aesthetic conversation even stronger. The Indonesian language's flexible syntax and rhythmic flow make it the best language for translating Qur'anic aesthetics. Indonesian, on the other hand, uses simplicity and musical flow to show beauty, while Arabic relies on a lot of morphological richness. Jassin understood this and used repetition and parallelism to make it feel like a rhythmic call. His lines rise and fall gently, which makes reading feel like a spiritual listening experience, like the recitative tone of Qur'anic recitation (*tilāwah*). In this context, Jassin's poetry exemplifies what Gadamer termed the fusion of horizons, representing a convergence of two aesthetic realms where the universal essence of the *Qur'ān* is revitalized within the framework of Indonesian culture (H. G. Gadamer et al., 2016).

Historically, Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* can be interpreted as an element of the larger Islamic cultural renaissance in Southeast Asia. During the 1970s, Indonesian intellectuals participated in discussions regarding the role of Islam in contemporary society. The rise of Islamic literature (*sastra Islami*) aimed to express a moral perspective aligned with artistic modernism. Jassin's work occupies a pivotal position within these discourses, presenting a synthesis that harmonizes artistic autonomy with religious devotion (Abdul Hakim, 2023). His assertion that the *Qur'ān* could be appreciated aesthetically without compromising its sanctity foreshadowed subsequent discourse on the diversity of Islamic expression. Jassin's poetic experiment implicitly contested the dichotomy between the sacred and the secular, positing that beauty constitutes a form of worship (Azhari et al., 2022). The stylistic elements of *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* further demonstrate Jassin's involvement with Qur'anic aesthetics. The way he uses assonance and rhythm is like the music that comes from Arabic recitation. His imagery frequently derives from Qur'anic symbolism, with light (*nūr*), water (*mā`*),

and wind (*rīḥ*) serving as recurring motifs that signify divine mercy and revelation. These components resonate with the Sufi perspective of the natural world as a reflection of divine presence. Jassin's description of the sea as "the reflection of God's face" is in line with the Sufi idea that everything in the world is a sign that points to the infinite. The aesthetic of transparency and reflection that pervades his poetry reflects the Sufi conception of beauty as *jamāl al-ḥaqq*, the beauty of the Real.

At a more profound level, Jassin's project unveils the potential for what could be described as a translanguing revelation. He shows that divine beauty can be expressed in different languages without losing its meaning by turning the *Qur'ān* into poetic Indonesian. This understanding is in line with the Qur'anic idea that revelation speaks in the language of its audience (*bi lisāni qawmih*, *Qur'ān* 14:4). By turning the *Qur'ān* into Indonesian verse, Jassin puts this idea into action in a modern way. His work asserts that the experience of revelation transcends linguistic constraints, being defined instead by the spirit that invigorates it. The Indonesian language transforms into a new conduit for the eternal cadence of divine discourse.

Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* is a mix of different styles: the classical Qur'anic style of *balāghah*, the mystical style of Sufism, and the modernist search for cultural identity in Indonesia (Saleh, 2020). It reinterprets the Qur'an's aesthetic universality through the lens of Nusantara culture, where sound, image, and rhythm coalesce as manifestations of faith (Aflisia et al., 2022). The work illustrates the concept that translation may serve as an act of spiritual creation rather than mere linguistic substitution. In this way, Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* is not only a part of Indonesian literature, but also a part of the larger world of Islamic art, which turns revelation into beauty.

The debates over Jassin's work are important, but they can't take away from how it changed Islamic aesthetics. Jassin pushed the limits of both literature and devotion by daring to reinterpret the *Qur'ān* through poetry. His work makes the point that beauty is not just an extra part of faith; it is faith itself. Jassin's verses bring back the words of the Prophet, "*Allāhu jamīl wa yuḥibbu al-jamāl*," which mean "God is beautiful and loves beauty." They invite readers to meet the divine through the music of their own language. In this way, *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* is not a translation but a continuation of revelation. It lets the aesthetic spirit of the *Qur'ān* breathe new life into Indonesia's cultural and linguistic world.

### **Intertextual Resonances: Between Sufi Poetics and Jassin's Qur'anic Verses**

Intertextuality is a useful way to think about the aesthetic and spiritual connection between Arabic Sufi poetry and H. B. Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi*. Kristeva (1980) posits that each text is situated within a framework of preceding discourses, assimilating and recontextualizing earlier voices (Barsht, 2021). Jassin's poetic interaction with the *Qur'ān* illustrates this phenomenon. His verses do not copy the *Qur'ān* or Sufi poets; instead, they use the same spiritual language in a new way that is both linguistically and culturally different. This rearticulation transforms Jassin's work into a locus of convergence between Arabic mystical poetics and Indonesian modern aesthetics in their collective quest for divine beauty.

Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* exhibits intertextuality on various levels. The first is linguistic resonance, which means that some Qur'anic and Sufi phrases sound like Indonesian poetry (Iqbal et al., 2023). For example, Jassin's repeated use of the word "light" (*cahaya*) is like the Qur'anic and Sufi symbol of *nūr*. In the *Qur'ān*, light represents divine guidance and presence, as exemplified in *Allāhu nūru al-samāwāti wa al-arḍ* (*Qur'ān* 24:35). Ibn al-Fāriḍ expands this metaphor into an experience of union, wherein the light of the Beloved engulfs the lover's essence. The mystical imagery is like Jassin's poetic line, "Light descends into the heart and illuminates the dark within man." The Indonesian wording has a different rhythm and tone, but the symbolic structure stays true

to the Sufi idea of illumination as both revelation and change. This intertextual echo is not a mechanical copy, but what Barthes (1977) called a "rewriting of reading," a creative continuation of what has already been written (Jadou & Al Ghabra, 2021).

There is a second level of intertextual resonance in Jassin's use of rhythmic repetition. The Qur'an's aesthetic appeal is primarily derived from its repetitive musical structures that inspire remembrance and reflection. Sufi poetry adopted this rhythm to induce spiritual states, transforming language into an instrument of dhikr (Inati & Omran, 1994). In Indonesian, Jassin's verses do the same rhythmic thing. He often uses parallel clauses, like in "He creates the day, He creates the night, He creates the heart that remembers," which sounds like the way the *Qur'ān* repeats itself. The repetition is not just for style; it is a meditative invocation that fits with the rhythm of revelation. In this manner, Jassin's poetic language engages in the same performative tradition that invigorates Sufi verse, wherein the recitation of beauty transforms into an act of worship (Deguenati, 2022).

Changing the meaning of a metaphor is the third intertextual dimension. Classical Sufi poets often utilized sensual imagery such as wine, love, and the beloved to convey spiritual intoxication and unity with the divine. Ibn al-Fāriḍ's Khamriyyah employs the metaphor of wine to represent divine knowledge, a motif that resonates with the Qur'anic imagery of the cup of paradise (*ka 'san kāna mizājūhā kāfūrā*, *Qur'ān* 76:5). Jassin reinterprets this motif in his Indonesian poetic idiom, substituting the imagery of wine with that of fragrance and light. In one of his translations, he writes, "The scent of the Divine fills the soul; the heart is drunk with mercy." This change shows both cultural adaptation and spiritual continuity. Indonesian Muslims may not like the symbolism of wine, but the basic Sufi meaning of being close to God in an ecstatic way is still there. Jassin's poetry exemplifies the principle of *ta'wīl*, which signifies a spiritual interpretation that transcends literal expression through metaphorical transformation.

The connection between Jassin and Sufi poetry is also shown by the fact that they both see language as a way for the divine to be present. For both, writing or reciting poetry is a way to experience revelation. Al-Junayd characterized this phenomenon as *sukr*, or spiritual intoxication, wherein the self-disintegrates, leaving only divine discourse (Karacan, 2023). Jassin's contemplation of his creative process reveals a comparable insight: he perceived poetic inspiration as something that "descends from above," resonating with the Qur'anic imagery of revelation (*tanzīl*). The intertextual dialogue here functions not only at the lexical level but also within the ontology of artistic creation. Jassin's poetic voice resonates as an ongoing *tajallī*, the self-revelation of beauty that transcends languages and cultures (M. A. Sells, 1996).

Jassin's work exemplifies what Ricoeur (1976) termed "appropriation," the process through which the reader or interpreter internalizes the meaning of a text (Caputo, 2023). His poetic reworking of the *Qur'ān* and its Sufi echoes is an appropriation that brings together people from different times and places (Warits et al., 2023). Ibn al-Fāriḍ and al-Junayd wrote in the language and spiritual world of classical Islam. Jassin, on the other hand, re-voices their ideas in the modern Indonesian context. The relationship between texts is both diachronic and dialogical: Jassin listens to the Sufi voices of the past and responds to them through his own art form (Mugabe et al., 2021). Gadamer's (1975) idea of understanding as the fusion of horizons fits with this process. In this view, meaning comes from the interaction between the text and the interpreter. In Jassin's poetry, the horizon of Qur'anic revelation and the horizon of Indonesian sensibility come together to create a new expression of the same spiritual truth.

A notable instance of intertextual fusion is evident in Jassin's poetic interpretation of *sūrah al-Raḥmān*. In Jassin's Indonesian version, the repeated phrase *fa-bi ayyi ālā'i rabbikumā tukadḍibān* becomes a call to thankfulness and wonder (2023, جاسم). The rhythm of the repetition and the meaning of divine mercy (*raḥmah*) together make me think of the Sufi state of *shukr*, which

is being thankful for God's generosity. The verse's musicality makes reading it feel like a meditation. Ibn al-Fāriḍ's poetry has a similar effect because it has a refrain-like structure that makes the name of love sound like a memory of God. The way these works relate to each other shows how rhythm and repetition can carry spiritual meaning across languages (Altabaa & Hamawiya, 2019).

Jassin's adaptation of Sufi poetics illustrates a nuanced interplay between universality and specificity. He uses universal symbols of love and light, but he puts them in the context of Indonesian images from nature. He often uses the sea, the forest, and the mountain as metaphors for God's greatness in his poems. These components not only situate the Sufi aesthetic within the archipelago's geography but also transmute nature into a dynamic commentary on revelation (Arberry, 2013). The *Qur'ān* consistently encourages contemplation of creation as a manifestation of God (*inna fī khalqī al-samāwāti wa al-arḍ wa ikhtilāf al-layli wa al-nahār la-āyāt li-ulī al-albāb*, *Qur'ān* 3:190). Jassin adds to this invitation by using the same way of looking at signs to explain the Indonesian landscape. The intertextual continuity between Sufi cosmology and Jassin's environmental imagery illustrates the versatility of Qur'anic aesthetics across various cultural contexts.

Another part of intertextual resonance has to do with the moral and emotional tone of the poems. Both Sufi and Jassin's poetry is marked by humility and desire. The Sufi poet admits that he is powerless in front of God's greatness, and Jassin echoes this by repeatedly admitting that humans are weak. Al-Junayd's saying that "the path to God is the path of weakness" is like lines like "The heart trembles before the light of His mercy." In both cases, giving up spiritually leads to aesthetic beauty. The intertextual relationship in this case is not about borrowing text, but about both texts pointing to the divine. This orientation turns the poem into a prayer, bringing together words, sounds, and silence in one act of worship.

From a broader literary standpoint, the intertextuality between Sufi poetics and Jassin's Qur'anic verses interrogates the limits of translation and authorship. If, as Barthes (1977) contends, the text constitutes a fabric of quotations from myriad sources, then Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* exemplifies a sacred manifestation of this intertextuality (Samoyault & Manghani, 2020). His work recognizes that it is based on earlier voices like the *Qur'ān*, Sufi poets, and the Indonesian oral tradition, but it makes them into something new. In Sufi terms, the poet is a *mutarjim al-hāl*, or "interpreter of states," who translates spiritual experiences instead of just words (Johnson-Davies & Ghazoul, 1983). By translating, Jassin takes part in the same creative process that has kept Islamic art alive for centuries: remembering beauty to bring it back to life.

Intertextual connections between Arabic Sufi poetry and Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* show a flow of spiritual expression that goes beyond language and time. Jassin reinterprets the Sufi aesthetic of divine love within the framework of Indonesian modernism by using symbols, rhythm, and metaphors. His work illustrates that intertextuality, when directed by spiritual intention, transforms into a form of *dhikr*, a remembrance that unites texts, cultures, and hearts within the enduring tradition of Qur'anic beauty. The next part will talk about how this hermeneutic change becomes a spiritual rearticulation of revelation itself, where poetry becomes the place where God shows up in human language.

### **Hermeneutic Transformation and Spiritual Rearticulation**

The interaction between revelation and poetry in H. B. Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* signifies both an artistic adaptation and a hermeneutic transformation. Translating the *Qur'ān* into poetic language constitutes an interpretive act that transcends the distinction between exegesis and creation. According to Gadamer (1975), hermeneutics is not the reconstruction of an original meaning; rather, it is the fusion of horizons wherein the text articulates anew within the interpreter's context (Damanik, 2023). Jassin's poetic interpretation of the *Qur'ān* exemplifies this principle. His

work does not aim to duplicate the Arabic text but to rejuvenate its spiritual essence within the Indonesian linguistic and cultural context. This happens through a process that can be called spiritual rearticulation, which is a way of understanding that turns revelation into an aesthetic experience. This change is since the *Qur'ān* is both a divine text and a human language. In Islamic tradition, the *Qur'ān* is regarded as *kalām Allāh*, the Word of God, which permeates human expression while retaining its divine essence. The aesthetic challenge of engaging this Word consists in maintaining its transcendence while making it comprehensible. Jassin's poetry addresses this challenge by converting the process of interpretation into a mode of devotion (Aspahani, 2023). His poetic language becomes an act of *ta'wīl*, which in its original sense means "to go back to the source." Through poetic *ta'wīl*, Jassin brings the text of revelation back to the beat of the human heart. This is in line with the Sufi idea that understanding is not the same as intellectual analysis, but rather as unveiling (*kashf*), which is a way of knowing that comes from inner light rather than outside logic (Al-Khazaali et al., 2021).

Ricoeur's (1976) concept of the "surplus of meaning" serves as a theoretical framework for comprehending this hermeneutic movement. Ricoeur posits that a text, upon its composition, transcends the author's intent and becomes susceptible to boundless reinterpretations. The *Qur'ān*, as a sacred text, has an endless amount of meaning that calls for constant rearticulation (Abd Rahman et al., 2022). Each act of poetic reinterpretation thus constitutes participation in the continuous revelation of beauty. Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* is a good example of this. His poems are not translations; they are echoes of revelation that fit into the Indonesian cultural soundscape in new ways. In this way, Jassin acts as a bridge between the divine Word and the modern reader, giving the *Qur'ān* a voice that speaks to modern sensibilities while keeping its sacred meaning.

From a hermeneutic standpoint, Jassin's conversion of the *Qur'ān* into poetry exemplifies what Gadamer termed the "event of understanding." This event transpires when the interpreter and the text engage in a dialogical relationship, resulting in mutual transformation. For Jassin, writing poetry is also an act of listening. He hears the voice of the *Qur'ān* and lets it change the way his own language sounds and looks. As a result, the poetry is not the result of subjective imagination, but of a dialogical process in which divine meaning becomes clear in a new language. This process is like the Sufi practice of *samā'*, which is a spiritual audition that lets the devotee hear the divine. Jassin's poetry transmutes this mystical listening into literary expression, allowing the reader to engage in a contemplative experience of hearing the *Qur'ān* through the medium of art (Keshavmurthy, 2017). Jassin's work also engages the theological discourse of *i'jāz al-Qur'ān*, the inimitability of the

*Qur'ān*, which is evident in the hermeneutic transformation. Classical scholars, including *al-Jurjānī*, contended that the beauty of the *Qur'ān* resides in its distinctive arrangement of words and meanings, which is unparalleled by any human composition. Jassin does not contest this principle but rather broadens its scope. He shows that the miracle of the *Qur'ān* is not only in its Arabic form, but also in its ability to inspire endless expressions of beauty by putting the spirit of *i'jāz* into a new linguistic context. His poetic interpretation does not seek to compete with the *Qur'ān* but to testify to its transformative efficacy. By doing this, he places the aesthetic miracle in the long history of how Muslims have received and understood revelation.

The Sufi notion of *tajallī* elucidates Jassin's hermeneutic approach. *Tajallī* denotes the perpetual self-revelation of God via creation and perception (Irawan et al., 2021). For the mystic, each encounter with beauty represents a moment of divine revelation. When Jassin turns the *Qur'ān* into poetry, he is taking part in this process of divine revelation. Writing becomes a place of *tajallī*, where the hidden beauty of the Word shows itself in new language (Cúrto, 2020). This interpretation of artistic creation as manifestation corresponds with Ibn al-'Arabī's metaphysical axiom that "the forms are many, but the meaning is one." Jassin's poetry gives this unity shape by letting the eternal

meaning of revelation take on an Indonesian linguistic and cultural form without breaking it up. In this way, his work shows how Islamic aesthetics can be a language of God's presence that goes beyond time and language.

Another aspect of Jassin's hermeneutic transformation pertains to the internalization of the Qur'anic message. In his poetry, revelation is depicted not as an external mandate but as an internal awakening. Verses that in the Arabic text speak to the collective conscience of the believers are reinterpreted as private conversations between the self and the divine. This inward movement is like the Sufi way of turning *sam'* (hearing) into *fahm* (understanding) by cleaning the heart. Jassin's poetic rearticulation thus serves as a reflection of the Sufi journey, transitioning from the external structure of language to the internal essence of existence. The reader who interacts with his poems is encouraged to experience a comparable transformation, engaging not solely with the intellect but also with the heart. The aesthetic experience transforms into an act of *dhikr*, a remembrance that integrates perception, emotion, and cognition in the consciousness of God (Qur'an & Abdel Haleem, 2004).

The language of Jassin's poetry also shows a change from straightforward writing to writing that has deeper meaning. His poems use images that suggest rather than define, which is different from the discursive style of commentary or translation. The Qur'anic symbols of light, water, and journey are reinterpreted in manners that provoke reflection rather than elucidation. This symbolic approach is like the hermeneutics of suggestion in Sufi poetry, where meaning comes through allusion and rhythm instead of argument. Ibn al-Fāriḍ showed in his poetry that the beauty of the poem comes from its ability to hide the divine in the sensory. Jassin's poetry does something similar: it turns the visible word into a doorway to the invisible. This method turns language into a holy medium through which God speaks in silence.

From the standpoint of comparative aesthetics, Jassin's hermeneutic transformation reconciles the rational with the mystical, and the analytical with the intuitive. His interaction with the *Qur'ān* is simultaneously intellectual and emotional. It encompasses what Ricoeur (1976) referred to as the "hermeneutics of faith," a method of interpretation that relies on the text to disclose truth through beauty. This is different from the "hermeneutics of suspicion," which tries to make things less mysterious (Al Wasim, 2020). Jassin's method confirms that comprehending the *Qur'ān* necessitates receptiveness to its aesthetic and spiritual aspects. In this way, the poem becomes a place of hospitality where God's meaning lives in human expression. The Indonesian reader, engaging with the *Qur'ān* in poetic form, perceives revelation not as abstract doctrine but as immediate presence (Whitehouse, 2022).

The spiritual rearticulation in Jassin's poetry ultimately indicates the continuity between revelation and human creativity. He turns the Qur'ān into poetry, which supports the Islamic idea that art, when done with honesty, is a part of God's creation. The *Qur'ān* says *wa nafakhtu fīhi min rūḥī* ("I breathed into him of My spirit," *Qur'ān* 15:29). This implies that the divine act of breathing life is what gives people the ability to create. Jassin's work is like a reenactment of this breath, turning the divine spirit into the rhythms of human language. The poet becomes a bearer of the *nafas al-Raḥmān*, the Breath of the Merciful, through which the world itself comes into being. This theological perspective positions *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* not solely as literature but as an extension of the creative essence of revelation in the contemporary world.

Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* is an example of a hermeneutic change that brings together interpretation and inspiration, intellect and intuition, word and spirit. His work changes the Qur'an's artistic form into a real conversation between divine revelation and human imagination. In this process of spiritual rearticulation, Jassin shows that the essence of the *Qur'ān* cannot be limited to language alone; it is always showing itself in new ways of being beautiful. The following section

will explore how this aesthetic and spiritual continuity engenders a more expansive notion of transnational Islamic aesthetics, connecting Arabic and Indonesian cultural expressions through a unified perspective of divine artistry.

### **Toward a Transnational Islamic Aesthetics**

The aesthetic interplay between Arabic Sufi literature and H. B. Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* culminates in a vision of transnational Islamic aesthetics. This idea is about how the beauty of the *Qur'ān* can cross language and cultural barriers, showing that divine art is universal. The *Qur'ān*, as *kalām Allāh*, has a rhythm that goes beyond language. Each culture that gets it expresses its beauty in its own way through art. In Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi*, the Qur'anic spirit acquires a novel resonance in the Indonesian language, illustrating that the aesthetic miracle of revelation persists in various tongues and imaginations.

Islamic aesthetics is transnational because the *Qur'ān* calls itself "guidance for all humanity" (*hudā li al-nās*, *Qur'ān* 2:185). Arabic Sufi poets like Ibn al-Fāriḍ and al-Junayd showed that this universality works through the experience of beauty. Their poetry demonstrates that divine love and enlightenment transcend specific languages or eras, instead expressing themselves through the rhythm of the human heart. Jassin's adaptation keeps this process of spreading going. His poetic translation not only translates the words of the *Qur'ān* but also its spiritual rhythm, so that Indonesian readers can experience revelation as both familiar and beyond (Jalees & AL-Qudah, 2022). The result is an aesthetic dialogue that turns the *Qur'ān* from a historical text into a part of Indonesia's cultural and emotional life.

From a hermeneutic perspective, this transnational movement exemplifies what Gadamer (1975) referred to as the "continuity of understanding." Every time you interpret something, it brings the truth of the text back to life in a new way. Jassin's poetry is a modern expression of Qur'anic aesthetics that fits into this continuum. By combining Sufi symbols with Indonesian images, he shows that revelation doesn't lose its truth when it's shown in new ways. Instead, it gains new life. The sea, the wind, and the mountain in his poems are like the Qur'anic symbols of creation, connecting the natural world to a higher meaning. Jassin creates a unique Indonesian form of Islamic spirituality through this synthesis, but he doesn't cut off its ties to the Arabic source (Zuhur, 2003).

Transnational Islamic aesthetics contests the idea that beauty in Islam is confined to a singular culture. Instead, it suggests a dynamic model in which divine revelation constantly creates new artistic languages. This model says that translation can become a form of *tajallī*, or a new expression of the divine Word, when it is done with spiritual awareness. Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* illustrates this process, demonstrating that the Qur'an's aesthetic potency can invigorate the imaginations of diverse cultures while maintaining its sacred essence. His work shows that Islam is universal not only because of its beliefs, but also because beauty can grow and change in different cultures (Jassin, 1978).

Jassin's poetry has a transnational aesthetic dimension that places Indonesian literature within the larger context of Islamic art. It shows that the conversation between Arabic Sufi poetry and Indonesian modernism is not about copying each other, but about using a common spiritual language. By taking part in this, the beauty of the *Qur'ān* becomes a bridge between cultures, proving that divine revelation speaks through any language that wants to praise its Source.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study has explored the aesthetic interplay between Arabic Sufi poetics and H. B. Jassin's poetic interpretation of the *Qur'ān*, illustrating that beauty serves as the profoundest connection between revelation and art. Through intertextual and hermeneutic analysis, it has demonstrated that

Jassin's *Al-Qur'ān Berwajah Puisi* not only translates the *Qur'ān* into Indonesian but also revitalizes its spiritual resonance within a novel linguistic and cultural context. His poems take the Qur'anic aesthetic ideas of *balāghah*, *i'jāz*, and *tajallī* and turn them into the rhythm and images of Indonesian verse.

Jassin's poems show that Arabic mystical expression and modern Indonesian spirituality are not separate but rather connected by the works of Sufi masters like Ibn al-Fāriḍ and al-Junayd al-*Baghdādī*. The intertextual echoes found in this study show that the *Qur'ān* spiritual and aesthetic aspects go beyond language. They appear wherever the human mind tries to reflect divine beauty. Using Gadamer and Ricoeur's hermeneutics to look at this change shows that revelation is still a living event that speaks through creative re-articulation.

The study conceptually enhances the comprehension of a transnational Islamic aesthetics wherein the beauty of the *Qur'ān* permeates various cultural forms. Methodologically, it amalgamates intertextual and hermeneutic analyses with Sufi aesthetics to elucidate how artistic creation can function as a medium for spiritual interpretation. In a broader sense, it places Indonesian literature in the larger context of Islamic art around the world. In short, Jassin's poetic *Qur'ān* says that the Word of God is still revealing itself through the beauty of human language, inviting people from all cultures to join in the eternal conversation between divine revelation and artistic imagination.

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