

Technics Of Soul Purifying As Religious Experiences And Practices Of Cianjur Thariqat Al-Tijaniyah (CTAT) Teaching Followers

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Abstract

Along with the rapid changes of Indonesian socio-culture –due to high pressures of economic demand, life competition, and life style– a group of Muslims who follows the teaching of Cianjur Thariqat Al-Tijaniyah (CTAT) tries to lead a pure, peaceful life. The paper aims to study comprehensively the technics of soul purification as religious practice of Cianjur Thariqat Al-Tijaniyah (CTAT) followers. The method used in this study is qualitative method by means of interviews and field observation. The theory used in the study is based on Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tijani's concept of Thareqat. The results indicate that the followers of CTAT practice three technics in purifying their souls namely, "Syar'i" (pious) life, "Dhikr" (divinity recital), and "Sholawat" (celebrating praises to Prophet Muhammad, Saw). The technics may serve as an alternative way to reduce anxiety resulted from Covid 19 pandemic as it is considerably seen as a spiritual proficiency..

Keywords: Soul purifying, Thariqa, Al-Tijaniyah

Abstrak

Seiring dengan pesatnya perubahan sosial budaya Indonesia – akibat tingginya tekanan tuntutan ekonomi, persaingan hidup, dan gaya hidup – sekelompok umat Islam yang mengikuti ajaran Cianjur Thariqat Al-Tijaniyah (CTAT) mencoba untuk memimpin masyarakat menuju kehidupan yang murni serta damai. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji secara komprehensif teknik penyucian jiwa sebagai praktik keagamaan umat Cianjur Thariqat Al-Tijaniyah (CTAT). Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif dengan cara wawancara dan observasi lapangan. Teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini didasarkan pada konsep Thareqat Syekh Ahmad Al-Tijani. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa para pengikut CTAT mempraktikkan tiga teknik dalam mensucikan jiwanya yaitu, "Syar'i" (kesalehan), "Dzikir", dan "Sholawat" (merayakan pujian kepada Nabi Muhammad, Saw). Teknik-teknik tersebut dapat menjadi salah satu cara alternatif untuk mengurangi kecemasan akibat pandemi Covid 19 karena dianggap sebagai kemampuan spiritual..

Kata kunci: Penyucian jiwa, Thariqah, Al-Tijaniyah

INTRODUCTION

In 2019, a case of mental health problems was issued by WHO. The director of Mental Health and Drugs Abuse Department stated that mental disorder had resisted sustainable development as anxiety disturbance caused global economic lost for US\$ 1 trillion per year, and inner damages had also been the main cause of 800,000 youths' death of suicide (Vigo, Kestel, Pendakur, Thornicroft, & Atun, 2019).

Social anxiety as a serious mental problem had increasingly grown among Indonesian people in 2020 due to the pandemic of Covid 19 (RR Rosita Cindarkasih, 2021: 90). Social activities and movement were limited and minimized as the government promoted the health protocol policies in March 2020 which contained at least four instructions: wearing masks outside the house, thoroughly and frequently washing hands, staying away from crowds, and not going out of home when unnecessary. The social

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mobility and activity limitation (PPKM) –ranged from level 1 up to 4– that was enforced to anticipate the pandemic that had been mounting piles of depression and confusion among society (Nurjanah, Rahman, & Halim, 2021).

In 2016, before the pandemic struck the whole world, the Institution of Community Mental Health reported that around 21% or 540 thousand out of 2.7 million residents of Cianjur had suffered from depression and 98 thousand of those were in acute condition (Jati, Luhpuri, & Supiadi, 2019) The number of mental disorder contaminated person in Cianjur significantly increased shortly after the pandemic began to hit the district. Nevertheless, in the middle of the uncertain and chaos mental state triggered by the Pandemic, some people who belonged to Cianjur Thariqat Al-Tijaniyah (CTAT) Teaching implemented several efforts to have peaceful and calm lives. The efforts were intended to understand the essence of truth by means of soul purification as religious practice by which they tried to be better people. The community members came from different backgrounds with one similar goal, namely “achieving peaceful life”, as a remedial treatment to mental destruction, which might occur due to instable soul state. They admitted to feel more comfortably calm and peaceful in going through their lives by perpetuating the spiritual practices, either individually or mutually.

The phenomenon of CTAT is interesting to study since it deals with objects from different socio-cultural backgrounds. The study covers religious practices and experiences as the implementation of ideas and principles of multicity. It is worthwhile to conduct considering the facts that plenty of people felt disoriented and bewildered by rapid changes due to development of media and technology, by swift alteration from agricultural to industrial age, by tight competition of life style trends, and by economic decadence owing to COVID 19 attacks. Another consideration is that the community of CTAT is recognized by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) via central Thariqat organization called JATMAN which stands for Jam’iyah Al-Thariqah Al-Mutabarah Al-Nahdliyah (bakar Atjeh, 1996), where in NU, *Thariqatism* is the basic foundation of this huge organization in Indonesia nowadays.

The main question of this study is: “What technics does CTAT implement to purify the soul as they become the religious practices and experiences?”

In response to the study question the writer refers to religious experience theory by Joachim Wach as a basic source. He states that the religious practices related closely to sacred and private emotion of an individual that could not be seen and comprehended by other individuals. There are three kinds of religious experiences according to Wach that individuals could express namely, religious experience in thoughts, religious experience in action, and religious experience in fellowship (Wach, 1958).

The phenomenon of CTAT has a close relationship with religious experience of an individual follower and those of community as a whole. The existence of CTAT may as well be seen through psychological side of religious function wherein the followers are trained and forged to have a strong self-defense against the changes of socio-culture states. In order to analyze the impacts of this soul purification practice the writer uses the theory of religion’s psychological function expressed by Koeng who suggested that a religion was functioned as a potent way to defend one against unnecessary changes of living and to conduct required steps in dealing with possible changes in life (Harold G Koenig MD, 2021: 289).

Another supporting theory used in analyzing the acts of purifying soul is the guidelines of alternative activities in forming collective resilience as a part of service protocol of mental health support during Covid 19 pandemic issued by the Indonesian Ministry of Health in 2020 wherein special alternative activities such as spiritual practices and skills are to carry out by the health workers to shape self-resilience (Ministry of Health: 2020: 11). Thus, the technics of soul purification done by the followers of CTAT could be considered as a spiritual skill in anticipating the pandemic.

In refers to the study, Syeikh Ahmad Tijani –the founder of Thariqat Al-Tijaniyah –suggests that there have been at least three major steps of soul purification, namely living syar’ily (piously), spelling dhikr (divinity recital), and celebrating sholawat (praise to Prophet Muhammad Saw.) The concept of soul purification technics to discuss in this study could be drawn in the diagram as follows:

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this study is qualitative method by means of interviews and field observation. The theory used in the study is based on Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tijani’s concept of Thareqat. The results indicate that the followers of CTAT practice three technics in purifying their souls namely, “Syar’i” (pious) life, “Dhikr” (divinity recital), and “Sholawat” (celebrating praises to Prophet Muhammad, Saw). The technics may serve as an alternative way to reduce anxiety resulted from Covid 19 pandemic as it is considerably seen as a spiritual proficiency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The term “Thariqat”, in general, has two definitions: a kind of spiritual method and a socio-religious institution. The first means a spiritual guidance that a religious master give to his students in order to get closer to God, while the latter means a community of brotherhood among *sufis* (pious persons) assembled in a spiritual organization such as *zawiyah*, *ribat*, or *khalaqah*/Islamic boarding school (Moch Rosyid : 80). According to Smith analysis, Thariqat as a socio-religious institution is equally parallel to Christian Church or Catholics Order (Halim, 2020: 47). A church could not only be seen as a place to worship, but it could also be well-recognized as a community. Similarly, Thariqat is frequently seen as an institution of brotherhood among *sufis* wherein every single member serves as a brother or sister to other members in a very close relationship so that a big family is formed automatically (van Bruinessen, 2013).

The name Thariqat Tijaniyah is taken from and addressed to the founder’s name: Syeikh Ahmad Tijani (1150H – 1230 Hijriya/1737 – 1815 A.D). Such kind of naming process normally takes place in Thariqat tradition (Atjeh, 1966: 303). The complete name of Thariqat founder is Abu Abbas Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Mukhtar bin Salim At-Tijani, born in Ain Madi, Southern Algeria and passed away in the city of Fez, Maroko (Editor’s Council: 102). As he came from Tijaniyah tribe in Algeria, the tribal names were customarily associated with the peoples’ names (Ikhyani Badrussaman: 3).

Abu Abbas Ahmad had a lineage of Rasulullah Muhammad Saw. The validity based on several investigation results and confessions of Tijaniyah’s member. As for Arabian whose lineage is patriarchal, the descendant line is taken from father’s line from top to bottom although it extends to the daughter of Prophet Muhammad. The lineage could be taken from his father named Ahmad bin Muhammad Salim bin Ahmad Al-Alwani bin Ahmad bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Al-Abbas bin Al-Jabbar bin Idris bin Ishaq bin Ali Zainal Abidin bin Ahmad bin Muhammad Al-Nasir Zakiyah bin Abdullah bin Hasan Al-Mutsanna bin Al-Sibthi bin Ali bin Abi Thalib and Sayidah Fatimah Azzahra binti Rasulullah Muhammad Saw. (Choiriyah, 2013).

When grouped based on the original place of appearance, Thariqat AtTijaniyah order was classified into coastal group of northern Africa (Moch. Rosyid: 81-82). Those that belong to this area are Syadzilyah, Tijaniyah, Tif’iyah, Ahmadiyah, Wafa’iyah, Zarruqiyah, Jazuliyah, Bakriyah, Khalwatiyah, Khawariyah, and Sanusiyah.

Thariqat Tijaniyah entered Indonesia in three ways, through trades, educations, and marriages (Anwar, 2007). Tijaniyah followers came to Indonesian Archipelago to trade, besides, they slowly spread the teaching of Thariqat as well. Indonesian citizens who went to study in Middle East were introduced with Thariqat Teaching, as they returned to Indonesia they practiced and spread the teaching of Tijaniyah to other Muslims in the surroundings. The other Tijaniyah followers who came to stay in Indonesia were engaged in several marriages with local citizens, and by means of family ties, the descendants preserved the teaching and proliferated it to the local hosts.

In Indonesia, especially in West Java, the well-known spreader of Tijaniyah Thariqat Teaching was a scholar called Ali bin Abdillah Attoyib Al-Azhari after 1920. He was a Medina mufti from Imam Syafi'i sect who had a legal authority to spread the teaching of Thariqat (Bruinessen, 1995). When he visited Cianjur, he was interviewed by GF. Pijper on Mount Gede in 1928, then his existence and activities was noticed by the Dutch Colony who was worried that he would recruit a lot of Muslims to fight against them (Pijper, 1980).

Ali bin Abdillah then appointed several official assistants (*Muqaddam*) in West Java, they were: Sheikh Muhammad bin Ali Abdallah (Bogor area): K.H. Asy'ari Bunyamin and K.H. Badruzaman (Garut): K.H. Usman Damiri (Cimahi): and K.H. Abas, K.H. Annas (Buntet) and K.H. Akyas (Cirebon) with the main task is to introduce Thariqat teaching (Asep Akhmat Hidayat, 2016: 36). These seven *muqaddams*, furthermore, had important roles in deliering Thariqat teachings to the whole areas of West Java, including Cianjur.

Previously, the existence of this teaching in Indonesia had been sentenced invalid (*ghoir Almutabarrah*) by some other groups of Thariqat due to the belief of its followers that Sheikh Ali bin Abdillah received the teaching directly and consciously from Allah SWT. then, after several debates among Thariqat scholars, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) as the main organization of thariqat teachings in Indonesia, through the sixth congress held in Cirebon, declared that the Tijaniyah led by Sheikh Ahmad Tijani was legally valid (Moh. Rosyid, 2018: 84).

Controversy over the validity of Tijaniyah order re-aroused in the consensus held at Cirebon Islamic Boarding School in 1987 wherein three sides of participants discussed fiercely on the case. The three sides served as the opponent, the researcher, and the Tijaniyah congregation. Each group represented one expert as spokesman: K.H. Husein Muhammad represented the opponent: Matin Van Bruinesen was on behalf of the researcher: and K.H. Badru was on the Tijaniyah side (Moeslim Abdurrahman, 1988: 80). There at the 27th NU congress, the debate over validity of Tijaniyah Order aroused, though some people assumed that this confrontation took place due to the political competition among *Kyais* in gaining as many followers as possible (Bruinessen, 1995). At the end of discussion, however, Thariqat Al-Tijaniyah was finally declared as a legal order by JATMAN (Jam'iyah Al-Tariqah Al-Mutabarrah Al-Nahdiyyah).

Cianjur was one of the areas in West Java where Tijaniyah Order spread. According to Ramdhan, one of Tijaniyah followers, the term of spreading area of Tijaniyah was called *zawiyah* (Interview Result, 2018). The term *zawiyah* is parallel to parish in Catholicism. One famous figure of CTAT follower was K.H. Nuh bin Idris who was well known either as a descendant of Nobles or *ulamas* (Moslem scholars). Besides, he was a direct student of Sheikh Ali bin Abdillah Attoyib Al-Azhari (Saef Lukman Interview Document, 2018: 2). He formerly studied at Tasik Malaya Islamic Boarding School led by Mama Ajengan K.H. Suja'i then continued studying in Mecca and Medina to some reputable Islamic scholars. Returning from the two cities he founded Al-Ianah Islamic College in Cianjur and became a member of Constituent Assembly of Indonesia Republic in 1950s.

In 1950s the teaching of Thariqat Tijaniyah was widely embraced in Al-Musyri Islamic Boarding School led by K.H. Ujang-as a muqoddam of CTAT- whose tasks were to lead mutual *dhikr* (remembrances of Allah) and routine Qur'an recital, to guide reading *talqin* (membership pledge) and to teach the Tijaniyah Thariqatism to a new member of CTAT (Department of Religion: 30).

Later on, in 2000 pesantren al-Ukhuwah was chosen to be a spot for CTAT followers to gather, wherein some youths, students, farmers, traders, college students and lecturers embraced the Thariqat teaching. Among members of CTAT They called each other *ikhwan* that refers to brother and *akhwat* that refers to sister, nevertheless, the brotherhood was not due to blood ties but they were bound by the same ideology or concept of Tijaniyah teachings.

In terms of principles and teaching concepts, CTAT belongs to an ordinary Thariqat in which the characteristics are commonly found in the teachings of other Thariqat all over the world, for instance, the leader's authority, leadership hierarchy, spiritual level, pledge of allegiance, principles of discipline and consistency, mutual dhikr, and respects to the person in higher spiritual level ("Adam, 2008: 26). The member of CTAT claim to have authoritarian principles that respect to the sheikh as a heir of the prophets and messengers who customarily possesses magical power (*karomah*) and thus his authority is absolute.

Several requirements and obligations are in demand for those who intend to join the CTAT, one of the first doors to enter before they are admitted as fresh members is bai'at procession, a certain spiritual oath or pledge to spell as a sign of life-time loyalty to Thariqat institution. The steps of bai'at are those amplified by previous sheikhs who had been given authority to do it. Besides, new comers shall possess pious, discipline, honest, and accountable personalities. CTAT followers claim that there is spiritual hierarchy among the followers, ones who has higher level of religious knowledge and piety are notified and classified through certain measurement and evaluation standards, thus, authority to lead the subordinates will be given to them. The hierarchy is strictly obeyed and highly respected by all members of CTAT. They also recognize the principles of disciplines by practicing dhikr that was usually performed at midnight, reciting Quran spells taught by the masters and praying for the spirits of ancestors either by visiting the graveyards or merely by delivering some prayers on the spots where they were.

Syar'iah Life

CTAT members are used to implementing spiritual activities as obliged in Islamic teaching such as compulsory or five times prayers (*shalat fardu*), along with the alternative ones (*shalat sunnat*), Ramadhan fasting, celebrating sholawat and dhikr, Quran recital, *Haj* pilgrimage to Mecca and so forth, as stated by Gelar Ramdhan, one of pesantren Ukhuwah students. "As a Muslim and a member of CTAT, it is compulsory to practice five times shalat, Ramadhan fasting, celebrating sholawat and dhikr, Quran recital, *Haj* pilgrimage as the major obligations (Ramdhan, Interview Result, July 20, 2021). The way of living like that is what so called *Syar'iah life*, the way of both Muslims in general and CTAT members fulfill Allah's Commandment and follow the *sunnah* of Rasulullah SAW.

All those activities based on Islamic laws are considered as *mahdhoh* worships (submitted directly to God). The knowledge of instructions and steps of the worships or the way show to do them correctly could be found in *ilmu fiqh*. In Islamic sight, these kinds of worships serve not only as communication media to Almighty God but also as methods of religious tradition or habit.

CTAT, as stated by K.H Asep, in implementing the teaching of Islamic rituals, takes the ideology of *Ahlissunnah Waljama'ah* (the concepts initiated by Imam Syafi'i) as the main reference and affiliated with Thariqat congregation of Nahdatul Ulama (NU) as supplementary reconciliation. This shows that CTAT is

an assembled theology between Assyar'iah and Maturidiah and thus Ahlissunnah Waljamaah teaching is likely assumed to have such coalition (Nasution, 1986: 9). Furthermore, if the concept of Islamic theology is traditional and liberal –and, at the same time, takes the principles of *Jabariyah*, *Qodariyah*, *Khawarij* and *Mu'tazillah* as well –then the concepts of Ahlissunnah Waljama'ah stands between traditional and liberal, or what so called “Moderate”.

Syar'iah life or tradition, as an effort to keep the soul clean, has become absolute condition to be able to interact with the holy light (*Nur Suci –Muhammad*). It is believed that applying syar'iah life would surely create spiritual communication and connection with 'the holy spirit' (Ramadhan, Interview Result, July 25, 2021). These traditions, was previously performed by the founder of CTAT and inherited from generation to generation and from time to time so that it turned to be a mainstream of spiritual competency of the followers (*Interview Result, K.H Asep June 21, 2021*)

Living *syar'ily* in CTAT tradition serves as signs of gratitude as K.H Saepudin stated:

Under the banner of CTAT, human beings are taught to understand the concepts of gratitude to Allah for the abundance given through some ritual practices and prayers in order that Allah may give His Blessings and Safety upon the Prophet Muhammad SAW as the last messenger. This habit was firstly performed by Sheikh Abu Al-Abbas Ahmad bin Muhammad Al-Tijani as a CTAT founder (*Saepudin, Interview Result, June 21, 2021*)

While committing syar'i life, the CTAT followers, at the same time, are required to avoid of doing bad acts and negative behaviors termed *maksiat*, while effort of minimizing or leaving *maksiat* is called *khalwat*. As Dahlan said: “When one embraces CTAT, he/she should live *syar'ily* and performs *khalwat* or staying away from any mischiefs as far as possible and controlling his/her misleading passions through getting rid of watching, speaking, and listening to bad things (*Dahlan, Interview Result, June 21, 2021*).

The first step of this soul purifying describes the habit of CTAT members in committing Islamic syari'at in discipline manners so that they shall be familiarized with living cleanly, carefully, and peacefully. The result of discussions clearly shows that Thariqat's life deals with performing Islamic teachings both compulsory and alternative but rewarded worships such as *shalat sunnat* including midnight prayers (*qiyamullail*), Monday and Thursday fasting, Qur'an reciting, dhikr and sholawat celebrating, as the ways to *taqarrub* (get closer) to Almighty God

Magical/Divine Spelling (Dhikr)

The second step of soul purification that needs implementing by the CTAT followers is called Dhikr. It is a practice of spelling or celebrating some words or charms (*lafadh*) related to divinity such as *istighfar* (apology to God), *tasbih* (glorifying God), *tahmid* (gratitude to God), and *tahlil* (confessing One-ness of God): and some spells deal with the efforts to grow the feeling of loves and affections to the last Prophet Muhammad SAW (*shalawat*) in order to gain his mediation or help (*syafaat*) in the Here After (*Akhirat*).

“We are accustomed to celebrate dhikr with *istighfar* and reading *shalawat* all the time in CTAT. The three charms have magical energy for us to draw ourselves close to Allah and to protect us from immoral deeds”. (Saepudin, Interview Result, June 21, 2021)

Dhikr and sholawat are believed to enable us to avoid of being forgetful and negligent to Allah and they are straight ways to thank and remember Him. The spells could be read either orally or by heart. The readings are considered to be effective way to present the whole hearts before Allah SWT and to achieve the highest concentration on worshipping Allah or *ma'rifat* (Mulyati, 2011)

Dhikr and sholawat play very crucial roles in the lives of Ahlussunnah Waljamaah and CTAT followers as KH. Ahmad Tijani viewed them as absolute requirements before celebrating prayers because without spelling dhikr to Allah and sholawat to Rasulullah, the prayers would not be delivered to and accepted by Allah but are floating between heaven and earth (Attijani, 1971: 127).

Spelling dhikr continuously and intensively during the days and nights or at certain times and periods is called *wirid* that has two types, namely *wajibah* and *ikhtariyah* wirids. The first is defined as obligatory wirid, so it is a must to do, while the latter defines as unobligatory wirid which serves as additional wirid to increase and enlarge Allah's rewards. *Wajibah* is also wirid that the kinds and times of spells to read are determined or fixed. It has several types, namely *lazimah*, *wazifah*, and *haylallah* (meanings: God's Absoluteness, Mercy, and Oneness/tahlil). *Wajibah* wirid is viewed as absolute requirement for a new follower of CTAT to gain his/her validity of membership, on the contrary, *ikhtariyah* wirid has no stressing and is not an obligatory one. Dahlan also suggested that there were two types of wirid that CTAT followers usually conducted namely *wajibah* and *ikhtariyah* (Dahlan, Interview Result, June 21, 2021). The statement was also confirmed by Mulyati, 2011: 236.

K.H. Saeful Lukman (Interview Result, July 25, 2021), a *muqodam* of CTAT, stated there were some requisites needed fulfilling by the member to ascertain the validity of their wirids of all types, they are:

- uttering *niat* (intention) by heart for wirid:
- being clean from any big or small *hadas*/dirts and defiling filths:
- covering all *aurats* (parts of boy should not be shown to others in opposite genders:
- not speaking or talking about any other thing but the dhikr itself during the wirid

The explanation about requirements above could also be found in Syafarudin, a CTAT researcher, who said that in celebrating wirid validly one should be purified from any dirts, cover all aurats, not talk other but spells, and intend to do the wirid (Syafarudin, 2011: 75).

Seeking for Nur Muhammad's Presence

The third technic of purifying the soul in CTAT is gaining the soul or Nur/light of Prophet Muhammad SAW as the sign of perfection of Thariqat. This could be reached through a special practice called *riyadlah* (spiritual enlightenment) in deep humility so that the soul reaches the possible state of finding the light of Prophet Muhammad SAW. Special sholawat called *Alfatih* and *Jauharatul kamal* are the spells delivered in the process of riyadlah. They are believed to have high magical power that could lead one's spiritual to summit state and meet the Prophet's light, as stated by Ahmad:

The succes in gaining the light of Muhammad is the highest achievement of a Thariqat follower and this might be produced by means of sending sholawat *Alfatih* and *Jauharatul kamal*. The meeting could be impossible when a speller fails to grab the concepts of *ruh Muhammady*, *nafs Muhammady*, and *Aqlu Al-Muhammady*, and opposingly, when the concepts are well-mastered, the quality of one's sholawats will get higher and better so that the existence of Nur Muhammad is strongly possible in *yaqdzah*/actual state, not merely in dreams (Ahmad, Interview Result, July 25, 2021).

In connection with the efforts of meeting Nur Muhammad, Ramdhan stated:

The presence of Nur Muhammad that comes to the reach of ordinary people as Thariqat followers is the noblest position gained which will locate them in purified state of soul. A CTAT member will surely be considered to be successful in purifying his soul if he could meet the spirit of Muhammad

in reality as it was previously undergone by Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tijani. This will surely occur when we routinely celebrate shalawat Alfatih and Jauharatul kamal in deep inspiration of heart (*Ramdhan, Interview Result, July 25, 2021*)

In the views of Thariqat followers, as Ramdhan stated, the meeting with Nur Muhammad was the true signs of noblest achievement which led someone to the highest rank of his Thariqatism. Therefore, the encounter with Nur Muhammad is very crucial to CTAT members to gain because it has been the final goal of their struggles. K.H Asep urged that this could only be obtained if one did the rituals of sholawat regularly and intensively. (*Asep, Interview Result, July 25, 2021*).

Members of CTAT said that the process of encountering with Nur Muhammad occurred in real life, not merely in dreams or imagination, as K.H Lukman explained:

“A person shall be considered successful in entering perfect level of Thariqat if he manages to interact with the light of Prophet Muhammad in real world, not just in dreams or hallucinations as described in the hadith about *ihسان*, and the meeting will not happen to unclean and impure states of human souls. It is very interesting to study closely about the concept of Takziat Annafs which describes the encounter in two forms: meeting with only the *ruh*/spirit of the Prophet and meeting directly with Prophet Muhammad physically as a human being (*Lukman, Interview Result, July 21, 2021*).

The success of encounter with prophet Muhammad is seen as the sign of the success of achieving final goal of Thariqat teaching that is soul purification as KH. Asep confirmed, “As a person has managed to interact with the haqiqat of Prophet Muhammad SAW., either mentally or physically, he is sentenced to reach soul purification. I feel in comfort when celebrating sholawat to Rasulullah and fully confident of getting an occasion to be in touch with the haqiqat of Muhammad (*Asep, Interview Result, July 25, 2021*).

Emotionally, the meeting with Nur Rasulullah gives great impacts on mental state, in other words, it brings about quietness, calmness, comfort, and peace to the heart of human in undergoing the living in rather chaotic condition like the present ages. K.H Saef Lukman said, “As haqiqat Al-Muhammadiyah is the realization of inner state of sayid Muhammad bin Abdullah –a man with highest degree of nobility- the existence of Nur Muhammad has been the most important thing to perceive as a legal license to guide and lead other followers to the same goal, that is, soul purification (*Lukman, Interview Result, June 21, 2021*).

Another impact of the meeting with Rasulullah on daily living of CTAT members is the proficiency to stay away from self-arrogance, as Ramdhan suggested. “After meeting the haqiqat of Rasulullah SAW, we could feel stimulus toward positive self-control which keep our manner from being arrogant” (*Ramdhan, Interview Result, 2018*). Those impacts, known as spiritual guidance, refer to psychological impacts on religious emotion of daily lives of Muslims wherein hopes and motivations enlighten. This phenomenon is in line with Jalaludin’s suggestion that a religion includes motivations, ethics, and hopes within individual’s life (*Jalaludin, 2003: 243*).

The third technic of self-purification consists of religious elements, they are religious experiences, emotions, and thoughts (Mc Guire, Religion, 1981: 11). When a member of CTAT admits that he has been gifted a chance to meet directly Rasulullah in reality, this confession is considered as a religious experience which might be undergone by everyone. When a member confess that he –after encountering with Rasulullah- perceives stimulus toward positive self-control which keeps our manner from being arrogant, it shows that he experiences religious emotion. Then, due to the fact that the experience of meeting Rasulullah undergone by Ahmad Tijaniyah, the founder of Thariqat Teaching, serves as a part of

knowledge, or a concept for his followers, this knowledge is viewed as a religious thought (Wach, 1959: 27-29).

The phenomenon related to CTAT, in the view of religious study, is classified into a Religious Institution, in which a group of people from different backgrounds are bound, working together, getting in touch, socializing, and experiencing similar things to reach the same purpose. Even though there is a hierarchy of leadership and membership in its structural, CTAT eventually takes the form of fellowship (Wach, 1958). The confessions of CTAT followers about feeling calmly, peacefully, and about being able to stay away from arrogance are the answers and results that are expected and experienced.

Activities implemented by CTAT members are suitable with health protocol policy promoted by Indonesia Ministry of Health wherein special alternative activities such as spiritual practices and skills are suggested to carry out by the health workers to shape self-resilience (Ministry of Health: 2020: 11). Self-resilience acts as self-endurance against the problems of living and powerful weapon to keep optimism in handling with high-risk circumstances (Pasudewi, 2012). The practices and experiences held by CTAT members such as living *syar'ily*, delivering *dhikr* and *sholawat*, and encountering with Nur Muhammad, are alternative solutions offered to minimize or even eliminated depressions, anxiety, fear, and other mental disturbances raised by climate alteration, Covid 19 pandemic, and other social changes.

CONCLUSION

From the discussions above we could see that the followers of Cianjur Thariqat Al-Tijaniyah Teaching (CTAT) perform soul purifications technics as religious practices and experiences. The technics cover three steps namely *syar'i* living, magical spelling (*dhikr*), and Nur Muhammad (Holy Spirit) encountering. The process of soul purifying is seen as religious experience since it consists of religious emotions, thoughts, rituals, and institutions.

Soul purification technics done by the CTAT followers significantly has contributed towards science of health and psychology owing to the facts that this alternative spiritual process brings about knowledge of how to cure mental disturbances due to rapid socio-cultural and industrial changes and the pandemic of Covid 19. These views are based on the consideration that human physical state, whether it is healthy or not, greatly depends on his mental state. Besides, the technics of soul purification deliver information about how to decrease mental illness which may occur in daily life such as anxiety, depression, and restlessness. Thus, the technics are very helpful for people in overcoming the problems of life and in raising optimism, due to the risky circumstances nowadays.

Finally the writer suggests other researchers to study the CTAT from sociological, political, and economic aspects since the CTAT could be examined based on socio-economics structural approach. The alienation theory of Karl Mark might also be taken into consideration as a basic principle in investigating the CTAT in the future, whereas, political science might as well be used as an effective approach to study the teaching in terms of political sights.

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