

Spells, Herbs, and Islam in the Influenza Medicine from the *Tetamba* Book

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Abstract:

In the cultural heritage of the archipelago, incantations function not only as healing incantations or prayers, but also as a medium that combines material elements in the form of natural ingredients and spiritual elements in the form of prayers and suggestions of faith. This study aims to reveal the harmony between the Islamic archipelago and local culture in traditional health practices recorded in the Kitab Tetamba from Cirebon, a 16th century manuscript containing various herbal recipes and incantations as means of healing. The present study employs a descriptive method by analysing the text, with a particular focus on the section about influenza treatment in the Tetamba Book, to interpret the cultural meaning and spiritual values contained therein. The analysis demonstrates that the treatment system outlined in the manuscript is holistic in nature, integrating the utilisation of medicinal plants with the belief that authentic healing is divinely facilitated by Allah SWT. This practice can be considered as a harmonious acculturation between local traditions and Islamic values, where cultural elements function practically while the spiritual dimension serves as a philosophical foundation. The Tetamba book is a historical artefact that reflects the cultural and spiritual identity of the people of the archipelago in the realm of traditional medicine.

Keywords: *Spells, Herbs, Islam, Influenza medicine, Tetamba book*

INTRODUCTION

In the cultural heritage of the archipelago, spell occupies a special position as part of the daily practices of the community, especially in the realm of traditional medicine. This term refers to readings, spells, or a series of words that are believed to possess supernatural powers, often accompanied by the use of natural ingredients such as spices, smoke, or certain plants. It has been demonstrated that spells function not only as a means of expressing the magical, but also as a conduit through which humans may establish a connection with the supernatural dimension. Furthermore, it has been shown that spells serve to reinforce suggestion in the healing process. Consequently, spells can be regarded not only as spiritual expressions, but also as an integral component of the traditional health system of local communities (Endang et al., 2017).

Recent studies confirm the frequent use of incantations in healing minor illnesses and disorders believed to involve non-physical dimensions, including fever, colds, coughs, and spiritual disturbances. Research on Spell Incantation Herbs in Bangka Belitung demonstrates that these incantations are employed in the treatment of illnesses through

herbal remedies, integrating components of suggestion believed to augment the potency of the remedies. These findings highlight the dualistic nature of incantations, which serve a material function through the utilization of traditional medicine and a symbolic function through the power of words (Nur Waki'ah et al., 2021).

The integration between physical and spiritual aspects is also emphasized by researchers who argue that ethnomedicine is a traditional medicine practice in Indonesia that reflects the holistic worldview of the community, in which the body, nature, and the supernatural are seen as interconnected. In other words, incantation is a concrete manifestation of the relationship between humans and the cosmos, as well as a representation of how local cultures interpret health and illness (Kintoko, 2025).

The use of herbal remedies, incantations, and prayers is a historical and cultural practice in Indonesia. This is due to the historical utilization of this combination as a holistic healing method, not merely as physical medicine. One historical example of this phenomenon can be found in the *Tetamba* Book, a 16th century text that documents over 100 types of herbal plants utilized for the treatment of approximately 83 diseases through various methods, including drinking, application, warming, and the use of external herbs. The book demonstrates that in ancestral traditions, material elements (herbal remedies) and spiritual elements (prayers, incantations) function in synergy as a unified entity within traditional health practices (Hidayani, 2023).

As an illustration of the incorporation of incantations and herbs in the *Tetamba* Book, an example can be found on page 43, which details a formulation of herbal medicine intended to enhance masculine virility.

*Punika hikmat jajamu lanang saranane bawang putih lanang sawiji sabang
Sulah saculokotokan ing tangan temu giring saang saupa deringo rong
Ros pentil jeruk purut satunggal mungsi tigang juput
Damar sela saligar kemiri arang aring sapapak pinet banyune.
Punika du'ane Allahumma ḥayyu qayyūm, dā'imun qā'imun,
lā yamūtu, ka'bal ka'bal, kabak kabak, kebal kebal, bi rahmatika
yā arḥamar rahīmīn.*

Translation:

This is a herbal remedy for men. The ingredients are one clove of garlic, one pinch of pepper, one piece of temu giring, two deringo leaves, one lime blossom, three pinches of turmeric, damar sela to taste, candlenut, one handful of urang-arang leaves, boiled in water.

This is the prayer: O Allah, You are the Living, the Ever-Protecting, the Eternal, the Self-Sufficient, ka'bal ka'bal, kabak kabak, kebal kebal. With Your mercy, O Allah, You are the Living, the Ever-Protecting, the Eternal, the Self-Sufficient, ka'bal ka'bal, kabak kabak, kebal kebal. By Your mercy, O Most Merciful among the merciful.

As previously mentioned, this herbal medicine recipe represents a specific form of traditional medicine heritage, meticulously designed for the male demographic. It employs a blend of spices and medicinal plants, reflecting a cultural and historical significance in the treatment of ailments. The ingredients consist of male garlic, which is believed to increase vitality and immunity, pepper, which has a warming effect and improves blood circulation, and temu giring, which is known as a natural body cleanser. Deringo leaves and urang-arang leaves have been demonstrated to increase freshness and nourish internal organs, while

kaffir lime buds and turmeric act as natural antioxidants that cleanse toxins and strengthen the body's resistance. The mixture is then boiled until the water contains beneficial nutrients for use as a herbal drink. Ingredients such as damar sela (candlenut) and others complement the mixture.

Such practices continue to be observed in the present day, particularly in contexts involving the preservation of traditional cultural heritage. For instance, the people of Cirebon continue to practice traditional medicine, incorporating herbal remedies and incantations (supernatural prayers) alongside taboos and rituals as an integral component of the healing process. This practice remains strongly influenced by Javanese traditions and syncretic Islam. The utilization of herbal remedies, in addition to their role as a medicinal ingredient, serves as a component of a comprehensive belief system, spiritual practices, and prayers that have been deeply entrenched within the community for an extended period of time. This observation highlights the multifaceted nature of herbal remedies within the cultural context.

The primary objective of this study is to identify and analyze the traditional knowledge contained in the *Tetamba* Book, with a particular focus on herbal remedies for the treatment of influenza. The *Tetamba* Book of Cirebon is an important heritage item listed in the Cirebon Religious Manuscript Catalog 2, which was compiled by the Jakarta Religious Research and Development Center in 2019 (Zulkarnain Yani et al., 2019). The manuscript is written in Pegon and Arabic script in the Cirebon Javanese and Arabic languages. It is in prose form and consists of 177 pages. Presently, the manuscript is under the custody of the Custodian of the Kacirebonan Palace, Dr. H. R. Bambang Irianto, BA. The contents of the *Tetamba* Book are highly diverse, encompassing a wide range of subjects. In addition to its discussion of traditional medicine, the text delves into temporal phenomena such as times of grace and disaster, as well as temporal calculations of days and nights. It also provides interpretations of Surah Al-An'am verse 10, signs of eclipses and earthquakes, dream interpretations, marital affection, and house-building procedures.

The research journey for this manuscript has also been quite extensive. In 2011, Bambang Irianto and Muhammad Mukhtar Zaedin conducted a study on the transcription of the *Tetamba* Book. Subsequently, in 2017, they translated it into Indonesian. Subsequently, Isriani Hardini approached the spells contained therein through the lens of Riffaterre's semiotic approach, as detailed in her study entitled *Mantra Cirebon in the Tetamba Keraton Kacirebonan Manuscript* (Hardini, 2015). As previously mentioned, Riffaterre's Semiotic Interpretation is a seminal text in the field. Next, Fika Hidayani researched the contents of the manuscript in an article titled *Traditional Indonesian Herbs of the 16th Century: The Tetamba Cirebon Manuscript* which was published in the *Tamaddun Journal* Vol. 11 No. 2 in 2023. This series of studies demonstrates the richness and breadth of the dimensions of the *Tetamba* Book, both in terms of traditional medicine, spiritual values, and the worldview of the Cirebon people in the past.

The focus of the research is on how the ingredients are combined, what materials are used, and the philosophical and spiritual values associated with them. This research highlights the integration of traditional medical aspects with the cultural, social, and religious contexts of the Cirebon community, which are intricately interwoven with these medical practices. Moreover, the findings of this study indicate that the spells and prayers employed in traditional medicine are in fact manifestations of Islamic teachings, thus illustrating the synergistic integration of medical practices, religious beliefs, and local wisdom.

Research on related topics has been conducted by several researchers who have studied herbal remedies, ethnomedicine, and even prayers and mantras in the traditional medicine of the Indonesian archipelago. Ellya Roza's article, titled "Non-Instant Herbal Remedies in the Tib Manuscript as an Alternative Treatment" published in the journal *Social Culture: In the 2014 volume of Media for Communication of Science - Social and Cultural Sciences*, which is number 11, issue 1, discusses 31 diseases treated with 67 herbal remedies, including headaches, eye pain, thrush, and mercury poisoning. The treatment practices were holistic in nature, combining botanical remedies with Islamic spiritual elements, such as the *basmalah*, the prayer of the Prophet Yunus, the *syifa'* prayer, and the prayer to expel jinn. These prayers are also present in amulets and Arabic writings, thereby reinforcing the spiritual dimension in the Islamic healing tradition. (Roza, 2014).

In her article entitled "Traditional Penyengat Island Herbs and Remedies for Eye-related Pain," published in the *Journal of Language and Literature* Vol. 12, No. 2, 2024, Indah Wahyuni explains the use of fifty types of herbs to treat eight eye diseases, ranging from wounds to blurred vision and swelling. Various natural ingredients such as garlic, turmeric, young areca nuts, date seeds, coriander, and betel are mixed with complementary ingredients such as rose water, alum, apiun, lang oil, jadam, lime, young breast milk, and camphor. Although prayers and amulets are also mentioned, their use is very limited. Overall, this healing tradition emphasizes the power of natural ingredients over magical elements. (Indah Wahyuni, 2024).

In his article, entitled "Ethnomedicine Practices in Malay Traditional Medicine Manuscripts," published in the 2016 volume 6, issue 2, of the *Manuskripta Journal*, Junaidi discusses 25 types of diseases, including cough, fever, deafness, eyesight problems, leprosy, female bleeding, and pod diseases. He treats various illnesses with more than 25 types of herbs, such as shallots, garlic, black cumin, coriander, ginger, turmeric, tamarind, and betel leaves. In addition to herbal remedies, prayers, charms, and amulets are also used. Verse 38 of Surah Yasin is recited for pod diseases, Al-Kautsar for supernatural disturbances, and the sun-moon chakra talisman is used for protection and to attract love (Junaidi, 2016).

In her article, "The Secrets of Medicine Implied in Mantra Manuscripts," published in the 2019 edition of the *Jumantara Journal* Vol. 2, No. 2, Elis Suryani This text discusses ten illnesses, such as stomach ache, fever, *ticengklak*, wounds, wasp stings, and *teluh*. Six herbs are used: cayenne pepper leaves, guava seeds, *jukut palias*, eucalyptus leaves, *kolé gedé*, and brown sugar but the basis of the treatment remains *jampé* and *jangjawokan*. For example, *jampé sakit perut* is used for digestive disorders, *jangjawokan muriang* for fever, and *jampé panjaga teluh* to ward off witchcraft (Suryani, 2019).

The studies on Indonesian medical manuscripts tend to focus on herbs, prayers, and incantations, while ignoring the examination of how specific diseases were treated or the influence of religious changes. This research addresses this gap by highlighting the *Kitab Tetamba*, a Cirebon manuscript that combines herbal medicine with spiritual elements. The section on treatment of influenza, however, is an interesting departure from this. It emphasizes herbal remedies and makes only a brief mention of healing coming from Allah. This indicates a shift from magical-spiritual practices to a more theological approach. It also demonstrates how Islam began to reshape local medical concepts.

Therefore, this study does not merely repeat previous descriptions of herbs and spells but specifically investigates how the *Tetamba* Book represents the integration of Islamic spirituality into the treatment of influenza. The findings illuminate a nuanced understanding of how local healing traditions adapted to Islamic teachings, where the act of

healing is redefined not through incantations, but through faith in divine will. In doing so, this research clarifies the unique role of influenza treatment as textual evidence of acculturation between Islam and local healing culture in the Indonesian archipelago.

The research method used in this study is descriptive analysis with a content analysis approach. This approach is a research method used to explore the meaning of text through systematic, reliable, and valid stages. The process involves the identification of relationships between texts, their subsequent grouping into specific categories, and their interpretation in a broader context. Content analysis is a methodological approach that is also used to understand content characteristics, interpret the messages contained within, and recognize apparent elements. All stages of the research process are meticulously executed, characterized by objectivity and an emphasis on validity and reliability. This methodological rigor ensures the accountability of the research outcomes (Titiana, 2021). The stages of textual analysis of the *Tetamba* manuscript presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Stages of Textual Analysis of the *Tetamba* Manuscript

Stage	Activity	Purpose
1	Identification of influenza treatment section in the manuscript	Identification of influenza treatment section in the manuscript
2	Transcription and translation of the original Javanese text	Transcription and translation of the original Javanese text
3	Lexical and thematic categorization	Lexical and thematic categorization
4	Cultural-semiotic interpretation	Cultural-semiotic interpretation
5	Synthesis and conclusion	Synthesis and conclusion

Contrary to the prevailing tendency in earlier studies to emphasise the utilisation of herbal remedies and prayers in the context of traditional medicine, this study is distinguished by its specific focus on the treatment of influenza in the Kitab *Tetamba* from Cirebon. By examining the integration of ritual language (incantations), herbal remedies, and Islamic values in the archipelago as a manifestation of local culture, this study offers a distinctive and nuanced perspective on the therapeutic practices employed in the region. Whilst the research by Ellya Roza (2014), Indah Wahyuni (2024) and Junaidi (2016) emphasised the inventory of disease types and herbal ingredients, and Elis Suryani (2019) focused on the structure and function of mantras, this study employs a cultural semiotic approach to interpret the symbolic meaning and spiritual relationship between humans, nature and God in the influenza treatment text. Consequently, this study enhances the fields of philology and ethnomedical studies, while concurrently introducing an innovative interpretative dimension. This new dimension positions the *Tetamba* Book as a symbol of the harmony between Islam and indigenous culture within the traditional health system of the Indonesian archipelago (Liau, 2022).

DISCUSSION

The Performative Dimensions of Mantra: Social, Psychological, and Theological Functions in Islamic Herbal Healing

In the traditional medicine of the Indonesian archipelago, mantras are regarded as performative acts that possess symbolic and spiritual power. The *Tetamba* book places them on par with herbs, forming a healing system that combines physical and metaphysical

elements. Through special intonations, mantras are understood to activate the power of words while maintaining harmony between humans, nature, and God. (Ruslan Sangaji, 2022).

Socially and psychologically, mantras strengthen trust between healers and patients and have a calming effect. Prayers such as the basmalah and salawat foster tranquility and support healing through emotional and spiritual strengthening. At the community level, this practice also strengthens cohesion because it is seen as part of shared worship and culture (Siti Asiyah, 2023).

From a theological perspective, mantras reflect practical monotheism: healing is understood to come from God, while herbs are merely intermediaries. Therefore, spiritual elements are a major part of the healing system. Mantras in *Tetamba* demonstrate a blend of Islamic values, local wisdom, and herbal knowledge, confirming that traditional medicine in these islands is a health practice steeped in spirituality (Onok, et al., 2021).

Islam in the Archipelago: Dialectics of Spirituality and Traditional Medicine through Spells and Herbal Remedies

Islam in the Indonesian archipelago is not only integrated with local traditions, but has developed through negotiations between animistic heritage and Islamic spirituality. The *Tetamba* book shows how beliefs about the spirit world are related to Qur'anic prayers and Islamic ethics. Mantras and prayers do not replace each other, but rather intertwine as a form of adaptation. Islamic elements provide a theological foundation, while traces of animism remain visible in the use of symbolic herbs, amulets, and ritual incantations, reflecting the integration of new teachings without abandoning the cosmology of the ancestors (Suarni et al., 2022).

The *Tetamba* manuscript, written in Arabic, Pegon, and Cirebon Javanese, shows cultural negotiation in medical and ritual practices. Qur'anic verses alongside ancient mantras indicate that Islamization took place through adaptation rather than eradication, with Islamic prayers replacing old intentions while retaining their ritual power. The tension between innovation and tradition is evident in the way Islam sacralizes local knowledge without severing its symbols, including the use of divine names for protection from spirits, reflecting old beliefs within a new framework.

Thus, *Tetamba* is not only a record of healing techniques, but also a reflection of cultural dialogue where beliefs and traditions meet. Health is understood as physical-spiritual balance, combining herbal empiricism and prayer. The animistic nuances within the Islamic framework demonstrate the creative adaptation of society, transforming potential tensions into a synthesis of life. These findings confirm that the spiritual dimension of traditional medicine in Indonesia is an ongoing dialogue between revelation and tradition that continues to shape the identity of Islam in the archipelago.

Islam in the Archipelago: Integration of Spirituality and Traditional Medicine through Spells and Herbal Remedies

Islam in the Indonesian archipelago demonstrates a fusion of religious beliefs and local wisdom. Traditional medicine is understood as a spiritual and therapeutic practice that complements each other, where mantras, herbs, and Islamic prayers work together in the healing process. Prayers strengthen the inner dimension, while amulets serve as symbols of protection in local Islamic ethics. This integrative approach affirms the continuity between herbal practices and religious practices in Indonesia (Suarni et al., 2022).

Tetamba, a significant text inscribed in Pegon script and Cirebon Javanese, comprises herbal remedies, prayers, and mantras for both physical and supernatural

ailments, thus offering a reflection of the community's values and beliefs. Philological and ethnobotanical studies demonstrate the existence of numerous diseases and a wide range of recipes, encompassing natural remedies, prayer rituals, and amulets, which are employed for both physical and non-physical ailments. The text also contains guidelines for maintaining harmony in the household, calming emotions in polygamous situations, increasing affection through prayers based on verses from the Qur'an, as well as warding off evil spirits and alleviating emotional conditions such as heartbreak. The treatment of physical healing, including eye disorders, is achieved through the integration of herbal remedies and mantras. In his analysis of Islam in the archipelago, *Tetamba* emphasises that health is understood as a harmonious relationship between humans, God, and nature. In this context, herbs are employed as physical healers, prayers as spiritual remedies, and amulets as connectors between the two realms. Contemporary studies have confirmed the importance of three factors. Firstly, the documentation of traditional knowledge. Secondly, the examination of the pharmacological potential of plants. And thirdly, the preservation of spiritual values, so that they are not lost in the process of modernization (Teti Estiasih et al., 2025).

Treatment of Influenza in the Tetamba Book: Traditional Herbal Medicine and Local Culture

Influenza or the flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus that can spread quickly. This illness is common among many people and its symptoms vary, ranging from mild to disruptive, such as fever, discomfort, pain, weakness, fatigue, and muscle and joint pain (BDDR, 1996). In addition to the symptoms previously mentioned, the influenza virus can also be accompanied by a cough, a runny nose with mucus discharge, continuous sneezing, watery eyes (Tapan, 2004) a sore throat that makes swallowing painful, and headaches that add to the discomfort. The combination of these symptoms contributes to the perception of influenza as a mild disease. However, its impact on the productivity and quality of life of those affected is significant (Pratiwi, N., 2008).

The *Tetamba* text identifies five types of illnesses commonly experienced by the community: headaches, rheumatism, fever, fatigue, and coughs. To address these issues, the manuscript presents a minimum of 50 traditional remedies derived from natural ingredients sourced from the immediate vicinity. Each remedy is typically accompanied by a prayer or specific recitation, and ultimately, an expression of belief that healing comes solely from God is invariably expressed. This suggests that the medicinal practices in *Tetamba* do not merely prioritize the physical dimension but also place significant emphasis on the spiritual aspect. Consequently, health is conceptualized as the outcome of a multifaceted interaction between human endeavor and divine intervention.

Headache

Text on page 21

"Punika tatamba ngelu saranane pala lan cabe lan kunir maka pinipis annuli pinilisaken".

Translation:

This is a remedy for headaches using nutmeg, chili, and turmeric, which are ground and then applied (like a mask).

Traditional medicine for headaches uses natural ingredients such as nutmeg, chili, and turmeric. Nutmeg provides a warming effect, chili improves circulation, and turmeric relieves inflammation. The three ingredients are ground into a powder and then used as a paste on the forehead. This practice reflects the use of local spices and a holistic view that healing focuses on restoring balance to the body (Kunnumakkara et al., 2023).

Text on page 133

“Punika tatamba ngelu saranane jinten putih kanthi mangsoyi sintok saporantu lan kencur lan bawangbang mentah lan suruh temu rose lan dringo bangle maka sinemburaken ing kapala”.

Translation:

This is a medicine for headaches: white cumin, ginger, mangsoyi, sintok, saporantu, aromatic ginger, raw shallots, betel leaf, temu ruas, dringo bangle, then sprayed on the head.

Traditional medicine for headaches utilizes various herbs, including white cumin, ginger, mangsoyi, sintok, saporantu, aromatic ginger, shallots, betel leaves, temu ruas, and dringo bangle. Each ingredient is believed to complement the others: white cumin and kencur provide a warming effect, shallots and betel leaves are antiseptic and reduce fever, while dringo bangle and sintok help relieve pain and provide a refreshing sensation (Sri Adi et al., 2015).

The ingredients are meticulously ground and subsequently applied to the head through the use of a spray mechanism. This practice is regarded as a form of physical therapy through its aroma and vapor, as well as a spiritual healing modality that serves to dispel negative energy. This approach highlights local knowledge and a holistic view that emphasises physical, mental, and environmental balance.

Rheumatism

Text on page 3

“Punika tatamba singgul atawa linu, saranane kencur, bangle, kemulun, lan mangsoyi, kembang pala, sunthi, jinten, ketumbar, kanthi, cengkeh, cabe, merica, tegara ingser putih, bawang abang, dringo bangle”.

Translation:

Here is the treatment for singgul or rheumatism disease: aromatic ginger, bangle, kemulun, mangsoyi, nutmeg flower, sunthi, cumin, coriander, cloves, chili, pepper, white lemongrass, shallots, and dringo bangle.

This medicine for rheumatism uses herbs such as aromatic ginger, bangle, mangsoyi, nutmeg flowers, sunthi, cumin, coriander, cloves, chili peppers, pepper, white lemongrass, shallots, and dringo bangle. These spices have warming, aromatic, and anti-inflammatory properties to relieve pain and stiffness. Ginger, bangle, and dringo improve blood circulation; nutmeg, cloves, and lemongrass have a calming effect; while cumin, coriander, chili, and pepper stimulate blood circulation, and shallots act as an antiseptic. (Galih Samudra, 2019).

The ingredients are typically pounded into a smooth mixture, which is then applied to the aching body part. Traditionally, this mixture is used not only for its physical properties, but also for its spiritual benefits. It is believed to remove ‘wind’ or energy that causes pain in the body. This method reflects the local wisdom of communities that utilize the archipelago’s rich biodiversity for health. It takes a holistic approach, focusing on healing the body while restoring balance to the mind.

Text on page 96

“Punika utawi lamon angelu sasane iki tatambane pupusing sate lan cae teteli ingambil pucuke lan dringo bangle pinipis binanyonan dunganga den dokagan ing lading maka ginagang ing marang dawa kira-kira anget kuku pinilisaken waras ilahi”.

Translation:

If you feel pain in your body, the recommended remedy is to take three chili peppers, remove the tips, add dringo bangle, then pound them and mix with dunganga water, heat

them on hot coals, and after they are warm, rub them on your body. You will be healed by Allah.

Traditional medicine for body pain uses sunti shoots, three chili peppers without stems, and dringo bracelets. Sunti shoots are believed to maintain energy, chili peppers provide a warming sensation to improve circulation, and dringo relieves pain and fever. These ingredients are ground, mixed with dunganga water, then heated before being applied to the affected area. This practice combines herbal properties and spiritual elements, with prayers and the belief that healing comes from divine power, so that the treatment encompasses both physical and spiritual aspects.

Fever

Text on page 5-6

"Punika tatamba wong parang saranane cecek putih racike anton-anton maka inguyupakaken gelis waras ilahi".

Translation:

This is the medicine for people with fever: soften white cloves, then drink the water. Get well soon, by the grace of God.

Traditional medicine for chills uses white cloves, which are believed to warm the body, relieve pain, and support the immune system. Eugenol, a compound found in cloves, has analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties. The cloves are softened and then the juice is drunk so that the warming effect works quickly. This practice also incorporates spiritual elements, with the belief that herbs are merely intermediaries and true healing comes from God, reflecting a holistic view that combines natural ingredients and prayer.

Text on page 76

"Punika tatamba awak panas, saranane godong widarasari lan adas palasari lan kelapa pinanggung maka pinipis kabeh den lembut maka binorebaken ing larane. Insy Allah waras ilahi".

Translation:

This is a treatment for fever, made from widasari leaves, palasari fennel, and burnt coconut, which are then finely ground. It is rubbed or applied to the affected area, and, God willing, the condition will improve.

The traditional medicine for fever uses Widasari leaves, Palasari fennel, and burnt coconut. Widasari is believed to reduce fever, fennel helps circulation and relieves inflammation, while burnt coconut has a cooling effect. The ingredients are finely ground and then applied to the body. The phrase "Insy Allah, you will be healed" expresses the belief that the remedy is only an intermediary and that healing comes from God, so the treatment combines herbs and prayer.

Text on page 90-91

"Punika tatamba panas awak saranane suruh temu rose lan angkuping kalapa lan temu adas palasari bawang abang binenem, asem kawak lan emur remek daging maka pinipis pinati patine ingurapaken ampase binorebaken waras ilahi".

Translation:

This is a fever medicine. The ingredients are betel leaves, rose ginger, and coconut palm fronds. Add galangal, fennel, shallots, tamarind, and crushed meat, then pound until smooth. Drink the liquid and apply the pulp to the skin. Recovery is due to God.

The traditional medicine for fever uses betel leaves, rose ginger, coconut leaves, ginger, palasari fennel, shallots, tamarind, and coconut meat. Betel leaves are antiseptic, ginger aids circulation, fennel supports metabolism, shallots reduce fever, and tamarind has

a refreshing effect. All ingredients are ground into a paste or liquid. Usage includes drinking coconut milk to alleviate internal heat and applying coconut meat to the body to aid in heat absorption. The phrase “healed by God” emphasises that the remedy is merely an intermediary, reflecting local wisdom that combines herbal medicine with spiritual beliefs in healing (Supriatna, 2023).

Fatigue

Text on page 97

“Punika tatamba awak lesu saranane temu kuning langgang sirih ping tiga mimiti lan bawang abang lan adas lan kembang palasari lan kamiri lan kencur lan godong dalima lan sunti sadidik maka binorebaken supaya waras ilahi”.

Translation:

This is a remedy for fatigue or weakness: take three pieces of yellow ginger and three pieces of betel leaf. Start with shallots, fennel, palasari flowers, candlenuts, kencur, pomegranate leaves, and a little sunti, then pound them and apply the mixture to heal, by the grace of God.

The traditional medicine for fatigue combines temu tiga, betel leaves, shallots, fennel, palasari flowers, candlenuts, aromatic ginger, pomegranate leaves, walnuts, and a small amount of sunti. Curcuma and aromatic ginger provide a warming effect and boost metabolism; betel leaves and pomegranate leaves refresh; shallots and candlenuts aid circulation; fennel and palasari calm and support digestion; sunti enhances the effects of the mixture. All ingredients are finely ground and then applied to the weak parts of the body. This practice combines herbal properties and spiritual beliefs, with the assumption that the mixture is only an intermediary and healing comes from God, reflecting the holistic approach of the local community (Maureen et al., 2024).

Coughs

Text on page 93-94

“Punika tatamba bocah watuk saranane kunci, kencur, lan sekul tinunu ketumbar, kemiri, parawas tinunu, labos tinunu, maka pinipis sinemburaken ing dadane, waras ilahi”.

Translation:

This is the treatment for children’s coughs: take ginger, galangal, rice, coriander, candlenut, and galangal, pound them, and rub them on the chest, they will be healed by God.

Traditional cough medicine for children is made from ginger, galangal, rice, coriander, candlenut, and cloves. Ginger, galangal, and cloves provide a warming effect to ease breathing; coriander aids digestion and has anti-inflammatory properties; candlenut helps bind and soften the mixture; rice acts as a binding agent. All ingredients are finely ground and then applied to the child’s chest to warm and relieve coughs. The phrase ‘healed by God’ emphasises that the mixture is only an intermediary, reflecting a holistic view that combines herbal medicine and spirituality. Findings from the Tetamba Book also show that the absence of mantras does not mean a loss of sanctity, but rather a new form of Islamisation in which spiritual meaning is internalised rather than ritualised (Wang et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

Herbal medicine and mantras are pillars of traditional medicine in the archipelago’s heritage, with the Kitab *Tetamba* Cirebon as an important example. This manuscript views health holistically, combining material healing through herbs and spiritual healing through mantras or prayers. Mantras function as suggestive reinforcers and connectors to the

supernatural world, while herbs work as physical therapies. Although this study highlights herbs for diseases such as influenza, the presence of spiritual elements in recipes, especially for men, shows that herbs are always tied to a comprehensive belief system.

The study of the *Tetamba* Book reveals the acculturative harmonisation between Islam and local medical practices through the combination of herbs with Islamic prayers and incantations such as praises to Allah in healing prayers which, in the context of influenza treatment, emphasises that healing is under divine will, thus making the *Tetamba* Book not only a documentation of ethnomedicine but also authentic evidence of the integration of religious beliefs and empirical efforts of the community. While also suggesting the necessity for further research that traces similar manuscripts in various regions of the archipelago, examines medical practices that are still maintained by the community, and expands interdisciplinary approaches so that the understanding of the relationship between herbs, rituals, and belief systems becomes more comprehensive and relevant to the development of traditional health today.

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