



ECOSUFISM IN SERAT CENTHINI AND ITS ACTUALIZATION: A THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE HUMAN–NATURE–GOD RELATIONSHIP IN THE JAVANESE SUFI TRADITION (Case Study: Hifdzu Bi'ah Programme, Desa Ngantru)

Panji Nur Muhammad Sholih¹, Mauluddin Rahmat², Muhammad Ahsin Maulana³,
Abdurrahman Sholeh⁴

Universitas Al-Qolam Malang^{1,2,3,4}

email: panjinurmuhhammad@pasca.alqolam.ac.id¹, mauluddinrahmat25@pasca.alqolam.ac.id²,
mahsinmaulana25@pasca.alqolam.ac.id³, abdurrohmansholeh25@pasca.alqolam.ac.id⁴

Received : 05 Juni 2026 | Revised : 21 Juni 2026 | Accepted : 10 Juli 2026

Abstract

This study examines the dimension of ecosufism embedded within Serat Centhini through the lens of Islamic philosophy and theology, and investigates its actualization in contemporary environmental practice through a case study of the Hifdzu Bi'ah programme conducted by KKN-T students of Universitas Al-Qolam Malang in Desa Ngantru, Kecamatan Ngantang, Kabupaten Malang (2025). Employing Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics for primary textual analysis of Serat Centhini and document content analysis of the KKN-T field report as empirical data, the study yields three principal findings. First, Serat Centhini contains a robust proto-ecosufist foundation grounded in the doctrine of wahdat al-wujud expressed through manunggaling kawulo-Gusti, the concept of khalifah, and the Javanese cosmic ethic Memayu Hayuning Bawana. Second, these classical values exhibit significant theological continuity with contemporary ecosufism frameworks articulated by Nasr (1996) and Suwito (2014), while also undergoing productive transformations at the methodological and institutional levels. Third, the Hifdzu Bi'ah programme demonstrates that Serat Centhini's ecosufist values can be operationalized through participatory Islamic community forums, particularly through the Fatayat and Muslimat NU women's religious networks, although structural challenges including the absence of permanent institutional arrangements continue to limit long-term sustainability. This research contributes to the development of a Nusantara ecosufism model that bridges classical Islamic-Javanese intellectual heritage with pressing contemporary ecological challenges, offering an authentically local foundation for Islamic environmental theology in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Ecosufism, Serat Centhini, Javanese Sufism, Islamic Environmental Theology*

INTRODUCTION

The global ecological crisis constitutes one of the most formidable challenges confronting twenty-first-century civilization. Accelerating deforestation, anthropogenic climate change, ecosystem degradation, and the unprecedented loss of biodiversity have reached a scale that exceeds the earth's natural regenerative capacity (IPCC, 2021). In Indonesia, these realities manifest with acute immediacy: repeated flash flooding across Java, extensive peatland and forest fires in Kalimantan and Sumatra, and the dramatic depletion of freshwater sources in rural communities. These compounding crises demand a response that transcends technical and institutional interventions to engage the deeper dimensions of human values, ethics, and spirituality.

Contemporary environmental thinkers have increasingly argued that the ecological crisis is, at its root, a spiritual crisis — a crisis of meaning and metaphysics rather than merely a problem of policy and technology. The Iranian-American philosopher Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1996) contends that the destruction of the natural environment in the modern world originates in the loss of what he terms a *sacred worldview* — a mode of perceiving nature not as inert material to be exploited, but as a divine sign (*āyah*) whose sanctity demands reverent engagement. In this framework, the relationship between humanity and nature is not subject-object but inherently spiritual — one of sacred trust and custodial responsibility. This insight has furnished one of the philosophical cornerstones of ecosufism as a field of contemporary Islamic thought (Sururi et al., 2020).

Among the richest and most underexplored repositories of Islamic-Javanese ecological spirituality is *Serat Centhini*. Completed circa 1814 CE under the patronage of Pakubuwana IV in Surakarta, this monumental text — comprising twelve volumes and approximately 3,500 pages — represents the most comprehensive encyclopaedia of classical Javanese knowledge ever compiled (Florida, 2012). It encompasses astronomy, agriculture, herbal medicine, mystical cosmology, Sufi doctrine, and ethical philosophy within a unified narrative framework (Ricklefs, 2024). Despite attracting sustained scholarly attention for its dimensions of eroticism, philology, and literary structure, the text's ecological-spiritual dimension — particularly its relevance to ecosufism — has received no systematic academic treatment. This constitutes a significant lacuna in both Centhini studies and Indonesian ecosufism scholarship.

The present study addresses this gap through two complementary objectives: first, to analyse the ecosufist dimensions of *Serat Centhini* from the perspective of Islamic philosophy and theology; and second, to examine the actualization of these values in contemporary practice through a case study of the Hifdzu Bi'ah ('Protection of the Environment') programme implemented by KKN-T students of Universitas Al-Qolam Malang in Desa Ngantru, Kecamatan Ngantang, Kabupaten Malang in 2025. By connecting rigorous textual analysis of a classical Islamic-Javanese source with empirical documentation of a contemporary environmental initiative, the study contributes to the development of a Nusantara ecosufism model — one that is deeply rooted in local

intellectual tradition yet fully responsive to the exigencies of the present ecological emergency.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Ecosufism: Synthesis of Mystical Islam and Ecological Ethics

Ecosufism may be defined as the synthesis of Islamic Sufism and ecological ethics — a framework that locates the imperative of environmental stewardship within the spiritual and metaphysical resources of the Sufi tradition. Its foundational premise is that the ecological crisis is inseparable from a spiritual crisis: when human beings lose their sense of nature's sacredness, they lose the moral inhibition that prevents unlimited exploitation. Nasr (1996, 2007) argues that classical Islamic philosophy and Sufi metaphysics offer precisely the corrective that modernity requires — a *sacred science* that perceives the natural world as theophany, as divine self-disclosure ('itself'), rather than as an object of calculative reason.

Central to Nasr's ecosufism is the Quranic concept of *khalīfah* — the human being as God's vicegerent on earth (Q.S. al-Baqarah: 30) — which he reads not as a licence for domination but as a mandate of sacred trusteeship. The *khalīfah* bears responsibility for the entire order of creation and will be held accountable for the fulfilment or betrayal of this trust. The natural world, understood as constituted by *āyāt kawniyyah* (cosmic signs of God), is not humanity's possession but God's property held in trust for all of creation. This theological framework generates an ethics of environmental stewardship that is simultaneously ecological and eschatological (Nasr, 2007).

In the Indonesian context, ecosufism was systematically developed by Suwito Ns. (2014) through ethnographic research at Pesantren Ilmu Giri and Masjid Aulia in Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta — communities that integrate environmental conservation practices such as reforestation, spring water protection, and organic agriculture into their Sufi devotional life. Suwito's work demonstrates that ecosufism is not merely a theoretical construct but a living praxis that organically unites spiritual discipline with ecological action. This Indonesian precedent is especially significant for the present study because it establishes that the ecosufist impulse identified in *Serat Centhini* has contemporary institutional expressions within the same cultural milieu.

Wahdat al-Wujud and Javanese Sufism in Serat Centhini

The Sufi tradition that permeates *Serat Centhini* is principally shaped by the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* (the unity of being), articulated in Javanese as *manunggaling kawulo-Gusti* — the union of the servant with the Lord. This doctrine, derived from the metaphysics of Ibn 'Arabī and transmitted through the Syathariyyah and Qadiriyyah orders that dominated Javanese pesantren networks in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Fathurahman, 2016; Simuh, 1988), carries profound ecological implications. If all existent things are in their inner reality manifestations (*tajallī*) of the one divine Being, then the natural world is not ontologically alien to God but is, rather, the mirror in which

divine glory is reflected. To destroy nature is thus to destroy the mirror of the Divine — a sacrilege of the deepest order (Izutsu, 1983).

Memayu Hayuning Bawana: Javanese Cosmic Ethics

The concept of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* — literally, ‘to beautify the beauty of the universe’ — constitutes the pre-eminent formulation of Javanese cosmic ethics. The term derives from the root *ayu* (beautiful, good, harmonious), prefixed to denote active causation: the human being is obligated not merely to refrain from destroying cosmic order but to actively contribute to its beautification and restoration. This concept appears across the Javanese literary canon contemporaneous with *Serat Centhini*, including *Serat Cemporet* by Rangawarsita (Wanti & Setyani, 2021), and represents an indigenous Javanese articulation of the universal Islamic principle of *khalifah* — one that predates the term ecosufism by two centuries but anticipates its essential content with remarkable precision.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative research design combining two complementary methodological approaches. The first is Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics (2004), applied to the primary textual analysis of *Serat Centhini* in the twelve-volume Kamajaya edition (1985–1991). Analysis was concentrated on volumes I–III — which contain the most extensive accounts of Jayengresmi’s spiritual journeys through Javanese sacred landscapes — and volumes XI–XII, which contain the apogee of Amongraga’s mystical teachings. The hermeneutical process proceeds through three movements: *Verstehen* (understanding the text within its own nineteenth-century Javanese-Islamic horizon), *Auslegung* (systematic interpretation of the ontological and ethical implications for human-nature relations), and *Anwendung* (application through a *fusion of horizons* that brings Centhini’s ecological wisdom into dialogue with contemporary ecosufism theory and practice).

The second methodological component is systematic document content analysis of the Laporan KKN-T “Gerakan Desa Masalah Hifdzu Bi’ah: Analisis Dampak Lingkungan dari Pengolahan Sampah di Desa Ngantru” (Kelompok 7, Universitas Al-Qolam Malang, 2025). This report functions as the primary empirical data source for the case study component. It was selected on three grounds: it explicitly employs Islamic theological concepts (*hifdhu bi’ah*, Maqashid Syari’ah, *khalīfah*) as the normative framework for environmental action; it was conducted within an Islamic-Javanese community directly relevant to the intellectual tradition of *Serat Centhini*; and it provides rich, multi-layered empirical documentation of the opportunities and structural constraints encountered when ecosufist values are translated into collective practice. Data from both sources were triangulated through systematic comparative analysis along the dimensions of continuity, transformation, and discontinuity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Ecosufist Dimensions of Serat Centhini

Systematic analysis of *Serat Centhini* reveals three interlocking dimensions that collectively constitute a coherent and well-developed proto-ecosufism. These dimensions correspond to the ontological, epistemological, and ethical levels of the text's worldview, and together offer a comprehensive theological grounding for ecological ethics within the Javanese-Islamic tradition.

The Ontological Foundation: Wahdat al-Wujud and the Sacredness of Nature

The ontological bedrock of *Serat Centhini*'s ecological vision is the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud*, articulated in Javanese idiom as *manunggaling kawulo-Gusti*. This doctrine — derived from Ibn 'Arabī through the Syathariyyah silsilah that profoundly shaped Javanese pesantren spirituality (Fathurahman, 2016) — teaches that all existent things are, in their innermost reality, manifestations (*tajallī*) or mirrors (*mazhar*) of the one Absolute Being. The theological-ecological implication is unambiguous: if the natural world is the mirror in which divine beauty and majesty are reflected, then the degradation of nature constitutes a desecration of the divine — a destruction of the theophanic medium through which God manifests to creation (Izutsu, 1983). This is not merely an aesthetic or pragmatic argument for environmental protection; it is a theological argument of the highest order, rooting ecological ethics in the very structure of Islamic metaphysics.

This ontological framework is not presented in *Serat Centhini* as abstract doctrine but as the experiential horizon of its protagonists' spiritual journey. Jayengresmi's peripatetic quest for *ma'rifāt* — the highest mystical knowledge — proceeds not through withdrawal from nature but through immersive engagement with it. Mountains, forests, rivers, and medicinal plants are not obstacles to spiritual progress but its very medium. The journey is simultaneously a journey through the landscape and a journey through the layers of divine self-disclosure. This experiential unity of spiritual and natural is, in essence, the ecosufist sensibility in its most organic and unconstructed form.

The Epistemological Dimension: Nature as Āyāt Kawniyyah

Serat Centhini contains an extraordinary wealth of knowledge about the natural world: thousands of plant names and their medicinal properties, detailed agricultural calendars, astronomical observations, and ecological descriptions of Javanese landscapes. This knowledge is not, however, presented as utilitarian information but as a form of *sacred science* in precisely Nasr's sense — knowledge that perceives in the phenomena of nature the *āyāt kawniyyah* (cosmic signs of God) that constitute, alongside the *āyāt qur'āniyyah* (scriptural signs), God's two great books of revelation.

A traditional Javanese herbalist in the world of *Serat Centhini* who compounds a medicinal remedy is not merely practising pharmacognosy; she or he is reading the *āyāt*

kawniyyah encoded in the plant kingdom and entering into a sacred relationship with the creative wisdom of God. The preparation of medicine is accompanied by ritual prayer, guided by the Javanese-Islamic spiritual calendar, and understood as a form of *tafakkur* — meditative reflection on the wonders of divine creation. This epistemological framework carries a consequential ecological implication: the extinction of a plant species is not merely a biological loss but the permanent erasure of a divine sign — an act of irreversible theological destruction. Nasr (1996) identifies exactly this epistemological rupture — the divorce of natural knowledge from its sacred dimension — as the proximate intellectual cause of the modern ecological crisis. *Serat Centhini* preserves, in living textual form, the integrated sacred epistemology that Nasr argues must be recovered.

The Ethical Imperative: Memayu Hayuning Bawana as Proto-Ecosufism

The concept of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* provides the ethical dimension that completes *Serat Centhini*'s ecosufist triptych. Crucially, this is not a negative ethics of restraint — merely prohibiting destruction — but a positive ethics of active cosmic custodianship. The human being is summoned to *memayu* (to actively beautify) the *hayuning bawana* (beauty/goodness of the universe). This imperative is structurally isomorphic with the Quranic concept of *khalīfah fil ardh*: the human being is not the proprietor of the earth who may dispose of it at will, but the vicegerent who bears active responsibility for the care and flourishing of all creation. Both concepts refuse the passive stance of merely 'not destroying' and demand an active, transformative engagement with the health of the natural world (Gufon & Hambali, 2022).

The convergence of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* with the Islamic concept of *khalīfah* is theologically significant in ways that transcend mere conceptual parallelism. It demonstrates that the authors and custodians of *Serat Centhini* were engaged in a genuinely creative synthesis of Javanese indigenous cosmic ethics with Islamic theological categories — producing, in the process, a distinctively Nusantara form of ecological spirituality that neither simply replicated Arabic-Persian Sufism nor simply perpetuated pre-Islamic Javanese cosmology, but generated something genuinely new. This synthesis may legitimately be characterized as *proto-ecosufism*: it meets all three of Nasr's (1996) criteria for ecosufism — recognition of nature's intrinsic sacred value, a spiritually grounded human-nature relationship, and rejection of exploitation as theologically impermissible — while predating the term itself by two centuries.

Comparative Analysis: Centhini's Ecosufism and Contemporary Frameworks

Comparison of the ecosufist dimensions identified in *Serat Centhini* with the frameworks of Nasr (1996, 2007) and Suwito (2014) reveals both profound convergences and instructive differences that together illuminate the specific character of the Nusantara contribution.

With respect to Nasr, the convergence is most visible at the ontological and epistemological levels. Both are grounded in the metaphysics of divine unity as the foundation for nature's sacredness; both insist that knowledge of nature is inseparable from knowledge of God; and both locate the root of the ecological crisis in the secularization of the natural world — its reduction from sacred sign to inert resource. The principal difference is contextual: Nasr writes as a critical diagnostician of Western modernity, addressing an audience that has already lost the sacred worldview and must consciously recover it. *Serat Centhini* was produced within a society still inhabiting the sacred worldview organically — it is expression, not recovery. This distinction is important: it means that *Serat Centhini* offers not a reactive ecosufism shaped by the need to critique modernity, but an affirmative ecosufism that models what it means to inhabit the sacred worldview from within.

With respect to Suwito (2014), the most illuminating point of convergence is the insistence that ecosufism is *praxis* rather than merely contemplation — that the Sufi's spiritual discipline is inseparable from active engagement with the ecological health of the community. *Memayu Hayuning Bawana's* active ethical imperative resonates precisely with Suwito's documentation of communities that treat reforestation and spring-water protection as Sufi spiritual practice. Both refuse the dichotomy between the 'worldly' and the 'spiritual,' integrating ecological action into the very fabric of devotional life. The suggestion of an intellectual genealogy connecting the ecosufist praxis documented by Suwito in Gunung Kidul — geographically adjacent to the Surakarta-Yogyakarta cultural sphere within which *Serat Centhini* was produced — with the text's proto-ecosufist tradition warrants further historical and ethnographic investigation.

The Hifdzu Bi'ah Programme: Actualization of Ecosufist Values in Desa Ngantru

The Hifdzu Bi'ah programme implemented in Desa Ngantru, Kecamatan Ngantang, Kabupaten Malang (January–July 2025) provides a rich empirical site for examining the actualization of ecosufist values within a contemporary Islamic-Javanese community (Kelompok 7 KKN-T, 2025). Desa Ngantru is located at the northern foot of Gunung Kelud — a sacred volcanic mountain in Javanese cosmology — and is characterized by strong communal religiosity structured around Nahdlatul Ulama institutions: Fatayat and Muslimat women's organizations, the local branch of the Ranting NU, Pondok Pesantren Al-Mahrusiyah, and a dense network of weekly devotional gatherings including recitations of *tahlil*, *diba'an*, and *pengajian*. This richly devotional social fabric constitutes precisely the kind of infrastructure of sacred community that ecosufism requires as its enabling condition.

Field research documented that Desa Ngantru faces severe ecological challenges arising from the absence of formal waste management infrastructure. The lack of any designated temporary waste facility (TPS) across the village's five hamlets has produced a pattern of indiscriminate waste disposal: into Sungai Talang (the community's primary

water source), into forest areas adjacent to cemeteries, into irrigation channels, and into abandoned lots. In 2023, accumulated waste in the Sungai Talang catchment contributed to a severe flood that destroyed agricultural crops, rendered the river unfit for bathing and domestic use, and disrupted daily life across multiple hamlets (Kelompok 7 KKN-T, 2025). Additionally, effluent from approximately eighty dairy cattle farms — only two of which employed biogas systems for waste processing — discharged directly into open drainage channels, contaminating water sources and prompting formal complaints from Perum Jasa Tirta regarding operations at the downstream dam.

From an ecosufist perspective, this environmental degradation represents more than a technical failure of waste management. It is a manifestation of what Nasr (1996) identifies as the loss of the sacred worldview: when Sungai Talang — a river that, in the Javanese spiritual tradition that produced *Serat Centhini*, would be understood as a sacred natural entity bearing divine signs — becomes a dump, the community has ceased to perceive it as the *āyah* it ontologically is. The restoration of ecological health is therefore inseparable from the restoration of a sacred perception of nature. This is precisely the horizon within which the Hifdzu Bi'ah programme operated.

Methodological Innovation: PAR Based on Maqashid Syari'ah

The Hifdzu Bi'ah programme employed Participatory Action Research (PAR) grounded in the Maqashid Syari'ah framework developed by Universitas Al-Qolam Malang, drawing on and extending Jasser Auda's (2008) systems-theoretic reconceptualization of the classical Islamic objectives of law. In this framework, *hifdhu bi'ah* (protection of the environment) is operationalized as a seventh pillar of human welfare alongside the classical five (protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property). This represents a significant methodological innovation: it embeds ecological protection within the normative architecture of Islamic jurisprudence, rendering environmental stewardship not an optional aspiration but a religious obligation of the highest order.

This PAR-Maqashid methodology is philosophically consonant with the ecosufism embedded in *Serat Centhini* in a structurally important way: like *manunggaling kawulo-Gusti*, it refuses the separation between the 'sacred' and the 'secular,' between spiritual obligation and communal environmental action. Where the classic Sufi doctrine locates all reality within the unity of divine Being, the PAR-Maqashid methodology locates ecological responsibility within the unity of Islamic normative obligation. Both produce, by different theoretical routes, the same fundamental insight: the care of the natural world is not supplementary to religious life but constitutive of it.

Key Findings: Continuity, Transformation, and Discontinuity

Systematic comparative analysis of *Serat Centhini*'s ecosufism and the Hifdzu Bi'ah programme reveals three analytically distinct relational patterns.

The first pattern is theological continuity. The concept of *khalifah* — expressed in *Serat Centhini* through *manunggaling kawulo-Gusti* and *Memayu Hayuning Bawana*, and in the Hifdzu Bi'ah programme through *hifdhu bi'ah* in the Maqashid Syari'ah framework — remains the unifying theological core of both. Similarly, the role of women as primary agents of spiritual and social transmission manifests continuously: from the figure of Centhini herself — whose name titles the text and who functions as the repository and transmitter of knowledge — to the women of Fatayat and Muslimat NU who serve as the most effective conduits of ecosufist values in Desa Ngantru. This continuity suggests that the Javanese-Islamic tradition maintains a structural predisposition to centre women in the transmission of sacred ecological knowledge.

The second pattern is productive transformation. The most consequential transformation is the shift from individual spiritual praxis to collective social action. In *Serat Centhini*, the ecosufist orientation is realized through the individual pilgrim's *suluk* — the intensely personal spiritual journey through sacred landscapes in search of *ma'rifāt*. In the Hifdzu Bi'ah programme, the same ecological-spiritual orientation is realized through collective PAR methodology that positions the entire community — irrespective of individual spiritual attainment — as the agent of ecological transformation. This shift from individual to collective praxis represents a democratization of ecosufism: its values become accessible and actionable for all community members, not only for those who have undertaken the Sufi path of individual spiritual discipline. The medium of transmission also transforms productively, from oral-literary tradition to multimedia community campaigns (banners, posters, documentary video, and social media content).

The third pattern is critical discontinuity that demands urgent attention. Most significantly, the role of young people as agents of ecosufism has markedly weakened. In *Serat Centhini*, young men — Jayengresmi, Amongraga, and their companions — are the central protagonists of the spiritual-ecological journey; youth and spiritual seeking are coextensive. In Desa Ngantru, the Karang Taruna (village youth organization) was found to be entirely inactive, with youth participation in any community programme effectively absent. This generational discontinuity is structurally threatening to the long-term viability of ecosufism as a living tradition: without the active transmission of ecological-spiritual values to young people, the tradition risks becoming institutionally frozen and ultimately extinct. The second critical discontinuity is the absence of permanent institutional arrangements. *Serat Centhini* has survived for over two centuries because it became embedded in a living literary-pedagogical tradition. The Hifdzu Bi'ah programme, by contrast, concluded without having established the institutional infrastructure — village regulation (Perdes), formal waste management structure, operational waste facility — required to sustain its achievements beyond the KKN period. This demonstrates that ecosufism requires not only spiritual motivation but institutional embodiment if it is to endure.

Critical Reflections: Ecosufism as Unfinished Praxis

The Hifdzu Bi'ah programme's most significant achievement is demonstrably not the construction of physical waste infrastructure — the originally intended TPS/TPA was not realized — but the establishment of a community-wide conversation about the spiritual meaning of environmental responsibility. The consistent integration of ecological messaging into the weekly rhythms of Fatayat and Muslimat devotional gatherings — gatherings that already commanded the trust, authority, and habituated participation of the community's women — represents a methodologically significant insight. Ecosufism is most effectively communicated not as a separate 'environmental programme' imported from outside, but as the recovery of an ecological dimension already latent within the community's own spiritual tradition. The recognition by residents of RT 26 and RT 29 that disposing of waste in Sungai Talang is incompatible with their identity as Muslims — evidenced by the spontaneous shift towards domestic waste burning as an interim alternative — illustrates, however imperfectly, this moment of spiritual-ecological recognition.

At the same time, the programme's structural limitations are instructive in ways that extend beyond Desa Ngantru. The inconsistency of the village government's commitment — initial verbal support declining into bureaucratic inaction — demonstrates that ecosufism as community praxis cannot rely solely on spiritual motivation and participatory methodology. It requires the active support of local political authority to secure land, regulatory frameworks, and operational resources. The classical analogy is instructive: *Serat Centhini* itself required the patronage of the Surakarta royal court — the political authority of Pakubuwana IV — to be produced and preserved. The ecosufist tradition has historically depended on institutional support from centres of power, and contemporary community-based ecosufism programmes are no exception. The lesson is that sustainable ecosufism requires a three-dimensional architecture: robust theological values, participatory methodology, and supportive institutional-political structures.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that *Serat Centhini* contains a coherent and sophisticated proto-ecosufism constituted by three interlocking pillars: the ontological foundation of *wahdat al-wujud / manunggaling kawulo-Gusti* (which renders the destruction of nature ontologically equivalent to the destruction of the divine mirror); the epistemological framework of nature as *āyāt kawniyyah* (which makes the loss of any natural species or ecosystem theologically irreversible); and the ethical imperative of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* (which demands not passive restraint but active, transformative custodianship of the cosmic order). This proto-ecosufism precedes the contemporary concept of ecosufism by two centuries, demonstrating that the Islamic-Javanese tradition generated this synthesis organically, from within the logic of its own spiritual and ethical resources, long before the term existed.

The case study of the Hifdzu Bi'ah programme reveals that these classical values are not merely historically significant but remain spiritually generative for contemporary Islamic-Javanese communities. The programme's most effective moment — the consistent weaving of ecological consciousness into devotional gatherings through Fatayat and Muslimat NU — validates the central ecosufist premise that genuine ecological transformation requires genuine spiritual transformation, and that the communal structures of Islamic devotional life remain the most potent infrastructure available for this purpose. The comparative analysis reveals patterns of strong theological continuity, productive methodological transformation, and critical institutional discontinuity that together define both the promise and the unfinished agenda of Nusantara ecosufism.

Three strategic recommendations follow from this study's findings. First, the explicit development of a Nusantara ecosufism model that formally integrates the classical resources of *Serat Centhini* and the broader Javanese-Islamic intellectual tradition with the PAR-Maqashid Syari'ah methodology as an operational framework for Islamic environmental programmes in Indonesia. Second, the institutionalization of ecosufist values through formal regulatory instruments at multiple levels: village environmental regulations (Perdes), pesantren environmental governance policies, and the integration of Islamic ecological ethics as a substantive component of Islamic education curricula from pesantren to university. Third, the deliberate cultivation of young people as the primary agents and inheritors of the ecosufist tradition — revitalizing the role that Jayengresmi and his companions embody in *Serat Centhini*: the young seeker of sacred knowledge who is simultaneously the keeper of the sacred world.

Ultimately, this research affirms that the answer to the global ecological crisis need not always be sought in external frameworks. It has been preserved for over two centuries in the pages of *Serat Centhini*, awaiting a new generation of readers with the hermeneutical horizon to recognize it for what it is: not the antiquity of a culture that has passed, but the wisdom of a living tradition that has not yet been fully heard.

REFERENCES

- Auda, J. (2008). *Maqasid al-Shariah as philosophy of Islamic law: A systems approach*. International Institute of Islamic Thought.
- Centhini (Kamajaya, Ed.). (1985–1991). *Serat Centhini: Suluk Tambangraras–Amongraga* (12 vols.). Yayasan Centhini.
- Fathurahman, O. (2016). *Shattārīyah silsilah in Aceh, Java, and the Lanao area of Mindanao*. Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.
- Florida, N. K. (2012). *Javanese literature in Surakarta manuscripts: Vol. 3*. Cornell University Southeast Asia Program.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (2004). *Truth and method* (2nd ed., J. Weinsheimer & D. G. Marshall, Trans.). Continuum. (Original work published 1960)

- Gufron, U., & Hambali, R. Y. A. (2022). Manusia, alam dan Tuhan dalam ekosufisme Al-Ghazali. *Jaqfi: Jurnal Aqidah dan Filsafat Islam*, 7(1), 86–103. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jaqfi.v7i1.16275>
- IPCC. (2021). *Climate change 2021: The physical science basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report*. Cambridge University Press.
- Izutsu, T. (1983). *Sufism and Taoism: A comparative study of key philosophical concepts*. University of California Press.
- Kelompok 7 KKN-T Universitas Al-Qolam Malang. (2025). *Laporan KKN-T Gerakan Desa Masalah Hifdzu Bi'ah: Analisis dampak lingkungan dari pengolahan sampah di Desa Ngantru*. Universitas Al-Qolam Malang.
- Nasr, S. H. (1996). *Religion and the order of nature*. Oxford University Press.
- Nasr, S. H. (2007). *The garden of truth: The vision and practice of Sufism, Islam's mystical tradition*. HarperOne.
- Ricci, R. (2024). A Sufi traveler on the road in nineteenth-century Java. *Philological Encounters*, 9(1–2), 60–89. <https://doi.org/10.1163/24519197-12340028>
- Ricklefs, M. C. (2024). Centhini, Serat. In *Encyclopaedia of Islam THREE*. Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_23877
- Simuh. (1988). *Mistik Islam kejawen Raden Ngabehi Ranggawarsita: Suatu studi terhadap Serat Wirid Hidayat Jati*. Penerbit Universitas Indonesia (UI-Press).
- Sururi, A., Kuswanjono, A., & Utomo, A. H. (2020). Ecological Sufism concepts in the thought of Seyyed Hossein Nasr. *Research, Society and Development*, 9(10), e5769108611. <https://doi.org/10.33448/rsd-v9i10.8611>
- Suwito, N. S. (2014). *Ekosufisme: Konsep, strategi, dan dampaknya terhadap pendidikan Islam*. STAIN Press.
- Tjahjandari, L., & Setyani, T. I. (2024). Secularization of Serat Centhini in the context of creative industries. *Mozaik Humaniora*, 24(2), 151–164.
- Wanti, M. A., & Setyani, T. I. (2021). Memayu hayuning bawana in Serat Cemporet as Javanese natural unity principle. In *Proceedings of INUSHARTS 2020* (pp. 178–183). Atlantis Press. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.211110.026>