

HARMONY WITH NATURE: A LITERATURE REVIEW OF ISLAMIC AND PERENNIAL VALUES IN CIKONDANG INDIGENOUS TRADITIONS

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Abstract

The Cikondang indigenous community, one of the indigenous communities in Bandung Regency, holds a wealth of rich and diverse cultural values, including Islamic and timeless values that serve as guidelines for life. However, in an era of modernization and rapid environmental change, challenges to the preservation of such traditions and values are increasing. A lack of understanding and documentation regarding the relationship between these values and harmony with nature can result in the loss of cultural identity and damage the balance of local ecosystems. Therefore, this research aims to explore and analyze existing literature to understand how Islamic and perennial values are reflected in the traditions of the Cikondang community and how these values can contribute to efforts to maintain harmony between humans and nature. The research method used is a literature review. The selected literature includes journal articles, books, and academic sources relevant to the themes of local wisdom, religious values, and community relations with the environment,

with a focus on publications from the last two decades. The results demonstrate that there is an integration of Islamic and perennial values in the Cikondang indigenous community. These values create a social system that encourages collaboration between humans and nature, where the Cikondang people see themselves as part of the ecosystem, not its master. Islamic values address environmental management, such as the concept of khalifah (stewardship), encouraging people to preserve natural resources. Similarly, perennial values promote respect for nature and encourage strengthening the relationship between humans and nature.

Masyarakat adat Cikondang, salah satu komunitas adat di Kabupaten Bandung, memiliki kekayaan nilai budaya yang kaya dan beragam, termasuk nilai-nilai Islam dan nilai-nilai abadi yang menjadi pedoman hidup. Namun, di era modernisasi dan perubahan lingkungan yang cepat, tantangan terhadap pelestarian tradisi dan nilai-nilai tersebut semakin meningkat. Kurangnya pemahaman dan dokumentasi mengenai hubungan antara nilai-nilai ini dengan keharmonisan alam dapat menyebabkan hilangnya identitas budaya serta merusak keseimbangan ekosistem lokal. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi dan menganalisis literatur yang ada guna memahami bagaimana nilai-nilai Islam dan abadi tercermin dalam tradisi komunitas Cikondang dan bagaimana nilai-nilai ini dapat berkontribusi pada upaya menjaga keharmonisan antara manusia dan alam. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah tinjauan literatur. Literatur yang dipilih mencakup artikel jurnal, buku, dan sumber akademis yang relevan dengan tema kearifan lokal, nilai-nilai keagamaan, dan hubungan masyarakat dengan lingkungan, dengan fokus pada publikasi dua dekade terakhir. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya integrasi nilai-nilai Islam dan abadi dalam komunitas adat Cikondang. Nilai-nilai ini menciptakan sistem sosial yang mendorong kolaborasi antara manusia dan alam, di mana masyarakat Cikondang melihat diri mereka sebagai bagian dari ekosistem, bukan penguasanya. Nilai-nilai Islam berbicara tentang pengelolaan lingkungan, seperti konsep khalifah (pemimpin) di bumi, yang mendorong orang untuk melestarikan sumber daya alam. Demikian pula, nilai-nilai abadi menghormati alam dan mendorong pemeliharaan serta penguatan hubungan antara manusia dan alam.

Keywords: *Cikondang indigenous community, local wisdom, Islamic values, perennial philosophy*

Introduction

Modernization has gradually brought changes to human life, leading to life crises (Wora, 2006). Human culture and knowledge systems have shifted, particularly in how people view nature. Modern humans see nature as an object to be enjoyed. Modern rationalism has displaced the position of God in human life. According to Emanuel, in the modern world, rationality no longer belongs to God but to man (Wora, 2006).

The development of science and technology has further encouraged the free exploitation of nature. This is unsurprising, as Western science has become increasingly secular. Secularism, in this context, refers to the exclusion of divine elements from the objects of science, which were once integral to the scientific worldview (Kartanegara, 2003). The consequence of this shift is the loss of the sacred aspects of nature. For modern humans, nature is merely an object, detached from human life, and therefore something to be used and enjoyed without limits. In Nasr's words, modern man has turned nature into a form of "prostitution," to be consumed without any sense of responsibility (Nasr, 1988). This perspective stands in stark contrast to pre-modern views, which held that nature possessed a sacred quality. It was believed that nature communicated with humanity, and all natural phenomena had meaning. Nature was also seen as a source of spirituality, as the structure of the cosmos conveyed a spiritual message to humans (Nasr, 1988).

Modern humans have excessively exploited nature, causing damage to habitats for both humans and other creatures. The consequences of these actions include a loss of balance and an environmental crisis. This environmental crisis negatively impacts human life, resulting in disasters such as floods and landslides. According to Nasr, the domination of nature has led to issues such as overpopulation, the lack of breathing space, urban congestion, depletion of natural resources, and the destruction of natural beauty (Nasr, 1988).

Environmental degradation can be caused by excessive mining, mass exploitation, forest burning, and dumping waste into rivers. These actions

trigger major disasters like landslides, floods, and droughts. Many human activities toward nature are carried out without responsibility, leaving people unaware that they are, indirectly, destroying their own habitat (Ramdhan et al., 2015; Mulyadi et al., 2022).

The ongoing destruction of nature must be stopped, or at least humans need to be made aware of their role within nature. Modern society can learn from indigenous peoples who diligently protect their environment. In fact, many humanitarian disasters are a result of human behavior itself (Abdillah, 2021; Suyatman, 2018).

Addressing environmental problems requires more than just technology and scientific methods; it also calls for forces such as religion, beliefs, and ethics that shape human attitudes toward nature. Moral and religious values often offer valuable guidance for environmental protection and preservation (Suyatman, 2018; Maridi, 2015).

These values are closely tied to local wisdom as principles and practices embraced by local communities in interacting with their environment, forming value systems and customary norms. Local wisdom, rooted in indigenous traditions, guides behavior passed down through generations (Salim, 2016; Chairul, 2019). Thus, the sustainability of local wisdom is reflected in the practices that contain values guiding the behavior of certain communities.

Communities with local wisdom are often tied to indigenous peoples. The term "indigenous peoples" refers to various groups worldwide, each distinct in history, traditions, culture, and lifestyle. Despite these differences, they share a deep, often spiritual, connection to their traditional lands, which shapes their identity (Henningfeld, 2009).

Indigenous peoples often express their culture through systems of rituals, activities, and artifacts, which carry values vital to their survival. This cultural richness is evident in the Cikondang indigenous community, a Sundanese ethnic group known for preserving ancestral teachings. All members of the Cikondang community practice Islam, reflecting a blend of Islamic and Sundanese cultural traditions in daily life. A key aspect of the

Cikondang community is their dedication to preserving and utilizing their natural environment (Miharja, 2016). In the context of climate change and environmental degradation, the practices of the Cikondang people offer valuable insights into sustainable solutions. Traditional practices often hold important lessons in environmental management. By understanding these adaptive practices, challenges, and the role of religious values, we can develop more effective strategies to preserve both cultural and ecological heritage.

Research on the Cikondang indigenous community, focusing on their culture, local wisdom, and environmental practices, has been extensive. Miharja (2015a) studied their cultural approach to environmental preservation and found that many traditions reflect a deep concern for the environment. For instance, the Cikondang area remains unaffected by landslides during the rainy season, and water sources are effectively utilized for agriculture, leading to abundant crops. Even during extended dry seasons, the Cikondang community does not face water shortages, despite being located in mountainous terrain.

Darmawan et al. (2023) focuses on the ecological local wisdom of the Cikondang traditional village through the concept of an eco-museum. The results highlighted how the values of the Cikondang indigenous people can be applied to environmental conservation efforts. This cultural inheritance can be preserved and passed on to younger generations through an eco-museum, which serves as a platform for appreciation and education. Similarly, Widiанти & Santosa (2021) examined the territoriality of space within the Cikondang traditional house during the Wuku Taun tradition. Their research found that territoriality is maintained through spatial arrangements, where space users adhere to customary restrictions as a defensive mechanism. These rules, grounded in cultural and ritual practices, foster an orderly territorial structure, demonstrating how indigenous customs continue to shape territorial behavior.

Much of the existing research centers on the culture, local wisdom, and traditions passed down through generations in the Cikondang traditional village. However, further exploration is needed to examine the

enduring values of local wisdom through the lens of perennial philosophy. Perennial philosophy, also known as traditional philosophy, addresses the existence of "The Sacred" or "The One," in contrast to modern philosophy, which often seeks to exclude the sacred from intellectual discourse (Wora, 2006; Amalia, 2019).

Perennial philosophy, or *Philosophia perennis*, literally means "everlasting philosophy." The term 'perennial' can be understood in two ways: as a specific philosophical tradition or as a philosophy with timeless teachings, irrespective of its name (Amalia, 2019). The concept of wisdom, particularly local wisdom, encompasses the following meanings: First, it refers to the wise and virtuous views of local leaders or ancestors, which serve as guiding principles for the community. Second, local wisdom represents ancestral values integrated into religion, culture, and customs. Third, it reflects a body of knowledge developed by local communities through generations of experience in cultivating nature, fostering a mutually beneficial and sustainable relationship between humans and the environment. In this sense, local wisdom is synonymous with ecological wisdom (Miharja, 2015b).

This research focuses on the local practices and values upheld by the Cikondang indigenous community in Bandung Regency, particularly in their interactions with the natural environment. It also explores how Islamic values and perennial philosophy are integrated into Cikondang customary practices, shaping the community's attitudes and behaviors towards environmental stewardship.

Method

This research is qualitative in nature, utilizing a literature-based approach (Darmalaksana, 2020). Literature was selected from various sources such as journal articles, books, and other academic materials relevant to the themes of local wisdom, religious values, perennial philosophy, and the relationship between communities and the environment, with a focus on publications from the last two decades related to local wisdom, Islamic

values, and perennial philosophy within the traditions of the Cikondang indigenous community. Once gathered, the literature sources were categorized according to the research questions. After categorization, the researcher extracted data from the library sources. The next step involved exploring and analyzing the existing literature to understand how Islamic and perennial values are reflected in the traditions of the Cikondang community, and how these values can contribute to efforts to maintain harmony between humans and nature.

Findings and Discussion

Cultural and Environmental Context of the Cikondang Indigenous Community

Administratively, the Cikondang Traditional Village is located in Lamajang Village, Pangalengan District, Bandung Regency. It is bordered to the north by Sukamaju Village in Cimaung Subdistrict, to the south by the Gunung Tilu Protection Forest and Pulosari Village in Pangalengan Subdistrict, to the east by the Cisangkuy River, Cikalong Village, and Tribhakti Village, and to the west by Sukamaju Village and Mekarsari Village in Pangalengan Subdistrict. To the northwest, it is bordered by the Gunung Tilu Forest and the Pasir Jambu Gambung Tea Plantation.

Cikondang is a peaceful village located on the slopes of Mount Tilu. For generations, the people of Cikondang have preserved their ancestral customs. As such, the Cikondang Village community is a closely-knit group that continues to uphold these traditions. The village has a leader, known as the *Juru Kunci* (or *Kuncen*), who is considered to possess deep knowledge of the village's customs. Cikondang Village is rich in both tangible and intangible heritage, including its customs and traditions (Miharja, 2016). For them, earning more about their local culture which helps preserving and perpetuating their cultural authenticity and indigenous heritage (Gunara et al., 2022).

The Wise Attitude of the Cikondang Indigenous People towards Nature

For generations, the people of Cikondang Village still adhere to ancestral customs. Therefore, wisdom inherited from generation to generation, makes the local area capable of making its natural environment sustainable. Cikondang has changed shape since the great fire of 1942 that hit this village, but the traditional values were still maintained. Some traditional buildings in the form of houses with the concept of a Sundanese house appear to still stand firm and well-maintained. It is what makes indigenous identity carried by the Cikondang village (Miharja, 2016).

In addition to the form of buildings that are still maintained, there are also traditions that to this day continue to be carried out for generations. This behavior illustrates the attention of Cikondang indigenous people to the surrounding nature and at the same time affirms the sacredness of nature. This can be seen from the way they treat nature. For them, nature is not an object that can be exploited excessively. Nature and humans have a relationship that must be maintained. Therefore, a number of traditions illustrate human respect for nature and servitude to the transcendent. This growing local wisdom is also a bulwark against modern paradigms and beliefs that have made nature an object to be controlled and as an entity separate from humans. Modernity has made humans arrogant about their abilities, emphasizing absolute individuality. In the era of modernity, the position of divine reality or universal reality has been eliminated, they focus more on particularity. In the end, God is no longer needed to answer questions about the meaning of the world (Abdillah, 2021; Wora, 2006).

The following are some traditions that have survived and continue to be practiced by the Cikondang indigenous people for generations (Miharja, 2016; Hasanah et al., 2021): First, the tradition of *Ngaruat Lembur* (Hajat Lembur). This is commonly practiced as a celebration held by the local community to ensure the safety of their hometown. *Ngaruat Lembur* is performed to ask God for blessings and protection over the environment they live in.

Second, the *Ngaruat Bumi* tradition, or "purification of the land." It is a ritual where the community seeks to cleanse or purify the land, offering respect to nature and seeking blessings for prosperity and harmony. The ceremony typically includes offerings and prayers to maintain the balance between humans and the natural world. Additionally, there is the *Ngaruat Kandang Ayam*, which involves cleansing the chicken coop (Miharja, 2016) to ensure that the chickens and their environment remain healthy and prosperous. This ritual symbolizes respect for animals and acknowledges their importance in the community's livelihood.

Third, the *Ruat Solokan* tradition, which focuses on preserving water channels that irrigate rice fields, ponds, and other areas. By maintaining these water flows, the community ensures they continue to benefit from them (Hasanah et al., 2021). In the *Ruat Solokan* tradition, the values of Islamic teachings are evident, with the recitation of *tawasul* and prayers seeking closeness to Allah. This tradition is an expression of gratitude to Allah.

Fourth, the *Ruat Hajat* tradition. This tradition can be understood as a cleansing ceremony to fulfill a significant desire or purpose (Miharja, 2016). It is typically performed during important moments in a person's life, such as before a wedding, embarking on a significant journey, or at the beginning of an agricultural season. It can also be conducted on a community level, particularly during harvest times or to commemorate special village events.

Fifth, the tradition of agricultural ceremonies. During farming activities, the farmers prepare a simple set of materials for the ceremony, including *hanjuang*, *jawer kotok*, temiang leaves, and *peuteuy selong* leaves. They then make a seven-ingredient salad, consisting of tamarind, coconut, sugar, *tiwu*, *surawung*, golden bananas, and *ambon* bananas. This salad is wrapped in banana leaves. Additionally, they prepare a set of betel materials with incense and frankincense.

Sixth, the tradition of the Hajat Paralon ceremony. *Hajat* or *Selamatan* is a tradition practiced in rural areas, including Cikondang Village in

Lamajang Village, which is passed down to the next generation. It serves as an expression of gratitude for blessings and protection from natural or human dangers. The term *hajat* comes from the word *hayat*, meaning life, which is reflected in the phrase *hajat solokan hirupna solokan ayana cai dengdeng langgeng henteu kakurangan cai* [The purpose of the canal is for life, with a constant flow of water, ensuring there is never a shortage of water]. This tradition highlights the Cikondang indigenous people's responsibility in managing and utilizing water (Hasanah et al., 2021). It also demonstrates their approach to village spatial planning, the establishment of protected forests, and the enforcement of various prohibitions and guidelines. The enduring legacy of water conservation wisdom in the Cikondang community is evident in the community's active involvement in ceremonial activities and the consistent integration of this wisdom into daily routines.

In addition to water conservation, the Cikondang indigenous people's farming knowledge system is also based on local wisdom. They have developed the ability to predict when to start planting and when to allow the land to rest. Their expertise in irrigation and fertilization methods leads to abundant harvests (Hasanah et al., 2021)

The belief in the protective power of ancestral spirits is thought to shield the Cikondang community from various problems and dangers. This trust and the enduring relationship the Cikondang people maintain with the transcendent have created a harmonious bond with nature. They recognize that when the harmony between humans and nature is disrupted, it is often a result of a broken relationship between humans and God (Nasr, 1990).

The main ancestors worshiped in Cikondang are *Eyang Pameugeut* and *Eyang Istri*, an ancestral couple who are significant elders in the Cikondang indigenous tradition. The local community regards these two Eyangs as guardians responsible for spreading Islam in the South Bandung region, particularly in Cikondang Village. They are believed to have "tilem," meaning they disappeared without a trace, as if swallowed by the earth or the jungle (Miharja, 2016; Istianti et al., 2022).

Customs related to the ancestors, such as adhering to taboos and conducting traditional ceremonies, are preserved to protect natural resources. These customs are observed by all 200 households in the Cikondang traditional village. Despite living in a modern era, the community has successfully preserved the environment and its living creatures for over 300 years. One example is the sacred or prohibited forests, which the local people continue to maintain. Miharja (2016) noted that the prohibited or sacred forest in the traditional village covers approximately three hectares and is part of the Gunung Tilu area. The Cikondang community firmly believes that the forest is a source of life that must not be disturbed. As a result, it is forbidden to cut down trees for firewood; only fallen branches or trees are permitted to be collected.

The knowledge and interaction between the Cikondang people and their natural surroundings, particularly the Mount Tilu forest, are evident in their multilayered ecosystem management, reflecting environmental wisdom. Their land management practices are based on historical experiences. According to this indigenous understanding, the landscape is defined as an open space that serves specific functions for daily life and is deeply connected to the community's history. The community names landscapes based on their purpose, attributes, or ownership. For instance, the *Parabon* landscape derives its name from the phrase "*paranti ngebon*," meaning gardening, and refers to land used primarily for gardening. The *Lamping* landscape, on the other hand, refers to steep land with a slope of over 45 degrees, making it unsuitable for conventional farming practices. In accordance with ancestral customs, certain rice field areas are designated as *Sawah Adat* based on their ownership (Ramadhan et al., 2015; Miharja, 2015a).

The knowledge and interaction of the Sundanese community in the Cikondang traditional village with the surrounding nature, particularly the Gunung Tilu forest, is demonstrated by a stratified ecosystem landscape that reflects environmental wisdom. This is reinforced by binding rules for the community based on "Pamali" (a law of taboo or sin). With such an

arrangement, the community refrains from exploiting the forest excessively and is encouraged to cultivate their own surroundings. They are also required to maintain the preservation of their forests, as it is considered part of their ancestral duties (Miharja, 2016).

In relation to "pamali," the term has an influence not only on the Cikondang residents but also on those in the surrounding areas. People are deterred from engaging in actions deemed taboo. Often, the specific meaning and intent behind a prohibition are not explained, with only the consequences mentioned. One example of environmental prohibitions in Cikondang custom is as follows: (a) *Teu meunang ka leuweung (karamat) dina poe Rebo, Juma'ah jeung sabtu* (Entering the sacred forest is forbidden on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays). The intent behind this is to give the forest a rest, allowing plants to grow undisturbed and animals the chance to breed. (b) *Teu meunang subat-sabet lamun lain sabeuteunnana* (Careless cutting of plants is forbidden). This suggests that certain plants, beneficial to humans, should not be unnecessarily destroyed. (c) *Teu meunang ngadeugkeun imah jeung teu meunang peupeulakan dina bulan Muharram, Safar, jeung Mulud, oge dina bulan Rajab, Reuwah jeung Puasa* (Building houses or starting planting activities during the months of Muharram, Safar, Mulud, Rajab, Reuwah, and Ramadan is prohibited). These months are filled with religious and traditional rituals, which often involve large gatherings. During this time, there is a balance between human activities related to worship and rituals, while the environment is given a period of recovery, as human interference is reduced (Darmawan et al., 2023, pp. 83-84).

Uniquely, people from outside the Cikondang indigenous community do not dare to enter the forest. They believe that if they recklessly do so, they will get lost. The trees in the forest are dense, with many having diameters of up to two meters. Every five years, to replace fallen trees, the community plants new trees, such as eucalyptus and pine. The forest is home to various animals, including monkeys, deer, tigers, wild pigs, and large snakes. Preserving the forest to maintain the natural balance is emphasized by Abah Ilin, one of the informants and a third-generation descendant of the founder

of Kampung Cikondang. He is highly active in preserving ancestral traditions for the sake of environmental balance, a practice followed by many other residents. As a result, during natural disasters such as landslides and floods that affect other areas in West Java, including Bandung District, the residents of Kampung Cikondang remain safe (Fatimah & Wazni, 2020).

The cultural system that develops in the Cikondang community certainly contains values that are useful for life. Although in some cases there is a mystical factors, but if studied logically and critically, it contains important meanings and values in building harmonious relationships between fellow humans and between humans and nature (Ramadhan et al., 2015). This cultural system carries profound values that provide practical guidance for sustainable living and environmental stewardship.

Another unique features of Cikondang village that reflects a modest lifestyle is the complex of traditional houses, also known as sacred houses. Surrounding these houses are rice barns, called "leuit." Nearby, there are also "lisung" and rice pounders. These traditional houses are part of the ancestral heritage that must be carefully preserved, including the various customs and rules associated with them. In a traditional house, guests or visitors can only drink or partake in food in a manner that aligns with the environmental messages passed down from the ancestors. The types of plants and animals around the traditional house are also well documented (Miharja, 2016) and even used for medicine (Mulyani et al., 2018).

The system ingrained in the Cikondang indigenous community is a universal one, reflecting values that apply across cultures and represent the highest ideals of human life. This aligns with the views of Kluckhohn (1954), as cited by Syarifuddin (2021), regarding how humans relate to nature: (a) life must submit to nature, meaning accepting natural occurrences as they happen; (b) life must be in harmony with nature, meaning that people should choose the right times for their activities; (c) humans must live in control of nature, meaning that they must acquire the knowledge to anticipate natural events and learn how to develop and manage them.

Overall, for the Cikondang indigenous people, forests play a crucial role. The forest is a sacred place that must be preserved, serving as the foundation for their philosophy on utilizing natural resources and maintaining environmental balance. Communities that uphold traditional values and rely on the forest have developed various methods of forest management, particularly through the preservation of sacred forests.

Integration of Local Wisdom, Islamic and Perennial Values in Cikondang Community

The Cikondang community is part of the Sundanese ethnic group and is categorized as an indigenous community because they continue to adhere to the teachings of their ancestors. Furthermore, according to the data obtained, the Cikondang community is entirely Muslim, indicating an integration of Islam with Sundanese culture in all aspects of life. One of the prominent characteristics of the Cikondang indigenous community is their persistence in preserving and utilizing the surrounding environment for their livelihood. This is evident during the rainy season, when the Cikondang area is unaffected by landslides, and water sources are optimally utilized for agriculture, despite the village being located in the hills of Gunung Tilu. Similarly, during the third dry season, the Cikondang indigenous community does not face water shortages, despite its position in the mountains (Darmawan et al., 2023).

As a result, the local wisdom that has developed within the Cikondang indigenous community represents an integration of religious and perennial values. These values, which remain strong within the community, can serve as an alternative solution to the ecological crises faced by modern society. They also form the foundation of an identity that maintains a balanced relationship with nature. The Islamic and perennial values within the Cikondang culture help preserve local wisdom, which has often been overlooked in addressing environmental issues (Ramdhan et al., 2015). Despite this, there is sometimes a perceived tension between religious and cultural values.

However, the facts show that religion and culture share a strong bond, as religion arises within the context of human life, which includes culture, and it naturally mingles with social life. Islam, for example, has been closely intertwined with Arab culture since its inception. As a universal religion, Islam is seen as a blessing for the universe, and as it spread, it mingled with the local cultures of various societies. Therefore, Islam and local culture cannot be separated; rather, they complement and support one another. In Indonesia, the relationship between religion and culture has historically been harmonious. For instance, the relationship between Islam and Sundanese culture is so close that it is often expressed through phrases like "*Islam teh Sunda, Sunda teh Islam*" (Islam is Sundanese, and Sundanese is Islam) or "*Urang Sunda mah geus Islam samemeh Islam*" (The Sundanese have been Islamic before Islam entered the Sundanese region) (Miharja, 2015b, p. 76).

Islam is a religion whose source of truth and law comes from Allah, but it does not dismiss laws or rules that arise within society. Islam respects cultural norms as long as they do not conflict with its fundamental teachings. Thus, Islam in Indonesia, including among the Sundanese, has a unique character that distinguishes it from Islam in the Middle East. This is because the expression of Islam in the archipelago has developed specific intellectual, cultural, social, and political patterns (Syihab, 1996). The presence of Islam in a society with its own pre-existing culture has led to a dialectical process, resulting in various patterns of interrelation and the manifestation of diverse ritual traditions and religious ceremonies.

The relationship between religion and culture in any society will have different patterns, depending on the community's conditions. When religion interacts with the culture of rural communities, its relationship will differ from that in urban settings. Additionally, ethnic factors can significantly influence these dynamics. For instance, the relationship between religion and culture in Javanese communities differs from that in Sundanese communities (Miharja, 2015b).

Nevertheless, Islam, as a monotheistic religion, views nature as sacred. Everything in the universe originates from Divine Reality and reflects that Reality. The entire cosmos, visible and invisible, is a manifestation of the Divine Names and Attributes and emanates from the "treasury" of God. Therefore, God's wisdom permeates the universe, and Muslims view the cosmos as God's primordial revelation. The Quran emphasizes this idea: "There is nothing that does not glorify Him" (17:44) (Nasr, 1988).

The views and attitudes of the Cikondang indigenous people align with the perennial philosophical paradigm, which considers nature an inseparable part of humanity. This traditional philosophy, known as perennial philosophy, always speaks of "The Sacred" or "The One" in all manifestations, such as religion, philosophy, science, and art (Nasr, 1988, p. 18). For religious individuals, space is not homogeneous; it contains breaks and interruptions where the sacred manifests. This manifestation of the sacred reveals absolute reality, contrasting with the non-reality of the surrounding space. The sacred, in this way, ontologically constitutes the world (Eliade, 1959).

Meanwhile, modern philosophy tends to remove the sacred from natural objects, separating spirituality from the worldly and even attempting to eliminate it altogether (Hidayat & Nafis, 1995). In perennial philosophy, nature is considered sacred and must not be exploited recklessly. Humans and nature share a close relationship, and maintaining balance with nature ensures harmony. The attitude of the Cikondang indigenous people toward nature contrasts sharply with modern thought. For them, nature is sacred, believed to communicate with humans, and all natural phenomena are seen as meaningful. Nature is also viewed as the source of religion, as the structure of the cosmos carries spiritual messages for humanity (Nasr, 1988).

Perennial philosophy, as articulated by Griffiths, has influenced contemporary human life in several ways. These include: (a) fostering a new relationship with nature based on an organic worldview, replacing the mechanistic view. Humans must cultivate a sense of cosmic interconnectedness and responsibility toward the world as a living entity. (b)

Encouraging a sense of oneness with the universe, shifting away from domination to a deeper ecological understanding. (c) The rise of a new human community shaped by these values, which Griffiths calls the "neolithic model of community," where health, wholeness, and holiness are interconnected (Wora, 2006, pp. 62-65).

The findings of this research, while valuable, face several limitations. The literature review lacks direct engagement with the Cikondang community, potentially missing real-time changes in cultural practices. Additionally, focusing on publications from the last two decades may exclude newer insights. The broad categorization of Islamic and perennial values could also overlook nuanced applications within subgroups. Therefore, follow-up studies are needed to conduct field research, include up-to-date sources, and explore the practical application of these values within different contexts in the community.

Conclusion

The problems in nature, such as environmental damage, disasters, landslides, and water shortages, are caused by excessive human domination over nature. This issue is exacerbated by the development of secular science and technology, which has led people to neglect their humanity. While the destruction of nature is recognized by all, few realize that disharmony among humans stems from their broken relationship with God. Modern humans no longer view nature as sacred, treating it merely as an object.

To prevent further destruction, it is crucial to study local cultures and reconnect with the transcendent. Researchers have found that indigenous peoples, such as the Cikondang, still preserve nature because they maintain strong relationships with both nature and the divine. The Cikondang community continues to uphold ancestral teachings, particularly in managing nature, following the philosophy "mipit kudu amit, ngala kudu bebeja" (picking must be done with permission, and taking must be announced).

The research also highlights how Islamic and perennial values are integrated into Cikondang traditions, offering insight into how local customs serve as a bridge between spiritual practices and environmental preservation. These findings can serve as a foundation for further, more in-depth research on spiritual and cultural values, as well as open the door to comparative studies with other traditions in different regions.

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