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## Actualization of Sufism Teachings in Environmental Conservation: Lessons from Tarekat Rowobayan

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PERADABAN JOURNAL OF  
RELIGION AND SOCIETY

Vol. 1, Issue 1

ISSN 2962-7958

Published Online

July 2022

[http://jurnal.peradabanpublishing.com/  
index.php/PJRS/article/view/30](http://jurnal.peradabanpublishing.com/index.php/PJRS/article/view/30)

Page : 41-54

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### Abstract

The tarekat's involvement in environmental conservation efforts has not been explored much. It is because tarekat is generally only associated with efforts to strengthen spirituality. Sufism and Tarekat are often not involved in discussions on social and ecological issues. This article aims to examine the Rowobayan congregation related to environmental ethics and environmental conservation efforts. Rowobayan is a tarekat whose validity is recognized by the majority of Muslims and has a substantial role in the development of the tarekat in Indonesia. Thus, his teachings on environmental ethics can be ensured by Islamic law. So, the assumption that environmental ethics in it is influenced by the syncretistic mysticism movement that is widely developing in Indonesia. The study found that the values of environmental preservation in the teachings of Sufism in the Tarekat Rowobayan are based on the concept of the unity of existence, the caliphate and servitude, the values of universal compassion (*rahmatan lil'alamin*), and the *zuhud*. The actualization of these values in environmental conservation is by being wise and respecting nature, being active in taking roles and responsibilities to preserve nature, loving and having good character in interacting with nature, and simplicity in the consumption and management of natural resources.

### Keywords

Sufism, Sufi Order, Ecological Values, Tarekat Rowobayan, Environmental Conservation

## **Introduction**

The great potential of the teachings of spiritualism in environmental conservation efforts has long been known. Suwito, for example, stated that the ecological crisis occurs because humans are far from God. Humans who are separated from God will ignore moral values and are controlled by greedy lust (ego). In other words, the environmental crisis occurs because humans put aside ethics when interacting with other God's creatures, including nature (Suwito NS, 2011). Long before that, Seyyed Hossein Nasr had also stated that the primary source of today's environmental crisis is the result of human error in the way humans view themselves and nature. Nasr further stated that Islamic teachings regarding God, humans, and nature and the relationship between these three aspects are a way out towards harmony with nature, as well as a correction to western traditions that forget the spiritual side. Islam views the universe as a reflection of 'His face' who always glorifies him, therefore nature and God and humans have a holistic relationship (unified). This theological concept ultimately becomes the basis for ecological wisdom (Nasr, 1968). However, how the Sufistic teachings on environmental ethics can then be transmitted and understood, and implemented in society has not been widely stated.

In Indonesia, the teachings of Sufism today are transmitted and practiced through tarekat institutions. Thus, the Tarekat currently acts as an institution that practices and disseminates Sufism values in society. So how the development of Sufism in society is determined by tarekat institutions (Sholikhin, 2018). Therefore, to understand the actual potential of Sufism in ecological preservation, and how the contribution of Sufism in Indonesia to environmental conservation today, must be explored in tarekat institutions.

The tarekat's involvement in environmental conservation efforts has not been explored much. It is because tarekat is generally understood as an institution that only seeks to cultivate personal spirituality, without any attention to social and ecological conditions. This view is exacerbated by the general understanding of society that tends to separate the spiritual, material, esoteric and exoteric (Irawan, 2012). Tarekat and Sufism teachings seem to have to be outside, in every effort to discuss environmental conservation and efforts to cultivate ecological awareness.

In fact, tarekat involvement in environmental preservation is contextual. The current ecological crisis in Indonesia is one of the worst. In terms of deforestation, in the last 20 years, Indonesia has always been one of the countries that rank highest in the list of countries with the Highest Primary Forest Loss in the World. From 2009-2013 every minute Indonesia loses forests three times the size of a football field (Forest Watch Indonesia, 2015). The World Resources Institute also reports that in 2016 Indonesia experienced the worst forest destruction in 18 years. A total of 929 thousand hectares of Indonesian forests were lost (Weisse and Goldman, 2020). The rate of forest fires is also still very high. In 2019 the forest burned reached 1.64 million hectares. These fires resulted in losses of USD 157 million to USD 5 billion (The Jakarta Post, 2019). Not to mention the pollution and environmental damage due to mining which claimed many lives (Jong, 2021).

At this point, Kholish reveals that environmental damage is the effect of modern human greed with his liberal capitalist ideology. Limited natural resources continue to be prostituted and exploited indiscriminately to fulfill the unlimited libido of human needs. Ironically, the interpretation of human existence as God's caliph on earth is hijacked to legitimize these exploitative actions. So that the

natural damage that occurred today was also contributed by irresponsible religious elites (Kholish, Irianto, & Galib, 2021).

It is in this context that this paper aims to examine the construction of the Rowobayan Padangan Bojonegoro Sufism concerning environmental ethics and environmental conservation efforts. The Rowobayan Order is one of the "old" tarekat which has had a great influence on the development of the Indonesian Naqsabandiyah Order (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 169). The influence of these tarekat teachings extends to several areas. For example in Gresik, Lamongan also to Central Java, namely in Blora and Ngawen (Mufrodi, 1997). This tarekat is also a mu'tabarah tarekat, whose validity is recognized by the majority of Indonesian Muslims (JATMAN, 2015). Thus, its teachings on environmental ethics can be ensured under Islamic law. So that it can dismiss accusations that its teachings on environmental ethics in it are influenced by mysticism and syncretistic mystic movements that generally develop in Indonesia (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 179).

The study in this paper is expected to enrich the treasures of studies regarding the role of Sufism practitioners in environmental protection, especially among mu'tabarah tarekat. This study at the same time seeks to dispel the notion that the mu'tabarah tarekat does not commit to environmental protection. Because so far, similar studies have been mostly conducted on groups of Sufism practitioners who are not included in the mu'tabarah tarekat (Ahmad, 2019; Suwito NS, 2011). This study includes two questions. First, how is the interpretation of Sufism values in the Rowobayan Order which is the basis for environmental conservation efforts? Second, how to actualize these values in the teachings of Rowobayan Sufism.

### **Understanding Sufism, Tarekat , and Its Development in Indonesia**

Sufism is generally understood as one of the fields of study of Islamic knowledge that studies various efforts toward Allah through various efforts to purify the soul and develop noble morals, such as simplicity, self-sacrifice, wisdom, and *istiqomah* (Nata, 2010, p. 179). In addition, Sufism is also understood as a style of religious expression that emphasizes the esoteric aspect (*batiniyah*) of getting closer to God. Thus Sufism is teachings that contain an ethical or moral system that guides how to build relationships with God, humans, and nature (Al-Misriy, 2009, p. 20).

Today, the discussion of Sufism is more directed at efforts to purify oneself and have noble character. Hamka, for example, explained that Sufism is an effort to cleanse the heart from what disturbs the feelings of most beings, the struggle to leave the original influence of the mind, extinguish the characteristics of weakness as a human being, and stay away from all calls of lust, approach the sacred qualities of spirituality, and rely on "true" knowledge, sowing advice to fellow human beings, keeping promises with Allah in matters of the essence, and following the example of the Prophet in matters of *shari'ah* (Hamka, 1992).

In recent developments, the teachings of Sufism have been institutionalized in the form of organizations or groups practicing Sufism called "tarekat" (sufi order). The word tarekat literally means "the way," and refers to both the system or training and practice ( *muraqabah*, *dhikr*, *wirid*, etc.) associated with the Sufi master, and the organization that grew up around a distinctive Sufi method (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 15). Tarekat is also a method that must be taken by a Sufi with certain rules that are following the instructions of each teacher or *mursyid* (teacher of the tarekat), to be as close as possible to Allah SWT.

Tarekat has been known in the colonial period. During the colonial era, many tarekat schools were involved in various socio-political movements in Indonesia, such as the Tarekat rebellion in West Java. So the Dutch considered

the tarekat as a dangerous movement. At that time all the schools of Sufism and also the flow of community beliefs that smelled of Sufism were referred to by the Dutch as "local orders". It seems that the Dutch could not understand the differences and characteristics of each of these Sufism schools, thus calling the various schools of tarekat or Sufism the same thing.

The term "Local Tarekat" is more appropriate to refer to tarekat schools that emerged and developed from the local environment of an area, not part of the mainstream tarekat schools that developed in the world. Because such local tarekat sects do exist. The current flow of local tarekat is very dependent on the teachings or practices of the teacher, certain tarekat have localized their Sufism experiences. In Java, those belonging to local tarekat such as Wahidiyah and Shidiqiyah in East Java or the Sahadatin congregation in Central Java. Such is the locality of these two tarekat experiences that their experiences seem to grow as a whole from the internal dynamics of society. The term "local congregation" is also used by Nur Syam to describe the practice of religious interpretation (related to Sufism teachings) carried out by "local people" which he considers to have relevance to Islamic teachings in the great tradition (Syam 2008 )

The practice of "local people" interpretation of the teachings of Sufism proposed by Nur Syam has now developed in various forms and models. In its current development, Sufism teachings are not only concentrated in the form of a certain order (tarekat) but develop in the form of organizations or congregations practicing Sufism in various formats.

As mentioned above, this diversity in subsequent developments led to the categorization of tarekat related to its validity in the Islamic tradition. There are existing tarekat categories, namely " mu'tabarah " and not " ghairu mu'tabarah ". The mu'tabarah category is intended to show that the tarekat in question is following the Shari'a and includes ahl Sunnah wa al-Jamaah, and also has a continuous lineage until the Prophet Muhammad. This category is to define and distinguish the tarekat school in question from "kebatinan" schools and other syncretistic mysticism movements, as well as from local tarekat are considered to have no clear lineage (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 179). The tarekat Rowobayan is a transnational tarekat that is recognized by the majority of Muslims as a mu'tabarah tarekat.

### **The Role of Religious Communities and Tarekat (Sufi order) in Environmental Conservation**

Studies on the role of religious groups and tarekat in environmental conservation have been widely studied. The actual action of these religious groups in protecting nature conservation efforts is embedded in various academic works. Prasenjit Duara cites reports by several researchers on the central role of religious networks in the environmental conservation movement in Asia. Such as the Catholic Church in the Philippines holding Mass to mobilize against logging operations in Bukidnon province. Cambodian and Thai forest monks have led grassroots movements to glorify trees by wrapping them in saffron robes and performing rituals to save the remaining forests. In Hong Kong and Taiwan, Buddhism and Taoism are often mobilized to promote environmental protests (Duara, 2014, p. 42)

Meanwhile, in the Indonesian context, the Islamic community also plays a principal role in Mangunjaya's nature conservation efforts, which explores the role of Islamic boarding schools and ulama in developing environmental awareness. One of them is by publishing environmental fiqh documents ( fiqh al-bi'ah ) which contain a review of Islamic law on ecological damage and its prevention efforts (Mangunjaya, 2011). Anna M Gade also explained how

Indonesian ulemas are actively involved in the environmental movement by using Islamic values through aspects of jurisprudence and also da'wah to collaborate and complement each other with various other value systems in a global context (Gade, 2015).

Islamic spiritualist communities such as tarekat and Sufism practice groups are also actively involved in environmental conservation efforts. Like the Jamaah Aulia Panggang, the "Pesan Trend " Ilmu Giri Yogyakarta, and the Majelis Zikir Kraton Pekalongan who made various efforts to spread awareness and ecological ethics among their followers, are also active in carrying out real movements to save the environment. (Ahmad, 2019; Suwito NS, 2011). An interesting development was the meeting of world Sufi leaders (Multaqo Sufi Al Alami) which was held in Indonesia in 2011. During the meeting, a declaration was agreed upon, one of which addressed the issue of the global environmental crisis (AULA, 2011). This indicates that the community practicing Sufism, especially Sufism whose validity is recognized by the majority of Muslims, is now paying attention to the environmental crisis that occurs and is also trying to find solutions to overcome it.

#### **Rowobayan and Its Role in the Development of Tarekat in Java**

The Rowobayan Order is basically a part of the Naqshbandiyah Order (Thariqoh Mu'tabarah An Naqsyabandiyah). This tarekat originates from Turkistan and is one of the well-known congregations in the international arena. The Naqsyabandiyah Order in Indonesia is one of the fastest growing orders. This tarekat is recognized as one of the tarekat whose validity is recognized, especially among NU, so it is called the mu'tabarah tarekat (JATMAN, 2015).

The Mu'tabarah category is intended to show that the tarekat in question is under the Shari'ah and includes ahl Sunnah wa al Jamaah, and also has a continuous lineage until the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This category is to define and distinguish the tarekat school in question from kebatinan schools and other syncretistic mystic movements, as well as from local tarekat which are considered to have no clear lineage (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 179).

The existence of the Rowobayan Order is closely related to the development of the Naqsyabandiyah Order in Java. The Naqshbandiyah Order in Rowobayan Padang became one of the nodes of the development of the Naqsyabandiyah order in Java, especially in Blora, Bojonegoro, and its surroundings (Bruinessen, 1992). Kyai Ahmad Ibn Munada, the bearer of the Naqsbandiyan Order in Rowobayan, was the first to "tripe" (open) the Rowobayan land, which is now known as the Kuncen village. Kyai Ahmad is the grandson or descendant of Mbah Sabil, one of the old scholars who is believed to be the pioneer of Islam in Bojonegoro and its surroundings (Yusabh, 2020). Mbah Sabil is also known as a scholar who later passed down the lineage of great scholars in Java, especially through his son-in-law, Sayyid Abdurrahman Basayaiban, better known as Mbah Sambu Lasem. From Mbah Sambu, many great figures and scholars were born on the island of Java. Mbah Sambu is also recorded in the history of the origin of the Lasem ulema. Even the founders of the Tebuireng and Tambakberas Islamic Boarding Schools in Jombang, Jember and Pasuruan are also believed to be descendants of Mbah Sambu (Risalah, 2021, p. 67).

Kyai Ahmad propagated and taught the Naqsbandiyah Khalidiyah congregation in Rowobayan after officially becoming a murshid through the process of bai'at by Sheikh Uthman in Saudi Arabia when Kyai Ahmad performed the Hajj. Kyai Ahmad died 27 Jumadil Awwal 1333 H or April 7, 1915 AD and was buried next to the Jami' Darussalam Mosque, Irsyaduth Tholabah Rowobayan

Islamic Boarding School Complex, Kuncen. Kyai Ahmad's name is now immortalized as the name of the road that passes through the Islamic boarding school complex, namely Jalan KH Ahmad.

After the death of Kyai Ahmad Rowobayan, the top leadership of the Naqsabandiyah Rowobayan Order was held by KH Abdurrahim and then by KH Abdul Hadi. Under the leadership of Kyai Abdul Hadi, the Naqsabandiyah Rowobayan order has developed quite rapidly. The influence of this tarekat teachings extends to several areas. For example in Gresik (to be precise in Kepatihan Village), Lamongan which includes Kembang Bahu, Tikung, Takeran, Gempol, Moroplang, Cungkup, Sukodadi, Pucuk and Tripe and Bojonegoro which includes Mulung, and Kedung Adem, as well as to the Central Java area, namely in Bora and Ngawen (Talok Wohmojo) (Mufrodi, 1997).

The development of the Tarekat Naqsabandiyah in Padangan is also recorded in the study conducted by Martin van Bruinessen. He noted that KH Ahmad Rowobayan Padangan was the first Naqsabandiyah sheikh (spiritual leader) in Bora and its surroundings. So that the Padangan Naqsabandiyah congregation became the entrance to the development of Naqsabandiyah in Bora and its surroundings. At first, Ahmad Rowobayan appointed two badals (vice leaders) in Bora, namely K. Abdullah in Gusten and K. Zaenal Abidin in Talok Wohmojo. Later these two badals became independent Khalifah (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 169).

Currently, the Naqsabandiyah Khalidiyah Rowobayan congregation is led by a grandson of KH Abdul Hadi, namely KH Abdussalam Yusabh. The center of the congregation's activities is the Jami' Darussalam Mosque. In addition, the Irsyaduth Tholabah Islamic Boarding School complex and the Ahmad Diponegoro Ar Robayani Islamic Education Foundation were also built. The educational foundation is part of the development of Ribath Naqsabandiyah. The foundation now has formal education ranging from Kindergarten (TK), Al-Qur'an Education Park, Madrasah Diniyah, and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

## **Environmental Conservation Values of the Tarekat Rowobayan**

### ***1. The value of the unity of being***

The concept of being ( existence ) is the most important theme in understanding the relation of three entities; God, man, and nature. The key to understanding it lies in the human concept. because humans are the basic form ( prototype ) of God's ideal creation. The discussion of the relationship between the three relates to the concept of al-maujud (what manifests). According to murshid In the Tarekat Rowobayan KH Abdussalam Yusabh, who is usually called Kyai Yus, a Muslim must realize that all existing existence ( al - wujud) is sourced from the true form of God, namely Allah. Allah is the cause of the existence of nature (the cosmos) and the beginning of all forms from the simplest to the most perfect nature, namely humans. Humans must always be aware that in nature there is actually a God. This means that nature is a form of manifestation of God's attributes, such as the creator, the almighty, and others. Nature is thus a reminder to Allah. "For example, the eye looks at the river, which Allah remembers, the skin feels the wind which Allah remembers, and so on", Kyai Yus said (Yusabh, 2020).

This view is different from the concept of the unity of God and man such as the metaphysical concept of wahdat-al Wujud or tajalli proposed by Ibn Arabi. The concept of manifestation ( tajalli ) holds that the diverse nature is a manifestation of the One Being (Allah). Nature's relationship with God can be illustrated as a 'face' and an 'image' of a face in a mirror. One face can be reflected

through a thousand and one mirrors (Ibn 'Arabi, 1972, p. 223). However, the view of the Tarekat Rowobayan has similarities with the concept of the oneness of God with nature such as *wahdat-al wujud*. That is seeing that nature basically has the attributes of divinity, holiness, or sacredness. Nature does not only have a physical dimension, but also a spiritual dimension.

In addition, Kyai Yus also emphasized the interdependence between God's creatures. Humans are the pinnacle of God's creation, but the process of "being" is through the system of being created by God. Man would not exist, without another being or life, such as the presence of substances in nature, soil, plants, and animals. Although humans are the most perfect creatures, their existence is basically one of the links in the system of existence that occurs in the universe. Concerning this system of existence, Kyai Yus, gives an example that humans are basically created from soil starch, which then passes to plants and animals that are eaten by humans and eventually become the forerunner of humans in the form of sperm and egg cells. So in the process, it is seen that the existence of humans is related to and dependent on other forms. If there is no land, plants (rice, corn, vegetables, etc), and animals, then humans may not exist (Yusabh, 2020).

This concept thus contains the understanding that human existence in this chain of existence is the same, and is interconnected, therefore humans should not underestimate or damage other existences. The concept also contains an understanding of the importance of interaction and mutual respect between beings (existence). This is because all beings are interdependent. Interaction between forms in nature is a necessity. This stems from the concept of monotheism. According to Kyai Yus, monotheism is unity in diversity or unified diversity. The meaning of uniting here is unity in forming a balance in the system of existence (Yusabh, 2020).

Thus all the diversity in nature is a unity that is interrelated and dependent. Need each other. Nothing is wasted. This is called the unity of the form of the environment or nature. The willingness of all-natural components as part of the chain of life (food) is a form of "submission" or obedience to nature ( Muslims ) as well as a form of natural *tasbih* to God.

## *2. The Values of The Khalifa and Abdullah*

Regarding the relationship between humans and nature, there are three relationships that Kyai Yus describes, namely the relationship between humans as individuals with God, with other humans or society, and relationships with the environment. Humans as creatures of Allah's most perfect creation. Humans are given the potential to increase their relationship with Allah to the highest level, namely meeting with Allah ( *liqo'* ). The process of *liqo'* is also the highest achievement of the human position as a servant of Allah ( *Abdullah* ) (Yusabh, 2020).

Kyai Yus also emphasized that basically all creatures are *Abdullah*. They obey God according to their respective capacities. For example, the sun shines and provides energy for plants to grow. The role of the sun is a form of surrendering the sun to the provisions and commands of Allah. Likewise, for other creatures, what they do is a form of expression of obedience to Allah's commands. All creatures glorify or worship. Trees worship and glorify God by producing oxygen needed by nature (humans, animals, and plants), and also with the various benefits that accompany it, such as the shade of the leaves and the benefits of the fruit. Likewise, animals, glorify and submit themselves to Allah by benefiting humans with their flesh and back (as a mount). (Yusabh, 2020).

It's different from humans. Humans besides having spiritual potential as servants of Allah, humans are also given the potential to become representatives ( caliphate ) of Allah. As representatives of God, humans carry out the mission of the prosperity of the universe. The task of the " caliphate " of humans as prosperous earth is like creating various kinds of creations to care for, maintain and spread love to all creatures. Within the framework of human relations with the environment, this task as a representative of God must be carried out by humans.

Position as a caliph is the highest phase possessed by humans. His position is as khalifatullah who can play a role in making creations for the good of the universe. If Allah created the night then humans make their own creations, namely candles and lamps to illuminate the dark. In addition, verbally and mentally, humans combine these two entities in understanding the meaning of the Supreme Creator, the Supreme Being from nothing, and the Supreme Designer (M. Quraish Shihab, 2000, pp. 74-100).

The task as a representative of God is supported by the reason that God has given to humans. For that, humans have the opportunity to manifest God's attributes to produce works and inventions to spread goodness in the universe. For example, the creation of lights as a reaction to the darkness of the night is a form of reflection on the nature of God as creator ( Khaliq ), and supreme designer ( musawwiru ). This cannot be done by other creatures, such as plants or animals.

But apart from acting as caliph, like other creatures, humans are also Abdullah. Therefore, humans must submit to God's provisions and must be responsible for what they do to God. Including how he carried out the mandate as caliph. Humans who are successful in carrying out the mandate given by God are the ones who become complete human beings.

### *3. Value of Compassionate for All Humans and Nature ( Rahmatan Lil Alamein)*

The principle of Rahmatan Lil Alamein is the essence of Islamic teachings. Rahmatan Lil Alamein is also the character of the treatise emitted from within the personality of the prophet Muhammad SAW as the bearer of the message of Islam. Allah SWT at the end of the letter at-Taubah explained the Prophet SAW by calling him Raufur Rahim (full of love and true love). In this context, Kyai Yus also stated that Allah is Most Merciful. God's grace is not tied to anything. Not tied to charity, piety, or the law of cause and effect. God's mercy flows to whoever and whatever he wills. Therefore, a shalik or practitioner of Sufism must always try to reflect the light of the divine nature. Its form is to have a character with Allah's nature. So people can reflect on the nature of God who always gives an abundance of grace to others to all creatures (Yusabh, 2020).

Because basically, Sufism is exercises of the soul in the context of worship ( ubudiyah ), placing and restoring the soul following the provisions and laws of divinity ( rububiyah ). So a person who takes the path of Sufism must equip himself with four characteristics, namely having a character with God's attributes, constantly carrying out His commands, leaving the victory of lust in him out of shame to God, and trying to always be with Him with earnest (Ismail, Dahlan, Barizi, Rahman, & Ismail, 2008).

Furthermore, Kyai Yus also explained that the process of self-purification in the Sufism tradition in the end also has implications for compassion and morals towards nature. In the Sufism tradition, there are three phases of self-purification, namely takhalli, tahalli and tajalli. Takhalli is an effort for humans to empty themselves of various despicable qualities. While tahalli is an attempt to adorn oneself with various good qualities. The next process is tajalli, which is manifesting



or reflecting these good qualities into behavior in life. One of the concrete forms of *tajalli* is to spread the love (*Rahmat*) to all God's creatures, both human beings, animals, and plants. Humans who have arrived at the *tajalli* process will thus reflect a sense of compassion in every action. Within the framework of nature conservation, this *tajalli* process provides the basis for Sufism practitioners to be wise or have good character towards nature.

In other words, humans who go through the road to God (Sufism) to the point of *tajalli* will have awareness and wisdom towards nature as a reflection of love for all God's creatures. So that it can be ascertained that humans who take the path to God will not do things arbitrarily ( *dzalim*) nature.

#### *4. Values of Zuhud and Simplicity*

It is undeniable that most of the natural damage is caused by human activities. overexploitation of nature without regard to the next life, which in the future can result in damage to nature is driven by greed, exaggeration ( *israf* ), and luxury (Muslimin, 2015). This despicable mental attitude is basically because humans always follow the impulse of lust. That is, when a person is not able to control his passions, he will tend to exceed the limits, which are characterized, among others: being greedy, dissatisfied, always wanting more than others, and so on (Kholish, Irianto, and Galib 2021). Likewise, the attitude of redundancy, this attitude encourages people to use something beyond the limits of their needs. Humans tend to overuse existing natural resources. It's like letting water go to waste, using assets beyond reasonable limits. In several of his hadiths, the prophet forbids wasteful and wasteful attitudes (Reflita, 2015).

Greed and excess are what encourage excessive consumption patterns, and excessive production and ultimately lead to overexploitation of natural resources as well. Therefore, according to Kyai Yus, simplicity and *zuhud* are the right attitudes to face the spread of this consumerist ideology. *Zuhud* is understood simply as an attempt to leave things behind which is just for fun or limit it to things that are really needed ( Yusabh (Yusabh, 2020)

Indeed, scholars differ on what *zuhud* is and how it is practiced. However, a widely developed understanding today is that *zuhud* is interpreted as an attitude of leaving dependence or attachment to worldly (material) possessions, even though it does not mean antipathy to them or having no property at all (Ismail et al., 2008). Thus the *zuhud* attitude has great potential to help humans control their passions and organize their lifestyles so that they are not complacent with excessive attitudes which will ultimately damage the environment.

### **Actualization of Environmental Conservation Values in Tarekat Rowobayan**

#### *1. Aware to be Wise and Appreciate the Nature*

As explained above, the values "of unity of being" emphasize the existence of divine elements or the sacredness of nature. It also emphasizes the interdependence of beings. It also emphasizes the interdependence of beings. These values in the context of environmental conservation in The Rowobayan congregation are realized by respecting nature and not over-exploiting it.

Nature is a manifestation of God's attributes. Nature also leads to awareness of the existence of the Creator. Thus nature has the values of holiness and sacredness. Destroying nature is the same as tarnishing the sacred value and also harming the please of the Creator. On the other hand, caring for nature is also understood as an act of worship. Because the form of consciousness is by glorifying its creator, namely Allah. In this context, Kyai Yus gave an example of how the

prophet Sulaiman and the Sufis highly respected everything in nature, even animals that were usually considered trivial. The Qur'an narrates that Prophet Solomon stopped his convoy of troops from stepping on the ants. Abu Yazid al-Busthomi, a great Sufi who lived in the 2nd century Hijriyah, was willing to walk hundreds of kilometers to return the ants he accidentally carried on his journey (Yusabh, 2021).

In addition, the understanding that humans and nature have unity in relations and are interrelated with each other will also lead to perspectives and behaviors that promote wisdom and mutual respect in interacting with nature and the entire ecosystem in it. This view, in the context of environmental ethics, is in line with the ecocentric perspective. Ecocentric ethics is a concept of environmental ethics that emphasizes the understanding that all life in an ecosystem has value in itself. This means that all creatures have the same values and rights so they protect and protect them the life of the entire ecosystem is a human responsibility as a moral actor. Thus, protecting the life of any creature is as important as protecting the life of a fellow human being (Keraf, 2010, p. 49)

Ethics is rooted in a holistic way of thinking with the assumption that everything that exists is related to one another to form one whole. The whole (total) affects every part of the former; and vice versa, the changes that occur inside are wrong one part will also change the other part and the whole too (Rachmat W., 2000).

Ecocentric ethics contradicts anthropocentrism theory. The latter views humans as the center of the universe system. So human interests must be above any interests, including nature. Everything else in this universe will only get value and concern insofar as it supports and is in the interest of human beings. Therefore, nature is seen only as an object, tool, and means for the fulfillment of human needs and interests. Nature is just a tool for the attainment of human goals. Nature has no value in itself. This view justifies all forms of exploitation of nature by humans which in the end gives a negative impact and damage to natural resources and the environment itself (White, 1967).

## ***2. Play a Role and be Responsible for Nature Conservation***

The awareness of Allah's caliph and Abdullah (servant of Allah) in the context of environmental conservation is manifested in awareness of the role and responsibility of humans to preserve nature. According to Kyai Yus, the awareness as a caliph is manifested by reflecting the attributes of God in interacting with nature. That Allah is al-Muqit, the one who maintains and also protects. Moreover, Allah is rabbal 'Alamin, who preserves all nature. Humans as representatives of God on earth should also be able to have a character with these attributes of God (Yusabh, 2020)

This understanding in the Sufi tradition is known as the concept of takhalluq, which is consciously imitating the attributes of God so that a believer can internalize the noble qualities of the faith of Allah SWT. The Sufis usually associate the takhalluq process with the prophet's hadith which reads " takhallaqu bi akhlaqillah " which means behave like God's behavior. The Takhalluq process is one of the phases in the practice of self-perfection in Sufism that is carried out in earnest ( mujahadah ) to get used to imitate the attributes of Allah (Moh Quraish Shihab 2017). Takhalluq process It is also considered an affirmation that Sufism is a representation of Islamic morality. The better the character of a person, the purer his soul will be. Abu Husain Al-Nuri said that Sufism can only be achieved by morals. Because Sufism is not just knowledge or insight but is a moral that

must be practiced, namely having a character with God's character. (Abitolkha and Muvid 2020, 15)

Furthermore, Kyai Yus also emphasized that awareness as a caliph should not be misunderstood as an absolute right to use nature and its contents. Because humans in interacting with nature must also always be aware of their position as Abdullah who must submit to Allah's commands and provisions. Allah indeed has subdued nature for humans. But it must be remembered that Allah will also hold humans accountable for the mandate to manage nature (Yusabh, 2020).

In the Qur'an, it has been stated that Allah "subjects" nature ( *tashir* ) to fulfill all human needs so that it is possible for humans to carry out the duties of servanthood and the duties of his caliphate on this earth. In Surah Luqman verse 20 Allah says, "Have you not noticed that Allah has subjected to you what is in the heavens and what is on earth and has perfected for you God blessings both outwardly and inwardly." (Surah Luqman: 20).

Even though it seems anthropocentric, the *taskhir* doctrine, according to Nurkholis Majid, does not mean giving absolute freedom to humans. This *taskhir* doctrine remains in the corridor of monotheism. This means that the concept of *taskhir* does not position nature in a lower position than humans, or become a reality that is separate from the reality of the human self. However, the reality of man and the universe is a cosmic entity that is simultaneously in the spectrum of creation. This is the concept of monotheism which lays down the basic principle of the relationship between the environment and the Muslim worldview. Thus, only with monotheism, which directly and consequently implies *taskhir* , can humans carry out their duties properly as the vicegerent of Allah in the universe (Rohmah, Herawati, & Kholish, 2021).

### *3. Loving and behaving well with nature*

The awareness of the values of mercy (compassion) for all creatures in Sufism will lead to an attitude of compassion for all of God's creatures. It is because compassion and doing good to all God's creatures is a reflection of love for God as the creator of these creatures. Doing good is "an active" attitude, but if an active attitude cannot be fulfilled, then at least humans should not harm or harm beings. Human affection for nature in Sufism is based on love for Allah and efforts to gain closeness to God. In the context of nature conservation activities, the active role of humans is manifested by caring for and preserving nature with the awareness that nature is a *wasilah* (medium) to God.

In the ethical narrative of Sufism, plants and animals are seen as creatures that must be treated equally with equal treatment of fellow human beings. This is also exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet always treated animals and plants with kindness and gentleness. In a narration, it is stated that the Prophet Muhammad PBUH once rebuked a friend who gave too heavy a burden to a camel until its stomach touched the ground. The Prophet rebuked the friend by saying: " *Ittaqillah fi al-bahaim farkabuha shalihatan wa dzabahuha shalihatan* " (Be fearful in treating this animal, ride it naturally, and slaughter it pleasantly). In another narration, the Prophet PBUH also gave an example of how good behavior towards animals brings safety and misery in the hereafter. Like a hadith narration that tells about the entry of a prostitute to heaven because of her attitude and behavior that shows compassion for a dog. And another story describes a person who was tortured in the grave, for showing an attitude and behavior that is not commendable, namely torturing and not feeding a cat to death. (Rohmah et al., 2021)

Awareness to have good character and love of nature will also give birth to an attitude of prudence in managing natural resources. Because every element in the universe does not stand alone. Everything is related to each other. And sometimes humans are not aware that what they do causes suffering for many other creatures. For example, a tree is a likely home to a flock of birds, a home for an ant colony lives. It could even be that the tree is also the house of the invisible jinn. This understanding can also be reversed in a positive sense. Efforts to preserve nature will certainly have a broad positive impact. Planting one tree, for example, will attract chain benefits. The tree will benefit various creatures. For example, producing humus that fertilizes the soil, oxygen that is made to breathe by animals and humans, produces carbon, the roots will absorb water which will become water reserves for humans and animals, and various benefits that humans may not think of (Yusabh, 2020).

#### *4. Not Excessive in Consumption and Utilizing Natural Resources*

On a practical level, the values of environmental conservation in the simplest area of individual behavior are manifested in the context of exploration and use of natural resources. In the context of natural resource exploration, the Naqsyabandiyah congregation emphasizes the prohibition of excessive exploration of natural resources. Due to excessive exploration of natural resources. This prohibition is in line with the recommendation to be *zuhud*.

A *Zahid* (*zuhud* practitioner) will try to limit himself to what is needed. This attitude is important to reduce the speed of consumption and production by considering sustainability (Fudholi, 2011). As seen in modern society, consumption patterns that tend to reflect the notion of "consumerism" force the production system to meet demand, thus triggering uncontrolled exploration of natural resources which leads to depletion of natural resources and tends to damage the environment. In this context, *zuhud* has found an important position for environmental preservation.

This awareness of overcoming the environmental crisis with an attitude of *zuhud* is in line with what was conveyed by world Sufi leaders who came to the fore in the World Meeting of Sufis and Mursyid Tariqah Forums held by PBNU in July 2011. In the forum, 5 points of agreement were produced called the Declaration of Multaqa Sufi. One of the points raised was the affirmation of the need for *zuhud* to overcome the extreme environmental crisis and climate change. The Sufis realize that the carrying capacity of nature is almost no longer able to meet the consumption needs of the increasingly greedy and greedy modern society. This results in more environmental damage and humanitarian crises (AULA, 2011). *Zuhud* behavior is also manifested in the management of natural resources, such as the use of water, forest resources, and so on.

#### **Conclusion**

The study shows that practitioner Sufism can translate the values of Sufism into a more practical realm, namely nature conservation. The values of environmental preservation in the teachings of Sufism in the Tarekat Rowobayan are based on the concept of the values of the unity of existence, the values of caliphate and servitude, the values of universal compassion ( *Rahmatan lil'alamin* ), and the values of *zuhud*. The values of the unity of being lead to an understanding of equality and interdependence between humans and nature. This is actualized in nature conservation by being wise and respecting nature. This attitude is based on the understanding that every living creature, as well as humans, has a value in itself that must be respected. The values of caliphate and servitude are actualized with an active attitude in taking roles and responsibilities to preserve

nature. This attitude is one of the manifestations of efforts to behave like God's behavior ( *takhallaqu bi akhlaqillah* ). The values of universal compassion are manifested by loving and having good manners when interacting with nature. Because the teachings of Islam are the bearer of mercy for nature and all that is in it. Therefore a Muslim must always try to spread mercy to all creatures. Meanwhile, the values of *zuhud* and simplicity can be actualized in consumption patterns and natural resource management. *Zuhud* behavior will control the appetite so that it is not excessive in daily consumption patterns and utilizes natural resources.

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