



Sacralization of natural environment and the socio-religious conditions of the South Coast of Java

Sardjuningsih^{a,*}, Rohmani Nur Indah^b, Khaerul Umam^a

^a *Sociology of Religion Department, Faculty of Ushuluddin and Da'wa, IAIN Kediri, Jawa Timur 64127, Indonesia*

^b *UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Jawa Timur 65144, Indonesia*

Article Info

Article history:

Received 10 October 2022

Revised 5 December 2022

Accepted 11 December 2022

Available online 17 November 2023

Keywords:

myths,
natural environment,
religious, sacred,
traditions

Abstract

This article concerns the sacredness of the natural environment and the socio-religious objects of coastal communities. It employs a sociological approach with the theory of functionalism-structural analysis by Robert K. Merton on the relationship between natural environmental conditions and people's thinking patterns. It is supported by the Geographical and environmental schools, emphasizing that society responds to environmental conditions in thinking patterns, culture and life values. The heterogeneity of the south coastal environment forms a pattern of community religiosity with a cosmological-anthropomorphic spiritualism value. It considers that the nature of south coast metaphysics is where mysterious, mystical and magical spirits reside. A famous myth legalizes this cosmological belief in Java about the superiority of the supernatural powers. This myth has a dual function, namely, a theological basis and a traditional instrument that protects the South Coast of Java's ecological damage. The finding of this study also contributes to the field of Sociology of Religion concerning the wealth of the community's spirituality embedded in people's lives.

© 2023 Kasetsart University.

Introduction

The natural environment is directly related to the level of community welfare. In sociology, geography and the environment explain that geographical conditions and the natural environment determine people's living conditions. Environmental sustainability is fundamental

to maintain the sustainability of human life (Szabo 2021). Islam teaches the preservation of the natural environment for the common interest, as long as it does not violate more general rules (Abdelzaher et al., 2019; Masruri, 2014). The local wisdom approach is essential: political ecology, human welfare ecology, anthropological perspective, human ecology, or action and consequences (Dudeck et al. 2017). Discussing ecology associated with the condition of the plural society in Indonesia cannot be separated from social complexities, including the eco-religious approach (Wargadinata et al., 2020).

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: sardjustain@gmail.com (Sardjuningsih).

<https://doi.org/10.34044/kjss.2023.44.4.24>

2452–3151/© 2023 Kasetsart University.

The culture of pranoto mongso (the calendar system for farmers) and nyabuk gunung (plant in hillside contour lines) are very well known, which manifests in Javanese beliefs and traditions (Costa, 2021). In traditional society, the natural environment inspires the inner self to believe that rulers reside in them (García, 2014). Such is known as sacred and haunted spaces, which can only be reached by certain people who have ngelmu batin or inner beliefs. This belief system supports efforts to preserve the natural environment (Carey et al., 2009). The people of the south coast are still strong with this belief manifested in tradition as the basis of spirituality (Kasnadi & Sutejo, 2018). This south coast tradition is practiced by all the south coast people from West Java to East Java, even those who claim to be Muslim. So far, coastal community studies have focused more on the socio-economic aspects of the fishing community. Fishing communities have been a tool of exploitation by capital owners and rulers. They also develop cultivation products according to the region's specificities (Stark, 2014). Studies on fishing communities are also inseparable from climate change and the issue of maintaining the coastal environment through community empowerment (Watra, 2018). Besides, existing studies also discuss the damage to the coastal environment and its impact on society from an Islamic perspective (Kasnadi & Sutejo, 2018).

The study of the ecology — geography of this heterogeneous south coast with all its socio-religious manifestations has never been adequately carried out. The preservation of the natural environment can inspire social norms to regulate the relationship between people and their environment, for the common good (Costa, 2021). The preservation of the natural environment inspires the inner community, which forms a religious system, to respect and place nature as a vital force in human life (Maydanov, 2018). The study of the ecology of the natural environment in Structural Functionalism by Merton explains that such consists of parts that function structurally and connected in society. Natural ecology has a specific function in human life. Structural Functionalism affirms that socio-cultural life is like the body of a living being. In this case, biological analogies (organisms) can explain the socio-cultural life of society. Individuals and cultures are then aligned with the cells in the body of living things, which are always dependent and inseparable from other cell functions (Ritzer & Yagatich, 2012). The study of spiritual ecology conducted by (Tucker et al., 1993) entitled *Worldview Ecology*

explained that traditional and religious values, as well as contemporary views (philosophy) found that global environmental ethical problems were experiencing a crisis, and require solutions. Religious and cultural teachings can help restore ethical attitudes and behavior towards nature.

This study complements the findings of the natural environment's sacredness and its relationship with the South coast's socio-religious community and has the character of sharpening the particular aspects of previous research in the exact location by taking the topic of the Sembonyo tradition, interwoven spiritualism of the fishermen community (Sardjuningsih, 2013). This study departs from basic questions on the theological meaning of the natural environment's sacredness and the socio-religious impact of the natural environment's sacralization. It also explores the impact of the sacredness of the natural environment on people's welfare (Carvalho & Steil, 2008).

The basic assumption is that environmental sacralization has a theological foundation in society's inner system manifested in society's religious system, which is hundreds of years old, and is part of religious practice. The sacralization of the natural environment faces challenges and pressures from social structures. Some believe and practice it in their daily lives, but other groups do not believe and reject it as a value system. The sacredness of the natural environment has an impact on the preservation of nature in minimizing natural disasters (Bednarz, 2017). Ritzer, Poloma and Turner's structural functionalism (organisms and evolutionary schools) states that socio-cultural life is like the body of a living being (Ritzer & Yagatich, 2012). Adherents of this school believe that biological analogies (organisms) can explain the socio-cultural life of society. Individuals and cultures are then aligned with the cells in the body of living things, which are always dependent and inseparable from other cell functions (Ritzer & Yagatich, 2012). This study also used the Faith and Nature theory of Thomas Dunlap to give and to provide a more comprehensive view of the contemporary worldview of the natural environment, that humans are driven to seek explanations about: the world, human, and the universe. Environmentalism is a branch of the secular material belief in reason that dominates modern society (Dunlap, 2009).

Studies on the environment analyses were more about natural damage, both caused by natural events (Costa, 2021; Maydanov, 2018), and human factors,

(Bednarz, 2017; Desmazières, 2018) as well as the impacts that arise (Smith, 2019; Szabo, 2021). Studies on the environment seen ontologically also still focused on traditional views that were presented emically (Carey et al., 2009; Gracia, 2014; Haft, 2020; Wargadinata et al., 2020) and its impact on strengthening the social ethics of preserving the community's environment (Kasnadi, 2018; Tucker et al., 1993; Wargadinata, 2020). The novelty this study showed is that the sacredness of nature, believed by the community, not only encouraged environmental and social ethics, but also became a value that encouraged the government to create policies that are friendly to the environment.

The 'Sacred' Natural Environment

The coastal community believes that there are sacred spaces around them controlled by spirits called Danyang, which are the Queen of the Southern Sea troops. This story is the most famous myth in Indonesia, especially for people who live on the southern coastline of the Indian Ocean. Geography of the Prigi region is in the southernmost part of Trenggalek Regency, bordering the Indian Ocean. Areas with heterogeneous geographic conditions store a lot of sacred space. Mountains, forests, caves, beaches, bays, rivers, and hills are believed to be inhabited by spirits, each with their respective territories (SPH, 53). In the people's belief, the magical area is divided into three areas: the Prigi Beach area, the suburban area, and the middle area. Each part has spaces believed to be sacred, mystical, and magic. The mythical universe in the southern coastal region is fully controlled by the South Sea's Queen, assisted by Raden Tumenggung Yudo Negoro and his Queen, Raden Nganten Gambar

Inten, often referred to as Adipati Andong Biru (SPL, 56 years; DMR, 62).

The division of the magical space with the authority of mystical power covers the coast and Prigi Sea, (Desmazières 2018). The surrounding area is a sacred area controlled by Ratu Laut Kidul and other Danyang-danyang. It also involves the suburban territory and its ruling authorities (Table 1) and the middle region (Table 2). The results of observations show that the sacred environment's phenomenon is generally no different from other places. According to the people, the suburban area is higher than the middle area, and is more haunted than the middle area. Mountains and rocky hills with big trees and other complex plants thrive. To reach this place takes a long time because the road is steep, steep and winding. Cave of Lowo, is a more strategic place on the side of the highway to Prigi beach. As a tourist destination, it does not erase the mystical and magical atmosphere. Many dark corners are used for meditation, with piles of offerings by seekers of blessings. Cave of Babahan is in the middle of the forest, and the road to get there requires energy and time. The mystical atmosphere is very strong because it is quiet and dark. The most famous beach in this place is Prigi Beach, which is a tourist destination. There is a mystical atmosphere in the fishing port because many ships are equipped with offerings from their owners. Other beaches that are considered sacred have fewer visitors. A mystical feeling arises because of the quiet atmosphere and dense plants. Not many people visit these places because of their awareness and belief in a haunted place. Arrogance is created because of the many taboo prohibitions humans should not do when approaching the place, both words and actions.

Table 1 The suburban territory and its ruling authorities

No	Sacred environment	Myth Theology	Myth status
1	Adipati Pinggiran	Raden Nganten and Adipati Andong Biru	The ruler
2	Mount of Buluk Sulus	R. Nganten Buluk Sulus	The patron
3	Mount of Tengahan	Raden Tengahan	The patron
4	Mount of Brenggolo	Kamituwo Brenggolo	The patron
5	Mount of Bengu	Raden Nganten Bengu	The patron
6	Mount of Manggolo	Demang Kromo Manggolo	The patron
7	Beach of Watu Dukun	Mbah Watu Dukun	The patron
8	Beach of Ngasrep	Bayan Ngasrep	The patron

Table 2 The middle region, with its authority

No	Sacred Environment	Myth Theology	Myth status
1	Adipati Tengahan	Tumenggung Yuda Negro	The ruler and patron
2	Mount of So Limo	Bayan So Limo	The ruler and patron
3	Mount of Boyo	Langu Patih Boyo langu	The ruler and patron
4	Cave of Babahan	Kanjeng yia Babahan	The ruler and patron
5	Mount of Ngekel	Suropati Ngekel	The ruler and patron
6	Beach of Cengkong	Demang Cengkong	The ruler and patron
7	Cave of Lowo Patih	Cave of Lowo	The ruler and patron
8	Mount of Karang Melang	Bayan Karang melang	The ruler and patron

For coastal communities, the natural environment around the ocean is a mysterious and mystical space. They believe that these haunted places are believed to be effective places to pray for their hopes. To fulfill the community's spiritual needs, the shaman's services play a crucial role in fulfilling the magical needs of the community, conveying prayers and hopes, bringing blessings, and removing logs through mystical and magical objects (Amulets) created by Shamans to fortify themselves from all forms of interference, both humans and spirits (DRM, 48; RPG, 54).

Theological Thinking behind the Sacralization of the Natural Environment

Most of the people of the South coast are followers of Islam Kejawen and traditional Islam. The people's religious pattern on the south coast is Kejawen, which is different from those of the north coast who are religious, as the developing center of the Islamic Kingdom in Java (Kasnadi & Sutejo 2018). Islamic historical sites are scattered on the north coast as evidence of the saints' preaching (Roihana & Lukito, 2021). The southern coast is mythically known as Segoro Kidul, which is considered the Mataram kingdom's mystical territory. The Queen of the south sea is as the sole mystical ruler. Her position in the Mataram Kingdom's power politics (Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat) is believed by the community as the mystical consort of the reigning kings until today (WJ, 52; KST, 61) (Smith, 2019). This divine thought is at the core of Kejawen teachings, where God can reside in anything right, and has properties like nature and humans. In Anthropology, this is called Anthropomorphism (Bednarz, 2017).

The coastal community believes that the Pesisir Selatan environment has a special meaning in their spiritual life. Visible nature holds an invisible "something"

in the form of spiritual power that they call "makhluk alus" to move the journey of human life (Desmazières, 2018). Mountain areas, forests, hills, caves, rivers, bays are interpreted as cosmic space, as a meeting between Divinity (religion), tradition, and power, which humans must carry out in regulating physical and mental behavior (Chen, 2017). The natural environment is called the Peripheral Region (Szabo, 2021). The middle is cosmically believed to be the embryo that gave birth to and developed the Coastal community. Proximity to nature affects the appreciation of God's power and strength (Haft, 2020). This appreciation becomes a local belief based on the belief of spirits. The natural environment has a double meaning, namely, material phenomena and metaphysical phenomena (Chen, 2017). It gave birth to the sacralization of nature. The ambivalent and biased divine construction of the Coastal community can be categorized as animism, believing in the many forces that reside in nature. In practice, this religiosity is strengthened by dynamism, by believing that there are magical and mystical objects that humans can use to subdue natural phenomena.

Dunlap (2009) in his theory Faith and Nature explained that the human impulse towards religion is to seek explanations about the world, human and the universe. This includes environmentalism as an offshoot of the secular, material belief in reason, which dominates modern society. Faith in Nature gives moral emphasis to the Enlightenment and Romanticism between religion and the environment, the importance of concern for everyday moral behavior, and its efforts to answer fundamental questions about the fundamental world order.

Functionalization of Myth

Animism-dynamism forms established spiritualism, a characteristic of Kejawan, which functions to strengthen mental-morals in the face of all forms of social pressure. The manifestation of this belief can be witnessed through traditional rituals, with physical and mental insight (Stark, 2014). The community believes that the traditional means of mystical power of beings - spirits, both those in the periphery and central areas, will manifest themselves in the form of mystical phenomena in humans and nature (MNH, 49; RKN, 58). Therefore, symbolic offerings have a significant role (Dhavamony, 1997) to show respect and obedience to these supernatural powers. The religiosity of the community is shown through rituals and actions according to myths (Marwantika, 2021). For them, religion and myth have the same existence, both of which are the power for salvation and confirmation of divine reality (Allen, 1998). The incredible power of nature is sacred, mystical, and magical by humans as the foundation of their life by offering traditional rituals (Kimic, 2021).

For coastal communities, myths are considered trustworthy and genuine, as part of their ancestors' life stories. The theory of Euhemerism states that humans create their gods according to themselves (Maydanov, 2018) According to him, gods from mythology are essentially human beings who are revered. A myth is a true story of people who have lived, but then the story has been distorted (Allen, 1998). An anthropologist, James Frazer, has an opinion similar to this concept, namely, in the past, humans believed in magical laws. When they lose their belief in the law, they create myths about gods and claim their previous magical rituals as religious rituals aimed at pleasing the gods.

The meaning of a myth as an oral tradition that is part of the community's culture is present in the framework of certain functions. In this case the function of the emergence of myths is based on true stories or stories presented in the context of particular political legitimacy. The emergence of myths is aligned with specific human figures as well (Rohdewald, 2022). For example, the myth of Ratu Laut Kidul existed during the Mataram kingdom (Kimic et al., 2021). The people have to believe what the sultanate says, considering that the sultan is the lord of the people (RKN, 58). The love story of Ratu Kidul and the Sultan of Mataram, which impacts the increase in soldiers of the Sultan and his powers, is easily spread throughout the archipelago.

Thus the position of Mataram became more assertive with the political legitimacy of power (Goodale, 2018). Dewa or Danyang in the coastal community's theological concept and Ratu Kidul is a powerful myth in society, which is believed to be confirmed by the community. The Mataram kingdom territory that covers the southern coast with all spiritual beliefs makes the South Coast's natural environment controlled by the mystical Queen of south sea (Carey et al., 2009).

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design with the perspective of Structural Functionalism of Robert K Merton using content analysis techniques. This research's object is the natural environment, and the research subjects of the coastal community of Prigi-Trenggalek. The reason for choosing the location was that the natural environment of the Prigi area and its people represented the geographical and demographic conditions of the Coastal region in general, especially in Java. The data collection technique used observation and in-depth interviews with ten informants, namely, five men and five women. Snow ball sampling technique was used to facilitate the determination of informants. Their identities in this article are written in initials to maintain privacy.

The research instruments involved interview guidelines and observation of environmental objects. Interviews were conducted with informants by creating a free atmosphere in the agreed place. Men and women got the same question. Data processing techniques were used to map data based on the type of data, then the data were reduced to get an easy and complete picture. A crossover was also carried out to check the data for other informants. Data analysis techniques were carried out by dialoguing the data with the theory using Structural Functionalism by Robert K. Merton and Faith and Nature by Thomas Dunlap. This research lasted for three months.

Result and Discussion

Environmental Sacralization Process

The function of myth is vital, replacing the function of scripture in religion. Understanding the structure and

function of myths in traditional society is not enough to explain human thought history separated from sacred values and rituals. Still, it is full of contemporary thought categorizations that are alive and meaningful in reality (Allen, 1998). Because myth contains all the religious consciousness of the community, the environment or other objects can be sacred, because they deserve to be called sacred. Sanctity always manifests itself as a reality different from “natural” realities. To designate a pattern of sacred self-manifestation, Mircea Eliade uses the term Hierophany (Chen, 2017). Something sacred shows itself in our awareness that it is not an ordinary profane object even though its nature is still an ordinary object, because it is still in the cosmic environment around it. Therefore hierophany can only be felt with supernatural awareness (Martin, 2015).

Nature is thought to have the power to create all conditions of human life. Mountains, caves, hills, seas and beaches are believed to have different powers from other profane objects. Therefore, there was admiration in awareness of these realms, believing that these realms were sacred. Mountains and oceans for the people are hierophany in a supernatural way (Costa, 2021). Humans who have religious experience may or may not grasp the hierophany. As people who have a close relationship with nature, they will experience a lot of cosmic sacredness. The sacred is identical with being. Sacred — profane opposition is often shown as real and unreal opposition (Chen, 2017). The mountain is a sacred place, because of the dwelling place of the spirits who are Mbahu Rekso, or Danyang. The sea where the Queen of the South Sea resides controls the entire territory of the ocean and the sacred southern coast. This area is believed to be the place for spirits / astral creatures who can bring disaster and safety to lives. Similarly, caves are often used to meditate in / khalwat, because they have mystical and magical values (MNH, 49).

This belief model is often found in people in Nusantara, even in the world community, who base their belief in spirits, spirits and traditions, and make it a system of thinking for people who believe more in the tightness of the natural environment (Costa, 2021). As stated by Dawami and Mulder, the thinking system of Javanese society is mythical (Uden et al., 2001).

Socio-Religious Meaning of the Sacralization of the Natural Environment

The sacredness of the environment based on myth gave birth to rooted traditions and rituals known as Petik Laut, as an implementation of Myth understanding (Smith, 2019). Coastal communities are more obedient to tradition than religion. Implementing the tradition in the form of a slametan ritual is the only medium to seek blessings. Slametan is also a sign of one's piety. More frequent slametan means more blessings, and at the same time shows piety. Slametan becomes a public medium to subdue the evil forces around it to bring logs, and good power can bring blessing (García, 2014). The nature has a double meaning, vertical and horizontal: as a form of gratitude, offering, rejecting logs, and social solidarity. Traditional ceremonies are a fusion of existing tensions and conflicts (Chen, 2017).

The natural environment shares certain common features in the belief systems labeled religions, which offer a complex set of moral obligations. Commands and obligations relate to the sacred environment space that originates from local wisdom, concerning spiritual ethics. Manifestations of human life and the universe as a whole are interconnected, and evoke strong beliefs, ranging from the mystical to the magical, so that they are believed to be part of a sacred space (Dunlap, 2009).

In reality, groups of people cannot adapt to the socio-cultural environment, which causes them to reject tradition. Rejection is based on subjective interpretations of religion. This group assesses Believing in myths is superstition, environmental sacralization is a form of shirk, ceremonial tradition is an understanding of bid'ah. Although this is only a small part of the coastal community, it has become a part of the pressure on tradition preservation groups (Szabo, 2021). The Kejawan community named the group that rejected this group as Putihan. It is associated with the symbol of group diversity, which is an organizationally affiliated group of Muhamadiyah. The pattern of relationship between the two groups didn't disturb harmony. Maturity in religion is shown to maintain good social relations.

The Impact of the Sacredness of the Natural Environment on Social Welfare

The southern coastal forest area, especially Trenggalek and Tulungagung, is a forest resource management unit in the Kediri Forest Management Unit (KPH), under the

East Java regional division. The forest area consists of protected forest of 37,927.3 ha = 32 percent, and production forest of 79,448 ha = 67.66 percent. Forest conditions in the coastal area are significant with teak, sengon, and pine managed by the forest management unit (BKPH) and the Forest Management Resort (RPH) (Pratiwi et al., 2014). Forest preservation in this area was disrupted during the 1998 Reformation period. Deforested land resulted in many landslides in various areas, including in the southern coastal areas (Sari et al., 2018). The government took years to rehabilitate the environment, an approach that involved local communities and community leaders to replant through a program: forestry reforestation, greening the environment, and planting a million trees together with the community, an integrative approach: economic, social, educational, and cultural aspects are used to accelerate the environmental restoration. Tradition preservation is held every year as a space to strengthen the belief that nature can bring prosperity to society (Carvalho & Steil, 2008). The elite, government, and society's role is very strategic to preserve the environment and save forests from damage to the eco system.

The traditional and contemporary world view of ecology is that the environmental crisis is a large scale and complex one. The urgency of this problem concerns the global world, concerning the preservation of human life. The new global environmental ethic strengthens traditional values originating from various sources. Cosmological Ethics already exists in traditional values by looking at each environment with respect, which is packaged in a model of a natural sacralization system. Although this is reduced by a new belief, namely, the dominance of reason, it is characterized as modern humans (Tucker et al., 1993). Cosmological ethics is interpreted broadly for the new ecological ethics, for comprehensive control and respect for natural resources. The sacralization of nature gains momentum in ecological ethics and cosmological ethics where every natural environment must be treated with respect and appreciation. Appreciating nature and placing it as something important is respecting human life itself, so that it is free from disaster, the source of all suffering.

Public awareness of the importance of protecting forests from damage and planting trees with local wisdom shows in the results that landslides and floods do not occur anymore (Stark, 2014). The local community's togetherness to work together with the local government became the last bastion to prevent tree cutting. The reform event left the community traumatized.

Now the community is calm: even with rains on the terraces, there is no worry because the forest conditions are excellent and the land safe. People living on the slopes of the mountains need a safe environment. The need is not only for food, but also a sense of security and calm, not disturbed by the fear of flooding and landslides (RS, 43). It is not the local people who seize wood from the forest, but unknown people from outside. There is a phenomenon of struggle for land power in this area between Perhutani and certain people with power. No local community dared to cut trees in the forest. Besides, there is always a foreman who looks after it because he is scary and haunted. I don't even dare to approach, let alone cut down, afraid of karma (Watra, 2018). The forest does not belong to the community, it belongs to the State, so if people cut trees it means stealing (RS, 43).

The local community can protect the forest area here, because we are afraid of getting our karma. The forest has an invisible protector, that is why the people do not act carelessly. Those are the teachings and traditions that we inherited from our ancestors (RS, 43). The construction of the sacred nature associated with disasters is believed to be because the community has committed violations of customs by disturbing spirits' space. Supernatural powers are constructed as what the Mbau Rekso region will be angry with, if humans destroy his mystical kingdom's environment. Conservation of the environment around the coast in Prigi with the development of mangrove forests also contributes positively to forest protection in the Prigi Coast area (Szabo 2021). Apart from being an economical tourist destination project, it also protects the south coast marine eco system (Paringsih et al., 2018).

Conservation of the coastal environment produces economic and social results for the community because tourist destinations in this region are increasingly diverse. Other coastal ecology impacts have been increasingly maintained; in the last 15 years there have been no landslides, and the community is free from natural pressures in every rainy season. The role of community elites in disaster mitigation and socialization to the community is a very strategic strategy (Sahlan, 2019). Climate change also has a direct impact on the lives of fishers, because the catch is reduced. The goal of sustainable development (TPB) is development that maintains the community's economic welfare sustainably. Development that maintains the quality of the environment and development that ensures justice and the implementation of governance that can maintain

the quality of life from one generation to the next (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2016).

East Java's geography is known for being prone to disasters: Earthquakes, floods, landslides, and volcanoes. The southern coast bordering the Indian Ocean and surrounded by mountains and forests requires community alertness, and disaster mitigation capabilities. After the Aceh Tsunami in 2004, coastal communities must have awareness of tsunami disaster mitigation literacy, especially areas that have open beaches, such as Trenggalek, Pacitan, Blitar, Malang, Banyuwangi (Priyowidodo & Luik, 2013). A multi-disciplinary and normative approach can be done by cooperating with coastal stake holders. Law No. 23/1997 on Environmental Management, provides the mandate to conserve and develop a harmonious and balanced environmental capacity to create sustainable development with an environmental perspective, to make the current generation and future generations prosperous. Efforts to ground environmental ethics in education are a strategic step to impart environmental knowledge (Rusdina, 2015). Conservation of Natural Resources (KSDAL) is everyone's responsibility because the ecological influence of development activities is not limited by differences in the State government's administrative areas.

Conclusion

The process of sacralization of the natural environment originates from the belief in supernatural powers, summarized in the myths of the south coast, which are sacred, mystical, and magical. All events in this area for the people of Java are always connected with the will of the rulers of the south coast. The cosmological pattern of divine understanding-anthropomorphism is a characteristic of Kejawen. They do not believe in one God (in religion). Still, their inner space is filled with belief in a cosmological God who can strengthen mentally and morally in dealing with various social, economic, and political pressures. Environmental spiritualization creates obedience and faith that is mystical and magical. The process of sacralization comes from belief, sociologically placing nature as a determinant of human life. Damage to nature means disaster for humans.

The belief in the Pesisir Selatan mythology is practiced in the rituals of the Pesisir tradition known throughout Nusantara, namely, sea quotes implemented in the form of a slametan. In the socio-religious analysis,

the ritual has multiple meanings, vertical and horizontal. The vertical meaning is a form of gratitude, supplication, sacrifice and rejecting logs. The horizontal meaning is a manifestation of the desire of the whole community to reintegration and social solidarity. Competition and conflict in daily interactions can be dissolved in the slametan ritual. Slametan is symbolically interpreted as an identity of piety. There are differences in the meaning of interpretations of religious piety and traditional piety. It is easier for people to practice traditional piety than religious piety. The slametan ritual in functionalism perspective guides each individual to appreciate all forms of effort, both physically and spiritually, to obtain natural blessings and avoid all forms of disaster.

National development that is environmentally sound is getting the right momentum with the local wisdom values of the South coastal communities who practice sacred nature's spiritual values. The preservation of the natural environment in the southern coastal areas will affect the ecological system of marine living resources, on which the community lives. Abundant marine resources will be reduced if the quality of the marine environment is damaged. The coastal community's spiritual value is one of the disaster mitigation systems that can prevent disasters from occurring. It takes a more serious role from community elites to provide environmental insight to the community through the education system and ethics that can strengthen the local wisdom system. This is because environmental spiritualization is less valuable if it is not accompanied by knowledge about environmental conservation. The 1997 reform events have provided evidence that belief systems are not sufficient to prevent forest destruction. Continuous education is needed to the community, so that forest preservation becomes a tradition to preserve life. Sanctifying the environment involves having faith in the presence of a universal God and actively nurturing the natural world.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare there is no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements

The authors thanks and acknowledges the Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kediri.

References

- Abdelzaher, D. M., Kotb, A., & Helfaya, A. (2019). Eco-Islam: Beyond the principles of why and what, and into the principles of how. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 155(3), 623–643. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3518-2>
- Allen, D. (1998). *Myth and religion in mircea eliade*. Routledge.
- Badan Pusat Statistik. (2016). *Sekilas SDGs*. Dashboard SDGs.
- Bednarz, E. (2017). Human/Mythos. *Canadian Literature*, (234), 168–168. <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A550996582/AONE?u=anon~ce761708&sid=googleScholar&xid=9de8e5cd>.
- Carey, L. B., Davoren, R. P., & Cohen, J. (2009). The sacralization of identity: An interfaith spiritual care paradigm for chaplaincy in a multifait context. In D. S. Schipani, & L. D. Bueckert (Eds.), *Interfaith spiritual care understandings and practices* (pp. 191–217). Pandora Press.
- Carvalho, I. C. M., & Steil, C. A. (2008). The sacralization of nature and the 'naturalization' of the sacred: theoretical contributions for the comprehension of the intercrossing between health, ecology and spirituality-The "cultivating self": health, ecology and spirituality. *Ambiente & sociedade*, 4, 1809–4422. http://socialsciences.scielo.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1414-753X2008000100006
- Chen, N. (2017). Secularization, sacralization and the reproduction of sacred space: Exploring the industrial use of ancestral temples in rural Wenzhou, China. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 18(4), 530–552. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2016.1197302>
- Costa Kott, A. (2021). *Umbanda's relationship with the natural environment & religious intolerance* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin]. <https://doi.org/10.26153/tsw/14227>
- Desmazières, A. (2018). 'Toward a sacralization of the religious vows? religious consecration and the solemnity of the vow in Thomas Aquinas's Works'. *Mirator*, 19(1), 32–42. https://www.academia.edu/36768057/Towards_a_Sacralization
- Dhavamony, M. (1997) *Christian theology of inculturation*. Gregorian Biblical BookShop.
- Dudeck, S., Rud, A. A., Havelka, R., Terebikhin, N. M., & Melyutina, M. N. (Eds.). (2017). 'Safeguarding sacred sites in the subarctic zone—three case studies from Northern Russia'. In *Experiencing and Protecting Sacred Natural Sites of Sámi and Other Indigenous Peoples* (pp. 159–180). Springer. https://www.academia.edu/31813138/Safeguarding_Sacred_Sites_in_the_Subarctic_Zone_Three_case_studies_from_Northern_Russia
- Dunlap, T. R. (2009). *Faith in nature: Environmentalism as religious quest*. University of Washington Press.
- García, J. R. C. (2014). Perspectives on the phenomenon of ritual sacrifice, sacralization of food and conviviality in the classical world. *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai-Historia*, 59(1), 285–307. <https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=206115>
- Goodale, M. (2018). 'Values without qualities: Pathos and mythos in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Human Rights* (pp. 441–449), Routledge.
- Haft, H. (2020). The Russian Orthodox Church at the council of Europe: Religious rights, free expression and traditional values. *NYUJ Int'l L. & Pol.*, 53, 953.
- Kasnadi, K., & Sutejo, S. (2018). 'Islamic religious values within Javanese traditional idioms as the Javanese life guidance'. *El Harakah*, 20(1), 33–48. <https://doi.org/10.18860/el.v20i1.4850>
- Kimic, K., Smaniotto Costa, C., & Negulescu, M. (2021). 'Creating tourism destinations of underground built heritage — the cases of salt mines in Poland, Portugal, and Romania'. *Sustainability*, 13(17), 9676. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13179676>
- Martin, D. (2014). *Religion and power: No logos without mythos*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd..
- Marwantika, A. I. (2021). The sacralization of the myth of prohibition of leaving the house at dusk in sandekala film: Charles sanders pierce's semiotic analysis. *Muharrrik: Jurnal Dakwah dan Sosial*, 4(1), 33–46. https://www.academia.edu/74421918/The_Sacralization_of_the_Myth_of_Prohibition_of_Leaving_the_House_at_Dusk_in_Sandekala_Film_Charles_Sanders_Pierce_s_Semiotic_Analysis
- Maydanov, A. (2018). 'The myth as the means of sacralization of the life world of human'. *Voprosy filosofii*, (9), 207–214. <https://doi.org/10.31857/S004287440001363-4>
- Masruri, U. N. (2014). Pelestarian Lingkungan dalam Perspektif Sunnah [Environmental Conservation from a Sunnah Perspective]. *at-Taqaddum*, 6(2), 411–428. <https://doi.org/10.21580/at.v6i2.718>
- Paringsih, N. C., Setyono, P., & Sunarto, S. (2018). Konservasi mangrove berbasis trm (tanam rawat monitoring) untuk menjaga sumberdaya laut di Cengkong, Trenggalek [TRM-based mangrove conservation (planting care monitoring) to protect marine resources in Cengkong, Trenggalek]. *Bioeksperimen: Jurnal Penelitian Biologi*, 4(2), 22–34. <https://doi.org/10.23917/bioeksperimen.v4i2.6882>
- Pratiwi, P., Hartoyo, M. E., & Narendra, B. H. (2014). Kesesuaian jenis pohon pada lahan kritis di sub das lesti, jawa timur [Suitability of tree species on critical land in the Lesti sub-watershed, East Java]. *Jurnal Penelitian Hutan Dan Konservasi Alam*, 11(2), 183–204. <https://doi.org/10.23917/bioeksperimen.v4i2.6882>
- Priyowidodo, G., & Luik, J. E. (2013). Literasi mitigasi bencana tsunami untuk masyarakat pesisir di Kabupaten Pacitan Jawa Timur [Tsunami disaster mitigation literacy for coastal communities in Pacitan Regency, East Java]. *Ekotrans*, 13(1), 47–61. http://repository.petra.ac.id/16600/1/Publikasi1_06016_1305.pdf
- Ritzer, G., & Yagatich, W. (2012). *Contemporary sociological theory, The wiley-blackwell companion to sociology* (pp. 98–118). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Rohdewald, S. (2022). Sacralizing the nation through remembrance of medieval religious figures in Serbia, Bulgaria and Macedonia. *Sacralizing the Nation through Remembrance of Medieval Religious Figures in Serbia*. Brill.
- Roihana, W. L., & Lukito, Y. N. (2021). The sacrality of Menara Kudus Mosque in manifesting sustainability of Kauman's built environment, AIP Conference Proceedings (Vol. 2376, 040011). AIP Publishing LLC. <https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0064112>
- Rusdina, A. (2015). Membumikan etika lingkungan bagi upaya membudayakan pengelolaan lingkungan yang bertanggung jawab [Grounding environmental ethics for efforts to cultivate a culture of responsible environmental management]. *Jurnal Istek*, 9(2), 244–263. <http://journal.uinsgd.ac.id/index.php/istek/article/view/198>
- Sahlan, M. (2019). Kearifan lokal dan peran elit agama dalam mitigasi bencana di Kecamatan Tangse Kabupaten Pidie [Local wisdom and the role of religious elites in disaster mitigation in Tangse District, Pidie Regency]. *Jurnal Sosiologi USK (Media Pemikiran & Aplikasi)*, 13(1), 72–88. <https://doi.org/10.24815/jsu.v13i1.14050>

- Sardjuningsih, S. (2013). *Sembonyo: Jalinan spiritualisme masyarakat nelayan* [Sembonyo: The spiritualism of fishing communities]. STAIN Tulungagung Press.
- Sari, R. R., Hairiah, K., & Suyanto, S. (2018). Karakteristik hutan rakyat jati dan sengon serta manfaat ekonominya di Kabupaten Malang [Characteristics of teak and sengon community forests and their economic benefits in Malang Regency]. *Jurnal Ekonomi Pertanian dan Agribisnis*, 2(2), 129–137. <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.jepa.2018.002.02.6>
- Smith, S. (2019). The sacralization of absolute power: God's power and women's subordination in the Southern Baptist Convention. *Honors Project*, 123. https://digitalcommons.bowdoin.edu/honorsprojects/123?utm_source=digitalcommons.bowdoin.edu%2Fhonorsprojects%2F123&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages
- Stark, K. (2014). Saints, stones, and springs: cult sites and the sacralization of landscape in Medieval Central Europe [Unpublished Thesis]. Central European University, Budapest.
- Szabo, C. (2021). Space sacralization in antiquity: The case study of Roman Dacia. *Transylvanian Review*, 30(3), 100–120. https://www.academia.edu/61766544/Space_Sacralization_in_Antiquity_The_Case_Study_of_Roman_Dacia
- Tucker, M. E., & Grim, J. A. (1994). *Worldviews and ecology*. Philpapers. <https://philpapers.org/rec/GRIWAE>.
- Uden, M. H. F. v., Mulder, A., & Pieper, J. Z. T. (2001). From myth to act. Modern pilgrimage to Santiago [Unpublished thesis. University of Calgary], Canada.
- Wargadinata, W., Maimunah, I., & Indah, R. N. (2020). Eco-religious approach to deforestation by Indonesian Istighosa community. *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, 19(56), 166–178. <http://jsri.ro/ojs/index.php/jsri/article/view/1212>.
- Watra, I. W., (2018). The sacralization of ogoh-ogoh in the city of Denpasar: Source of new funding, Proceeding book-international seminar Bali Hinduism. *Tradition and Interreligious Studies*, 149–156. <https://press.unhi.ac.id/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/149-156.pdf>