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Interrelation of Religion and Culture in *Gunungan* Tradition Cosmology: Islamic and Javanese Perspectives

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Abstract

Philosophically, the science of The Qur'an about mountains is interpreted as a system of local awareness in the form of spiritual communication in the *gunungan* tradition of Javanese society. The concept of mountains in the Qur'an is scientific proof (*kauniyah*) of the Oneness of God as the Javanese interpret it as the concept of *Gusti Manunggal*. This dialectical relationship can be traced through the meaning of mountain cosmology in the Qur'an and Javanese philosophy in the perspective of interrelation between religion and culture. This study aims to explain mountains in the scientific perspective of the Qur'an with various functions which philosophically have a strong relationship in the *gunungan* tradition of the *Garabek*, *Tumpeng*, *Slametan*, and *Sekaten* rituals as the embodiment of tauhid in Central Java or *Panjang-jimat* in West Java. The method used is a thematic interpretation study with a descriptive narrative approach. Research on mountain cosmology or *gunungan* in the perspective of Islam and Javanese culture finds that (1) *Gunungan* is a form of symbolic communication that functions as an adhesive for the ordinary people on the one hand and at the same



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time spiritual. (2) The mountain is a universal system that affects the life of the Javanese people in fulfilling their life needs in an ecosystem function. (3) The *gunungan* tradition is a medium for praying, gratitude as a form of application, safety, and peace, as well as a medium for the spread of Islam. It can be concluded that the relationship between Islam and Javanese culture is a unified and unique Islamic characteristic in expressing theological and ecological awareness.

[Sains al Qur'an tentang gunung secara filosofis dimaknai sebagai sistem kesadaran lokal berupa komunikasi spiritual dalam tradisi *gunungan* masyarakat Jawa. Konsep gunung dalam al Qur'an merupakan bukti sains (*kauniyah*) tentang ke-Esa-an Tuhan sebagaimana Jawa memaknainya sebagai konsep *Gusti Manunggal*. Hubungan dialektis tersebut dapat ditelusuri melalui pemaknaan kosmologi gunung dalam al Qur'an dan filosofi Jawa dalam perspektif interelasi agama dan budaya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan gunung dalam perspektif sains al Qur'an denganberagam fungsinya yang secara filosofis memiliki hubungan kuat dalam tradisi *gunungan* pada ritual *Garabek*, *Tumpeng*, *Slametan*, maupun *Sekaten* sebagai pengejawantahan tauhid di Jawa Tengah atau *Panjang-jimat* di Jawa Barat. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi tafsir tematik dengan pendekatan naratif deskriptif. Penelitian kosmologi gunung atau *gunungan* dalam perspektif Islam dan budaya Jawa menemukan bahwa: (1) Gunung merupakan bentuk komunikasi simbolik yang berfungsi sebagai perekat keummatan di satu sisi dan spiritual sekaligus. (2) Gunung adalah sistem alam semesta yang mempengaruhi kehidupan masyarakat Jawa dalam memenuhi hajat hidup dalam fungsi ekosistem. (3) Tradisi *gunungan* merupakan media berdoa untuk kesyukuran sebagai bentuk permohonan keselamatan dan kedamaian serta media syiar Islam. Hal ini dapat disimpulkan bahwa hubungan Islam dan budaya Jawa menjadi satu karakteristik keberislaman yang menyatu dan unik dalam mengekspresikan kesadaran teologis sekaligus ekologis.]

Keywords: religiosity; science of the Qur'an; *gunungan* tradition



Introduction

Religion and science in the study of the Qur'an are often seen as a forceful instrument of justification, which is not entirely true when it is seen in the paradigm of science or *'ilm*.¹ Conceptually, its view can be traced in the terminology of righteousness, for example, interpreting the concept of *istislah*, which is not only limited to morality but needs to be expanded from the limits of the religious rituals' meaning to the more practical and factual purpose. It can alleviate the problems of the Muslim society are increasingly entangled in the matters of injustice, balance, social law, up to culture. Therefore the idea of the Qur'an related to science should be reviewed in the human relational paradigm and the wider universe.²

The relationships of human and universe in the Qur'an perspective is described as an inspiring partnership relation both governance till the meaning of natural material structures functions to be understood as evidence of God's *kauniyah*, so that become the basic principle of the knowledge concept that can raise human analytical awareness on the attitude of religiosity with nature.³ Evidence of religious affinity and science is also confirmed by Imam Ghazali in the book of *ihya 'ulumuddin* and in *Jawahirul Qur'an* and some other thinkers and mufassir such as Fakrurrazi in his commentary *al Razi* (850-900 AD).⁴ Likewise, other Muslim scholars before and after al Razi who have proven the study of science in the Qur'an such as; al Jabir (750-800 AD), Khawarizmi (800-850 AD), then al-Mas'udi (900-950) as the post-al Razi generation, Abu al-Wafa' (950-1000 AD), then al-Biruni and Ibn Sina who were a generation in 1000-1050 AD and al-Khayyam (1050-1100 AD). The study of Muslim intellectuals can be

¹Nidhal Guessoum, *Islam's Quantum Question; Reconciling Muslim Tradition and Modern Science* (London: New York: I.B.Tauris, 2011), 54.

²Ziauddin Sardar, *How Do You Know?: Reading Ziauddin Sardar on Islam, Science and Cultural Relations, Science* (London: Pluto Press, 2006), 137.

³Muzaffar Iqbal, *Science and Islam* (London: Greenwood Press, 2007), 35.

⁴Zaghlul Al-Najjar, "Madkhal Ila Dirasah Al-I'jaz Al-'ilm Fi Al-Quran Al-Karim Wa Al-Sunnah Al-Nabawiyah Al-Mutahharah" (lebanon: Dar Ma'rifah, 2009), 78-79.



the essential relation of science with the Qur'an that gives the space of scientific knowledge to explain the Oneness of God through His-*kauniyah* verse.⁵

Kauniyah verses, which are known as scientific evidence of the Qur'an, can be traced through various verses that around 750-1000 verses in the Qur'an, compared with 250 verses that explain the issues of law or sharia. In terms of the verses, Qur'an proportion and science are unity part of revelation that is indisputable.⁶ However, it does not mean the Qur'an as proof of science, but rather as a guide to the justification of God's Oneness. That statement is relevant to Sayyid Hosein Nasr's statement that science in the Qur'an is more appropriate if it places the Qur'an as a prototype for science.⁷ If it is so, the fluency of the Qur'an science will continue to intertwine and inspire people throughout time.⁸ Based on the evidence of science verses in the Qur'an, Allah Almighty. It always motivates people to empower the grace to observe, analyze, to observe various natural phenomena.⁹ The factuality of the science verse was later developed as the basic principle of science in various fields of knowledge.¹⁰

One of the interesting Qur'an sciences is the phenomenon of mountains both in terms of building architecture and the universality

⁵Abdul Alim Abdurrahman Chodhuri, *Al Thabi'yyatu Wal I'jaz Al 'Ilmi Lil Qur'an Al Karim* (Palestina: Dar al Su'udiyah, 1986), 19-24; Mahayudin Haji Yahaya, "Alam Semesta Dan Bencana Alam Dari Perspektif Agama Dan Sains," *Unimap* 1 (2012): 71-85, <http://dspace.unimap.edu.my:80/xmlui/handle/123456789/41419>.

⁶Yusuf Haji Ahmad, *Mausuatul I'jaz Al 'Ilmi*, 2nd ed. (Maktabah Ibnu Hajar, 2003), 206. Zaglul Al-Najjar, "Madkhal Ila Dirasah Al-I'jaz Al-'ilm Fi Al-Quran Al-Karim Wa Al-Sunnah Al-Nabawiyah Al-Mutahharah" (lebanon: Dar Ma'rifah, 2009), 74. Abdul 'Alim Abdurrahman Khudri, *Al Tabi'iyat Wa Al I'jaz Al 'Ilmi Lil Qur'an Al Karim* (Bagdad: Dar al Su'udiyah, 1987), 19.

⁷Sayyed Hosein Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1972), 37.

⁸M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al Misbah*, 15th ed. (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), 392.

⁹Jamal Fakhri, "Sains Dan Teknologi Dalam Al-Qur'an Dan Implikasinya Dalam Pembelajaran," *Ta'dib* 15, no. 01 (2010): 121-42, <https://e-journal.iaingorontalo.ac.id/index.php/almuzakki/article/view/107>.

¹⁰Sayyed Hossein Nasr, *Science and Civilization in Islam* (Chicago: ABC International Group, 2001), 41.



function of spirituality medium as a manifestation of transcendental interdependence attitudes. In terms of spirituality, the mountain phenomenon in macrocosm reality is evidence of the manifestation of God's existence sourced from His-*rububiyah* nature, in Ibn Arabi's view explained that the existence of the universe is part of God's immanent form that encourages self-awareness into a unified system of faith and belief in God's existence.¹¹

Science in the Qur'an that talks about mountains get a fairly high academic appreciation by producing a variety of views, such as mountains that function as pegs of the earth to maintain the stability of the earth from various shocks or earthquakes.¹² With its stability, the life of the earth becomes habitable because it has a certain level in terms of the earth's temperature, gravity, till the distance of the earth from other sky objects.¹³ Even according to Tantawi Jauhari, the mountain also serves as water storage because of the mountain characteristics that are able to manage the watery clouds at the top of the mountain to produce more frequent and heavy rain.¹⁴ Phenomenological awareness consciously builds spiritual reception and symbolic articulation by society in human relations with the universe.

The awareness arises and strengthens in Javanese tradition, in tradition and culture also spiritual function known as *gunungan* which is more spiritual in symbolic meaning. *Gunungan* became an important part of the representation of Javanese rituals during the *Garebek* event, which is understood as a monolithic tawhid system that serves as a reminder of humans to God as a phase of gratitude to ask for safety and

¹¹Howard R. Turner, *Science in Medieval Islam: An Illustrated Introduction* (2006: University of Texas Press, 1998), 39-40.

¹²Samsul Arifin, "Gunung Dalam Al Qur'an" (Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2015), 111-117.

¹³Ahmad Harfa, "Keseimbangan Penciptaan Bumi Menurut Al Qur'an Dan Sains" (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2011), 57-58.

¹⁴Fuad Taufiq Imron, "Konsep Gunung Dalam Kitab Al-Jawahir Fi Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Karim (Perspektif Sains Moderen)" (Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo, Semarang, 2016), 84.



peace by sharing each other.¹⁵ On the other hand, *gunungan* used in puppet shows explains the religious, philosophical message of religious awareness that is not just entertainment.¹⁶ Even *gunungan* or *tumpeng* for Javanese people is also interpreted as a balance system of the universe and spiritual. Based on the symbolic awareness, Javanese people internalize in the practice of Javanese people called as *sangkan paraning dumadi*.¹⁷

From the conception of *gunungan* above, this paper wants to answer the academic problematics on how the integration of mountain cosmology in the tradition of the Qur'an and Javanese culture. This article aims to explain the meeting point of Islamic and Javanese thought by describing the philosophical views of the Qur'an also the understanding of Javanese people in *gunungan* rituals. To explain the academic problems above, a few questions about how mountain cosmology is in the Qur'an and Java also how is the function of *gunungan* in Java tradition.

Methods

This study used qualitative methods in thematic interpretation studies through narrative-descriptive approaches to answer the questions above. The data source is obtained by searching library materials (library research) that discuss mountain topics from an Islamic and cultural perspective. Theoretically, the thematic interpretation studies were conducted through interpretation steps developed by Toshihiko Isutzu into structural-semantic models by focusing on the relation of text, meaning, and meaning's field through binding terms.¹⁸ From

¹⁵J. J. Ras, *Javanese Literature since Independence: An Anthology* (London: New York: Brill, 1979), 339.

¹⁶ Djoko Sulaksono, "Filosofi Pertunjukkan Wayang Purwa," *IBDA` : Jurnal Kajian Islam Dan Budaya* 11, no. 2 (January 1, 1970): 238–246, <https://doi.org/10.24090/ibda.v11i2.82>.

¹⁷ Andreas Yunarma, "Konsep Manusia Dalam Gunungan Sebuah Refleksi Filosofis Terhadap Kearifan Lokal," *Jurnal Filsafat* 22, no. 1 (2012): 18–30, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jf.12983>.

¹⁸Toshihiko Isuzu, *God, and Man in the Qur'an; Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung* (Tokyo: Islamic book Trust, 2008), 11-16 dan 32-42. Toshihiko



various meanings of the mountain, then look for a meeting point in the philosophical view of Javanese people through *gunungan* traditions are reviewed in an integrative perspective.

Results

Mountain Cosmology and Gunungan: Islamic and Javanese Perspective

Before exploring the side of mountain cosmological in the tradition of revelation, it is worth introducing mountain information from a scientific perspective. Mountain in geological understanding is a large land area in the form of an ocean where the seabed experiences sedimentation accompanied by erosion that compacts the soil and rock layers. Therefore, the arrangement of rocks that tower upwards is caused by tectonic force so that there is folding, faulting, and uplifting. The height of the mountain with tectonic force can reach a height of 600 meters.¹⁹ Van Zuidam (1985), quoted by Taufiq, explained that the mountain is a land with a height between 500-10000 meters. Similarly, in Islamic science scientists al Naggar, mountains are defined as a large mass consisting of a series of mountains or mountains that are narrow, with or without peaks, closely related to the position, direction, formation, and age.²⁰

Based on the definition above, there are two mountain typologies: volcanoes and others that are not fiery. Volcanoes are mountains formed by layers of material coming out of the earth's stomach characterized by symptoms of explosions or eruptions. The typology of the volcano is known as the Monogenesis volcano and the active period is short, and the shape is smaller than polygenesis

Isuzu, *Ethico Religious Concepts in the Qur'an* (Canada: McGill Queen University Press, 2002).

¹⁹Dendy Sugono et al., *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pusat Bahasa Departemen pendidikan Nasional, 2008), 495-496.

²⁰Z.R. El Naggar, *The Geological Concept of Mountain In The Qur'an* (Cairo: Al Falah Foundation, 2003), 8.



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volcanoes. Many eruptions form polygenesis Mount, and usually, the distance between one eruption and another is characterized by a relatively long distance of silent time and involves magma-type elements.

However, for Bronto, there was no agreement about what volcano meant. At least he gave an example that for people living in Japan and New Zealand, an active volcano is a mountain that has erupted 50.000 years ago until now. Meanwhile, the mountain that has erupted in the span of 50.000-100.000, has potential reactive, and if beyond the time above, it is considered a volcanic fossil.²¹ While active volcanoes in Indonesia is around 127 volcano mountains, either has erupted or do not have solfatara and fumaroles and geothermal.

In Islamic tradition, the terms of the mountain used in the Qur'an are like as *Jabal* or *jibal* which means (ما ارتفع عن الأرض إذا عظم وطال) something that rises from the earth's solid plains and culminates.²² Another part of the *Jabal* form is *al jiblu* (الجبيل) which means community as in Qs. Yasin [36]:62.²³ While the characteristics or functions of the mountain are often followed by the term *rawasi*, which means (ثبت وأصله) (رسخ) to remain, stable or to hit the earth very profoundly.²⁴ Simply, the mountain is a mound of hard and sturdy layers of rock and a towering peak. The mountain is part of the earth's surface area consisting of rocks layers and soil that towered over with an average height above 600 meters. *Jabal*. *Jabal* (جبل) *jibal* (جبال) amounts to 33 verses.

The repetition of the mountain's term in the book of *Mu'jam al Mufahras li al Fadzil Qur'an* repeats 39 times.²⁵ Various forms of *Jabal* based on the formation of the word there are at least two forms of the word mountain, namely plural and singular. In the form of singular *Jabal* (جبل) amounts to 6 verses and in the form of plural *jibal* (جبال)

²¹Arifin, "Gunung Dalam Al Qur'an.", 25.

²²Hasan 'Izzuddin bin 'Abdul Fattah Ahmad. Al-Jamal, *Makthutah Al-Jamal: Mu'jam Wa Tafsir Lughawy Li Kalimat Al-Qur'an* (Kairo: Al- Haiah al-Mashriyah al-'Amah li al-Kutub, 2003), 304.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid, 195.

²⁵Muhamma Abdul Baqi', *Mu'jam Al Mufahras Li Al Fadzi Al Qur'an* (Mesir: Dar al Kutub, 1945), 163-164.



amounts to 33 verses. On the other hand, the meanings contained in the word *Jabal* are very diverse, no less than 26 meanings in the Qur'an.²⁶

The use of the mountain's term in lafadz *Jabal/jibal* as many as 11 times which the mountain is interpreted by walking or traveling or moved is illustrated in Qs. Al Kahfi [18]:47, Qs. At Thur [52]: 10, Qs. An Naba' [78]: 20 and at Takwir [81]: 3. Furthermore, the mountains are destroyed on the Day of Resurrection, like in Qs. Thaha [20]: 105-107, Qs. Al Waqi'ah [56]: 4-6 Qs. Al Muzammil [73]: 14 Qs. Al Mursalat [77]: 10. Similarly, the formulation of the mountain as feathers fly, Qs. Al Ma'arif [70]: 8-9 al Qari'ah [101]: 5. In other places, no less than 17 verses with 16 chapters describe the mountains in the world inhabited by humans; 7 verses related to the stories of the Prophet Daud Qs. Al Anbiya' [21]: 79 Qs. Saba' [34]: 10 and Sa'd [38]: 18-19 the clans of prophet Samud who had the expertise to sculpt Qs. Al A'raf [7]: 74 Qs. Al Hijr [15]: 80-82 Qs. Asy Syu'ara [26]: 149 the story of Prophet Nuh Qs. Al Hud [11]: 42.²⁷ Meanwhile, the meaning of the word *jibal*, which is called side by side with the earth and sky, is found in the Makkiyah verses like as; Qs. Maryam [19]: 88-91 Qs. Al-Hajj [22]: 18 al Ahzab [33]: 72 Qs. An Naba'[78]: 6-7 Qs. An Nazi'at [79]: 27-32 Qs. Al Ghasiyah [88]: 17-20.

On the other hand, the Qur'an does not only refer to mountains with the terms *Jabal* or *jibal* but also uses the word *rawasi*, which more refers to the functional meaning of mountains. The term *rawasi* is the equivalent of the term *Jabal* which is understood as being fixed, firm, and strong. The word *rawasi* (رواسي) is more specific than *Jabal* which is meant as an earth peg, as in its primary meaning, which means to make a shaking object standstill, and that object is the earth. In the Qur'an *rawasi* (رواسي) is in side by side with the sentence (القي) in (Qs. Qaaf [50]: 7) means "Dumping" or putting something that was not there

²⁶Muhammad Sibam Rusydi Zaini, *Mu'jam Al Mufahras Li Ma'anil Qur'an*, 1st ed. (Beirut-Lebanon: Dar al Fikri, 1995), 266-268.

²⁷Kementrian Agama, *Gunung Dalam Perspektif Al Qur'an Dan Sains*, (Jakarta, 2016), 13-15.



before.²⁸ Also, the mountain is called *al-a'lamas* many as two times. The variety of terms will undoubtedly affect the meaning of each word formation in it. However, in general, the nature of mountains serves as a balance from shocks and maintains the earth's lithosphere.²⁹

Likewise, from the side of the verse, the division of the Makkiyah and Madaniah verses indicates the context of the verses. It is not less than nine verses in the Qur'an which describe mountains with the term *rawasi*, 8 of which are Makkiyah verses such; Qs. Al Hijr [15]:19, Qs. An Nahl [16]:15 Qs. Al anbiya' [21]: 31 Qs. An Name [27]: 61 Qs. Lukman [31]:10 Qs. Fussilat [41]:10 Qs. Qaf [50]: 7 Qs. Al Mursalat [77]: 27. Meanwhile, one verse includes Madaniah verses like QS. Ar Ra'du [13]: 3. From the division of Makkiyah and Madinah, there are three verses that have meaning mountains are a gift from Allah to humans by stretching out the earth Qs. Ar Ra'du [13]: 3, Qs. Al Hijr [15]:19 dan Qs. Qaf [50]: 7. Meanwhile, three other verses explain the function of mountains to prevent the earth and everything in it from shaking. Qs. An Nahl [16]:15, Qs. Al anbiya [21]: 31, Qs. Lukman [31]:10. The other three last mention mountains without being associated with a phenomenon in the universe contained in Qs. An Name [27]: 61, Qs. Fussilat [41]:10 Qs. Al Mursalat [77]:27.³⁰

The use of the term mountain as in the Qur'an has a symbolic meaning in the Javanese tradition; mountains are better known as the term *gunungan*. *Gunungan* is a Javanese tradition that has a spiritual meaning in the awareness of religiosity and philosophy of life in the practice of Javanese life. These symbolic meanings are often found in a series of Javanese traditions, such as in the *Greek* or *sekaten* event rituals. *Sekaten*, which is marked by *gunungan*, actually wants to show a form of evidence to God's blessings through religious awareness in the form of tauhid sentences as evidence to God. The term *sekaten* is a public reception for awareness of tauhid evidence, namely *syahadatain*.

²⁸Imron, "Konsep Gunung Dalam Kitab Al-Jawahir Fi Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Karim (Perspektif Sains Moderen).", 42.

²⁹Ahmad, *Mausuatul I'jaz Al 'Ilmi*, 237-239. Kamarul Azmi Jasmi and Nurliyana Ahmad Zawawi, *Al-Qur'an Dan Geografi*, 1st ed. (Johor Bahru: UTM Press, 2013), 64-68.

³⁰Kementerian Agama, *Gunung Dalam Perspektif Al Qur'an Dan Sains*, 17-18.



It can also be found in the Cirebon tradition known as the *Panjang-jimat* tradition, a symbolic sentence from the shahada sentence.³¹

Furthermore, we also find the meaning of religiosity in the replica of the Borobudur temple. The mention of its name is also close to the meaning of mountain, namely *budhara* or for Balinese Hindus calling it *beduhur*, which means above or the top. Borobudur's position is geographically flanked by two volcanoes, namely Mount Merapi and Mount Merbabu. Geographically, the area is located between two mountains which is called the area "kedu" which means holy. This is the basis that mountains are not just a natural phenomenon but hold sacred meanings for Javanese people to this day. The meaning of sacredness or purity of the mountain is based on the logic of thinking, which is logical and spiritual in the form of ecological spirituality. This view is relevant to how the Javanese people believe that mountainous areas are fertile land suitable for farming and irrigation from an ecological point of view.³² This fact confirms that holiness is closely related to the ecological meaning that it can be maintained and preserved. Its purpose for human life can sustainably take place.

On the other hand, Borobudur is a mountain representation in the heyday of Hindu-Buddhism, which has a humanitarian cosmology based on three world divisions, namely *Kamadhatu* as the world of desire, *Rupadhatu* as the world of existence, and *Arupadhatu* as the world without existing.³³ The three divisions emphasize the spirituality of Javanese society in practicing holiness in everyday life. Humans who pursue the world are called material humans in the lowest position, namely *kamadhatu*. Likewise, humans who leave the world of desire and pursue the position of existence realize that their existence depends on charity and goodness until they reach the peak of *Arupadhatu* as a

³¹Abdul Ghaffar Muhaimin, *The Islamic Traditions of Cirebon: Ibadat and Adat Among Javanese Muslims* (Australi: ANU E Press, 2006), 128-129.

³²Agustina Dwisati Malvina, *World Heritage Nature and Culture* (Jakarta: Batara Publishing, 2009), 175.

³³Ibid, 179.



stage of self-purity as a spiritual human being close to God and incarnate as a wise man.

Interrelation of Mountain Cosmology as Religious Awareness of Islam and Java

Mountain cosmology in an ecological perspective has a meeting point in mountain cosmology and Islamic tradition by calling to the mountain as *ma'an furatan* in Qs. Al Mursalat [77]:27, which means clean water that is beneficial to humans, including protecting the natural ecosystem from shocks to the feasibility of the universe as a place to maintain the continuity of human life needs. Scientifically, fresh water, which comes from the valleys of the mountains, is a process of water vapor that clumps and falls in the crevices of the mountains and flows into rivers, as referred to in Qs. Ar Ra'du [13]: 7. From these benefits, traditional communities living inland or at the foot of the mountains can take advantage of mountain water for various needs ranging from daily to agriculture and the farm.

On the other hand, a mountain is described as a place that is not quiescent but moves like a boat sailing in Qs. An Name [27]: 88. This verse strongly describes the foot of the mountain that goes to the bottom of the earth so that the mountain's movement is not known. This theory is similar to the theory of gravity. The earth that rotates around the sun remains on its axis because of mountains that provide a proportional balance force. Therefore, the function of mountains in the Qur'an as earth pegs is as revealed in Qs. An Nazi'at [79]: 23 and 33. An Najjar added that this function could also be found in the other nine surahs such Qs. Ar Ra'du [13]: 3, Qs. al Hijr [15]:19, Qs. An Nahl [16]:15, Qs. Al Anbiya' [21]: 31, Qs. An Name [28]: 61, Qs. Al Lukman [31]:10, Qs. Fussilat [41]:10, Qs. Qaaf [50]: 7, Qs. al Mursalat [77]: 8.³⁴

Furthermore, Najjar also provides information about the meaning of *mafhum siyaq* where *lafads* (الأرض) which means the earth in the hadith above, has three meanings alternately; first, the earth as part of the planet in the solar system, the second the ground of the earth

³⁴Al-Najjar, "Madkhal Ila Dirasah Al-I'jaz Al-'ilm Fi Al-Quran Al-Karim Wa Al-Sunnah Al-Nabawiyah Al-Mutahharah.", 398.



as a place to live or live for humans, flora and fauna, third, the highlands, namely the earth-shaking mountains.

It is like the mountains in the cosmology of the Qur'an, which clearly explain their function as the continuity of earth and human life, which also can be found in Javanese cosmological concepts. The mountain for the Javanese people explains the cosmological function of being micro-cosmic, in the middle of macro-cosmic survival. This cosmic awareness is without cause but crosses the limits of human consciousness and religiosity in the practice of *parenting dumadi*, namely the attitude of unity and mutual care. Between nature and humans and a view of life about *paworing kawula*, the Javanese people believe in the order of nature as a manifestation of God's power.

The mountain for the Javanese is perceived as a sacred place as well as explaining the essential reflection of humanity through physical, soul, and spiritual awareness. It is not only that, from the side of the Javanese tradition, it has various religious symbols for self-awareness as seen in the *tumpeng* tradition, which functions as a ritual medium for various thanksgiving or *slametan* activities. The aim of the *slametan* for the Javanese people is transcendent communication to offer prayers as a confession of God on the one hand and the balance of the universe.³⁵

This form of piety firmly becomes the factual basis of the interrelation model of Islam and Javanese culture as religious ethics from the syncretic model of religion.³⁶ Although the perception of syncretic Islam is very problematic to see the *slametan* tradition as a

³⁵ Debi Setiawati, "Slametan Dalam Spiritualitas Orang Jawa Pada Masa Lalu Sampai Sekarang," *Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah dan Sosiologi* 1, no. 1 (2019): 76–88, <https://doi.org/10.33503/maharsi.v1i01.357>; Mohamad Abdun Nasir, "Revisiting the Javanese Muslim Slametan: Islam, Local Tradition, Honor and Symbolic Communication," *Al-Jami'ah* 57, no. 2 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2019.572.329-358>; Abdul Wahab Rosyidi, "Doa DaLam Tradisi Islam Jawa," *El-Harakah* 14, no. 1 (2012): 88–100, <https://doi.org/10.18860/el.v0i0.2199>.

³⁶ Virgin Suciyanti Muqoddam, Faqihul; Maghfiroh, "Syncretism of Slametan Tradition As a Pillar of Islam Nusantara," *Karsa: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 27, no. 1 (2019): 75–93, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v27i1.1950>.



people's belief at least this is an arena for the Javanese to continue the system of forms of social harmony and religious tolerance.³⁷ At least Ricklefs's analysis becomes a meeting point for the reconciliation of Islam and Java that the contemporary Javanese Muslims and the Javanese are getting stronger even though they still maintain old traditions and beliefs.³⁸ *Tumpeng* structures are cone-shaped and circular and have two sides of meaning. The lower circle is a form of togetherness, cooperation, or in Islam, the congregation until the end, which is tapered, is a form of one-being to God. This meaning is relevant if *tumpeng* is used as a medium of thanksgiving activities, of course, with the hope of salvation from God.

The tradition of *tumpeng*, which is close to its meaning in the Java *gunungan* tradition, can historically be found in the Hindu tradition of the I to XIV centuries, which states that mountains in Hinduism are the dwelling places for the holy gods, known as *Ardi Dewata* or holy places which are called *Kaja* in Hindu society, Bali. Thus *tumpeng* in the Javanese tradition is not limited to a matter of tradition but structurally has a spatial layout. The most important is the spiritual side of the relationship, meaning between man and God.³⁹

It is not much different from the prophetic treatise in the Islamic tradition; the function of mountains contains a profound spiritual message as the prophetic events that occur. For example, the hills of shafa and Marwa in the pilgrimage rites illustrate Sitti Hajar's struggle, sincerity, and optimism in finding water. Likewise, with the dialogue of the prophet Musa on the rocky hills of Mount Sinai and Muhammad's

³⁷Jochem van den Boogert, "The Role of Slametan in the Discourse on Javanese Islam," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 45, no. 133 (2017): 352–72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2017.1345166>.

³⁸Azyumardi Azra, "Islamisasi Jawa," *Studia Islamika* 20, no. 1 (2013): 169–77; Carool Kersten, "Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java: A Political, Social, Cultural and Religious History, c. 1930 to the Present by M. C. Ricklefs," *Ilahiyat Studies* 6, no. 2 (2015): 263–67. <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v20i1.352>.

³⁹Sutyono, "Tumpeng Dan Gunung: Makna Simboliknya Dalam Kebudayaan Masyarakat Jawa," *Cakrawala Pendidikan* 1, no. 1 (1998): 61–67. Patricia Jessy Angelina and Laksmi K Wardani, "Makna Ruang Ritual Dan Upacara Pada Interior Keraton Surakarta," *Jurnal Intra* 2, no. 2 (2014): 294–301. <http://publication.petra.ac.id/index.php/desain-interior/article/viewFile/2096/1888>.



first prophetic treatise that came down in the hills of the cave hira and various other stories. This historical fact is the turning point of the spiritual message that mountains are a symbolic medium for human alienation into the oneness of God as a manifestation of a servant's love for Allah SWT *hablumminallah*.

The Interrelation of Islamic and Javanese Spirituality in The *Gunungan* Tradition

In a deeper form of appreciation, the meeting between the history and traditions of Islam and Java is very close to building spirituality over the essence and purpose of life. This is evident, for example, in internalizing mountains as the nature of *Allah's rububiyyah*, which is infused as *kauniyah worship*.⁴⁰ in the puppet stage known as *kayon*, its term Kawi language is close to the meaning of *hayyun*, which means life or the origin of life. The beginning of the *kayon* or *hay un* in the puppet is the beginning of life play that is performed. Apart from that, artistically caricature images in *kayon* containing the world's reality through various images from trees to animals are illustrations of mountain ecosystem life that need to be properly maintained as the upright *kayon* at the end puppet.⁴¹ This is evidence that the structure of the *gunungan* in the puppet dimension unites worldly dimensions and spirituality as a form of theological piety in the *maqashid Syari'ah* structure as a representation of *hifdzul bi'ah* in Islam.

Those are not enough; the interrelation of Islam and Javanese culture also is getting stronger in the *Garebeg* or *gunungan* tradition at the momentum of the Islamic holiday as a part of social communication and transcendental piety at the same time. The *Greek* ceremony is an activity of social communication and ritual that brings together one another on the one hand and in the form of gratitude to ask for safety

⁴⁰Muhammad bin Sholeh Usaimin, *Fath Zuljalali Wa Al Ikram Bi Syarh Buughul Maram* (Mesir: Maktabah Islamiyah, 2006), 383.

⁴¹ Maulana Hermawan, "Philosophical *Gunungan* in Puppet: A Semiotic Study," *SSRN Electronic Journal* 2 (2018) <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3315129>.



and peace on the other. Here the Greek tradition is not limited to the traditions of the Javanese people but has become an important part of the Islam syiar.⁴² For example, the Surakarta Garebek celebration has become an annual event to celebrate the prophet Muhammad's birth.⁴³ So it is not surprising when elements of Islamic teachings internalize in the traditions of Javanese society to form a genuinely unique Islamic ritual model that is different from the form of Islamic acculturation in other places such as Malay Islam in general.⁴⁴ For example, in the puppet stage, it is seen in the *wayang Sadat gunung*, which includes Islamic values as a means of *da'wah* and wisdom in conveying (*tabligh*).⁴⁵ This is, of course, relevant in the core of the spirit of *Amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar* teachings, which is not only good in terms of material but the method used is also recognized and familiar in the society.

The view above can be an essential basis that the interrelation of Islamic tradition and Javanese culture in mountain cosmology or *gunungan* can form a more diverse face of Islam in terms of Javanese Islam or Indonesian Islam in social piety and rituals that are known in Javanese customs for broader social interests.⁴⁶ Furthermore, although the globalization of reformist Islam in Indonesia is not becoming

⁴² Yohanes Arie Kuncoro, "Komunikasi Ritual Garebek Di Keraton Yogyakarta," *Jurnal ASPIKOM* 3, no. 4 (2018): 623–34, <https://doi.org/10.24329/aspikom.v3i4.189>.

⁴³ Ahmad Adib and Kundharu Saddhono, "Paradigma Budaya Islam-Jawa Dalam Gerebek Maulid Kraton Surakarta," *Al Qalam* 35, no. 2 (2018): 271–96, <https://doi.org/10.32678/alqalam.v35i2.1081>.

⁴⁴ Umi Sumbulah, "Islam Jawa Dan Akulturasi Budaya; Karakteristik, Variasi Dan Ketaatan Ekspresif," *El Harakah* 14, no. 1 (2012): 51–68, <https://doi.org/10.18860/el.v0i0.2191>.

⁴⁵ Slamet Subiyantoro and Hasan Zainnuri, "Gunungan Wayang Sadat: The Study of Its Religious Values and Its Relevance in Fine Art Learning in High Schools," *Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities* 25 (2017): 273–80, <http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/>.

⁴⁶ Andik Wahyun Muqoyyidin, "Dialektika Islam Dan Budaya Lokal Dalam Bidang Sosial Sebagai Salah Satu Wajah Islam Jawa," *El-Harakah* 14, no. 1 (2012): 18–33, <https://doi.org/10.18860/el.v0i0.2197>; Rubaidi Rubaidi, "Javanese Islam: A Blend of Javanese Culture and Islamic Mysticism Viewed from Post-Colonial Perspective," *El Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam* 21, no. 1 (2019): 19–36, <http://103.17.76.13/index.php/infopub/article/view/6066>.



orthodox Islam with increasingly diverse spiritual practices, this is a sign.⁴⁷ Even the *gunungan* tradition finds role models as facilitators to connect traditional ideological messages with broader interests.⁴⁸ Therefore, in Suwito's view, the characteristics of Javanese Islam can be characterized by two things, namely the uniqueness of its rituals and the philosophy of its meaning.⁴⁹ Various views emphasize very close interrelation of Islam and Javanese culture in principle, which converge on the concept of humanity both in terms of social and spiritual communication and the function of the ecosystem for the balance of the universe.

Conclusion

The relationship between Islam and Java in mountain cosmology has a close meaning philosophically as a social and spiritual value system. Mount in the scientific perspective of the Qur'an is a sign system (*kauniyah*) to represent the existence and oneness of God as the Javanese people interpret it as a sacred symbolic medium to embody a sense of servitude to God through the tradition of gratitude to ask for peace and safety.

The closeness of Islam and culture, especially in the Javanese tradition, should be based on adaptative awareness, tolerance, and mutual affirmation to broadcast Islamic teachings through local awareness of the society. It is grounded and a medium for spiritual cultivation to make human beings wise and steady as the philosophy of

⁴⁷Vincent Houben, "Islam and the Perception of Islam in Contemporary Indonesia," *Heidelberg Ethnology* 3, no. 0 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.11588/hdethn.0.0.25362>.

⁴⁸Joko Aswoyo and Sularso Sularso, "The Concept of Panutan in Governance Festival Lima Gunung in Magelang Central Java Indonesia," *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education* 20, no. 1 (2020): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.15294/harmonia.v20i1.24818>.

⁴⁹ Suwito Suwito, Arif Hidayat, and Sriyanto Agus, "Tradisi Dan Ritual Kematian Wong Islam Jawa," *IBDA` : Jurnal Kajian Islam Dan Budaya* 13, no. 2 (1970): 6–25, <https://doi.org/10.24090/ibda.v13i2.659>.



the mountain with a variety of meanings. So Islam and tradition should be side by side to become adhesive of ummah.

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