

From Manuscript to Moral Ecology: The Manifestation of Memayu Hayuning Bawana in Serat Kandha Bumi

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Abstract

Memayu hayuning Bawana is a Javanese outlook on life that contains the values of preserving, maintaining peace, to achieve world safety. The aim of this study is to explain and describe the embodiment of the Memayu Hayuning Bawana concept found in Serat Kandha Bumi as a guideline to the Javanese. The method used is descriptive qualitative. The data source in this study is Serat Kandha Bumi, which contains 53 pages in the form of gancaran. The data consists of text excerpts from Serat Kandha Bumi and interpretations of their meanings that demonstrate the concept of Memayu Hayuning Bawana. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth and repeated reading and interviews with ancient manuscript experts. Data analysis techniques used Miles and Huberman techniques. The results of this study show that the concept of Memayu Hayuning Bawana concerns 1) relationships between humans that are realized with an attitude of compassion; a sense of empathy; ewuh pekewuh; and aja dume, 2) Relationships between humans and nature through sacred rituals and the elements of water and vegetation in rituals, 3) Relationships between humans and God through prayer, accepting destiny, and acknowledging the power of God. This research expands the study of the Memayu Hayuning Bawana concept which is sourced in Serat Kandha Bumi as an ecological and social ethical framework that can be used as a life guide to create a better life.

Keywords: *Memayu Hayuning Bawana, Serat Kandha Bumi, Ki Padmasusastra*

Abstrak

Memayu Hayuning Bawana sebuah pandangan hidup Jawa yang memuat nilai melestarikan, menjaga kedamaian, agar tercapai keselamatan dunia. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menjelaskan dan mendeskripsikan perwujudan konsep Memayu Hayuning Bawana yang ada dalam Serat Kandha Bumi sebagai pedoman hidup orang Jawa. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Sumber data dalam penelitian ini yaitu Serat Kandha Bumi yang berisi 53 halaman berupa gancaran. Data berupa kutipan teks dari Serat Kandha Bumi dan tafsiran maknanya yang menunjukkan tentang konsep Memayu Hayuning Bawana. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan pembacaan secara mendalam dan berulang serta wawancara dengan pakar naskah kuno. Teknik analisis data menggunakan Teknik dari Miles and Huberman. Hasil dari kajian penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa konsep Memayu Hayuning Bawana mengenai 1) hubungan antar manusia yang diwujudkan dengan sikap rasa tresna welas asih; rasa tepa selira; ewuh pekewuh; dan aja dume, 2) Hubungan antara manusia dan alam melalui ritual sesuci lan elemen banyu dan tetuwuhan sajroning ritual, 3) Hubungan manusia dan Tuhan melalui donga, nrima mring takdir, lan ngakoni kuwasane Gusti. Penelitian ini memperluas kajian konsep Memayu Hayuning Bawana yang bersumber dalam Serat Kandha Bumi sebagai kerangka etika ekologis dan social yang dapat digunakan sebagai pedoman kehidupan untuk menciptakan kehidupan yang lebih baik.

Kata kunci: *Memayu Hayuning Bawana, Serat Kandha Bumi, Ki Padmasusastra*



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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is home to a rich tapestry of cultural expressions. Among its cultural heritage are tangible artifacts such as temples, fortresses, and other historical buildings. However, in addition to these material relics, ancient manuscripts—known as *naskah kuna*—represent another crucial facet of Indonesia's cultural legacy. The existence of these manuscripts serves as evidence of the long-standing literary tradition within the archipelago. Ancient manuscripts hold substantial informational value; they not only provide historical records and insights into the lives of past societies but also offer broader perspectives on cultural aspects such as customary law, indigenous belief systems, and other socio-cultural elements (Rahardjo, Sulistyani, & Rahmaji, 2022).

Furthermore, these manuscripts bear witness to the spiritual and intellectual journeys of their authors, capturing the philosophical and moral frameworks that shaped their respective eras. As such, the study of ancient manuscripts is essential for uncovering values that may still resonate in contemporary society (Kwok, 2003). Through close examination of these texts, we can identify moral and social principles that remain relevant and applicable today. Preserving and researching ancient manuscripts is, therefore, a vital endeavor for safeguarding the cultural identity and historical continuity of a nation (Wibowo et al., 2024). A significant number of manuscripts remain stored in museums or private collections and have yet to be thoroughly studied. Consequently, the potential values and insights embedded within them remain largely untapped.

Javanese manuscripts contain profound philosophical reflections on life. Javanese philosophy preserves ancestral teachings that emphasize the pursuit of life perfection (*kasampurnaning urip*) as a central goal (Suprayitno et al., 2018). This notion of perfection is considered a vital pillar for individuals in their journey to discover their identity. In Javanese thought, life perfection is not merely associated with personal happiness but also entails maintaining harmony with one's surrounding environment. The concept of a balanced life, known as *urip kang sampurna*, emphasizes the need for individuals to harmonize spiritual and material aspects of existence. Javanese philosophy underscores the importance of compassion, cooperation (*gotong royong*), and social responsibility. It offers a form of knowledge that provides insights often unattainable through empirical sciences. By internalizing these philosophical teachings, communities are encouraged to uphold the values of togetherness and promote social harmony. These teachings serve as moral guidance for Javanese society, fostering empathy and a strong communal ethos. Harmony in social interactions is a fundamental value consistently prioritized in Javanese communities, in alignment with the core spirit and principles embedded in Javanese philosophical traditions (Sulistiyan et al., 2021).

These teachings about life are manifested in the form of a triadic relationship between *Gusti* (God), *Jagad* (the universe), and *manungsa* (human beings). These three elements are believed to be intrinsically interconnected in a harmonious and balanced manner, aiming to enhance the beauty and order of the world principle known as *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* (MHB) (Nugroho & Elviandri, 2018). *Memayu Hayuning Bawana*, which can be translated as "beautifying the harmony of the world," reflects a moral disposition in which humans are called to maintain peace and contribute positively to the world. This ideal is realized when individuals interact without conflict, uphold mutual respect, and prioritize tolerance (Soesilo, 2000, pp. 43–45). The MHB philosophy also emphasizes the necessity of maintaining balance across all dimensions of life, both personal and societal. In the context of modern life, these values remain highly relevant, particularly in confronting global challenges such as environmental degradation, social inequality, and the erosion of cultural identity. The concept underscores that a harmonious life cannot be achieved solely through individual effort but must also involve meaningful interactions that foster social equilibrium. When humans can sustain healthy

relationships with one another, care for the natural environment, and maintain a spiritual connection with the Divine, life becomes more prosperous and meaningful.

The cultivation of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* (MHB) as a foundational principle of social harmony cannot be realized through the efforts of a single individual alone. According to Endraswara (2016), there are three essential pathways for actualizing the MHB philosophy: (1) the relationship between human beings; (2) the relationship between humans and nature; and (3) the relationship between humans and the Divine. Through the integration of these three dimensions, individuals are believed to be capable of contributing to the realization of a more harmonious and beautiful world.

Among Javanese communities, philosophical teachings—*pitutur* or moral guidance—are often conveyed through literary works, particularly in the form of traditional Javanese manuscripts (Aji, Wijayanti, & Fitriana, 2023). Many authors have embedded their philosophical reflections into their literary creations. *Serat Kandha Bumi* (SKB), authored by the Javanese literary figure Ki Padmasusastra, is one such text that encapsulates profound moral teachings as guidance for navigating life. This work is thematically and philosophically connected to several other writings by the same author, including *Serat Prabangkara*, *Serat Rangsang Tuban*, and *Serat Kabar Angin*. *Serat Kandha Bumi* is written in *gancaran* form, or prose, and was composed in 1924 in Kediri. The narrative centers on the journey of two siblings, Raden Sapartitala and Endang Siti Pasir, following the death of their parents. The story not only chronicles their physical journey but also their spiritual and moral development, offering readers a rich array of life lessons. Through this work, Ki Padmasusastra illustrates how individuals must confront life's challenges by upholding the noble values passed down by their ancestors. Furthermore, Ki Padmasusastra's writings reflect a deep engagement with broader, even global, concerns such as environmental awareness, leadership, and social responsibility (Pamungkas et al., 2018). Within *Serat Kandha Bumi*, numerous passages contain explicit references to the philosophy of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* (MHB), offering moral instruction that remains relevant to both traditional and modern contexts.

Based on the discussion above, this study aims to address the research question: *How is the concept of Memayu Hayuning Bawana manifested in Serat Kandha Bumi by Ki Padmasusastra?* This research is significant considering the rapid pace of modernization, which has contributed to a *decline* in human empathy—towards fellow human beings, nature, and even the Divine. Local wisdom values, which once served as guiding principles for communal life, are gradually being eroded by the forces of modernity, which increasingly prioritize materialism over spiritual and social harmony. Therefore, this study seeks to rediscover and reinterpret these noble values so they may be recontextualized and applied within contemporary life. By examining the philosophical teachings contained in *Serat Kandha Bumi*, this research hopes to offer insights that are particularly relevant to younger generations. It is expected that through this study, the youth will gain a deeper understanding of Javanese cultural values and learn to apply them in their daily lives, thereby fostering a balanced integration of traditional wisdom and modern living. In today's highly digitalized era, local wisdom such as *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* must be actively revitalized and promoted to ensure that younger generations are equipped with the moral and philosophical foundation necessary for a balanced life. Technology alone cannot sustain human well-being; balance—between the spiritual, social, and environmental dimensions—is essential. Thus, reintroducing traditional teachings embedded in classical Javanese literary works, particularly *serat* texts, is a crucial step toward preserving cultural identity and guiding social behavior in the modern age.

Based on the literature review, several previous studies have been identified that share similarities in terms of both formal and material objects of research. One such study is by Hidayati (2021), titled *"The Ethics of Javanese Life According to Serat Kandha*

Bumi by Ki Padmasusastra: *A Study in the Sociology of Literature*." The study identified several ethical principles in Javanese life, including: (1) *pracaya lan mituhu* (faith and obedience); (2) *rila lan sabar* (sincerity and patience); (3) *ethok-ethok* (deliberate pretension or self-restraint); and (4) *wedi lan sungkan* (fear and respect). The similarity between Hidayati's study and the present research lies in the object of study—both focus on the Javanese manuscript *Serat Kandha Bumi* (SKB). However, the key difference lies in the theoretical framework: Hidayati employs a literary sociology approach, whereas the present study utilizes a philosophical-cultural perspective, particularly through the concept of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana*.

The second relevant study is by Isnaini (2021), titled "*The Concept of Memayu Hayuning Bawana: A Hermeneutic Analysis of the Poetry of Sapardi Djoko Damono*." The primary distinction between that research and the present study lies in the research object: Isnaini analyzes modern poetry by Sapardi Djoko Damono, whereas this study focuses on the traditional Javanese manuscript *Serat Kandha Bumi* (SKB). However, both studies share a theoretical foundation, as they each explore the concept of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* (MHB) using the theoretical framework proposed by Suwardi Endraswara. Therefore, Isnaini's work serves as a valuable reference that contributes to the theoretical and conceptual development of this research. Based on background and literature, the present study is titled: "*The Manifestation of the Concept of Memayu Hayuning Bawana in Serat Kandha Bumi by Ki Padmasusastra*."

METHOD

This research is a qualitative descriptive study with a hermeneutic approach to interpreting the text (Yuliani, 2018). The manuscript analysis procedure follows three main steps in the research: (1) explaining the ideas contained in words and symbols, translating them, and acting as an interpreter; (2) clarifying the meaning through language or symbols that are easy for the reader to understand; and (3) conveying the intended message (Wachid, 2015). Likewise, this research has three main steps: 1) transliterating the Javanese script into Latin script. Then, translating it into Indonesian, interpreting the meanings of the words and sentences. 2) The researcher then explains the meanings or symbols that require more detailed explanation so that readers can immediately grasp their meaning. 3) conveying messages related to the concept of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* contained in the manuscript. To ensure the accuracy of the reading of symbols, translation and meaning of the manuscript, the researcher also conducted interviews with a manuscript expert from the Radya Pustaka Museum, namely Mr. Totok Yasiran. The translation results were then also discussed together with a literary expert from UNS, namely Dr. Djoko Sulaksono, M. Pd., to complete the study of the concept of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana*.

The data in this study consist of interpretive meanings contained in the *Serat Kandha Bumi* (SKB) related to the concept of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* (MHB). The primary data source is the *Serat Kandha Bumi* manuscript, which consists of 53 pages. The *Serat Kandha Bumi* manuscript, which serves as the research data source, has previously undergone a philological stage in the form of manuscript comparison to find the best form. The manuscripts being compared are the *Serat Kandha Bumi* manuscripts held at the Radya Pustaka Museum and the Lestari Literature Foundation. The manuscripts selected were printed photocopies accessed from the Lestari Literature Foundation because they were clearer and more complete.

The data analysis technique used in this study involved careful and repeated reading of the text. This was done to minimize inaccuracies. The next step was identifying and documenting elements related to the MHB concept. The collected data was selected, organized, and categorized according to the researcher's needs, allowing for further processing using descriptive-analytical methods. To ensure data validity, the researcher

applied theoretical and methodological triangulation. In analyzing the data, the researcher followed the steps of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, as outlined by Miles and Huberman (1992, p. 16). These steps were taken to uncover the philosophical messages and moral values implied in literary work.

The data validity technique used in this study is method triangulation. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing the results of the analysis of the concept document *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* contained in the primary source of the *Serat Kandha Bumi* Manuscript with informant sources, namely the opinions of manuscript experts and literary experts. This is done with the aim of ensuring that the concept of *memayu hayuning bawana* is truly valid.

HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

This section presents an analysis of the concept of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* (MHB) in *Serat Kandha Bumi* (SKB) by Ki Padmasusastra. The manuscript consists of 53 pages, written in *gancaran* (prose) form, and was authored by Ki Padmasusastra in 1924. Currently, the manuscript is preserved and managed by Yayasan Sastra Lestari in the form of a photocopied printed edition. The transliteration of the manuscript is accessible via the website sastra.org.

The narrative centers on two siblings who are orphaned and subsequently raised by a sage, after which they separate and eventually reunite. The concept of MHB in the manuscript encompasses three key relationships: (1) the relationship between humans; (2) the relationship between humans and nature; and (3) the relationship between humans and the Divine. These aspects will be elaborated in detail in the following discussion.

Human-to-Human Relationship

a. *Rasa tresna welas asih* (Love and Compassion)

Ki Jaga Mandhala and Bok Jaga Mandhala are characterized by their generosity and kindness. They are known to possess wealth that can sustain seven generations. Despite their affluence, they never exhibit arrogance; instead, they use their wealth to generously support the surrounding community. This benevolence is illustrated in the following excerpt.

"Ki Jaga Mandhala sae manahipun, wêlasan dhatêng tiyang pêkir mêsikin, dipun tulung sakadaripun." (SKB, 3)

Translation: Ki Jaga Mandhala is portrayed as a kind-hearted individual who possesses compassion for the poor and consistently strives to offer help whenever possible.

From this data, it is evident that the characters in *Serat Kandha Bumi* embody the attitude of *tresna welas asih* (love and compassion), demonstrated by their continuous concern for the impoverished community and their willingness to help. Human capacity for love and compassion can be observed through behavioral patterns characterized by mutual understanding and care (Putri et al., 2024).

In this context, *tresna welas asih* is expressed through mutual empathy. Empathy implies that individuals must foster harmony and tolerance (Royyand et al., 2024). Within Javanese social life, this concept is frequently applied in neighborly relations, where people are expected to maintain cooperative attitudes, such as mutual assistance in communal activities like *gotong royong* (collective work).

"Ki Jaga Mandhala rumaos bégja dene botên kirang sandhang tédha, dhasar linulutan sarta ingaji-aji têtiyang sadhusun Maetala."

Translation: Ki Jaga Mandhala felt content despite not lacking in basic needs such as food and clothing, primarily because he was deeply respected by the people of Maetala village.

The data above reflects the impact of an individual who consistently performs acts of kindness and spreads love and compassion. Ki Jaga Mandhala frequently extended assistance to the local community, and because of these actions, he received genuine affection and respect in return.

b. The Value of *Tepa Selira* (Empathy and Tolerance)

The behavior of *tepa selira*, or mutual empathy and tolerance, is illustrated through the character of Bok Jaga Mandhala, who shared in her husband's sorrow over the fact that, throughout their marriage up to that point, they had not yet been entrusted with the blessing of raising a child. This emotional sensitivity is reflected in the following excerpt.

"Bok Jaga Mandhala kraos manahipun kêmêng-kêmêng lajêng nangis sênggruk-sênggruk, wicantênipun: Prakawis niku kédah sampeyan galih sing sayêktos, kula mirêng ontên tiyang sagêd, tilas priyantun saniki mawiku èntên ing Lêbu Pasir." (SKB, 4)

Translation: Bok Jaga Mandhala felt deeply moved, her eyes welled up with tears, and she began to sob uncontrollably. She said, "This matter must be carefully contemplated. I heard of someone who might be able to help — unlike most people today, he resides in Lebu Pasir."

The attitude of *tepa selira* is reflected in Bok Jaga Mandhala's response when she observed her husband, Ki Jaga Mandhala, sitting in silence as if burdened by a heavy thought. When she asked him about it, Ki Jaga Mandhala replied that he was contemplating his fate—despite having accumulated great wealth, he did not know who would inherit it once they were gone. Witnessing her husband's sorrow, Bok Jaga Mandhala was deeply moved and began to cry. This response illustrates her empathy, as she shared in her husband's emotional burden. *Tepa selira* refers to an individual's ability to empathize with others by imagining how a particular action would feel if it were directed at oneself (Istikomah & Hardiyanto, 2022). In this context, Bok Jaga Mandhala internalized her husband's sadness and subsequently advised him to seek guidance from a sage (*Resi*) in Lebu Pasir. The concept of *tepa selira* teaches that in every action, one must remain considerate of others' feelings.

"Yèn bojomu kasêngkala duwe anak mati konduran, iku baya wis pêsthine, manungsa mung sadarma nglakoni, ora liwat pamujiku mung ditawêkal bae atimu, ngèlingana marang anakmu lanang wadon, bokmênawa dadi wiji kêna kogondhèli, dene anakmu kopasrahake mênayang aku iya tak tampani kalawan suka pirênaning atiku." SKB, 13)

Translation: *If your wife faces the trial of passing away during childbirth, then that is her destiny; humans can only accept it. I pray that you remain patient. Remember your child—if they can become a useful person, they will also be beneficial to you. If you entrust your child to me, I will gladly accept.*

The data above illustrates the attitude of empathy demonstrated by Resi Rasatala upon witnessing the difficulties faced by Ki Jaga Mandhala. Empathy is also expressed through genuine concern for the experiences of others, to the extent that one seemingly shares in their problems (Istikomah & Hardiyanto, 2022). In the excerpt, Ki Jaga Mandhala approaches Resi Rasatala to entrust his children, as he is unable to care for them following the death of his wife during childbirth. Moved by the situation, Resi Rasatala compassionately accepts Ki Jaga Mandhala's request to take care of his children.

c. *Ewuh-Pekewuh* (Reluctance Due to Respect)

Raden Sapartitala was a man with exceptional skills and agility, which led to his appointment as a chief minister (*patih*) by King Prabu Mangkubumi. On one occasion, the king ordered him to marry, but Raden Sapartitala hesitated to comply because he felt *pekewuh*—a respectful reluctance—not wanting to precede the king, who was still unmarried. This attitude is illustrated in the following excerpt.

“Dèrèng, malah sêdya kawula badhe angantuni sasampunipun paduka apalakrama, kawula lajêng rabi.” (SKB, 26)

Translation: Not yet. In fact, I intend to postpone my marriage until after Your Majesty has married; only then will I proceed with my own marriage.

The excerpt above exemplifies the attitude of *ewuh-pekewuh* demonstrated by Sapartitala when King Prabu Mangkubumi asked him to marry the daughter of Patih Janaloka. Sapartitala wished to postpone his marriage because he felt *pekewuh*—a respectful hesitation—and preferred that the king marry first. This reflects Sapartitala’s awareness of his social position as a chief minister (*patih*), feeling inappropriate and disrespectful to precede the king in such matters. The attitude of *ewuh-pekewuh* is also observable in modern life, particularly in workplace interactions between subordinates and superiors, where maintaining respectful boundaries and decorum remains essential.

“Badhe nusul, pakèwêd sapisan, ingkang eyang mǎngsa kaparênga, kaping kalih sumusul dhatêng nagari mǎngsa sagêda nunggil kalihan ingkang raka dening dèrèng manggèn sawêg pados pasuwitan.” (SKB, 18)

Translation: I want to follow later; first, I feel hesitant because my grandfather might not permit it, and second, I intend to go to the kingdom so that I can reunite with my older brother who has already settled there to serve.

The excerpt above is taken from the SKB narrative, illustrating Endang Siti Pasir’s hesitation about following her older brother who serves the king. She feels reluctant to ask her grandfather for permission, uncertain if it would be granted. However, she deeply desires to join her brother as she feels lonely without him. The Javanese cultural value of *ewuh-pekewuh* teaches that one should not act solely based on personal desires but must also consider and respect the feelings of others (Wijayanti, 2024). Thus, the dimension of *ewuh-pekewuh* is clearly reflected in Endang Siti Pasir’s attitude.

d. *Aja Dumeh* (Do Not Be Arrogant)

Aja dumeh, often understood as “do not act arrogantly” or “do not be presumptuous,” is a principle mentioned in the SKB. When Sapartitala was about to serve the king, he received twelve pieces of advice from Resi Rasatala. These advisories emphasized becoming a humble person who does not act arbitrarily and who dares to act only when it is based on truth and righteousness. One of these pieces of advice is the teaching of *aja dumeh*. This principle is illustrated in the following excerpt.

“Andhap asor, nanging aja asoring budi, têngêse budimu kang ngumala, gêlêm kalah marang bǎndha baumu, nanging ora gêlêm dirèmèhake.” (SKB, 26)

Translation: Be humble, but do not demean your dignity. This means maintaining wisdom, being willing to yield in matters of wealth and worldly affairs but never allowing yourself to be belittled.

The excerpt above illustrates the principle of *aja dumeh* conveyed by Resi Rasatala to Raden Sapartitala, as reflected in the phrases “...andhap asor, nanging aja asoring budi...” and “...gelem ngalah marang bandha baumu...”. These statements command one not to be arrogant but to remain humble. Humility means not excessively boasting about one’s strengths and acknowledging that everyone has weaknesses and limitations (Munawaroh & Setyawan, 2024). Within this dimension of humility, the advice emphasizes that *andhap asor* (being modest) is an integral part of the *aja dumeh* attitude, as Resi Rasatala teaches Sapartitala to always practice humility.

“Ngalah basa sakêcap laku satindak, nanging aja dadi tukang kalahane.” (SKB, 28)

Translation: Yield in words but be firm in action; do not become someone who always concedes.

The quotation above is part of the twelve teachings delivered by Resi Rasatala to Sapartitala before he commenced his service to the king. Sapartitala was advised to practice yielding or to refrain from responding impulsively, which aligns with the principle of *aja dume*—encouraging one to avoid presumptuous behavior and thereby steer clear of arrogance and pride (Tomé et al., 2022).

“Yèn kowe dierang-erang ana ing pajagongan, aja kolawani catur, mung ewanana bae, iku prasasat wis kotapuk raine.” SKB, 29)

Translation: If you are provoked during a conversation, do not respond with arguments. Simply smile or avoid the situation; this is better than escalating tensions.

This excerpt explains one aspect of the *aja dume* attitude, which advises that when provoked, one should avoid engaging in arguments or confrontations. Instead, responding with a smile and withdrawing from the situation is recommended. This behavior is metaphorically described as if one has already ‘slapped the face’ of the provocateur. Such a response is considered better than becoming involved in a dispute.

Human Relationship with Nature

a. Sacred Rituals and the Element of Water

Within the SKB, which discusses the fundamental elements of life, particularly earth, it is emphasized that Ki Padmasusastra’s work is deeply connected to environmental issues. The SKB strongly highlights that humans must maintain a harmonious relationship with nature, as nature plays a crucial role in human existence. Respecting nature is equated with respecting God. This concept is illustrated in the excerpt below.

“Sabên dina Rêbo (= malêm Kêmis) adusa sumur 7 wiwit jam 6 sore, jam 8. 10. 12. 2. 4. bêngi, sarta jam 6 esuk, ganêp ping) = X 7.” (SKB, 8)

Translation: Every Wednesday night (the eve of Thursday), bathe in the well seven times—at 6 p.m., 8 p.m., 10 p.m., midnight, 2 a.m., 4 a.m., and 6 a.m.—completing a total of seven times.

The excerpt above illustrates that humans are inherently dependent on nature. This reflects the harmony of the cosmos, in which the roles of the macrocosm and microcosm must be in balance (Endraswara, 2016). In their effort to have descendants, Ki Jaga Mandhala and his wife met a *resi* (sage) in Lebu Pasir, who instructed them to perform a purification ritual involving bathing seven times within a single day. This act signifies that water possesses the power to purify the self, cleansing one’s intentions of any impure elements. In Javanese tradition, the number seven symbolizes divine assistance—thus, the ritual represents a spiritual hope that Ki Jaga Mandhala’s efforts will receive guidance and blessing from God.

b. Plants in Ritual Practice

In the SKB, in addition to the use of natural elements such as water, there are also examples of utilizing plants as part of ritual practices. This is illustrated in the excerpt below.

“Sabên bêngi wayah jam 3 tutug jam 4 = 7 mêtu mênyang latar ngadêg marêp mangulon, iyaiku ambarêngi têtuwuhan modot madungdung sari mêkar.” (SKB, 8)

Translation: Every Thursday morning at 7 a.m., perform a ritual bath and hair washing; then, at 7 p.m. on Friday night after the Isha prayer, engage in marital relations.

The excerpt above highlights the power of nature in the relationship between humans and the natural world. It describes a moment when Ki Jaga Mandhala was

instructed by Resi Rasatala to leave the house for one hour, from 3 a.m. to 4 a.m. a duration symbolically associated with the number seven, which in Javanese belief signifies divine assistance. This is further illustrated in the phrase “...*ambarengi tetuwuhan modot madungdung sari mekar...*”, which carries a symbolic meaning of hope, referring to the early morning hours when plants begin to bloom and release their essence. The blooming represents renewal or the beginning of a new life.

Human Relationship with God

a. Prayer, Acceptance of Fate, and Acknowledgment of God's Power

Ki Jaga Mandhala's efforts to have children were unwavering; he diligently followed all instructions given by Resi Rasatala while continuously surrendering himself to God. This is illustrated in the excerpt below.

“Ana uga isarate, nanging nganggo laku, tur ora mēsthi katarima, mung wajibing aurip nganggo istiyar, kowe apa kēduga nglakoni.” (SKB, 6)

Translation: There are conditions, but it must be accompanied by effort and is not necessarily guaranteed. In life, one is only obligated to try; can you do that?

The excerpt explains that in making efforts, one must also involve God by surrendering to whatever outcome may arise. From the initial meeting between Ki Jaga Mandhala and Resi Rasatala, it was emphasized that effort is necessary, but success is not guaranteed; one's obligation is simply to try. This explanation aligns well with the dimension of accepting fate. The concept of *nrima mring takdir* refers to the ability to sincerely accept all that has been ordained by God. This attitude is illustrated in the following excerpt.

“He Allah, kawula ngestokakên karsa tuwan, kawula badhe nurunakên wijining dumadi, mokal dhawahing wiji siya-siya, amēsthi tuwuh tumêngkar ngisèni buwana, mugi tuwan nêmbadanana.” (SKB, 8)

Translation: O Allah, I submit to Your will. I seek the gift of the seed of life. It is impossible for a seed You send to be in vain — surely it will grow and flourish to fill the world. May You grant my prayer.

The excerpt above describes Ki Jaga Mandhala's prayer to receive offspring. This reflects that Ki Jaga Mandhala has demonstrated *tawakal*, or complete trust and surrender of all worldly affairs to God. His attitude exemplifies the teaching of *nrima mring takdir* (accepting fate), where *tawakal* means entrusting all efforts to God's will. *Tawakal* involves surrendering oneself or placing full trust in God, with the conviction that every effort entrusted to God will yield positive outcomes (Fitriani et al., 2024)

“Ora nyana aku, yèn bojomu kasêngkala duwe anak mati konduran, iku baya wis pēsthine, manungsa mung sadarma nglakoni, ora liwat pamujiku mung ditawékal bae atimu.” (SKB, 13)

Translation: I did not expect your wife to suffer the misfortune of dying after childbirth; that is her fate. Humans can only endure it. I pray that you remain patient.

The excerpt above exemplifies *tawakal* as conveyed by Resi Rasatala upon Ki Jaga Mandhala's visit to entrust his child. Moved by his situation, Resi Rasatala encouraged him to continue surrendering to God. This illustrates the concept of *nrima mring takdir* (acceptance of fate).

“Aja mèri marang sihing gusti kang tumiba ing wong liya sanadyan wong liya mau ora nyambut gawe kaya kowe, kowe mǎngsa wēruha karsaning gusti kang winadi.”

Translation: Do not envy the kindness your king shows to others, even if they do not work as diligently as you do. Understand that this kindness is ordained by God.

The excerpt above is part of the advice given by Resi Rasatala to Sapartitala, emphasizing that one should never be envious of the king's generosity toward others, even when those others have made little or no contribution. It reminds us to trust in God's

will and to acknowledge His power, which aligns with the teaching of *ngakoni kuwasane Gusti* (acknowledging God's authority).

SIMPULAN

Javanese manuscripts contain abundant teachings aimed at achieving a harmonious life, serving as a foundation and guideline for all individuals in social life. The concept of Memayu Hayuning Bawana teaches that to realize a harmonious world, humans must actualize three essential relationships: with fellow humans, with nature, and with the Divine. In Serat Kandha Bumi, a literary work that portrays the elements of life, teachings related to the concept of Memayu Hayuning Bawana are found. In human relationships, values such as tresna welas asih (love and compassion), tepa selira (empathy), ewuh-pekweuh (consideration), and aja dumeuh (humility) are emphasized. Regarding the relationship with nature, the manuscript imparts knowledge on the use of water and plants to harmonize the microcosm and macrocosm. In relation to the Divine, teachings emphasize acceptance of fate combined with sincere effort. The wisdom contained in Serat Kandha Bumi can serve as a life foundation to achieve the beauty and harmony of the earth.

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