

# **The Interrelation of God, Human, and Nature: A Comparative Exploration of Ibn 'Arabi's and *Pikukuh Sunda's* Anthropocosmic Vision**

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## **Abstract**

*Some contemporary scholars criticize modernity and advocate for a reevaluation of the 'perennial philosophy,' which endeavors to reveal fundamental truths throughout history, religious practices, and spiritual understandings. This philosophical framework is rooted in a holistic perspective that underscores the interrelation of all facets of existence as an integrated unity. This article investigates the anthropocosmic perspective of humanity, nature, and the divine as articulated in two divergent traditions: the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi and *Pikukuh Sunda*. It illustrates how these doctrines embody a sense of harmony while maintaining the distinct ethical and philosophical contributions of each tradition. Employing a descriptive qualitative methodology through a comparative analytical framework, this research posits that a predominant motif in the teachings of Sunda Sufism and the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi is their collective representation of interconnectedness within their linguistic interpretations of human, nature, and the divine, thereby emphasizing their shared importance and interconnectivity.*

**Keywords:** *Ibn 'Arabi, *Pikukuh Sunda*, Perennial, Anthropocosmic Vision, Human, Nature, God*

## **Abstrak**

*Beberapa cendekiawan kontemporer mengkritisi modernitas dan menganjurkan penilaian ulang terhadap 'filsafat perenial', yang berupaya untuk mengungkap kebenaran inti lintas sejarah, tradisi agama dan spiritual. Kerangka filosofis ini berakar pada perspektif holistic yang menggarisbawahi keterkaitan semua aspek keberadaan sebagai kesatuan yang terintegrasi. Tulisan ini menyelidiki perspektif antropocosmik tentang manusia, alam dan Tuhan sebagaimana diartikulasikan dalam dua tradisi berbeda: Sufisme Ibn 'Arabi dan *Pikukuh Sunda*. Artikel ini menggambarkan bagaimana doktrin-doktrin ini mewujudkan rasa harmoni sambil mempertahankan kontribusi etika dan filosofis yang berbeda dari masing-masing tradisi. Dengan menggunakan metodologi kualitatif deskriptif melalui kerangka analitis komparatif, penelitian ini berpendapat bahwa tema sentral dalam ajaran tasawuf Sunda dan tasawuf Ibn 'Arabi ditemukan pada bagaimana kedua tradisi tersebut sama-sama mencerminkan adanya saling keterkaitan pada konsep-konsep mereka seputar manusia, alam, dan Tuhan secara kebahasaan sehingga konsep-konsep tersebut memiliki signifikansi bersama dan saling terkait.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Ibn 'Arabi, *Pikukuh Sunda*, Perenial, Visi Antropocosmik, Manusia, Alam, Tuhan*

## Introduction

Some modern people regard ancient wisdom as obsolete. This knowledge is frequently linked to the cultivation of individuals perceived as unrefined and excessively simplistic, notwithstanding their tranquility.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, it is regarded as inconsequential to the pragmatic orientations of modern life, which are predicated on, as articulated by Hossein Nasr, 'the notion of the evolution of thought and the progression toward truth.'<sup>2</sup> Likewise, Islam is frequently perceived by Western societies as a tradition that, is intrinsically distinct from their own, and therefore necessitates reform to align with contemporary sensibilities.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, certain Western intellectuals, including Aldous Huxley, criticize modernity and advocate for a resurgence of the 'perennial philosophy,<sup>4</sup> which encapsulates the fundamental truths underlying various ancient and principal religions. René Guénon underscored the significance of ancient traditions, particularly Eastern religions, as an "urgent necessity" for the salvation of

the West,<sup>5</sup> resonates with Jusuf Sutanto's assertion regarding the pertinence of "ancient wisdom" in modern life,<sup>6</sup> to achieve a holistic comprehension of life, particularly concerning the role and position of human being in the cosmos, to avert conflict and foster harmony.<sup>7</sup> Fritjof Capra contends that the modern scientific paradigm, notwithstanding its substantial contributions, has corrupted global culture and affecting world peace due to its ingrained reductive ideologies and values. It conceptualizes the universe, including humanity, as a mechanical construct, and social existence as a competitive endeavor for boundless material advancement through economic and technological growth, thereby engendering numerous new challenges and instilling uncertainties within humanity regarding its ability to secure survival in both the present and the future.<sup>8</sup>

Capra advocates for a holistic paradigm, conceptualizes the world as an integrated whole, thereby asserting that no part can be comprehended in isolation from other

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<sup>1</sup> Jusuf Sutanto, *Kearifan Kuno di Zaman Modern: Penyejuk Manusia Mencari Kebenaran*, Cet. 1 (Jakarta: Hikmah, 2004), xi.

<sup>2</sup> Kholid Al-Walid, *Filsafat Perennial: Upaya Mengembalikan Fitrah Primordial Manusia* (Jakarta: Sadra Press, 2023), 2.

<sup>3</sup> Sachiko Murata, *The Tao of Islam: Kitab Rujukan Tentang Relasi Gender dalam Kosmologi dan Teologi Islam* (Bandung: Mizan, 1998), 22.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Walid, *Filsafat Perennial Upaya Mengembalikan Fitrah Primordial Manusia*, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Suha Taji-Farouki, *Beshara and Ibn 'Arabi: A Movement of Sufi Spirituality in the Modern World* (Oxford, U.K: Anqa, 2007), 244.

<sup>6</sup> Sutanto, *Kearifan Kuno di Zaman Modern*, vii.

<sup>7</sup> Sutanto, ix. Sutanto further emphasizes that ancient wisdom never gets old and decays over time because it is transmitted in chains through heart to heart. "What is the point of trying to invent something as if you had discovered something original yourself?"

<sup>8</sup> Sutanto, 4.

components within the intricate web of life. Furthermore, he underscores that even scientific truths are derived from a constellation of interconnected human perceptions, values, and actions. His perspective posits that values inherent in all living entities are rooted in a spiritual comprehension that perceives nature and the self as an organic entirety,<sup>9</sup> which forms the foundation of deep ecology.<sup>10</sup>

William C. Chittick, following Tu Weiming, calls the vision that perceives humanity and the universe as in inseparable unity, implying priority on harmony and understanding of the world rather than dominance over it, as an *anthropocosmic vision*.<sup>11</sup> This viewpoint is primarily inspired by Eastern religions and diverse ancient indigenous beliefs, such as that of the Nusantara (Indonesia), one of which is the *Pikukuh Sunda* teachings.

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<sup>9</sup> Fritjof Capra, *Jaring-Jaring Kehidupan: Visi Baru Epistemologi dan Kehidupan* (Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2002), 24.

<sup>10</sup> Fritjof Capra, 16. Capra defined deep ecology by contrasting it with shallow ecology and showing that it is a network concept: Shallow ecology is anthropocentric or human-centered. It views humans as above or outside of nature, as the source of all value, and ascribes only instrumental, or "use", value to nature. See "Deep Ecology - Environment and Ecology," accessed April 15, 2024, <https://ecology.gen.tr/deep-ecology.html>. Although other scholars criticize that the philosophical basis of deep ecology will fall into the shallowness of arguments, for example, equating non-human objects as equal to humans who are superior. See Mudhofir Abdullah (2010), *Al-Qur'an dan Konservasi Lingkungan*, p. 195.

<sup>11</sup> Chittick, *Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul*, 109-10

<sup>12</sup> Lucky Hendrawan, *Pitutor Agung Sang Batara Guru: Ujar Bijak & Bajik dari Sang Pencerah*

Regarding *Pikukuh Sunda* teachings, contemporary scholar Lucky Hendrawan (2023) –also known as *Abah Uci*, the elder of Padepokan Bumidega Sunda Academy – expresses concern over the marginalization of ancestral teachings that have struggled to thrive in their homeland, despite their historical significance in fostering community ties.<sup>12</sup> According to Hendrawan, before official religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam were introduced, there had been Indigenous religions existed across the regions,<sup>13</sup> such as Sunda *Wiwitan*, the foundation of *Pikukuh Sunda*, and it is still practiced by some people, such as the Madrais community in Jawa Barat, besides Padepokan Bumidega Sundayana.<sup>14</sup>

The Eastern perspective on the interconnectedness of reality, including God, human beings and

(*Ajaran Pikukuh Sunda*) (Bandung: Yayasan Bumi Dharma Nusantara, 2023), ii.

<sup>13</sup> Hendrawan, i.

<sup>14</sup> Ahmad Muttaqien, "Spiritualitas Agama Lokal (Studi Ajaran Sunda Wiwitan Aliran Madrais di Cigugur Kuningan Jawa Barat)," *Al-Adyan* Vol. III, no. No. 1 (2013): 89. Muttaqien underscores that there are many more of native religions in each region in Nusantara, such as Sunda Wiwitan which was embraced by the Sundanese people in Kanekes, Lebak, Banten; Sunda Wiwitan Madrais sect, also known as the Cigugur religion (and there are several other names) in Cigugur, Kuningan, West Java; Buhun religion in West Java; Kejawan in Central Java and East Java; Parmalim religion, the original Batak religion; Kaharingan religion in Kalimantan; the Tonaas Walian trust in Minahasa, North Sulawesi; Tolottang in South Sulawesi; Wetu Telu in Lombok; Naurus on Seram Island in Maluku Province, and others.

nature, also aligns with Islam. Muslim scholars often begin this exploration with interpretations of the hadith: "God Created Adam in His Image."<sup>15</sup> Various interpretations have been put forward by prominent scholars and figures in Islamic mysticism tradition, such as al-Ghazali and Ibn 'Arabi, also known as the Shaykh al-Akbar. According to Masataka Takeshita (1986), Ibn 'Arabi's philosophy of the "Perfect Man" centers around Adam, whom God Created in His image to act as His vicegerent on earth.<sup>16</sup>

In the context of interpreting this hadith, another significant concept discussed is the macrocosm-microcosm motif, closely linked to the anthropocosmic vision. William C. Chittick (2007) describes the anthropocosmic vision as reviewing humans and the cosmos as a unified, organismic whole.<sup>17</sup> This concept aligns closely, albeit not always in terminology, with Ibn 'Arabi's exposition in his magnum opus, *Futūḥāt al-Makiyyah*. He elucidates that:

"Nature is all a detailed form of Adam, and Adam is the whole book. Adam is to nature like a soul to a body,

and man is the spirit of nature, while nature is his body. Together, they create a macrocosm, with humans and nature functioning as one unit. Without humans, nature resembles a body without a soul, and the perfection of nature, achieved through human involvement, parallels the perfection of a body regulated by the spirit."<sup>18</sup>

Ultimately, the central questions arising from this discussion include; what is the significance of examining the relationship between humans, nature, and God within the philosophies of Ibn 'Arabi Sufism and Ajaran *Pikukuh* Sunda? How can this understanding be applied to contemporary life? Additionally, why is it important to compare Islamic philosophy with local philosophy, and in what ways are they interconnected? A prevalent response to these questions aligns with Toshihiko Izutsu's (1984) assertion that mutual understanding among the world's nations and religions is essential, emphasizing the importance of considering diverse levels of existence.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Mishkat Al-Masabih 3525 - Retaliation - كتاب القصاص - Sunnah.Com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم), accessed July 17, 2024, <https://sunnah.com/mishkat:3525>.

<sup>16</sup> Masataka Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi's Theory of the Perfect Man and Its Place in the History of Islamic Thought* (Illionis, US: The University of Chicago, 1986), 8.

<sup>17</sup> William C. Chittick, *Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul: The Pertinence of Islamic Cosmology in the Modern World* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007), 109.

<sup>18</sup> Muhyi al-Din ibn 'Arabi, *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makiyyah*, 4 vols., (Beirut: Dar al-Sadir, n.d.), II:67. It is said,

فالعالم كله تفصيل آدم و آدم هو الكتاب الجامع فهو للعالم كالروح من الجسد فالإنسان روح العالم و العالم الجسد فبالمجموع يكون العالم كله هو الإنسان الكبير و الإنسان فيه و إذا نظرت في العالم وحده دون الإنسان وجدته كالجسم المسوي بغير روح و كمال العالم بالإنسان مثل كمال الجسد بالروح

<sup>19</sup> Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism: A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 469.

Thus, this study aims to foster a dialogue for peace between the two religions by exploring the intertwining concepts of humans, nature, and God encapsulated in the anthropocosmic vision through the lines of Ibn Arabi's Sufism and Ajar *Pikukuh* Sunda. This study does not seek to draw superficial conclusions or assert that the two teachings are identical – i.e. that “Islam is Sunda and Sunda is Islam.” Instead, it focuses on the moral and philosophical wisdom inherent in each tradition. This paper posits that the central issue within the teachings of Sunda and Islamic Sufism lies in their linguistic correlation. Without this linguistic connection, the concepts of humans, nature, and God – or the anthropocosmic vision – would remain isolated and devoid of mutual relevance.

### Methodology of Research

This study employs qualitative methodology. According to Bryman and Brell (2019), the primary objective of qualitative research is to understand phenomena from the perspectives of participants, providing rich descriptions and contextual presentations, including the exploration of conflicts and theoretical concepts that emerge from the study.<sup>20</sup> This research will offer a descriptive

analysis of the concepts of human, nature, and God and their integration within the two perspectives: Ibn 'Arabi's Sufism and *Pikukuh* Sunda. To achieve this, the study utilizes a comparative framework of religious studies. According to Charles Kimball (2008), comparative religious studies consider the historical interactions among diverse religious traditions to illuminate notable similarities and clear distinctions between them.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Aria Nakissa (2023) underscores that analyzing various traditions is beneficial as it helps reveal broader patterns across different religious traditions.<sup>22</sup>

To avoid preconceptions about the nature of Sunda, particularly regarding the concepts of human, nature, and God as integrated within *Pikukuh* Sunda teaching, this study highlights the core features of *Pikukuh* Sunda's original philosophy, referencing principles derived from Sunda *Wiwitan*. This study also includes a literature review of relevant works on *Pikukuh* Sunda and Ibn 'Arabi's Sufism. The primary source of *Pikukuh* Sunda will be drawn from the series authored by Lucky Hendrawan, an authoritative of cultural expert of *Pikukuh* Sunda. Meanwhile, for Islamic Sufism, the analysis specifically references *Futūḥāt al-Makiyyah* by Ibn 'Arabi, a prominent

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<sup>20</sup> Alan Bryman and Edward Brell, *Social Research Methods*, Fifth Canadian edition (Don Mills, Ontario, Canada: Oxford University Press, 2019), 198.

<sup>21</sup> Charles Kimball, *Comparative Religion* (Virginia: The Great Courses, 2008), 8.

<sup>22</sup> Aria Nakissa, “Comparing Moralities in the Abrahamic and Indic Religions Using Cognitive Science: Kindness, Peace, and Love versus Justice, Violence, and Hate,” *Religions* 14, no. 2 (February 2, 2023): 11, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14020203>.

Muslim Sufis both in Muslim and Western Academy.

### Mapping Trends: Studies of Islamic Sufism and Sunda Philosophy

Numerous studies have been conducted globally on topics related to Islamic Sufism, Sunda, spiritualism, and the anthropocosmic vision. From these previous studies, three key trends emerge. The first trend includes ethnographic and literary analyses aimed at understanding Sunda *Wiwitan* and the mystic synthesis in Java. Notable scholars contributing to this body of work include M.C. Ricklefs (2006),<sup>23</sup> Ahmad Muttaqien (2013),<sup>24</sup> Etty Saringendayanti, et. al (2018),<sup>25</sup> Alfonsus Sutarno et. al (2003),<sup>26</sup> Yayat Sudaryat et. al (2019),<sup>27</sup>

Lucky Hendrawan (2015, 2018, 2023, 2024),<sup>28</sup> and Panji Sisdianto (2020).<sup>29</sup> However, these studies primarily focus on the teachings of *Pikukuh Sunda*, often lacking any connection to Islamic teachings.

The second trend focuses on ethnographic studies examining the acculturation and integrational aspects of Islamic Sufism and Sundanese spiritualism, particularly their impact on the spread of Islam as the predominant religion among the Sundanese people from the pre-colonial to the post-colonial era. Notable researchers in this area include Jajang A. Rohmana (2012, 2018),<sup>30</sup> Ujang Suyatman (2019),<sup>31</sup> Ahmad Muttaqien (2013),<sup>32</sup> and Deni

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<sup>23</sup> M.C. Ricklefs, *Mystic Synthesis in Java: A History of Islamization from the Fourteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Eastbridge, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> "Spiritualitas Agama Lokal (Studi Ajaran Sunda Wiwitan Aliran Madrais di Cigugur Kuningan Jawa Barat)."

<sup>25</sup> "Tri Tangtu on Sunda Wiwitan Doctrine in the XIV-XVII Century," *Tawarikh: Journal of Historical Studies*, Volume 10, no. 01 (October 2018).

<sup>26</sup> "Constructing Human Integrity in the Perspective of Sunda Wiwitan Religious Ethics," *Inferensi: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 17, no. 1 (August 14, 2023): 59-86, <https://doi.org/10.18326/infsl3.v17i1.59-86>.

<sup>27</sup> "Ecopedagogical Values in Traditional Idiomatic Expressions," *Proceedings of the Second Conference on Language, Literature, Education, and Culture (ICOLLITE 2018)*, Vol. 257 (2019), 380-385.

<sup>28</sup> Lucky Hendrawan, *Pitutor Agung Sang Batara Guru: Ujar Bijak & Bajik dari Sang Pencerah: Waspada Tinggal Permana (Ajaran Pikukuh Sunda)* (Bandung: Yayasan Bumi Dharma Nusantara, 2018); Lucky Hendrawan, Deny Supratman DP, and Arleti Mochtar Apin, "Sesajen Sebagai Kitab Kehidupan," *Jurnal ATRAT: Jurnal Seni Rupa*, Vol 3, No 1 (2015), <http://dx.doi.org/10.26742/atrat.v3i1.383>. and

Lucky Hendrawan and Arleti Mochtar Apin, "Mamsa dalam Tantra Bhairawa: Interpretasi di Ruang Budaya," *Jurnal Dekonstruksi: Jurnal Filsafat*, Vol. 10, No. 02 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.54154/dekonstruksi.v10i02>.

<sup>29</sup> "Manekung as a Method from the Teaching of Sunda to Annihilation Mind," *AESCIART - International Conference on Aesthetics and the Sciences of Art: Indonesian Cultural Traditions, Visual Culture and Its Disruptions in the 21st Century*, September 28, 2020.

<sup>30</sup> "Sundanese Sufi and Religious Diversity in the Archipelago: The Pluralistic Vision of Haji Hasan Mustapa (1852-1930)," *Kawalu: Journal of Local Culture* 5, no. 1 (June 30, 2018): 34, <https://doi.org/10.32678/kawalu.v5i1.1873>.

"Sundanese Sufi Literature and Local Islamic Identity: A Contribution of Haji Hasan Mustapa's Dandang," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 50, no. 2 (2012).

<sup>31</sup> "Sistem Kepercayaan dan Karakteristik Masyarakat Sunda: Memahami Kembali Islam *teh Sunda*, Sunda *teh Islam*," *Al-Tsaqafa: Jurnal Ilmiah Peradaban Islam*, Vol. 16, no. 2 (2019): 215-25, <https://doi.org/10.15575/al-tsaqafa.v16i2.5937>.

<sup>32</sup> Muttaqien, "Spiritualitas Agama Lokal (Studi Ajaran Sunda Wiwitan Aliran Madrais di Cigugur Kuningan Jawa Barat)."

Miharja et. al (2022).<sup>33</sup> While these studies explore the spiritual elements of Sundanese culture and tradition and their fusion with Islam, they often do not treat Sunda as an independent local religion with its own distinctive characteristics. Consequently, these works tend to emphasize the notion that “*Islam is Sunda and Sunda is Islam,*” a perspective that is contested by adherents of *Pikukuh* Sunda.

The final trend encompasses extensive literature and comparative studies on Eastern religious teachings and the traditional mystical aspects of Islam, leading to the notion of ‘perennial wisdom’ and the concept of anthropocosmic vision. Prominent scholars contributing to this body of work include Toshihiko Izutsu (1984),<sup>34</sup> Masataka Takeshita (1986),<sup>35</sup> William C. Chittick (1998, 2005, 2007),<sup>36</sup> Sachiko Murata (1992),<sup>37</sup> Sachiko Murata and William C. Chittick (1994),<sup>38</sup> Muhammad ‘Ali Hajj Yusuf (2008),<sup>39</sup> Fritjof Capra (2002),<sup>40</sup> Jusuf Sutanto (2004)<sup>41</sup> and Suha Taji-Farouki (2007).<sup>42</sup> Many of these scholars focus on comparative studies

between Taoism and Islamic Sufism or spiritualism in general. While these works provide valuable insights into the interconnection among humans, nature, and God within the Islamic tradition, particularly through the lens of Ibn ‘Arabi’s thought, they do not engage with the teachings of Sunda.

While the aforementioned trends may be distinct, they can also complement one another to establish a foundational framework for understanding the interconnection between human, nature, and God within Ibn ‘Arabi’s Sufism and *Pikukuh* Sunda. The comparative study of Islam and Sunda as a local religion may not be a novel endeavor for some scholars, as it relates to the origins of the acculturation of Islam and Sunda in Indonesia during the period of Islamic dissemination. However, previous research on this topic is relatively limited, and it can be challenging to locate primary resources specifically referencing the original scriptures of Sundanese teachings. Cultural practitioners assert that the Sunda religion lacks written

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<sup>33</sup> “Islam and Local Culture: The Value of Islamic Teachings and Sundanese Culture in the Ruwatan Leuweung Babakti Mandala Manglayang Tradition,” *Religió: Jurnal Studi Agama-agama*, Vol. 11, no. 2 (September 2022), <https://doi.org/10.15642/religio.2021.11.2.228-247>.

<sup>34</sup> Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism*.

<sup>35</sup> Takeshita, *Ibn ‘Arabi’s Theory of the Perfect Man and Its Place in the History of Islamic Thought*.

<sup>36</sup> William C Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God* (United States: State University of New York Press, 1998); *Ibn ‘Arabi: Heir to the Prophets, Makers of the Muslim World* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005), and *The Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul: The*

*Pertinence of Islamic Cosmology in the Modern World* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007).

<sup>37</sup> Sachiko Murata, *The Tao of Islam: A Sourcebook on Gender Relationships in Islamic Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).

<sup>38</sup> Sachiko Murata and William C. Chittick, *The Vision of Islam: Visions of Reality* (NY: Paragon House, 1994).

<sup>39</sup> Muhammad ‘Ali Hajj Yusuf, *Ibn ‘Arabi - Time and Cosmology*, (London; New York: Routledge, 2008).

<sup>40</sup> Capra, *Jaring-Jaring Kehidupan: Visi Baru Epistemologi dan Kehidupan*.

<sup>41</sup> Sutanto, *Kearifan Kuno di Zaman Modern*.

<sup>42</sup> Taji-Farouki, *Beshara and Ibn ‘Arabi*.

scriptures akin to the Qur'an.<sup>43</sup> Documentations of Sundanese teachings are collected in the form of archeological remnants such as inscriptions, reliefs, temples, *tembang* (songs), or poetry, which are beyond the scope of this study. The author's approach thus far has relied on library research and the examination of related data on social media.

The views presented in this paper regarding the teachings of *Pikukuh Sunda* belong to authors, and experts may have differing opinions. Despite its limitations, this study aims to contribute to the documentation of a comparative analysis of existence as a whole—encompassing humans, nature, and God as interconnected entities—from the perspective of the local Sunda religion and the Islamic tradition as a missionary faith. Ultimately, both teachings emphasize the submission of humanity and nature to a singular existence, whether understood as God (Allah) or *Sang Hyang*. Additionally, this study aspires to provide a clear and descriptive guide for understanding

the dialogue between Sunda and Islam, particularly in relation to the anthropocosmic vision.

## Discussion

### Anthropocosmic Vision vs Pantheism: Are They the Same?

The term 'anthropocosmic' is first utilized by William C. Chittick in his work, 'Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul' (2007), and originates from the Confucian scholar, Tu Weiming. The term 'anthropocosmic' refers to the concept of the human being and the cosmos as a single, inseparable, organismic whole. The goal of human life, therefore, is to harmonize oneself with heaven and earth and to return to their transcendent source.<sup>44</sup> The 'anthropocosmic vision' emphasizes understanding rather than manipulating the world. Tu Weiming encapsulates this idea with the phrase "to learn how to be human," by actualizing true human nature. Chittick employs this term to describe the overarching worldview of Islamic civilization.<sup>45</sup> In this article, this term

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<sup>43</sup> B. Nursananingrat, *Purwawisada Agama Djawa Sunda*, (Bandung: Pastoral, 1964), h. 11. Sundanese wisdom believes that there is a more fundamental divine source for wisdom than textual books, in Abah Uci's saying, "the universe of life... the most real 'book' of the Almighty's creation." See Lucky Hendrawan, "Guriang Tunggal," unpublished manuscript, 2010), typecript, 33. Regarding how the *Kitab Kehidupan* (the Sacred Book of life) is presented practically in ritual activities in *Pikukuh Sunda*, it can be seen, among others, in relation to *Sesajen*. See Lucky Hendrawan,

"Kitab Suci yang Hidup," Bumidega Sundayana, July 9, 2015, <https://youtube.com/watch?v=GI0GGVF8KfA>; "Animisme dan Dinamisme, menurut LQ Hendrawan - Part 2," July 22, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8kQWcUhJuY&t=98s>

<sup>44</sup> Chittick, *Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul*, 109.

<sup>45</sup> Chittick, 110.

is used here to describe the interconnected concept of God, human, and nature in both Ibn 'Arabi's sufism and *Pikukuh* Sunda.

Masataka Takeshita (1986) argues that Ibn 'Arabi's 'mystical philosophy' is predominantly characterized by the concept of *Insān Kāmil* (the Perfect Man) symbolized by Adam, whom God created in His image as His viceregent on earth. Prior to the term of 'anthropocosmic,' Takeshita used 'anthropocentrism' to describe Ibn 'Arabi's view on ontology and metaphysics.<sup>46</sup> Unlike 'anthropocosmic,' the term 'anthropocentrism' is already established in the Old Testament (Genesis) and Judaic interpretation, indicating that 'man is the ultimate aim of God's creation,' similar to the hadith: 'God created Adam in His image.'<sup>47</sup> However, this paper does not use 'anthropocentrism' due to its different emphasis from 'anthropocosmic,' which signifies a broader, interconnected concept of God, humans and nature. Referring to Toshihiko Izutsu (1984) methodology, this paper faces a significant comparative analysis challenge since there is no historical connection between Ibn 'Arabi's Sufism and *Pikukuh* Sunda. Izutsu emphasizes that in such cases, 'if there happens to be a central concept active in both systems, but having its linguistic

counterpart only in one of the systems, we have to pinpoint the concept in the system where it exists in a non-linguistic fluidity and then stabilize it with a definite 'name,' which can be borrowed from the other system and considered as a truly appropriate one.'<sup>48</sup>

This paper highlights two central concepts active in both Ibn 'Arabi's philosophy and the *Pikukuh* Sunda teachings by Lucky Hendrawan (*Abah* Uci), which represent the 'anthropocosmic vision.' The first concept is 'unity with God,' represented by Ibn 'Arabi's concept of *Waḥdah al-Wujūd* and the *Pikukuh* Sunda concept of *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti*.<sup>49</sup> The second concept is 'macrocosm and microcosm,' represented by Ibn 'Arabi concepts of '*Alam Sagir* and '*Alam Kabir*, and by the *Pikukuh* Sunda concepts of *Jagat Alit* and *Jagat Ageung*. This framework is constructed on the fundamental principle of the interconnection between God, humans, and nature, which characterizes both philosophical systems.

However, despite the universal concepts shared by these two mystical philosophies through the anthropocosmic vision, criticism has long arisen toward both traditions. Critics allege that their philosophical bases equate material objects with

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<sup>46</sup> Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi's Theory of the Perfect Man and Its Place in the History of Islamic Thought*, 8.

<sup>47</sup> Takeshita, 10.

<sup>48</sup> Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism*, 473.

<sup>49</sup> Hendrawan, *Pitutur Agung Sang Batara Guru: Ujar Bijak & Bajik dari Sang Pencerah*, 2.

human, who are considered superior.<sup>50</sup> Some critics accuse Ibn 'Arabi's mystical philosophy to resemble pantheism—the view that God is identical with the material universe. Scholars like Afifi have credited Ibn 'Arabi with founding a 'new religion of pantheistic philosophy' in the Muslim world, questioning his commitment to Islam.<sup>51</sup> On the other hand, some scholars view Sunda not as an established religion but rather as a local belief characterized by animism.<sup>52</sup>

In response to the aforementioned criticism, scholars offer different perspectives. Suha Taji Farouki (2007) argues that Ibn 'Arabi is a monist, with his mystical philosophy characterized by non-dualism. This term implies not only its monistic nature but also the complete overcoming of dualistic concepts.<sup>53</sup> Regarding Sunda, Ahmad Muttaqien (2013) considers it monotheistic due to its distinctive cosmology.<sup>54</sup> According to Vicky Cummings et al. (2014), an established religion is characterized

by having a cosmology—a theory of the origin, structure, and nature of the universe, including the place of human within it.<sup>55</sup> Yusuf Muhammad Ali Hajj (2008) defines cosmology as the science that studies the universe, or the cosmos, a term originating from early Greek metaphysical thought meaning 'harmony' or 'order.'<sup>56</sup>

Chittick explains Ibn 'Arabi's mystical philosophy and cosmology as being based on *tawhīd*, the concept of divine unity. According to Chittick, Ibn 'Arabi views Islam as originating from the creation of the world. In its broadest sense, the word *Islam* (submission, surrender) designates the universal and ever-present situation of creatures in relation to the Creator: "To Him is submitted everything in the heavens and the earth" (Qur'an 3:83). This underscores why the first and fundamental teaching of Islam is *tawhīd*.<sup>57</sup> In the context of Sunda, Hendrawan (2023) refers to a particular rite of prayer called *Sembahyang*, which comes from two words: "*sembah*" (to offer sincerely

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<sup>50</sup> Mudhofir Abdullah, *Al-Quran & Konservasi Lingkungan: Argumen Konservasi Lingkungan sebagai Tujuan Tertinggi Syari'ah* (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, 2010), 195.

<sup>51</sup> Taji-Farouki, *Beshara and Ibn 'Arabi*, 283.

<sup>52</sup> Certain Sunda Wiwitan's beliefs have been categorized as animism and dynamism along with some misunderstanding about the term that has led to misinterpretation towards Wiwitan believers as natural objects worshipers. Lihat Lucky Hendrawan, "Animisme dan Dinamisme, menurut LQ Hendrawan - Part 1," Bumidega Sunda Academy, June 25, 2020, <https://youtube.com/watch?v=k83IHNWQj1Q&t=39s>; "Animisme dan Dinamisme...- Part 2," July

22, 2020, <https://youtube.com/watch?v=o8kQWcUhJuY&t=98s>

<sup>53</sup> Taji-Farouki, 283.

<sup>54</sup> Muttaqien, "Spiritualitas Agama Lokal ...," 89.

<sup>55</sup> Vicki Cummings, Peter D. Jordan, and Marek Zvelebil, *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology and Anthropology of Hunter-Gatherers* (Oxford: Oxford University press, 2014), 1221.

<sup>56</sup> Yusuf, *Ibn 'Arabi - Time and Cosmology*, 1.

<sup>57</sup> Chittick, *Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul*, 111.

with respect) and "hyang" (the essence of all sources). Thus, *Sembahyang* signifies human consciousness as a servant of the Almighty *Gusti Hyang*, culminating in the harmonious relationship known as *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti*.<sup>58</sup> This concept of submission somehow illustrates a harmony between Islam and Sunda through the mystical philosophies of Ibn 'Arabi and *Pikukuh Sunda*.

Miharja and Prasetyo (2022) explored 'the contact of Islam with indigenous Indonesian culture' and found that nearly all aspects of Sundanese life incorporate Islamic values.<sup>59</sup> Hendrawan (2024) argues that there are numerous similarities between local Nusantara teachings and those from external sources. While the messages in these teachings often align, there are also differences in their meanings and applications.<sup>60</sup> These similarities may explain the relatively smooth process of Islamization in Sundanese areas, facilitated by the broad insights of Sundanese ancestors and the adaptability of Islam to the Sundanese context at the time.<sup>61</sup> Jajang A.

Rohmana (2012) provides an example with Haji Hasan Mustapa, a prolific Sundanese Sufi who composed over 10.000 stanzas of Sufi *dangding* (poetry in Sundanese literature).<sup>62</sup> Mustapa incorporated familiar Sundanese images and symbols, including folklore figures such as *Sangkuriang*, *Ciung Wanara*, *Sunan Ambu*, *Prabu Siliwangi*, *Ratu Galuh*, *Dayang Sumbi* and *Mundinglaya Di Kusumah*, into the Islamic mysticism tradition,<sup>63</sup> which is notably influenced by the Sufis, including al-Jilli and Ibn 'Arabi's concept of *Wahdah al-Wujūd*.<sup>64</sup>

Nonetheless, this paper does not aim to explore the Islamization of Indonesia. Rather, the context provided helps to identify Sunda as an indigenous religion that existed prior to the advent of Islam in Indonesia, specifically in West Java. According to Oxtoby et al. (2015), an "indigenous religion" is defined as the beliefs, experiences, and practices related to non-falsifiable realities of people who: a) identify themselves as indigenous, and b) rely, at least in part, on kinship and location to define their place in the world.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Hendrawan, *Pitutur Agung Sang Batara Guru: Ujar Bijak & Bajik dari Sang Pencerah*, 49.

<sup>59</sup> Miharja and Prasetyo, "Islam and Local Culture: The Value of Islamic Teachings and Sundanese Culture in the Ruwatan Leuweung Babakti Mandala Manglayang Tradition," 231.

<sup>60</sup> Lucky Hendrawan and Arleti Mochtar Apin, "Mamsa dalam Tantra Bhairawa: Interpretasi di Ruang Budaya," *Jurnal Dekonstruksi: Jurnal Filsafat*, Vol. 10, No. 02 (2024): 55, <https://doi.org/10.54154/dekonstruksi.v10i02>.

<sup>61</sup> Suyatman, "Sistem Kepercayaan dan Karakteristik Masyarakat Sunda: Memahami Kembali Islam *teh Sunda*, *Sunda teh Islam*," 215.

<sup>62</sup> Jajang A Rohmana, "Sundanese Sufi Literature and Local Islamic Identity: A Contribution of Haji Hasan Mustapa's Dangding," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 50, no. 2 (2012): 304.

<sup>63</sup> Rohmana, 305.

<sup>64</sup> Rohmana, "Sundanese Sufi and Religious Diversity in the Archipelago," 34.

<sup>65</sup> Willard Gurdon Oxtoby et al., eds., *A Concise Introduction to World Religions*, Third Edition (Ontario: Oxford, 2015), 35.

## The Interrelation of God, Human, and Nature in *Pikukuh Sunda*

According to M.C. Ricklefs (2006), Java had already developed a highly sophisticated society before the advent of Islam, evidenced by its ancient literature, architecture, and several major kingdoms.<sup>66</sup> Sunda religion, commonly known as Sunda *Wiwitan*, is one of the enduring legacies, particularly in West Java. Oxtoby asserts that while indigenous religions may not be the same as they were 100, 500, or 10.000 years ago, the traditions as they exist today are no less authentic than in the past.<sup>67</sup> Hendrawan contends that the teachings of Sunda originate from the archipelago's ancestors, having refined and adapted to suit the needs of the nation over thousands of years.<sup>68</sup> This section will describe the various philosophies of Sunda *Wiwitan* identified by scholars.

According to Ahmad Muttaqien, the teachings of Sunda *Wiwitan* are rooted in ancient Sundanese beliefs, commonly known as *Pikukuh Tilu*. This teaching is based on the doctrine of trilogical

relationships, which focuses on the connections between God, human, and nature.<sup>69</sup> It emphasizes a high awareness of human nature (*cara ciri manusa*), national identity (*cara ciri bangsa*), and the duty to serve those in positions of authority (*madep ka ratu raja*).<sup>70</sup> Another key doctrine in Sunda *Wiwitan* is *Tri Tangtu* or *Pikukuh Tilu*, a philosophical concept used to maintain harmony in life both vertically and horizontally.<sup>71</sup> Saringendayanti et al. (2018) explain that the ancient doctrine of *Tri Tangtu* is understood as a principle that human are an integral part of nature within the hierarchical structure of the universe. This structure helps human navigate their path and achieve their ultimate goals, encompassing *Buana Sakala* (Microcosmic), *Buana Niskala* (Macrocosmic), and *Jatiniskala* (Grand Cosmic), embodying the principle of 'three to unite' and 'one for three.'<sup>72</sup>

According to Lucky Hendrawan (2018), each group in the Nusantara has its own unique approach to harmonizing with nature, described as *ciri sabumi cara sadesa*.<sup>73</sup> In *Pikukuh Sunda* teachings, "doing good" is considered the primary objective of

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<sup>66</sup> M.C. Ricklefs, *Mystic Synthesis in Java: A History of Islamization from the Fourteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries*, 5.

<sup>67</sup> Oxtoby et al., *A Concise Introduction to World Religions*, 35.

<sup>68</sup> Hendrawan, *Pitutur Agung Sang Batara Guru: Ujar Bijak & Bajik dari Sang Pencerah*, i.

<sup>69</sup> Muttaqien, "Spiritualitas Agama Lokal ...," 89.

<sup>70</sup> Muttaqien, "Spiritualitas Agama Lokal ...," 95.

<sup>71</sup> Muttaqien, "Spiritualitas Agama Lokal ...," 96.

<sup>72</sup> Saringendayanti, Herlina, and Zakaria, "Tri Tangtu on Sunda *Wiwitan* Doctrine in the XIV-XVII Century," 2.

<sup>73</sup> Hendrawan and Apin, "Mamsa dalam Tantra Bhairawa: Interpretasi di Ruang Budaya," 55.

human life, emphasizing actions that benefit the universe.<sup>74</sup> Sutarno et al. (2023) describe how the religious ethic developed by Sunda *Wiwitan* supports the integrity of the Sundanese as indigenous people, balancing physical and spiritual aspects through the principles of *silih asah*, *silih asih*, and *silih asuh*. The term *silih* signifies reciprocity, indicating mutual acts of kindness. Specifically, *silih wangi* refers to protecting each other's reputation, while *silih asah* involves mutual education, *silih asuh* denotes mutual care and protection, and *silih asih* represents mutual love.<sup>75</sup> Sutarno further characterizes the Sundanese people as living harmoniously in their homeland, with the ability to sustain their culture and environment. Key pieces of wisdom include *kudu bisa ngindung ka usum*, *ngabapa ka jaman* which means 'people must be able to adjust to the changing times,' and *kudu bisa ngigelan jeung ngigelkeun jaman*, meaning people need to be selective and participative.<sup>76</sup>

In his book, *Sajatining Guru Waspada Tinggal Permana*, Hendrawan,

through the compilation of Sundanese manuscripts – including *kawih*, *pinisepuh*, proverbs, myths, legends, customs, arts – and the exploration of sacred places (*kabuyutan*), elucidates the relationship between the microcosm (human) and the macrocosm (the universe). He highlights that the core of *Pikukuh* Sunda teaching revolves around the notions of *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti* and the concept of perfect human. Hendrawan characterizes the perfect human in *Pikukuh* Sunda teachings through *ngariksa diri* (self-examination), *welas asih* (compassion), *eling lan waspada* (awareness) and *waspada tinggal permana* (alertness).<sup>77</sup> He further emphasizes that *Pikukuh* Sunda teachings encourages individuals to recognize their personal behavior, act vigilantly, thoroughly, and meticulously, and remain introspective regarding changes in both the microcosm (*Jagat Alit*) or macrocosm (*Jagat Ageung*).<sup>78</sup>

According to *Pikukuh* Sunda philosophy, mountains, forests, rivers, lakes are considered sacred elements

<sup>74</sup> Lucky Hendrawan, *Sajatining Guru: Waspada Tinggal Permana (Ajaran Pikukuh Sunda)* (Bandung: Yayasan Bumi Dharma Nusantara, 2018), 110..

<sup>75</sup> Sutarno, Samho, and Yasunari, "Constructing Human Integrity in the Perspective of Sunda *Wiwitan* Religious Ethics," 59.

<sup>76</sup> Sudaryat, Permana, and Nurhadi, "Ecopedagogical Values in Traditional Idiomatic Expressions," 380.

<sup>77</sup> Hendrawan, *Sajatining Guru: Waspada Tinggal Permana*, 6. Of course, translating some of these terms into English poses certain difficulties because they embody a distinctive worldview that cannot be easily rendered into English. For

instance, "*waspada tinggal permana*" carries moral, psychological, and philosophical connotations deeply tied to the Sundanese worldview, which cannot simply be represented by the term "alertness." Another example is "*sajen*" (derived from *Su-Astra Ajian Rahayu Ningrat*, *Su-ajian*, *Sasajen*), which is not merely "offering" but also a moral-philosophical-spiritual teaching in which the Sundanese worldview and ideology are symbolically expressed through sacred-hermeneutical actions where humans and nature harmoniously participate. However, these aspects are not the focus of this article, so simplifications have been made for the sake of efficiency.

<sup>78</sup> Hendrawan, 9.

of the earth, dedicated to worshipping the Almighty through their preservation and respectful use. In this tradition, the planet Earth is referred to as *Buana Larang* (*larang* means holy) and *Bumi Suci* (the Holy Earth). The *Pikukuh* Sunda believes that *Buana Larang* must remain pure so that all elements of life can coexist harmoniously, sustaining present and future generations. Consequently, destroying any of these natural elements is akin to desecrating a place of worship for the adherents of *Pikukuh* Sunda. Hendrawan emphasizes that each Human of Sunda (*manusa* Sunda),<sup>79</sup> referred to as the 'Perfect Man,' is considered a prophetic human or *manusa ing weruh disemu saestu* (man of light) sent by *Hyang Maha Kawasa* (The Almighty) to earth, and is also known as *Batara Guru* or *Guru Agung* (Great Teacher); a perfect depiction of a human being who has attained self-awareness as *kawula Gusti* (the servant of Lord), that

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<sup>79</sup> The term "Human of Sunda" or "Sundic Human" emphasizes the embodiment of the Sunda, as "way of life, worldview and ideological teaching" in both spiritual and physical life, distinguishing it from the ethnic connotation of "Sundanese." Typically, "Sunda" is associated with an ethnic group in West Java, but Abah Uci argues that Sunda represents a value system of enlightenment and illuminative wisdom (Su-Ananda; Sunda-yana), often uses the symbolization of light and the Sun. These values are tied to ancient wisdom from the Sunda Besar region (when Java, Sumatra, and Kalimantan were connected to mainland Asia) and the Sunda Kecil region (Bali and eastern islands of the archipelago, excluding Papua). Therefore, the people of West Java are more appropriately referred to as Western Javanese. However, remnants of Sundanese

always mindful (*eling*) and vigilant (*waspada*).<sup>80</sup> The Humans of Sunda are symbolized by the steadfast mountains, lush forests, and clear, well-maintained rivers; the harmonious, interconnected elements of life, and beneficial to society and other living creatures in the Earth. In this context, the Humans of Sunda regard *Buana Larang* as their holy book.<sup>81</sup> This worldview fosters the wisdom that human, as *Jagad Alit* (Microcosm), are integral part of the universe as *Jagad Ageung* (Macrocosm), with an inseparable connection. Accordingly, every human action should align with nature.<sup>82</sup> This understanding underpins the Sundanese practice or organizing *sesajen* (offerings). The offerings are seen as essential to human existence, reflecting the causal mechanisms of the universe through their

wisdom still exist in West Java, possibly causing misunderstandings and distorting the original meaning of Sunda as a system of truth and wisdom into an ethnic label. See, Lucky Hendrawan, *Pitutur Agung Sang Batara Guru: Ujar Bijak & Bajik dari Sang Pencerah*, 5-7; L. Hendrawan, "Ratu La-Ra-Hyang: Dangiang dari negeri Cahaya Merah dan cahaya Putih" (unpublished manuscript, 2008), 9-11.

<sup>80</sup> Lucky Hendrawan, *Pitutur Agung Sang Batara Guru* 7.

<sup>81</sup> Lucky Hendrawan, "Lucky Hendrawan Facebook Account," accessed April 14, 2024, <https://facebook.com/notes/478843716353487/>. See also, previous footnote (footnote number 43).

<sup>82</sup> Sisdiyanto, "Manekung as a Method from the Teaching of Sunda to Annihilation Mind," 142.

microcosmic representation in the *sesajen* arrangement.<sup>83</sup>

In *Pikukuh* Sunda philosophy, human is often referred to as *jagat alit* (small universe) or *buana alit*, which are closely related to *Jagat Agung* (the great universe).<sup>84</sup> It is believed that the human body is formed through the essence of earth and water, symbolically represented at the dining table,<sup>85</sup> emphasizing that each person is the result of the combined power and efforts of the universe (*Jagat Ageung*).<sup>86</sup> As a small universe (*Jagat Alit*), a person can grow into a wise and virtuous individual by understanding and embodying "compassion" (*welas asih*). Such a person reflects the generosity of the great universe (*Jagat Ageung*), which gives unconditionally, and recognizes that the Most Holy One (*Hyang Mahasuci*) resides within every individual, including themselves.<sup>87</sup> This harmonious relationship, achieved through heightened human consciousness, is known as *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti*.<sup>88</sup> The state of *manunggaling kawula Gusti* is defined as the holy path to enlightenment, characterized by the physical and spiritual experience of accepting and venerating the

Almighty (*Hyang Maha Agung*) in a state of calm and peace, guided by *guna dharma* (noble behavior). This state of being distinguishes the perfect human from others in general.<sup>89</sup>

Lucky Hendrawan further explain how *Pikukuh* Sunda teaches individuals to unite with *Hyang Maha Agung* through a practice called *Manekung*. However, understanding *Manekung* require an explanation of Sundanese cosmology. Panji Sisdianto (2020) highlights that, in Sundanese philosophy, the genesis of the universe originates from *Suwung*, or the Great Nothingness. From this state of primordial void, cosmic vibrations arose, gradually intensifying, condensing and solidifying, and eventually erupting to create celestial bodies emerged, gradually becoming denser, compressed to solidify, which then exploded to form celestial entities, including the Sun (*Batara Guru*) and Earth (*Batara Uma*),<sup>90</sup> as well as other forms of existence, including human. Throughout this process, *Suwung* has remained as the Great Nothingness, the origin of all beginnings and the medium for all beings and non-being. Characterized by its permanence, unchanging nature, and lack of beginning or end, the universe as a

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<sup>83</sup> Lucky Hendrawan, Deny Supratman DP, and Arleti Mochtar Apin, "Sesajen Sebagai Kitab Kehidupan," *Jurnal ATRAT : Jurnal Seni Rupa*, Vol 3, No 1 (2015): 36, <http://dx.doi.org/10.26742/atrat.v3i1.383>. See also the previous note (footnote 77).

<sup>84</sup> Hendrawan, *Sajatining Guru: Waspada Tingal Permana*, 15.

<sup>85</sup> Hendrawan, 84.

<sup>86</sup> Hendrawan, 16.

<sup>87</sup> Hendrawan, 18.

<sup>88</sup> Hendrawan, *Pitutor Agung Sang Batara Guru: Ujar Bijak & Bajik dari Sang Pencerah*, 49.

<sup>89</sup> Hendrawan, *Sajatining Guru: Waspada Tingal Permana*, 120.

<sup>90</sup> Notice, in *Pikukuh Sunda*, natural entities also have spiritual dimension besides its material form.

whole is referred to as *Jagad Suwung*.<sup>91</sup> This understanding of *Suwung* is essential for comprehending the practice of *Manekung*.

*Manekung* is an attempt to approach emptiness without becoming completely empty. It involves a process akin to smelting, shedding, separating, destroying, unattachment, and release. The state of *Manekung* aims to maintain a delicate balance, akin to the space between sleep and wakefulness, or the middle ground between conscious and unconscious states, while remaining attentively alert. Understanding *Manekung* is further clarified by contrasting it with meditation.<sup>92</sup> Hendrawan emphasizes that *Manekung* can be facilitated through breath control techniques. He explains that when a person breathes, he is essentially inviting the Almighty into themselves. When the Almighty is internalized, the individual refers to this presence as 'spirit.' Conversely, when the Almighty is perceived as external, He is referred to as *Hyang Suci*, *Hyang Agung*, *Hyang Wening*, *Hyang Wenang*, or *Sang Hyang Taya* (the Supreme Reality of No-Thingness).<sup>93</sup>

Ultimately, this section once again elaborates on how *Pikukuh Sunda* teachings illustrate the interconnectedness between God,

human, and nature through the concepts of *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti* and *Jagat Alit* and *Jagat Ageung*. This interconnectedness underscores the emphasis on human consciousness striving to unify with God. The interwoven nature of this concept is also reflected in specific Sundanese rites, such as *sajen* (offerings) to maintain the balance of nature, and *Manekung*, which involves breath control to invite *Sang Hyang Agung* (The Almighty). The following section will explore a parallel interwoven concept in Ibn 'Arabi's mystical philosophy, focusing on the relationships among God, human and nature.

### **Comparative Analysis of Divine, Human, and Cosmic Interrelations in Ibn 'Arabi's Sufism and Pikukuh Sunda**

Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Abdullah Hatimi al-Ta'i, commonly known as Ibn Arabi (AH 560-638/AD 1165-1240), was a prominent Sufi thinker of the Middle Ages and one of the most influential authors in Islamic history. His writings have profoundly

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<sup>91</sup> Sisdianto, "Manekung as a Method from the Teaching of Sunda to Annihilation Mind," 139.

<sup>92</sup> Sisdianto, 145.

<sup>93</sup> Hendrawan, *Sajatining Guru: Waspada Tingal Permana*, 87.

impacted Islamic civilization for centuries.<sup>94</sup> Farouki (2007), referencing Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d.111), argues that Islam can be envisioned as a complete entity with Sufism as its heart, theology as its head, philosophy as the traditional framework binding its various aspects, and law as its operational limbs.<sup>95</sup> Although Ibn 'Arabi theosophical views remain subject to debate within Islamic circles, his ideas, especially concerning cosmology, offer valuable insights into natural conservations.<sup>96</sup>

Ibn 'Arabi's two most renowned and influential works are *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* (The Meccan Illuminations), an encyclopedic discussion of Islamic Wisdom, and the shorter *Fuṣuṣ al-Ḥikam* (the Bezzels of Wisdom), which consists of chapters named after prophets representing different spiritual archetypes. Ibn 'Arabi's cosmology encompasses both material and abstract, spiritual realms. He posits that the fundamental reason for the creation of the universe is 'Love.'<sup>97</sup> The ontological relationship between God and the universe is articulated by Ibn 'Arabi using the terms *Huwa Huwa* (He is He) and *Huwa lā Huwa* (He is not He). According to Henry Corbin (2002), this view suggests that the universe

embodies both aspects of God's essence and His transcendence.<sup>98</sup> Chittick (1989) further emphasizes that God created the universe with the purpose of revealing Himself. Without this act of self-manifestation (*tajallī*), the creation would not have occurred.<sup>99</sup>

According to Ibn 'Arabi, nothing exists apart from God, whose essence is Absolute Being, Mystery of mystery, a "Hidden Treasure" (*Kanz Mukhfiy*)<sup>100</sup> – an unparalleled Oneness that defies any notion of a second entity and is beyond all calculation or conception. However, this raises question: if existence solely belongs to God, how do we account for the apparent multiplicity in the universe? To address this, Ibn 'Arabi's concept of *Waḥdah al-Wujūd* (Unity of Existence) provides a framework. Although Ibn 'Arabi himself did not explicitly use the term *Waḥdah al-Wujūd* in his writings, he implicitly conveyed this idea. The term was introduced by his spiritual heir, Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi, who played a crucial role in systematizing Ibn 'Arabi's teachings.<sup>101</sup>

Maroof Shah translates *Waḥdah al-Wujūd* as the 'transcendent unity of being' or simply as "the Oneness of

<sup>94</sup> Yusuf, *Ibn 'Arabi - Time and Cosmology*, 6.

<sup>95</sup> Taji-Farouki, *Beshara and Ibn 'Arabi*, 252.

<sup>96</sup> Abdullah, *Al-Quran & Konservasi Lingkungan: Argumen Konservasi Lingkungan sebagai Tujuan Tertinggi Syari'ah*, 189,190.

<sup>97</sup> Yusuf, *Ibn 'Arabi - Time and Cosmology*, 8.

<sup>98</sup> Henry Corbin, *Imajinasi Kreatif: Sufisme Ibn 'Arabi* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2002), 243.

<sup>99</sup> William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination* (Albany, N.Y: State University of New York Press, 1989), 76.

<sup>100</sup> Ibn 'Arabi, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, 4 vols., II: 112, 232, 310, 399; III: 267; IV:428, 574.

<sup>101</sup> Chittick, xviii.

being.”<sup>102</sup> Afifi, as cited by Netton (1989), defines *Wahdah al-Wujūd* as the doctrine wherein God encompasses everything, reducing all that is not God to nothingness, with God being the All-Embracing and Eternal Reality.<sup>103</sup> Oludamini Ogunnaike (2013) further elaborates that the apparent plurality of the universe is merely a projection of the names of *al-Ḥaqq* (the Absolute Truth). Ogunnaike suggests that what we perceive as the world and everything other than God are relational to *al-Ḥaqq*, akin to a shadow depending on its object. In this view, all things are shadows of God,<sup>104</sup> as stated by Ibn 'Arabi,

و معلوم ان لنا افتقارا من بعضنا لبعضنا.  
فاسماءنا اسماء الله تعالى اذ اليه الافتقار بلا شك. و  
اعياننا في نفس الامر ظله لا غيره.<sup>105</sup>

“And it is known that we depend on each other, and our names are the names of Allah Ta'ala, it is on Him that we depend without a doubt, and our entities are essentially His reflection, not other than them.”

Sachiko Murata (1998) asserts that, in Islamic terms, the universe or cosmos (*al-'ālam*) is defined as “everything other than Allah” (*mā siwa Allāh*), without any spatial or temporal limitations. In the later

intellectual tradition, every discussion inherently involves its relationship (*nisbah*) with Allah.<sup>106</sup> All creatures in the universe are seen as signs of Allah, including various male and female pairs, which reflect aspects of the Divine.<sup>107</sup> Within the Qur'anic framework, Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli (2008) portrays creation of universe as a silk tapestry on which God's beauty and magnificence displayed. The ordered arrangement of creation is perceived as a source of peace for humanity, and the expanse of the earth and sky is revered for its beauty. God created the world in the most perfect manner: *[God] made excellent all that which He created* (Qur'an 32:7). Similarly, human were created in the most excellent condition: *Verily We created the human being in the most excellent constitution* (95:4).<sup>108</sup> Ibn 'Arabi further elucidates that the Arabic term *'ālam* (universe) is derived from the root *'alama* (sign), *'alam* (sign board), and *'ilm* (knowledge). From these meanings, Ibn 'Arabi reveals that the universe is a sign that demonstrates God's power, with each sign carrying a divine message (*rasūl*), as stated as follows:

<sup>102</sup> M Maroof Shah, “Relevance of Ibn Arabi In Modern Era,” *Journal of Peace Studies*, 17, no. 4 (2010): 9.

<sup>103</sup> Ian Richard Netton, *Allah Transcendent: Studies in the Structure and Semiotics of Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Cosmology* (England: Curzon Press Ltd, 1989), 272.

<sup>104</sup> Oludamini Ogunnaike, “Inception and Ibn 'Arabi,” *Journal of Religion and Film*, Vol. 17, no. 2 (2013).

<sup>105</sup> Muhyi al-Din ibn 'Arabi, *Fuṣuṣ Al-Ḥikam, Ta'liqot Abu al-'Ala al-'Afifi*, (Cairo: Dar Ihya' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyah, 1946), 1:106

<sup>106</sup> Murata, *The Tao of Islam*, 1998, 29.

<sup>107</sup> Murata, 37.

<sup>108</sup> Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli, *Islam and the Environment* (Qum: Isra Press, 2008), 15.

“(We will show them our signs on the horizon’) refers to everything that is outside of you, while (‘within themselves’) refers to your deepest essence. And the expression that (‘That is Real Reality (al-Ḥaqq)’) means that He is a Reality in which you are a picture of Him and He is your *rūh*.<sup>109</sup>

Ibn 'Arabi describes the cosmos or the universe as an obedient servant, wholly subject to God. It has been entrusted by God with the role of guiding human towards Him by revealing signs of His greatness and supporting human existence. In this context, Ibn 'Arabi metaphorically refers to the universe as a mother nurturing her children, where human are the children she cares for.<sup>110</sup> Specifically, Ibn 'Arabi emphasizes the earth as the dwelling place for humanity, describing it as a *Raqub*. The term *Raqub* is derived from the root word *muraqabah*, which signifies closeness. Thus, *Raqub* in Ibn 'Arabi's framework denotes a mother who, with deep attentiveness and affection, is concerned about her children's well-being, fearing both their departure and their eventual separation. This perspective is illustrated by the following Ibn 'Arabi's assertion:

“Rasulullah Saw. said that the earth actually has children, so if she has children, then she is the mother of

these children. One of a mother's behavior is that she cares for and looks after her children, because she raises them and loves them, she has a mother's love for them, and is wary of them in case a choice will arise for those who are her competitors, namely another world. They are now really inclined towards her, so mother keeps them from getting a vision of the goodness of the other world, and she further strengthens her care for each of their conditions.”<sup>111</sup>

The above discussion underscores the profound interconnections between God, the cosmos, and human. Mudhofir Abdullah (2010) argues that God represents the ultimate goal of this triadic relationship, with human and the cosmos existing as interdependent entities. The strength of one influences the strength of the other: as human grows stronger, so too does nature, and conversely, as human becomes damaged or critical, so does nature. Thus, fostering a harmonious and ethical relationship that progresses towards God as the cosmic center becomes challenging in times of disharmony and degradation.<sup>112</sup>

In this context, Amuli asserts that human nobility is derived from their role as divine viceroy. To claim this divine viceroyalty without

<sup>109</sup> Ibn 'Arabi, *Fuṣuṣ Al-Ḥikam*, I:69. As he states below,  
و قال الله تعالى: (سنريهم آياتنا في الافاق) وهو ما خرج عنك (وفي انفسهم) وهو عين. (حتى يبين لهم) اي للناظر (انه الحق) من حيث انك صورته وهو روحك. فانت له كالصورة الجسمانية لك، وهو لك كالروح المدير لضرورة جسدك.

<sup>110</sup> Ibn 'Arabi, *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makiyyah*, II:211, he states that,  
إن للدنيا أبناء و إذا كان لها أبناء فهي أم لهؤلاء الأبناء و من عادة الأم أن ترقب أبناءها لأنها المربية لهم و لها عليهم حنو الأمومة

<sup>111</sup> Ibn 'Arabi, II:211. As he states below,  
قال رسول الله ص إن للدنيا أبناء و إذا كان لها أبناء فهي أم لهؤلاء الأبناء و من عادة الأم أن ترقب أبناءها لأنها المربية لهم و لها عليهم حنو الأمومة و الحذر عليهم إن تؤثر فيهم ضررتها و هي الأخرى فيميلون إليها فتحفظهم من مشاهدة خير الأخرى فتشتد مراقبتها لأحوالهم

<sup>112</sup> Abdullah, *Al-Quran & Konservasi Lingkungan: Argumen Konservasi Lingkungan sebagai Tujuan Tertinggi Syari'ah*, 167.

aligning one's perception and will with God is to usurp the position, obeying instead a different authority. For example, an egoistic and hedonistic individual cannot truly attain the exalted status of divine viceroyalty and thus lacks the inherent nobility it confers.<sup>113</sup> Chittick complements this view by portraying prophets as the prototype of human beings who fully perform this divine viceroyalty, with Ibn 'Arabi identifying the prophets from Adam to Muhammad as the *Insān Kāmil* (Perfect Man).<sup>114</sup>

According to Sayyed Hossein Nasr and William C. Chittick (2001), the only way to achieve perfection is by adhering to prophetic authority/guidance.<sup>115</sup> Chittick elaborate that a human who fails to attain perfection in this world is merely a "rational animal" rather than a true "human being," comparing such individuals to corpses in relation to their personal existence: "He is physically human, but not in reality. He is like a corpse that has lost all its abilities. Therefore, he does not attain perfection."<sup>116</sup> In this context, Ibn 'Arabi asserts:

"Know that all of nature, if there were no perfect human, would

not have been created. And that in fact he (perfect man) with his existence is the true goal of new knowledge (*ḥadīth*) about God. And the form of the *ḥadīth* is actually a form of Eternal Being. So, in fact the knowledge of God *Muḥaddīth* – which is a form of knowledge of God *Qadīm* – cannot exist except in those who in creation are in His form, and this is none other than in perfect humans (*Insān Kāmil*). This is what is called *Kāmil* (perfect). He is the spirit of nature, and nature is subject to him from the highest to the lowest level."<sup>117</sup>

Kausar Azhari Noer (1995) analogizes the *Insān Kāmil*, or perfect man, as a diamond binder (*faṣṣ*) on the King's ring, symbolizing the role of this perfect human as the guardian of God's property. In this analogy, the perfect human serves as a representative of God on earth, preserving and reflecting all creation as a manifestation of divine attributes. Ibn 'Arabi states:

فإنسان الكامل الذي يدل بذاته من أول البديهة  
على ربه هو تاج الملك و ليس إلا الإنسان الكامل

"The perfect human being who intuitively points himself to his Lord is the crown of kingship and is

<sup>113</sup> Amuli, *Islam and the Environment*, 18.

<sup>114</sup> Takeshita, *Ibn 'Arabi's Theory of the Perfect Man and Its Place in the History of Islamic Thought*, 8.

<sup>115</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr and William C. Chittick, *Islam Intelektual, Tebologi, Filsafat, dan Ma'rifat* (Depok: Perennial Press, 2001), 142.

<sup>116</sup> Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God*, xxii.

<sup>117</sup> Muhyi al-Din ibn 'Arabi, *Al-Insān Kāmil*, ed. Mahmoud Al-Ghurab, 1990, 8. He states that,

اعلم ان العالم كله لولا الانسان الكامل ما وجد، و انه بوجوده صح المقصود من العلم الحادث بالله، والوجود الحادث الذي هو على صورة الوجود القديم. فان العلم بالله المحث الذي هو على صورة العلم بالله القديم لا يتمكن ان يكون الا لمن هو في خلقه على الصورة، و ليس غير الانسان الكامل، و لهذا سمي كاملا، و انه روح العالم، و العالم مسخر له علوه و سقله.

nothing but the perfect human being.  
"118

Ibn Turkah offers a significant interpretation of Ibn 'Arabi's concept of *Insān Kāmil* by emphasizing that human being are the ultimate purpose of God's creation. According to Ibn Turkah, human serve as the the final cause of creation, embodying and manifesting all of God's attributes. The universe, being a manifestation of God's names, displays signs of the divine, and thus the whole cosmos reflects the reality of *al-Ḥaqq*.

This concept is supported by the Qur'an, which states, "and He taught Adam all the Names," and the hadith that says, "Indeed Allah created Adam in His form." These sources suggest that human being are a reflection of *al-Ḥaqq*, mirroring divine attributes within themselves. The universe is considered the macrocosm (*Insān Kabīr*), while human are the microcosm (*Ālam Ṣaghīr*), reflecting the divine in both large and small scales.<sup>119</sup>

Ultimately, Ibn 'Arabi's definition of nature or the universe extends beyond the material dimension discussed in modern science. His view encompasses nature as a manifestation of God's perfection,

conveying a profound message: human should not merely use nature for their benefit but also seek to understand its spiritual significance. This understanding leads to a greater awareness of how to act and behave in harmony with nature.

Ibn 'Arabi's mystical philosophy emphasizes that spirituality pervades every aspect of human life. According to his teachings, human are spiritual beings with a purpose in this universe, and their actions, whether conscious or not, have a spiritual dimension. This perspective suggests that spirituality is intrinsic to human existence and that recognizing this can help fill the emptiness many feel in their spiritual lives.<sup>120</sup> Ibn 'Arabi's teachings thus play a crucial role in guiding human towards a more fulfilling and harmonious existence, both in their relationship with God and with nature.

To summarize, the parallels and distinctions pattern between *Pikukuh Sunda* and Ibn 'Arabi's Sufism can be encapsulated in the following table,

Table 1.0. Comparative Analysis between *Pikukuh Sunda* and Ibn 'Arabi's Sufism

<sup>118</sup> Ibn Arabi, *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makiyyah*, 4 vols., II:104. Se also Kautsar Azhari Noer, *Ibn Arabi: Waḥdah al-Wujūd dalam Perdebatan* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1995), 123.

<sup>119</sup> Sa 'in al-Din 'Ali ibn Muhammad Turkah, *Sharḥ Fuṣuṣ al-Ḥikam*, vol. 2 (Qum: Bidar, 1378), 7

[إن الانسان هو العلة الغائية المقصودة من الكون و فتحه و تحصيله] وذلك لان العالم اثر تجليات اسماء الحق تعالى, فيكون اية

الحق يشاهد فيه وجهه, فالعالم من حيث جميعته للاسماء مثال الحق تعالى. و الانسان ايضا نسخة جامعة لجميع الاسماء بما نص عليه تعالى في كتابه: [و علم الاسماء كلها] وورد في الحديث: [إن الله خلق آدم على صورته]. فهو ايضا مثال الحق في عالمه الصغير وهو [الحق الخلق] ولتشابه النسخين يسمى العالم ب [الانسان الكبير] وفي مقابله الانسان ب [العالم الصغير].

<sup>120</sup> Peter Young, "Working Together between God's Two Hands" II (2006): 458.

Feature	Pikukuh Sunda	Ibn 'Arabi's Sufism
The unity of existence	<i>Manunggaling Kawula Gusti</i> : The unity of self, nature, and <i>Hyang</i> , where the true human is microcosm ( <i>jagat alit</i> ), mirroring the macrocosm ( <i>jagat ageung</i> ), both existing as dedicators ( <i>kawula</i> ) manifesting Divine will ( <i>Kersaning Gusti</i> ) that sustains the sacred-compassionate harmony of all things.	<i>Wahdah al-Wujūd</i> : God, the Absolute, is All encompassing Reality; and all else (the plurality in the universe (macrocosm), including human (microcosm) as nothing but manifestations ( <i>tajalli</i> ) of Divine Attributes. All things (the cosmos), with human being as its microcosmic mirror, exist in relational dependence on <i>al-Haqq</i> --like a shadow to its real entity--as obedient servant (' <i>abd</i> ), exists wholly subject to God's compassionate will.
Perfect man	<b>Human of Sunda (Manusa Sunda)</b> : The perfect man who has attained enlightenment, embodied the values of Enlightener ( <i>Sunda-yana</i> ), and becoming a <i>manusa ing weruh disemu saestu</i> (man of light) a manifestation of <i>Hyang</i> on earth. Also known as <i>Batara Guru</i> or <i>Guru Agung</i> (the Great Teacher), <i>Ki Sunda</i> dedicates himself to protecting, guiding, nurturing the community, serving as " <i>Rama</i> " (the Father) in society and becoming a servant of the Good ( <i>Sewaka dharma</i> ).	<b><i>Insān Kāmil</i> (The Perfect Human)</b> : The human that embodies or manifests all of God's attributes as His vicegerent ( <i>Khalifah</i> ) on earth. Represented as the diamond binder on a king's ring, the <i>insān kāmil</i> serves as the medium through which the divine is realized, the guardian of creation, and the reflection of God's presence in existence.

Cosmology	From <i>Suwung</i> (Primordial Void; Great No-thing-ness) to cosmic vibrations, the genesis of the universe that emerged gradually becoming denser, compressing into solid matter, which then exploded to form celestial entities, including the Sun ( <i>Batara Guru</i> ), Earth ( <i>Batara Uma</i> ), as well as other forms of existence.	From Absolute-Hidden Treasure ( <i>Kanz Mukhfy</i> ) to the creation of universe as His Self-manifestation ( <i>tajalli</i> ) in which He put "love to be known" as underlying aspect of <i>tajalli</i> . Without this act of self-manifestation ( <i>tajalli</i> ), the creation would not have occurred.
Earth	<i>Buana Larang</i> : The Earth, also known as <i>Bumi Suci</i> (Holy Earth) and <i>Batari Uma</i> (Motheral Divine Manifestation), is regarded as <i>Buana Larang</i> (Sacred World), so it must be preserved with deep respect, not only to maintain the harmony of life but also reflecting human dedication and devotion to the Almighty who permeates all existence. This sacredness elevates the Earth to the status of a "holy book" – a source of divine wisdom – fortified by the inseparable connection between humans ( <i>Jagad Alit</i> ) and the universe ( <i>Jagad Ageung</i> ). Consequently, every human action must align with nature. The practice of <i>Sesajen</i> , which involves earthly elements in the ritual of symbolical offerings, implies the recognition of the Earth as part of the way of deepening human connection with God	<i>Raqub</i> : Derived from the root word <i>muraqabah</i> (closeness), this term depicts the earth as a mother who, with deep affection, cares for the well-being of her children. It not only highlights the profound closeness of the earth (as the womb of life) for humans but also emphasizes the sacred role of earth (considering the sacredness of mother in religious contexts). This reflects the sacred responsibility of humans to preserve and protect nature, viewing it as a sacred act that upholds their connection with God.

Based on the table, both *Pikukuh Sunda* and Ibn 'Arabi's Sufism reflect a shared view of the universe as

an interconnected whole. In *Pikukuh Sunda*, the concepts of *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti* and the relationship between the *jagat alit* and the *jagat ageung* underscore the unity of all existence. Similarly, Ibn 'Arabi's notion of *Waḥdah al-Wujūd* portrays the universe as a manifestation of God's attributes, where everything is ultimately a reflection of the divine. In both traditions, human being is seen as central to this interconnectedness. In *Pikukuh Sunda*, human is tasked with preserving and harmonizing with nature, reflecting a sense of stewardship and unity with the Environment. Ibn 'Arabi presents human as the *Insān Kāmil* (Perfect Man), who embodies divine attributes and serves as a reflection of God's names and attributes. Human are seen as essential in realizing and manifesting the divine in the material world. *Pikukuh Sunda* emphasizes *Buana Larang* as their holy book and preserve rituals such as *Sajen* (offerings), which treat the earth as sacred and central to maintaining harmony. On the other hand, Ibn 'Arabi refers to nature as *Raqub*, meaning closeness or mother, which nurtures and protects human. He underscores the importance of human stewardship in preserving nature to sustain their connection with God. Despite these differences, both traditions converge in their shared vision of an anthropocosmic framework.

However, there are notable differences between the two traditions,

suggesting they cannot be fully regarded as homogeneous. Specifically, their concepts of the fundamental reality diverge significantly. Ibn 'Arabi posits that the fundamental basis of all reality is *al-Ḥaqq*, The Truth, The Absolute—a Divine reality expressed as both absolute and inherently personal divine reality. In contrast, *Pikukuh Sunda's* cosmology introduces The Universe of Emptiness (*Jagad Suwung*) as the foundation of all things, existents, which conveys a sense of impersonal reality.

However, the opposite impression can also be derived from both traditions. From Ibn 'Arabi's perspective, the impression of the impersonality of the Personal Reality (*al-Ḥaqq*) is evident in its all-encompassing nature. Conversely, *Pikukuh Sunda* implicitly suggests a personal aspect of the ultimate reality in terms such as *Hyang Taya*, where "Hyang" denotes supreme or divine reality with a personal connotation, and "Taya" signifies "nothingness." Additionally, it is important not to equate *suwung* or *taya* in the framework of binary categories of existence and non-existence in the scholastic metaphysical systems in Islamic and Western philosophy. Instead, these terms may refer to unlimitedness, unconditioned absoluteness, or no-thing-ness, where "thing" represents limitation. Thus, both traditions exhibit distinctive characteristics commonly found and

acknowledged in Eastern philosophical narratives, mystical teachings, and perennial philosophy, stemming from the limitations of language—namely, the paradoxical description of reality. Further research is needed to explore whether these differences are primarily surface-level or a matter of emphasis.

### Conclusions

The exploration of *Pikukuh Sunda* and Ibn 'Arabi's Sufism reveals a profound understanding of the interconnectedness between God, human, and nature. The comparative examination of both traditions elucidates both similarities and distinctions in their conceptual framework. Both philosophical systems accentuate the pivotal role of human in maintaining equilibrium among the divine and the universe. *Pikukuh Sunda* explicates this interconnectedness through the principles of *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti* and the interplay between *jagat alit* and *jagat ageung*, in conjunction with ritualistic practices such as *Sajen* that underscore the reverence for nature. Ibn 'Arabi's conception of *Waḥdah al-Wujūd* and the significance of the *Insān Kāmil* highlight the divine manifestation intrinsic to all existence, positioning humanity as an embodiment of God's attributes.

Notwithstanding this common anthropocosmic paradigm, significant

theological differences are apparent. Ibn 'Arabi's cosmological perspective, grounded in the tenet of *Tawhīd* as delineated in the Qur'an, posits *Al-Ḥaqq* as the singular ultimate reality. Conversely, *Pikukuh Sunda* introduces the notion of *Jagat Suwung* (The Great Emptiness) as the primordial source, thereby reflecting a distinctive cosmological viewpoint. These disparities not only elucidate the profundity of each tradition's worldview but also stimulate further scholarly exploration into the dynamics of cultural and theological contexts in shaping cosmological discourse.

Additionally, this investigation paves the way for subsequent scholarly inquiries into the anthropocosmic paradigms present in *Pikukuh Sunda* and the Sufism articulated by Ibn 'Arabi, particularly regarding their prospective contributions to contemporary dilemmas. Future scholarly endeavors could augment comparative evaluations to encompass additional indigenous and Islamic mystical doctrines, scrutinizing the way cultural contexts inform cosmological and ethical perspectives. Moreover, the linguistic and semantic aspects of pivotal concepts, including *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti*, *Waḥdah al-Wujūd*, and the notion of Emptiness, necessitate further examination to elucidate their intricate implications. the Environmental ethics inherent in

rituals such as *Sajen* and the stewardship principles espoused in Ibn 'Arabi philosophical discourse also provide significant insights into sustainable methodologies. In addition, interdisciplinary frameworks that amalgamate religious studies, anthropology, and environmental science could shed light on the pragmatic applications of these traditions in confronting contemporary challenges, including ecological crises and social cohesion.

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