

## Mysticism in the Kyai Brojomusti Folklore and Its Pedagogical Relevance: A Literary-Ecological Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the mystical elements contained in the folklore of the Kyai Brojomusti forbidden forest and examines their relevance for Indonesian language learning in secondary education. Previous studies have not sufficiently addressed the contribution of local folklore to classroom instruction and to the development of students' cultural awareness. This research employs a qualitative descriptive design with data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The data are analyzed using a literary ecology framework. The findings identify three central concepts of mysticism in the Kyai Brojomusti narrative: positive motives, material existence, and levels of sarengat. The study also identifies six manifestations of mysticism, namely religious rituals, slametan or bancaan practices, healing practices, sacred trees, sacred tombs, and white tigers. These findings demonstrate that local folklore can function as a culturally grounded learning resource that supports value-based instruction and contributes to the development of the Pancasila student profile.

**Keywords:** *cultural values, folklore, kyai brojomusti, literary ecology, mysticism*

## INTRODUCTION

The existence of mysticism in Indonesia will continue to endure and remain relevant despite the progression of time. The development of the modern era may transform mystical practices in Indonesia, either diminishing or reshaping them, but it cannot erase them entirely. This persistence is closely tied to the historical reflections of Indonesian society, which has long been rooted in mystical thought and belief. Communities believe that stories from the past are inseparable from present-day life. Human existence is often linked to ancestral experiences that are considered real, unavoidable, and inseparable from daily life. Mysticism does not solely concern supernatural horror; rather, it encompasses everyday practices related to belief, spirituality, and sacredness (A'yuni, 2024).

Mysticism in Javanese folklore is often expressed through prohibitions, rituals, and beliefs associated with sacred sites such as forests, springs, and large trees. These taboos function not only as mechanisms for environmental

preservation but also as tools for social regulation. Mysticism is also expressed through religious rituals (Indratmo & Ww, 2020; Sultoni, 2023; Vincentia & Mulatsih, 2025). Mysticism as a subculture that emphasizes reasoning through intuition and direct knowledge. This intuitive dimension shapes people's interpretations of events and experiences, particularly in the context of folklore. In the case of Kyai Brojomusti, this understanding of mysticism not only enriches the spiritual practices of the local community but also influences how they perceive the narratives surrounding the forbidden forest. The principles of harmony and unity in life, as emphasized by this definition, resonate deeply with the communal beliefs and rituals practiced by the people of Kecik Village, thus connecting the theoretical framework of mysticism directly to the cultural context of Kyai Brojomusti's folklore.

Etymologically, mysticism derives from the word *mystic*, meaning something secret, hidden, dark, or veiled (Hashina, 2022). In broader terms, mysticism is present within all major religious traditions, including Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and others. According to Mulder (2006:28), mystical practice can be understood as a human effort to attain inner reality and achieve the ultimate goal through magical or spiritual acts. In Javanese society, *kejawen* is a spiritual teaching that embodies mystical elements (Mulder, 2006:5). Mulder further outlines three concepts of mysticism: motive, existence, and practice. The motive of mysticism relates to the human quest to understand spirituality and religiosity (Zarrabizadeh, 2011:93). Its existence reflects the human journey of life, manifested in religious experiences (Mulder, 2006:29). Meanwhile, practice represents the concrete expressions of Javanese mysticism (Mulder, 2006).

Culture and tradition emerging within society often take the form of folklore. However, it is essential to narrow this discussion to explain why this particular folklore is worth studying. The story of Kyai Brojomusti is significant because it not only embodies local beliefs and values but also reflects the unique mystical narratives that distinguish it from other mystical tales. Koentjaraningrat (2004) described culture as a "worshiping force" consisting of human creativity, initiative, and feeling, which in turn produces cultural expressions. Folklore, whether oral or written, is transmitted across generations. One example is the folklore of Kyai Brojomusti from the *hutan larangan* (forbidden forest) in Kecik Village, which exists as oral literature passed down within the local community. Folklore is a cultural narrative that explains local traditions and reflects mimetic aspects of society. As a cultural product, folklore also contributes to shaping oral traditions and belongs to the wider realm of traditional culture (Anafiah, 1998:129).

The *hutan larangan* in Kebayanan 3, Kecik Village, is a forest rich with history and mystery. According to local belief, its origin is linked to the Sukowati graveyard and the tomb of Kyai Brojomusti, with the forest path resembling the body of a long serpent. The community regards the forest as sacred, suitable for certain ritual activities. It is not merely an ordinary forest filled with trees; it is

also believed to be inhabited by supernatural beings such as a white tiger and a serpent, considered guardians of the site. Local folklore recounts mysteries such as the fluctuating number of visible tombs and the belief that anyone who takes a branch with malicious intent will be struck with illness (Kaplan & Teaching, 2022; Rahayu et al., 2018).

The community believes the forest holds countless untold stories and must be preserved (Llamazares & Cabeza, 2018). No one dares to move or damage the sacred tombs within, particularly the well-known grave of Kyai Brojomusti, which remains intact as an earthen mound. Local traditions, inherited from previous generations, continue to be practiced. These include prayers for ancestral spirits and rituals of gratitude for the harvest. Situated in the midst of rice fields, the *hutan larangan* is thought to bring blessings to the farmers' crops. Yet, alongside these practices, some rituals deviate from religious tenets, such as asking for healing, fortune, or performing acts of worship beyond divine boundaries.

Such phenomena can be examined through the lens of literary ecology, which studies the relationship between humans and their environment. This is an important point that deserves further elaboration. Since literary ecology is central to this analysis, it is essential to expand on this section by providing a brief explanation of key concepts in literary ecology and how they influence the approach to studying mysticism in folklore. Folklore, deeply rooted in the natural surroundings, can be understood ecologically as it reflects the reciprocal ties between human life and the environment. According to Endraswara (2016:3), literary ecology provides a framework for addressing environmental issues through literature, or conversely, for interpreting literature from an environmental perspective.

Previous studies have explored similar intersections of mysticism, folklore, and culture. Onok (2021), in *Mysticism in Oral Literature: Environmental Wisdom in the Cepetan Alas Tradition*, described how the Cepetan Alas ritual represents a form of local wisdom preserved across generations. This tradition exemplifies the unity of humans, nature, and God, and contributes to the sustainability of cultural practices amidst modernization. Similarly, Ita (2022), in *Javanese Mysticism in the Webtoon Comic Creep In Season 1 by Ino Septian: A Semiotic Study*, examined Javanese beliefs in supernatural beings, illustrated through incantations, offerings, and ascetic practices within the comic narrative. Another study by Nur (2020), *Mysticism in the Mappadendang Tradition in Allamungeng Patue Village, Bone Regency*, highlighted how the ritual was performed during the COVID-19 pandemic as a protective measure against misfortune, inspired by a villager's dream message from a spiritual being.

However, these studies predominantly focus on specific traditions or mediums, leaving a gap in understanding the broader implications of mysticism within the context of the Kyai Brojomusti folklore and its ecological significance. This research addresses this gap by not only documenting the mystical beliefs held by the community but also examining how these beliefs interact with and

influence their environment. In doing so, this study contributes to the preservation of local wisdom and highlights the role of folklore as a cultural resource that can be transmitted from generation to generation, offering insights into communal practices and beliefs.

## METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research method. According to Sugiyono (2016:9), descriptive qualitative research is conducted to examine objects in their natural context. This design was particularly suitable for exploring mysticism in folklore because it allows for an in-depth understanding of cultural narratives within their social and environmental settings, providing rich insights into the complexities of mystical beliefs and practices." Kim H. (2016) further states that descriptive qualitative research focuses on answering questions regarding events and experiences that have already occurred. The qualitative approach applied in this study was based on factual realities within society. Such an approach enabled the research process to uncover findings related to the presence of facts embedded in folklore within the community. Through this perspective, clearer information concerning the mysticism in the folklore of Kyai Brojomusti can be obtained.

The researcher enhanced the reliability of the findings by analyzing the data using thematic analysis, which involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. This method was chosen because it allows for a detailed examination of the different aspects of mysticism present in the folklore. Folklore elements are further explored through observation, interviews, and documentation in order to obtain comprehensive and authentic data.

The data sources in this study consisted of observation, interviews, and documentation. Field observations were carried out directly to examine the forms of Kyai Brojomusti folklore. Interviews were conducted with ten informants to obtain broader insights. These included one *juru kunci* (caretaker), three local residents, two visitors, one village head, and three village elders. In conducting interviews, informed consent was obtained from all participants to ensure ethical standards were met. Additionally, steps were taken to ensure data validity, such as triangulating data sources and cross-checking information with different informants. The research site was the *hutan larangan* (forbidden forest) in Kecik Village, Tanon District, Sragen Regency. This location was chosen because it serves as a site for annual religious rituals, communal feasts (*bancaan/slametan*), and pilgrimage practices. The research was conducted over a two-month period, from November 20, 2024, to January 20, 2025.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted in the *hutan larangan* (forbidden forest) of Kecik Village. Located in Tanon District, Sragen Regency, the *hutan larangan* is a site deeply associated with mystical narratives. It lies approximately one kilometer south of Kecik Village and has remained preserved without any surrounding buildings. Believed to bring blessings to local farmers, the *hutan larangan* has never been damaged or destroyed by the community. The abundance of mystical stories tied to the site has instilled a sense of reverence, leading the community to refrain from engaging in practices prohibited by their ancestors.

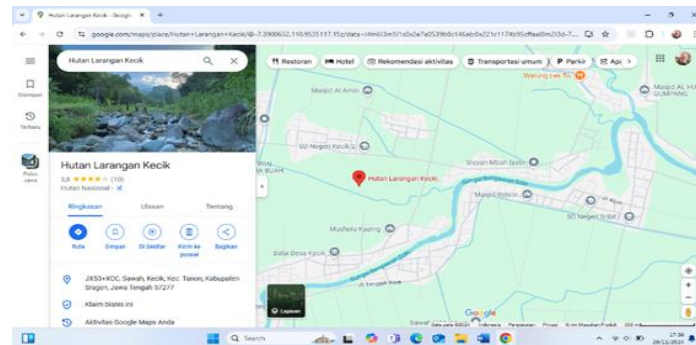


Figure 1. Location of Hutan Larangan via Google Map

Based on the map, the *hutan larangan* is located at the center of Kecik Village, surrounded by four neighboring villages. According to the village elders, the *hutan larangan* has long been regarded as a site containing numerous historical narratives. Beyond its eerie atmosphere, it is also associated with mystical stories experienced by the local community. The name *hutan larangan* derives from the Javanese words *wit-witan* (trees) and *larangan* (prohibition), signifying a forest of trees accompanied by taboos that must not be violated. These prohibitions are intended to preserve the forest's natural integrity and sustainability. Situated amidst community-owned rice fields, the *hutan larangan* appears lush and green, attracting visitors who are curious to explore its interior.

### Mysticism in the Folklore of Kyai Brojomusti and the *Hutan Larangan*

According to Endraswara (2006:23), mysticism is a belief that arises from collective thought within society. Mulder (2006:5) explains that the Javanese concept of mysticism embodies secrecy, regarded as a deeply personal matter that touches upon belief and religiosity. Mysticism has been embedded in Javanese culture for centuries. Mulder (2006:5) identifies three dimensions of mysticism: motive, existence, and practice. From this perspective, mysticism can be understood as a communal belief in events imbued with magical power. In the case of the folklore of Kyai Brojomusti in the *hutan larangan*, mysticism is reflected in its positive motives, material existence, and ritual practices associated with *syari'at* (religious law).

Based on an interview with Mbah Dwijo Sukarno (DS), the caretaker (*juru kunci*) of the *hutan larangan*, the site was once used as a battlefield by royal forces. The *hutan larangan* is said to be connected to the Sukowati cemetery in Sanggrahan Village. Both functioned as places of refuge, with Kyai Brojomusti,



Brojogento, and Bagaspati, along with their followers, believed to have hidden there during times of war. Among these figures, Kyai Brojomusti is the most well-known and is considered the principal guardian of the forest.



**Figure 2.** Captured of Hutan Larangan

Kyai Brojomusti and Prince Sukowati are believed to share a symbolic connection, likened to the elongated body of a snake, with the *hutan larangan* as its head and the Sukowati grave as its tail. Similar to an ancient settlement once inhabited by humans, the *hutan larangan* remains untouched—its form, trees, and contents have never been altered. No structures have ever been built around it, and the trees that have stood since ancient times remain firmly rooted, never felled. Even the animals that occasionally emerge from the forest are not driven away by the community. For the locals, the *hutan larangan* is not a frightening place but rather a realm inhabited by unseen beings.

The community is cautioned not to misuse the forest for purposes such as *pesugihan* (rituals of wealth-seeking). The *hutan larangan* is not meant to be a place of worship. Practices such as *pesugihan* are strictly forbidden, as they are believed to demand repayment in the form of human lives, even extending to one's descendants. This belief reflects the notion of altering one's worldly fate at the cost of life. Such prohibitions serve to remind the community that the forest should instead be used for positive purposes, such as communal feasts (*slametan/bancaan*) and prayers for the souls of ancestors buried within it.

One of the myths associated with the forest concerns the graves whose exact number remains unknown to this day. Among them are the graves of Kyai Brojomusti, Brojogento, Bagaspati, and their followers. When villagers once attempted to restore the graves, one resident reportedly dreamt of being visited by the forest's spiritual guardians, who warned: "*Do not alter our dwelling.*" Consequently, the community abandoned their plan to reconstruct the graves into temples. Other myths speak of the presence of a mystical white tiger and a serpent, invisible to most people, which occasionally reveal themselves in the surrounding rice fields. It is believed that if the white tiger steps on a rice field, the harvest will be abundant.

Beyond these myths, the graves in the *hutan larangan* are not limited to human remains. Based on an interview with the caretaker (DS), certain graves are believed to contain sacred heirlooms and even the head of a serpent. Their

contents, however, can only be perceived by those with spiritual insight. Additionally, locals believe that the forest houses an invisible mosque-like structure located on its southern side, discernible only to individuals with special abilities.

### The Concept of Mysticism: Positive Motives

A positive motive refers to the pursuit of specific goals through constructive actions. Such motives are expressed as acts of gratitude for blessings already received or hoped for. Activities reflecting positive motives include religious rituals, *slametan/bancaan*, and healing practices. Residents of Kecik Village perform these rituals within the *hutan larangan*. Religious rituals are conducted to seek prosperity, healing, or success in trade. The *slametan/bancaan* performed in the forest includes the *nyadran* feast held during the third month of the harvest season. Healing practices are also carried out there by individuals seeking recovery from illness.

#### a) Religious Rituals

Religious rituals are a series of practices performed in accordance with spiritual beliefs or traditions, serving as a medium of communication with supernatural powers (Babieva & Ruchkina, 2020; Haar, n.d.; Plante et al., 2023). The *hutan larangan* functions as a sacred site for such rituals among those who believe in its mystical energy. People conduct these rituals to fulfill specific requests or aspirations for a better life. Both residents of Kecik Village and outsiders come to the forest for these purposes. According to the caretaker (DS), visitors typically request assistance in attaining smooth livelihoods and successful business ventures, though their petitions vary widely. Overall, these findings reveal that the religious rituals conducted in the *hutan larangan* not only fulfill personal desires but also reinforce cultural identity and community solidarity. This aligns with Mulder's (2006) notion that mysticism serves as a communal belief system, providing a framework for understanding the shared values and practices within the community.



**Figure 3.** The caretaker offers prayers at the grave of Kyai Brojomusti (Personal Documentation, 2025)

There are several prohibitions associated with performing religious rituals in the *Hutan Larangan*. A person is allowed to conduct rituals as long as the primary intention is to pray for the ancestral spirits believed to dwell in the sacred forest. Anyone who comes with the desire to make requests must first have the intention of offering prayers for these ancestral spirits. There was a case where an individual, after requesting something from the forest, later had a dream in which the guardian spirit of the forest appeared. The dream conveyed a warning that if the request was made with purposes other than praying for the ancestors, the consequence would be a demand for a life in return. In this sense, the guardian spirit was believed to claim the life of the petitioner. Such prohibitions or warnings are often revealed through dreams to those who violate the rules of the *Hutan Larangan*.

#### b) Slametan/Bancaan

The *slametan* or *bancaan* is a Javanese tradition performed as an expression of gratitude and a request for safety and blessings from Allah SWT. The ritual carries symbolic meaning as a manifestation of harmony between humans, nature, and God. There are many types of *slametan/bancaan*, including those for birth, marriage, death, moving to a new house, as well as agricultural cycles or religious festivals. In practice, *slametan/bancaan* also reflects the values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) and communal solidarity, which form the core of Javanese culture. The *slametan/bancaan* held in the *Hutan Larangan* is known as *bancaan nyadran*, which is performed regularly during the third month of the harvest season. This ritual serves as an expression of gratitude for the abundant harvest. For most of the people of Kecik Village, who work as farmers, *bancaan nyadran* represents joy and thanksgiving for the prosperity of their crops in the third month.



Figure 4. Bancaan Activity

Nyadran is exclusively practiced by the community of Kecik Village. The sacred forest's location, situated amidst the village's rice fields, reinforces the local belief that the *Hutan Larangan* plays a significant role in ensuring agricultural abundance and prosperity. By routinely performing the *bancaan nyadran* as an expression of gratitude, the community has consistently preserved this cultural tradition since ancient times. The people of Kecik Village



are committed to safeguarding this ritual practice so that it does not fade away with the passage of time. The term *nyadran* originates from the Sanskrit word *śraddha*, meaning “faith” or “belief.” The ritual reflects the community’s reverence for their ancestors and embodies elements of animistic traditions. However, *nyadran* in the *Hutan Larangan* differs from the broader *nyadran* practices carried out in other regions. Specifically, the *bancaan nyadran* in this sacred forest is held during the third month of the rice harvest season, corresponding to the dry season, when yields are greater compared to the rainy season. The community expresses gratitude for this agricultural abundance by organizing the *bancaan nyadran* following the summer harvest.

The ritual involves collective prayers performed on the western side of the sacred forest, near ancient burial mounds and a large tree considered spiritually significant. Prior to the commencement of the ritual, the *juru kunci* (forest guardian) conducts prayers at the base of the sacred tree, seeking permission to initiate the ceremony. The ritual leader prepares offerings, such as flowers and incense, which are placed at the exposed roots of the tree as a gesture of respect and symbolic greeting to the unseen realm. The *juru kunci* then leads the communal prayers and oversees the ritual proceedings. Upon completion, participants share the food they have brought, symbolizing unity and gratitude for the blessings received. For the community, *bancaan nyadran* represents not only thanksgiving for material prosperity but also a reaffirmation of cultural values and spiritual continuity.

### c) Healing Practices

Healing in the context of the *Hutan Larangan* refers to the process of seeking recovery from illness through ritual intercession rather than purely medical treatment. Such practices are pursued by individuals whose illnesses persist despite hospital treatment, and who seek spiritual assistance by praying within the sacred forest. These healing rituals are usually conducted under the guidance of the *juru kunci*, who performs prayers beneath the sacred tree—the same site where most rituals in the forest begin. According to an informant (HP), who had personally undergone such a ritual, he sought healing in the *Hutan Larangan* after prolonged illness that conventional medical care could not fully address. Following his visit and prayers, he reported feeling healthier, though occasional symptoms persisted. He attributed his improvement to both his prayers to Allah SWT and the sacred atmosphere of the forest. Acknowledging his advanced age, the informant accepted his condition as part of the natural process of aging, but regarded the healing ritual as spiritually significant in alleviating suffering. Healing practices in the *Hutan Larangan*, therefore, are understood not as medical treatment in the biomedical sense, but as symbolic acts of faith in the unseen power believed to inhabit the sacred site. These practices demonstrate the enduring intersection of spirituality, animistic traditions, and communal belief in the efficacy of ritual healing.

The diverse forms of positive ritual motifs practiced in the *Hutan Larangan*—religious rituals, *slametan/bancaan*, and healing practices—

illustrate the community's reverence for ancestral spirits and their commitment to cultural preservation. These activities, rooted in traditions passed down for generations, reinforce social cohesion, ensure the continuity of local heritage, and maintain respect for the sacred landscape. While religious rituals are observed by certain individuals who believe in the transformative power of the sacred forest, the slametan/bancaan is collectively performed to honor ancestors, and healing practices represent a culturally embedded means of seeking well-being. Together, these practices highlight how the community of Kecik Village sustains its historical and spiritual connection to the Hutan Larangan amidst the challenges of modernity.

### **The Concept of Mysticism in Material Existence**

Material existence is perceived as both instrumental and practical, serving as a medium for realizing human spirituality. Within this framework, material existence is represented by objects believed to possess magical or supernatural power capable of altering one's destiny. Such beliefs in mystical forces persist to this day, shaping practices intended to meet human needs and desires. In Kecik Village, material existence is manifested in the veneration of sacred trees and ancestral graves, both regarded as entities imbued with mystical power that can influence the course of human life.

#### **a) Trees**

Trees, as living beings and integral components of natural ecosystems, hold profound philosophical and spiritual significance for Javanese society. Large trees, in particular, are often perceived as symbols of life, balance, and protection (Bouphapanya & Hongsuwan, 2024). Certain species are considered sacred and associated with specific rituals or traditions (Pandey, 2020; Sadigli, 2024). This worldview reflects a holistic understanding of the interrelationship between humans and nature, in which reverence for trees embodies harmony between the human, natural, and spiritual realms. Before the widespread adoption of belief in Allah SWT, earlier communities practiced worship by venerating objects considered to possess extraordinary power, including statues and large trees believed to determine human destiny. Within Javanese cosmology, the presence of large trees has long been associated with spiritual strength and the sustenance of human life. Locally, these trees are regarded as living entities cultivated to support human existence. Similarly, the large sacred tree within the *Hutan Larangan* continues to function as a focal site where the community performs prayers, reflecting the persistence of ancestral belief systems in contemporary ritual practice.



**Figure 5.** The sacred big tree in the forbidden forest

In the past, the ritual of tree worship was one of the traditions practiced by the community. Large trees that grew in the land of Java were believed to possess mystical powers and to be inhabited by many invisible beings. Before the practice of worshipping Allah SWT was established, people conducted ritual veneration of big trees. Their belief in jinn, who were thought to have the ability to alter human destiny, shaped a routine practice of praying beneath large trees. It was not uncommon for them to request wealth or other forms of supplication related to human fate and life.

#### **b) The Grave**

For the Javanese community, a grave is not merely regarded as the final resting place of an individual, but also as a site of profound spiritual significance. Graves are often considered sacred spaces where the connection between the living and the deceased remains preserved. In certain contexts, graves may serve as sites for veneration or ancestral reverence, undertaken as an expression of devotion, a request for blessings, or as a means of seeking prosperity. This tradition reflects the Javanese worldview that integrates spiritual beliefs with cultural values and customary practices.



**Figure 6.** Burial Mound

It remains a mystery to this day that whenever someone attempts to count the graves in the sacred forest, the numbers always seem to change. At times,

there are 30 graves, and at other times, the number becomes 40. In addition to the grave of Kyai Brojomusti and his attendants, the burial mounds within the sacred forest also include those of Brojogento and Bagaspati. There had once been a community plan to renovate these mounds. However, before the work was completed, one of the villagers reportedly had a dream in which a guardian spirit of the sacred forest appeared and forbade any alteration, declaring that the graves should not be changed because they were considered “their homes.”

### The Concept of Mysticism at the Level of *Sarengat*

The *sarengat* level represents the most fundamental stage of mystical practice. At this stage, people hold beliefs in objects such as statues, trees, and other entities that can serve as offerings. Furthermore, humans also acknowledge the existence of supernatural beings as agents capable of fulfilling their desires. In the case of the villagers of Kecik, the practice of *sarengat* mysticism within the sacred forest is still preserved through rituals conducted beneath large trees, which are believed to serve as sites for worship and veneration.



Figure 7. The Caretaker Praying

The sacred tree in the forbidden forest functions as a locus of worship conducted prior to the commencement of various communal activities. Prohibitions and myths surrounding forbidden forests or sacred sites play an essential role in preserving the natural environment and fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and nature (Arianto et al., 2024; Septriani; & Endrizal, 2023). The *juru kunci* (caretaker), who is responsible for leading ritual practices in the sacred forest, first offers prayers to seek permission from the spiritual guardians of the site by scattering flowers and burning incense. This act of requesting permission reflects the Javanese cultural value of courtesy when entering places that are not accessible to everyone. Similar to other sacred spaces in Javanese cosmology, the forbidden forest is believed to embody



mystical narratives and spiritual presence. The offering of flowers and incense thus serves not only as a medium of prayer but also as a protective ritual intended to ward off disturbances, avert misfortune, and reinforce the cosmological order as understood in Javanese spirituality.

The practices carried out by the community within the *sarengat* stage of mysticism represent expressions of human desire in navigating life. Worship and ritual petitions are directed toward attaining prosperity, protection from harm, deliverance from disaster, and transformation of one's destiny (Lin & Xie, 2025; Maño & Xygalatas, 2022). The veneration of the sacred tree reflects an ethic of mutual respect between humans and other creations of God, which are believed to possess metaphysical potency capable of fulfilling human aspirations. However, with the passage of time and the influence of modernization, such rituals have become increasingly rare and are gradually being abandoned.

Findings from this study reveal six conceptual dimensions of mysticism present in the folklore of Kyai Brojomusti and the forbidden forest. These include positive motifs, comprising religious rituals, *slametan* (communal feasting), and healing practices; material existence, expressed through the community's belief in the spiritual power of sacred trees and ancestral graves; and the *sarengat* stage, which involves the practice of tree veneration as a form of worship. The implications of this study suggest that external perspectives on the mysticism of Kyai Brojomusti's folklore often recognize it as a form of local wisdom that ought to be preserved in Kecik Village. For the local community, these mystical traditions are not merely symbolic but are believed to generate tangible benefits in sustaining their livelihood and well-being. Additionally, the concept of literary ecology can be integrated into this discussion, as it emphasizes the interconnection between the community's beliefs and their natural environment. Understanding these mystical practices through a literary ecology lens allows for a deeper appreciation of how folklore and environmental consciousness coexist, highlighting the importance of preserving both cultural narratives and the ecological integrity of the hutan larangan. This aligns with the view of Hilmi et al., (2024) ; Yulisetiani et al., (2022) who states that the ecological values embedded in folklore teach respect, responsibility, and solidarity toward nature, as well as instill an ethic of environmental preservation.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the study entitled "*Mysticism in the Folklore of Kyai Brojomusti in the Forbidden Forest of Kecik Village, Tanon District, Sragen Regency: An Ecological Literary Perspective*", the forbidden forest is regarded as a site imbued with numerous mystical narratives. These mystical elements are believed by the local community to serve as a form of warning or reminder directed toward the inhabitants of Kecik Village. This study deepens our understanding of mysticism by identifying the concept of mysticism categorized

into three dimensions: positive motifs, material existence, and the sarengat stage. Positive motifs refer to practices employed to achieve specific purposes through culturally and spiritually meaningful actions. These practices are performed as expressions of gratitude for blessings that have been received or desired. Positive motifs encompass religious rituals, *slametan* or communal feasts (*bancaan*), and healing practices.

Material existence, by contrast, is perceived as a medium through which inner spirituality is manifested in tangible forms. It includes objects believed to possess magical or supernatural powers that can alter an individual's fate. Within the context of the forbidden forest, the community acknowledges several objects of mystical potency, including sacred trees, ancestral graves, and the mythical white tiger. The *sarengat* stage represents the most basic level of mystical practice. At this level, human beings place their belief in objects such as statues, trees, and other entities that may serve as offerings or focal points of veneration. Belief in the sarengat stage remains evident among the people of Kecik Village, who continue to recognize sacred trees as entities endowed with supernatural power capable of influencing their lives.

The implications of this study highlight the importance of cultural preservation and the use of these narratives in educational contexts, which can help future generations understand and appreciate their cultural heritage. Thus, this research not only enriches the study of mysticism and folklore but also provides insights for future cultural preservation practices.

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