



The Concept of Ecotheology in the Qur'an

Reinterpretation of QS. Yusuf [12]: 43-49 Through *Ma'nā-cum-Maghzā* Approach

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received:

Revised:

Accepted:

Keywords

Islamic ecotheology

QS. Yusuf [12]:43-49

Ma'nā-cum-Maghzā

ABSTRACT

*This study reveals that QS. Yusuf [12]:43-49, which has been understood as a historical narrative, contains ecological concepts that are highly relevant to the current global environmental crisis. In the story of the king's dream, interpreted by the Prophet Yusuf, about seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine, there is a lesson about the importance of sustainability strategies in managing natural resources. This study uses a *ma'nā-cum-maghzā* approach to interpret the historical meaning of the verse with contemporary issues such as sustainability and climate change. The results of the study show that this verse offers practical solutions in facing the ecological crisis, with an emphasis on the importance of balance between the utilisation and preservation of nature. This study enriches the discourse on Islamic ecotheology, which was previously limited to normative understanding, by providing a more in-depth and applicable interpretation. Its practical contribution is to encourage Muslims to adopt ecological principles in their daily lives and public policies that support sustainability. Further research could explore the application of ecological concepts in global policies, particularly those related to climate change mitigation and sustainability.*

1. Introduction

Every minute, the Earth loses forest land equivalent to 10 football fields due to deforestation (Greenfield, 2024), while global carbon dioxide emissions reached a record high of 421 ppm in 2023-levels that humanity has not experienced in the last three million years (Attracta Mooney, 2025). This ecological crisis threatening the planet not only jeopardizes the survival of millions of flora and fauna species but also presents a profound paradox for Muslims, who believe the Qur'an is *rahmatan lil 'ālamīn* (a mercy to all worlds). Ironically, amidst this massive ecological destruction, the Qur'anic verses rich with ecological wisdom are often understood merely as historical narratives, without exploring their transformative potential in addressing contemporary environmental crises.



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Available online at: <https://ejournals-glm.id/index.php/pappaseng>



In academic discourse, the debate regarding the relevance of Qur'anic narrative verses to contemporary issues continues to evolve. Scholars such as Irfangi (2017) and Sulaiman & Ahmad (2022) emphasize that the Qur'anic narrative verses possess dimensions of wisdom that extend beyond mere historical storytelling, while al-Qattan (2018) asserts that the Qur'an remains a *hudan* (guidance) relevant for all ages. However, within the context of ecology, the conceptual definition of Qur'anic ecological verses is still debated. Rasyid (2016) defines ecological verses as those containing the concept of *rahmatan lil 'ālamīn*, which necessitates the preservation and balance of nature, whereas Wahyudi (2022) focus more on verses that explicitly contain instructions for environmental conservation. This debate reflects the complexity in understanding the Qur'an's ecological dimensions, which requires a comprehensive hermeneutical approach.

Analysis of previous research reveals a significant gap in the study of Qur'anic ecological verses. Studies such as those by Muhirdan (2008) and Muntaqo (2015) have explored environmental ethics from an interpretative Qur'anic perspective but remain limited to a normative-doctrinal approach. Meanwhile, Mudhofir (2010) examined ecological verses thematically, but did not address the hermeneutic dimensions that could bridge historical meanings with contemporary contexts. More problematically, findings by Borrong (2019), Muhammad (2022), and Laksono (2022) reveal that the awareness and reflection of Muslims on ecological verses remain minimal, and the discourse surrounding their exegesis is neither deep nor comprehensive. This gap underscores the need for a more sophisticated methodological approach to explore the transformative potential of narrative verses in the context of the contemporary ecological crisis.

Based on the identification of this research gap, this study aims to analyze the relevance of the narrative of Prophet Yusuf in Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49, specifically his interpretation of the king's dream regarding seven years of abundance and seven years of famine, as a conceptual foundation for natural resource management and climate change anticipation within the framework of Islamic ecology. The underlying argument of this study is that the narrative of Prophet Yusuf not only contains wisdom regarding long-term economic planning but also harbors an ecological blueprint relevant to addressing sustainability and climate change challenges in the Anthropocene era. The research is premised on the belief that the Qur'an, as a universal and eternal holy book, has the capacity to offer constructive solutions to the global ecological crisis, particularly through the reinterpretation of narrative stories that have yet to be fully explored for their ecological potential.

To achieve this research objective, the study employs a hermeneutic approach with the theory of *ma'nā-cum-maghzā*, developed by Sahiron Syamsuddin, as the primary analytical framework. This theory is chosen for its ability to bridge the understanding of the original meaning (*ma'nā*) of the text with its contemporary significance (*maghzā*), which is highly relevant for analyzing the narrative of Prophet Yusuf in the context of modern ecological issues. The research method used is library research with a descriptive-analytical approach, which primary data consisting of the verses from Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49 will be analyzed using various classical and contemporary exegeses, then contextualized with Islamic ecological literature and the latest environmental science studies. The analysis will be conducted in three stages: exploration of historical meaning (*ma'nā*), identification of

contemporary significance (*maghzā*), and applicative synthesis for constructing a Qur'anic wisdom-based environmental management model.

This research is expected to make a significant theoretical contribution to the development of Qur'anic studies, particularly in the underexplored field of Islamic ecological hermeneutics. Theoretically, this study will enrich the discourse of *tafsīr bi al-‘aṣr* (interpretation in the context of the present age) by developing a model for interpreting narrative verses that is not only historically-narrative but also functionally-applicative in the context of contemporary global challenges. The practical contribution of this research lies in its potential to strengthen ecological literacy among Muslims through an approach rooted in Islamic intellectual tradition, thereby encouraging active Muslim participation in the global environmental preservation movement. Furthermore, this research is expected to serve as an academic reference for the development of environmentally-sensitive policies that consider religious values and stimulate further research exploring the ecological dimensions of the Qur'an through more sophisticated and comprehensive methodological approaches.

2. Method Research

This study employs a qualitative design with a hermeneutic-exploratory approach aimed at analyzing the ecological relevance of Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49 through the methodological framework of *ma'nā-cum-maghzā* (MCM) developed by Sahiron Syamsuddin. This research designed to allow for an in-depth exploration of the historical meaning (*al-ma'nā al-tārīkhī*) and the dynamic contemporary significance (*al-maghzā al-mutaharrik al-mu'ashir*) of the examined verses. The study adopts a progressive quasi-objectivist paradigm that integrates textual-linguistic approaches with contextual-hermeneutic analysis, enabling a fusion of horizons between the Qur'anic text's horizon and the contemporary horizon of the global ecological crisis (Syamsuddin, 2020). The epistemological framework of this research is grounded in five fundamental paradigms of MCM: the universality of the Qur'anic message, the need for continuous interpretation, the complementarity of revelation and rationality, and the rejection of the concept of *naskh* (abrogation) in the sacred verses, which collectively facilitate the reactivation of Qur'anic values in the context of natural resource management and the mitigation of the contemporary ecological crisis (Syamsuddin, 2023).

Primary data collection is conducted through library research, which focuses on Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49 as the main object of study, which is then enriched with secondary data consisting of classical and contemporary exegesis literature, Islamic ecological studies, and the latest environmental science research. The data processing follows a systematic procedure that includes inventorying and categorizing sources of exegesis based on chronological periodization (classical, modern, and contemporary), classifying Islamic ecological literature according to methodological approaches (normative-doctrinal, hermeneutic-contextual, and empirical-applicative), and compiling relevant environmental science studies on themes such as natural resource management and climate change adaptation. The collected data is then processed using content analysis to identify interpretive patterns, thematic analysis to extract relevant ecological themes, and comparative analysis to compare various interpretive perspectives on the examined verses.

All data processing is conducted with consideration for source validity, contextual relevance, and the novelty of perspectives offered by each piece of literature.

The data analysis stages using the MCM approach are conducted in two main, integrated phases. The first phase involves the exploration of the historical meaning and significance through four methodological steps: (1) philological analysis of the linguistic structure of Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49, with attention to the linguistic rules of 7th-century Arabic, particularly ecological terminology such as *sab'a baqarātin simān*, *sab'an 'ijāf*, *sab'a sunbulātin khudr*, and *ukhar yābisāt*; (2) intratextual analysis to compare the use of these terminologies in other verses of the Qur'an; (3) intertextual analysis linking the interpretation of these verses with relevant texts outside the Qur'an; and (4) exploration of the historical micro and macro context of the revelation of these verses to capture their primary significance during the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

The second phase involves constructing the dynamic contemporary significance through: (1) categorizing verses into types as either definitively universal or instructively particular; (2) reactivation and contextualization of the significance of the verses in relation to the contemporary ecological crisis; (3) exploration of the implicit meanings behind the symbolism of the Egyptian king's dream from an ecological perspective; and (4) interpretative synthesis using a multidisciplinary approach from Islamic ecology, environmental science, and sustainable development studies. The researcher then elaborates the results of the analysis with the five ethical-theological principles of Islamic ecology: *al-'adālah* (ecological justice), *al-tawāzun* (ecosystem balance), *al-intifā' dūn al-fasād* (utilization without destruction), *al-ri'āyah dūn al-isrāf* (care without exploitation), and *al-tahdīs wa al-istikhlāf* (renewal of renewable resources), in order to construct a Qur'anic wisdom-based environmental management model responsive to the challenges of the Anthropocene ecological crisis.

3. Results and Discussion

a. Description of QS. Yūsuf [12]:43-49

The following is an excerpt of the verse and its translation by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2019;

وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ إِنِّي أَرَى سَبْعَ بَقَرَاتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعَ عَجَافٍ وَسَبْعَ سِنَبْلَتٍ حُضْرٌ وَأَخْرَ يِسْتَ
يَايُهَا الْمَلَأُ أَفْنُونِي فِي رُعَيَايِي أَنْ كُنْتُمْ لِلرُّعَيَا تَعْبِرُونَ ٤٣ فَالْلُّوَا أَصْنَعَاتُ أَخْلَامٍ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَأْوِيلِ
الْأَخْلَامِ بِعِلْمٍ ٤٤ وَقَالَ الْدَّوْنِي نَجَا مِنْهُمَا وَدَكَرَ بَعْدَ أُمَّةٍ أَنَا أَنْتِكُمْ بِتَأْوِيلِهِ فَأَنْسِلُونَ ٤٥ يُوسُفُ
يَايُهَا الصَّدِيقُ أَفْتَنَا فِي سَبْعَ بَقَرَاتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعَ عَجَافٍ وَسَبْعَ سِنَبْلَتٍ حُضْرٌ وَأَخْرَ يِسْتَ
لَعْلَيَّ أَرْجِعُ إِلَى النَّاسِ لَعْلَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ٤٦ قَالَ تَزَرَّ عُونَ سَبْعَ سِنَبْلَتٍ دَابِّا فَمَا حَصَدْنَاهُ فَرَزُوهُ فِي
سِنَبْلَةٍ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ ٤٧ ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ سَبْعُ شِدَادٍ يَأْكُلُنَّ مَا قَدْمَنَّهُ لَهُنَّ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِمَّا
تُحْصِلُونَ ٤٨ ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ يُعَاقَّ النَّاسُ وَفِيهِ يَعْصِرُونَ ٤٩ (يوسف/12: 43-49)

Translation:

"The king said (to the leaders of his people), "I dreamt that I saw seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean cows and seven green stalks (of wheat) and seven dry stalks. O rulers of the people, explain to me my dream if you can interpret it!". 44. They said, "They are empty dreams, and we are not able to interpret them." 45. The survivor of

the two said and remembered (about Joseph) after a long time, "I will tell you about (the one who is able to) interpret the dream. So, send me to him." 46. (He said,) "O Yusuf, the trustworthy one, explain to us (the interpretation of my dream) about the seven fat cows that were eaten by seven lean ones and the seven green stalks (of grain) that (covered) the other seven dry ones, so that I may return to the people and they may know." 47. (Joseph) said, "Plant your crops seven years in succession, and what you reap, leave on the stalks, except a little for you to eat. 48. Then, after that, there will come seven (years) of great hardship (famine) which will consume what you have stored up for it, except a little of what you have stored up. 49. After that there will come a year when the people will be given rain (sufficiently) and in that time they will press (grapes)" (Kementerian Agama, 2019).

QS. Yūsuf [12]:43-49 focuses on the dream of the Egyptian king, which narrates seven fat cows being consumed by seven lean cows, along with seven green ears of corn being eaten by seven dry ears. This dream is followed by the interpretation of Prophet Yusuf, who reveals that there will be seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine. In the context of its revelation, Surah Yūsuf belongs to the Makkiyyah category, revealed during difficult times for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a form of consolation and guidance for the Muslim community facing significant challenges (al-Alusi, 1994). Through the narrative of Prophet Yusuf, Allah SWT affirms the principles of patience, wisdom, and good planning, with the objective of fostering trust in His decrees in facing the trials of life. The meaning embedded in these verses serves not only as guidance for Muslims but also as a framework for managing the natural environment and resources granted by Allah.

Classical interpreters offer diverse interpretations of this verse. Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī and Jalāluddīn al-Mahallī in their exegeses emphasize the wisdom of Prophet Yusuf in interpreting the dream, marking the culmination of his knowledge and wisdom (al-Jalālāin, 1505). They relate the seven years of abundance to prosperity and the seven years of famine to scarcity. In contrast, Al-Tabarī (2000) and al-Zamakhsyārī (1987) also highlight Prophet Yusuf's role in providing a concrete solution to address the famine, advising to store a portion of the harvest during the years of abundance. This approach underscores the importance of natural resource management strategies in confronting long-term challenges. Meanwhile, contemporary commentators such as M. Quraish Shihab stress the relevance of this story in the modern context, viewing it as guidance for sustainability in managing natural resources and responding to the ecological crisis (Shihab, 2002).

Contextualizing the meaning of this verse within the framework of Islamic ecotheology is crucial. Interpreting Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49 within the context of ecotheology offers insights into Islam's views the relationship between humans and nature. As contemporary exegeses reveal, the principles of Islamic ecology teach humans not to exploit nature excessively, but to utilize it wisely and sustainably. Concepts such as sustainability, ecosystem balance, and food security embedded in these verses are highly relevant of addressing current environmental challenges. Therefore, interpreting this verse within Islamic ecotheology is essential for building global awareness of the importance of fair and sustainable natural resource management, as well as creating harmony between humans and the environment.

b. Conceptualisation of Ecotheology in QS. Yūsuf [12]:43-49 Ma'na cum Maghza Perspective

Grammatical and Linguistic Analysis of QS. Yūsuf [12]:43-49

A philological analysis of the ecological terminology in Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49 reveals the linguistic complexity that deepens the symbolic meaning of nature within the Qur'anic narrative. The word *simān*, the plural form of *samīn* or *samīnah*, not only denotes the physical condition of being "fat" or "fleshy" in cows but semantically implies the concept of fertility and prosperity within a broader ecological context. Ibn Manzūr (1997) in *Lisān al-'Arab* explains that this word can describe the fertility of both animals and land, reinforcing the interpretation that *sab'a baqarātīn simān* represents a period of ecosystem prosperity in a comprehensive sense. The linguistic contrast between *simān* and *'ijāf* (the plural of *a'jaf*, meaning thin or without flesh and fat) creates a semantic dichotomy that reflects the natural cycle of abundance and scarcity of resources.

Meanwhile, the analysis of the term *khuḍr* (green) uncovers meanings that extend beyond simple color description. The root *khaḍira* signifies the process of becoming green, and derivations such as *akhḍara* (to make green) and *ikhḍarra* (intensity of greenness) suggest vitality and the growth process of ecosystems. The opposition between *khuḍr* and *yūbisāt* (dry), derived from the root *ya-ba-sa*, meaning the loss of moisture, reflects a sophisticated understanding of the hydrological cycle and its impact on ecosystem productivity.

Linguistic exploration of the strategic terminology in Prophet Yusuf's interpretation reveals a sophisticated conceptualization of resource management in the 7th-century Arabic linguistic tradition. The use of the term *da'aban* in the phrase *tazra'ūna sab'a sinīna da'aban* indicates the concept of continuity and consistency in agricultural activities, with the form of the present tense emphasizing the sustainability of the process as a fundamental principle in natural resource management. The terminology *sunbul* (ear of corn) in the context of the storage strategy *fāḍarūhu fi sunbulihi* not only describes an effective conservation method but also reflects an in-depth understanding of food storage technology for preserving the quality of harvests over the long term.

The word *syidād* (very difficult) in *sab'un syidādun* uses the intensive form of *ṣīgat mubālagah*, indicating the intensity of the difficulties to be faced. Meanwhile, the metaphorical phrase *ya'kulna mā qaddamtum lahuunna* (they will consume what you have stored) personifies the years of famine portraying them as entities that consume, reflecting a dynamic understanding of the human-nature relationship. Al-Alusi (2010) analyzes the term *yugāšu*, which shares the same root as *gaiš* (rain) in the phrase *yugāšu an-nāsu*. This analysis demonstrates the conceptualization of divine assistance through natural phenomena, integrating theological dimensions with ecological understanding of the importance of the hydrological cycle in sustaining life. Overall, this linguistic analysis reveals that the Qur'an uses extraordinary terminological precision to convey complex concepts about environmental management, ecological resilience, and sustainability, which are highly relevant to contemporary ecological discourse.

Table 1. Analysis of the Ecological Terminology of QS. Yūsuf [12]:43-49

No	Terminology	Basic Meaning	Contextual meaning/development	Ecological Significance
1	<i>simān</i> (سِمَانٌ)	Fat, fatty	Fertility of the ecosystem, prosperity of nature	Representation of resource abundance and environmental productivity
2	'ijāf (عِجَافٌ)	Thin, without flesh	Shortage, scarcity of resources	Symbolism of scarcity and environmental degradation
3	<i>khudr</i> (خُدْرٌ)	Green, to be green	Vitality, growth process	Indicator of ecosystem health and sustainability
4	<i>yābisāt</i> (بَيْسَاتٌ)	Dry, loss of moisture	Drought conditions, degradation	Reflection of hydrological cycle and climate change impacts
5	<i>da'aban</i> (دَابَانْ)	Habit, continuity	Consistency in activities	Principle of sustainability in resource management
6	<i>tazra'una</i> (تَزْرَعُونَ)	Cultivating crops	Sustainable activities	Practice of sustainable agriculture and food security
7	<i>sunbul</i> (سُنْبُلٌ)	Grain, stalk of wheat	Food storage technology	Conservation methods and food security
8	<i>syidād</i> (شِدَادٌ)	Hard, difficult	Intensity of crisis/difficulty	Extreme challenges in ecological resilience
9	<i>yugāšu</i> (يُعَاثُ)	To be helped	Restoration through natural phenomena	Concepts of ecosystem restoration and climate adaptation
10	<i>ya'sirūn</i> (يَصْرُونَ)	To squeeze, to cultivate	Post-crisis productive activity	Indicators of economic-ecological recovery and revitalisation

Intratextual and Intertextual Analysis

An intratextual analysis of QS. Yūsuf [12]:43-49 within the context of the entire Surah reveals a highly planned and coherent narrative structure, in which the king's dream functions as the culmination of the gradual development of Prophet Yusuf's hermeneutical abilities throughout the Surah. The structural parallelism between the king's dream and Yusuf's dream at the beginning of the Surah (verses 4-6) creates a cyclical narrative framework, where both dreams function as prophetic elements predicting significant future events. Yusuf's dream predicts his rise to leadership, while the king's dream predicts the cycle of prosperity and famine. The development of Yusuf's character from a recipient of divine revelation to an interpreter of divine revelation, demonstrates a consistent evolution, beginning with the imparting of *hukm* (judgment) and *'ilm* (knowledge) (verses 21-22), demonstrated through the interpretation of the prisoners' dreams (verses 36-41), and culminating in the interpretation of the king's dream that leads him to a position of power (verses 54-56). The theme of patience (*fa-ṣabrun jamīl*) spoken by Ya'qub in the face of Yusuf's loss (verses 18 and 83) resonates strongly with Yusuf's ability to remain calm and offer long-term solutions despite his difficult circumstances as a prisoner, illustrating the transmission of spiritual values across generations and emphasizing the integration of spiritual wisdom with practical competence as a characteristic of prophetic leadership.

An intertextual analysis adds a comparative dimension that enriches the understanding of the universality and specificity of the Qur'anic narrative through comparisons with various textual traditions. A comparison with the Alkitab (2006) in Genesis 41 reveals fundamental similarities in the content of the dream about the seven fat and lean cows and the seven fertile and dry ears of grain. However, the Qur'an adds significant details, particularly the prediction of the 15th year bringing fertility back (*yugāšu an-nāṣu*) and specific advice regarding the storage of grain in its ears, which is not found in Genesis. An exploration of pre-Islamic Arabic poetry traditions, as cited by al-Zamakhsyarī in his analysis of the word *ta'burūna*, reveals that the practice of dream interpretation was deeply rooted in Arab culture before Islam, providing important cultural context to understand the Qur'anic narrative's resonance with its audience. Furthermore, Ibn 'Asyur's linguistic analysis of the use of *simān* and *'ijāf*, adjusted to create linguistic balance (*li ajl al-muzāwajah*), as illustrated in the pre-Islamic poetry "*hattāku akhbiyatān wallāju abwiyatān*" (The opener of tents and the breaker of doors), demonstrates the Qur'an's aesthetic precision in organizing its phonological structure to reinforce semantic meaning, while also showing how the Qur'an interacts with and transforms classical Arabic linguistic conventions to convey deeper theological and ethical messages.

Micro and Macro Historical Analysis

A micro-historical analysis of the context of the revelation of Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49 reveals the complex psychological and social dimensions within the early Muslim community in Mecca during the late Makki period. Although this Surah does not have specific *asbāb an-nuzūl* (causes of revelation) recorded through authentic narrations, the historical context suggests that Surah Yusuf was revealed in response to the psychological condition of the companions who were experiencing spiritual fatigue and weariness, as narrated by 'Aun ibn Abdullah, who described the companions' request for stories that could revive their spirits (Al-Wahidi, 1992). More significantly, the revelation of this Surah

coincided with one of the most difficult periods for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, following the death of his beloved wife Khadijah and his protector Abu Talib, known as the 'Ām al-Huzn (Year of Sorrow) (Al-Syawabikah, 2010). The narrative parallelism between the experiences of Prophet Yusuf and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, from the conspiracy to remove him (the well of Yusuf vs. the Cave of Sur), imprisonment and boycott (the Egyptian prison vs. the Valley of Abu Talib), to ultimate victory (rule in Egypt vs. rule in Medina), shows the therapeutic and prophetic function of this Surah in providing comfort and reinforcing the belief that hardship will be followed by ease, in accordance with the divine providence pattern experienced by past prophets (As-Suyuti, 2014).

A macro-historical analysis uncovers an intriguing structural contrast between two great civilizations that form the backdrop of this narrative: 7th-century Mecca as the context of revelation and ancient Egypt as the historical setting of Prophet Yusuf's story. Mecca during the revelation was a tribal society organized in a commercial oligarchy, with the Quraysh tribe as the dominant elite, creating a rigid social structure with significant gaps between wealthy traders and marginalized groups. In the other hand, the political system was run through a council (*malā'*), which stands in stark contrast to the individualistic and meritocratic leadership model exemplified by Yusuf in Egypt. Culturally, the Arab society highly valued oral narrative traditions and eloquence in language, making the sophisticated narrative structure of Yusuf's story resonate strongly with their aesthetic preferences, while also challenging the existing social hierarchy by presenting a leadership model based on wisdom rather than tribal genealogy. Meanwhile, the background of ancient Egypt illustrates a highly stratified agrarian civilization with an absolutist political system under the Pharaoh, where Yusuf's ability to interpret dreams, considered a divine message in Egyptian culture, granted him access to the pinnacle of power, reflecting an unusual social mobility for his time. Egypt's reliance on the flooding cycle of the Nile River, as reflected in Yusuf's prediction of seven years of abundance and famine, demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of hydraulic resource management, which was foundational to Egyptian civilization, and provides a relevant environmental management model in the face of contemporary global challenges such as sustainability and climate adaptation.

Synthesis of Historical Meanings (*al-Ma'nā al-Tārīkhī*)

Based on the convergence of philological, structural, comparative, and contextual analyses, the historical meaning (*al-ma'nā al-tārīkhī*) of Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49 can be synthesized as a presentation of the prophetic leadership paradigm that integrates hermeneutic wisdom, managerial competence, and ecological ethics within the context of a civilization crisis. Linguistically, the remarkable terminological precision in depicting the natural cycle through the dichotomy of *simān* or *'ijāf* and *khuḍr* or *yābisāt* reflects a sophisticated understanding of ecosystem resilience and resource management. This not only functions as a narrative element but also serves as a practical instruction for sustainable development that is integrated with the spiritual dimension. The coherent narrative structure of the entire Surah Yūsuf shows a systematic evolution of Yusuf's hermeneutic abilities, from a recipient of revelation to an interpreter of divine guidance, culminating in the king's dream episode as a demonstration of the integration of divine knowledge with practical applications in crisis management, while validating the

meritocratic leadership model that challenges the dominant genealogical-based hierarchical structures of the time of revelation.

The intertextual dimension shows that although this narrative parallels the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Qur'an contributes uniquely through strategic details on storage technology (*sunbul*) and the prediction of recovery (*yugāšu an-nāšu*), enriching the discourse on disaster management and climate adaptation. The historical context of the revelation in Mecca during the '*Ām al-Huzn* (Year of Sorrow) provides a crucial therapeutic dimension, where the story functions not only as a narrative source of consolation but also as a psychological strength for the early Muslim community facing social-political pressures. It provides a model of divine providence, assuring believers that hardship will be followed by ease through wise leadership and just resource management, while also projecting an alternative vision of a more egalitarian social order based on competence.

4. The Relevance of Islamic Ecotheology in Managing Natural Resources Insights from Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49

The application of Islamic ecotheology in Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49 reveals that the Qur'an conveys messages about the management of natural resources that are highly relevant to contemporary ecological issues. Research related to Islamic ecotheology suggests that the teachings of the Qur'an emphasize the balance between humans and nature, as explained by Mohamed (2014), who underscores that the concept of *rahmatan lil-ālamīn* reflects Islam's commitment to ecological sustainability and environmental protection. In this context, the interpretation of the terms *simān* (fat) and *khuḍr* (green) in the analyzed verses leads to a deeper understanding of ecosystem fertility that must be preserved for the balance of life. The concepts of *yābisāt* (dry) and *ijāf* (thin) describe the condition of a degraded environment, which is highly relevant to the warnings about the ongoing global ecological crisis. These findings with findings from research by Pickett (2007) and Quddus (2017), which show that Islamic ecotheology can provide practical guidance in managing natural resources in a sustainable manner.

The interpretation of these verses also provides insights into the importance of long-term strategies in resource management, as seen in the use of the terms *da'aban* (continuity) and *tazra'ün* (planting). This reinforces the notion that sustainability in agriculture and the management of natural resources is central to Islamic teachings on ecological sustainability, in line with research by Maksum (2023), which emphasizes that sustainability is not just an ecological issue but also a moral and spiritual matter in Islam. This perspective is further strengthened by the Islamic ecotheology theory proposed by Ibadulloh dan Mutaqin (2023), which stresses the importance of building harmony between humans and nature through Qur'anic teachings that advocate for the fair and efficient utilization of resources. The concept of natural resource management contained in these verses, which includes effective and efficient grain storage, is highly relevant to modern sustainability principles in global food management and food security.

On the other hand, the discourse on ecological resilience that emerges from the analysis of the words *syidād* (difficulty) and *yugāšu* (help) in Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49 emphasizes the importance of adaptive capacity in facing environmental changes. In line with this, research by A Zahid (2021) found that Islamic ecotheology teaches that Allah

SWT, through His revelation, provides guidance on how to face ecological crises through preventive actions and wise adaptation. Thus, the findings of this research, which show the relevance of the ecological concepts in the Qur'an to the current challenges of climate change, are supported by other studies indicating that understanding these verses can provide a foundation for value-based approaches to mitigating the increasingly urgent environmental crisis.

5. Conclusion

This study reveals that the verses in Surah Yūsuf [12]:43-49, traditionally understood as mere historical narratives, contain ecological concepts that are highly relevant to the current global environmental crisis. In the story of the king's dream interpreted by Prophet Yusuf, which includes seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine, there is a clear teaching on the importance of sustainability strategies in managing natural resources. This sustainability is reflected in the use of terms such as *simān* (fat), *khudr* (green), which describe the prosperity of nature, as well as *yābisāt* (dry) and *ijāf* (thin), which highlight the importance of maintaining ecosystem balance and facing natural changes wisely. These verses demonstrate that Islamic ecotheology not only involves spiritual principles but also offers practical solutions to address the ecological crises that are becoming increasingly evident, particularly with regard to global climate change.

This study presents a strong synthesis with previous research that has highlighted the importance of Qur'anic verses in the ecological context. For example, research by Mohamed (2014) connects the concept of *rahmatan lil-'ulāmīn* with environmental stewardship, while Pickett (2007) and Quddus (2017), emphasizes the importance of sustainability in Islamic teachings. However, this study distinguishes itself by employing a deeper hermeneutic approach through the *ma'nā-cum-maghzā* theory, which allows for the interpretation of not only the historical meaning of the text but also connects it with modern issues such as sustainability and adaptation to climate change. This enriches the discourse of Islamic ecotheology by demonstrating the relevance of the natural resource management model found in the narrative of Prophet Yusuf, which prioritizes the balance between utilization and conservation of nature.

This study's implications are highly significant both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research enriches the discourse on Islamic ecotheology with a more contemporary hermeneutic approach, integrating classical Qur'anic texts with current ecological issues. Practically, this study can guide Muslims in adopting ecological principles in daily life and public policy, enhancing environmental literacy grounded in religious values. Moving forward, further research could explore the application of these ecological concepts in the global context, particularly in the fields of environmental crisis mitigation and sustainability policies that align with Islamic theological values.

6. Acknowledgment

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kendari and the Quranic Studies and Interpretation Study Program in Fakultas Ushuf for their invaluable support and contributions throughout the research process. Their academic environment and resources have been invaluable in the development of this research. We

greatly appreciate their encouragement and commitment to advancing research in Islamic studies, particularly in the field of Islamic ecotheology. We also affirm that there are no conflicts of interest in this article. All findings and conclusions are the result of independent research, and no external factors have influenced the integrity or impartiality of this work.

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