



## Literary Ecological Analysis in Tere Liye's Novel "Pulang Pergi"

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### ABSTRACT

Literary works play an important role as a medium for criticism of environmental degradation and human behavior towards nature. This study aims to analyze the ecological dimensions in Tere Liye's novel *Pulang Pergi* through the lens of literary ecology. Unlike previous studies, this study specifically explores the integration of ecocultural and ethnoecological concepts in action-crime genre narratives. The method used is descriptive qualitative with Cheryll Glotfelty's ecocritical approach. Data was collected through reading and note-taking techniques, then analyzed using dialectical methods to connect the facts in the text with the reality of the global ecosystem. The results show that the novel *Pulang Pergi* represents ecological imbalance due to the dominance of technology and destructive human ambition, as reflected in the setting of a nuclear reactor exclusion zone and land exploitation. However, the narrative also offers hope through traditional knowledge and ethnoecology as a path to sustainability. These findings confirm that popular literature can be a critical instrument in voicing contemporary environmental issues and building readers' ecological awareness.

**Keywords:** *Literary Ecology, Ecoculture, Ethnoecology, Pulang Pergi, Tere Liye*

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### INTRODUCTION

Literary works are not merely aesthetic artifacts, but complex representations of social reality and human interaction with the environment. As a result of oral and written creativity, literature functions as a medium of symbolic communication that conveys moral messages and reflections on life (Kasiru 2024). Among literary genres, novels have the advantage of conveying detailed narratives, allowing authors to elaborate on emotional dynamics and thoughts in detail (Alviah 2014). However, the function of literature has now shifted beyond merely being a medium of entertainment or character education. Contemporary literature has begun to take on a crucial role in voicing the global ecological crisis through the paradigm of ecocriticism. Literature has the ability to open readers' minds to solutions to social and environmental problems, making texts a space for the formation of eco-centric awareness (Kriswanto and Rohman 2022).

The main issue underlying this research is the increasing environmental degradation that is often positioned only as a static backdrop in works of fiction, even

though nature is an inseparable living entity, where the patterns of interaction between humans, flora, and fauna form a narrative ecosystem (Sari 2018). This phenomenon is clearly evident in Tere Liye's novel *Pulang Pergi* (2021). Although this novel is popular for its action and crime genres, there is an interesting paradox in which the narrative of cross-border adventures highlights the beauty of nature and the impact of environmental damage caused by human conflict. The main character, Bujang, who comes from the forests of Sumatra (Talang), represents how human identity is shaped by the history of the surrounding natural environment.

Several previous studies have explored literary ecology to justify the urgency of this study. One relevant study is "Literary Ecology Analysis in Reza Nufan's Novel *Pulang ke Rinjani*." This study aims to describe the literary ecology in the novel while raising readers' awareness of the importance of protecting the environment from damage. The results of the study show that the author tells the story of the main character, Reza Nufa, who walks from Jakarta to Lombok. During this journey, he faces various challenges, with an environmental backdrop that includes forests, rice fields, hills, mountains, and rivers, with a particular focus on Mount Rinjani (Fuziana and Rahman 2023).

Another study entitled "Folktales as a Means of Local Wisdom Literacy: A Literary Ecology Approach" by (Suryanto et al. 2024) is also relevant. This study aims to analyze the educational value of folk tales that emphasize environmental preservation as a learning medium for character education. The results show that these folk tales serve as a means of educating students in Karanganyar Regency, Central Java, about the importance of protecting the environment. There is a clear gap in the literature, as most eco-critical studies in Indonesia are still limited to descriptions of the environment as a setting or simple ecofeminist moral messages. This study fills that gap by applying Cheryll Glotfelty's theory, which views the environment not as part of natural history. The novelty of this article lies in the integration of the concepts of ecoculture and ethnoecology in the novel genre. Crime fiction, an area rarely touched upon in previous studies of literary ecology.

This research is very important because the novel *Pulang Pergi* presents a contradiction between technological/economic progress (shadow economy) and the preservation of nature in Talang. The research question focuses on how the text reflects the complex interaction between humans and nature through Glotfelty's categories. The purpose of this study is to describe the ecological manifestations of literature in the novel and reveal how popular literature can be used as a tool for environmental advocacy. The method used is descriptive qualitative with a read-and-note technique, in which data in the form of linguistic units are analyzed dialectically with current ecological realities. Through this approach, it is hoped that this research will make a significant contribution to the development of Indonesian ecocriticism studies, particularly in mapping how popular narratives can influence readers' perceptions of the global crisis (Mohammed 2024).

## METHOD

This section explains the systematic steps taken by researchers in the process of examining the ecological aspects of literature in Tere Liye's novel *Pulang Pergi*. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method, which focuses on describing the characteristics of phenomena naturally, where the researcher acts as the main instrument in observing and analyzing data. The subject of this study is the text in the novel *Pulang Pergi* by Tere Liye, with purposive sampling techniques focusing on

linguistic units in the form of words, phrases, and sentences that represent the interaction between humans and the environment. The research instrument refers to Cheryll Glotfelty's theoretical framework of Literary Ecology, which views nature not merely as a backdrop, but as an integral element in human history (Mohammed 2024). The data collection procedure was carried out using a systematic reading and recording technique, beginning with a comprehensive reading of the entire novel to identify the four main aspects of literary ecology according to Glotfelty. Each relevant finding was recorded and classified into a data corpus based on these categories.

The data analysis plan was carried out in five sequential stages, namely in-depth observation of the text, compilation of data according to category, description of the ecological context, identification of complex relationships between humans and nature, and drawing credible conclusions. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the researcher applied the techniques of theoretical triangulation and increased observation persistence to ensure that each interpretation was consistent with the existing textual evidence. The analysis was conducted qualitatively without using statistical tests, focusing on comparisons between literary narratives and the ecological realities they represent. The scope of this research is limited to the dimension of ecocentrism in the novel, so that the results reflect specific literary representations and are not intended to be generalized to ecological phenomena outside the context of the literary work being studied. With these detailed procedures, this research provides a sufficient basis for other researchers to replicate it using similar formal or material objects (Kusmiaji 2021).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Ecological Aspects of Literature in Tere Liye's Novel *Pulang Pergi*

Based on an analysis of Tere Liye's novel *Pulang Pergi*, this work substantially describes the relationship between humans and the environment using a literary ecological approach. This study identifies various themes related to human-nature interactions and the resulting social impacts. The following is a discussion of four ecological concepts used by the author in Tere Liye's novel *Pulang Pergi*.

#### a. **The relationship between natural elements and humans and technology directly**

In this modern era, the relationship between natural elements, humans, society, and technology has become increasingly complex. Changes in land use and technological developments often ignore the existence of nature, which affects the way humans interact with their surroundings. This phenomenon is evident in everyday life, especially in areas that were previously rich in social activities and traditions. One example of the impact of human activities on the environment can be found in the novel *Pulang Pergi* written by Tere Liye, which depicts humanity's neglect of nature.

*"Jalan setapak yang dulu sering dipakai anak-anak berlarian menuju sungai dan atau ladang tidak lagi terlihat bekasnya. Jangan tanya lapangan tempat bermain bola, digantikan Semak belukar lebat, dengan hewan liar di dalamnya"* (Liye, 2021, hlm. 5)

The above excerpt indicates that in his story, the author provides detailed information about a location in a forest area in Sumatra. The nature depicted there not only displays stunning beauty, but also reflects environmental changes that have occurred over time and as a result of human neglect of nature. These changes have turned the forest into a complex arena of interaction between humans and nature, where human presence is often replaced by increasingly wild natural conditions. This

creates a striking contrast between the orderly and harmonious life with human presence, and the uncertainty and chaos that arise when nature reclaims control over the space it once inhabited. Thus, the author not only describes the location, but also invites readers to reflect on the relationship between humans and the environment and the impact of our actions on this fragile ecosystem.

The changes in the landscape described in this excerpt reflect the reality of deforestation and land conversion occurring in many areas of Sumatra. Data from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry shows that the rate of deforestation in Sumatra has continued to increase in recent decades, resulting in the loss of natural habitats and significant changes in ecosystems (Firjatullah, Rizaldi, and Novarino 2024). The concept of “third space” proposed by Homi K. Bhabha can be used to analyze this quote, as third space describes cultural encounters that give rise to new identities and negotiated meanings. This quotation, which highlights the ambivalence and process of renegotiating identity and meaning in cultural and natural interactions, is consistent with Bhabha's understanding of the third space as an arena for cultural hybridization (Latifi 2015). In this context, hybridization here is not only human culture, but also hybridization between abandoned civilizations and reclaimed nature. The path covered with bushes is an “in-between space” where humans no longer reign supreme, but their traces remain.

This shows that the relationship between humans and the environment is reciprocal. The environment has an influence on human existence, and conversely, humans are also influenced by their environment. Humans interact with their environment and cannot be separated from it. Thus, the environment plays a crucial role in human life in meeting daily needs (Arifin, Rahman, and Sari 2020). In the excerpt from the novel *Pulang Pergi*, it is a clear example of how environmental neglect (*jalan setapak dan lapangan hilang*) causes direct social impacts, namely the loss of children's play spaces and social interaction.

*“Ada enam-tujuh ekor kuda poni liar sedang mengunyah rumput yang muncul di balik tumpukan salju. Kalian pernah melihat kuda poni yang berukuran lebih kecil dari itu?. Di hutan belakang rumah pasangan tua itu, kuda poni sedang menikmati pagi bersama kawannya. Hewan-hewan ini liar, dengan surai panjang, lincah melompat, terlihat menggemaskan”.* (Liye, 2021, hlm. 276)

The quote describes biodiversity and the interaction between animals and nature as the core of literary ecology, where each species plays an important role in the balance of the ecosystem. In literature, authors often show the symbiotic relationship between animals and their habitats, as well as the impact of environmental changes on the behavior and survival of living things. For example, stories of birds foraging in lush forests or predators adapting to changing climates reflect the resilience and beauty of nature. Through this perspective, literature invites us to appreciate biodiversity and emphasizes human responsibility for environmental conservation, encouraging reflection on the impact of our actions on the natural world.

The presence of wild ponies can be linked to biodiversity conservation efforts in several regions around the world. Studies of wild horse populations in Europe show the potentially positive role of donkeys in conservation areas (Clancy et al. 2021). Effective management can contribute to maintaining ecosystem balance and raising public awareness about the importance of conservation.

The theory of ecocentrism proposed by Arne Naess emphasizes that our planet is a place where all species live in mutual dependence. According to ecocentrism, nature and humans are one (Raja 2018). All living creatures have intrinsic value and

the right to live and thrive. In this context, the depiction of wild ponies enjoying the great outdoors reflects an ecocentric view that values animal life beyond human interests.

*".....Landskap daratan Rusia terlihat berbeda dibanding negara-negara lain". (Liye, 2021, hlm. 40)*

This sentence describes the diverse natural beauty of Russia, from majestic mountains and dense forests to clear rivers, all of which add to the unique charm of each region. This diversity not only enriches the landscape but also creates ecosystems rich in flora and fauna, giving each region its own characteristics and appeal. Every corner of Russia offers a different experience, from the tranquility of the forest to the roar of waterfalls, creating a feeling of connection with nature. This strengthens our gratitude for the wonders of nature and local cultural identity. Local communities, with traditions rooted in the environment, make nature an integral part of their identity. In this context, Russia's natural beauty serves as a key factor shaping the social, cultural, and spiritual life of its people.

The diversity of Russia's landscape is supported by geographic data that shows significant variations in climate and topography across the country. Russia has a variety of climates, ranging from polar in the north to subtropical in the south. Its topography also varies, from lowlands to high mountains. Therefore, the protection of ecosystems and the preservation of the services they provide to humans must be taken into account, given their interaction with the surrounding landscape (Prodanova, Nedkov, and Petrov 2024). Yi-Fu Tuan states that sense of place explains how humans build emotional bonds and identity with a particular location. The meaning and relationship of the community to a place can be a potential for sustainability, because this affects the community's willingness to strive to improve the sustainability of that place (Shifa, Kurniati, and Rahdriawan 2023). In this context, Russia's unique landscape contributes to a strong sense of place for its inhabitants.

*"Butir hujan mulai turun satu-persatu. Gemerutuk awan gelap. Petir menyambar, seperti membawa kemarahan yang sama di hati Maria saat ini". (Liye, 2021, hlm.372)*

In literary ecology, weather descriptions that reflect the emotions of characters can be interpreted as representations of the relationship between humans and nature, where bad weather, such as heavy rain or storms, often symbolizes the anger and internal conflicts experienced by characters. This phenomenon not only creates an atmosphere that supports the narrative, but also reflects the impact of human behavior on the environment. For example, bad weather that occurs when a character commits a destructive act can symbolize the consequences of exploiting nature to achieve a specific goal, showing that every action has a broader impact.

The emotional interaction between characters and nature in literature often reflects the depth of the characters' feelings and personalities towards their environment. In the context of ecocriticism as described by Glotfelty, this relationship highlights the strong connection between humans and nature, as well as the reciprocal impact that occurs between the two (Nur, Saguni, and Afandi 2024). Through detailed descriptions and realistic depictions, authors often describe characters' responses to the weather. Thus, the depiction of weather in literature serves not only as a backdrop, but also as a tool for exploring the complex relationship between humans and the natural environment. Thus, the depiction of weather in literature serves not only as a backdrop, but also as a tool for exploring the complex relationship between humans and the environment.

The depiction of weather that reflects the emotions of characters is often found in classical and modern literary works. The use of weather symbolism in literature shows that weather can be used to express various emotions and themes. Pathetic fallacy is often interpreted as any personification used as a poetic technique, regardless of its cause. However, Ruskin used the term to refer to a perception of the world triggered by overwhelming feelings (Lichtenstein 2021). John Ruskin's concept of the pathetic fallacy explains how writers connect human emotions with natural phenomena. In this context, the storm reflecting Maria's anger is an example of the pathetic fallacy used to reinforce the character's emotions.

*"Tembakan Junior telah menghantam tank yang berada di halaman kastil. Tank itu terpelanting dua meter, rantai rodanya putus, bagian dalamnya terbakar, kemudian meledak. Tentara musuh yang berada di dekatnya terlempar". (Liye, 2021, hlm.193)*

Human conflict has an impact on environmental damage because military conflict often creates a profound and lasting impact on ecosystems and the physical environment. Armed conflict causes the destruction of natural habitats, soil and water pollution due to the use of weapons, and deforestation for strategic purposes. In addition, explosions and fires during combat can dramatically alter the landscape, eliminating species of flora and fauna that cannot recover. Air quality also deteriorates, affecting the health of communities and surrounding wildlife. In the long term, this damage disrupts the balance of ecosystems, leading to a loss of biodiversity and damaging natural resources that are essential to human and animal life.

Environmental damage caused by war has become a global concern. The UNEP report addressed to UN agencies and peacebuilding staff emphasizes the need to integrate the issue of sustainable use of natural resources into peacebuilding. This aims to leverage the potential of environmental cooperation in supporting peacebuilding, given that armed conflict often causes significant environmental damage and hinders sustainable development efforts (Krampe, Hegazi, and VanDeveer 2021)

Environmental justice emphasizes that everyone has the right to a healthy and sustainable environment. Environmental law not only regulates relationships between humans, but also vice versa, considering humans as part of nature. This shows the interdependence between humans and the environment (Imamulhadi, Idris, and Nuriyah H. 2024). In this context, the environmental impact of military conflicts often disproportionately affects vulnerable and marginalized communities.

*"Kawasan ini menjadi surga bagi hewan liar sejak reactor nuklir meledak. Ratusan ribu orang mengungsi, meninggalkan kawasan kosong. Hewan-hewan ini kehilangan musuh besarnya: manusia. Bahkan termasuk jenis yang dulu jarang sekali ditemui, nyaris punah". (Liye, 2021, hlm.276)*

The sentence discusses the significant environmental impact of human activities, particularly nuclear reactor explosions, which cause profound ecological changes. This tragic event not only resulted in soil and water contamination, but also forced humans to leave the area in search of safer places to live. Meanwhile, the remaining flora and fauna began to adapt to the new conditions, resulting in changes in their breeding and migration patterns. This process demonstrates how ecosystems can transform rapidly in response to threats caused by human actions, creating new dynamics in the relationship between species and their environment.

The Chernobyl exclusion zone is a clear example of how the environment can recover after being abandoned by humans. Research shows that some animal species have actually thrived there because there is no human disturbance. Rewilding is at the

heart of the massive restoration efforts needed to address the global biodiversity crisis and enhance the biosphere's capacity to mitigate climate change. In a socio-ecological context, rewilding efforts must be implemented democratically with the involvement and support of local communities. The concept of rewilding emphasizes the importance of restoring natural ecosystems by reducing human intervention (Svenning 2020). In this context, the Chernobyl exclusion zone is an extreme example of unintentional rewilding.

This shows that literary ecology reflects the relationship between humans and nature. Works that explore the impact of nuclear reactor explosions, for example, often describe not only physical losses, but also the psychological trauma experienced by individuals and communities. Thus, literary ecology becomes a tool for criticizing and reflecting on environmental impacts, while questioning humanity's moral responsibility towards nature.

*"Karena sepanjang malam badai salju. Drone itu tidak bisa terbang melewati angin kencang dan butiran salju. Dia menunggu badai salju reda, menunggu kita mendekat, di area yang menurutnya paling baik mencegat"*. (Liye, 2021, hlm.297)

This sentence shows the influence of weather, such as snowstorms and strong winds, on technology, especially the use of drones. This interaction reflects how environmental conditions affect the effectiveness of human-created technology. In the context of literary ecology, this relationship shows humanity's dependence on technology to face natural challenges, as well as the limitations and vulnerabilities of technology in facing the forces of nature. It invites readers to reflect on our responsibility in using technology, understanding that even though technology helps us explore the world, it is still bound by the laws of nature. Thus, the interaction between humans, technology, and the environment becomes the core of a narrative that illustrates the complexity of our relationship with the ecosystem.

Technological limitations in dealing with extreme weather conditions have been a concern in various fields, including aviation and space exploration. Other obstacles include the unpredictability of tropical weather, which can disrupt flight schedules and air services (Ahmad Fiqri, Alfian Hugo, and Nawang Kalbuana 2024). Studies on the impact of weather on drone performance show that snowstorms and strong winds can reduce the effectiveness and safety of drone use.

The concept of technological determinism argues that technology shapes society and culture. Understanding technological determinism is crucial in efforts to build a resilient, innovative, and sustainable society (Firmansyah et al. 2024). However, in this context, the snowstorm that hampered the use of drones shows that nature can also limit and influence technological development.

#### **b. Ecological Crisis and Anthropogenic Damage (Concept of Literary Ecology)**

According to Garrard, there are several concepts related to ecology, namely: (1) pollution, (2) wilderness, (3) disaster, (4) habitat, (5) animals, and (6) earth. Ecological literature promotes the idea of respecting the environment so that humans can live safely and harmoniously. Amidst numerous violations of ecological concepts, this theory provides a solution to overcome various environmental problems (Andriyani 2020). In Tere Liye's novel *Pulang Pergi*, there are several sentences that touch on environmental issues such as forest destruction, pollution, and nuclear disasters.

*"Ada banyak hama tikus di lahan ini beberapa tahun lalu. Tikus-tikus itu nyaris membuat pertanian ini bangkrut. Panen gagal total. Tumbuhan mati"*. (Liye, 2021, hlm.132)

This sentence describes the physical condition of agricultural land affected by rat infestation as alarming. These infestations cause significant damage to crops, resulting in a drastic decline in crop yields. Rat infestations can be considered a form of ecological disaster that disrupts the balance of the agricultural ecosystem. When pests attack, not only are crops damaged, but the ecosystem that supports human life is also disrupted. In this case, pollution is not only related to chemicals, but also to biological imbalances caused by the disharmonious interaction between humans and nature.

Rat infestations are a common problem in agriculture in many parts of the world. Rats (*Rattus argentiventer*) are among the most harmful plant pests in the agricultural sector, especially in rice cultivation, as they can cause crop failure (Farah Mutiara, A. Yusuf Kholil, Fendiyatmi Kusufa, Tirta Yoga 2025). Studies on rat pest control show that rats are one of the wild animals that are significant pests in human life, both in agriculture, plantations, settlements, and also health (Azi Kurnawan, Yuliana Kansrini, and Puji Wahyu Mulyani 2024).

The concept of ecological imbalance describes the disruption of the natural balance in an ecosystem, whether caused by natural disturbances or human activities. Humans are part of nature and must maintain the balance of the ecosystem for their own survival (Wulandari 2016). In this context, rat infestations are an example of ecological imbalance that threatens agricultural sustainability. Garrard's theory emphasizes the importance of respecting nature so that humans can live safely and harmoniously. In this context, rat infestations must be handled using a sustainable and environmentally friendly approach, such as the use of organic farming methods or natural pest control. Thus, we not only maintain agricultural productivity, but also foster a better relationship between humans and the environment. This is in line with the ecological literary goals promoted by Garrard, namely to create awareness of the importance of preserving ecosystems for the common good.

*"Talang itu sudah lama sepi. bahkan lima-enam tahun lalu, penduduk talang telah pergi. Panen padi tadah hujan gagal berkali-kali, harga kopi dan karet tidak menarik, penduduk pindah satu-per satu". (Liye, 2021, hlm.6 )*

The above quote reflects the impact of the environment on the social and economic life of communities, particularly evident in crop failures often caused by extreme weather conditions. Adverse weather, such as drought or flooding, can drastically reduce agricultural yields, resulting in food shortages and price increases that impact community welfare. The interaction between humans and the environment creates enormous challenges, with farmers struggling to maintain their livelihoods and facing threats to community food security. Crop failures can also lead to migration to urban areas, exacerbating social problems such as poverty and instability. In this context, the relationship between humans and the environment becomes increasingly clear, where ecological changes can trigger widespread social changes, creating a cycle that is difficult to break.

Population migration due to crop failure has become a serious problem in many developing countries. Climate change has emerged as a global issue that has sparked widespread concern due to its complex and diverse impacts. Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature and weather patterns. The consequences of climate change are not limited to environmental aspects, such as rising sea levels, forest fires, and increasingly frequent disasters, but also have a profound impact on human life. This has prompted countries to focus on mitigation and adaptation in order to build resilience in the face of the challenges they face (Silviana and Soerjatisnanta 2025).

Studies on the impact of climate change on migration show that droughts and floods can force communities to leave their homes.

This can be explained by the concept of climate refugees. According to experts from the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), climate refugees are individuals who are forced to leave their traditional habitats, either temporarily or permanently, due to climate change that threatens their existence and impacts their quality of life. Over the past decade, there has been a significant increase in the number of climate refugees caused by changes in the nature of environmental degradation. Global issues, including climate change, loss of biodiversity, river and ocean pollution, land degradation, drought, and destruction of rainforests are putting increasing pressure on the Earth's ecosystems (Hasanah et al. 2023). In this context, residents of the valley who moved due to crop failure can be considered climate refugees.

*"Dia persis berada di sebuah rumah yang nyaman di kota Kiev, Ibukota Ukraina, di sekelilingnya dipenuhi alat-alat pembuat bom, dan drone terbang. Dia menatap marah layar-layar besar yang memperlihatkan bangkai dronanya di jalanan raya". (Liye, 2021, hlm.295)*

This sentence shows a deep conflict between technology and the environment, where sophisticated tools such as bomb makers and drones turn what should be a comfortable environment into an arena of conflict. Streets littered with drone wreckage create a horrific scene and reflect the environmental damage caused by war and the irresponsible use of military technology. In the context of Garrard's theory of ecological literature, this situation emphasizes the importance of respecting nature and understanding the negative impacts of human and technological interactions. Garrard emphasizes that ecological understanding must include recognition of the consequences of human actions, both visible and invisible. Environmental damage caused by war technology shows that without ecological awareness, technological progress can be disastrous for ecosystems. Therefore, it is important to develop environmentally friendly technologies and promote harmony between humans and nature for a more sustainable and secure future.

The use of drones in the context of war has raised significant concerns about environmental and social impacts. Reports from various human rights organizations reveal that drone strikes can cause damage to civilian infrastructure and inflict deep psychological trauma on affected communities. Advances in drone technology have also created new opportunities for human rights violations, whereby destructive actions can be carried out against specific communities. One example is the actions of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group, which modified civilian drones to launch attacks against security forces in Iraq and Syria. These actions not only demonstrate the misuse of technology, but also highlight the ethical complexities and challenges faced in dealing with modern conflicts (Rabbi Fudhali 2023).

Ulrich Beck's concept of the risk society describes a condition in which we live in an era marked by technological advancement, where no one can understand with certainty or interpret the diversity of possibilities that may arise in the future (Zurnetti and Sanusi 2021). This concept is better known in the context of how modern societies deal with risks caused by technology and industrialization, which are the effects of radical modernization. This technology can produce global risks that are detrimental to human actions on the environment (Rahmat and Sriharini 2018). In this context, the use of drones in warfare is an example of technological risks that threaten the environment and society.

### **c. Eco-culture and Place Identity**

According to Teew (Sugiarti 2017), a particular literary system does not develop in isolation or without cultural context. This is in line with Endraswara's view, which emphasizes the importance of cultural aspects in literary studies. Within the framework of ecocriticism, the expansion of studies includes ideas and representations of the environment that arise in various cultural contexts. Thus, cultural space provides a broader and more flexible dimension of meaning to literary works. This understanding shows that literature is not only an artistic expression, but also a reflection of the social and cultural dynamics that surround it. In literary analysis, paying attention to the cultural context allows us to understand more deeply how literary works interact with environmental issues, social values, and diverse cultural identities. Therefore, the ecocritical approach is very relevant because it explores the relationship between literature and the environment, as well as how the representation of nature in literature can be influenced by, and at the same time influence, the surrounding culture. In Tere Liye's novel *Pulang Pergi*, there are several passages that reflect cultural ecology with an emphasis on traditions and beliefs related to nature.

*"Selamat datang di kota moskow, si babi hutan". berseru hangat di tengah dinginnya udara malam moskow, butiran salju turun". (Liye, 2021, hlm.32)*

In the context of cultural ecology, this sentence creates a magical atmosphere that blends with the daily life of the community. Each falling snowflake is not only an element of nature, but also a symbol of traditions that have been intertwined for centuries, in which the community adapts to the harsh climate. In Russian culture, snow symbolizes beauty and challenge, reminding us of folk tales about human resilience and creativity in the face of nature. The mention of "the wild boar" refers to Bujang, a character who represents the wild spirit and resilience of city life.

Bujang symbolizes the complex relationship between humans and the environment, showing how individuals create identities amid urbanization. Its presence reflects the complex interaction between the city and nature, where traces of nature remain even though the environment has changed. Through the lens of cultural ecology, snow and the character of Bujang shape the physical landscape and cultural identity of Moscow's society. They enrich the collective narrative and remind us of our responsibility to maintain a balance between progress and environmental sustainability, as well as celebrate the relationship between culture and the ecosystems around us.

Snow plays an important role in Russian culture, influencing architecture, art, and traditions. Studies of culture show that snow is often a symbol of beauty, resilience, and spirituality. The concept of cultural landscape is an idea that examines the protection or preservation of activities as part of a culture that is recognized through ways of life, belief systems, religion, language, technology, settlement patterns, works of art, cultural elements, and social norms that influence the living environment (Ardi, Nurul, and Yuliani 2019). Based on this definition, cultural landscape explains how natural landscapes are influenced by culture and human activities. In this context, the snow-covered city of Moscow is an example of a cultural landscape that reflects the interaction between nature and Russian culture.

*"Tempat ini, talang ini, adalah salah-satu tempat yang paling dibenci oleh Bujang, tapi entah kenapa dia kembali menjenguknya lagi". (Liye, 2021, hlm.10)*

This sentence describes the deep emotional connection between people and places, supporting the idea of human interaction with the environment and memories tied to nature. In the context of cultural ecology, this relationship reflects how individual and collective experiences assimilate with natural elements, creating

narratives rich in meaning. Every element of the environment, such as the sound of the wind and the smell of the earth after rain, reminds us of the history and traditions that shape the cultural identity of a community. Memories associated with specific places, such as seasonal celebrations and agricultural rituals, demonstrate the interaction between culture and nature that shapes the perspectives and values of a community. This attachment also reflects a moral responsibility for environmental preservation, in which the character becomes part of the ecosystem and guardian of cultural heritage. Thus, the emotional connection between the character and the place enriches personal experience and invites us to reflect on our role in maintaining the balance between cultural development and environmental sustainability. In cultural ecology, this interaction affirms that humans and the environment shape and influence each other.

The emotional connection between humans and places has become a major focus in environmental psychology research. Various studies show that attachment to certain places can improve individual well-being and motivate people to protect the environment. This issue has a significant impact on human behavior in everyday life, especially in the use of outdoor spaces, which is closely related to mental health and individual well-being (Ruzeilawati Wasi'atu Lathifah and Dewi Rezalini Anwar 2022)

The concept of topophilia explains how humans develop a deep love and attachment to certain places. In this context, Bujang's mixed feelings towards the gutter illustrate the complexity of topophilia, as Bujang, the "Number One Beater," turns out to be fragile when faced with memories of his homeland. This proves that human cultural identity remains rooted in its original ecology (sense of place), even though it has moved to a modern technological landscape. This shows that the relationship between humans and place is not only simple, but also nuanced and emotionally deep.

#### **d. Ethnoecology as a Solution for Sustainability**

In addition to the physical impact of disasters, the connection between humans and nature is also manifested in how technology interacts with extreme weather, which will be discussed in the Ethnoecology section. Ethnoecology aims to describe the environment from the perspective of the community being studied. This includes descriptions of local knowledge systems and the decision-making processes undertaken by communities when dealing with specific environments or situations (Bisjoe, A.R.H., Dewi, I.N., Hayati 2014). In the context of ethnoecological research on Tere Liye's novel *Pulang Pergi*, the main focus is on depicting the community's understanding of agricultural and livestock practices. Through the lens of ethnoecology, we can see how communities develop their traditional knowledge, including farming techniques, animal husbandry, and adaptation to environmental changes.

*"Ivan menanam beragam jenis buah, sayur, kacang-kacangan, umbi-umbian. Juga terhampar kandang-kandang sapi, kambing, ayam, bebek, apapun itu yang biasa ditemukan di lahan pertanian, ada di sini. Pagi ini, puluhan pekerja sibuk. Mereka mulai bekerja mengurus ladang, berlalu-lalang dengan seragam dan Sepatu boots". (Liye, 2021, hlm. 131)*

The sentence describes the diversity of agricultural practices carried out by Ivan, including the cultivation of various fruits, vegetables, nuts, tubers, and the raising of animals such as cows, goats, chickens, and ducks. In the context of ethnoecology, this reflects the interaction of local communities with the environment, the management of natural resources, and the application of traditional knowledge in agriculture. The busy morning with dozens of workers shows the social and economic dynamics of the community. The workers' uniforms and boots reflect professionalism and the importance of collaboration in managing the fields, as well as the community's

adaptation to the demands of work in the agricultural sector, which is an integral part of their lives. Overall, this description reflects the knowledge and practices inherited within the community, as well as decisions made based on experience and understanding of the environment. This is in line with the goal of ethnoecology to understand the relationship between humans and the environment through the perspective of culture and local knowledge.

Ivan's farming practices not only reflect a strategy for adapting to climate change, but also demonstrate the importance of diversifying food sources. Studies of traditional farming systems have shown that this approach can increase food security and reduce the risk of crop failure. In addressing the problems posed by climate change, wise and sustainable management of natural resources is essential to anticipate increased environmental degradation, as stated by (Surbakti and Leonak 2020). The concept of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) explains how local communities develop a deep understanding of their environment through long-term interaction. In this context, Ivan's agricultural practices are a clear example of TEK, which is not only passed down from generation to generation, but also adapted to the needs and challenges of the times. Thus, Ivan not only preserves his cultural heritage, but also contributes to environmental sustainability and food security in his community. This depiction of ethnoecology through Ivan's agricultural practices reinforces Glotfelty's category of symbiotic relationships between culture and the environment, where local knowledge becomes the last line of defense in the face of ecological uncertainty.

This study shows that Tere Liye's novel *Pulang Pergi* is not just a typical crime narrative, but a medium for profound criticism of global environmental destruction. The main findings in this study confirm the representation of ecological imbalance triggered by technological domination and destructive human ambition. This is strongly reflected in the depiction of the nuclear reactor exclusion zone and massive land exploitation in the plot. The relevance of these findings for readers and the field of literary studies is the affirmation that popular literature has the rhetorical power to build eco-centric awareness amid the modern climate crisis.

This study reaffirms the key finding that the novel *Pulang Pergi* conveys an ecological message through three main dimensions. First, Representation of the Global Ecological Crisis. Findings show that this novel uses the setting of the "Exclusion Zone" of a former nuclear reactor not merely as a place of refuge, but as a symbol of the failure of human technology that has created "dead land" that cannot be inhabited again. This is a critique of energy ambitions that do not consider the carrying capacity of nature. Second, Ethnoecology as survival. The data in the novel shows that the characters (especially the local community in Talang) have traditional knowledge about how to treat nature. These findings confirm that amid the onslaught of military technology and the illegal economy, local wisdom (traditional ecological knowledge) remains the last bastion for maintaining ecosystem balance. Third, Criticism of Anthropocentrism in the Action Genre. Unlike typical action novels that only focus on conflicts between humans, *Pulang Pergi* shows that human conflicts (the shadow economy struggle) always have an impact on habitat destruction. This finding proves a shift in perspective from anthropocentrism (human-centered) to ecocentrism (nature-centered).

Compared to similar studies, the results of this study reinforce and add a new dimension to the discourse of ecocriticism. Similarities are found (Fuziana and Rahman 2023) and (Kriswanto and Rohman 2022) which both view literature as a means of

shaping environmental awareness. However, there is a significant difference in context: while previous studies have mostly examined novels in the romance or nature adventure genres, this study delves into the more complex action-crime genre. Consistency in data regarding environmental damage was also found in studies (Firjatullah, Rizaldi, and Novarino 2024) on deforestation and (Krampe, Hegazi, and VanDeveer 2021) on the impact of military conflict on ecology. Furthermore, the use of literary ecology to highlight local wisdom is in line with the thinking of (Suryanto et al. 2024) and the function of literature as symbolic moral communication according to (Kasiru 2024). These similarities arise because of the same material objects that capture concerns about environmental degradation, while the differences in methodology and genre in this study enrich scientific knowledge by touching on the issue of global technological risks.

The main novelty of this article lies in the integration of the concepts of ecoculture and ethnoecology into the narrative of popular novels, an area that has rarely been touched upon in previous ecocritical studies in Indonesia. This study successfully dissects the contradiction between technological progress and the preservation of traditional ecosystems, proving that popular literature can be a critical instrument for voicing issues of climate refugees and the risks of a risk society. Academically, this provides a new analytical model for literary studies by combining popular genres and contemporary ecological issues. Practically, these results have implications for the use of creative works as effective environmental education tools for the younger generation, as well as providing policy input on the importance of ecological literacy in supporting global sustainability.

However, this study has limitations because it only focuses on the internal dimension of ecocentrism in the text and is limited to Cheryll Glotfelty's theoretical perspective. Therefore, it is recommended that future researchers empirically explore reader response (reception study) to measure the extent to which the text is truly capable of changing people's ecological behavior. In addition, developing theory through a more comprehensive Risk Society paradigm or comparative studies between genres is highly recommended to deepen understanding of the reciprocal relationship between humans, technology, and nature in the future.

## CONCLUSION

Based on an analysis of Tere Liye's novel *Pulang Pergi* using a literary ecology approach based on Cheryll Glotfelty's theory. Of the four aspects, the relationship between natural elements and humans and technology is more dominant. This dominance shows the impact of human activities on the environment, such as pollution, forest destruction, and ecological changes due to technology and conflict. The results of this study confirm that an understanding of literary ecology is very important to increase readers' awareness of environmental issues. By examining the cultural values and traditional knowledge contained in the novel, readers are invited to be more sensitive to the impact of their actions on nature.

As an implication of this study, it is recommended that further research be conducted to explore other literary works that raise ecological themes, in order to deepen understanding of the contribution of literature in promoting ecological awareness. Thus, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of ecocriticism studies and sustainable character education with a focus on biodiversity.

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