

Interconnection of Human and Enviromental Degradation in Tere Liye's Novel Hujan: A Literary Ecocriticism

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Info Artikel

Article history:

Received Mei, 2025

Revised Agu, 2025

Accepted Agu, 2025

Keywords:

Ecocriticism, Gerg Garrad, Interconnection, Human and Enviromental Degradation, Novel

Kata Kunci:

Ekokritik, Gerg Garrad, Hubungan, Manusia dan Degradasi Lingkungan, Novel

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the interconnection between human and environmental degradation in Tere Liye's novel Hujan using the ecocritical approach proposed by Gerg Garrard. The focus of this study is how human actions affect the environment and how nature responds to these actions. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method, where data is taken from novel texts and analyzed using ecocritical theory. The results of the analysis show that this novel describes various forms of pollution, habitat destruction, and the disastrous impacts caused by human exploitation. Pollution due to the use of environmentally unsustainable energy sources and policies that harm nature are the main themes. In addition, the image of wilderness as a source of balance for ecosystems and other living things is reduced because of the destruction. Ecological disasters that occur, whether natural or made by human, create conflicts between human needs and natural resource capacity. With an emphasis on the interrelationship between humans and the environment, this study aims to raise awareness about the importance of preserving the environment through a literary lens.

ABSTRAK

Tulisan ini mengkaji hubungan antara manusia dan degradasi (kerusakan) lingkungan dalam novel Hujan karya Tere Liye dengan menggunakan pendekatan ekokritik yang dikemukakan oleh Gerg Garrard. Fokus kajian ini adalah tindakan manusia memengaruhi lingkungan dan bagaimana alam merespon tindakan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, di mana data diambil dari teks-teks novel dan dianalisis menggunakan teori ekokritik. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa novel ini menggambarkan berbagai bentuk pencemaran, perusakan habitat, dan dampak bencana yang disebabkan oleh eksploitasi manusia. Pencemaran akibat penggunaan sumber energi yang tidak ramah lingkungan dan kebijakan yang merusak alam menjadi tema utamanya. Selain itu, citra alam liar sebagai sumber keseimbangan bagi ekosistem dan makhluk hidup lainnya pun terkikis akibat kerusakan tersebut. Bencana ekologi yang terjadi, baik yang bersifat alamiah maupun yang dibuat oleh manusia, menimbulkan konflik antara kebutuhan manusia dengan kapasitas sumber daya alam. Dengan penekanan pada keterkaitan antara manusia dan lingkungan, kajian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran tentang pentingnya menjaga lingkungan melalui sudut pandang sastra.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ecocriticism is a term derived from the conjunction of ecology and criticism. Ecology is the scientific examination of the interactions among plants, animals, humans, and their environment. Criticism can be regarded as a manifestation and articulation of comprehension regarding the positive or negative attributes of anything. Ecocriticism is an examination of environmental issues. Greg Garrard is a prominent ecocritical scholar recognized for his publication named *Ecocriticism*. Greg Garrard's thesis in ecocritical studies posits that the values articulated in literary works align with ecological wisdom, hence the examination of the interplay between literature and the physical environment is termed literary ecocriticism.

Ecology examines the interactions among flora, fauna, and humans within their environment. Criticism serves as a means of evaluating anything, regardless of whether the assessment is favorable or not. Ecocriticism examines the interplay between literature and the natural environment. Literary ecocriticism, as articulated by Arianto et al. (2021), seeks to demonstrate how literary works reflect environmental concerns. Ecocriticism adopts an environmentally based perspective in literary analysis. Furthermore, ecocriticism examines methods of conceptualizing and articulating the relationship between humans and the environment across all cultural domains. Ecocriticism was influenced by, and serves as a critical perspective on, the contemporary environmental movement.

Literary ecocriticism is a contemporary critical theory applied to literature. In the multidisciplinary field of ecocriticism, which encompasses ecology and literature, diverse pertinent theories for literary and environmental studies must coexist, collaborate, and integrate. These theories encompass critical theory, literary criticism, cultural theory, and environmental ethics theory (ecology). Literary ecocriticism refers to the examination of the relationship between literature and the physical environment (Glottfelty & Fromm, 1996). According to Garrard (2004), critical ecology has the ability to assist in the identification, investigation, and even resolution for broader ecological problems. Literature comes from the natural environment (ecological). Therefore, it is very reasonable that literature has the capacity to express an understanding of the environment, including the principles of environmental wisdom, because literature functions as a medium that represents people's perspectives, views and reactions to the surrounding environment. According to Kerridge & Sammells (1998), ecologists want to follow ideas and environmental representations.

According to Garrard (2004), ecocriticism includes the study of the ways in which we see and describe the relationship between humans and the environment in every aspect of cultural outcomes. Ecocriticism is inspired by contemporary environmental movements and also as a critical attitude towards them. Greg Garrard traces the evolution of the movement and examines ecocritical concepts such as: 1.) pollution, 2.) wilderness, 3.) apocalypse, 4.) housing/dwelling, 5.) animals, and 6.) earth. However, research on the conflict between nature and humans using Gerg Gerrard's ecocritical theory is still limited.

Hujan, a novel by Tere Liye, combines stories of love, friendship and sacrifice in a challenging future world setting. This novel tells the story of Lail, a young woman, who faces trauma and loss due to a devastating natural disaster that hits the world. The story begins when the earth is shaken by a volcanic eruption that causes great destruction. Lail, who was still a teenager at the time, had lost his family in the tragedy. On his journey, he met Esok, a young man who becomes both a friend and an important figure in his life. Their relationship is close, but not free from dilemmas and

sacrifices. Lail recalled various important moments in her life. The storyline alternates between memories of the past and present-day situations, where Lail must decide the big thing in her life. This novel also presents the philosophy of hujan (rain) as a symbol of life, purification, and hope. With Tere Liye's writing style, Hujan invites readers to reflect on the meaning of life, love, and happiness, as well as how humans survive the trials of life. Therefore, this research will reveal the conflict that occurs between nature and humans in the novel Hujan by Tere Liye.

2. METHOD

This study included a descriptive qualitative study. In qualitative research, the interpreted problems cover things that are broad in nature or include perspectives on all aspects (Creswell, 2019). In this case, what will be interpreted is the novel Hujan by Tere Liye. According to Creswell (2019), one of the main characteristics in qualitative research is that the data is described by analyzing the text and interpreting it.

In this research, the novel Hujan by Tere Liye was used as the data source. The data taken for research material is in the form of text narrated in the data source. The data collection technique in this research uses literature studies, namely reading, marking and identifying data related to the problems raised. After the data is collected using markup techniques (markers), the data is then analyzed using text analysis based on Wendy B Faris' perspective (Gadamer, 2004) which are: 1.) describe the data in the novel Hujan by Tere Liye, 2.) analyze data on six ecocritical characteristics found in the novel Hujan, 3.) analyze problems in the text by connecting the six previously discovered with ecocritical characteristics, and 4.) make conclusions based on the analysis results.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gerg Garrard's ecocritical theory is an approach in literary studies that combines ecology and literature. This theory aims to understand how literary texts represent humans' relationship with nature, as well as how nature itself 'speaks' through literary texts. In other words, this theory invites us to 'read' nature through literary works and vice versa. In the novel Hujan by Tere Liye, the interconnection of human and environmental degradation will be analyzed through Gerg Garrard's theory with several ecocritical concepts.

3.1 Interconnection of Human and Pollution in Tere Liye's Novel Hujan

People engage in a wide variety of activities that are in close contact with the natural world, and these actions constitute the source of pollution. A sense of apathy to the natural world and human avarice are the primary contributors to the creation of pollution. Even with their greed and dissatisfaction, humans make regulations that have a negative impact on nature and cause pollution. In Gerg's theory, Garrard examines how literary texts describe environmental damage caused by human activities, such as air, water and land pollution as quoted in the text below,

Data: *Pada hari ke-60 pula, pembangkit listrik yang menggunakan sumber daya terbarukan seperti angin, air, dan cahaya matahari juga telah berpotensi penuh. Sebaliknya, kota-kota atau negara-negara yang mengandalkan tenaga nuklir, saat gempa bumi terjadi, pembangkit itu menjadi masalah mengerikan, melipatgandakan kerusakan. Reaktor nuklir meledak seperti bom atom, menyebarkan radioaktif ratusan kilometer, menciptakan zona radiasi nuklir. (Liye, 2018: 69)*

Translation: On the 60th day, power plants that use renewable resources such as wind, water and solar light also have full potential. In contrast, cities or countries that rely on nuclear power, when an earthquake occurs, the plant becomes a terrible problem, multiplying the damage. Nuclear reactors explode like atomic bombs, spreading radioactivity hundred kilometers, creating zones of nuclear radiation. (Liye, 2018: 69)

From the data above, it can be clearly seen that pollution due to nuclear power plants is a terrible problem, as in the sentence nuclear explosions are like atomic bombs, spreading radioactivity hundred kilometers, creating zones of nuclear radiation. Radiation pollution caused by nuclear reactor explosions has long-term impacts and damages the environment so it can be categorized as a very dangerous form of pollution. Nuclear radiation can contaminate soil, water, and air, damaging the ecosystem as a whole.

3.2 *Interconnection of Human and Wilderness in Tere Liye's Novel Hujan*

The idea of a wilderness is about a landscape in a region or country that is not contaminated by any civilization. Wilderness is the most powerful natural construct available for the balance of the world's environment in the future. It also has sacred value in every inch of its territory as a mobilized construct to protect specific habitats and species.

Data: *Hutan-hutan terlihat kerontang, menyisakan pohonnya yang kelabu. Tanah persawahan retak-retak. Perkampungan yang kembali ditinggalkan, kota kota mati, terlihat di sepanjang jalur kerta.* (Liye, 2018: 294)

Translation: The forests look dry, leaving behind gray trees. Rice fields are cracked. The village is again abandoned, the city is dead, visible along the train line. (Liye, 2018: 294)

The data above reflects the consequences of human actions that damage the environment. Gerrad's theory of wilderness emphasizes that humans must learn to live in harmony with nature, not exploit it. In this novel, the damage experienced by the environment is a reflection of human indifference to the sustainability of forests and ecosystems.

3.3 *Interconnection of Human and Apocalypse in Tere Liye's Novel Hujan*

This study posits that the disaster marks the conclusion of civilization's history. The image depicts irreversible damage. Degraded ecosystems, an erratic climate, and unpredictable weather patterns that elude human scientific forecasting. Environmental crises can generally be categorized into two types: first, environmental disasters, which are incidents resulting from human actions that disturb ecosystem balance and cause long-term, global damage. This category encompasses issues such as global warming, water and air pollution, and nuclear radiation, among others. Natural disasters are events resulting from natural processes, including earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis (Norfil Laily, 2017). This theory analyzes the depiction of natural or man-made disasters in literary texts and their impact on the environment and society.

Data: *Gunung purba di belahan benua lain meletus. Suara letusannya terdengar hingga 10.000 kilometer saking kerasnya, praktis penduduk radius 200 kilometer dari gunung itu langsung tuli seketika sebelum tahu apa yang terjadi.* (Liye, 2018: 21)

Translation: Ancient mountains on other continents erupted. The sound of the eruption was heard up to 10,000 kilometers so loud, practically the residents within a 200 kilometer radius of the mountain were, immediately deaf before they knew what was happening. (Liye, 2018: 21)

The data above can be considered an ecological disaster. Another example such as extreme drought, rising air temperatures, and the loss of the rain cycle are the impacts of human actions that cause disasters. This is a classic example of the conflict between humans and nature.

3.4 *Interconnection of Human and Dwelling in Tere Liye's Novel Hujan*

Dwelling or residence is not a temporary state, but implies a long-term human settling place in the images of memory, descent and death, ritual, life, and work. This study

discusses models of human habitation. The residence in question is not just a residence but a place to live life. Gerg Gerrad's theory shows how literary texts describe human's relationship with the place of life, which can be home, city, or surrounding natural environment.

Data: *Kota indah mereka telah hancur oleh gempa bumi berkekuatan 10 skala Richter. Sedikit sekali dalam catatan sejarah, ada gempa sekuat itu, yang tenaganya mampu menghancurkan benua. Gedung-gedung bertumbangan, jalan layang rebah, penduduk kota berteriak-teriak, berlarian menyelamatkan diri.* (Liye, 2018: 30)

Translation: Their beautiful city has been devastated by a magnitude 10 earthquake. In very few historical records, there was an earthquake as strong as that, whose power was able to destroy the continent. Buildings fell, flyovers fell, city dwellers screamed, ran for their lives. (Liye, 2018: 30)

This quote highlights the inevitable conflict between humans and nature. Humans try to build civilization on earth, but nature always has the power to destroy everything humans have built. This shows how vulnerable humans are in the face of natural forces. Humans cannot stop natural disasters, and are often victims of powerful natural forces.

3.5 Interconnection of Human and Animal in Tere Liye's Novel Hujan

The idea of animals in ecocritical studies is the study of the relationship between animals and humans. Animals and humans must be aligned in equal rights in a unit of life without having to differentiate between the two. In this way, bad and cruel treatment of animals can be avoided. In Gerg's theory Gerrad shows how literary texts represent animals and the relationship of humans to animals.

Data: *Menatap hamparan sawah, burung-burung terbang di atas padi menguning. Sekarang, semuanya berubah.* (Liye, 2018: 135)

Translation: Staring at the expanse of rice fields, the birds flew over the yellow rice. Now, everything changes. (Liye, 2018: 135)

This data illustrates significant changes in the natural environment. The phrase staring at the expanse of rice fields and the birds flew over the yellow rice depict a harmonious and productive ecosystem. However, the phrase now everything changes indicates disturbance or damage to the ecosystem. These changes occur as a result of human behavior which results in a conflict between human needs for space and resources and the needs of ecosystems and other living creatures.

3.6 Interconnection of Human and Earth in Tere Liye's Novel Hujan

The earth in this study represents life in the future. Earth has been regarded as a fragile, small, and isolated environment. In keeping with the preceding reasons, ecocriticism can also aid in the identification, exploration, and resolution of bigger ecological problems. Literature, as a vehicle for reflecting people's attitudes, beliefs, and responses to their surroundings, has the capacity to express concepts about the environment, particularly environmental wisdom ideals. This is very fair, given that literature evolves, develops, and emerges from society and the natural world.

Data: *Emisi gas menetap di stratosfer hingga puluhan tahun, mengubah iklim dunia. Kota tempat mereka tinggal suhu rata-ratanya sekarang menjadi delapan sampai sepuluh derajat Celsius.* (Liye, 2018: 69)

Translation: Gas emissions remain in the stratosphere for decades, changing the world's climate. The city where they lived the average temperature was now eight to ten degrees Celsius. (Liye, 2018: 69)

Earth is described as the place of life in the future and as a place to live for all living creatures, experiencing drastic changes due to human activities. Increasing global temperatures threaten the survival of many species and change overall environmental conditions. This quote describes the clear conflict between humans and nature. Human activities that produce gas emissions have damaged the balance of nature and threatened human survival itself.

4. CONCLUSION

Garrard emphasized the importance of seeing literature as part of nature and not as something separate from it. This view is in line with the message conveyed by Tere Liye in his novel that humans and nature are one unit that influences each other. The novel *Hujan* by Tere Liye depicts the impact of excessive natural exploitation, climate change and ecological disasters that threaten human survival. This novel invites its readers to reflect on the relationship between humans and nature, as well as the consequences of our actions on the environment. Thus, *Hujan* is not just a literary work, but also a call to an action. The novel invites us to look back on our role as inhabitants of planet Earth and encourages us to seek solutions to increasingly complex environmental problems.

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