



## Representation of Islamic Ecotheology in the Novel “Si Anak Kuat”, Tere Liye

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### **Abstract**

Ecological preservation needs to be done based on natural disparities. Islam teaches that the preservation of nature is also a commandment of Allah which is written in the Al-Qur'an. Literature is one of the good medium in reporting the importance of preserving nature. This study aims to represent the ecotheology of Islam in Tere Liye's novel “Si Anak Kuat”. The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative. Sources of data in this study are documents, namely “Si Anak Kuat” novel by Tere Liye. The technique to collect the data in this study is content analysis. Technique validity of data in this study using triangulation theory. Data analysis techniques using interactive data analysis techniques. The results showed that there are aspects that represent the ecotheology of Islam in Tere Liye's “Si Anak Kuat” novel. The aspects are 1) Tawhid, 2) Khilafah, 3) Amanah, 4) Fairness, and 5) Istislah. Studying Islamic ecotheology is the same as exploring environmental preservation in terms of Islamic teachings.

**Keywords:** *Islamic Ecotheology; Literary Ecocritic; Novel*

### **Introduction**

Islamic ecotheology examines the process of natural management from the perspective of Islamic teachings. The human attitude towards nature needs to be directed to preserve and balance nature. It is intended that humans have responsibility, morals and awareness of their mandate as caliph on earth. This ecological study can educate a positive way of thinking about nature, so that humans have the intelligence to carry out the duties of the Caliphate and fulfill their daily needs. This description makes the attitude to realize aesthetics and appreciation of nature important, this attitude must have an objective and scientific basis, because the appreciation process cannot be realized with mere feelings (As-Sayyidi, 2016: 183-184), (Carlson, 2010) : 292), (Sponsel, 2018: 181).

Amin (2016) revealed that there is exploitation of biological and non-biological diversity. Natural forest in Indonesia has decreased by 72%, per day there is destruction of 400 hectares or 1.46 hectares per year. Water, air and soil pollution increased 13-15 times due to increased industrial development. The condition of the coral reefs that are still in good condition remains at 5.56%. There are 13,931 hectares of land for development in the Jabodetabek area. This is similar to the ecological problems that have occurred in Malaysia (Mamat et al. 2011), (Zainal, 2013: 36) and in Pakistan (Salam, 2011), in the form of large development projects on land, exploitation of timber in forests, and urbanization that have been

changing environmental conditions for the worse, such as river and air pollution, factory waste polluting rivers, and deforestation.

Various attempts have been made to prevent and control environmental pollution through identification and regular observation, planting trees, improving the arrangement and enforcement of government regulations and policies, handling urban domestic waste, increasing regional institutional capacity, and community participation (Pramudyanto 2014: 27). The destruction of the natural ecosystem has led to the phenomenon of the destruction of the global climate, such as the construction of impermeable houses, chaotic urban planning, destruction of natural river channels, and violations of laws securing certain areas to become immediate causes of massive flooding (Ali, 2008).

Many people accuse humans of indifference to nature, it causes the emergence of that natural disaster. The greed of humans who explore natural resources without control, thus damaging the natural ecosystems that have been created by Allah SWT. In fact, for a long time, environmental problems have received serious attention, especially when the exploitation of the environment is carried out excessively which causes environmental damage and impacts on the ecosystem (Arif, 2010).

Various scientific fields try to uncover theories that can be used as an ecological approach. One of these theories is ecotheology. Ecotheology is a form of constructive theology that explains the relationship between religion and nature (interrelationships of religion and nature), especially in terms of the environment. The basis for understanding Ecotheology is the awareness that the environmental crisis is not merely a secular problem, but also an acute religious problem because it originates from a misunderstanding of religion about life and the environment. Through ecotheology, reinterpretation of religious understandings in society, especially regarding the position of humans, their relationships and responsibilities regarding this earth (Quddus, 2012).

In understanding Islamic ecotheology, one needs to study various Islamic teachings first. The basic framework in Islamic teachings is *akidah*, *sharia* and morals which study all processes of human life, both those related to physical and life processes related to non-physical aspects (Daud Ali, 2011: 133), (Fauzi, 2011: 151), (Marzuki, 2012: 77). The three frameworks have their own basis and process for implementing them. Taufik and Rohmadi (2010: 12) state that faith is something that is related to the heart in matters of belief that what has been held firmly in living life is true. The effect is that a person finds a soul that is peaceful, calm and avoids doubts. *Sharia* is a guidance, guidance or way of how humans can get closer to Allah. Isnaniah (2013) states that morals are feelings that are embedded in humans that encourage physical members to carry out an activity spontaneously without any consideration.

Ecology deals with organisms that exist in the environment and all the processes that connect organisms and the environment. The term ecology in literary works is defined by Glotfelty & Fromm (1996), refers to the study of biological themes and relationships that appear in literary works. This is at the same time the role of literature in its efforts to contribute to the preservation of nature. Ecology literature responds to severe environmental problems and offers the potential to address these problems based on ecological knowledge. Scientists warn that currently human civilization is entering a new geological era in the form of anthropocentric (Zalasiewicz, Williams, Haywood & Ellis, 2011).

Literature is an appropriate medium in presenting the value of Islamic Ecotheology in the collection of novels *Serian Anak-Anak Mamak*. Through literature, it is hoped that it can provide awareness to foster a positive attitude towards the surrounding community. So that it can create a clean, beautiful and comfortable environment. In accordance with this, researchers are interested in examining how the representation of Islamic Ecotheology in a literary work which is expected to become a medium for society to open ecological awareness.

Research that examines Islamic ecotheology has previously been carried out by Agtasia Ferdan, Indonesian Language and Literature Education Student, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, in 2019. His thesis examines the ecology of Islamic perspective in Ayu Utami's "Bilangan Fuu" novel. The "Bilangan Fuu" novel contains stories of characters on their adventures to climb mountains. The research examines the events of figures related to nature in the mountains. It means that the scope of Islamic Ecotheology in the "Bilangan Fuu" novel is limited to climbing events. It is different from the research on Islamic Ecotheology in the collection of novels "Si Anak Kuat" Tere Liye which examines Islamic Ecotheology from the point of view of human activities in the home environment and the natural surroundings. The scope of Islamic ecotheology in the practice of dominant human daily activities is illustrated in this story. This is what makes this research different from the Agtasia research. The parallels are in research topics that examine ecology in literary works.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in studying Islamic ecotheology in a literary work. For this reason, this study describes how is the representation of Islamic ecotheology in Tere Liye's novel "Si Anak Kuat"? The novel will be studied through various points of view of the characters in the story. From this study, it is hoped that it can gain public awareness of the importance of nature conservation.

### **Research Method**

This study is a descriptive qualitative research. According to (Creswell, 2015: 173) qualitative research is a method that uses text and images with interesting steps in analyzing data and using various investigation strategies. Qualitative research aims to gain insight into the construction of reality that occurs to be interpreted (Cropley, 2019: 10). The data source in this study is documents. The document that will be studied is the "Si Anak Kuat" novel by Tere Liye. Data collection techniques using content analysis. Content study is a way to draw conclusions by trying to get a message that is carried out objectively and systematically (Weber, 1990: 9). Technique validity of data in this study using triangulation theory. The data analysis technique in this study uses interactive data analysis techniques. Interactive data analysis has the following stages: data collection, data reduction according to the existing problem formulation, arranging reduced data according to the group, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 16).

### **Results and Discussion**

Islamic ecotheology has the view that Islam teaches one's faith is not only measured by the number of levels of ritual or praying in places of worship, but preserving and managing the environment is also fundamental to the perfection of one's faith (Rhofita and Naili, 2018). In its concept, Islamic ecotheology is divided into 5 aspects (Mawardi et al, 2011: 21), namely 1) *Tauhid*, believing that Allah is the only creator, preserver and being who wills for everything that occurs in this universe. 2) *Khilafah*, humans are responsible for this nature. They must always and be enthusiastic in maintaining this nature as a form of servitude to Allah, 3) *Amanah*, humans have the mind to think about how to manage nature without destroying it, 4) *Fair*, the balance of humans and nature can experience disturbance (disharmony). For this reason, the harmony of humans and nature must be maintained, one of which is by preserving nature according to Islamic teachings and 5) *Istishlah*. Initially, istishlah was defined as improvement. However, the main goal of istishlah is to preserve nature, which means creating benefit and welfare for all beings both in the life of this world and the hereafter.

## ***Representation of Islamic Ecotheology in Tere Liye's Novel Si Anak Terbaik***

Islam commands to always take care of the environment for the benefit of mankind. In this context, Islamic teachings related to nature conservation can be pursued in various ways, one of which is through literary works. Islamic ecotheological values in the form of monotheism, caliphate, trustworthiness, justice and *istislah* can be internalized in literary works which act as a bridge between Islamic teachings and the ideology of society. This study examines the ecotheological value of Islam in Tere Liye's novel *Si Anak Strong*. Next, the researcher describes the results of his research analysis.

### ***Tauhid (Tawheed)***

The aspect of tauhid in Islamic ecotheology has a definition that Allah is the only creator, ruler and guardian of this universe. Only Allah has the right to all natural phenomena that occur. Islam teaches this belief so that humans do not associate with it, even humans must realize that the success or failure of what humans plant is the will of Allah. In the "*Si Anak Kuat*" novel by Tere Liye, the concept of tauhid is found in several story contexts. The following is the researcher describing the concept.

(Datum 1)

*"Terima kasih. Sungguh terima kasih. Entah apa pun yang terjadi besok lusa-apakah bibit ini akan berhasil atau tidak, menyaksikan kuncup daun hijau memberikan rasa riang luar biasa. Hari itu, dua ribu bibit kopi kami tumbuh, menjanjikan banyak hal"* batin Amelia (Tere Liye, 2018: 384)

*Dalam sebuah proses perubahan, selalu bagian terpentingnya adalah memulai perubahan tersebut. Persis seperti bola salju yang menggelinding atau barisan kartu yang dirobahkan. Adalah pertama kali bola menggelinding atau kartu dirobahkan, itulah awal segalanya. Sisanya, apakah berhasil hingga ke ujung, membesar, bermanfaat, atau sebaliknya gagal, terhenti, tidak banyak faedahnya adalah hal lain, misteri Tuhan yang di luar kendali kita.* (Tere Liye, 2018: 442).

("Thank you. Really, thank you. Regardless of what happens the day after tomorrow - whether these seeds will succeed or not, watching the green leaf buds gives off a feeling of immense joy. That day, two thousands of our coffee seeds grew, promising many things "thought Amelia (Tere Liye, 2018: 384)

In a change process, the most important part is always initiating the change. Just like a snowball rolling down or a line of cards being knocked down. It's the first time the ball rolls or a card is knocked down, that's how it started. The rest, whether successful to the end, enlarge, beneficial, or otherwise fail, stop, of little use is something else, those are a mystery of God which is beyond our control. (Tere Liye, 2018: 442).).

The quote above, Amelia seems to be having a good time because the coffee seeds she planted have finally grown. In another context, she gave up on the custodian of the success or failure of the coffee program in the future. This context illustrates that Amelia has a belief in accordance with the concept of tauhid in Islamic teachings which states that the success or failure of a planting program carried out by humans is the will of Allah alone, just like Amelia's expression in the quote above which states "*Sisanya, apakah berhasil hingga ke ujung, membesar, bermanfaat, atau sebaliknya gagal, terhenti, tidak banyak faedahnya adalah hal lain, misteri Tuhan yang di luar kendali kita*" (The rest, whether successful to the end, enlarge, useful, or vice versa fail, stop, not much benefit is something else, the mystery of God beyond our control). Humans are only able to try to carry out the program as best they can. Allah has

many ways in determining the success or failure of Amelia's coffee planting program. The statement that only Allah has the will for the success or failure of the planting program carried out by humans can be proven in the following quote.

(Datum 2)

*Banjir bandang terjadi, air bergulung dengan tinggi tiga meter tumpah dari lembah bagian atas..... hilang sudah dua ribu batang kopi subur yang berbaris dengan rapi..... "Tidak ada yang bisa disalahkan, Amel." Mamak dan Bapak memeluk bahu, mencoba menenangkan. "Ini di luar kuasa kita. Allah menghendaki lain." (Tere Liye, 2018: 446-447).*

(A flash flood occurred, water rolling three meters high spilled from the upper valley ..... gone were already two thousand stalks of lush coffee lined up neatly ..... "There's nothing to blame, Amel." *Mamak and Bapak* hugged my shoulders, trying to calm me down. "It is beyond our control. God wants something else.") (Tere Liye, 2018: 446-447).

The quotation above states clearly that the natural phenomenon in the form of flash floods has made a program run by Amelia's character in the form of coffee seed seeding a failure. Amelia's character was delighted when green leaf buds had grown and was convinced of the success of her program. The opinion that states that humans are only able to do their best in growing these coffee seeds and Allah as the determinant is in fact proven by the existence of flash floods. Allah is the only one who wishes to bag the universe. The belief in the will of Allah is also seen through the expressions of the father and Mamak figures who state "*Ini di luar kuasa kita. Allah menghendaki lain*" (This is beyond our power. Allah wants something else). This expression also clarifies the existence of the ecotheological value of Islam in the aspect of tauhid those readers can digest and understand in the novel *Si Anak Strong*. Tere Liye's work.

Apart from the above quotation, the aspects of Islamic ecotheology monotheism in Tere Liye's novel *Si Anak Ungu* are also included in the following quote.

(Datum 3)

*"Jika matahari di orbitnya tidak bergerak dan terus diam, Tentu manusia bosan padanya dan enggan memandang Bijih emas bagaikan tanah biasa sebelum digali dari tambang Kayu gaharu (cendana) tak ubahnya seperti kayu biasa jika didalam hutan." (Tere Liye, 2018: 374).*

"If the sun in its orbit does not move and continues to stay still, of course humans are bored with it and are reluctant to look at gold ore like ordinary soil before being excavated from the mine. Agarwood (sandalwood) is like ordinary wood in the forest." (Tere Liye, 2018: 374).

The quotation above shows the novelist who believes in Allah's Unity. He illustrates to the reader that God's power over the universe is vast. This quote explains that Allah wills the eye to move in its orbit. It is not possible for humans to move the sun. By the power and will of Allah, the sun moves in its orbit and provides heat energy to the planets around it. The selection of good diction by the author illustrates how great the power of God is. In terms of environmental preservation, this diction is able to convey the value contained in the story. That way, the hope of giving knowledge about the importance of protecting the environment can be conveyed well through the novel *Si Anak Strong*.

### ***Khilafah (Caliphate)***

The concept of caliphate is built on the basis of God's choice and human willingness to become God's vicegerent on earth. As representatives of Allah, then humans are obliged to represent the attributes

of Allah. Humans must be active and responsible to protect the earth. As representatives of Allah on earth, humans must always carry out God's commands and stay away from Allah's prohibitions, in this context something related to nature. The attitude that shows a khilafah is having the spirit to protect and care for the earth considering that this is a command of Allah. The following is a quote that contains aspects of the caliphate presented by the author in "Si Anak Kuat" novel.

(Datum 4)

*"Kata Pak Bin, penduduk kampung kami itu memang rajin-rajin. Sepagi ini, hujan tidak membuat mereka mengeluh, apalagi menunda pekerjaan. Aku menguap, menggaruk rambut. Aku selalu suka hujan, itu selalu special"* (Tere Liye, 2018: 6).

"Pak Bin said, the people in our village are very diligent. This early morning, the rain didn't make them complain, much less delay work. I yawned, scratched my hair. I always like rain, it's always special "(Tere Liye, 2018: 6).

In quote above, the character Pak Bin stated that the people in his village are diligent at work. In the story, the majority of the work of the villagers used as the background of the story are coffee farmers. The enthusiasm of the residents illustrates how serious they are in managing the coffee land. Apart from getting a nominal value, another reason is their love for the land in the village where they live. They take care of it as well as possible so that their village is not arid and can take the best benefit from the harvest. The illustration also shows the nature of a caliphate on earth. They care for and protect the environment around them from damage. The quote in the form of "*hujan tidak membuat mereka mengeluh, apalagi menunda pekerjaan*" (rain does not make them complain, let alone delay work) shows their strong zeal in managing and caring for Allah's creation. This kind of attitude should be exemplified by readers as a comparison in today's instantaneous life to always be passionate about caring for the surrounding environment.

In another context in the "Si Anak Kuat" novel by Tere Liye, the aspect of the caliphate is also contained in the quote below.

(Datum 5)

*"Panen kopi itu tidak rumit. Kita tinggal memetik buah kopi dari tangkai pohonnya. Memasukkannya ke dalam keranjang. Satu demi satu tangkai, selesai satu pohon dipetik seluruh buahnya. Pindah ke pohon sebelahnya. Terus begitu hingga keranjang terasa berat digendong. Keranjang dibawa ke pondok. Buah kopi ditumpahkan ke dalam karung. Lantas kembali ke lokasi sebelumnya, melanjutkan panen kopi hingga seluruh pohon kopi telah dipetik semua"*. (Tere Liye, 2018: 200).

"Coffee harvesting is not complicated. We just need to pick the coffee fruit from the tree stalk. Put it in the basket. One by one stalk, all the fruit is picked from one tree. Move to the tree next to it. Keep doing this until the basket feels heavy to hold. The basket is brought to the hut. The coffee cherries are spilled into the sack. Then return to the previous location, continue to harvest coffee until all the coffee trees have been picked". (Tere Liye, 2018: 200).

Datum 5 above shows the success of the villagers in managing their coffee plants. They flocked to harvest the coffee that had been treated before. Humans as khilafah on earth must be able to make the best use of the various creations of Allah. In the quote above, society shows how to harvest coffee properly so that the harvest can be harvested as a whole. From these events, readers can take lessons that the use of nature properly and correctly will provide benefits for them. The author describes the atmosphere of the story well so that the reader can feel the events in the story. The hope is that the value of this aspect of the caliphate can be transferred to the ideology of the readers.

### ***Amanah (Trustworthiness)***

Everything on earth is intended for humans, but everything is only for safekeeping. Humans have the mind to think about how to manage nature in order to avoid damage. There are limitations in managing nature. Further, human nature is greedy. They must be able to use their intellect not to cross the boundaries of managing nature. The mandate aspect in Tere Liye's novel "Si Anak Kuat" is contained in the following quote.

(Datum 6)

*"Jangan penuh-penuh, Amel." Kak Eli menahan tanganku yang hendak menambah kayu bakar di keranjangku. "Jalan setapak licin, tidak mudah dilewati." (Tere Liye, 2018: 82).*

"Don't be full, Amel." Sis Eli held my hand which was about to add firewood on my basket. "The path is slippery, not easy to pass." (Tere Liye, 2018: 82).

In the quote above, the character Eliana detains the Amelia character from continuing to take logs from the forest. This is because if the loads they carry are too heavy, they can slip on slippery paths. In addition, in utilizing nature there are also limitations. Eliana's character in this story illustrates an attitude of trust. The image is shown through the phrase "*Jangan penuh-penuh, Amel*" (Do not be full, Amel). This was done by Eliana so that the natural balance was maintained and protected from damage. If the basket is full and it feels heavy, then that can also hurt him. This attitude is a representation of the mandate aspect. Through Eliana character, readers can imitate her attitude to become a trustworthy human in managing nature.

### ***Adil (Fair)***

The balance between humans and nature can be disturbed (dis-harmony). For this reason, the harmony of humans and nature must be maintained, one of which is by preserving nature according to Islamic teachings. The following is a quote that contains a fair aspect in Tere Liye's novel Si Anak Kuat. (Datum 7)

*"Seluruh penduduk kampung datang saat musim menebar benih, seperti pesta. Karung-karung bibit dipikul pemuda dan lelaki dewasa. Panci berisi makanan dibawa gadis-gadis kampung dan ibu-ibu. Beramai-ramai. Lantas tetua kampung, biasanya Wak Yati, akan menyenandungkan gurindam tentang rasa syukur kepada Tuhan dan 'kebaikan alam'" (Tere Liye, 2018: 10).*

"All the villagers come during the season for sowing seeds, like a party. Youth and adult men carry the sacks of seeds. The pot of food was brought by the village girls and the mothers. Many of you. Then the village elders, usually Wak Yati would hum the gratitude to God and 'the goodness of nature' (Tere Liye, 2018: 10).

The quote above shows the harmonization of three sides, namely from the human side, the natural side and from the side of Allah. The human side benefits from the land that can be used as a coffee growing field, from the natural side it becomes well-groomed and fertile, and from the side of Allah who will continue to add to the blessings of those who are always grateful. In addition, justice is also reflected in the activities of the population. For men who have more strength than women, they are tasked with lifting sacks of coffee seeds. For women, preparing food and drinks for men who are tired after lifting the sack. The harmonization that occurred in this incident was the result of the continued fairness. The author

describes every event in the story by highlighting positive values. So, readers can imitate it to create a comfortable and peaceful environment as a representation of fairness.

### **Istislah**

Istislah originally meant improvement. However, the main goal of istislah is to preserve nature in order to create benefit and welfare for all beings both in the life of this world and the hereafter. Humans as creatures who have reason can certainly use it with a variety of knowledge that can benefit mankind. Knowledge in managing nature will be very beneficial for human survival and the preservation of nature itself. In Tere Liye's novel "Si Anak Kuat", the Istislah aspect can be found in the following quote.

(Datum 8)

*"Itulah salah-satu jawaban kenapa kemiskinan, keterbatasan, bisa dikalahkan dengan ilmu pengetahuan. Tentu kerja keras menjadi syarat utamanya. Akan tetapi jika ditambah sedikit ilmu pengetahuan, petani kampung kita bisa hidup lebih makmur dan berkecukupan. Ya, Amel?" kata Pak Bin. (Tere Liye, 2018: 95)*

"That is one of the answers to why poverty, limitations, can be defeated by science. Of course, hard work is the main requirement, but if you add a little knowledge, our village farmers can live more prosperously. Is it right, Amel?" said Mr. Bin. (Tere Liye, 2018: 95)

In datum 8 above, the character Pak Bin provides advice from the head of Amel regarding solutions to overcoming poverty and limitations. Pak Bin's character shows that science is the answer to Amel's question. According to Pak Bin, armed with knowledge, the villagers can develop their coffee farms so that the yields become more valuable. That way, the villagers can get out of the shackles of poverty and limitations. In addition, life in the village is also more prosperous and more prosperous. This Istislah aspect is illustrated by the attitude of the character Pak Bin who states that science can improve the condition of the villagers and the management of coffee plants. The representation of the istislah aspect conveyed by the Pak Bin figure aims to benefit the lives of all the inhabitants of the village. The author presents this aspect through the questions of a student and the answers of a teacher who is wise in giving advice. The diction that is used also makes it easy for the reader to understand and feel the situation in the village so that they are moved to act according to the values contained.

The author's representation of Islamic ecotheology in the "Si Anak Kuat" novel is beautifully described through various events related to humans, nature and God. This novel is one of the recommendations for the nation's children in the millennial era to always protect, care for and add insight in managing nature. Thus, human survival in the present and the future will feel comfortable and peaceful.

### **Conclusion**

The representation of Islamic ecotheology in Tere Liye's novel "Si Anak Kuat" is as follows. 1) *Tauhid*, the belief that Allah is the creator, preserver and source of life for all creatures, 2) *Khilafah*, this concept is built on the basis of Allah's choice and the willingness of humans to become the Caliph of Allah on earth. As representatives of God, humans are obliged to represent the attributes of God. Humans must be active and responsible for protecting the earth, 3) *Amanah*, everything that is on earth is intended for humans, but everything is only a deposit. Humans have the mind to think about how to manage nature in order to avoid damage, 4) *Adil*, the balance between humans and nature can experience disruption (disharmony). For this reason, the harmony of humans and nature must be maintained, one of which is by

preserving nature according to Islamic teachings, and 5) *Istishlah*, which means improvement. The main purpose of *istishlah* is to preserve nature, which means to create benefit and welfare for all beings both in the life of this world and the hereafter. With science, humans can create benefits for the surrounding community.

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