P-ISSN 2355-2794
E-ISSN 2461-0275

Representation of Ecocriticism in the Folklore of *Mak Ungkai* Spirit[1]

Tomi Arianto*
Dairi Sapta Rindu Simanjuntak

Department of English, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universitas Putera Batam, Batam 29439, INDONESIA

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study is to analyze the relationship between human and nature behind the story of Mak Ungkai by using the ecocritical approach. The informants in this study are the native Malay people who live in Tanjung Kertang village, Batam, Indonesia. They were determined by looking at relevant backgrounds based on the research theme: they are the Malay generation, both young and old, know about the Malay folklore of Mak Ungkai Spirit, have profession and activities at the sea, and reflect the representation of families in Tanjung Kertang village. Based on those criteria, the researchers finally chose 25 respondents to conduct in-depth interviews. These interviews were recorded by using the audio recorder and camera. The results indicated that the relationship between nature and humans behind the story of Mak Ungkai Spirit could be seen from the position of nature as human subjects and objects. The position of nature as a subject included nature as mother of earth, nature as caring ethic, and nature as holistic. Meanwhile, nature as an object is reflected from exploitation of nature and violence. This study is related with the local wisdom and culture in Indonesia. Therefore, international and local environmental non-government organizations related with social and humanity can use the result of this study for preservation of the local culture and environment, and among them is through the local wisdom.

Keywords: Ecocritic, *Mak Ungkai* spirit, human, nature, local wisdom.

[1] Some parts of the research results were presented at the *2nd English Education International Conference (EEIC) in conjunction with the 9th Annual International Conference*, held on September 18-19, 2019 at Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

* Corresponding author, email: tomy2088.ta@gmail.com

Citation in APA style: Arianto, T., & Simanjuntak, D. S. R. (2020). Representation of ecocriticism in the folklore of *Mak Ungkai* spirit. *Studies in English Language and Education, 7*(2), 576-591.

Received May 31, 2020; Revised July 26, 2020; Accepted August 14, 2020

https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v7i2.16822

1. INTRODUCTION

Batam is famous as one of the major industrial cities in the Indonesian region. Since 1970, through Presidential Decree No. 74/1971, Batam has been designated as a bonded zone for the establishment of the Batam development authority and business entity (Pernando, 2018). As an industrial city, Batam become a magnet that attracts large-scale migration from outside the city to seek fortune and improve its economy and prosperity. Even with the implementation of the Free Trade Zone (FTZ) in 2009, the investors attracted to open a large-scale industry in Batam city (Aritenang, 2017). Behind the dark industrial city of Batam and the opening of employment opportunities for residents outside Batam, industrialization has a significant impact especially on nature and the environment. Wicaksono (2018), a Batam environmental activist, said that the biggest damage to the natural environment in Batam was mainly caused by industrial logging, residential areas, sea reclamation, and industrial waste pollution.

One of the efforts to restore public concern for the environment is to inspire local wisdom and culture. One of them is by re-absorbing the traditions and habits of the local people. For Malay people in Batam, the folklore of *Mak Ungkai* spirit has a very significant story for their local wisdom and culture. *Mak Ungkai* raised the horror myth about the spirit that disturbs humans, especially fishermen. But it also evokes restrictions and recommendations that bring people closer to nature. It is relevant to the issue of local wisdom through the community traditions behind the spirit of *Mak Ungkai* myth. According to Ratna (2011), local wisdom is a binding in the form of culture that already exists so that it is based on its existence. Local wisdom as a culture is created by local actors through an interactive process through norms and religion so that it becomes a way of life. So, it is clear that the story of *Mak Ungkai* is part of local wisdom because it contributed to community trough culture and tradition that are still believed and held firmly by its adherents.

Myth is part of oral literature which is identified as a form of local wisdom that can be explored. Oral literature is a group of texts that are transmitted and passed down orally from generation to generation (Nasir, 2015; Omolewa, 2007). Intrinsically, myths contain literary work that contains aesthetics in the moral and cultural relations of society (Taum, 2011), whereas, Atmazaki (2007) defined oral literature as referring to spoken literary texts. Oral literature can be in the form of folklore, myths, fables, folk songs and poetry. The Spirit of *Mak Ungkai* story is a story that is told from generation to generation about myths that are believed to exist. It can be said that *Mak Ungkai*'s story is a part of Malay oral literature. As part of literature, *Mak Ungkai*'s story can be studied with literary theories; one of them is the theory of ecocriticism.

Ecocritism is the new approach that could be used to analyze literary work. Ecocritic in literary work is an approach to understand cultural artefacts, both through oral and written forms. The ability to investigate cultural artefacts from an ecological perspective began to brush up when Garrard (2004) began to introduce them through various articles and papers in seminars. Ecocritics is the perspective of studies that seek to analyze literature from an environmental perspective. This study seeks to observe that the environmental crisis raises not only technical, religious and political questions, but also cultural issues related to literary phenomena. Efforts to critically examine literature from environmental aspects have led to a relatively new discipline called literary ecocritics. Habits that occur in literary ecocriticism are presenting cultural phenomena, climate, and environmental changes in literature.

In analyzing literature using ecocritic theory, some concepts can be used. Garrard (2004) offers his concept related to human relations and nature in the perspective of nature as a subject and object. Nature as the subject of life divided into mother of earth, caring ethic, and holistic nature. Mother of earth, as the first concept by Garrard (2004), means that nature is the guardian and balancer of life. Humans are the guardians of nature with their consciousness without reward and freedom. Caring ethic in the sense of the relationship between humans and nature must have an ethic of guarding one another with its own method. Humans and nature have conscience awareness that is close together and feel each other. The third relationship between human and nature can be seen from the concept of holistic nature. Holistic equates to medicine for healing in terms of overcoming various problems that exist with different perspectives. Therefore, the emergence of holistic actions is considered capable of overcoming environment destruction.

Nature as an object places the unbalance relationship between humans and nature. Humans are positioned as subjects and nature as human objects. Garrard (2004) offers two theoretical concepts called exploitation and violence. Natural exploitation comes from the greed of humans who use nature without regard to the environment. Exploitation is done by draining the natural resources as much as possible and leaving after they run out. Furthermore, violence is an act of violence committed by humans against nature. Violence is carried out against natural ecosystems such as plants, coral reefs, marine and terrestrial animals.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Ecocritics

Ecocritics is introduced in the 1970s at a conference called The Western Literature Association (Wiyatmi, 2017). At the conference, the use of the term ecocriticism were first explained by William Rueckert through his article on the literary and ecology, about the experiment of ecocriticism phenomena (Rueckert, 1978). This term then became very dominant before the western literature association was re-implemented in 1989. Since then, the term ecocriticism has been widely used as an approach in literary research, especially in America. Literary ecocritic focused on discussing literature and the environment. It means that the human environment is the basis for the emergence of literary works. Literary ecocritic is an attempt to understand cultural artefacts both oral and written (Garrard, 2004). Ecocritics is one of the methods in ecology which aimed to reveal the interrelationship between humans, literature and the environment (Glotfelty, 1996). Pranoto (2014) argued that ecocritical literature has several criteria, namely the language used contains much ecological diction, the content of the work is based on love on earth. Ecocritical literature must be able to influence people's mind sets and attitudes towards the destruction of the earth. This is in accordance with the vision and mission of green literature, namely literature that plays a role in awareness and enlightenment that is expected to change the lifestyle of the destroyer into a preserver caring for the earth (Bergthaller, 2018).

Through literary works, literary critics try to criticize natural disasters and damage caused by human activities, directly or indirectly. Through the narration of the character and the narrator, the writer tries to deconstruct human behavior that causes

natural disasters and damage (Hambrick, 2010). Literary works are born from an ecosystem of social life, nature, and culture. Ecocriticism is a literary flow of criticism that pay attention to the environment. Literary ecocriticism usually begins to get thirst for studies of ecological aspects which are also part of literary ecology. Literary ecology is an environmental condition that surrounds the growth and development of literature (Roode, 2008).

According to Mahayana (2008) awareness about the importance of the environment in human life has long been echoed by writers. They always reminded the importance of brotherhood with the world around them and emphasized the need for humans to establish a harmonious relationship with nature. Friendship with nature and the poet's concern for the environment has placed nature and the environment as an endless source of inspiration. Philips (2003) said that the importance of ecological knowledge is not only to see the harmony and stability of the environment but also to know human attitudes and behavior. Therefore, ecocritical analysis is interdisciplinary which encompasses other disciplines, namely literature, culture, philosophy, sociology, psychology, environmental history, politics and economics, and religious studies. This research connected literary works, the environment (ecology), and the reciprocal relationship between humans and nature by using ecocritical theory with the research data in The Spirit of *Mak Ungkai* story or floklore.

2.2 The Folklore of Mak Ungkai Spirit

The spirit of *Mak Ungkai* story begins with a mythical story about the anxiety of Malay people when trying to catch fish at the sea. *Mak Ungkai* has other spirit's brothers named *Awang Jangkung* and *Datuk Jerapang*. Both of them are the spirit of the sea that frightens and disturbs fishermen. They like to sink ships, kidnap fishermen, and throw fishermen's nets with poisonous fish. It can be seen from one of the villager's story on *Mak Ungkai*: *"tak silap mate, Mak Ungkai sigap melempar penangkap ikan same ikan lepu, sembilang, dan utik jahan bersengat. Ikan tu berbahaye sangat, bisa mati orang dibuatnye"* (invisible to the eye, *Mak Ungkai* can throw fishermen with *lepu* fish, *sembilang* fish, and *utik jahan* fish. The fish are very dangerous; fishermen can be stung by these poisonous fish).

Then, once upon a time, a person was stranded by the sea known as Shaykh Johan, a pious person from the other side of the land of Batam. Malay people in Batam decided to bring him to their settlement. After the Shaykh was healthy, the people asked for help from the pious man to expel the spirit of *Mak Ungkai* that was troubling the residents. Sheikh Johan recited spells so that the spirit of *Mak Ungkai* stopped disturbing the residents. Nevertheless, the folklore reminds the people that the spirit of *Mak Ungkai* had expressed her anger because the Malay people no longer protected the nature. Many people break traditions, do not follow the culture, and destroy nature. That was what invited *Mak Ungkai*'s anger, so she is known to still disturb the Malay fishermen who does not abide to the rules of the sea.

2.3 Research on Ecocriticism in Literature Studies

There are some researchers who used as approaches. Sultzbach's article elevated the ecocriticism of modernist views in the story of Foster, Woolf, and readers. He reminded that divisions, cheosmuses, and negative spaces that characterize modernist

writing as evidence of modernist attention to the ecocritical principle (Sultzbach, 2017). Gifford (2009) also analyzed the national, linguistic and ecological complexity of contemporary Scottish poetry with a post-colonialist ecocritical approach related to the environment and culture. Another article related to a case study of Byzantine ecocritics that explores the zoomorphic and endomorphic issues in the medieval, romance story inspired by studying literary and cultural relations written by (Goldwyn, 2016). Another ecocritical research has raised themes on homeland narratives, ecocritics and Graham Swift's plot written by Bracke (2018). His article explained that water land's natural writings invite an approach where ecocriticism filled with narratology underscores that shaping the perception of natural world. In addition, this ecocritical criticism reflected the disclosure of the destruction of economic factors on the environment and life below the poverty line at Amherst, Massachusetts after the world war (Babcock, 2012). Another article which can be used as references entitled traditional expressions in traditional marriage community ceremonies Bajo on Balu Island, West Muna Regency, Indonesia (Anton, 2015). Uniawati (2014) analysed the fishermen's novel in the northern sea with an ecocritical approach also found about the symbiotic relationship between humans and the environment. This article discussed the creation of harmonious and romantic images which concern in protecting and loving the nature. Related with the used of feminism in ecocritical theory, Arianto (2018) described that there is a correlation between doctrine, women and nature. Humans constructed a doctrine through natural phenomena that sometimes produced justifications about the female body.

Akhmadieva et al. (2019) in their article used the noxological approach in his research related to environmental preservation and the safety of human activities to fight the dangers of modern risks carried out by humans on environmental sustainability. Taufik and Farnanda (2019) also analyzed students' attitudes in Aceh universities related to religious fundamentalism with the local wisdom of the Acehnese people. Yuspin et al. (2019) raised the theme of local wisdom through regional regulations in Aceh as the effort to restore culture as a reflection in people's ways of thinking. Othman et al. (2019) can also be used as a reference by examining the issues and challenges of the future media industry. He analyzed the fate of the media due to the development of digital journalism which threatened the print media newspaper. Articles related to phenomena could be found also in Juanda (2018), a research that raise the theme of environmental exploitation in the Indonesian Sunday newspaper short story with an ecocritical approach. All of these studies addressed the theme of ecocriticism and local wisdom. This research, however, focus more deeply about the Malay people who are marginalized by analyzing their folklore through an ecocritical approach.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study used a qualitative method. According to Creswell (2010), the qualitative method is a research method that is used to examine the condition of natural objects, where researchers are key instruments in the sense of understanding phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior,

perception, motivation, and action. This research used qualitative method because it moves from the phenomenon of Malay society presented behind the story of *Mak Ungkai* spirit.

3.2 Data Collection

Data collection techniques in this research were performed through observations and interviews. Types of observations are divided into two, namely pure observation and participant observation. Pure observation is done where the researchers only observed without being directly involved in community activities, while participant observation is done by the researcher directly involved in various activities and practices of community life (Singarimbun, 1995). In this study, the observation technique conducted by researchers was pure observation by visiting the research location in Tanjung Kertang village, Sebulang Islands, Batam, Indonesia. At the research location, the researchers observed many things relevant to the research theme, including:

- The daily activities of fishermen in Tanjung Kertang village that Are related to *patang larang* (Malay's prohibition and taboo) from the folklore of *Mak Ungkai* spirit.
- People's habits in protecting the marine environment as a form of preventing natural destruction and disasters.
- The implementation of the tradition of protecting the marine environment which is still carried out by the young generation of Tanjung Kertang village.
- The results of this observation were recorded in a notebook that were further used for analyzing the relationship of humans and nature behind the story of *Mak Ungkai* spirit. Malay community activities are also recorded using a camera in the form of photos and videos.

In addition to observation, researchers also used data collection techniques with interviews. The informants chosen in this in-depth interview are representations of each generation of Malay people in Tanjung Kertang Village. Respondents were determined by looking at relevant backgrounds based on the research theme. The backgrounds of respondents are the Malay generation both young and old, those who knows about the folklore of *Mak Ungkai* spirit, have profession and activities at the sea, and reflect the representation of family in Tanjung Kertang village. Based on those criteria, the researchers chose 25 respondents to conduct in-depth interviews. The people interviewed in Tanjung Kertang were:

- Representatives of the oldest generation of Malay people: AK (107 years old, an ex-fisherman), AU (67 years old, an ex-fisherman), AB (60 years old), and AHM (63 years old, an ex-fisherman).
- Representative of the second generation of oldest housewives: UJ (72 years old, a house wife).
- Representatives of the young generation of Malay people: M (56 years old, the chief of the village), HR (60 years old, a religion teacher), MB (54 years old, a fisherman), MK (42 years old, a fisherman), MA (45 years old, a fisherman), MK (40 years old, a fisherman), MT (54 years old, manager of Setokok beach), MN (51 years old)), UR (46 years old, a house wife), MD (42 years old, a house wife), UM (51 years old, a house wife).

- Representative of the second generation of oldest housewives: MS (48 years old, a housewife)
- Representative of the millennial generation: KH (18 years old), SU (20 years old), JO (16 years old), MA (18 years old), NB (16 years old), IM (21 years old), WA (20 years old), and MI (19 years old).

Interviews were conducted in a structured manner in which the researchers have prepared in advance a list of questions to be asked. The questions were related to the ecocritical theory, that is about the relationship between nature and humans. The interview was conducted during their free time so that they could answer the questions freely without haste. The interview was recorded using an audio recorder.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data obtained from subsequent observations and interviews were processed in detail with the following orders:

1) Listened carefully to the source of research data, both primary and secondary data that has been collected from the research location.
2) Performed data source reduction, which was selecting data sources that were relevant to the research variable, while irrelevant data sources were ignored.
3) Transcribed the recording of the interview results, then translate the data into English.
5) Re-read carefully the data processed.
6) Identified and classified the data based on the themes that emerged in data with regard to the ecocritical theory.

In order to examine more deeply the structural analysis of the story of the spirit of *Mak Ungkai*, the researchers draw it into the concept of ecocriticism as conveyed by Garrard (2004). Thus, researchers linked the relationship between the stories with the environment. In the story, there are many phenomena of human life represented by Malay society. Ecocritical analysis in this case, further shows how the relationship between humans and nature behind the story of the Spirit *Mak Ungkai*. The relationship between humans and nature is categorized into two theoretical concepts; nature as the subject of life and nature as a human object. All of these relationships are examined by reducing and classifying research data from interview results. The position of nature as a subject included nature as mother earth, nature as a caring ethic, and nature as holistic, while nature as an object is reflected from exploitation of nature and violence.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicated that by using Garrard's (2004) ecocritical theory, the relationship between nature and humans could be seen from the position of nature placed as subjects and objects of human. The position of nature is placed as a human subject conceptualized in three terms, namely, mother of earth, nature as caring ethic, and nature as holistic. The spirit of *Mak Ungkai* as a representation of nature is displayed paradoxically by deconstructing the character that has been considered as an antagonist. The caring ethic is a manifestation of the mother's earth representation, where the spirit of *Mak Ungkai* displayed as protecting nature against the destruction

and exploitation by human activities. Nature as holistic is the prevention of nature. It is proven by the involvement of social norms formed by the Malay people. The result of this prevention not only preserved the environment but also placed and involved nature as a healer in preserving the environment.

Furthermore, the positioning of nature as a human object is reflected in two aspects in the terminology of ecocritics, called exploitation of nature and violence. Behind *Mak Ungkai*'s *patang larang* (Malay's prohibition and taboo), they implied a variety of human behaviors that are obsessed with conquering nature. The obsessions then lead to distortions in the form of exploitation of natural resources without responsibility. Violence is shown from the human activities toward the ecosystems by contaminating the ocean with direct physical and indirect activities (ethically and morally). A further explanation that describes the relationship between nature and humans behind the spirit of *Mak Ungkai* story is explained in the next sub-sections.

4.1 Nature as Mother of Earth

Mother of earth itself is actually closer to the word 'mother'. The ecological conception is more drawn into the point of view of women or ecofeminism (Warren, 2000). This study does not specifically focus on this point, but the relationship between ecology and women is quite significant to be examined into the characterization in a story (Candraningrum, 2013). It can be seen from the characterization of *Mak Ungkai* as a frightening and avoidable woman spirit figure. If deconstructed, the presence of the women character as represented by *Mak Ungkai* as an antagonist in the story becomes a paradoxical form. Her role as an antagonistic woman is turning to the character as a guardian of nature, balancing between human and nature, even protecting the destruction of nature by human greed. It can be seen from AF's statement in interview (E refers to excerpts):

E1 *Ketike melaot fokus pade tujuan, kalau ade yang datang tibe mintak hasel laot, bagi saje dan segere balek, mungkin saje itu jelmaan hantu laut, hantu laut bukan sekadar mengacau tapi jugak sebagai penunggu dan penjage laot lepas. Sampai mase kini kami percaye akan hal itu.* [When going to the sea, focus on the goal, if suddenly there is a sudden person coming to ask for the fish, just give what is requested and go home immediately. That could be the incarnation of a sea ghost. Sea ghosts are not just annoying but also as guardians and watchmen of the high seas. Until now, we still believe they exist.]

At a glance, E1 shows the fear of the Malay people of the spirit of *Mak Ungkai*. On the other hand, *Mak Ungkai* is actually the guidance of the sea and a reminder to human. The expressions "incarnation" and "ask for fish" contain significance which shows that the spirit of the sea is a reminder of humans to not be greedy, willing to give, and immediately return home if the fish catch is sufficient. Warren (2000), in his concept of social ecofeminism, explained that women have the ability to harmonize nature. Women are depicted as being close and caring for nature. The word 'mother' as an expression shows that the earth is a place to live for all living things. It is represented in the figure of *Mak Ungkai* spirit as a woman guardian of nature as she is closest to nature.

The spirit of *Mak Ungkai* is indeed as an image that is configured as a horrible woman; paradoxically she is also feared by everyone. This is in line with what was delivered by AB who said:

E2 "*Alo ingat-ingat cerite rang tue tentang antu laot, berat rasenye nak tejon ke ae. Serase ade yang mengiring disampan"* [if I remember the story of sea ghosts from my parents, I do sometimes feel that the boat is heavy making it is hard to go to the sea, as if someone is accompanying me in the boat].

Like the answers from other sources, the story of *Mak Ungkai* is a myth conveyed by word of mouth. Even though they did not see it directly, the terrible shadow of *Mak Ungkai* still accompanied the fishermen's fishing activities. Community conventions about the figure of *Mak Ungkai* as a woman on one side has put her into "elimination" but on the other hand, as a threat and feared. The female figure that is eliminated in *Mak Ungkai*'s story is also revealed in the interview with AHM:

E3 *Sosok Mak Ungkai memang diibaratkan seperti nenek tua yang menakutkan, mengeluarkan bau busuk dan suara yang menggelegar. Ia ditakuti semua nelayan, hanya nelayan yang tak kuat dengan iman atau punya hati yang kotor. Ia tahu betul bagaimana niat orang ingin melaut.* [The figure of *Mak Ungkai* spirit was indeed like a fearsome old grandmother, giving off a foul odor and a thunderous sound. She is feared by all fishermen, especially fishermen who are not strong in faith or have a dirty heart. She knows exactly people's intention before sailing.]

E3 also affirms that the figure of *Mak Ungkai* is more than a horrible woman. Community conventions who put women as 'abnormal and elimination' are also implied trough the characters described, such as foul odors and booming voices. If it is associated with a women's convention, it is a woman who is fussy, angry but feared by men. The fisherman profession, which is generally carried out by men, is a natural reason for the conventions for depicting women. The 'feared' statement in E3 shows that *Mak Ungkai's* figure is not only a submissive woman but also a ruler of the ocean. Likewise, with the ability to read one's dirty mind implied that *Mak Ungkai* is also 'the mother of earth' or the guardian of the ocean.

4.2 Nature as Caring Ethic

Caring ethic in the case of the relationship between humans and nature refers to an ethic of guarding one another (Dreese, 2002). Humans and nature have conscience awareness that is close together and can feel each other. The ethics of preserving nature in the story are reflected in the taboos and prohibitions. In the Malay tradition behind the spirit of *Mak Ungkai* story, many things become prohibitions when going to sea. This can be reflected in the statement expressed by AR and AM in E4:

E4 *Kalau pegi ke laot banyak patang yang kene di jage oleh masyarakat Melayu. Semisalnye tak boleh cakap koto dekat laot, membao pehiasan atau bende logam mulie, mencaci, memaki, apelagi melakukan perbuatan yang dilarang, contohnye macam ngambek barang yang tetinggal sebelom melaot, kuceng kumbang melintas sebelom kite pegi kelaot, buang aer sembarang, dan lain-lain.* [If you go to the sea, there are many restrictions that must be maintained by the Malay fishermen. For example, you may not

talk dirty while the sea, berate and curse, bring jewelry or precious metals, do immoral deeds, take back items left behind before going to sea, black cat crossing when you go to sea, urinating wherever he likes, and so on.]

E4 shows that it is not just a taboo or prohibition for Malay people, but also a reflection of local wisdom that leads to the ethics of protecting nature. Swear words, for example, are prohibited in the middle of the sea. Nature is a form of beauty, and so, as a form of beauty, it will be undoubtedly tainted with the use of bad languages. Of course, this will invite the anger of *Mak Ungkai* spirit. Jewelry and precious metal refer to worldly things. Jewelry as a symbol of wealth and metal as a symbol of industrialization are contrary to nature. It is prohibited because it is more likely to lead to the destruction of nature's beauty and the environment. Going back to take something that is left at home after stepping into the sea is a taboo act and against the ethics of protecting nature; they believe that this shows doubts and weaknesses. The effect of from this activity is that the fisherman's concentration will be disturbed and damage the atmosphere when going to sea. The cat as a sacred symbol for the Malay people is more directed to a nature's signal or reminder of something to humans before doing their activities. Urinating in places that are not supposed to be is also not a good ethic for humans. Marine ecosystems and the environment will also be disturbed because of these actions. Accordingly, KA said that if a man really needs to go and is nowhere near the bathroom, he must firstly ask permission from the guardian of nature:

E5 *Mak, numpang buang ae, tak nak ganggu siapapon.* [Mother, please give me permission to pee; I will not bother anyone.]

A statement in E5 is also an ethical form of the Malay people in maintaining the relationship between nature and humans.

Another statement from the interviews that indicated the relationship between humans and nature is implied from interviews conducted with the young Malay generation. They also got the story from their old generation about the story of *Mak Ungkai*. JO and IM said:

E6 *Usah sesekali membasoh baldi atau tempat ikan dekat laot. Kalau dekat laot, mulot jangan caboh atau celupah sebab tak boleh sembarang cakap, ape lagi becakap koto dan bekate tak molek. Dan jugak paleng pantang nutop ikan yang baru dapat dari laot pakai baju yang kite pakai. Jike melangga, biase nye esok dan seterusnye, gelombang laot jadi besa dan angen kuat.* [Never wash fish basins or containers in the sea. The second, which is to guard the mouth from all dirty words. The next step is to abstain from covering fish that have just been caught using T-shirts. If violated, usually the next day, the sea waves become huge and they will be like that throughout the day.]

The taboo sentences and prohibitions above are also dense with an ecocritical atmosphere in the concept of caring ethics. Margarita (2018), in her article, said that environmental ethics called into question the alleged moral superiority of humankind over other organic and inorganic beings on earth. The prohibition on washing fishponds is also part of protecting nature from pollution. The metaphor taught that humans must respect one another at the sea. The sea has given its contents in the form of fish to fishermen. Therefore, the fishermen must keep the sea clean and awake. In relation with dirty words and curses, nature as purity and beauty should also be

protected from swearing and curse. Furthermore, MR and KA on the same occasion added prohibitions and taboo that fishermen must pay attention to when they go to the sea:

E7 *Kalau berade dekat tengah laot, nelayan tak boleh nyampak pinggan mangkok, sudu dan periok. Jike hal itu terjadi, make nelayan itu haros turon menyelam ngambek pekakas itu. Jike tidak, nelayan tu haros patah balek, atau balek lagi dari awal pade mase nak berangkat ngael.* [When in the middle of the sea, fishermen are not allowed to throw away plates, spoons, and pans. If that happens, the fisherman must go down to take the objects. If not, then the fishermen must hurry home and start again from the beginning when they want to go fish.]

The prohibition against throwing the plates, spoons, and forks represented actions that protect nature from garbage pollution. Nowadays, metal materials in the industrial era are even more prominent in factories and industries. Of course, they are polluting the sea. The impact of this activity toward humans is significant, such as natural disasters from seas. The consequence that must be paid by fishermen is to improve their ethics by repeating fishing activities from the beginning.

Hence, in this theme, the roles of literary works, especially folklore, are the most effective means of looking at human relations and nature in depth. Naess (1989) said the debate about the environmental crisis and ecological destruction is not enough to overcome the environmental immorality of humanity. Literature and art have a vital role in the ethics of protecting the environment and nature. Here, the story of *Mak Ungkai* has proven conditions of various phenomena on the caring ethic in the concept of ecology.

4.3 Nature as Holistic

Nature as holistic refers to the concept of holistic environment (Wiyatmi, 2017). Barrow (2006) explained that holistic environment is a management of the environment in a single unit by not separating it from the environment itself. Holistic is a thought about unity that becomes something more important than its constituent components. So, each role played by each component forms a more primary system. Environment is a part of nature. Nature as holistic means placing and involving nature as a healing in preserving the environment. The environment consists of biotic and abiotic environment. Each of them has a role as the healing of environment as a part of nature. In the story of *Mak Ungkai*, it is unknown whether the existence of the spirit of *Mak Ungkai* exists or not. However, the story lives on in the lifes of the Malay people. The folklore becomes a human reminder to protect the environment. In a sense, humans have placed the spirit of *Mak Ungkai* as part of the existence of protecting nature from damage. This can be understood from the statement of AM:

E8 *Hantu laut bukan sekadar mengacau tapi jugak sebagai penunggu dan penjage laot lepas. Sampai mase kini kami percaye akan hal itu* [The spirit of the sea is not just disturbing people but also as a guardian and watchmen of the high seas. Until now we still believe it exists].

The ecosystem in the sea is certainly biotic and abiotic; each have a role in protecting the environment. In the sea, all living ecosystems maintain balance with one another.

4.4 Exploitation and the Violence of Nature

The development of culture in various aspects is developing rapidly, starting from the machinery industry, weaponry, to culture. It cannot be denied that everything in the attainment of modern humanity is a part of the exploitation of nature. Humans meet their needs by logging forests, mining, hunting animals, to the use of machines that result in increased pollution and global warming, and various natural disasters arise (Howarth, 1996). A literary work, including a mythical story, sometimes reveals the reality of real life. The phenomenon of environmental exploitation and violence against the natural ecosystems is also reflected behind the *patang larang* (Malay's prohibition and taboo) of Malay society through the spirit of *Mak Ungkai* story.

MD, in the interview, also conveyed the elders' message regarding the ban on contaminating the sea behind the story of *Mak Ungkai*. It can be seen in E9:

E9 *Jangan cube-cube melempar bangkai binatang kelaut. Tak kan lame, kapal kalian bisa dibolak balikkannye oleh hantu laot. Ditenggelamkannye atau terdampar di tempat yang tak tau keberadaanny dimana.* [Don't try to throw dead animals into the sea. It won't take long; your ship can be overturned by the spirit of *Mak Ungkai*. The spirit will sink you in a place that other people will not know where it is.]

E9 is a prohibition for Malay people that cannot be violated. This habit triggers the tradition of the people who do not want to carelessly throw garbage at sea, especially animal carcasses like cats, dogs, and chickens. They should bury the animals that have died rather than throw them into the sea. It is caused by the foul odor of the animal and will invite the arrival of *Mak Ungkai*spirit. Thus, *Mak Ungkai* is believed to come and disturb humans again if the prohibition is broken. She will sink an innocent fishing boat because of her anger. *Mak Ungkai* will also punish humans by carrying fishing boats with waves so that they are stranded in an unfamiliar place and then die of starvation.

UJ also added several statements related to the Malay tradition that must not be violated, that is related to disrupting the existence or residence of the spirit of *Mak Ungkai*. This can be seen from UJ's statement in E10:

E10 *Ade jugak manusie yang suke menghancurkan karang, menangkap ikan sesuke hati, merusak tumbuhan laot tempat tinggal Mak Ungkai. Bende macam ni dapat mengundang kemarahan Mak Ungkai, Mak Ungkai akan datang ke tempat tinggal orang itu, memakan hewan ternak masyarakat, mengacau masyarakat dengan suare yang mengerikan dan mengeluarkan bau yang tak sedap.* [There is also a human who likes to destroy corals, arbitrarily catching fish, damage the marine plants where *Mak Ungkai* lives. Something like this can invite *Mak Ungkai*'s anger. *Mak Ungkai* will come to the community settlement, eat community livestock, disturb the community with a terrible noise and give off an unpleasant odor.]

The sign of *Mak Ungkai* spirit arrival is a foul odor that is very unpleasant. Nobody knows where it came from. Wherever people seek, the stench comes from

every direction. This indicates that *Mak Ungkai* is very angry or known as "*naik pitam*". It could be revealed that *Mak Ungkai's* anger is because her residence is being bothered. *Mak Ungkai* usually lives in corals. She can manifest in any form. If someone breaks the corals, she will come and drown him/her to the sea with a high wave. This prohibition also applies to small children who play carelessly with the corals themselves. *Mak Ungkai* will also drown men or women who commit immoral acts in the sea with the waves. These two prohibitions are reflections of ecological wisdom that are instilled in Malay society. First, related to the prohibition of exploiting ecosystems in the sea. Second, contaminating the ocean in both direct activity (physical) and indirect activity (ethically and morally).

Another prohibition found during the interview was to ask for help from *Mak Ungkai* for fish resources. It is said by UR and UM behind the story of *Mak Ungkai* spirit. Long time ago, there is a Malay man who always get plentiful of fish. He brought fish more than the other fishermen even during "*paceklik"* (bad weather). He became wealthy by selling lots of fish. Then it was known that the man was using an amulet or "*pikat*" to win the heart of *Mak Ungkai*. However, besides his wealth, *Mak Ungkai* later asked for the sacrifice of his wife and children. His son or wife must be thrown into the sea as a sacrifice for *Mak Ungkai*. They explained:

E11 *Ade jugak nelayan yang tamak, die memintak bantuan kepade Mak Ungkai untok mendapatkan hasel tangkapan yang lebeh. Nah tu biasenye Mak Ungkai mintak imbalan balek, Mak Ungkai mintak tumbal nyawa anak atau istri die.* [There was also a greedy fisherman, he asked for help from *Mak Ungkai* to get plentiful of fish. Well, as usual, *Mak Ungkai* asked for a compensation, she asked for the sacrifice of the life of his child or wife.]

E9 showed another story behind the spirit of *Mak Ungkai*. The story continues to be conveyed from generation to generation as a reflection. Ecological wisdom that can be drawn from the story can also be linked to discernment in interpreting nature. Nature is not used as an object of human for getting their profit. Understanding nature is not to position it in conjunction with arbitrariness between the sovereign and the servant. The relationship of the arbitrary hierarchy will cause inequality for humans and nature itself. The prohibition above not only talked about morals and ethics but also wisdom in understanding nature.

On the contrary, these traditions and myths are mostly no longer held by the community even by the younger generation of Malays themselves. This myth is only a story that is no longer even believed by the younger generation. The impact of the relationship between humans and nature becomes a hierarchical relationship between the sovereign and the servant. Humans do not make nature as the subject of life but as objects to be exploited and violence.

5. CONCLUSION

The story of *Mak Ungkai* spirit has considerable strength in creating the Malay culture and traditions. The researchers conclude that the significance behind the story creates ecological wisdom held by people who believe in it. By using the Ecocritic Garrad theory, it was found that the story refers to a relationship between humans and nature that is mutually sustainable. The relationship is seen where humans put nature

as the subject or object of life. By listening to the interviews with the local Malay community, the researchers obtain many supporting data to validate Garrad's theory of ecocriticism about the environment. It was found that the story of *Mak Ungkai* was still well-known by the Malay people and believed by the old generation, but most of the traditions have been abandoned by the younger generation. Ecological wisdom, such as protecting forests and oceans, is reflected behind the story. However, now, the story is just a story. The younger generation has begun to forget it. Tradition is no longer an ecological wisdom. Industrialization, modernization, and immigration have taken over some of their culture and the Malay society has been marginalized.

This research can be a whip to reintroduce local culture and make it a policy for further attention. The limitation of this research focused on the data sources that raise the ecocritic behind the story of *Mak Ungkai* spirit. Researchers chose respondents who could represent each generation in the Malay coastal people in Batam. In the process of observation and interview, the researchers found that there are still many local cultures, especially those related to oral literature in Batam. It is expected that future researchers can continue to conduct research in this area so that the culture, as part of heritage, can be preserved and known in Malay society.

REFERENCES

Akhmadieva, R. S., Ostanin, L. M., Ostanina, S. S., Moiseyev, V. O., & Chudnovskiy, A. D. (2019). Noxological approach to environmental protection and human life activity safety: Risks of modern dangers. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews, 7*(4), 1269-1276.

Arianto, T. (2018). Indoctrination against women in "The Lowland" by Jhumpa Lahiri. *Jurnal OKARA, 12*(2), 153-166.

Aritenang, A. F. (2017). Special economic zone at the crossroads: The case of Batam. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik*, *21*(2), 132-146.

Atmazaki. (2007). *Ilmu sastra: Teori dan terapan* [Literary sciences: Theory and applied]. Citra Budaya.

Babcock, M. J. (2012). "Biosthetics" in Robert Francis's traveling in Concord. *JOE: The Journal of Ecocriticism*, *4*(1), 1-19.

Barrow, C. J. (2006). *Environmental management for sustainable development.* Routledge.

Bergthaller, H. (2018). Ecological immunity and Kim Stanley Robinson's 2312. *JOE: The Journal of Ecocriticism*, *8*(1), 1-12.

Bracke, A. (2018). Man is the story-telling animal: Graham Swift's waterland, ecocriticism and narratology. *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, *27*(2), 134-146.

Candraningrum, D. (2013). *Ekofeminisme dalam tafsir agama, pendidikan, ekonomi, dan budaya* [Ecofeminism in religious, educational, economic and cultural interpretations]. Jalasutra.

Creswell, A. J. (2010). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage Publications.

Dreese, D. (2002). *Ecocriticism: Creating self and place in environmental and American Indian literatures*. Peter Lang Publishing.

Garrard, G. (2004). *Ecocriticsm*. Routledge.

Gifford, T. (2009). Ecology and modern Scottish Literature Welsh environments in contemporary poetry. *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, *16*(4), 871-873.

Glotfelty. (1996). *The ecocriticism reader: Landmarks in literary ecology*. The University of Georgia Press.

Goldwyn, A. J. (2016). A case study in Byzantine ecocriticism: Zoomorphic and anthomorphic metaphors in the Medieval Greek Romance. *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, *23*(2), 220-239.

Hambrick, K. (2010). Ecocritical explorations in literary and cultural studies: Fences, boundaries, and fields. *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, *17*(3), 614-615.

Howarth, W. (1996). *Some principles of ecocriticism in Glotfelty and Fromm*. University of Georgia.

Juanda. (2018). Fenomena eksploitasi lingkungan dalam cerpen koran minggu Indonesia: Pendekatan ekokritik. [The phenomenon of environmental exploitation in the short story of the Indonesian sunday newspaper: An eco-critical approach]. *AKSIS Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*, *2*(2), 165-189.

Mahayana, M. S. (2008). *Ekstrinsikalitas sastra Indonesia* [Extrinsicality of Indonesian literature]. Rajawali Press.

Margarita, E. (2018). The ethics and aesthetics of eco-caring: Contemporary debates on ecofeminism(s). *Women's Studies Journal, 47*(2), 123-146.

Marwati, A. (2015). Ungkapan tradisional dalam upacara adat perkawinan masyarakat Bajo di Pulau Balu Kabupaten Muna Barat [The traditional expression in the traditional wedding ceremony of the Bajo community on Balu Island, West Muna Regency]. *Jurnal Humanika*, *15*(3), 1-15.

Naess, A. (1989). Ecology, community and lifestyle: Outline of an ecosophy. (D. Rothenberg, Trans) (original work published in 1962). Cambridge University Press.

Nasir, C. (2015). Attitudes of Acehnese people towards Acehnese proverbs in relation to education. *Studies in English Langauge and Education, 2*(1), 45-60.

Omolewa, M. (2007). Traditional African modes of education: Their relevance in the modern world. *International Review of Education, 53*, 593–612

Othman, S. S., Nayan, L. M., Tiung, L. K., & Hassan, F. (2019). Issues and challenges of future newspapers. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, *7*(5), 364–373.

Pernando, A. (2018, April 18). *Mengembalikan kejayaan industri Batam.* Bisnis.Com. https://ekonomi.bisnis.com/read/20180429/257/789739/mengembalikan-kejayaan-industri-batam

Philips, D. (2003). *The truth of ecology: Nature, culture, and literature in America*. Oxford University Press.

Pranoto, N. (2014). *Sastra hijau pena yang menyelamatkan bumi dalam bahasa dan sastra dalam perspektif ekologi dan multikulturalisme* [Green pen literature that saves the earth in language and literature in the perspective of ecology and multiculturalism]. Interlude.

Ratna, N. (2011). *Antropologi sastra: Peranan unsur-unsur kebudayaan dalam proses kreatif* [Literary anthropology: The role of cultural elements in the creative process]. Pustaka Pelajar.

Roode, J. (2008). Explorations in ecocritical theory and practice. *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, *15*(2), 272-273.

Rueckert, W. (1978). *Literature and ecology: An experiment in ecocriticism*. John Hopkins University Press.

Singarimbun, M. (1995). *Metode penelitian sosial* [Social research methods]. Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan, Penerangan, Ekonomi & Sosial.

Sultzbach, E. K. (2017). Ecocriticism in the modernist imagination: Forster, Woolf, and Auden. *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, *24*(4), 834-835.

Taufik, A. A., & Farnanda. (2019). Fundamentalism among Acehnese youth: Acehnese university students' attitudes on religious fundamentalism, right-wing authoritarianism, and militia sentiments. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, *6*(3), 1-8.

Taum, Y. Y. (2011). *Studi sastra lisan: Sejarah, teori, metode, dan pendekatan disertai contoh penerapannya* [Oral literary studies: History, theory, methods and approaches accompanied by examples of their application]. Lamalera.

Uniawati. (2014). Nelayan di lautan utara: sebuah kajian ekokritik [Fishermen in the northern seas: An ecocritical study]. *Kandai*, *10*(2), 246–257.

Warren, K. J. (2000). *Ecofeminist philosophy: A western perspective on what it is and why it matters.* Rowman & Littlefield Publisher.

Wicaksono, D. (2018). *Dampak lingkungan di batam semakin miris.* Batamnews. https://www.batamnews.co.id/berita-33991-dampak-kerusakan-lingkungan-di-batam-bikin-miris.html

Wiyatmi, Suryaman, M., & Swatikasari, E. (2017). *Ekofeminisme: Kritik sastra berwawasan ekologis dan feminis* [Ecofeminism: Literary criticism with ecological and feminist insight]. Cantrik Pustaka.

Yuspin, W., Absori, & Nurhayati. (2019). The establishment of participatory regional regulations based on local wisdom. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, *7*(3), 92-96.