

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides background of the study, statement of problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and scope and limitation.

1.1 Background of the study

Recently, we face global environmental crisis. In Worster quoted by Glotfelty proposes that “it is not because of how the ecosystems function but rather because of how our ethical systems function. The anthropocentric sees the human being have needs and the nonhuman world exists to satisfy these needs” (Glotfelty, 1996: xxi). It cannot be denied that human tend to do consumption or nature’s exploitation. Lack of ecological consciousness motivates humankind to exploit nature for their selves’ good. Nature’s exploitation causes the world imbalance and damage. Nature’s damage is one of the effects from overpopulation. The more people living on earth, the more this earth will suffer.

“There would, after all, be no reason to have ecological concerns if we did not really know for sure that our human activities caused real damage to the natural environment.”
(Berton, 207: 2007)

According to Berton’s statement above, human’s activity cause nature’s damage. Thus, it is no use to pay attention toward ecology if human do not understand that the cause is actually human’s activities, such as driving motorcycle that will produce gas emission and cause air pollution. It can be seen from the word “human activities caused real damage to the natural environment”.

Therefore, the more people live on earth, the more people cause nature’s destruction. The condition of human population on earth in which consists of too many people is called overpopulation.

Overpopulation is not the modern phenomenon. It has been a great problem in the last decade because the exponent curve of population growth will grow exponentially. According to U.S. Census Bureau, the world's population rose at the rate of 1.5% per year from 1950 and peaked at 2% in the 1960s.

“Overpopulation is closely linked to poverty, environmental destruction, misuse of natural resources, inadequate medical care, and civil and political conflict. Population levels reaching an unsustainable level may result in high levels of unemployment, malnutrition, illiteracy, violence, and the spread of communicable diseases.”

The definition of overpopulation published in Health Journal above indicates the high risk from the effect of overpopulation. There are many effects caused by overpopulation, for example; wide range of joblessness, health problems, low degree of education, high potential of crime, and transmitted diseases.

Attention toward this problem is required not only concerning to the impact on nature, but also attention on ethical systems to reform them as well as possible. Overpopulation issue has become a broader research topic in academic realm especially in Biology. Glotfelty asserted that, “If we're not part of the solution, we're part of problem” (Glotfelty, 1996: xxi). Therefore, society have to find out the best solution related to environmental problems which exist in recent day.

As a matter of fact, literary work is one of easiest way in order to grab the reader's interest to pay attention towards overpopulation's problem. Understanding the literary work through ecocentric perspective could be one of the contributing factors in decreasing ecological crisis. As the result, it will change the way of thinking to be more concern toward nature and raise ecological ethic.

Unfortunately, there are no many writers of literature who concerned about this case. Luckily, there is still a writer who concerned about this case.

This study discusses novel *Inferno* written by an American author named Dan Brown which was released on May 14, 2013 by Doubleday publisher. *Inferno* is the fourth book of Robert Langdon series, following *Angels & Demons*, *The Da Vinci Code*, and *The Lost Symbol*. The writer chooses this novel because the novel was number one on the New York Times Bestseller hardcover fiction based on the data from USA TODAY'S Best-selling book based on sales from December 31th, 2012 until December 29th, 2013. The unique thing from this novel is Dan Brown has taken controversial issue as its major theme, that is overpopulation. Dan Brown looked this phenomenon as crucial problem, so he conveyed it through his work entitled *Inferno*. Brown has created the figure of Bertrand Zobrist as biochemist who is fanatic in Dante's *The Divine Comedy*. He uses Dante's *Inferno* as a tool to solve overpopulation's problem by creating virus which make the one-third of population infertile to control population growth. This study is aimed to examine the relationship between Dan Brown's *Inferno* and natural phenomenon which exist. The writer sees that the novel concerns about the future and ask what perception about the environment in the world.

Related to the background of the study, Ecocriticism is the most appropriate theory to analyze this novel because the writer would like to analyze about ecological issue and the solution offered toward overpopulation problem and also global nature renewal depicted in the novel. When the writer look at Dan Brown's *Inferno*, therefore, it contains ecocritical context in which he has written

and the present ecocritical context in which the novel is read by the reader. The writer conducts this study as important study because there are many significant problems caused by overpopulation which the reader of this literary work should be aware.

1.2 Statement of Research Question

From the explanation of the background of the study above, the question are formulated:

1. How is ecocentrism reflected in Dan Brown's *Inferno*?
2. How is the global nature renewal depicted in Dan Brown's *Inferno*?

1.3 Objective of the Study

1. To describe how ecocentrism is reflected in Dan Brown's *Inferno*
2. To explain the global nature renewal depicted in Dan Brown's *Inferno*

1.4 Significances of the Study

This study contains two significances. The first is theoretical significance of the study and the second is practical significance of the study.

Theoretically, this study enriches the reader's knowledge about the theory of ecocriticism for readers, especially in Dan Brown's *Inferno*. The result of this study is expected to give some contribution to the next study about ecocriticism theory in literary work.

Practically, this study provides many lesson and moral value of life, so the writer hopes that the study could grab reader's attention and raise reader's

awareness toward nature and environmental issues especially overpopulation issue in Dan Brown's *Inferno*. Therefore, the writer hopes that the readers more concern toward the sustainability of our nature and should be started from present day, because what is done today will influence what will occur in the future.

It is worth noting that this study is first study in English Department of Trunojoyo University and make it as pioneer on Ecocriticism subject.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study discusses ecological that is portrayed in novel *Inferno*. Therefore, the scope of this study focuses on ecocentric approach by using the theory of Ecocriticism. The limitation of this study is only in the form of words, phrases, or sentences in Dan Brown's *Inferno* which are related to this study.