

From Conflict to Socio-Ecological Harmony: The Social Imaginary of ‘Alī Aḥmad Bākathīr’s *Laḥn al-Salām* in Dialogue with Indonesia

Minatur Rokhim^{1*}, Ruslan Hadi², and Untung Famuji³

¹ Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

² Department of Balāghah wa al-Naqd, Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt

³ Universitas Islam Negeri Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, Central Java, Indonesia

Abstract

This study investigates how ‘Alī Aḥmad Bākathīr’s Arabic poem *Laḥn al-Salām* constructs a socio-ecological imaginary of harmonious common life and examines its dialogic relevance to contemporary Indonesian society. Employing an interpretive qualitative design, the study analysed eleven purposively selected poetic units through close reading, reflexive thematic interpretation, semantic-relational analysis, and temporal mapping. The analysis focused on textual configurations of conflict, peace, solidarity, love, justice, and human–environment relations, while Indonesian socio-ecological scholarship was used as a contextual rather than representational frame. The findings reveal three interconnected orientations. First, the poem transforms a negative imaginary of war, enmity, and environmental damage into an explicit rejection of violence. Second, it expands collective belonging from bounded group identity toward inclusive human solidarity, with love and justice functioning as normative foundations of peace. Third, the poem extends harmony beyond interpersonal relations by incorporating soil, water, vegetation, earth, and sky into an interdependent order of life. These orientations form a temporal structure that moves from damaged relations, through ethical reorientation, toward a projected socio-ecological future. The study advances Arabic literary scholarship by conceptualising ecological imagery not merely as symbolic representation of nature but as a constitutive element of an imagined social order. Its implications extend to environmental humanities, peace-oriented literary studies, and intercultural education by demonstrating how poetry can function as a critical-imaginative resource for rethinking inclusive and ecologically responsible forms of common life.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 6 January 2026

Revised : 28 March 2026

Accepted : 12 April 2026

KEYWORDS

Arabic poetry; ecological imagination; social harmony; social imaginary; socio-ecological harmony.

PUBLISHER’S NOTE

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CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

* **Minatur Rokhim**, Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia.

Email: minatur.rokhim@uinjkt.ac.id

Introduction

Contemporary societies increasingly confront the challenge of sustaining social cohesion within conditions of religious, ethnic, cultural, and ideological plurality, making harmony less a condition of passive coexistence than an ongoing process of recognition, negotiation, inclusion, and equitable belonging (Acar et al., 2024; Pajarianto et al., 2022; Subchi et al., 2022). In Indonesia, pluralism is embedded in the social fabric yet continuously requires cultural and institutional mechanisms capable of transforming difference from a potential boundary of exclusion into a resource for collective belonging and civic solidarity (Apandie et al., 2022; Rumahuru & Gaspersz, 2021; Subchi et al., 2022). Studies of Indonesian religious and cultural diversity further demonstrate that tolerance becomes socially meaningful when it develops beyond passive endurance toward mutual recognition, dialogical engagement, and the formation of shared commitments across identity

boundaries (Acar et al., 2024; Lukens-Bull & Makin, 2025; Pajariantanto et al., 2022). Consequently, social harmony cannot be reduced to the absence of overt conflict; it requires imaginaries of common life through which different communities can perceive themselves as belonging to a wider moral and social order (Apandie et al., 2022; Rumahuru & Gaspersz, 2021; Subchi et al., 2022).

The challenge of harmonious coexistence is increasingly inseparable from ecological conditions because human security, social vulnerability, and collective well-being are deeply embedded in relationships with land, forests, water, climate, and other components of the more-than-human world (Gasior et al., 2024; Großmann, 2020; Putiamini et al., 2022). Indonesian research demonstrates that peatland fires, coastal flooding, environmental degradation, and unequal exposure to ecological hazards generate consequences that simultaneously affect ecosystems, livelihoods, social vulnerability, and community resilience (Gasior et al., 2024; Kiely et al., 2021; Putiamini et al., 2022). Studies of Indonesian communities similarly reveal that environmental relations are socially and culturally mediated, since conceptions of land, resources, pollution, and ecological responsibility are embedded in power relations, local knowledge, collective practices, and competing understandings of nature (Großmann, 2020; Phelan et al., 2020; Prastiyo et al., 2020). These findings suggest that social harmony and ecological sustainability should not be treated as independent concerns because disruptions to human–environment relations can intensify social vulnerability, while culturally grounded relationships with the nonhuman world can influence how communities understand collective responsibility and continuity of life (Gasior et al., 2024; Großmann, 2020; Kiely et al., 2021).

Literature is particularly important within these interconnected social and ecological questions because literary narratives do more than reproduce existing realities; they can reorganise perception, invite identification with unfamiliar experiences, and make alternative modes of coexistence imaginatively available (Kucirkova, 2019; Lehner, 2021; Ware, 2023). Poetry possesses a distinctive capacity in this regard because metaphor, affect, rhythm, and symbolic condensation may turn abstract ethical concerns into emotionally and culturally meaningful forms through which solidarity, resistance, empathy, and peace can be imagined (Lehner, 2021; Plys, 2020; Ware, 2023). Research on narrative and education likewise demonstrates that imaginative texts can provide protected symbolic spaces in which readers encounter unfamiliar perspectives, explore alternative futures, reconsider established structures, and develop environmental awareness (Kucirkova, 2019; Lindgren Leavenworth & Manni, 2021; Yang et al., 2022). Literary imagination is therefore not politically or ecologically neutral; it can participate in questioning inherited orders while opening conceptual possibilities for alternative forms of human and more-than-human coexistence (Lindgren Leavenworth & Manni, 2021; Truman, 2023; Ware, 2023).

This imaginative capacity can be productively theorised through contemporary developments in scholarship on social imaginaries. Recent studies conceptualise social imaginaries as collectively produced and normatively charged visions through which communities understand existing social arrangements while simultaneously envisioning desirable or possible futures (Lehtiniemi & Ruckenstein, 2019; Longhurst & Chilvers, 2019; Yoon, 2024). Such imaginaries are not simply private mental representations because they circulate through narratives, institutions, discourses, practices, and cultural artefacts that normalise particular understandings of how collective life is or should be organised (Levidow & Raman, 2020; Lupton, 2021; Masso et al., 2023). Their temporal dimension is equally important: crisis and dissatisfaction with existing conditions may become points of departure

from which alternative futures are narrated, contested, and prefigured (Grishakova et al., 2022; Paprocki, 2020; Yoon, 2024). Research on sustainability transformations further indicates that imaginaries are consequential because representations of desirable futures inevitably contain assumptions about social relations, political priorities, human needs, environmental resources, and legitimate pathways of change (Beck et al., 2021; Longhurst & Chilvers, 2019; Waddock, 2024).

The increasingly prominent notion of an eco-social imaginary extends this theoretical insight by challenging models of common life that locate human society outside or above ecological systems. Contemporary sustainability scholarship argues that viable future imaginaries need to recognise the flourishing of human beings and nature as mutually implicated rather than competing goals (Beck et al., 2021; Paprocki, 2020; Waddock, 2024). Literary and narrative scholarship similarly demonstrates that nonhuman entities can occupy active relational positions rather than functioning merely as decorative settings for human concerns, thereby destabilising rigid boundaries between social and ecological worlds (Hilson, 2022; Oluseye et al., 2020; Shang, 2022). Ecocritical studies of poetry further reveal that land, water, vegetation, landscape, and other natural elements can encode environmental ethics, cultural memory, vulnerability, and relationships of interdependence (Estok, 2021; Mohsen et al., 2022; Oluseye et al., 2020). This relational approach is especially important for interpreting poetic texts in which representations of peace and social solidarity coexist with representations of earth, water, vegetation, and the conditions that sustain life (Hilson, 2022; Mohsen et al., 2022; Shang, 2022).

Within Arabic literary studies, recent ecocritical scholarship has begun to demonstrate that environmental imagery should not automatically be reduced to aesthetic ornamentation. Studies of modern Arabic and other postcolonial poetic traditions show that landscapes and natural elements can embody cultural attachments, ethical relations, environmental anxieties, and critiques of anthropocentric domination (Estok, 2021; Mohsen et al., 2022; Oluseye et al., 2020). Meanwhile, scholarship on poetry in Islamicate and conflict-affected contexts indicates that poetic language can generate affective bonds, solidarity, resistance, and alternative repertoires for interpreting relations with others (Lehner, 2021; Plys, 2020; Ware, 2023). These two trajectories literature as a medium of ecological relationality and literature as a medium of social imagination suggest that poetry can be examined not only for what it says about nature or peace separately, but also for the kind of collective order it makes imaginable (Mohsen et al., 2022; Plys, 2020; Waddock, 2024).

‘Alī Aḥmad Bākathīr’s *Laḥn al-Salām* provides a productive site for such an inquiry because its poetic structure juxtaposes enmity and war with love, solidarity, justice, peace, and the regenerative imagery of earth, water, dew, and vegetation. Rather than treating these elements as independent moral themes, contemporary work on social imaginaries suggests that sequences of crisis, reorientation, and projected futures can be read as configurations of an alternative collective order (Grishakova et al., 2022; Longhurst & Chilvers, 2019; Yoon, 2024). Similarly, recent eco-social and nonhuman-oriented scholarship makes it possible to analyse natural imagery as constitutive of the imagined common world rather than as an ornamental supplement to an otherwise exclusively human social order (Hilson, 2022; Shang, 2022; Waddock, 2024). Such an interpretation also has dialogic relevance for Indonesia, where scholarship simultaneously documents the continuous negotiation of plural coexistence and the social consequences of ecological vulnerability (Gasior et al., 2024; Rumahuru & Gaspersz, 2021; Subchi et al., 2022).

Despite these advances, an identifiable gap remains at the intersection of these fields. Contemporary research on social imaginaries has predominantly examined technological governance, sustainability transitions, data practices, climate futures, and institutional visions, whereas literary research on environmental imagination has primarily examined ecological representation, nonhuman agency, landscape, environmental ethics, or climate narratives (Beck et al., 2021; Masso et al., 2023; Yoon, 2024; Estok, 2021; Hilson, 2022; Mohsen et al., 2022). Research on literature, art, and peace has meanwhile demonstrated their capacity to foster empathy, solidarity, and transformed perceptions, but has seldom integrated these social functions with the ecological constitution of the common world within a single interpretive model (Kucirkova, 2019; Lehner, 2021; Plys, 2020; Ware, 2023). Consequently, insufficient attention has been paid to how a modern Arabic poem can simultaneously construct a temporal social imaginary moving from conflict to ethical transformation and future possibility and an eco-social imaginary in which human peace depends upon relational continuity with the nonhuman world (Grishakova et al., 2022; Shang, 2022; Waddock, 2024). The novelty of the present study therefore lies in reading *Laḥn al-Salām* not merely as a poem advocating peace and not merely as a repository of ecological imagery, but as a poetic architecture of common life in which conflict, solidarity, justice, love, and ecological interdependence form a continuous socio-ecological imaginary. Accordingly, this study aims to analyse the textual mechanisms through which *Laḥn al-Salām* constructs this imaginary, explain its relational and temporal movement from conflict toward inclusive and ecological harmony, and examine its dialogic relevance to contemporary Indonesian socio-ecological conditions without claiming that the poem directly represents or causally explains the Indonesian context.

Method

Research Design

This study employed an interpretive qualitative textual design to investigate how *Laḥn al-Salām* constructs a socio-ecological imaginary through poetic language. This design was selected because the research focused on patterns of meaning, relational configurations, and projected forms of common life rather than on measuring textual frequency or testing causal relationships. Interpretive qualitative inquiry is particularly appropriate when the objective is to understand how meanings are constructed, organised, and related within a bounded textual corpus. Contemporary qualitative scholarship emphasises that thematic interpretation is suitable for moving from individual textual units toward patterned structures of meaning while maintaining transparency regarding the interpretive role of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Byrne, 2022; Jowsey et al., 2021).

Research Corpus and Units of Analysis

The primary corpus consisted of ‘Alī Aḥmad Bākathīr’s poem *Laḥn al-Salām*. The analytical units comprised words, phrases, and complete poetic lines that contributed substantively to representations of conflict, peace, love, solidarity, justice, collective identity, life, earth, water, vegetation, and the relational connections among these concepts. Eleven textual units were purposively selected because they formed the concentrated textual sequence through which the poem develops from enmity, violence, and ecological damage toward social inclusion, peace, and ecological regeneration. Accordingly, data selection was based on semantic and functional relevance rather than lexical frequency. The selected units preserved the corpus structure of the original analysis, in which the eleven excerpts constituted the textual basis for the three principal interpretive orientations.

Data Preparation

Data preparation began with repeated close readings of the Arabic poem to identify textual elements directly related to the research focus. Each selected unit was subsequently organised into an analytical matrix containing the original Arabic line, transliteration, English translation, key lexical marker, relational function, provisional thematic interpretation, and position within the poem's temporal movement. The analytical matrix was designed not to quantify the recurrence of particular expressions but to ensure traceability between interpretive claims and their corresponding textual evidence. Particular attention was given to lexical repetition, semantic opposition, relational structures, metaphorical expression, and the sequential development of ideas across the poem.

Data Analysis

The analysis was conducted iteratively through six interconnected stages: familiarisation, initial semantic coding, relational coding, thematic construction, thematic review, and interpretive synthesis. These stages adapted principles of reflexive thematic analysis to the analysis of a bounded literary corpus (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Byrne, 2022; Jowsey et al., 2021). During familiarisation, the poem was read repeatedly in both its original Arabic form and through its transliterated and translated versions. Initial semantic coding identified lexical and conceptual markers associated with conflict, peace, love, solidarity, justice, identity, ecological damage, and regeneration.

Relational coding subsequently focused on how these concepts interacted rather than treating them as independent categories. Particular attention was paid to semantic oppositions such as enmity/solidarity, war/peace, injustice/justice, bounded identity/inclusive belonging, destruction/regeneration, and human/nonhuman relations. These relationships were then synthesised into higher-order thematic structures. Three principal interpretive domains were consolidated: the transformation from conflict to peace, the extension of belonging toward inclusive human solidarity, and the extension of social harmony toward ecological interdependence.

Temporal-Relational Analysis

A second analytical layer examined the temporal organisation of the poem. Expressions referring to violence, hostility, and a damaged earth were interpreted as constituting a negative social and ecological condition against which transformation becomes intelligible. Statements rejecting war and expanding collective identity were analysed as markers of ethical and relational reorientation, while future-directed expressions concerning love, peace, harmony, earth, water, vegetation, and life were interpreted as projections of an alternative common order.

This temporal-relational procedure made it possible to distinguish isolated moral expressions from the broader imaginative structure generated through their sequential arrangement. The analysis therefore examined not only what particular lines signify individually, but also how their ordering produces a movement from conflict and ecological damage toward solidarity, justice, peace, and ecological regeneration.

Contextualisation with the Indonesian Setting

Indonesian scholarship concerning social plurality, environmental vulnerability, and community–environment relations was used as a dialogic contextual frame for interpreting the contemporary relevance of the poem. The Indonesian context was not treated as evidence that Bākathīr directly represented contemporary Indonesian social or ecological conditions. Likewise, no causal relationship was inferred between the poem and Indonesian realities.

Instead, contextualisation functioned as an interpretive dialogue through which the socio-ecological imaginary identified in the poem could be examined alongside contemporary issues of diversity, environmental degradation, disaster vulnerability, and human–environment relations in Indonesia. This distinction was maintained throughout the analysis to avoid conflating literary interpretation with empirical social representation.

Trustworthiness of the Analysis

Methodological trustworthiness was strengthened through several procedures. First, an explicit audit trail was maintained by connecting each thematic claim to identifiable textual units within the analytical corpus. Second, semantic correspondence between the original Arabic text, transliteration, English translation, and subsequent interpretation was carefully preserved. Third, thematic categories were reviewed iteratively to consider alternative placements and competing interpretations before final thematic consolidation. Fourth, a clear analytical distinction was maintained between textual findings derived directly from the poem and contextual interpretations developed through engagement with Indonesian scholarship.

These procedures are consistent with contemporary recommendations that credibility in qualitative research depends on coherence among epistemological assumptions, analytical procedures, evidence, and interpretive claims rather than on mechanical claims of objectivity (Adler, 2022; Amin et al., 2020; Rose & Johnson, 2020).

Ethical Considerations

This study analysed a publicly accessible literary text and published scholarly materials. It did not involve human participants, personal or identifiable information, experimental intervention, interviews, surveys, or participant-generated data. Consequently, human-subject ethical approval was not applicable. Nevertheless, scholarly integrity was maintained by preserving the original textual evidence, clearly distinguishing interpretation from contextualisation, and appropriately acknowledging all secondary sources used in the analysis.

Result and Discussion

Result

The analysis of *Lahñ al-Salām* identified a coherent socio-ecological imaginary constructed through eleven textual units. Rather than functioning as isolated expressions, these units form an interconnected sequence that moves from enmity and violence toward peace, inclusive solidarity, justice, and ecological interdependence. The findings are organised into four interrelated themes: conflict as a negative social and ecological imaginary, the expansion of collective identity, love and justice as the normative foundations of harmony, and the extension of social harmony toward ecological interdependence.

Conflict as a Negative Social and Ecological Imaginary

The poem begins by presenting conflict as a destructive condition affecting both human relationships and the physical world. This negative imaginary is articulated through the following lines:

مَا لِلْوَرَىٰ يُعَادِي بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا
بِالْحَرْبِ وَالْجِلَادِ قَدْ شَوَّهُوا الْأَرْضَا
mā li-l-warā yu'ādī ba'duhum ba'dan
bi-al-ḥarbi wa-al-jilādi qad šawwahū al-arḍ

"Why do people show enmity to one another, when with war and violence they have disfigured the earth?"

The lexical sequence *yu'ādī* (to show enmity), *al-ḥarb* (war), *al-jilād* (violence), and *šawwahū al-arḍ* (they disfigured the earth) establishes a close semantic relationship between damaged human relations and damaged ecological space. The earth (*al-arḍ*) is therefore positioned not merely as the background of human conflict but as an entity affected by it. The textual logic suggests that violence has consequences extending beyond interpersonal suffering into the wider world that sustains life.

This relationship constitutes the first analytical orientation of the poem: social conflict and ecological damage are represented as interconnected forms of disharmony.

The transition from conflict toward transformation is then marked by the declaration:

لَا حَرْبَ مِنْذُ الْيَوْمِ
lā ḥarba mundhu al-yawm

"No more war from this day on."

The temporal expression *mundhu al-yawm* ("from this day on") creates a clear rupture between an undesirable past and a projected alternative future. Conflict is therefore not presented as a permanent condition but as a social order that can be rejected. The progression can be represented as enmity → violence → damage → rejection of war, establishing the textual foundation for the poem's subsequent movement toward harmony.

From Bounded Identity to Inclusive Human Solidarity

After constructing conflict as a condition that must be overcome, the poem shifts toward the reconfiguration of collective identity. This transformation is expressed through the lines:

نَحِبُّ كُلَّ شَعْبٍ مِنَ الْغَرْبِ أَوْ فِي الصِّينِ
فَكُلُّ قَوْمٍ قَوْمِي
nuḥibbu kulla ša'bin mina al-gharbi aw fī al-šīn
fa-kullu qawmin qawmī

"We love every people, whether from the West or in China; every people is my people."

The repeated use of the universalising term *kull* ("every/all") widens the social boundary of belonging. The poem explicitly refers to geographically and culturally differentiated communities, represented by *al-gharb* ("the West") and *al-šīn* ("China"), yet refuses to interpret such difference as a basis for opposition. Instead, the phrase *fa-kullu qawmin qawmī* transforms the other from an external group into part of an expanded collective "we." In textual terms, the movement is from difference toward identification rather than from difference toward exclusion. This finding demonstrates that the imagined community in the poem is not constructed through ethnic, territorial, or national sameness, but through an inclusive conception of human solidarity. The original manuscript similarly positions these expressions as evidence of a shift from group identity toward wider social inclusion.

The transformation can therefore be formulated as group difference → recognition → inclusion → solidarity. Significantly, the poem does not erase particular identities; rather, it relocates them within a larger horizon of belonging. The expression *qawmī* ("my people") functions as the key textual marker of this expanded social identity.

Love and Justice as the Normative Foundations of Harmony

The inclusive identity established in the preceding section is subsequently given an ethical foundation through the concept of love. The poem states:

نَدِينُ دِينَ الْحُبِّ وَالْحُبُّ أَسْمَى دِينٍ
nadīnu dīna al-ḥubbi wa-al-ḥubbu asmā dīn

"We follow the religion of love, and love is the most exalted religion."

The lexical repetition of *al-ḥubb* ("love") and its association with *dīn* places love beyond the domain of private emotion. The plural verb *nadīnu* ("we follow") makes love a collective principle

that governs common life. The poem thus transforms love into a social ethic through which solidarity and peaceful coexistence become possible. This normative structure is further developed in the following lines:

بِالْحُبِّ وَالسَّلَامِ سَنُسَعِدُ الدُّنْيَا

نَعِيشُ فِي وِئَامٍ لَا ظُلْمَ لَا بَغْيًا

bi-al-ḥubbi wa-al-salāmi sanus'idu al-dunyā

na'īšu fī wi'āmin lā ḡulma lā baḡhyā

"With love and peace we shall make the world happy; we live in harmony, with no injustice and no oppression."

These lines connect *al-ḥubb* (love), *al-salām* (peace), *wi'ām* (harmony), *ḡulm* (injustice), and *baḡhy* (oppression or aggression) within one ethical structure. Harmony is therefore not represented as the simple absence of war. Instead, it requires love, peace, justice, and the rejection of oppressive relations. The future-oriented verb *sanus'idu* ("we shall make happy") strengthens the temporal dimension of the poem because it positions harmony as a social condition that remains to be realised rather than one that is already fully achieved. The source text explicitly links these lines with the development from love and solidarity toward peace and justice.

Accordingly, the textual sequence can be expressed as love → solidarity → peace → justice → harmony. Love functions as the normative principle, peace as the relational condition, and justice as the ethical requirement of the imagined common life.

From Social Harmony to Ecological Interdependence

The most significant expansion of the poem's concept of harmony occurs when the ethical vocabulary previously used for human relations is extended to the natural world. This is visible in the line:

حُبُّ الْحَيَاةِ لِلتُّرْبِ، حُبُّ النَّدَى لِلْعُشْبِ

ḥubba al-ḥayāti li-l-turb, ḥubba al-nadā li-l-ʿuṣb

"The love of life for the soil, the love of dew for the grass."

The use of *ḥubb* in relation to *al-turb* (soil), *al-nadā* (dew), and *al-ʿuṣb* (grass) extends the semantic logic of love beyond human society. Nature is represented as a relational system in which elements of life are mutually connected. Soil, dew, vegetation, and life therefore do not operate as decorative poetic images but as components of a broader structure of interdependence.

This ecological orientation is further reinforced through the lines:

الْأَرْضُ وَالسَّمَاءُ يَخْدُوهُنَّ الْحُبُّ

يَهْمِي السَّنَا وَالْمَاءُ فَيَنْبِتُهُنَّ الْعُشْبُ

al-arḡu wa-al-samā'u yaḡdūhunna al-ḥubb

yahmī al-sanā wa-al-mā'u fa-yunbituhunna al-ʿuṣb

"Earth and sky are led by love; light and water pour down, and grass grows from them."

The ecological lexicon *al-arḡ* (earth), *al-samā'* (sky), *al-mā'* (water), and *al-ʿuṣb* (grass) forms a network of relations through which life becomes possible. This imagery establishes a strong contrast with the earlier representation of *al-arḡ* as an earth disfigured by war. Whereas violence produces destruction, love and interconnection produce growth and regeneration. The poem

therefore constructs two opposing relational models: violence → damaged relations → damaged earth and love → interdependence → regeneration → life.

The ecological dimension thus represents an extension rather than a separate thematic strand. The same ethical principle that connects people with one another is extended to the non-human world. Consequently, social harmony and ecological harmony function as parts of one continuous imaginative structure.

Integrated Textual Pattern of the Socio-Ecological Imaginary

The eleven textual units can be synthesised into three major orientations, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Textual construction of the socio-ecological imaginary in *Laḥn al-Salām*

No.	Arabic text	Transliteration	English translation	Analytical function
1	مَا لِلْوَرَىٰ يُعَادِي بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا	<i>mā li-l-warā yu‘ādī ba‘duhum ba‘dan</i>	Why do people show enmity to one another?	Fractured social relations
2	بِالْحَرْبِ وَالْجِلَادِ قَدْ شَوَّهُوا الْأَرْضَا	<i>bi-al-ḥarbi wa-al-jilādi qad šawwahū al-arḍ</i>	With war and violence they have disfigured the earth	Social and ecological damage
3	لَا حَرْبَ مِنْذُ الْيَوْمِ	<i>lā ḥarba mundhu al- yawm</i>	No more war from this day on	Rejection of violence
4	نُحِبُّ كُلَّ شَعْبٍ مِنْ الْغَرْبِ أَوْ فِي الصِّينِ	<i>nuḥibbu kulla ša‘bin mina al-gharbi aw fī al- šīn</i>	We love every people, whether from the West or in China	Universal solidarity
5	فَكُلُّ قَوْمٍ قَوْمِي	<i>fa-kullu qawmin qawmī</i>	Every people is my people	Inclusive identity
6	نَدِينُ دِينَ الْحُبِّ وَالْحُبُّ أَسْمَىٰ دِينٍ	<i>nadīnu dīna al-ḥubbi wa-al-ḥubbu asmā dīn</i>	We follow the religion of love, and love is the most exalted religion	Love as social ethics
7	بِالْحُبِّ وَالسَّلَامِ سَنُسَعِدُ الدُّنْيَا	<i>bi-al-ḥubbi wa-al-salāmi sanus‘idu al-dunyā</i>	With love and peace we shall make the world happy	Future projection
8	نَعِيشُ فِي وِئَامٍ لَا ظُلْمَ لَا بَغْيًا	<i>na‘īšu fī wi‘āmin lā zulma lā baghyā</i>	We live in harmony, with no injustice and no oppression	Harmony and justice
9	حُبُّ الْحَيَاةِ لِلتُّرْبِ، حُبُّ النَّدَىٰ لِلْعُشْبِ	<i>ḥubba al-ḥayāti li-l-turb, ḥubba al-nadā li-l-‘uṣb</i>	The love of life for the soil, the love of dew for the grass	Ecological relationality
10	الْأَرْضُ وَالسَّمَاءُ يَخْدُوهُنَّ الْحُبُّ	<i>al-arḍu wa-al-samā‘u yaḥdūhunna al-ḥubb</i>	Earth and sky are led by love	Nature as a relational order
11	يُهْمِي السَّنَا وَالْمَاءُ فَيَنْبِتُهُنَّ الْعُشْبُ	<i>yahmī al-sanā wa-al- mā‘u fa-yunbituhunna al-‘uṣb</i>	Light and water pour down, and grass grows from them	Regenerative interdependence

As shown in Table 1, the eleven textual units reveal a sequential transformation rather than a collection of disconnected themes. The poem begins with a damaged social and ecological condition, introduces an explicit rejection of violence, widens the boundaries of collective identity, establishes love and justice as ethical principles, and finally extends harmony to the non-human world. The overall sequence can therefore be formulated as conflict → damaged earth → ethical rupture → inclusive solidarity → love and justice → social harmony → ecological interdependence. This structure is further summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. Major orientations of the socio-ecological imaginary in *Laḥn al-Salām*

Orientation	Dominant Arabic textual markers	Relational transformation	Interpretive outcome
From conflict to peace	الْحَرْبُ، الْجِلَادُ، شَوْهُوا الأَرْضَا، لَا حَرْبَ	Violence and destruction → rejection of conflict	Peace as a deliberate transformation
From group identity to inclusive solidarity	نَحْبُ كُلِّ شَعْبٍ، فَكُلِّ قَوْمٍ قَوْمِي، دِينَ الْحَبِّ	“Us/them” → enlarged human community	Inclusive collective identity
From social to ecological harmony	الحَيَاة، التُّرْب، النَّدى، العُشْب، الأرض، السَّمَاء، الماء	Human coexistence → human–nonhuman interdependence	Socio-ecological common life

Taken together, the results demonstrate that *Laḥn al-Salām* constructs harmony through a progressive widening of relational concern. The poem initially addresses damaged relations among human beings, subsequently redefines collective belonging, and ultimately incorporates the natural world into the imagined community of life. Its central textual pattern can therefore be conceptualised as a socio-ecological imaginary of harmonious common life, in which peace, solidarity, justice, and ecological interdependence constitute mutually connected dimensions rather than separate thematic concerns.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that *Laḥn al-Salām* constructs peace not as an isolated moral injunction but as a reorganization of the relationships through which collective life becomes imaginable. The poem develops a discernible movement from a negative imaginary characterized by *al-ḥarb* (war), *al-jilād* (conflict), hostility, and a damaged earth toward a normative order articulated through *al-ḥubb* (love), *al-salām* (peace), *wi'ām* (harmony), inclusive belonging, and ecological flourishing. Particularly significant is the expression *fa-kullu qawmin qawmī*, through which belonging expands beyond bounded communal identity toward an enlarged human “we.” At the same time, images of soil, water, dew, grass, earth, and sky show that this reconstructed community is not exclusively anthropocentric. Social reconciliation and ecological relationality are organized through the same symbolic vocabulary of love and interdependence. The poem can therefore be understood as producing a socio-ecological imaginary of peace in which rejection of violence, expansion of solidarity, and restoration of human–nature relations form a single future-oriented poetic structure. This interpretation does not imply that the poem predicts particular political or environmental outcomes; rather, it identifies the normative world that the text makes imaginatively available.

This finding corresponds closely with contemporary scholarship on social imaginaries, which emphasizes that imaginaries do more than represent existing reality: they organize assumptions about desirable futures and legitimate forms of collective life. Longhurst and Chilvers (2019), Grishakova et al. (2022), and Yoon (2024), already mobilized in the manuscript, provide an important foundation for this interpretation. More recent sustainability research offers an additional point of comparison. Riedy and Waddock (2022) found that transformative social imaginaries frequently combine social justice, cooperation, ecological sustainability, compassion, and harmony with nature in representations of desirable futures. Their respondents also tended to narrate

movement from crisis toward awakening and collective transformation. Although *Laḥn al-Salām* belongs to an entirely different genre and historical-cultural context, its poetic sequence exhibits a structurally comparable movement: an unacceptable present is first exposed before an alternative relational order becomes imaginable.

Celermajer et al. (2024) further conceptualize climate imaginaries not merely as representations of remote futures but as forms of praxis through which communities prefigure alternative ways of living. Their emphasis on justice, interdependence, and prefiguration helps illuminate the poem's movement beyond abstract hope. In *Laḥn al-Salām*, the desirable future is given symbolic form through altered relations among peoples and between humanity and the earth. Nevertheless, an important distinction should be maintained: unlike the community practices analyzed by Celermajer et al., the poem offers textual prefiguration rather than documented social praxis. Its contribution lies in the literary production of possibility, not in evidence of behavioral transformation.

The movement from conflict toward reconciliation is also compatible with scholarship on artistic practices and peacebuilding. Lehner (2021) argues that cultures of peace require imaginative capacities that enable alternative modes of coexistence to be envisioned before they can become socially meaningful. Ware (2023) similarly shows that arts-based metaphor can help participants reconsider conflict narratives, imagine alternative repertoires, and develop empathic understanding. Particularly relevant to the present study is Ware's finding that creative forms can reorganize how conflict is cognitively and emotionally framed. *Laḥn al-Salām* performs an analogous operation at the level of poetic structure: violence is not merely condemned; it is narratively and symbolically displaced by love, solidarity, and shared belonging.

Jeffery (2024) adds another dimension by demonstrating that arts-based practices can contribute to post-conflict meaning-making by providing symbolic resources through which traumatic pasts and possible futures may be emotionally negotiated. This evidence reinforces the plausibility of understanding poetry as culturally significant for peace imaginaries. However, it also clarifies an important methodological boundary. The present study did not investigate readers, trauma recovery, empathy, or behavioral change. Therefore, international evidence on arts and peacebuilding should be used to contextualize the poem's interpretive potential, not to infer that reading *Laḥn al-Salām* necessarily generates reconciliation or psychological transformation.

The ecological dimension of the findings further strengthens the argument that the poem constructs an integrated socio-ecological imaginary rather than juxtaposing a social theme with a separate nature theme. Existing references in the manuscript—including Estok (2021), Mohsen et al. (2022), Oluseye et al. (2020), and Shang (2022)—already establish that literary environments can function as ethically and narratively significant agents. Recent ecopoetic research sharpens this interpretation. Adeniyi (2024), examining African eco-poetry, identifies poetic imaginaries that connect ecological precarity, anthropogenic destruction, temporality, and visions of restored human–nature interdependence. His analysis is especially relevant because it shows that ecological poetry may organize its critique temporally: environmental damage in the present becomes the basis from which a different future is imagined. *Laḥn al-Salām* demonstrates a related but distinctive logic, integrating ecological repair directly into an imagined order of peace.

Akingbe (2024) similarly demonstrates that ecopoetry can resist rigid separation between human social concerns and nonhuman environments. His study of Gabeba Baderoon's poetry

emphasizes relationships among water, plants, human vulnerability, and environmental responsibility, supporting the present argument that ecological imagery should not automatically be interpreted as decorative background. Shamim's (2024) ecocritical reading of Mahmoud Darwish and Naomi Shihab Nye is especially relevant to Arabic-related literary contexts because it demonstrates how natural imagery may intersect with homeland, colonial experience, resistance, cultural memory, and collective identity. In this light, the earth imagery of *Laḥn al-Salām* can be read not simply as aesthetic pastoralism but as part of the poem's broader ethical vocabulary of belonging.

This interpretation also accords with comparative environmental-humanities scholarship. Harper and Brown (2024) argue that environmental representations must be interpreted within culturally and historically specific systems of knowledge rather than being abstracted from the wider worlds in which they acquire meaning. Such caution is useful for the present study: contemporary ecological concepts should illuminate the poem without retroactively transforming Bākathīr into a contemporary environmental activist. The significance of the poem instead lies in the fact that its textual logic permits a contemporary ecocritical reading in which human peace and ecological flourishing become mutually intelligible.

The Indonesian contextual dialogue strengthens this interpretation while requiring methodological restraint. Previous Indonesian studies retained in the manuscript—including Apandie et al. (2022), Pajariantanto et al. (2022), and Rumahuru and Gaspersz (2021)—show that sustainable pluralism involves relational recognition, community interaction, religious moderation, and culturally embedded negotiation rather than passive tolerance alone. The expression *fa-kullu qawmin qawmī* resonates productively with this literature because the poetic voice moves beyond permitting difference toward symbolically incorporating the other within an expanded category of belonging. Apandie et al. (2022), for example, connect *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* and religious moderation to the strengthening of Indonesian pluralism, emphasizing interconnected civic values rather than homogeneous identity.

The ecological dialogue is equally pertinent. Kiely et al. (2021), Putiamini et al. (2022), Gasior et al. (2024), Großmann (2020), and Phelan et al. (2020), already cited in the manuscript, demonstrate that Indonesian environmental disruption is inseparable from livelihoods, vulnerability, governance, cultural relations, and unequal access to resources. Indonesian literary scholarship also increasingly identifies poetry as an important medium of ecological consciousness. Hartati and Karim (2024), examining contemporary Indonesian poetry, identify recurring representations of pollution, wilderness, disaster, dwelling, animals, and the earth, demonstrating that poetry can encode culturally situated responses to ecological disruption. The relevance of Indonesia to the present study should therefore remain dialogical rather than genealogical: *Laḥn al-Salām* does not describe Indonesian conditions, but Indonesian scholarship shows why a poetic model linking social reconciliation with ecological responsibility remains conceptually meaningful in contemporary contexts.

Theoretically, the study extends social-imaginary theory by arguing that the “social” in literary imaginaries may itself be ecologically constituted: the desired order of collective life in *Laḥn al-Salām* includes not only transformed human relations but also repaired relations with land, water, vegetation, and the wider earth. This position resonates with contemporary work on transformative and climate imaginaries in which social justice and ecological interdependence are increasingly conceptualized together (Celermajer et al., 2024; Riedy & Waddock, 2022). Pedagogically, the poem

offers potentially valuable material for Arabic literature, peace education, religious and intercultural education, and environmental humanities because learners can examine how lexical choices, metaphor, pronouns, poetic sequence, and natural imagery construct conflict, otherness, solidarity, and ecological responsibility. Peace-education scholarship likewise suggests that artistic imagination can provide spaces for exploring alternatives to violence (Lehner, 2021; Ware, 2023). Such implications should nevertheless remain interpretive: this study did not measure student attitudes, environmental awareness, tolerance, or peace-oriented behavior. At the policy level, the findings support the inclusion of literary and cultural texts within interdisciplinary peace, pluralism, and environmental-education initiatives, but they do not establish that curriculum exposure to this poem alone will produce measurable social change. Educational policy should therefore treat literature as a critical-discursive resource that complements, rather than replaces, empirical civic, ecological, and peace education.

The principal novelty of this study lies in integrating social-imaginary analysis and ecocriticism into a single interpretive model rather than treating social peace and environmental imagery as parallel thematic domains. The analysis identifies a sequential architecture—negative imaginary → ethical rupture → inclusive re-identification → normative reconstruction → socio-ecological projection—through which the poem converts a damaged present into an imaginable alternative future. This extends recent scholarship on future-making and transformative imaginaries by demonstrating that poetic sequencing itself can perform future-oriented cultural work. It also contributes to Arabic literary studies by showing how the poem's language of peace reaches beyond interpersonal reconciliation to produce an expanded symbolic community encompassing both human plurality and ecological life. Methodologically, the Indonesian context is employed not as evidence of direct influence but as a dialogic horizon through which the contemporary significance of this socio-ecological imaginary becomes visible. This avoids both decontextualized formalism and anachronistic claims that an Arabic poetic text directly represents contemporary Indonesian realities.

Several limitations delimit these conclusions. First, the analysis concerns a single poem; consequently, the proposed socio-ecological imaginary cannot be generalized to Bākathīr's complete literary oeuvre or modern Arabic poetry more broadly. Second, the methodology is interpretive, and although the analysis establishes text-to-theme relationships, alternative semantic, historical, theological, and rhetorical readings remain possible. Third, the Indonesian dimension is constructed through scholarly dialogue rather than empirical reception data; therefore, it establishes contemporary interpretive relevance rather than demonstrating actual influence on Indonesian readers. Fourth, translation and transliteration inevitably mediate aspects of Arabic polysemy, prosody, rhythm, and rhetorical intensity. Finally, the study does not establish educational or behavioral outcomes arising from exposure to the poem. Future research should consequently examine a comparative corpus of Bākathīr and other modern Arabic poets, investigate whether the proposed five-stage model appears across different works, conduct reader-response studies among Arabic and Indonesian audiences, compare interpretations of Arabic originals with translated versions, and experimentally investigate whether pedagogical engagement with socio-ecological poetry influences students' environmental reasoning, perspective-taking, or conceptualization of peace.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that ‘Alī Aḥmad Bākathīr’s *Laḥn al-Salām* constructs harmonious common life as a dynamic socio-ecological imaginary rather than as a simple moral appeal for the cessation of conflict. Through a textual movement from enmity, war, and a disfigured earth toward the rejection of violence, the expansion of collective identity, the institutionalisation of love and justice as ethical principles, and finally the interdependence of soil, water, vegetation, earth, and sky, the poem redefines peace as a relational order involving both human and nonhuman life. The principal contribution of the study is therefore its identification of a temporal-relational structure in which social reconciliation and ecological responsibility constitute a single imaginative trajectory: negative imaginary → ethical rupture → inclusive solidarity → just social harmony → ecological interdependence. Reading the poem dialogically alongside contemporary Indonesian socio-ecological conditions further demonstrates the relevance of this imaginative structure without reducing the literary text to a direct representation of Indonesia. The findings extend Arabic literary studies by showing how social-imaginary and ecological approaches can be analytically integrated and suggest that poetry can function as a critical space for conceiving more inclusive, peaceful, and ecologically responsible forms of common life. Nevertheless, broader comparative and reception-based research is required to establish whether this socio-ecological pattern recurs across other literary corpora and how diverse readerships interpret its ethical and environmental possibilities.

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