

Mourning a Vanishing Soundscape: Vernacular Solastalgia in a Contemporary Javanese Geguritan

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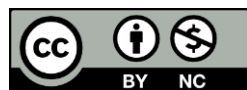
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ABSTRACT

This study examines Any Faiqoh's *Kangen Tembang* as a literary representation of acoustic and cultural loss in contemporary Javanese life. The poem recalls children's songs, *gobak sodor*, *macapat*, protective prayers, affectionate forms of address, and familiar nonhuman sounds that are perceived as gradually disappearing. Rather than treating the text merely as an expression of nostalgia, the study investigates how the loss of culturally familiar sounds produces estrangement within a continuing home environment. A qualitative interpretive design was employed through close reading, soundscape-oriented analysis, contextual interpretation, and analytical translation. The analysis identified four interconnected movements in the poem, namely the transition from nostalgia to place-based distress, the construction of the village as a vernacular soundscape, the association of cultural silence with moral disorder, and the transformation of literary memory into an acoustic archive. The findings show that the poem represents home not simply as a physical location but as an environment sustained through songs, games, ritual voices, intergenerational address, and human and nonhuman

relations. Their disappearance weakens cultural familiarity, communal intimacy, moral orientation, and channels of transmission. To explain this condition, the study proposes *vernacular solastalgia* as distress caused by the erosion of everyday sounds, practices, and relationships that formerly made a home environment culturally recognisable. The concept extends *solastalgia* cautiously beyond visibly damaged landscapes toward culturally inhabited acoustic environments. The study also demonstrates how locally published and noncanonical literature can preserve affective traces of gradual cultural loss that remain marginal within formal heritage documentation.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji *Kangen Tembang* karya Any Faiqoh sebagai representasi sastra tentang kehilangan akustik dan budaya dalam kehidupan Jawa kontemporer. Puisi tersebut mengenang tembang anak, gobak sodor, macapat, doa perlindungan, sapaan penuh kasih, serta bunyi nonmanusia yang semakin menghilang. Penelitian ini tidak hanya melihat teks sebagai ungkapan nostalgia, tetapi juga menelaah bagaimana hilangnya bunyi-bunyi yang akrab secara budaya menimbulkan keterasingan di lingkungan rumah yang masih tetap ada. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan interpretatif kualitatif melalui pembacaan dekat, analisis bentang suara, interpretasi kontekstual, dan terjemahan analitis. Analisis menemukan empat gerak utama, yaitu peralihan dari nostalgia menuju tekanan berbasis tempat, pembentukan desa sebagai bentang suara vernakular, hubungan antara kesunyian budaya dan kekacauan moral, serta perubahan ingatan sastra menjadi arsip akustik. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa rumah tidak hanya dipahami sebagai tempat fisik, tetapi sebagai lingkungan yang dibentuk oleh tembang, permainan, suara ritual, sapaan antargenerasi, serta relasi manusia dan nonmanusia. Hilangnya unsur-unsur tersebut melemahkan keakraban budaya, keintiman komunal, orientasi moral, dan transmisi budaya. Penelitian ini mengusulkan konsep solastalgia vernakular untuk menjelaskan tekanan akibat terkikisnya bunyi, praktik, dan relasi sehari-hari yang dahulu membuat rumah dapat dikenali secara budaya. Karya sastra lokal dan nonkanonik juga terbukti mampu menyimpan jejak afektif kehilangan budaya yang sering terabaikan dalam dokumentasi warisan budaya formal.

1. INTRODUCTION

A village night is remembered through its sounds. Children gather beneath the full moon, their voices carrying fragments of *tembang dolanan* across an open space. Their running feet, laughter, and shouts animate a game of *gobak sodor*. Somewhere nearby, birds call from among the wild sugarcane, while older voices hum *Maskumambang*, *Asmaradana*, or *Gambuh*. Before the night deepens, a parent recalls a protective verse and addresses a son or daughter with the affectionate names *thole* and *gawuk*. The place is not experienced merely as a visible settlement. It is inhabited through voices, melodies, animal sounds, prayers, movement, and repeated acts of listening.

In Any Faiqoh's *Kangen Tembang*, published in the collection *Kumpulan Geguritan Bebrayan* in 2021, that acoustic world survives principally as memory (Faiqoh, 2021). The poem repeatedly declares that the songs, games, humming, and prayers are no longer heard. It does not describe the destruction of a village or the physical disappearance of its houses, fields, and paths. Instead, it depicts a place that remains geographically imaginable while losing the sounds through which it was once recognised. The resulting grief is directed not only toward the past but toward a present environment that has become culturally unfamiliar.

The disappearance of everyday sounds is rarely as visible as the destruction of a forest, the excavation of a mountain, or the drying of a river. It may occur gradually, without producing a single event that can be publicly commemorated. A song ceases to be sung, a game is no longer played, and a protective prayer disappears from domestic speech. Each absence may appear insignificant in isolation. Taken together, however, they alter how a community inhabits and recognises its environment. They also weaken the ordinary channels through which memory, values, and cultural knowledge move between generations.

This condition invites engagement with the concept of *solastalgia*. Albrecht et al. (2007) introduced *solastalgia* to describe distress caused by unwanted environmental transformation while people remain directly connected to their home environment. The concept differs from nostalgia, which conventionally refers to longing generated by separation from a familiar home. In *solastalgia*, the subject may remain in place, but the place changes around them. Home becomes a source of grief because it can no longer provide the familiarity, identity, or consolation previously associated with it. Later scholarship has developed the concept across studies of mining, drought, wildfire, climatic disruption, landscape transformation, displacement, and ecological degradation, consistently emphasising the relationship among environmental change, place attachment, identity, and emotional distress (Albrecht, 2019; Krüger et al., 2022; Rafa et al., 2025).

Most applications of *solastalgia* have understandably concentrated on materially visible environmental transformation. Such studies demonstrate the concept's importance for understanding the psychological and cultural consequences of ecological loss. They also create a critical question. Must the transformation that produces *solastalgia* always be visually dramatic or physically measurable? Environments are not experienced exclusively through sight. They are also inhabited through sound, smell, movement, memory, language, social relations, and recurrent cultural practices. The disappearance of these dimensions may transform a place even when its physical structures remain relatively intact.

Soundscape scholarship provides a way to approach this less visible form of environmental change. Soundscape does not refer simply to all sounds occurring within a location. It concerns an acoustic environment as perceived, experienced, and understood by people within a particular context (International Organization for Standardization, 2014). From Schafer's (1994) foundational account of the sonic environment to Truax's (2001) communicational model, soundscape studies have shown that listening is central to relationships among people, communities, and places. Sounds mark time, identify activities, distinguish spaces, communicate social presence, and participate in the production of environmental familiarity.

Soundscapes also exceed the human world. Soundscape ecology draws attention to the interaction of biological, geophysical, and anthropogenic sounds within environments (Pijanowski et al., 2011). Birds, insects, vegetation moved by wind, human voices, ritual performances, vehicles, and machines can coexist or compete within the same acoustic field. Changes in their relative presence can indicate broader transformations in ecological and social life. Nevertheless, literary representations of soundscapes require a distinct mode of attention. A poem does not provide an objective acoustic recording. It selects, rearranges, intensifies, and remembers sounds according to an affective and aesthetic logic.

This distinction is particularly important in reading *Kangen Tembang*. Its birds, chickens, wild sugarcane, children's songs, games, *macapat*, and prayers should not be treated as straightforward evidence of biodiversity loss or total cultural disappearance. They are poetic elements through which the speaker constructs a formerly familiar world. The poem registers a perception of acoustic erosion rather than offering an inventory of environmental change. Its evidentiary force is therefore affective and literary. It reveals how disappearance is felt, narrated, and morally interpreted.

Studies of oral tradition and cultural memory further illuminate this process. Songs, nursery rhymes, chants, prayers, poems, and proverbs transmit knowledge, values, and collective memory through repeated performance. Their continuity depends not simply on textual preservation but on use within living social contexts (UNESCO,

n.d.). Oral forms are especially vulnerable because their disappearance may follow the weakening of ordinary occasions for performance rather than an explicit decision to eliminate them. When children no longer sing a particular song or hear it from older generations, the cultural knowledge embedded in its rhythms, imagery, and vocabulary may gradually become inaccessible.

Memory, however, is not merely stored and retrieved. It is produced through communicative acts, media, and changing relations between past and present (Assmann, 2011; Pentzold et al., 2023). A written poem can therefore become a secondary site for sounds that have weakened within oral circulation. It cannot reproduce the complete social situation in which the sounds were originally performed, but it can preserve fragments, emotional evaluations, and perceptions of absence. In this sense, contemporary vernacular literature may operate as an affective acoustic archive.

The term vernacular is important here. It should not be reduced to local language or contrasted simplistically with elite culture. In this study, the vernacular refers to an everyday cultural world formed through familiar speech, games, songs, forms of address, beliefs, bodily practices, and relations with surrounding life. Such elements may remain peripheral to official archives and canonical literary histories, yet they are central to how home is experienced. The publication of *Kangen Tembang* by a modest local press also demonstrates that contemporary Javanese literary production continues beyond the most visible authors, institutions, and publishing centres. Its significance lies not in canonical status but in its capacity to record an experience of cultural change from within vernacular life.

Existing scholarship establishes important connections among environmental transformation, place-based distress, soundscape perception, oral transmission, and cultural memory. Yet these fields have seldom been brought together to examine how the disappearance of culturally familiar sounds is represented in contemporary Javanese poetry. Research on *solastalgia* remains predominantly oriented toward physical ecological change, while soundscape studies often focus on acoustic perception, design, health, ecology, or heritage environments. Studies of oral tradition and intangible cultural heritage, meanwhile, frequently emphasise safeguarding and transmission without fully conceptualising the affective condition produced when a living soundscape becomes silent.

The critical problem is therefore not simply whether *Kangen Tembang* expresses nostalgia. The more consequential question is how its recollection of vanished sounds represents estrangement within a continuing home environment. Treating the poem only as nostalgic would locate its emotional force in a sentimental attachment to the past. Reading it through *solastalgia* makes it possible to examine how acoustic disappearance transforms the present experience of place. At the same time, extending *solastalgia* beyond direct physical degradation carries the risk of conceptual inflation. The analysis must therefore remain attentive to the poem's actual evidence and avoid converting every form of cultural nostalgia into an environmental condition.

Responding to this tension, the study examines how remembered songs, games, nonhuman presences, ritual voices, and cultural silence organise the poem's experience of loss. It asks how the poem moves from acoustic memory to environmental estrangement, why the disappearance of song becomes associated with moral disorder, and how written poetry preserves traces of a soundscape it simultaneously declares to be vanishing. Through this reading, the study proposes *vernacular solastalgia* as a situated form of distress caused by the erosion of everyday sounds, practices, and relations that formerly made a home environment culturally familiar.

The proposed concept constitutes the study's principal theoretical contribution. It extends *solastalgia* cautiously from visibly transformed landscapes toward culturally inhabited acoustic environments without separating cultural loss from material place. Its pragmatic contribution lies in providing an interpretive vocabulary for recognising gradual losses that may escape conventional environmental and heritage documentation. Its practical contribution concerns cultural safeguarding. By identifying poems, songs, games, prayers, and local literary publications as records of environmental familiarity, the study encourages heritage initiatives to document not only cultural objects and formal performances but also the ordinary acoustic relations through which communities experience continuity.

This study does not claim that one poem represents contemporary Javanese society as a whole. Nor does it claim that every disappearing tradition generates *solastalgia*. Its more limited objective is to demonstrate how a brief, noncanonical *geguritan* can make a vanishing soundscape intellectually and emotionally legible. *Kangen Tembang* mourns what can no longer be heard, but its act of mourning also interrupts total silence. Through poetry, the lost sounds return as fragments, warnings, and invitations to listen.

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative interpretive design centred on the close reading of a single contemporary Javanese poem. The primary text was Any Faiqoh's *Kangen Tembang*, published in *Kumpulan Geguritan Bebrayan* by Cipta Prima Nusantara in 2021. The poem was selected purposively because its compact structure brings together disappearing children's songs, traditional games, *macapat*, protective prayers, nonhuman presences, and intergenerational address. Purposive selection was appropriate because the objective was not

statistical representation but the intensive examination of a text capable of illuminating a specific cultural and affective phenomenon.

The use of one poem does not imply that *Kangen Tembang* represents all contemporary Javanese poetry or all experiences of cultural transformation in Java. A single case can nevertheless be analytically valuable when it is examined for the conceptual questions it makes visible rather than treated as a miniature sample of an entire population (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The poem was therefore approached as a situated literary articulation of cultural loss. It provides evidence of how one poetic voice perceives and organises change, not empirical proof that the cultural practices mentioned in the poem have disappeared uniformly.

Close reading constituted the principal analytical procedure. Close reading remains a foundational practice in literary studies because it directs sustained attention to diction, repetition, imagery, form, tonal movement, and relations among individual textual elements (Brown, 2017; Kusch, 2016). The analysis examined the poem line by line, with particular attention to repeated expressions, acoustic references, cultural vocabulary, temporal markers, proverbial language, and direct address. Phrases such as *ora ana maneh* and *kabeh ilang kelindhes jaman* were interpreted not merely as statements about the past but as devices that organise the poem's experience of absence and historical pressure.

The second procedure was a soundscape-oriented reading. Soundscape refers to an acoustic environment as it is perceived, experienced, and understood within a particular context rather than merely to a collection of objectively measurable sounds (International Organization for Standardization, 2014). References to birds, bantam chickens, children's songs, *gobak sodor*, humming, *macapat*, parental speech, and protective prayer were identified and classified according to their textual functions. The provisional categories comprised nonhuman sound, playful sound, literary-musical sound, ritual sound, domestic voice, remembered sound, and cultural silence. These categories enabled the poem's acoustic elements to be interpreted as parts of an inhabited environment rather than as unrelated motifs.

The analytical categories were refined through an iterative thematic process. Coding was treated as an interpretive act rather than a mechanical extraction of themes from the text. Reflexive thematic analysis emphasises that themes are actively generated through sustained engagement between the researcher, the material, and the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2022). Initial codes included remembered sound, declared absence, childhood play, human and nonhuman relations, moral inversion, protective prayer, and intergenerational counsel. Through comparison and revision, these codes were organised into four interpretive themes, namely the movement from nostalgia to vernacular solastalgia, the village as a vernacular soundscape, cultural silence as moral disorder, and literary persistence as an acoustic archive.

Contextual interpretation accompanied textual analysis. Terms such as *tembang dolanan*, *gobak sodor*, *Maskumambang*, *Asmaradana*, *Gambuh*, *thole*, and *gawuk* were retained in Javanese because complete substitution with general English terms would diminish their cultural and acoustic specificity. The study interpreted these expressions according to their functions within the poem and their participation in Javanese oral, musical, domestic, and ludic practices. Context was used to clarify textual significance, but it was not allowed to replace evidence from the poem itself.

The English version was produced as an analytical translation rather than an autonomous poetic adaptation. The translation sought to preserve semantic sequence, repetition, culturally marked vocabulary, and the movement from remembered sound to silence and moral warning. Translation inevitably involves interpretive choices, particularly when culturally embedded expressions have no exact equivalents in the target language (Bassnett, 2014; Venuti, 2018). For this reason, culturally specific terms and refrains were retained where domestication would erase their local resonance. The original and translated versions were compared repeatedly to identify semantic displacement, tonal alteration, and possible loss of acoustic texture.

The concept of *vernacular solastalgia* was developed through abductive analysis. Abduction moves iteratively between empirical material and existing theoretical explanations, especially when an observation cannot be adequately explained by established concepts alone (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). The analysis initially considered nostalgia as an explanation for the poem's longing. It then examined *solastalgia* because the poem describes estrangement within a continuing home environment. Since the text does not explicitly portray physical ecological destruction, the concept was not applied deductively or without qualification. Instead, the poem and the theory were repeatedly compared to formulate *vernacular solastalgia* as a cautious extension describing distress caused by the erosion of an everyday cultural and acoustic environment.

Interpretive credibility was supported through repeated reading, comparison between the Javanese and English texts, explicit documentation of thematic categories, and attention to alternative explanations. Nostalgia remained a relevant dimension of the poem rather than being rejected merely to privilege a new concept. The analysis also distinguished textual interpretation from historical or ethnographic verification. References to disappearing songs and games were treated as the poetic speaker's situated perception.

The principal limitations arise from the small textual corpus and the absence of audience interviews or ethnographic observation. The study cannot determine how other readers interpret the poem or establish the actual

prevalence of the practices it names. Literary memory may also be selective, idealised, or shaped by present concerns. These limitations define the scope of the study rather than invalidate it. The analysis demonstrates how a brief contemporary *geguritan* can articulate the gradual transformation of a familiar cultural environment and make that transformation available for theoretically informed interpretation.

3. RESULTS

3.1. The Poetic Text and Its Vanishing Soundscape

The primary text examined in this study is Any Faiqoh's *Kangen Tembang*, published in the poetry collection *Kumpulan Geguritan Bebrayan* by Cipta Prima Nusantara in 2021. The poem consists of remembered fragments of children's songs, references to traditional games, *macapat* melodies, protective prayers, and parental advice. Rather than presenting a linear narrative, it assembles a sequence of sounds that once animated communal life but are now perceived as disappearing.

The following version presents the original Javanese text alongside an English translation. The translation prioritizes semantic clarity while retaining repetition, culturally specific vocabulary, and the oral quality of the poem.

Original Javanese	English Translation
KANGEN TEMBANG	LONGING FOR SONGS
<i>Tekate dipanah-dipanah</i>	The bantam chicken is being shot at
<i>ngisor gelagah ayam-ayam kate</i>	beneath the wild sugarcane, the little bantam chickens
<i>Ana manuk ondhe-ondhe</i>	There is also the call of the <i>ondhe-ondhe</i> bird
<i>Mbok sri mbok, mbok-mbok sri kate</i>	<i>Mbok Sri mbok, mbok-mbok Sri kate</i>
<i>Mbok sri mbok, mbok-mbok sri kate</i>	<i>Mbok Sri mbok, mbok-mbok Sri kate</i>
<i>Mbok sri mbok, mbok-mbok sri kate</i>	<i>Mbok Sri mbok, mbok-mbok Sri kate</i>
<i>Ora ana maneh tembang dolanan</i>	No children's play songs can be heard anymore
<i>Kang dak prungu wayah padhang mbulan</i>	the songs I once heard beneath the full moon
<i>Ora ana maneh ramene gobak sodhor</i>	No longer is there the joyful noise of <i>gobak sodor</i>
<i>lan rengeng-rengeng tembang</i>	nor the gentle humming of songs
<i>Maskumambang, Asmarandana, utawa sekar Gambuh</i>	<i>Maskumambang, Asmaradana, or the verses of Gambuh</i>
<i>kabeh ilang kelindhes jaman</i>	all have disappeared, crushed beneath the passing age
<i>kang jare jaman edan</i>	an age people call the age of madness
<i>yen ra edan ra keduman</i>	those who are not mad receive no share
<i>saya edan saya dieman</i>	the madder one becomes, the more one is cherished
<i>Aja turu sore, kaki</i>	Do not fall asleep before nightfall, my child
<i>ana dewa nganglang jagad</i>	for a deity is travelling across the world
<i>nyangking bokor kencana</i>	carrying a golden bowl
<i>isine donga tetulak</i>	filled with prayers that repel misfortune
<i>sandhang kalawan pangan</i>	clothing and food
<i>ya iku bageanipun</i>	are the blessings reserved
<i>wong melek, sabar, narima</i>	for those who remain awake, patient, and accepting
<i>Yen donga tetulak wis ora dikumandhangake</i>	When prayers against misfortune are no longer chanted
<i>aja eram yen donya dadi ora karuan</i>	do not be surprised when the world falls into disorder
<i>Ayo, thole, anak lanangku</i>	Come, <i>thole</i> , my beloved son
<i>gawuk, anak wadonku</i>	<i>gawuk</i> , my beloved daughter
<i>aja melu ngedan</i>	do not join the madness
<i>sanadyan donya saisine padha edan</i>	even though the entire world has gone mad
<i>ajabake dongamu, gayuh gegayuhanmu</i>	affirm your prayers and pursue your aspirations

Several Javanese expressions have deliberately been retained. *Gobak sodor* refers to a traditional team game played by children within a rectangular field divided by lines. *Maskumambang*, *Asmaradana*, and *Gambuh* are forms of *macapat*, a Javanese poetic and vocal tradition governed by particular metrical and melodic conventions. The affectionate forms *thole* and *gawuk* refer respectively to a boy and a girl. Translating these terms into general English expressions would reduce their cultural and acoustic specificity.

The opening stanza differs structurally from the rest of the poem. It resembles a remembered fragment of a children's song rather than an explanatory statement. Chickens, wild sugarcane, birds, and repetitive vocal patterns are combined without a conventional narrative sequence. The repeated line *mbok sri mbok, mbok-mbok sri kate* is particularly important because it appears to operate through rhythm and sound rather than through literal description alone. Its significance lies not merely in what it denotes but also in how it recreates an orally transmitted sonic pattern.

The poem subsequently moves from the performance of remembered sound to an explicit declaration of absence. The phrase *ora ana maneh*, meaning "there is no longer" or "no more," appears repeatedly. Through this repetition, absence becomes the organizing structure of the poem. Children's songs are no longer heard during full-moon nights. The excitement of *gobak sodor* has vanished. The humming of *macapat* melodies has also disappeared.

These lost sounds belong to different but interconnected domains. *Tembang dolanan* represents childhood play and informal oral transmission. *Gobak sodor* evokes collective movement, shouting, laughter, and public interaction. The three *macapat* forms represent a more formally recognized Javanese literary and musical tradition. Their coexistence within the poem suggests that the soundscape being mourned was not divided rigidly between children's culture and classical culture. Both formed part of an inhabited vernacular environment.

The expression *kabeh ilang kelindhes jaman* marks the poem's central perception of historical change. Time is not represented as a neutral process. The verb *kelindhes* conveys the image of being run over, crushed, or flattened by a powerful moving force. The songs do not simply fade because older generations naturally pass away. They are imagined as being violently displaced by the advancing age.

This representation of historical change is followed by the proverbial discourse of *jaman edan*. The disappearing soundscape therefore becomes connected to a broader diagnosis of moral disorder. The loss of song is not treated as an isolated artistic problem. It is placed alongside social opportunism, the normalization of madness, and the inversion of ethical values.

The third movement recalls a protective song or parental admonition. The travelling deity carrying a golden bowl filled with protective prayers introduces a sacred dimension into the remembered soundscape. Singing is presented not only as entertainment but also as a practice through which protection, sustenance, patience, and acceptance are transmitted. The song produces a relationship between the cosmic world, domestic life, and everyday ethical conduct.

In the closing lines, the disappearance of protective prayer is directly associated with the disorder of the world. The parental speaker addresses both a son and a daughter, urging them not to participate in collective madness. Although the poem begins with longing and loss, it does not end entirely in resignation. Prayer, aspiration, and moral endurance remain possible.

The textual movement therefore proceeds from remembered sound, to cultural silence, to moral warning, and finally to intergenerational counsel. *Kangen Tembang* does not merely list traditions that have disappeared. It constructs a vanishing vernacular soundscape in which children, parents, birds, vegetation, games, poetic melodies, prayers, and supernatural beings once occupied the same experiential environment. The loss of these sounds consequently signifies the weakening of communal intimacy, cultural continuity, and moral orientation.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. From Nostalgia to Vernacular Solastalgia

At first reading, *Kangen Tembang* appears to express nostalgia for childhood songs, communal games, and Javanese poetic traditions that are no longer commonly heard. Nostalgia, however, does not fully explain the poem's structure of feeling. The speaker does not imagine returning to a geographically distant homeland. Instead, she remains affectively attached to a familiar cultural environment that has changed around her. The village may continue to exist physically, but the sounds through which it was formerly recognised have faded.

This condition approaches what Albrecht et al. (2007) define as *solastalgia*, namely distress arising from unwanted environmental transformation while people remain connected to their home environment. Unlike nostalgia, which conventionally involves separation from home, *solastalgia* describes the pain of experiencing home itself as altered. Subsequent studies have reinforced the importance of place attachment, environmental familiarity, and perceived disruption in the production of such distress (Albrecht, 2019; Borges, 2024; Krüger et al., 2022; Rafa et al., 2025).

The transformation represented in *Kangen Tembang* differs from the mining, drought, wildfire, and landscape degradation frequently examined in *solastalgia* research. The poem offers no direct account of ecological disaster. Its evidence is primarily cultural and acoustic. Children's songs are no longer heard beneath the full moon, the noise of *gobak sodor* has disappeared, *macapat* melodies are no longer hummed, and protective prayers are no longer chanted. The familiar environment has become unfamiliar through the disappearance of recurrent sounds.

The poem therefore suggests that environmental familiarity is produced not only through visible landscapes but also through culturally patterned listening. Sounds orient people within places, mark social occasions, activate memories, and contribute to place attachment (Schafer, 1994; Truax, 2001). Research on soundscape perception similarly emphasises that an acoustic environment is not merely a measurable collection of sounds. It is an environment as experienced and interpreted by individuals and communities within particular contexts (International Organization for Standardization, 2014; Kang et al., 2016).

To describe this culturally situated experience, this study proposes the concept of *vernacular solastalgia*. The term *vernacular* does not refer only to the use of Javanese. It identifies an everyday world sustained through locally transmitted songs, games, forms of address, oral formulas, beliefs, and habits of listening. Such practices may lack monumental visibility, yet they help make an environment socially recognisable and affectively inhabitable.

Vernacular solastalgia can thus be understood as distress caused by the erosion of everyday cultural relations that previously made a home environment familiar. It does not treat culture as separate from environment. Instead, it recognises that lived environments are composed of material places, human and nonhuman presences, recurring activities, sensory patterns, and inherited meanings. A village may remain materially present while becoming affectively diminished when its characteristic sounds and practices disappear.

The expression *kabeh ilang kelindhes jaman* provides the poem's strongest image of this transformation. The verb *kelindhes* implies being crushed or run over by a powerful moving force. Time is consequently represented not as neutral succession but as destructive pressure. The older soundscape does not simply recede naturally. It is experienced as being flattened by an advancing age whose cultural direction appears difficult to resist.

4.2. The Village as a Vernacular Soundscape

The concept of soundscape clarifies why the poem mourns more than a collection of obsolete artistic forms. Schafer (1994) introduced soundscape as a way of attending to the total acoustic environment, including natural, human, and technological sounds. Truax (2001) subsequently emphasised the communicational relationship among listeners, communities, and environments. More recent soundscape research has likewise shifted attention from sound as a physical signal toward sound as perceived within context (International Organization for Standardization, 2014; Kang et al., 2016).

The soundscape reconstructed in *Kangen Tembang* includes birds, bantam chickens, children's voices, sung fragments, collective games, *macapat*, parental warnings, and ritual prayers. These elements belong to different social and acoustic domains, yet memory gathers them into one inhabited world. Their coexistence shows that the village was perceived not simply as a location but as a web of audible relationships.

The opening stanza is especially significant because it resists purely semantic interpretation. Its chickens, wild sugarcane, birds, and repeated phrase *mbok sri mbok, mbok-mbok sri kate* resemble remembered fragments of oral play. Meaning is carried partly through rhythm, repetition, imitation, and vocal pleasure. Oral traditions commonly depend on poetic organisation, repetition, and musical patterning as supports for memory and transmission (Rubin, 1995). Songs and children's rhymes can therefore persist in memory even when their lexical or narrative meanings become uncertain.

The stanza simultaneously performs persistence and fragility. A remnant of the children's song remains audible because the poem repeats it. Yet it appears as a fragment, followed immediately by the declaration that such songs are no longer heard. The written poem becomes a secondary site in which an endangered oral sound can continue to resonate.

This movement from oral performance to written recollection also illustrates the interaction between communicative and cultural memory. Communicative memory circulates through everyday conversations and interpersonal practices, whereas cultural memory depends more heavily on durable forms capable of transmitting selected meanings beyond immediate social interaction (Assmann, 2011; Pentzold et al., 2023). By incorporating remembered oral fragments into a published poem, Faiqoh converts fragile communicative memory into a modest form of literary preservation.

The soundscape is also more than human. Birds, chickens, vegetation, children, and singers participate in the same acoustic imagination. The poem does not state that the animals or wild sugarcane have physically disappeared, so it would be excessive to claim direct biodiversity loss. Nevertheless, their presence shows that cultural memory emerges from encounters among human voices, animal life, vegetation, weather, and place. Soundscape ecology similarly recognises acoustic environments as combinations of biological, geophysical, and human sounds rather than exclusively human compositions (Pijanowski et al., 2011).

The poem's juxtaposition of *tembang dolanan*, *gobak sodor*, and *macapat* further expands this acoustic community. Children's play songs represent informal oral transmission. *Gobak sodor* creates sound through running, shouting, cooperation, and competition. Studies of the game emphasise its collective, coordinative, and socially interactive character (Kurnia & Djiwo, 2024; Wicaksono et al., 2021). The disappearance of its "joyful noise" therefore indicates the loss of both sound and embodied social interaction.

Meanwhile, *Maskumambang*, *Asmaradana*, and *Gambuh* represent more codified forms of Javanese sung poetry. By placing them beside children's songs and games, the poem refuses a strict distinction between classical heritage and everyday culture. Both were once encountered through listening, imitation, participation, and repeated social exposure. Their disappearance signals the fragmentation of a cultural continuum through which children could move from playful song toward more formal poetic knowledge.

UNESCO identifies oral traditions, songs, poems, and language-based expressions as important vehicles of intangible cultural heritage whose continuity depends upon transmission within communities (UNESCO, n.d.). The loss represented in *Kangen Tembang* is therefore not merely the declining popularity of several genres. It is a weakening of the social conditions that allow sounds, expressions, and embodied knowledge to pass between generations.

4.3. Cultural Silence and Moral Disorder

Cultural silence in *Kangen Tembang* is not aesthetically neutral. After describing the disappearance of songs and games, the poem invokes *jaman edan*, an age of madness in which moral values are reversed. Those who refuse to participate in madness receive nothing, whereas those who become increasingly mad are increasingly cherished. The movement from acoustic disappearance to ethical inversion indicates that the lost soundscape previously carried social and moral functions.

Traditional songs often transmit knowledge without assuming the explicit form of formal instruction. Their memorable structures allow advice, social expectations, beliefs, and collective values to circulate through repeated performance (Rubin, 1995; UNESCO, n.d.). In the poem, the remembered verse beginning with *aja turu sore, kaki* connects domestic discipline with a deity travelling through the world while carrying a golden bowl filled with protective prayers. Clothing, food, wakefulness, patience, and acceptance are joined within a compact sung cosmology.

The importance of the song lies not in whether its supernatural account is accepted as literal fact. Its significance rests in how it arranges relations among children, elders, the sacred world, livelihood, and ethical conduct. The song makes a cosmology inhabitable by embedding it in domestic time and acoustic repetition. Values are not delivered as abstract principles but as memorable voices heard within the household.

The line stating that the world becomes disordered when protective prayers are no longer chanted extends this logic. Vocal performance once helped establish a relationship between material sufficiency, spiritual protection, patience, and social order. Its disappearance is consequently perceived as a rupture in the moral infrastructure of everyday life. The world becomes quieter but also less intelligible and less protected.

This does not mean that the poem objectively proves a causal connection between the disappearance of traditional songs and social disorder. It demonstrates how cultural loss is affectively interpreted by the poetic speaker. Literary texts provide access not merely to events but also to structures of feeling through which transformation becomes emotionally and ethically meaningful. The poem registers the perceived consequences of silence rather than offering a sociological measurement of cultural decline.

The closing address to *thole* and *gawuk* nevertheless prevents the poem from ending in complete resignation. The speaker calls both son and daughter to resist the surrounding madness, affirm their prayers, and pursue their aspirations. Direct address reactivates the intergenerational relationship whose weakening the poem has mourned. The older voice continues to advise, even when the wider soundscape that once supported such advice has diminished.

The poem therefore moves from lamentation toward limited cultural repair. Remembering becomes a way of transmitting. Writing down a disappearing song does not restore the former social environment in its entirety, but it prevents complete acoustic erasure. The poem keeps fragments available for renewed listening, interpretation, and circulation.

4.4. Literary Persistence as an Acoustic Archive

The publication of *Kangen Tembang* within a locally produced collection adds an important dimension to its cultural work. Literary value should not be measured solely through canonical recognition, prestigious publishers, or national circulation. Vernacular literary production can record experiences that remain peripheral to dominant archives and literary histories.

The poem functions as what may be termed an affective acoustic archive. It does not preserve a field recording of an earlier village soundscape. Instead, it preserves how the disappearance of that soundscape is remembered, mourned, and morally interpreted. Its repeated refrains, named melodies, forms of address, and declarations of absence retain traces of sounds whose continued performance can no longer be assumed.

Calling the poem an archive does not imply that it provides transparent ethnographic evidence about all contemporary Javanese communities. Oral and literary memories are selective, performative, and shaped by present concerns (Assmann, 2011; Rubin, 1995). One poem cannot demonstrate that *tembang dolanan*, *gobak*

sodor, *macapat*, or protective prayers have disappeared uniformly throughout Java. It can, however, reveal how one poet situated within contemporary Javanese literary production experiences cultural transformation.

This limitation is also the poem's analytical strength. *Kangen Tembang* articulates loss at the scale of ordinary life. It does not describe a spectacular catastrophe with a clearly identifiable date. It records gradual attenuation. Songs cease to be sung, games cease to be heard, and prayers cease to structure domestic listening. Such losses may remain invisible to institutions because no single event announces their disappearance.

The concept of *vernacular solastalgia* gives critical language to this gradual thinning of cultural life. It identifies a form of place-based distress produced when familiar sounds and practices no longer sustain the experience of home. The poem shows that *solastalgia* may be heard before it is seen. Its object is an environment whose geographical coordinates may remain unchanged while its acoustic, social, and moral textures become increasingly unfamiliar.

Kangen Tembang consequently performs two apparently contrary acts. It mourns a vanishing soundscape while preserving fragments of that soundscape in writing. The poem cannot recreate the full communal world of moonlit games, children's songs, birds, *macapat*, and protective prayer. Nevertheless, it keeps that world partially audible. *Vernacular solastalgia* therefore names not only grief caused by cultural and acoustic loss but also the literary impulse to resist complete silence.

5. CONCLUSION

This study has examined Any Faiqoh's *Kangen Tembang* as a poetic articulation of acoustic and cultural loss. The poem does not portray environmental destruction through damaged land, polluted water, or disappearing settlements. Instead, it presents a home environment that becomes unfamiliar through the gradual disappearance of children's songs, traditional games, *macapat*, protective prayers, familiar forms of address, and remembered nonhuman sounds. Its grief arises not from geographical separation but from remaining affectively attached to a place whose cultural soundscape has changed.

The analysis shows that the poem moves through four interconnected stages. It begins by recalling fragments of an earlier acoustic world, then declares the disappearance of its characteristic sounds, associates that silence with moral disorder, and finally transforms mourning into intergenerational counsel. The lost soundscape once joined children, elders, birds, vegetation, games, poetic traditions, domestic instruction, and sacred protection within a shared environment. Its disappearance therefore signifies more than the decline of several cultural practices. It indicates a weakening of environmental familiarity, communal intimacy, cultural transmission, and moral orientation.

To describe this condition, the study has proposed the concept of *vernacular solastalgia*. The term refers to place-based distress caused by the erosion of everyday sounds, practices, and relationships that formerly made a home environment culturally recognisable. It extends *solastalgia* cautiously beyond visibly damaged landscapes toward culturally inhabited acoustic environments. This extension does not equate every form of nostalgia with environmental distress. Its usefulness depends on evidence that the present experience of home has been altered by the disappearance of familiar relations.

The study also demonstrates the value of noncanonical and locally published literature as an affective acoustic archive. *Kangen Tembang* cannot restore the social conditions in which its remembered songs and prayers were once performed. Nevertheless, it preserves fragments of those sounds and records how their disappearance is emotionally and ethically understood. The poem therefore mourns silence while simultaneously resisting complete erasure.

The study remains limited by its focus on one poem and by the absence of ethnographic verification or audience reception data. Future research could compare similar representations across contemporary Javanese poetry, document surviving performances of the songs named in the poem, or examine how different generations perceive changing village soundscapes. Even within its narrow scope, however, *Kangen Tembang* shows that cultural loss may first become legible through what can no longer be heard. Listening to such literary silences can broaden both environmental humanities and heritage studies by revealing that home is sustained not only by landscapes and buildings, but also by the fragile sounds that make them familiar.

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