

THE AMBIVALENT PORTRAYAL OF THE ECOFEMINIST MOVEMENT IN *TANAH IBU KAMI* (2020)

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ABSTRACT. *Tanah Ibu Kami* (2020), a documentary film produced by The Gecko Project and Mongabay, published on YouTube, follows the travels of journalist Febriana Firdaus to four rural areas in Indonesia where she meets Sukinah from Kendeng, Central Java; Lodia Oematan and Aleta Baun from Mollo, East Nusa Tenggara; Eva Bande from Banggai, Central Sulawesi; and Farwiza from Banda Aceh, Aceh. The film portrays these women leading socio-ecological movements that fight for their rights along with their land rights, as they face the risks of violence, imprisonment, and judgment from large corporations and patriarchal customs and beliefs. Placing the documentary within the ecofeminist framework, exemplified by Warren (2000) and Shiva and Mies (2018), I would like to show how the documentary portrays the state and the cultural institutions having control over women and nature. In its narrative method, the film tends to look at the environmentalism done by women as something to be highlighted not because of its substantial aspects but more as a valorized act because of its masculine attributes. Thus, while the film glorifies women as empowered environmentalists with the ability to exert agency, the structure of and behind the film is based on patriarchal assumptions.

Keywords: ecofeminism; *Tanah Ibu Kami* (2020); documentary; gender and media studies

AMBIVALENSI PENYAJIAN EKOFEMINISME DALAM FILM *TANAH IBU KAMI* (2020)

ABSTRAK. *Tanah Ibu Kami* (2020), film dokumenter yang diproduksi oleh The Gecko Project dan Mongabay, ditayangkan di YouTube, menampilkan perjalanan jurnalis Febriana Firdaus ke empat daerah pedesaan di Indonesia di mana dia bertemu Sukinah dari Kendeng, Jawa Tengah; Lodia Oematan dan Aleta Baun dari Mollo, Nusa Tenggara Timur; Eva Bande dari Banggai, Sulawesi Tengah; dan Farwiza dari Banda Aceh, Aceh. Film ini menggambarkan para perempuan ini memimpin gerakan sosio-ekologis yang memperjuangkan hak mereka dan hak lahan, mereka menghadapi kekerasan, pemenjaraan, dan penghakiman dari perusahaan besar serta adat dan kepercayaan patriarki. Menempatkan film dokumenter dalam kerangka ekofeminis, digagas oleh Shiva dan Mies (2018), saya ingin menunjukkan cara film dokumenter menggambarkan negara dan institusi budaya memiliki kontrol atas perempuan dan lingkungan hidup. Dengan metode naratifnya, film cenderung melihat betapa gerakan lingkungan hidup yang dilakukan oleh perempuan adalah sesuatu yang ditonjolkan bukan karena aspek substansialnya, tetapi lebih sebagai pengagungan akan tindakan yang dianggap maskulin. Maka dari itu, kendati film mengagungkan perempuan sebagai aktivis lingkungan hidup yang berdaya dan memiliki agensi atas dirinya, struktur film masih melanggengkan asumsi-asumsi yang patriarkal

Kata kunci: ekofeminisme; *Tanah Ibu Kami* (2020); film dokumenter; kajian gender dan media

INTRODUCTION

Tanah Ibu Kami (2020) is a documentary depicting environmental activism led by women in four rural areas in Indonesia. *Tanah Ibu Kami* was published on November 2, 2020. This is a collaboration work of The Gecko Project and Mongabay with a total duration of 55 minutes and 7 seconds. When seen as an ecofeminist work, *Tanah Ibu Kami* offers valuable portrayals of how the environmental conditions in Indonesia are deteriorating. The Gecko Project and Mongabay as the producers behind *Tanah Ibu Kami* are both concerned with environmental issues. The Gecko Project claims to focus on investigating and reporting the issue of corruption, climate, rainforests, and fairness while Mongabay focuses on publishing news on environmental science, energy, and green design. Mongabay also features information on tropical rainforests and deforestation statistics around the world. According to The Gecko Project's website, *Tanah Ibu Kami* is one out of six of their projects.

Tanah Ibu Kami presents an environmental issue through the eyes of Febriana Firdaus, a journalist who travels to four rural areas in Indonesia to meet four women, namely Sukinah from Kendeng, Central Java; Lodia Oematan and Aleta Baun from Mollo, East Nusa Tenggara; Eva Bande from Banggai, Central Sulawesi; and Farwiza from Banda Aceh, Aceh. She narrates the film through her conversations with the five environmentalists, telling the stories of how their communities struggle against companies. The lives of rural people are being dispossessed by companies in alliance with the state, taking away the communities' access to resources they need to live. When they resist, they often face the wrath of the state.

Tanah Ibu Kami seems to try to portray how environmental work by women plays a crucial role in providing preferable ways to address the issues. However, the way the documentary portrays women and nature is unbearably patriarchal. It tries to show how women and nature are inseparable which makes

both of them exploited by the state and corporations as masculine institutions. Both the interviewer and interviewees in *Tanah Ibu Kami* are women, which emphasizes how women's work in environmentalism is significant. With that being said, the film can be considered a feminist work because it puts an effort to put women's visuals and voices on the screen. However, analyzing more on how the film structures work, the film still preserves the way patriarchal way of thinking actualized in society, thus, it fails to show how human beings and nature should be seen equally. The ecofeminist stance as apparent in this documentary is ambivalent in three aspects, namely; the feminization of nature, the domestication of women, and the masculinization of the state; where all of which are contradictory to the ecofeminist way of thinking.

In *Tanah Ibu Kami*, the depiction of nature focuses either on the way nature is perceived as a sacred being or as an object that can be exploited by humans. Warren (2000) emphasizes that the solution to ecological crises needs to be found from a feminist point of view and that discrimination against women needs to be fixed by putting an ecological perspective on it. I suggest that this documentary film as an alternative media attempt to portray women's activism to raise awareness of the intersection between gender and environmental issues. The film also negotiates the power relation between the state and nature. To know more about documentaries in Indonesia with environmental concerns, it is important to assess other discussions that contribute to film studies and gender studies. A study on *Tanah Ibu Kami* has been employed before by Cintya et al. (2022), Pamungkas and Sokowati (2022), and Simanjuntak and Lubis (2022). Cintya et al (2022) use linguistic and critical discourse analysis to see how the film that portrays women can have several ways to protect the environment. They discuss the role of women in the context of the environmental project, but they still embody a patriarchal way of thinking about perceiving women's significant participation in the environmental movement. Pamungkas and Sokowati (2022) also use critical discourse analysis as an approach to reading the film. They also use an ecofeminist approach in the discussion which leads to the argument of how there is a significant relationship between how women and the environment are being naturalized. Pamungkas and Sokowati (2022) use the social context outside of the film to support their discussion. The last previous study, which is research done by Simanjuntak and Lubis (2022) argues that the exploitation of nature contributes to the discrimination against women, and vice versa. The method being used is text analysis only. From these three previous studies, I propose

a different approach to discuss this film which is by using film narratology as the methodological research and an ecofeminist approach to conducting a deep understanding of how the film is ambivalent in portraying the ecofeminist movement.

Not many researches have been conducted in discussing *Tanah Ibu Kami*. Thus, the discussion on ambivalency, ecofeminist cinema, and women and nature will help enrich the previous studies of this article. Paparcone (2020) uses three Italian films titled Quattriglio's *Con il fiat sospeso* (2013), Mangini and Barbanente's *In viaggio con Cecilia* (2013), and Kauber's *In questo mondo* (2018) as the research object. Characterizing these three films as ecofeminist cinema, Paparcone analyze the technique used by women filmmaker succeed in detaching the film from an anthropocentric point of view in showing the relation between human beings and non-human beings (2020). Discussion by Paparcone (2020) is contradict from what I will discuss in *Tanah Ibu Kami*, since *Tanah Ibu Kami* still embodied the way anthropocentric angle sees the nature. The women filmmaker of these Italian ecocinema blur the boundaries between gender and genre, thus completely aware that the problem of ecological crisis and the discrimination of women works as the result of binary oppositions in patriarchal-capitalist society (Paparcone, 2020).

Agiş (2022), on the other hand, discusses how Turkish series titled *Wounded Love* (2016-2018) uses environmental spaces metaphorically in relation to women's empowerment in getting their agency during and after the Turkey's liberation war. Using the ecofeminist framework coined by d'Eaubonne, Agiş argues how the three-key argumentation on ecofeminism can be applied on the metaphor of nature and women in *Wounded Love* (2016-2018). The discussion of women in activism portrayed on the article wrote by Parameswaran (2022). This research emphasizes how India, which is starting to feel the impact of the climate crisis, is still neglecting the advocacy of this issue to the public. On the other hand, environmental activism from the middle class dominates public discussion. The issues raised are women's resistance, class issues, and environmental issues. This research is a historical study that discusses women's resistance in India since the Independence of India with a focus on the spiritual ecofeminist movement. Similar to what Hódosy (2023) does in her article, she uses theological approach to analyze ecological crisis in *Noah* (2014) and *mother!* (2017) directed by Darren Aronofsky. Hódosy (2023) argues that to help being environmentally sound as a living being, it is not based on what religion stated, but by being compassion to living beings, human and non-human. It is because the religious teaching, in this

case Christianity intertwined with patriarchy and anthropocentrism which leads to the fall of ecology (Hódosy, 2023). Hódosy (2023) uses ecocriticism specifically ecofeminism and deep ecology as the base framework to point out the ecological cases depicted in *Noah* (2014) and *mother!* (2017).

Foster (2021) on her discussion towards contemporary environmental governance uses ecofeminism approach theorized by several ecofeminist, namely Starhawk, Susan Griffin, and Vandana Shiva. This article applied the theory to see the relevance to today's environmental governance. According to the article, it is useful to rethink how ecofeminism approach can be a counter in the era of rationalism and technocentrism (Hódosy, 2023). The ecofeminist approach on policy has affect gender equality by empowering women on their contribution in society (Hódosy, 2023). As Hódosy uses policy as the research object, Cortez (2022) on the other hand uses film to discuss ecological issues. Cortez (2022) analyzes *Jackass: The Movie* (2022) to show the ambivalent on both parodied national and gendered fantasies of "hardness" where it also drew on dynamics of racial and queer mimesis to reinscribe hegemonic (white/ straight) masculinity. Discussing the queer ecology, this article uses the key element of ecofeminism which is how binary opposition works in the research object.

Thus, the argument that I would like to offer here is that the documentary film work in an attempt to show how the ecofeminism embedded in the women portrayed in the film and the ecofeminist struggle they face along the way.

METHOD

To arrive at the research objective, I carried out several stages as follows; determining the object of research; close reading of research objects based on research methodology in the form of film narratology; focusing attention on and collecting descriptions of environmental and gender issues; classifying the portrayal of ecofeminist movement; analyzing the contents of the research object using ecofeminist approaches, feminist film theory, narratology theory, film narratology theory, and film theory, as well as other supporting analytical theories; mapping and describing the results of the analysis based on aspects in the film; interpreting the findings based on the results of the analysis; and drawing conclusions. The data taken in this study are in the form of textual and visual data. Dialogue, scene, and film structure are selected based on their relevance and importance to this research.

To analyze the way documentaries portray environmental issues, I use the combination of

narratology, film narratology, and film theory exemplified by (Bordwell et al (2010), Chatman (1978), Genette (1983)) as a research methodology. I examine the documentary carefully to probe all of the filmic aspects that contribute to the ambivalent portrayal of ecofeminist work. I also focus on the narrative aspects, namely: mise-en-scène, editing, cinematography, and voice that resonate with the ecofeminist issues. To respond to the ecofeminist movement, I place my discussion with the conceptual framework theorized by Warren (2000) and Shiva & Mies (2018). I classify the issues into three categories, the masculinization of the state, the feminization of nature, and the domestication of women. Before analyzing the documentary, I divided the content into its dialogue and its particular scene which shows three keys of my findings. The concept of the masculinization of the state, the feminization of nature, and the domestication of women are depicted through the dialogue narrated by the interviewee, the interviewer, and the structure of the film. I characterized the content based on the significant aspects attributed to them in showing the ambivalent portrayal of the ecofeminist movement narrated by the five women in *Tanah Ibu Kami*. These contents are then useful to produce a thoughtful and comprehensive analysis. To read the film, I am going to offer the theory proposed by Bordwell et al (2010), Chatman (1978), Genette (1983).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Glorifying Women, Masculinizing the State

In *Tanah Ibu Kami*, all of the narrators and characters are women. At the very beginning of the film, there is a text on the screen that stated "[a]cross the country, hundreds of rural communities are in conflict with corporations seeking control of their land and resources. In some cases, the resistance has been led by women" (Plunkett et al., 2020, 00:35). By this statement, it can be shown how the film tries to amplify the act and the voice of women in Indonesia regarding the environmental crisis. There are five women in this film who re-tell their stories namely, Sukinah, Mama Lodia, Mama Aleta, Eva Bande, and Farwiza. Other than those women, there are also two women who re-tell their stories, but the duration of their talking on the screen is not as much as the five women. They are Yu Parmi and Bu Patmi.

In all four areas, Kendeng, Mollo, and Aceh advocate the same issue which is water scarcity. Impacted by industrialization, their environmental condition deteriorates day by day due to the investors and corporate developers that try to exploit their natural resources. All of the women from these four rural areas lead the environmentalism work to

defend environmental rights. The environmentalism in Banggai led by Eva Bande proposes agrarian matters regarding the owning of land. As in the other areas depicted in the film, water scarcity is a rapidly growing problem that they need to overcome. Water scarcity impacts women in various aspects because they are unable to access and benefit from affordable, adequate, reliable, and safe water. It also leads to gender-based violence. The women in the film are not only harassed by the military force of the state but also, during Kartini Kendeng's fight against the state, they lose one of their women. Her name was Patmi, a woman from Kendeng who dies during her fight for their rights and their land rights. They lost one of their fellow activists which they thought was the hardest trial. After the loss of Patmi, Sukinah and the other women do not give up fighting for "mother earth". They keep the spirit of Yu Patmi with them as they fight for their environment, showing how strong they are in voicing their voice. Sukinah even states in the interview, "[b]ecause even though Patmi has passed, she is still with us. 'I'm here. Even though my body has been buried, my soul was never buried.'" (Plunkett et al., 2020, 15.50)

But in the film, it shows that their protest failed. The president at that time broke the promise he previously made, and the cement factories still continued with their construction project. The film portrays how the activism done by the women of Kendeng fails to reach their objectives. The women and the land have already experienced violence, exploitation, and inequality by the state, but they still were not able to defend their rights. Following Shiva and Mies' explanation of the masculinization of the land, Kendeng women's beliefs and protests are seen as the tolerance of diversity. Their protests are effeminized by the state's strength and power, making women and nature become more and more vulnerable in the capitalist patriarchal society.

Tanah Ibu Kami may narrate the documentary to point out how women leaders are fighting for their environment. However, the film on the other hand shows how women fail to break the gender norms which always associate women with feminine attributes. Even if the activism is led by women, it does not make women empowered. The state and military force will always have control over women and nature, as the case is with Lodia Oematan and Aleta Baun in Mollo, East Nusa Tenggara. Both of them have been fighting for their environmental conditions concerning the water crisis because of mining companies. Lodia with her ability to weave and Aleta with her capability to give a mandate to her people in her district show how women have the capacity to voice out their matters despite their being harassed by the brutality of the male-centric political

culture and masculine norms perpetuated in their region. Lodia manages to do the protest by weaving for one week in the mountain. Lodia and other women do it because they do not want the mining companies to interfere with their land. They weave in the mountains so that the thugs and police who protect the mining can see how they are doing something to protect their mountains. In the interview, Lodia says she was neglecting their homes and farms in order to do the protest in the mountains. It is not an easy thing to do for her, as she received verbal and physical abuse by the authorities from the state. This shows that women's activism once again leads to gender-based violence. Lodia suffered physical, mental, and even financial violence because she could not do her work in the private (domestic) and public spheres (farm). Eva Bande and Parmi from Banggai also got terrorized by the police, the military, and the state. Eva Bande was imprisoned for four years. She was wrongfully accused because of an irresponsible act done by the soldiers in one of the protests she led. She shares her experience in environmentalism along with the farmers, "[a]s we were trying to reclaim the land there were visits from the police, the military, and others, in an effort to terrorize the people." (Plunkett et al., 2020, 36.50)

Eva Bande states that it may be challenging for agrarian activists when they are doing a protest or march because they need to confront the state face-to-face; it is not just a battle of words. In 2014, Eva Bande was freed from prison and granted clemency during the reign of President Joko Widodo, Eva Bande is physically affected because of her detention time which makes her unable to continue her activism on environmental matters. Another case is Parmi, the mother of Nuril who was also wrongfully arrested by the police. Parmi is psychologically traumatized by how the authorities came to her house at night to arrest her son, Nuril.

From what is shown in the film, it can be concluded that the film is trying to show how women can lead environmentalism, and have the power to contribute to environmental and socio-political welfare. The film also depicts the way the state is masculinized. The scenes which show male characters emphasized how the state uses the repressive state apparatus—police to take aggressive action against the women contributing to environmentalism with weapons or armed force. The film shows footage of women getting harassed by state apparatus when they are having an environmental movement. Written on the video description on The Gecko Project's YouTube channel, women who have risen to lead environmental and socio-political movements in Indonesia are facing violence, imprisonment, and judgment when seeking justice for environmental matters.



(Source: Plunkett et al., 2020, 02:05)

Figure 1. a woman helps her husband on getting wrongfully arrested



(Source: Plunkett et al., 2020, 10:13)

Figure 2. a woman gets beaten up by the police



(Source: Plunkett et al., 2020, 03:08)

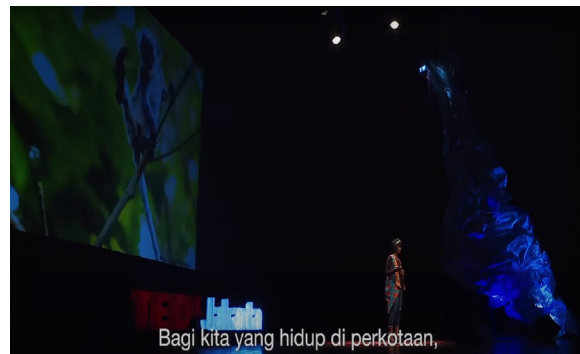
Figure 3. a woman faces violence while doing the environmental protest

In the beginning of the film and also on the description of it on YouTube, they emphasized how the women leading the environmentalism have to face violence from the state's repressive apparatus. Women who fight for the environment by protest and march on the street got harassed. These three scenes are examples of the state's use of force, military intervention, and the maintenance of armed forces. Using the medium-shot angle, we can see the position and the relation between women and armed forces. This can be assumed that activism which is seen as a male-dominated space aligns with the notion of masculinity that valorize strength, aggression, and control. Rural communities itself is already seen as not equal to the state, let alone women who come from the rural communities pursuing environmental

and socio-political justice. Another depiction of how masculinity is presented as strength and aggression is shown in the Kendeng part where Bu Sukinah stated.

The thinking was that if we take action, the women must be on the front lines because then it wouldn't descend into anarchy. Because if it's the men, maybe... By anarchy you mean violence? Violence, yes. Coming face-to-face with the police. Because if it's the men, they would be easily provoked. The women must stay in control, to avoid... Violence? Violence. People could be killed if that happens. And to join the environmental movement, to fight for the environment, you don't have to be a man. (Plunkett et al., 2020, 08:01)

This is ambivalent because, on one hand, Sakinah approves that women can and should lead environmental activism; but on the other hand, she shows that women activists are only preferred because they supposedly have well-natured traits that can hinder the aggressive behaviors of men. Meanwhile, Farwiza from Banda Aceh, Aceh offers a different perspective as part of the younger generation. She states that environmental activism can be approached via media and policy. Farwiza is concerned with forest and conservation matters.



(Source: Plunkett et al., 2020, 49:41)

Figure 4. Farwiza at TED

In the interview, Farwiza tells Febriana that to perform an impactful act for forest and conservation issues, she cannot just stay in the forest all day; she needs to do something in the public sector. She states, "I wish I worked in the forest every day. But the reality is that the work to protect the forest often takes place in meeting rooms, courtrooms, and in front of computers" (Plunkett et al., 2020, 50:17). Not only do women have an important role in advancing the economy, but Farwiza also believes that women have a big impact in protecting the environment which is described as "mother earth" in the film. In the discussion between Farwiza and Febriana, the ambivalent portrayal of ecofeminism shown by understanding how Farwiza need to be in the public sphere to be able to voicing out the environmental problem. She can not stay on the forest to be able to point out how forest in Aceh is getting destructed day by day.

Tanah Ibu Kami may be seen as a documentary that amplifies the voice of women however, the film tends to overlook their role which lead to the glorification of women in environmentalism. Women leads the environmentalism, in the film, works harder to put themselves in a male-dominating place which is the public sphere. In voicing out themselves, women need to resist the domination from the public sphere where at the same time they need to be in the public sphere to be heard. They need be in a sphere where the masculine attributes is valued.

Domesticating Women, Feminizing Nature

The five women environmentalists in *Tanah Ibu Kami* are portrayed as leaders who risk their life fighting for environmental issues. In voicing out the destruction of the environment and its effects, they face violence, the threat of prison, and even death. In these four rural areas in Indonesia, the women manage to break the patriarchal boundaries that dominate them. They organize their own movements as a resilience act against the capitalist patriarchal system. In Kendeng, people consider the mountains to be their Mother Earth, who nurtures and even breastfeeds their land.



Figure 5 a ritual in Kendeng

In this scene, it is not made clear what agenda the indigenous people of Tegalwodo Village are carrying out, but the subtitles in the film indicate that this tradition indicates the worship of nature and women who have a strong attachment to nature. This is emphasized in the dialogue spoken in Javanese, "... who wash **their** rice every afternoon, They grind the rice, wash it with water" (Plunkett et al., 2020, 06.33, my emphasis). There is a tendency for the domestication of women here, as the text uses "their" to denote rice washed by women for family consumption. Febriana in her narration also emphasizes that the issue that is happening in Kendeng and Mollo is the water crisis which has a big impact on women. This is shown in the dialogue, "[e]specially the women who have to get up the first thing in the morning and deal with water." (Plunkett et al., 2020, 51.27). The understanding conveyed by Febriana in the film indicates the tendency to relate

women with nature because of domestic affairs which is shown by how women need to wake up early in the morning to prepare the food for the family. In this ritual held in Tegalwodo Village, women seem to be glorified because of their significant role in the household, but in reality, when representing the voices of women in her village, Sukinah said that "back then we'd never even left Kendeng. We were just housewives. Never. Especially for meetings with companies or anything like that." (Plunkett et al., 2020, 05:14). Through rituals, people try to show how much they value women, but in social life, women are required to play a major role only in the domestic space. It even emphasized by Febriana's dialogue before she moves on to the next city on the film. From the narrative conveyed by Sukinah, she sees public space as something far away and unreachable. If Sukinah, who acts as a representative for women in her village, never leaves Kendeng, it will be more difficult for other women to amplify their voices in the public sphere.

In portraying the issues, the film has a tendency to look at women as the opposite of the state. When organizing the protest, Sukinah suggests that the men should stand behind the women's row because she believes that women stay in control more than men do. As men's aggressiveness often leads to violence, Sukinah also states that if men are in control, it usually leads to violence, which makes their interaction with the police lead to violence. She also states that environmental issues are not something to be voiced out only by men, as women have the capability and knowledge to lead the way to the prosperity of the environment. The important thing from the movement by Sukinah and Kartini Kendeng is how Sukinah perpetuates women with feminine aspects. Instead of seeing the act as empowerment of Kendeng's women, her statement makes the feminization of women apparent. She also states that what she is doing with Kartini Kendeng is meant for the future generation to live on, suggesting that the responsibility of nurturing the environment falls onto the woman.

Aleta Baun from Mollo, East Nusa Tenggara experienced environmentalism differently. Compared to the other women, Aleta as the daughter of a community leader succeeded in going beyond the boundaries. Aleta believes the world has changed and a woman could rise to lead a social movement. Aleta shows the independence of a woman who does not get the same space as a man does but still manages to have power in managing social movements concerning environmental issues. In another case of Eva Bande from Banggai, Central Sulawesi, the life of the woman is dependent on the male, the husband, and the son. The arrest of the men of Piondo had a

huge consequence on the women. They were left to provide for their families alone. It is shown that women in Piondo cannot stand on their own without the help of another family member. It is related to how Farwiza sees women in correlation to nature. She thinks that the burden of thought and the emotional and financial burden are on the mother. It includes violence that is physical, psychological, emotional, and financial. By stating so, Farwiza indicates an act of domesticating women. The way the interviewer and the interviewees see the environmental crisis is ambivalent because they still imply a patriarchal point of view.

Some of the interviewees still bear the scars of many years of activism, through physical injuries, financial loss, years in prison, and even death. Even though the awareness of the significance of women in the environmental movement has begun to surface, women environmental activists still experience marginalization. In the context of marginalization and exploitation, women workers who come from rural areas are workers whose wages are the cheapest because they do not come from the city center. Remembering what Sukinah said, her experience in Jakarta made her realize how living in Kendeng is more peaceful and full of gratitude than in this multi-faceted city. Of all the cases of ecofeminism in rural areas in Indonesia, it is safe to say that Kartini Kendeng is the most powerful and massive act done by nine women from Kendeng. They went to Jakarta to protest the state's agreement with cement factories. The main objective of their movement is to peacefully refuse the project conducted in their mountain. The people of Kendeng believe that land, water, and forests belong to everyone, and need to be used wisely. This belief resists outside forces, especially the ones that will be harmful to their mother earth, the karst mountain. When it came to opposing the cement factory, it was the women who took to the front line. As stated in the film, both Sukinah as an interviewee, and Febriana as the interviewer think that women will be the most impacted by the water scarcity problem caused by the cement company. Before the protest, Sukinah, the leader of Kartini Kendeng says that before women in Kendeng had never been outside Kendeng because they are just homemakers obligated to do domestic work; things like going to a meeting to discuss the environmental condition of their home is not something a woman would do.

Specifically talking about Yu Parmi and Bu Patmi who share their story in the film, their narratives do not at all speak about the environmental crisis. Febriana interviews them regarding their feelings and how they live after their important person died after voicing out the environmental crisis. This part may

not be significant in contributing to the discussion of how the women activist tackle environmental matters, however, the fact that the film tries to make it shown on the screen throws the film off balance. However, the way the movie presents this particular part, where the women lost an important man in their lives, should be questioned as it might show how the movie perceives women by the men around them. I assume it may be related to the gaze as the way film narrate the environmental issues still using the capitalist-patriarchy perspective in perceiving women in environmentalism. As much as the film tries to make women the center of the film, the film positions women under the patriarchal system.

In the story of Kartini Kendeng which is shown in the very first part of the film, Yu Parmi is depicted as the late Yu Patmi's best friend—the woman who died not long after she joined the feet-cementing act in Jakarta. Yu Parmi re-tells the story of how she and Yu Patmi are like family to one another. In the interview, none of Febriana's questions lead to the contributions of Yu Parmi and the late Yu Patmi to their community and environment. The questions serve more as small talk to understand the relationship between Yu Parmi and the late Yu Patmi and Yu Parmi's feelings on the loss of her best friend. Similar to what is shown on Kartini Kendeng's part, Febriana also interviews Bu Patmi from Banggai, Central Sulawesi, to talk about the loss of her son. Bu Patmi explains that her son was wrongfully arrested by the police. The story of environmentalism done by women in Banggai is shown from the point of view of Eva Bande, the leader of agrarian activism in Central Sulawesi. Eva and other activists, who are mostly men, are arrested by the police because their act is considered an inviting-provocation act. Not long after her son is finally released by the police, Bu Patmi needs to bear the loss of her husband. The grief of Bu Patmi is shown in this dialogue, "[m]y husband died a few months after Nuril was released from prison. All he asked was how Nuril was doing, over and over again. When my husband was in pain, he always wanted Nuril." (Plunkett et al., 2020, 40.48). She also stated,

When I think back to it, it always makes me cry. Remembering what happened to my son. Why did it have to happen to him? When I think about it now, it's like opening an old scar. I can't hear the sounds [of that night] again. It traumatizes me straight away. The past is gone. I don't want to open it up again. (Plunkett et al., 2020, 40.24)

Examining this part, Bu Patmi actually does not want to discuss this case whatsoever. However, it is still included in the film to show the grief experienced by the victim of apparatus violence. This scene is framed with Bu Patmi as the center of the screen with Febriana from the back side in a blur. It can be

shown in the picture how Bu Patmi is crying during the interview because she needs to re-tell the story of how the police wrongfully arrested her son and how her husband died not so long after the police gave her son back.



Figure 6. Bu Patmi cries because the loss of her husband after her son got arrested by the police

This scene in the film shows an ambivalence toward showing environmentalism led by women. On one hand, the film tries to show how powerful it is when women become the main center of activism in a male-dominant space, yet, the film portrays the feminine attributive on women which does not have any significance on the environmentalism done by women itself.

In the discussion of ecofeminism, women and nature always symbolically connected. It is because the feminine attributes of women being nurturing, caring, and loving is being connected to how human perceives nature as 'mother earth' because nature gives human what they need. *Tanah Ibu Kami* is continuously using the word 'mother earth', even the title is also related to the term 'mother earth'. In attempt to show women in environmentalism empowered, the structure of the film neglects the fact they domesticate the women and feminize the nature by emphasizing on the interconnectedness of women and nature because of their feminine attributes. Ultimately, the main argument of this research leads to a conclusion that women's agency as depicted in the film put women as empowered environmentalists on the screen. However, the structure of and behind the film is still maintaining a patriarchal way of thinking.

CONCLUSION

While trying to point out how empowered women are by leading environmentalism, the film portrayed how the state is still the one that has full power regarding the choices on environmental issues. The domination of human beings not only negatively impacts non-human beings which in this case is the natural environment, but also it negatively affects women as the ones who weigh all the burden of the water scarcities because they are the ones taking

care of the household as part of the environment. *Tanah Ibu Kami* may be relevant and reflective to show how women in Indonesia are voicing out environmental issues by leading environmentalism which is considered as a feminist attempt of the film. However, using the ecofeminist perspective, the film is still maintaining the patriarchal way of thinking which makes it ambivalent in showing the ecofeminist movement done by women.

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