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## Queering Ecology: Three Investigations from Indigenous Women in Post-Conflict North Sumatra

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# Queering Ecology: Three Investigations from Indigenous Women in Post-Conflict North Sumatra

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## Abstract

Feminists and environmental scholars draw connections between gender inequality, heterosexism, and the devastating impact of environmental catastrophes on the livelihoods of women and gender minorities, exacerbating their precarity. This body of scholarship has begun to imagine alternatives to patriarchal gender and heterosexual norms for reconciling the relationship between humans and nature by calling for "queer(ing) ecology." I investigate the possibility of queering ecology by posing three theoretical concerns in opposition to anthropocentric and gendered preconceptions about nature: its idleness, naturalness, and rightfulness. Respectively, I will dissect such presumptions by questioning nature as metaphors, investigating "the natural" attribute in nature, and rejecting nature as the most just system through the case and experience of Indigenous Batak Toba women in North Sumatra. This essay serves as an invitation to reimagine queer ecology as a relationship between humans and nature that transcends beyond nature-human dualism, anthropocentric utilitarianism, and nature deification.

Keywords: Queer(ing), Ecology, Nature, Women, North Sumatra

## Irreversible Soil, Reversible Desire

"We're not going to work until Maria comes," said Patrisia, one of my informants in the North Sumatra village of Sipituhuta. I went with her to her *marsirimpa* (collective work) with her other friends, Maria and Tiurma. The arrangement requires Batak Toba women farmers to assist one another in their crops on a set schedule. This system has served as the backbone of their rural activity, and if women do not participate in *marsiadapari*, social punishments such as gossip will be imposed. Patrisia referred to her women friends as "her whole world" because no one else assisted her when her husband died. Following *marsiadapari*, all 27 Batak women I interviewed put their friendship on a pedestal and managed a care network. "If I die, nothing will happen, but if the women in this village die, there will be a serious problem," said Mangatur, my host, a male Indigenous-religious authority in the village.

In 2009, the Indigenous Batak Toba women of Sipituhuta regained their holy benzoin jungle from Toba Pulp Lestari Ltd. Women suffer the brunt of soil deterioration caused by deforestation in the village since flooding, drought, and increased work burden occurred not on reclaimed land, but on women's plots and gardens. The women demonstrated how they rebalanced their relationship with their surroundings amid change. The changed relationship manifests in shifted dynamics of gender performance and household financial restructuring. Women's bonds were strengthened further, both materialistically and culturally, by expanding



their *marsiadapari*; such a women-exclusive environment has homoerotic undertones with their expression of devotion for and dependence on each other.<sup>1</sup>

All of the Indigenous Batak Toba narratives, vignettes, and anecdotes provided here are from my ethnography conducted between July-December 2019. My initial research was centered around socioecological solutions following a land conflict. In addition to ethnography, I interviewed 27 Indigenous Batak women from the villages of Marade, Sipituhuta, and Pandumaan;<sup>2</sup> four local advocates who were present during the struggle; and three national activists who were active in the community's legal mobilization. To complement these interviews, I also meticulously documented time diaries of Indigenous women and connected them with soil fertility to determine the extent of ecological degradation caused by the land grab and how women suffered as a result of their deteriorating ecosystem.

Grievance emerged as a pivotal factor in understanding the restlessness experienced by Batak Toba women following the battle. Their experiences present a rare example of how achieving environmental justice and elevating women as mobilization methods that are often considered effective by many social movement scholars, does not necessarily guarantee an equitable society. The changing ecosystems and physical characteristics of their area, I find, are central for the women's challenging post-conflict situation.

This ethnography with Batak Toba women provides a prism through which to critique established social paradigms and imagine queer alternatives for human-nature relationships in the midst of changing climate. This essay will first trace and explore the queer perspectives on seeing nature. I will then move on to three research questions in order to investigate and problematize the heterosexism inherent in the existing human-nature relationship(s). The conclusion underlines the importance of queer reimagining of nature in the face of an impending ecological disaster.

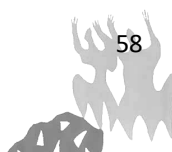
### **Queer/Nature: An Overview**

Classic scholarship in gender studies and feminism has extensively explored the duality between nature (environment) and culture (human) and how the difference between human and nature occurs (Gaard 1997). The separation of mind and body, human consciousness, and rationality is generally attributed to the Western scientific achievement and rationalism of the Age of Enlightenment (Keraf 2010). Thus, the division constructs what counts as "natural" and "social," with the natural tailored to human social prescriptions, including instruments like bodies and their sexes. The process of human-nature separation did not occur once but has been perpetuated over time through many forms of power such as capitalism, whiteness, male dominance, and colonialism. As a result, the development of modern nature as we know it is riddled with biases that favor and enhance specific socio-cultural ideals and political economic systems (Barad 2008).

Philosophers have claimed that the gender system, which is still dominated by the man-woman binary, serves as a bridge between human and natural division. By mediating, they are referring to how the gender binary contributes to the perpetuation of human-nature duality. In

<sup>1</sup> I would like to clarify that not all *marsiadapari* is practiced only by women (Kelompok Studi dan Pengembangan Prakarsa Masyarakat, 2021), but it is in the case of Sipituhuta village.

<sup>2</sup> In this essay, I focus on Sipituhuta women's narratives.



*The History of Sexuality*, Foucault observes that after the emergence of rationality, sex becomes a scientific object (of study) modeled after "physiologies of plant and animal reproduction" (1990: 54). As a result, the social world and its regulations project nature into its operation, resulting in an irony in which nature is incorporated into the social but remains external as a timeless model (or myth) rather than a dynamic entity. This paradox manifests prominently in the disproportionate impact of environmental disasters on women and gender minorities, especially trans persons. Rural women, for instance, heavily rely on agricultural labor, which becomes increasingly susceptible to climate change, consequently altering women's income and even home relations (Harcourt and Nelson 2015; Nightingale 2006). Transwomxn<sup>3</sup> are more likely to face homelessness in urban ecosystems that are ill-prepared for climate mitigations since their economic access is constrained due to persistent transphobia and gender discrimination in employment and financial opportunities (Reta 2022).

"Queer" as a practice and notion in human, nature, and gender debates and study has its roots in explorations of literary and poetics in naturalist arts that integrate nature into human social dynamics. It also finds its origins in how Indigenous people (and/or non-Western society) deny dualism (Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson 2010). Because gender binary is one of the products of humans-nature separation, and it also coincides with the disproportionate effects of environmental crises, queerness provides an avenue to envision political, economic, and sociocultural alternatives. Furthermore, "queer" is used as an analytical tool to deconstruct the "natural" fallacies and invalidate ostensibly scientific results, such as the gender binary and biological determinism. For example, findings of homosexual and non-marital behaviors in non-human animals are frequently used to refute the absoluteness of sexual reproduction and heteronormativity. Using queerness as an analytical tool also contributes to a better understanding of Indigenous alternatives and challenges the inert and ahistorical myths of indigeneity that are often uncritically championed as alternatives to human-nature dualism (Trigger 2008; Yeh & Bryan 2015).

This essay blends Saras Dewi's (2015) ekofenomenologi (ecophenomenology), which focuses on viewing humans and nature in relation rather than separating them, with Sara Ahmed's (2006) queer phenomenology, which investigates how queerness undermines current gendered and binary relations. Dewi aims to overcome the beyond nature/culture divide by treating the relationship between nature and humans as a phenomenon to move toward a balanced interconnection. On the other hand, Ahmed delves into how to queer phenomenology and rethink the orientation of relationships between subjects (consider humans and nature) that is not based on oppressive hierarchies. By merging the two theories in this dialogue, my goal is to advance ecophenomenology so that it does not become fixated on "restoring equilibrium" and embraces the messiness of human-nature dynamics, while also incorporating queer phenomenology into a larger structure of nature. In the following sections, I question persisting beliefs about nature that perpetuate the gender binary and contrast them with Sipituhuta women's everyday experience of gender and the environment.

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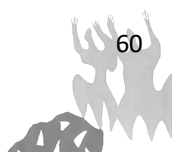
<sup>3</sup> I spell transwomxn with an "x" as a support to transgender politics that rejects gender binary.

## Metaphorizing Nature

The first part of this essay will examine the use of nature as a metaphor. By utilizing nature as a metaphor, I simply mean how nature becomes a figurative speech, a mystery landscape out there. Many sayings, speeches, and proverbs, including those in Indonesian, use nature to reflect deeply held and reinforced social values. Consider the *umpasa* (proverbs) of Batak Toba, where the first line typically alludes to the surroundings to rhyme with the second line, which contains the core sociocultural message. Because of my own Batak clan, Patrisia created a familial bond with me and frequently pushed me to get over my bachelor life and have children. "Have a lot of kids!" she taunted, using *umpasa*. "So, you can have several stars!" Her expression is based on the Batak Toba proverb "*Bintang na rumiris, tu ombun na sumorop; anak pe antong riris, boru pe torop*" (many stars and dews, many sons and daughters). The utilization of landscape serves not only achieving aural and rhythmic objectives, but also facilitating a deeper connection between young individuals and elements of the natural world, such as stars and dew.

The use of metaphors is understandable in so far that it allows users some levels of familiarity (Smith & Katz 2004). My intention is not to oppose the use of metaphors nor actively promote them. Rather, one must be aware of the power and the use that metaphors may possess. Metaphors are not neutral literary devices; metaphors hold cognitive, normative, descriptive, and prescriptive values, all for reinforcing or hindering social values that may not be immediately visible (McKittrick 2020: 10–11). Nature, as a space, becomes the source for many metaphors to the point it is important to understand why so and to ground these metaphors on nature. However, it is crucial to recognize that this metaphorical usage can sometimes border on fetishization, where nature transforms into both a commodity to exploit and the extension of one's self-expression (or even collective means) to maintain and justify such an exploitation (Demeritt 2017). The fetishization is also due to the metaphors' reference to what geographers call absolute space, or where space becomes a "coordinate of systems of mutually exclusive locations" (Smith & Katz 2004: 79), implying that nature is a field that is, in itself, immovable and independent from any externalities.

Various reasons may explain how nature is fetishized and molded to serve as metaphors for human's absolute wisdom and nearly unchallenged prescription. For analytical purposes, however, I will primarily focus on the assumption of static nature, that nature remains unaltered despite evolving circumstances. This idleness does not mean that many would not assume dynamics in nature; rather, nature is assumed to be balanced. Hence, the static refers to that nature has its own, sanitized, way that is external from the human/social world. Put it simply, nature is assumed *ahistorical*, hence it has less dynamic because its ecological, geomorphological, and/or biophysiological processes are expected irrespective of its internal changes (Barad 2008; 2011). The idleness, the balance, then offers some stability that is also reinforced across cultural and social groups, and it manifests into unquestionable wisdom. While sometimes they work best and do provide guidance (for example: Indigenous wisdoms for ecological restoration), the values are rarely questioned and ironically detached from the changing landscape, from which those wisdoms often derive.



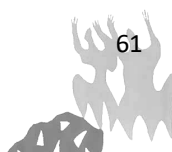
Metaphors of nature help push gender binary and heterosexism as they frame the latter as naturally found in the environment. Indigenous Batak Toba, similar to many groups, assume the Earth to possess a feminine body and call it "mother." Even though many women still believe in that Indigenous value, they start questioning the motherly role that the Earth is assumed to have. In particular, Sipituhuta women continue grieving over the changing ecosystem following the conflict because they suffer from soil erosion disproportionately compared to men. Men are also distressed because the conflict destroyed parts of their benzoin forest, but benzoin crop holds significant economic value compared to other combined commodities women typically cultivate (coffee, rice, herbs). Regrettably, post-conflict environmental crises are often overlooked because the focus of the struggle is the main property that belongs to men, as Sipituhuta women are not allowed to cultivate the benzoin in the sacred forest. Tiurma thus wonders why, if indeed the Earth is Batak Toba's mother, "no one cares about" her struggling plots. "Are not my coffee plots our mother, too?" She asked.

Metaphors are materially and discursively constructed, and being uncritical towards metaphors thus assumes their "free-floating" (Smith & Katz 2004: 79) properties and denies their constructed nature. That is particularly important when considering queering ecology, as it shall not take metaphors for granted, especially as it is understood that they have the potential to represent and reinforce certain social values. Allowing metaphors to persist without critical examination may further entrench nature into assumptions of idleness and naturality, dismissing the dynamics that should be considered in the extracted wisdom. Problematizing metaphors thus help reestablish the connection between humans and nature, which free-floating metaphors have severed and alienated. Scrutinizing metaphors can pave the way for rethinking politics contained in nature – gender binary, capitalist sexual division of labor, and heterosexism – to reform a relationship with nature that is not based on such politics. The next two sections will explore two main assumptions that become the basis of nature's metaphors: naturality and fairness.

### **Questioning the Natural in Nature**

The second investigation concerns the presumption that "nature" is inherently "natural." Such a presumption is historically rooted in Cartesian dualism that separates body and mind, leading to the strict division of science, in which nature is seen as a natural object of study with rigid laws. On the other hand, human and/or social science is the chaos that needs laws. Such differentiation in scientific assumptions and pursuits thus manifests that belief in human relationship with nature. Nature is often regarded as a phenomenon governed by given laws and predictable processes. By prescribing and insisting, that nature is inherently predetermined, humans reproduce nature's externalization. Externalizing nature means detaching human relationship from nature, and seeing nature as a completely sanitized entity without any human involvement (Haila 2000).

Externalizing nature affects how humans treat the environment under heterosexist and capitalist systems. Since externalizing means to other nature/environment from the social world, mainstream solutions for environmental problems will mostly be technocratic, neglecting that nature is a nebula of multiple ecosystems (Bakker 2009). Consider urban inequalities predominantly tied to social categories like race, gender, and poverty level.

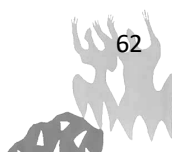


However, the very spatial design and environmental landscape of cities may perpetuate or alleviate these disparities. The low health quality rate among working-class urbanites is closely correlated with cities' air quality and water sanitation, whose management and designs depend on good governance *and* how urban ecosystems are altered. Changing the urban landscape implies changing the social structures and influencing social problems. Hence, the division between nature and culture collapses once it is understood that nature and culture (humans) occupy the same growing space and influence each other's existence and dynamics. Questioning the natural is to overcome the subject-object dualism (who/what built who/what), echoing David Harvey's famous quote, "There is nothing unnatural about New York City" (Harvey 1996: 435; 2006: 88)

Ironically, under capitalism and patriarchy, the human externalization of nature never completely abandons its "natural" signifier. If anything, nature manifests in how the social world is expected to follow nature's "natural law." Gender binary heavily relies on that image of nature: gender binary is natural because it conforms to the biological reproduction found in most species. Furthermore, this binary is also projected onto human understanding of nature (Gaard 1997; Mortimer-Sandilands 2005). Consider the "Mother Earth" metaphor, nature is often portrayed as a feminine figure due to its assumed passivity and (re)productive abilities, thus perceiving nature as something that needs to be untamed. The logic is prominent in colonialism, where colonizers assume any land as a blank chart to exploit. The same logic finds its way into Sipituhuta's land grab. During the conflict, the companies offered "modern" jobs for farmers. "They are [the company] assholes, every single one of them, they told everyone that our forest is better for eucalyptus because it brings more money [than benzoin]," cursed Mangatur. "As if the forest never gave us anything before," he added. Nature is considered natural only until values must be extracted.

Because the conflict in Sipituhuta pushed Indigenous women to the frontier of struggle and made them the symbol of resistance. The women increasingly gained gender awareness and started questioning their being as women and specifying their assumed ("natural") role of caregiving for the community and its environment. "I grew up listening to my mother telling me what Batak women should be, look, and do, because it is what it is," said Mastiur. "But now (after the conflict), I grow weary, all of this hard work, and for what exactly?" Women maintain and operate most of Sipituhuta's agricultural fields, particularly the village's other main commodity: lintong coffee, one of the world's finest coffee beans. Furthermore, despite women not working in the sacred benzoin forest, they also take care of the forest stewardship rituals, such as preparing the blessing and prayers for foods carried by the male farmers. In other words, behind the expectation of nature performing its "natural" state, in that assumed to be an idle ecosystem, is Indigenous care work, and even unpaid if women do it.

The consequence of the gender binary manifests even further in Sipituhuta's community rebuilding. The women had complained about how reparation after the conflict did not address the changing ecosystem in which women worked and struggled to maintain. Sipituhuta women become a primary case in which a hard-won struggle does not immediately deliver community justice. The land grab degrades the village ecosystem, particularly in women's coffee and rice fields, from which their main derives. "The forest is indeed where my husband's work, and we struggled hard to reclaim it. But then why after all of this, I'm still the most stupid (*oto-oto*), unheard, and exhausted one?" Daniela teared up. She believed that if everyone indeed must



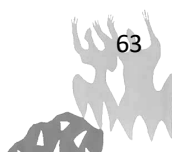
protect the forest, where women could not even enter, then the effects of such atrocity (land grab) should be resolved by everyone. "But here I am, I sell onions from my garden." She claimed that her garden used to be her solemn, where she could relax. However, due to economic hardships after the conflict, she started planting petty cash crops like onions and lime leaves to sell every Friday in the market for a low price.

### **Facing Unjust Nature**

Daniela's rice field was one meter deep underwater in mid-December, and it was not the first time within the last few weeks. "I don't know what's going on anymore," she said, "This feels so exhausting and unfair." "This" refers to the changing weather that affects her production as a farmer. The flood forces Daniela to clean up and rearrange her rice plot to avoid a failed crop. Research shows that farming communities understand climate change through crop and land conditions, translating keywords "heat wave" and "emission" to failed crops, early rains, and so forth (Elliott 2018; Wetts 2020). Less discussed is how communities construct and seek justice in the changing climate. Daniela, for example, assumed how "unfair" her ecosystem was, particularly after the conflict. Her complaint opens an opportunity to discuss a possibility in which nature is not as just as many assume and expect it to be. The wish for nature justice correlates greatly with the fetishization of nature as a commodity, and how nature – especially in its "natural" state – offers a model for ideal civilization and lives. However, what if nature inherently is unjust, and how does one face such nature?

Scholars on gender and sexuality have long questioned the portrayal of nature as a just entity. The persistent notion of nature's "poetic justice" has been under a scrutiny, particularly within social movements related to environmental and indigenous justice, whose strategies often restrengthen and conflate the image and the close relationship between women and nature (Harcourt and Nelson 2015; Olivera 2005). The case of Sipituhuta exemplifies such mainstreaming, where villagers and their advocates switch their environmental justice jargon to Indigenous ones and put women on the front line (Arizona et al. 2019; Bedner and Arizona 2019; Kardashevskaya 2021; Silalahi 2020). Their campaigns used "mother earth" as one of their key phrases, drawing parallels between land grabs and the destruction of Indigenous womanhood. Well-meaning as they are, such movements ironically deepen the construction of what counts as "natural" for both women and nature. Sipituhuta Indigenous community, in its pursuit of environmental justice, reproduces and reinforces the traditional image of "strong" Indigenous Batak women who "work hard, prioritize family, and protect nature" as their environment changes. This reinforcement of traditional roles has material consequences for Batak Toba women who grieve and complain that their role expectation as women "becomes harder after the conflict" without significant material compensation or support to cope with these changes.

Transgender scholars have critically examined how using nature as a basis for sex and gender expectation contains transphobia in which sexes become a biologically ("natural") ordained social category, if not boldening the boundaries of sex and gender categories (Cuboniks 2018). Even when queer and/or transgender individuals in Indigenous communities are highly regarded and seen as "holy," that acknowledgment comes with utilitarian baggage in which they must perform a sacred, useful, duty for communities (Davies 2007). Forcing the



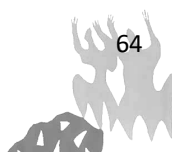


"natural" from nature to justify transphobia, sexism, and opportunistic expectations on gendered labor implies that this notion of nature is inherently unjust towards women and trans people. Nature frequently becomes a justification for injustice and heterosexism, correlating with the prescribed signifier "natural" (Ensor 2017). Critics call for scrutinizing the romantic image of nature through the expected closeness of indigeneity to nature that often reinforces the sexual division of labor, oblivious to women and gender minorities' hardships across any heterosexist communities.

Climate change may provide an example of how nature can be unjust, aside from the fact that it has disproportionately affected women and gender minorities. However, understanding climate change's effects cannot be perceived in a singular dimension in which either the earth is "healing itself again" as believed by climate denialists, fatalists, and fascists, or if the effects are solely of social inequality. In other words, without denying the influence of social structures, many climate atrocities should be seen as a form of nature's response to its capitalist and anthropocentric relationship with humans. It is a complex interplay of both natural and social factors. It is one of the reasons why the rising temperature expedites on an extraordinary scale than ever before, since heat release to the atmosphere is among the logical consequences of deep extraction and exploitation of the earth. Thus, one must reckon what kind of relationship one wants to establish with nature, whether to rectify the current condition or to mitigate and moderate nature's responses (Ahmed 2006; Sandilands 2020).

To clarify, I avoid engaging in a debate about nature's agency, focusing instead on human-nature relationships rather than one's subjectivity. To see the possibility of nature being unjust is refusing to perceive nature as fair under human morality and standards, as justice derives from utilitarianism in which humans are the main benefactor. However, such unfairness is neither intentional nor given. Instead, to question the justice of nature involves rejecting the view of nature as an everlasting balanced entity. This rethinking will help evaluate current (institutional and programmatic) responses to environmental crises. How can we restore the balance of nature if it has never been in balance to begin with? To which form do these programs restore nature? Who benefits from nature's poetic justice, and why does such fairness often leave out women and gender minorities?

The irreversible environmental damage predominantly impacted the farming areas of Sipituhuta women, and unfortunately, they received no assistance or specific programs aimed at rebuilding their spaces. "I think something has to change because our land too has changed," argued Darmina. She then pointed out a *tarombo*, an ancient Batak genealogy that traces every Batak clan's historical root to their first creation, hanging on her wall. "Someone like me [a woman] will never have her name there [*tarombo*]. I find it disgraceful. They keep reminding me that Batak women do everything, we hold the community together, but for what, exactly?" Indigenous Batak women's affinity to nature (Simbolon 1998) had been used during the struggle. However, this affinity and unexamined relationship with nature bears the burden of sexual division of labor—a form of justice for Darmina and other women in the village. Relatedly to the unexamined "natural" in nature, inputs of work and labor involved in maintaining poetic justice—the source of many wisdoms and metaphors—in nature are gendered and, therefore, not equally compensated.



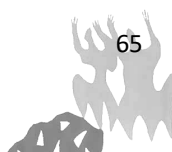
## Changing Environment: A Queer Response

I have explored three assumptions on nature, along with their gendered dynamics and consequences. Each assumption may be distinguished from the other, but they all boil down to two points; that either nature is property to be possessed, maintained, or worshiped; and what ties and maintains the gendered nature of such assumptions is labor and its division.

Concluding this essay, I want to return to Sipituhuta women's practice of *marsiadapari*. This is not to further mystify Indigenous values, but to showcase how indigeneity adapts to changing nature and going against the grains. While *marsiadapari* in other Batak Toba villages are not women-exclusive, the case of Sipituhuta shows that gender restructuring correlates with how the ecosystem changes. During 2013-2014, fearing unlawful arrests by the police, Sipituhuta's women hid their male family members in their coffee fields and the forests. The male-dominated benzoin forest's contribution to the village economy dwindled and was replaced by women's collective work in small plots, gardens, and fields. At once a community value, *marsiadapari*, got even more reinforced after the conflict with serious consequences: gossip, collective dismissal, and being denied financial help. Still, it serves as women's safe space for continuing their grievance, affectionate friendship, and a rather indirect articulation of homoerotic bonding. Women often joke how it feels like they're also "married to women friends," and "will pursue their friends once their husbands are dead." During their work, especially the younger ones, the women often exchange sexual jokes with each other. Gendered work thus becomes the site of both pain and pleasure for Sipituhuta's women to respond to their increasingly precarious conditions.

Post-conflict *marsiadapari*, compels the women to reassess and rethink their relationship with their environment. Patricia was annoyed by me when I accidentally stepped on her tamarillo vines. Although I was sorry, I excused myself by pointing out that her tree had not produced fruit for a while because of soil erosion from the land grab. She scoffed, "With fruit or not, I am hurt, you step on it and it feels like you step on me too." The material hardship that put more burden on women's labor during the conflict extended Sipituhuta women's bodies to their field. The care for their ecosystem no longer heavily depends on using produce, soil, and commodities. Sipituhuta women never stopped working even if it was raining, justifying that the labor was "for my body too; my health, my plot's health, and my family." Dualism broke down after the crisis because the crisis itself was caused, among other reasons, due to the binary held in the sexual division of labor.

To queer ecology possibly means to mend the fractured relationship that humans and nature suffer from their dualism. The mending process requires a profound reconstruction of gender and sex categories on which the dualism relies, leading to further environmental crises and their magnitude. Queering ecology is an attempt to reorient the social world towards nature that exists in tandem and relation with humans, including the latter's right to exist without providing any anthropocentric usefulness (Seymour 2013). This reorientation envisions a new form of inhabitation towards a new space (queer space, queer ecology) in which social categories (gender identities, sexual orientation) are rearranged to occupy it. Nature is one of the spaces humans inhabit, and equality will only exist when oppressive structures like capitalism, patriarchy, and heterosexism are dismantled. In his exploration of architectural designs, the architect Aaron Betsky contends that queer space is a space of where differences



are not only celebrated, provides possibilities of liberation (Betsky, 1997). Queering ecology thus must abide by liberatory visions and practice: acknowledging that humans and nature share the same ecosystem network, and whatever actions taken in one will greatly influence another and its responses.

### Acknowledgements

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