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Ernanda Ernanda
Universitas Jambi, Indonesia, ernanda@unja.ac.id

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Challenging the patriarchal culture

Feminist critical discourse analysis of the Indonesian environmental heroines

ERNANDA

ABSTRACT

This study unveils the representations of women in the documentary film, *Tanah Ibu Kami*, which depicts women's movements defending nature from corporations in four islands in Indonesia. It utilizes feminist critical discourse analysis which incorporates critical discourse analysis and feminist studies to disclose perplexing hegemonic power relations. The data in this study are taken from the transcription of the dialogues in the film. Some extracts constructing the representations of women in the film are extracted for further analysis. Interviews were conducted with the film's producer and female figures. The four themes constructing the representations of women are: (1) women in patriarchal culture, (2) women as leaders in environmental movements, (3) women as symbols, and (4) women's enthusiasm to protecting nature. The paper concludes that women are challenging traditional gender divisions and leading environmental movements. They have become the symbol of courage, bravery, and sacrifice. They are recognized as the equivalent of Kartini, a renowned Indonesian heroine, for all they have done as defenders of the land. They have raised awareness of the importance of caring relations with nature and spread the ecophilosophies by which humans can live in harmony with nature.

KEYWORDS

Feminist critical discourse analysis, documentary film, environment, patriarchy, culture.

ERNANDA holds a PhD in Linguistics from Leiden University, The Netherlands. She was formerly a research associate at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, and is currently an Assistant Professor in Indonesian Studies in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at Universitas Jambi, Indonesia. She has received an ELDP grant from SOAS London for the documentation of oral traditions in Kerinci (Sumatra, Indonesia). Her documentary collections can be accessed through the digital Endangered Languages Archive (ELAR). Her research interests include functional linguistics, language and gender, and critical discourse analysis. Ernanda can be contacted at: ernanda@unja.ac.id.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Patriarchy is a powerful ideology and cultural norm to control women in all domains of society. In Indonesia, patriarchy is actualized by the concept of *ibuism* (J.I. Suryakusuma 1996: 101; M. Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis 1987: 44). V.F. Hyunanda et al. (2021: 9-10) claim that the *ibuism* paradigm controls the ideal representations of women's role as the subordinates of men in the family, which women have to accept as their nature (*kodrat*). It is safe to say that Indonesian women are considered obedient subjects who act as supplementary members of society. The primary roles of Indonesian women sponsored by the state are as wives and mothers; therefore, their role is to stay at home (Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis 1987: 44). Although the notion of women's empowerment is accepted in Indonesia, women's roles are filtered through the paradigm of *State Ibuism* (Hyunanda et al. 2021: 14). Nowadays, however, there is a shift in women's roles enabling women take part in more domains of life, especially in public space, moving them towards greater social acceptance (H. Hejase et al. 2013: 38).

The rise of women's involvement in public space, particularly in environmental movements, is challenging long-established gender roles. Today, many environmental movements are led by female leaders (H. Kilburn 2009). Women are believed to be closely connected to the environment (A.L. Booth 1999: 90). Some researchers have established women's relationship with nature (K.J. Warren 1987; C. Spretnak 1990). Warren (2000: 1) elaborates that as "second-class citizens" women tend to be oppressed, and their insights into nature are deprecated *ad infinitum*. The environment has also been oppressed and become increasingly polluted since the Industrial Revolution. Women and nature are devalued in the patriarchal society, and both are considered connected. Empirically, the consequences of the exploitation and pollution of nature affects women more than men because women depend on nature as a result of the dichotomy of gender roles which places women in the domestic sphere (V. Plumwood 2003: 21). Historically, women have been considered agrarian cultivators who preserve nature (M. Mies and V. Shiva 1993: 166). This connection between women and nature facilitates ecofeminism.

Ecofeminism is an ideology which integrates feminism and ecology (Mies and Shiva 1993: 13-16; Warren 2000: 1). The goal of male-technological production in a patriarchal society has been to maximize profit and it causes ecological degradation (Spretnak 1990: 5; M. Phillips 2016: 472). Women, as life care-givers with a strong relationship with nature, contend such destruction (Mies and Shiva 1993: 14). Ecofeminism strives to maintain a balance between humans and ecology and alter the course of the patriarchal value system from being the cause of destruction to empathy and care for the planet (Spretnak 1990: 12).

The realization of ecofeminism discourse has been examined in social media. Using Foucaultian discourse analysis, M.A. Olson (2015) analysed ecofeminism's voice on gendered environmental movements in the social media. She found that ecofeminism is not entirely represented by the groups

she studied. H. Shabir (2020) has examined how women as social media users represent a natural way of living. Her findings describe women positively as knowledge-producers about sustainable living aligned with ecofeminism values. One of the approaches for analysing discourse in ecofeminism is critical discourse analysis (CDA).

CDA focuses on how language is used in social practice (N. Fairclough 2013). Communication as a part of the discourse is analysed critically by considering the context of language usage. Language use in a discourse reflects the social inequality which CDA aims to investigate (R. Wodak 2001: 2). Ideologies are also framed discursively in texts (T.A. van Dijk 2006: 121). What are constructed in discourse are versions of the reality of those who produce it (Fairclough 2013: 209). In this context, CDA attempts to reveal the ideologies behind the produced text.

However, this study has opted for feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA). This approach incorporates feminist studies and CDA to radically dismantle internal discourse structures as manifestations of gender issues in society (M.M. Lazar 2005: 1-28, 2007: 141-164, 2014: 180-199). M. Narthey (2021: 3) states that FCDA draws on CDA for feminist purposes. In simple terms, FCDA is “the application of existing CDA approaches to analyze gender (issues)” (Narthey 2021: 3). In recent literature, FCDA has penetrated many text types which depict social practice, including women’s representations in media such as the Internet, newspapers, magazines, and films (R. Marling 2010: 7-19; E. Dalton 2019: 1-9; M. Harkness and H. Cheyne 2019: 1-7; Narthey 2021: 1-17, among others).

Feminist CDA is an interdisciplinary approach which combines CDA and feminist studies to reveal the discourse of power and ideology to extract holistic views of complex hegemonic power relations (Lazar 2005: 1-28). It digs into details in gendered assumptions with a background knowledge of the effects of specific issues on communities. It contributes to two domains simultaneously; *first*, language and discourse studies to gain insights from feminist studies; *second*, gender issues in feminist studies make use of language and discourse studies as a tool for analysis (Lazar 2007: 141-164, 2014: 180-199).

The involvement of women in social practice is represented positively in the media (film) under study, in which women and the value of ecofeminism are depicted. Non-profit organizations, The Gecko Project and Mongabay, have portrayed women’s ecological movements in a documentary film, *Tanah Ibu Kami*. The film highlights women’s struggle to defend their land against powerful national actors. Unlike the discourses produced by authoritative parties which usually try to legitimate the dominant groups (Van Dijk 2004: 36), the producers of this film, fired by their environmental background and concern for land deals, human rights, corruption, and rainforests, demonstrate that women’s movements make a positive contribution to maintaining the ecological balance in Indonesia. Women in patriarchal societies oppressed by hegemonic masculinity are described as a power to be reckoned with, and their movements have broken the glass ceiling.

Nonetheless, the previous literature on women has focused on the discourse of discrimination, marginalization, gender inequality, and repression in general (M.M. Ferree 2004: 85-101; R. Gungor and E. Prins 2010: 170-176; R. Batra and T.G. Reio Jr. 2016: 88-101; R. Marshall 2017: 261-278; D. Casale and D. Posel 2021: 1-5, among others). In hegemonic literature, they are usually portrayed negatively as “second class” citizens or “burdens” (A.G. Johnson 2005: 15; N. Puwar 2004: 91). Therefore, representations of women’s emancipation which depict their contribution to society positively deserve more attention. To fill a gap in the literature, the present study addresses the following research question: What are the representations of women in the film, *Tanah Ibu Kami*?

The present study is significant for uncovering the dynamic of the rooted patriarchal culture and depicting the bargaining of traditional gender roles in environmental movements run by women in the Indonesian context. By drawing attention to the positive representations of female environmentalists, this study contributes to promoting gender equality, especially in ecofeminism, aligning with the feminist goal of the CDA (Lazar 2007: 144). It also provides new insights into the existing literature with information about women’s representations in the media: the documentary film *Tanah Ibu Kami*. Therefore, it can be used for further discussions on women’s emancipation and movements.

This paper is organized as follows. The next section describes the background to the problem. It will then discuss the representations of women in the documentary. Finally, I shall present some concluding remarks and directions for future research.

2. THE BACKGROUND TO *TANAH IBU KAMI*

Febriana Firdaus, The Gecko Project, and Mongabay produced *Tanah Ibu Kami*. The Gecko Project and Mongabay are non-profit organizations focusing on environmental and marginalized community issues. This documentary film won the Spirit of Activism Award at the 2021 Wild and Scenic Film Festival. The inspiration for the film was drawn from the producer’s personal experience as a woman living in a patriarchal culture.¹ Firdaus is aware of how social standards limit and marginalize women in many facets of life.

The film portrays female grassroots activists and their struggles with companies taking over their resources. These women are Sukinah (a farmer in Kendeng), Lodia Oematan and Aleta Baun (environmental activists in Mollo), Eva Bande (a human rights and agricultural activist in Banggai), and Farwiza Farhan (an environmental activist in Aceh). They tell their inspirational stories about defending the environment against the corporations to Febriana Firdaus, an independent journalist and screen-writer.

The story begins by depicting privileged women in the island Java, the epicentre of the Indonesian economy. It then takes us in the opposite direction

¹ Online interview with F. Firdaus, 10-3-2022.

to a considerably less progressive society compared to other parts of Indonesia. In Mollo, women on the margins have fought for their mountains. At the time of the conflict, the Internet was not available in the area. The story escalated in Banggai, where a female leader was jailed. The story ends in Aceh, where a young female environmentalist tells the story of her struggle to defend Leuser. She is an example of young people as the watchdogs of their environments.² The documentary is illustrated in the following sections.

2.1 THE STORY OF KENDENG

In 2006, a company tried to expand its capital assets by building a cement company in an agricultural area in the Pati region, Central Java (T.C. Aprianto 2013: 158). However, according to R.A. Harnanto et al. (2018: 10), the Pati people won a lawsuit against the company. Thereafter, the company moved to the Kendeng Mountains, Rembang region. The Kendeng Mountains are one of the karst areas of Central Java. The karst landscapes in Kendeng are a source of clean water for the locals, households and irrigation in particular (Subarkah and A. Wicaksono 2014: 179-180; T. Subekti 2016: 193). A home to wildlife offering unique habitats, the site is also a natural carbon reservoir regulating the climate (T. Apriando 2015).

The local government issued a mining permit (Subekti 2016: 196). Apriando (2015) claims that the mining industry posed a direct threat to the locals and the sustainability of the ecosystem. He stresses that destroying the environment could cause enormous damage, such as water pollution, soil erosion, flooding, and the diminution in the richness of flora and fauna (Apriando 2015). The company's activities could undermine the locals' quality of life (Apriando 2015; Aprianto 2013: 160; J.A. Kurniawan 2018: 512). A study conducted by the Ministry of Economic Affairs team also concluded that Java is unsuited to mining because of its lack of support capacity and dense population (Komnas HAM RI 2016). Komnas HAM RI (2017) recommended that the cement factory construction and activities be discontinued because they did not comply with either existing laws and regulations or human rights principles.

The locals took action against the company, filing lawsuits, organizing community movements, and building a social media network (Subekti 2016: 197-200). Women farmers stepped forward and led the locals in the fight against cement company's expansion (Apriando 2014). Because of their unflagging protests and filing a lawsuit, they got good news. A Supreme Court case review decision, which was legally binding, favoured the Kendeng Mountains people (Direktori Putusan Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia 2016;³ S.I. Pradhani 2019: 72). However, they then discovered that the local authorities had given their approval and allowed the cement company to continue its mining activities (T. ICEL 2017: 142; Walhi 2017; Ihsanuddin 2017). Having to face insurmountable odds at every turn encouraged the locals to

² Online interview with F. Firdaus, 10-3-2022.

³ Putusan MA Nomor 99PK/TUN/2016 (The decree of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia Number 99PK/TUN/2016).

launch fierce protests. In recent years, women farmers heroically have put their feet into concrete blocks in front of the Presidential Palace in Jakarta for days on end (Ihsanuddin 2017). One of the protesters, Yu Patmi, died of a heart attack while defending the water and the land from the miners (K. Erdianto 2017). The locals, also called *Sedulur Sikep*, won the 2018 Yap Thiam Hien award for their courageous struggle (C. Ristiano 2019).

In the documentary, Febriana Firdaus interviews Sukinah, one of the women farmers who put her feet into concrete blocks in Jakarta. Another woman farmer who is also interviewed is Yu Parmi, who told the story about the death of Yu Patmi.

2.2 THE STORY OF MOLLO

In the 1990s, without the approval of the locals, the authorities issued permits and allowed mining companies to exploit the marble in the mountains in Mollo, in Timur, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia (B. Dalupe 2020: 39). The sacred mountain of Mutis, on which people harvested food, medicine, and plants to make natural dyes for traditional woven textiles, was a treasure-trove of plants (Dalupe 2020: 38). The villagers honour this mountain, hold a rituals there, and are concerned about nature. In their eyes, nature is their identity and is expressed in their language as: *Oel nam nes on na, nasi nam nes on nak nafu, naijan nam nes on sisi, fatu nam nes on nuif* 'Water is blood, the forest is hair, the soil is flesh, the stone is bone' (APSN 2020). Years of conflicts broke out when corporations moved in on their mountains (S. Saturi and A. Fachrizal 2013; Firdaus 2017: 95).

Febriana Firdaus engages in a conversation with Lodia, one of the female protesters who stayed out of the spotlight. Lodia recalls the time when she was involved in the women's movements. She remembers her anger, sadness, and disappointment during the struggle. Febriana also meets another critical figure, Aleta Baun, who led the protests to protect the land and supported the locals. Despite facing real brutality, she organized a movement against mining firms. Her determination to save the environment from destructive marble-mining was unbroken. She was supported by hundreds of villagers. In 2006, 150 women escalated the protests (Firdaus 2017: 97). They occupied the marble quarries and wove their traditional cloths there quietly for a year (Goldman Environmental Prize 2013). Women took the lead as the guardians of the land. The occupation by the weavers attracted the attention of the Indonesian government, the public, and overseas. By 2012, the mining firms had terminated their operations and withdrawn from Mollo (Dalupe 2020: 44). For fighting for the environment, Aleta Baun received the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2013 and the 2016 Yap Thiam Hien Award (Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan PPID 2017).

2.3 THE STORY OF BANGGAI

The journalist Febriana Firdaus flew to Sulawesi to continue her conversation with another environmental activist. An agrarian conflict had arisen between

the villagers and corporations in the Banggai Regency, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. The agrarian conflict between companies and the locals began when the companies invaded the land to set up palm-oil plantations. E.Y. Irawan, W. Gunawan, and M. Sulaeman (2022: 79-80) add that there were about 184 ha of overlapping land claims disputed between the company and the locals. The company had a government permit from the office for Industrial Forest Plantation,⁴ bestowing on it the right to cultivate.⁵ Unfortunately, the permit led to land-grabbing (A. Badrah 2011: 239-240; Irawan, Gunawan, and Sulaeman 2022: 77).

The community defended its land against the powerful firm. The resistance escalated in 2010 when the company attempted to evict the locals from their land and closed the roads to farms used by farmers. The landowners challenged the corporation's aggressive attempts by mounting protests, and violence was inevitable.

Eva Bande, an agrarian activist, was arrested and sentenced to four years. She was accused of inciting people to act violently and charged with violating Article 160 of KUHP (Kontras 2018: 24). Other farmers were also arrested (Irawan, Gunawan, and Sulaeman 2022: 82). In December 2014, Bande was granted clemency by the President of Indonesia and released from prison (R. Kustiani 2014). Kustiani (2014) reports that President Jokowi supported people who defended their land rights and did not want these people ending up in detention. For her efforts, Eva Bande won the 2018 Yap Thiam Hien Award (Ristianto 2019).

2.4 THE STORY OF ACEH

Taman Nasional Gunung Leuser (TNGL, 'Mount Leuser National Park') is one of the world heritage sites in Sumatra, Indonesia. According to Taman Nasional Gunung Leuser official information (2022), the national park is rich in rainforest, a wide range of soils, and a wide diversity of threatened flora and fauna. The Leuser tropical rainforest is also one of the last places on earth which functions as a megafauna habitat and is home to elephants, prime tigers, rhinos, orangutan, various bird species, reptiles, and other endemic mammals (Taman Nasional Gunung Leuser 2022). However, green Leuser is at risk because of many illegal destructive activities to which it is subjected, including illegal logging for its valuable hardwoods, arson, expanding agriculture and palm-oil plantations, poaching, ongoing construction, and road-building (J. Hanafiah 2020). The tsunami which damaged the territory contributed to more massive illegal logging as the locals struggled to feed their families by any means possible (Yichuan 2011). According to L.J. Roetzel (2021), Farwiza Farhan, the chairperson and co-founder of Aceh-based Non-Governmental Organization Forest, Nature, and Environment of Aceh (HAKA), stepped forward to protect the pristine wilderness. The NGO she led was dedicated to advocating for the local community to participate in conservation work.

⁴ Hutan Tanaman Industri

⁵ Hak Guna Usaha

HAKA aims to ensure the community protects the forest (Yayasan HAKA n.d.). Farwiza's unfaltering courage in pursuit of community conservation won her the 2016 Whitley Award (Roetzel 2021).

3. THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

This study examines the representations of women in the film, *Tanah Ibu Kami* produced by The Gecko Project, Mongabay, and Febriana Firdaus. This film is available on Youtube (The Gecko Project 2020). As a social media platform, YouTube gives everyone an opportunity to express the voice of under-represented, marginalized groups (J. Ortiz et al. 2019: 21). So far, it has been watched by 66,000 viewers. The film consists of dialogues between the independent journalist Febriana Firdaus (FF) and women from areas in four places (Kendeng, Mollo, Banggai, and Aceh) who have fought for a sustainable environment. The duration of the film is 55:07 minutes. The data in this study are a transcription of the dialogues in the film. Some extracts which construct the representations of women in the film have been used for an even deeper analysis.

After the dialogues were transcribed, the text was thoroughly examined to identify and classify the themes related to the representations of women. The four themes used as strategies to portray women in the discourse are (1) women in the patriarchal culture, (2) women as leaders in environmental movements, (3) women as symbols, and (4) women's enthusiasm in protecting nature. The discursive strategies representing women were identified, analysed, and interpreted within the framework of these themes. Following Lazar (2007: 151), who claims that feminist CDA could include ethnographic methods, such as interviews to contextualize the linguistic data in this study, interviews were held with the producer and the female figures in the documentary to gain more insights into the film and the actual situation in the field. The first interview with Febriana Firdaus was held on 10 March, 2022. The second interview with Eva Bande was recorded on 11 March, 2022. The third interview was conducted with Sukinah on 25 March, 2022. In what follows, the analysis demonstrates four mechanisms utilized to represent women in the film, *Tanah Ibu Kami*.

Living in a conservative patriarchal system in which men dominate women (V.S.D. Soedarwo 2014: 487; Hyunanda et al. 2021: 9-10), the women in *Tanah Ibu Kami* show that patriarchy is not stable and the division of gender roles can be negotiated. Women-led major movements have participated in environmental wars, defying women's traditional domestic roles. These women spread the message of unity and harmony with the environment. In the feminist CDA framework, this study reveals the construction of women's representations in *Tanah Ibu Kami*.

Feminist CDA investigates how the discourse of power and dominance is "[...] produced, resisted, and counter-resisted in a variety of ways through textual representations of gendered social practices and interactional strategies of talk" (Lazar 2014: 189). Lazar (2014: 190) adds that it uncovers how both

genders function in all spheres of life in specific communities. It is hoped that FCDA is not restricted just to deconstructing texts but might also effect social change (Lazar 2014: 185). The analysis demonstrates four themes utilized in representing women in the film *Tanah Ibu Kami*.

3.1 WOMEN IN PATRIARCHAL CULTURE

Patriarchy is a social stratification system which considers men to be the dominant party and controls women in all spheres of life. Hegemonic masculinity has control over women in all domains of society. As a cultural idea, patriarchy promotes unequal distribution of power between the genders (Johnson 2005: 38). By actualizing a male-dominated social structure, men can suppress and exploit women (B. Hooks 2013). It is also buttressed by tradition, law, language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labour. In Indonesia, this system is internalized in society as the norm. The following extracts illustrate women's representations in Indonesia's patriarchal culture.

- (1) Sukinah *Tadinya itu, kami kan gak pernah keluar toh mbak. Karena sebagai ibu rumah tangga*
'Back then we'd never even left Kendeng. We were just housewives.'
- (2) FF *Saya tahu persis bagaimana masyarakat yang konservatif membatasi gerak-gerik perempuan. Tapi mereka pada akhirnya menjadi pemimpin pergerakan ini. Saya mulai belajar tentang gerakan perempuan di seluruh Indonesia yang telah berhasil melewati batas-batas patriarki dan menjadi kelompok yang mengorganisir gerakan mereka sendiri. Untuk sampai ke titik ini, mereka harus mengalami kekerasan, menghadapi ancaman pemenjaraan dan bahkan kematian.*
'I knew exactly what kind of constraints a conservative society could place on women. Nevertheless, they became leaders in this movement. I began to learn about other women across the length and breadth of Indonesia who had broken through patriarchal boundaries to organize their movements. They had faced violence, the threat of prison, and even death.'
- (3) Farwiza *Iya, jadi seringnya beban pikiran, beban emosional, dan juga beban finansial ada di si ibu. Terus juga kita lihat banyak. Karena sebenarnya masyarakat kita ini kan tidak pemerataan derajat antara laki-laki dan perempuan itu belum menjadi sesuatu yang umum. Perempuan punya peran yang sangat besar, untuk memajukan ekonomi, untuk melindungi lingkungan. Bahkan kita menggambarkan bumi saja sebagai sosok perempuan, Ibu Bumi.*
'So often, the burden of worries, and the emotional and financial strain falls on the mother. You can see that there isn't equality between men and women in our society. Women play a huge role in advancing the economy, protecting the environment, and we even depict the Earth as a woman: Mother Earth.'

- (4) Aleta *Ya, saya tidak menyangkal bahwa saya anak dari kepala suku, betul. Nah, tetapi karena saya tidak sebagai laki-laki maka saya tidak diberi mandat untuk menguasai tokoh itu. Saya karena perempuan, jadi perempuan biasa mereka tidak memberi mandat. Tetapi ketika saya berjuang untuk melawan, mereka juga mengakui bahwa pada masa kini, mandat itu akan datang kepada perempuan atau laki-laki sama. Nah, sehingga saya berhasil untuk merangkul mereka, dan kita bisa berjuang untuk melawan tambang.*
 ‘Yes, It’s true. I do not deny that I am the daughter of a chief. However, because I’m not a man, I was not given the mandate to tell those leaders what to do. I’m a woman and women are usually given no mandate whatsoever. But, when I joined this fight, they realized that, nowadays, the mandate might be given to women and men equally. With this awareness, I was able to unite my people to stop the mining together.’
- (5) FF *Aleta percaya bahwa dunia telah cukup berubah, sehingga seorang perempuan dapat bangkit untuk memimpin sebuah gerakan sosial, dan ia benar.*
 ‘Aleta believed the world had changed enough that a woman could rise to lead a social movement. And she was right.’
- (6) Sukinah *Pertimbangannya, jadi kalau kita aksi, ibuk-ibuk itu harus di garis depan karena supaya tidak ada gerakan yang anarkis.*
 ‘The thinking was that if we protest, the women must be in the vanguard to stop it descending into anarchy.’
- FF *Anarkis, maksudnya kekerasan, ya?*
 ‘By anarchy, you mean violence?’
- Sukinah *Iya, kalau seorang laki-laki bertatap muka dengan polisi, pasti ada darahnya yang begitu marah dan ibuk-ibuk harus mengendalikan semua itu, jangan sampai ada kekerasan apalagi, apa sampai korban jiwa seperti itu. Dan untuk gerakan lingkungan, untuk memperjuangkan lingkungan ini, tidak harus bapak.*
 ‘Violence, yes. If the men were to come face-to-face with the police, their blood would boil. The women would have to take control of the whole affray. People could be killed were that to erupt. To join the environmental movement, to fight for the environment, you don’t have to be a man.’

The issue of a patriarchal social order, especially how men as a social group benefit and women are the disadvantaged in power relations, has emerged as the primary concern of feminist CDA, (Lazar 2007: 145). The data show that social norms and practices are gendered and discriminate against women. Following Lazar (2014: 189), in postulating the complexity of gender and power relation, gender in this study is examined by analysing its interdependence with other social identities (for example, culture).

Patriarchy dictates what part women will or will not play and what steps people take (T. Cresswell and T.P. Uteng 2016: 4-5). In Extract 1, this

documentary demonstrates the restrictive environment: *Tadinya itu, kami kan gak pernah keluar toh mbak. Karena sebagai ibu rumah tangga 'Back then we'd never even left Kendeng. Because we were just housewives.'* The division of roles oppresses women, focusing them on the private sphere in the household.

The restriction imposed on women's mobility in the patriarchal culture in Indonesia is admitted in Extract 2, *Saya tahu persis bagaimana masyarakat yang konservatif membatasi gerak-gerik perempuan 'I knew exactly what kind of constraints a conservative society can place on women.'* Notwithstanding mobility restrictions, the boundary of these social norms can be pushed and negotiated if necessary (B. Agarwal 1997: 4). The women's movement pushed the patriarchal boundaries to fight to protect nature despite the dangers they had to battle against as a consequence.

An echo of gender inequality is also found in Extract 3. Adhering to their roles, women have to be multi-taskers and deal with many aspects of life, in both the private and public domains (for example, protecting the environment). This axiom is conceptualized more sharply by gendering the Earth as a woman, *Ibu Bumi, 'Mother Earth'*. Mother Earth or Gaia (the Goddess of nature) emphasizes the connection between women and nature (E.C. Rose 1991: 77-78). Their femininity means women are considered to have caring and human-nature interrelationship values.

In a patriarchal system, having the privilege of being the daughter of a chief in a local area did not do much to alter the division of gender roles because the decision-making authority in society was assigned to men, as exemplified in Extract 4: *[...] karena saya tidak sebagai laki-laki maka saya tidak diberi mandat untuk menguasai tokoh itu '[...]' because I'm not a man, I was not given the mandate to tell those leaders what to do.'* However, the speaker did successfully shatter the glass ceiling and, after being authorized as a leader, facilitated the amalgamation of the townfolks to stop the mining (Firdaus 2017: 97). It is argued that, compared to men, women in movements have "purer" motives (D. Manekin and R.M. Wood 2020: 2). They have a conservative orientation and are unlikely to abuse an opportunity (R.M. Wood and J.L. Thomas 2017: 34).

The discourse shows that the concept of patriarchy is unstable and does change temporally. Restructuring a gender-relations paradigm in the patriarchal culture, women have bargained a status to gain greater decision-making power as demonstrated in Extract 5: *Aleta percaya bahwa dunia telah cukup berubah, sehingga seorang perempuan dapat bangkit untuk memimpin sebuah gerakan sosial 'Aleta believed the world had changed enough to allow a woman to rise to lead a social movement.'* The change in patriarchal social norms has been built on women's contribution to the community. In this context, women's participation is considered vital to the group. Hence, the women's movement is promoted and supported by the community members, as can be seen in Extract 6: *Pertimbangannya, jadi kalau kita aksi, ibuk-ibuk itu harus di garis depan karena supaya tidak ada gerakan yang anarkis, 'The thinking was that*

if we protest, the women must be in the vanguard because then it wouldn't descend into anarchy.'

Gender imagery has a tangible impact on constructing positive perceptions. E. Lombardo and P. Meier (2014: 22-26) have argued that women are portrayed as vulnerable, non-violent, and selfless community defenders. Conversely, men are perceived as brutal, aggressive, and violent. The film represents women as crucial agents in maintaining a sustainable environment, which stretches beyond the bounds and norms of a malleable patriarchal culture. Even in the traditional patriarchal culture of Java, gender roles can now be divided equally. Women can be on the frontline to defend the land, and the men have supported them.⁶ Sukinah adds that women initiated the women's movement in Kendeng because they were dismayed by the destruction of the natural world. Notably, even though it is visualized in the documentary, the word "ecofeminism" is not used in the film. "Feminism" is considered unacceptable to Indonesian norms because it is stigmatized as westernized and liberal.⁷ Most people believe that the concept of feminism is unsuited to traditional Indonesian culture. However, people do apply it in everyday life, and the stories in the documentary testify to its practice. This practice is in accordance with the aim of feminist critical discourse analysts: bringing about "a social transformation based on social justice that opens up unrestricted possibilities for both women and men as human beings" (Lazar 2007: 153).

3.2 WOMEN AS LEADERS IN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

Feminist CDA reveals the struggles of women to change the oppressive gendered social practice subjugating women and to cause a social transformation (Lazar 2007: 145). Using discourse analysis, the social status quo which privileges men is challenged to cause a turnabout in society. Feminist CDA is also "[...] praxis-oriented and concerned with the social transformation of structures of gender oppression, awareness and attitudinal change by both men and women are necessary" (Lazar 2007: 150). Utilizing feminist CDA, the second theme unveils the transformation of the patriarchal gender dichotomy so that women can be assigned to lead social movements.

Environmental movements have been led by female leaders (A. Peterson and C. Merchant 1986: 474-475). Women with their femininity are believed to have a nurturer and care-giver instinct which interlinks with their roles in protecting the environment (M.C.J. Stoddart and D.B. Tindall 2011: 17). The view which sees the relationship between women and the natural world is often dubbed "ecofeminism". In ecofeminism, women's participation is fundamental in solving environmental problems. The following extracts illustrate women as leaders in environmental movements.

⁶ Online interview with Sukinah, 25-3-2022.

⁷ Online interview with F. Firdaus, 10-3-2022.

- (7) FF *Protes kali ini cukup berbeda, bukan hanya menanam kaki di semen, tetapi perempuan tampil di garda depan.*
 'But this protest stood out not only because they set their feet in cement. But also because women were in the vanguard.'
- (8) FF *Wiza yang lahir di Aceh, adalah salah satu aktivis kunci yang melawan perusakan hutan di Taman Nasional Leuser.*
 'Wiza, who was born in Aceh, is one of the key figures in the fight against deforestation in Mount Leuser National Park.'
- (9) FF *Hubungan orang Mollo dengan alam begitu dalam sehingga mereka mempertaruhkan tubuh mereka untuk menyelamatkannya. Aleta percaya bahwa dunia telah cukup berubah, sehingga seorang perempuan dapat bangkit untuk memimpin sebuah gerakan sosial, dan ia benar. Tapi satu hal yang tidak berubah, kekuatan yang menghalangi mereka telah menggunakan segala daya untuk menggagalkan gerakan perlawanan ini.*
 'The connection of the Mollo people to the natural world runs so deep that they put their bodies on the line to save it. Aleta believed the world had changed enough to allow a woman to lead a social movement. And she was right. However, one thing has not changed: the forces aligned against them will use everything in their power to try and bring down their movement.'
- (10) FF *Empat tahun yang lalu, saya menyaksikan kelompok aktivis perempuan menyemen kakinya di depan Istana Negara, di Jakarta. Mereka datang langsung dari desa, menempuh ratusan kilometer untuk mengorganisir protes melawan perusahaan semen raksasa yang mengancam persediaan air bersih mereka.*
 'Four years ago, I looked on as a group of female activists plunged their feet into cement outside the Presidential Palace in Jakarta. They had travelled hundreds of kilometres from their village to mount a protest against a giant cement company they feared would pollute their community's water supply.'
- (11) FF *Pada akhir dekade 1990-an hingga 2000-an ratusan perempuan menduduki kawasan pegunungan Mollo untuk membentengi wilayah adat mereka melawan perusahaan tambang. Bagi masyarakat adat di Mollo, gunung batu itu sakral. Para perempuan adat membawa perkakas tenun mereka ke pegunungan dan menenun selama berminggu-minggu sebagai upaya menghalangi para investor.*
 'In the late 1990s and early 2000s, hundreds of women occupied the mountains of Mollo to protect them from mining companies. To the indigenous people of Mollo, the mountains are sacred. The women carried their looms up into the mountains and wove for weeks on end as they sought to hold off the mining firms.'

- (12) Lodia *Artinya mama-mama baku sayang. Supaya kita menghadang sampai tanah kita kembali. Mancang senjata sampai tanah kita kembali.*

'This means that the mothers love each other. So, we shall fight for our land until we win it back. We'll keep a grip on our weapons until our land is returned to us.'

- (13) Lodia *Itu, masyarakat semua berpikir karena waktu itu sudah parah Ibu. Kalau kami tidak mencari hati untuk menenun di atas pohon batu, orang sudah naik untuk ini. Lebih baik mama-mama ambil tenun untuk pasang di atas pohon batu. Kita tenun supaya datang bala ini, batu seperti ini. Jadi kita punya pekerjaan kita, supaya kita mati hidup kita tetap punya hak milik. Supaya kita menahan dengan tenun. Kami tenun. Datang bor di sini Bu (menirukan suara bor). Saya bilang menolak, menolak. Ini bor batu di samping mama, bor batu di samping mama, mama tenun. Saya bilang, biar kami mati hidup, tetap preman tidak menang, tetap masyarakat menang, karena masyarakat punya hak milik.*

'The community knew it was critical. If we didn't look into our hearts and weave in the mountains, they would have gone up there and taken everything. We wanted to weave our cloth and wrap it around the mountain. We wanted to show them that the land belongs to the people, alive or dead. They brought the machines here as we continued to resist their presence. I shouted, "Resist! Resist!" That drilling machine was right next to me, but I just kept on weaving. Even if it killed us, we would never let those thugs win. Because this land belongs to the people.'

- (14) FF *Menonton Eva bersama orang-orang di Piondo, saya dapat melihat bagaimana ia telah menginspirasi mereka. Ia punya bakat alami menjadi pemimpin. Orang-orang tertarik pada gagasannya.*

'Watching Eva with the people of Piondo, I could see how she inspired them. She is a natural leader. People are drawn to her ideas.'

Extracts 7 and 8 show how women can be environmental movement leaders by emphasizing their roles: *perempuan tampil di garda depan* 'women were on the frontline' and *aktiois kunci yang melawan perusakan hutan di Taman Nasional Leuser* 'the key figures in the fight against deforestation in Mount Leuser National Park'. Women protect the environment from the exploitation of nature by big companies. Extract 9 reveals how close their relationship with nature is, and they are willing to fight against powerful actors who intend to take advantage of it. *Hubungan orang Mollo dengan alam begitu dalam sehingga mereka mempertaruhkan tubuh mereka untuk menyelamatkannya* 'Their connection to the natural world runs so deep that they put their bodies on the line to save it'. All non-human parts of that community, including water, should be treated as equal to humans so that, instead of exploiting it, one should protect it (Warren 2000: 86-87).

As a marginalized group, women fought against the domination of nature which would have inevitably led to environmental destruction such as water pollution, as shown in Extract 10. They walked hundreds of kilometres to

defend their right to clean water. They also harmed themselves by plunging their feet in cement as a form of protest. Sukinah recalls, "We took the risk of burying our feet in the concrete block because we were thinking of our descendants' future. It was okay for us to get hurt, but we did not want our descendants to be hurt."⁸ Extract 11 also shows how the women-led movement defended their mountains from a mining company which wanted to occupy the area. They wove for weeks to stop the mining from invading their mountains. The local people worshipped the sacred mountains of Mollo (D. Tran 2019). Hence, they had to stop the company's invasions of their area by a sit-in weaving.

The resistance to the oppression of nature and the invasion of the land was carried out by non-violent protest (for example, occupying the mountain by weaving on it). The heroic acts of these women are recorded in Extracts 12 and 13 using some telling constructions, such as *menghadang* 'fight' (Extract 12); *mati hidup kita tetap punya hak milik* 'We wanted to show them that the land belongs to the people, alive or dead' (Extract 13); *menolak* 'resist' (Extract 13); *biar kami mati hidup, tetap preman tidak menang, tetap masyarakat menang, karena masyarakat punya hak milik* 'Even if it killed us, we would never let those thugs win. Because this land belongs to the people' (Extract 13). Extract 14 demonstrates how women's leadership becomes an inspirational motivation to achieve better results. [...] *saya dapat melihat bagaimana ia telah menginspirasi mereka [...]*, '[...] I could see how she inspired them [...]'.

Since the nineteenth century, global industries have been gradually developing. Industrial growth contributes to environmental pollution and damage (N.L. Nemerow 2007: 1). *Tanah Ibu Kami* shows how industrial corporations have attempted to occupy communities' lands. Female activists have emerged as leaders of environmental movements, taking frontline roles to save nature. In spite of enduring violence and suffering, their heroic acts have inspired many people.

Demonstrating the fact that women are massively involved and lead the environmental movements, I argue that (eco)feminism values are approved of in Indonesia, even in a conservative culture in which a man is seen as the king of the household. However, its practice differs from western standards. Indonesian (eco)feminism is implemented from consensus within a family and has enormous scope (for example, in villages). Gender role divisions are bargained for more significant sustainable environmental goals. In my interview with Bu Sukinah, she claimed, "I have no idea what ecofeminism is, but I know that our Mother Earth is being hurt and women have to be her guardians. I care about nature because I live in it. Nature gives us life. Why do we hurt it?"⁹ This shows us that the connection between women and Mother Earth is a natural one.

The documentary portrays how women step forward heroically as nature's guardians. Nevertheless, women's movements can only arise if

⁸ Online interview with Sukinah, 25-3-2022.

⁹ Online interview with Sukinah, 25-3-2022.

men support them. Men take care of domestic sphere while women sign up for the environmental fight. This partnership will only be accomplished by pre-arranged negotiation. Besides offering critical perspectives on gender inequality discourses, the harmony of gender relations in this context is what feminist CDA focuses on (Lazar 2007: 160).

3.3 WOMEN AS SYMBOLS

The language used in discourse can symbolize the concept of gender. How an agent is represented describes the principle and what the agent stands for (Lombardo and Meier 2014: 4). The gendered symbols attached to both women and men assume meanings and values. In the context of a nation, men are symbolized as defenders. In contrast, women represent the nation's virtues (Puwar 2004: 6). Women are also closely associated with motherhood and the domestic sphere (serving and feeding the family), which is an instance of conventional gender norms in society (Lazar 2007: 147). Women in the film are portrayed and symbolized in a positive light, as depicted in the following extracts.

- (15) FF *Orang-orang menganggap gunung sebagai Ibu Bumi mereka, yang memelihara dan bahkan mencukupi kebutuhan air untuk lahan pertanian mereka. Saat saya berjalan melintasi ladang bersama Sukinah, ia bernyanyi dengan lembut. "Ibu Bumi telah memberi, Ibu Bumi terluka, Ibu Bumi akan mencari keadilan."*

'The people consider the mountains their Mother Earth, who nurtures and even breastfeeds their farmland. As I walked through the fields with Sukinah, she sang softly, "Mother Earth has given; Mother Earth has been hurt; Mother Earth will seek justice".'

- (16) FF *Festival berlanjut hingga malam. Sukinah memimpin sekelompok perempuan membawa obor bambu ke sebuah sumur. Mereka menimba air dan melantunkan sebuah lagu penghormatan untuk menghormati Ibu Bumi yang telah menyediakan air bersih secara cuma-cuma. Kehidupan di desa di Pulau Jawa sangat didominasi oleh laki-laki, tetapi di Kendeng saya melihat perempuan punya wadah untuk mengekspresikan diri. Mereka punya suara. Mereka bahkan menjadi pemimpin. Pada April 2016, setelah para perempuan melakukan protes di lokasi pabrik selama hampir dua tahun. Mereka memutuskan untuk meningkatkan eskalasi pergerakan. Sukinah dan delapan wanita lainnya melakukan perjalanan ke Jakarta. Dan di depan Istana Negara mereka menanam kaki di semen. Mereka kemudian dikenal sebagai Sembilan Kartini Kendeng.*

'The festival continued into the night. Sukinah led a group of female farmers, bearing bamboo torches, to a sacred well. They drew water and sang their tribute to Mother Earth. Life in Javanese villages is dominated by men. However, in Kendeng I saw that the women had a platform on which to express themselves. They had a voice.

They were even leaders. By April 2016, after the women had protested about the construction site for almost two years, they decided to escalate their actions. Sukinah and eight other women travelled to Jakarta. Outside the Presidential Palace, they planted their feet in cement. After that, they became known as the Nine Kartinis of Kendeng.'

- (17) Farwiza *To tell and retell, and retell, the story. Karena pada akhirnya perjuangan melindungi lingkungan itu adalah sesuatu hal yang mungkin tidak akan pernah habis, tidak akan pernah selesai. Apa yang dimulai oleh Kartini kendeng, apa yang dimulai Eva Bande, apa yang dimulai oleh Aleta Baun, akan berlanjut ke generasi-generasi berikutnya. Kita semua tu berharap, ya kita lakukan aksi sekali, kemudian masalahnya selesai. Gini, kalau menurutku yang bisa lakukan adalah mengampifikasi suara-suara dari para ibu-ibu ini. Ada lebih banyak Kartini Kendeng, ada lebih banyak Aleta Baun, ada lebih banyak Mama Yosefa, yang mungkin kita tidak pernah dengar.*

'Tell, and retell, and retell the story again. Because, when it is all said and done, the struggle to protect the environment is something which might never end. It will never be finished. What was begun by the Kartinis of Kendeng, what was launched by Eva Bande, what was commenced by Aleta Baun, will need to be continued by the next generation. We all want to take just one action and hope the problem is solved. In my opinion, what we can do is amplify the voices of mothers. There are more Kartinis of Kendeng, more Aleta Bauns, and more Mama Yosephas [Alomangs], of whom we might never have heard.'

In Extract 15, a mountain which is a source of water is gendered as a woman, presented by the lexicalized item "Mother of Earth". This extract implies an ideology: *Ibu Bumi telah memberi, Ibu Bumi terluka, Ibu Bumi akan mencari keadilan* 'Mother Earth has given, Mother Earth has been hurt, Mother Earth will seek justice'. A mother who has provided resources is hurt; therefore, justice must be won. The speaker personifies the mountain as a mother and an injured woman; therefore, it should be preserved and protected by demanding justice.

Extract 16 personifies the Earth as a living creature, and women worship it as a caring, tender mother (Starhawk 1990: 74). *Mereka menimba air dan melantunkan sebuah lagu penghormatan untuk menghormati Ibu Bumi yang telah menyediakan air bersih secara cuma-cuma*, 'They drew water and sang in tribute to their Mother Earth.' This shows how essential nature is to this community, especially the women. Men's hegemonic power over women, especially in Java, is acknowledged in this extract: *Kehidupan di desa di Pulau Jawa sangat didominasi oleh laki-laki*, 'Life in Javanese villages is dominated by men.' Regardless of men's domination in society, women can empower themselves collectively to fight for their goal of protecting nature from destruction (A. Allen 1999: 21). They have even led social movements and been involved in street demonstrations. The collective female actors are expressed in this extract and symbolically

represented as “Kartini”, an Indonesian heroine. In it they are hailed as “the Nine Kartinis of Kendeng”.

Extract 17 demonstrates that the exploitation and oppression of nature which damages the environment might be unstoppable, since greediness is an indelible attribute in industrial societies. More women should be involved in the environmental movement to promote their messages univocally. The female figures in the documentary are socially constructed as the symbols of environmental movements, and these agents are nominalized, as depicted in Extract 3: *Ada lebih banyak Kartini Kendeng, ada lebih banyak Aleta Baun, ada lebih banyak Mama Yosefa, yang mungkin kita tidak pernah dengar* ‘There are more Kartinis of Kendeng. There are more Aleta Bauns. There are more Mama Yosephas, of whom we might never have heard.’

In Extract 18, the deviation of her gender role in an image of a woman who radiates strength is demonstrated alongside an image from the documentary film.

- (18) FF *Gambaran pertama yang dilihat sebagian besar orang Indonesia tentang Eva Bande, adalah seorang perempuan yang kuat dengan tinjunya yang menantang di dalam sel penjara. Ia dipenjara karena hasutan. Kejahatannya adalah mengorganisir petani melawan elit lokal yang merebut tanah pertanian mereka untuk diubah menjadi perkebunan sawit.*

‘The first images of Eva Bande most Indonesians saw showed a proud, strong woman, her fist raised inside a prison cell. She had been jailed for incitement. Her crime was organizing farmers to help stop powerful local elites from clearing their farmland for oil-palm plantations.’



Figure 1. Eva Bande (The Gecko Project 2020).

Feminist CDA also examines semiotic resources such as images (Lazar 2014: 192). Taken from the film, Figure 1 portrays a woman behind iron bars in jail, raising her fist. It symbolizes resistance to the abusive exploitation of nature. The image proposes a negotiation of traditional hegemonic discourse on gender relations. The woman in Figure 1 encompasses “manly attributes”, showing characteristics attached to men in traditional social construction. She represents strength and resilience, symbolizing the deviation from gender structure ideology (Lazar 2007: 146). To quote Lazar (2007: 147) in her explanation of feminist CDA, this kind of symbol is “[...] going against gendered expectations in some settings could (inadvertently) result in reinforcement, instead of the eradication, of the existing gender structure”.

Research shows that females are more sensitive and emotional (X. Chen et al. 2018: 1). However, the female figure, Eva Bande, remained mistress of her emotions in the worst of situations. Instead of thinking of herself imprisoned behind bars, she motivated others who were arrested with her during the conflict to stay positive and not let the situation get them down.¹⁰

Extract 18 overtly suggests that symbols are not static and can be reconstructed. The transformative gender relations are legitimized by society, and, as a result, they renew women’s identity socially, a so-called “radical social transformation” in the feminist CDA framework (Lazar 2007: 153). The extract also emphasizes the irony of reality. The female figure, Eva Bande, was prisoned because of her resistance to industrialism threatening to take over her motherland. Her action was considered a crime. *Ia dipenjara karena hasutan. Kejahatannya adalah mengorganisir petani melawan elit local yang merebut tanah pertanian mereka untuk diubah menjadi perkebunan sawit*, ‘She had been jailed for incitement. Her crime was organizing farmers to help stop powerful local elites from clearing their farmland for oil-palm plantations.’ Firdaus (2017: 91) claims that no legal protection explicitly regulates the protection of human rights defenders. He adds that it is sporadically regulated in some laws, such as Law number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights in Chapter VIII, concerning Community Participation (Articles 100-103). However, it does not clearly state in detail the rights possessed by human rights defenders nor does it explicitly state what protections are available to defenders.

In the third theme, language is used to present women as symbols. Earth is gendered as a female human, Mother Earth. It is alive and is hurt by industrial exploitation. Women heroically take to the frontline to defend their mother’s land and are symbolized as “Kartini” an honoured Indonesian heroine. The female figures in the film become the symbols of the environmental movements. Crucially, the image of Eva Bande, one of the female figures in the movements, breaks the gender stereotype in society. This image symbolizes women as powerful agents who bravely fight for Mother Earth.

¹⁰ Online interview with Eva Bande, 11-3-2022.

3.4 WOMEN'S ENTHUSIASM IN PROTECTING NATURE

The dichotomy of gender norms in social practices is deep-rooted and accepted as the standard in a patriarchal society (Lazar 2007: 147). This leads to the legitimation of gender domination which is attained through discourse. Feminist CDA concerns the practices of feminism “to further non-feminist goals” (Lazar 2007: 152). Lazar (2014: 184) adds that from the point of view of feminist CDA, more women should be included, thereby participating in the public sphere. The film under study reveals the women's participation in a broader context, protecting nature. The women's crusading spirit to make a positive contribution to sustainable nature is depicted in the following extracts.

- (19) Sukinah *Ke depannya kita harus tetap memperjuangkan lingkungan. Kita harus mengingatkan yang belum ingat. Istilahnya yang lagi tidur harus kita membangunkan, pentingnya lingkungan, kesadaran lingkungan, jadi bukan cuma buanglah sampah pada tempatnya saja. Setiap langkah kami belajar dari orang-orang yang positif tentang lingkungan, tentang makna dari kehidupan ini, makna dari kita, gunanya untuk, hidup untuk siapa, hidup untuk apa. Jadi aku, aku sangat bangga Mbak.*

‘We shall have to keep **fighting** for the environment **in the future**. We must **arouse** those who are still ignorant. We have to **arouse** people who are **not aware of environmental problems**. It's not just about where we put our rubbish. **Learn** every step on the way from people who are positive about the environment: about the meaning of this life, the meaning of our presence, for whom we live, for what we live. So I'm very proud.’

- (20) FF *Meski Kartini Kendeng untuk sementara ini kalah dalam perjuangan melawan pabrik semen, dan kehilangan teman mereka, saya tetap menaruh harapan kepada mereka. Sebab, gerakan yang mereka bangun, begitu kuat, dan mempererat rasa persaudaraan dan budaya di antara mereka. Bahkan semakin kuat seiring berjalannya waktu, mereka terus menatap masa depan, sambil tetap membawa semangat Yu Patmi, rekan mereka yang meninggal usai aksi. Saya bisa melihat Kartini Kendeng menginspirasi generasi muda seperti saya.*

‘Although the Kartinis of Kendeng **lost** their battle to stop the cement factory and **lost their friend**, I still left them with a sense of **hope**. Their movement is so **firmly rooted** in their sense of sisterhood and culture, it has grown only stronger as the years pass. They keep looking forward to **the future, carrying on the spirit of Yu Patmi**, their comrade, who died after the demonstration. They have **inspired** the younger generation — people like me.’

- (21) FF *Saya bercerita kepada Wiza tentang perjalanan saya ke Kendeng, Mollo, dan Lubuk Banggai. Saya bertemu dengan perempuan-perempuan luar biasa yang tidak lelah menjaga kelestarian lingkungan. Hingga salah satu dari mereka harus meregang nyawa.*

‘I told Wiza about my journey to Kendeng, Mollo, and Banggai. I met **extraordinary women who have fought tirelessly for the environment**, even to the point that one of them lost her life.’

- (22) Sukinah *Cobaan terberat itu, kita harus kehilangan saudara kita yang seperjuangan, Mbak Patmi itu. Jadi kita merasa kehilangan. Tapi dengan berpulangnya Mbak Patmi, itu bagi aku sama dulur-dulur yang lain, itu cahaya, menumbuhkan semangat. Kita jangan diam saja. Kita jangan lemah. Kita jangan kalah. Kita harus kuat. Kita harus maju. Karena Mbak Patmi walaupun pulang tapi dia itu masih mengawal kita. Jadi, dia ngasih support buat kita. Inilah aku, walaupun tubuhku mungkin sudah dikubur, jasadku sudah dikubur, tapi jiwaku gak pernah dikubur. Kan seperti itu.*

'The cruellest challenge was when **we lost our sister**, who had fought with us. We felt lost. But, for me and the other sisters, her passing brought **light. It fired up our enthusiasm**. We knew we **must not remain silent**. We're **not weak**. We **can't lose**. We **must be strong**. We **must advance**. Because, even though Patmi has passed on, she is still with us. "**I'm here. Even though my body has been interred, my soul was never buried**".'

Optimism about the future and the spirit to pursue actions to awaken awareness about the caring interaction with nature is illustrated in Extract 19. Sukinah emphasizes the importance of cultivating the environmental spirit and ensuring it is ineradicably instilled. Extract 20 reveals hope of a better future while reflecting on the loss of one of the movement's members during the protest. Even though these women lost out to the corporations, the speaker believes their spirit will inspire today's youth to re-establish human relations with nature. The optimism should grow more substantial after the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia handed down its decision on forestry in 2012. The decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 35/PUU-X/2012 is imbued with *the spirit of progressive derogable protection* which aims to liberate the community's customary rights. It distinguishes between customary and state forests (F. Tobroni 2013: 461-482). Local regulations should determine the development of indigenous forests and the rights of indigenous peoples.

The values and ideologies of these women in their fight to protect nature are manifested in Extract 21. The speaker reflects on her admiration for the unflagging spirit of women in preserving nature. *Saya bertemu dengan perempuan-perempuan luar biasa yang tidak lelah menjaga kelestarian lingkungan* 'I met extraordinary women who have fought tirelessly for the environment'. In Extract 22, Sukinah confirms her determination to continue the fight. Even though they lost one of the woman activists, Yu Patmi, for protesting against the cement company, they have kept their hopes alive and are spreading the spirit of the fight to protect their land. Yu Patmi died, but the fight was not over. She is multiplying the strength of the movement.

These women's spirited determination to keep fighting for the environment is depicted in all the extracts in this sub-theme. Some verbal phrases are used, such as *memperjuangkan lingkungan* 'to fight for the environment', *mengingatkan yang belum ingat* 'to make those who are not aware, aware', *membangunkan*

pentingnya lingkungan 'to give a wake-up call people who are not aware of environmental problems', *membawa semangat Yu Patmi* 'to carry on the spirit of Yu Patmi', *menginspirasi generasi muda* 'to inspire the younger generation', *menjaga kelestarian lingkungan* 'to fight for the environment', *menumbuhkan semangat* 'to fire up (our) enthusiasm'.

The film shows the female protagonists fired up with enthusiasm for protecting nature. There is always hope of a sustainable natural world. Notwithstanding the death of Yu Patmi, the spirit to fight is unquenched and will spread to the next generation because the exploitation of nature will not stop; therefore, women, as the guardians of nature, must also continue to defend their land. Sukinah says that maintaining a sustainable ecosystem is everyone's responsibility and is not gendered. If the environment is destroyed, not only will the men be affected, but the women as well.¹¹

Even without very much formal education, these women farmers know best how important it is to protect their motherland, Indonesia. In my interview, Bu Sukinah added, "*Mengapa bilang 'aku Indonesia', tapi merusak Indonesia? Mengapa bilang 'aku Pancasila',¹² tapi tidak mengamalkannya?*" ("Why do we claim 'I am Indonesia', but we destroy Indonesia? Why do we claim 'I am Pancasila', but we do not put it into practice?").¹³ This should be food for thought for all Indonesians in their everyday lives. ICEL (2022) says that the government has recently revoked the mining permits of 2,078 mineral and coal-mining companies. 192 Forestry Permits covering an area of 3,126,439 hectares were also revoked plus plantation concessions covering an area of 34,448 hectares. This gesture should not be underestimated as it is a token of the government's good intentions.

Considering the importance of women's movements in all the struggles recorded in history of defending nature, women should participate and be allowed to participate in larger spheres of life (Firdaus 2022). Restricting them to the domestic domain will not take civilization anywhere, especially on environmental issues, since their connections to and experience of nature has revealed a power which can bring some changes for a better future. Along the lines of the goals of feminist critical discourse analysts (Lazar 2007: 153), this film portrays a social transformation brought about by both women and men to defend their nature and fight for social justice.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The concept of women's empowerment has shifted women's roles, albeit they are still restricted and are not allowed to cross patriarchal boundaries. Women's emancipation has put women in the public space from where they can serve larger domains of life. Emancipation is also actualized in environmental movements in the ecofeminism paradigm. When the Industrial Revolution and the concomitant exploitation of nature increasingly polluted

¹¹ Online interview with Sukinah, 25-3-2022.

¹² *Aku Indonesia, aku Pancasila* (I am Indonesia, I am Pancasila) is a famous slogan in Indonesia.

¹³ Online interview with Sukinah, 25-3-2022.

the clean world, women opened up space for preservation and conservation. They stepped forward to stop and minimize the destruction. They have now fulfilled non-traditional roles as leaders in environmental movements.

Discourses portray many cases of the domination and exploitation of nature which have triggered protests by women activists. One instance can be seen in the documentary film, *Tanah Ibu Kami*. In the feminist CDA realm, this study uncovers the representations of the women featured in this film. The way these female ecological heroines are portrayed in the discourse can be divided into four themes.

The first theme clearly emphasizes how the deep-rooted patriarchal culture in Indonesia restricts women's roles. Women are represented as essential agents in nature preservation but are hampered by many constraints and practical barriers imposed by the patriarchal system. In the second theme, women are represented as leaders of environmental movements who have put everything they have on the line for nature's sake. Beset by difficulties, they have inspired other people to create a sustainable world. The third theme highlights women as symbols. The women are called "Kartini Kendeng", after a national heroine in Indonesia. Kartini, the heroine, is the symbol of women's resistance. The female figures in the film symbolize the heroines of the environmental women's movements. The last theme sets out all the hopes for a sustainable world in the future. These women are outspoken about significant environmental issues and encourage others to do the same. They warn people that they must be aware that irresponsible actions can cause irreversible environmental damage; an unacceptable fact. Hence, all people should learn how to live in harmony with nature.

This study shows that Indonesia, with its rooted patriarchal culture, is open to the concepts of (eco)feminism, although people are reluctant to use this term. Its values can be especially seen during environmental crises when women have been in the vanguard to defend their land. A strong partnership within a family makes it possible to negotiate roles between women and men. It is also impossible to deny that men's support for their spouses has greatly influenced the participation of women in environmental movements. The social transformation in gender social practices portraying the oasis of tranquility in the film is the aspiration of feminist critical discourse analysts (Lazar 2007: 145).

When it comes to environmental issues, the state should be more actively involved in dispensing equal justice for all and perform its duties and functions as responsibly as possible. Environmental protection and industrial growth should be balanced against each other. Relationships between companies, local communities, NGOs, and law enforcement agencies should be created and maintained to ensure no party is harmed.

All things considered, our understanding of the different roles played by women leading the environmental movements discussed in this study remains limited; partly in order to a focus on the discourse in the documentary. Future research could examine women-led environmental movements in other media

and different contexts, investigating the ways power-bargaining takes place when women in a patriarchal defend nature culture.

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