

# THE ROOT OF FEMINISM IN LAKE TOBA ORAL TRADITION: FAMILY, ECOSYSTEM AND ECOFEMINISM

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## ABSTRACTS

**F**amily and the struggle of eco-feminism are two different aspects that need to be elaborated in the research of social science and humanities. On the one hand, family is not only defined as the relation between husband, wife and children. It is a whole social system where the concept of family is always moving and the society involves in the dynamics of family. On the other hand, the study of ecofeminism sees a connection between the exploitation and degradation of the natural world and the role of men and women in the exploitation and degradation of the natural world. Family also become part of the degradation of that natural world. The oral tradition of Lake Toba Oral Tradition showed how the imbalance of family relationship affected the natural ecosystem. The methods used in this paper was the descriptive analysis. The paper attempted to look at the ecofeminism from the New Age ecofeminism.

**Key words:** Family, Ecosystem, Eco-Feminism, Natural World

## INTRODUCTION

Family and the struggle of eco-feminism are two different aspects that need to be elaborated in the social sciences and humanities research. Family is one of the smallest institution or hierarchy established by society or culture to set the order of social life. Ecofeminism itself is part of a movement or struggle of feminism who criticizes their relationship with the exploitation of women's oppression nature performed by men or culture. Family in feminist view is one of the institutions that used to legitimize oppression or as an area of initial formation of the differences between women and men. Differences in these two aspects, on the one hand as dominating legitimization and the other side as a movement that enforce legitimacy that create exploits. Two different aspects of this in the humanities, especially literature need to be assisted in order to explore the problems of oppression at the smallest hierarchy in society, the family, which resulted in the nature destruction.

Literature work is an author afterthought on various issues, including the conflict in the surrounding, both of which have occurred or imagined. Literature work also serves as a medium to convey a message to society. Therefore, paper will explore relationship messages between family members and the existing natural environment on the legend of origin of Lake Toba. This problem begins with the statement that a family has a relationship of mutual respect and responsibility are the same, both in the family and nature. So, the research question is "How is the eco-feminism described in the realm of family on the origin legend of Lake Toba?"

## **Theoretical Framework**

### Eco-feminism in literature

The term eco-feminism was first introduced by Françoise d'Eaubonne in 1974, to express his view that there was a connection between the oppression of women and the oppression of nature. Ecofeminism is specialized in the flow of movement 'social ecology' which criticize the views 'deep ecology'. General basic ideas of social ecology is the recognition that the nature of the underlying anti-ecology of most of the social structures and economic and technological rooted in the dominant system and social organization. Patriarchy, imperialism, capitalism, and racism are examples of social domination that is exploitative (Capra, 2001, pp. 19-20).

Ecofeminism perceives the man from the perspective of ecological and holistic. Human is structured in holistic, integrated with each other, and other natural environment. Mission awareness, alignment, and togetherness become intrinsic ecofeminism movement. Subject in the eco-feminism New Age movement makes priority themes of unity (integration) , whole and wholeness (Bohm , 1980: 20, 2001:13) . This is relevant with the Primavesi theory that speaks about the earth ecosystem. Earth is an ecosystem consisting of interdependent, interrelated, mutually influencing and decisive parts. The parts are fused into a single unity, togetherness form networks of life. These themes presupposes the importance of the meaning of unity and wholeness, and unity of each of the existing part in the whole system of life (Primavesi, 1991, pp. 1-4).

This Primavesi when applied in the family, then each part or family members together, the whole family, an entire ecosystem. If only among members work together well without the elements that dominate or exploit, mutual cooperation and mutual has high solidarity, then the chain of harmonization with each other will be maintained. Primavera (Primavesi, 1991, p.1) explained that traditional organism and the neighborhood had been studied together as an ecosystem. On the implicit understanding that the ecosystem is not a fact isolated from the environment, but that his role in an overall interconnected great. Ecological paradigm developed here requires ultimately all interlinked ecosystems of this planet in a whole life that we call earth , and that this connection should be called as explicit possibility.

Soure (1996) explained that eco-feminism is a new version in feminist theory has been applied first in literature. Critics saw the dominance of any living creature to the status of objects, which reduces morale is very possible exploitation, abuse, and destruction. Practice eco-feminism culture literature looked at the text did not just become "text" but acknowledged having "relations with others" and where the focus of attention of the new model associated with dialog.

Kaur (2012) explained that eco-feminism in literature related to eco-criticism, but eco-criticism ignores their dominance. Pranoto (2014: 4-5) explained eco-criticism term was first used by William Rueckert in 1978 and in

the study of literature was introduced by Dana Phillips with the term green literature. Green literature criteria include the language used a lot of diction ecology, the contents of its work based on love on earth, a sense of concern for the earth is destroyed, anxieties in addressing the destruction of the earth, against injustice at the arbitrary treatment to the earth and its contents (trees, water, air, and its inhabitants-human), and the idea of the liberation of the planet from destruction and implementation.

Murphy (1991) stated that literature is helpful for the development and expansion of eco-feminism philosophy even further and can be used as an element of movement eco-feminism structured and integrated. Murphy also impose limits eco-feminism ecological literature by linking dialog analysis by Bakhtinian who had previously directed the theories of feminism in culture and literature. Literary criticism that is able to observe in terms of the beauty of a text to the questions about the strength of a larger community of culture, politics, and ideology under patriarchal understanding. Murphy (1991) classified eco-feminism literature as a phenomenon in the late twentieth century as part of proto ecology and to a certain extent can realize two-dimensional detailing how to solve the ecological crisis and how to resolve the oppression of women (women's oppression and environmental degradation).

### Family

Family is the smallest social unit or units and a social unit consisting of father, mother, and children. Goode found the family was not only as a relationship place of husband and wife, children and parents, but also as a nexus of social networking and community members (Goode, 1993, pp. 3-11). In a broader definition, Goode explained the family is a social institution smallest of society, consists of a group of people who live together in a bond of blood relationship marriage and adoption. In the larger society, the family is the primary group in society, formed from the marriage relationship between a man and a woman for the regeneration representing a sustainable manner. Because the family not only as a container relationship of husband and wife, children and parents, but also the relationship with the community (Goode, 1993, pp.63-64).

### **Methods**

Material object in this article was the origin legend of Lake Toba and formal object in was the family ecosystem in eco-feminism. Sources of data obtained from the search of folklore books and interviews in some areas around Lake Toba in North Tapanuli. Interview was conducted considering variation of different stories that widely circulated. Barker (Barker, 2005, p. 382) asserted that the task of the researcher, be deconstructed textual meaning of the data to be more democratic, not biased, and bargaining meanings between the researcher and the owner of the literature text. Bernard (Bernard, 1994, p. 180) explained that anthropologists need to understand the data field in the form of music, dance, folklore, and a number of rituals that happened lately, the researchers also need to explore the literary anthropology of literary texts. Text did not have to be a book but a literary text that may accompany the whole folklore. Data in the form of words and sentences on the

relationship of man to man and man to nature or later were analyzed using the theory of ecofeminism, particularly ecosystem relationships in the family.

## **DISCUSSION**

Literature or ecological folklore was already in the time of our ancestors. Sikana (Sikana, 2009, p.478) described the literature as the creation of human life and nature all around. They were told after returning from rice paddies and fields. So, the natural surroundings gave color their literatures. Sikana (Sikana, 2009, p.478) explained further that the era dominated by animism let human nature so that the cultural and literary manifestations too. Modern times showed literary controlled by technology. The origin legend of Lake Toba was born in the farming communities who live in the mountains and forests. Their lives were still possible depending on nature.

### Family in the Origin of Lake Toba

Samosir family life consisting of a father, mother and son narrated dependent and live happily with each other. Samosir role as breadwinner who worked hoeing in the rice field and his wife took care of the house and look for herbs in the forest. The division of labor between Samosir and his wife initially did not show dominance and this is reflected cooperation and their mutual respect. Basim (Basim, 1996, pp.31-35) explained that the sexual division of labor has been formed at that time the family environment (age Barbarian), the male role was finding food and having food search tools. Until one day allow that work outside the household (male job) may be used to accumulate material wealth. Employment in the community become more dominant, because the men have more power.

The division of labor in families Samosir aimed to complement each other and profitable, but over time problems arise domination, the one over the other. Selfish sense was a key trigger in matters of division of labor within the family. Many theories had asserted that the division of labor is not a problem that presented itself in the household, but already formed in the society. Public order problems in AMDT was not visible, it is because in folklore tended to have a simple pattern. However, it was not impossible to rule out the possibility that there was a society in AMDT influencing dominance in the Samosir family. Pattern in this society had influenced all the hierarchies and systems of work in all areas involving women and men.

The family that has been dominated by a single member in this case the husband and the other party be dominated, it will bring disharmony surrounding ecosystem. Referring to Primavera (Primavesi, 1991, p.1) that is traditionally one organism and the neighborhood has been studied together as an ecosystem. On the implicit understanding that the ecosystem is not a fact isolated from the environment, but that his role in an overall interconnected great. Anger of Samosir who felt he had to work more and must take precedence than his wife, causing disappointment and cause damage to the ecosystem of the family. Damaged ecosystems is not only in the sphere of the family but the neighborhood. Anger Naidoo has led to floods that drowned all the contents of the village.

### Women in Nature

Women in the AMDT legend placed a wife and mother were beautiful, soft, firm, and good at taking care of the house. These women-owned

intelligence directing the affairs of support in the domestic realm, for example: cooking, weaving, select seeds, cultivate crops, and occasionally looking concoction into the woods. Women here have contributed to the outside home, who are looking for potions, but this activity is still endorse the domestic sphere. Such representation of women showed that women were objects that depend on the needs of the subject. Woloch (Woloch, 1984, pp.495-496) explained that domestic ideology portray women as housekeepers and nannies. Domestic role looks more passive and not competitive and does not stand out compared to men engaged in the public domain. This gave rise to the perception that women are beautiful, healthy, educated and focused on her husband, children, and the household into a description of ideal women.

Social order in AMDT perceived women position in the domestic sphere to be obedient to men or patriarchal. According to Ruthvan, patriarchy is a system that allows both men dominate women in a social relationship (Ruthvan, 1990, p.1). Thus, women are not inferior because of nature, but because they are being inferior by the culture, for example: they are cultured to inferiority (Ruthvan, 1990, p.45). Patriarchy regarded women as inferior human beings in all areas of life, including within the family system, economy and others.

This patriarchal strength eliminated traces of a wife who is described as an incarnation of fish. The origin of these women lead lives of a women who cannot be untied with the environment, in this context is water. The fish is an animal that cannot be separated from the natural water in a long time, so do humans. Samosir's wife is a fish which metamorphosed into a woman or a man, which together will die if escape from the water. Changes of fish as a personification of the importance of water for all living things. Displacement of living beings from atmospheric water onto the land be indicative of the same dimensions, are equally dependent on the earth / nature. This fish symbol also indicates that there is a close relationship with nature. However, Samosir who represented himself as the superior, has denied proximity of the origin of his wife. Samosir who reneged on a promise to tell the origin to his child caused on the destruction of nature. Close relationship with nature that represented through these female figures confirm that there has been a charge on the legend AMDT ecofeminism. Tong (Tong, 1998, p.373-398) explained that in ecofeminism there are four concepts that look at the relationship of women with nature, one of which saw women's connectedness with nature as Mother Earth (motherland), the birth mother, a mother who counts the life, and mother who created all that exists.

## **CONCLUSION**

Eco-feminism literary study emerged in the late twentieth century, but the root of the literature has eco-feminism discourse at a time when the oral tradition be an effective means to convey the teachings on the public. The origin legend of Lake Toba, for example, has showed imbalance relationship between family members, that is when the wife becomes a place to vent anger, then nature becomes damaged and destroyed.

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