

**FRAGMENTS OF MADURA WOMEN
IN THE WORKS OF MADURESE AND EASTERN JAVANESE
LITERATURE: A READING OF ECOFEMINISM**

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Abstract: This paper will present the fragments or dimensions of Madurese women in the context of environmental relations with culture, social interaction and gender in the works of Madurese and East Javanese writers. The focus of this research study is the narratives of Madurese women in viewing and interpreting the relationship between nature or the environment with Madurese culture, whether influenced by environmental changes, social dynamics, local wisdom, Madurese community norms in literary works written by Madurese writers, and East Java. The approach in this study is ecofeminism as a formal object aimed at uncovering the relationship between women and the environment inherent in Madurese Man and his entire culture. The interpretive descriptive method is used to analyze and interpret data from material objects, including prose and poetry by Madurese and East Java writers which have been determined based on the research objectives.

Abstrak: Tulisan ini akan menyajikan fragmen atau dimensi perempuan Madura dalam konteks relasi lingkungan dengan budaya, interaksi sosial dan gender dalam karya sastra Madura dan Jawa Timur. Fokus kajian penelitian ini adalah narasi-narasi perempuan Madura dalam melihat dan memaknai hubungan alam atau lingkungan dengan budaya Madura, baik dipengaruhi oleh perubahan lingkungan, dinamika sosial, kearifan lokal, norma masyarakat Madura dalam karya sastra karya sastra Madura dan Jawa Timur. Pendekatan dalam penelitian ini adalah ekofeminisme sebagai objek formal yang bertujuan mengungkap hubungan antara perempuan dan lingkungan yang melekat pada diri laki-laki Madura dan seluruh budayanya. Metode deskriptif interpretatif digunakan untuk menganalisis dan menafsirkan data dari objek material, termasuk prosa dan puisi karya sastra Madura dan Jawa Timur yang telah ditentukan berdasarkan tujuan penelitian.

Keywords: Ecofeminism, East Java, Women, Madura

INTRODUCTION

Madura does have an inexhaustible attraction to explore. Many artists and writers grew and grew, because their writings portrayed the exoticism of Madura in a multidimensional way. Madura is like a mine

of words, for their source of inspiration. The sea, salt, boats, tobacco, siwalan, farmers, are symbols that are scattered in many literary works written by writers and initiate artists apparently.

For example, from the literary circles: D Zawawi Imron, Abdul Hadi WM., Fudzoli Zaini, Jamal D Rahman, Syaf Anton WR,

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Djamaludin Kahfie, Turmizi Dzaka, M Faizi, Moh Hamzah Arsa, Ibn Hajar, Edi AH Iyubenu, and a series of names. others who are poor across the literary area. Of the many writers, most chose to live in Madura, and some chose to live in various areas, outside Madura.

When classified, some Madurese writers consist of: Madurese writers who grew up, grew up and lived in Madura; Madurese writer who grew up, grew up and lived outside Madura; writer outside Madura who grew up, grew up and settled in Madura; and writers outside Madura who grew up and grew up in Madura, and live outside Madura. From this classification, it is interesting to examine the second and fourth categories: Madurese writers who grew up, grew up and lived outside Madura; and and writer outside Madura who grew up and grew up in Madura, and lives outside Madura. How the works are produced, after they are not in Madura, and the like.

To be more specific, the discussion will focus on several writers both from Madura and outside Madura, who now live outside Madura. And more narrowly, the two categories of writers above, who now live in the eastern area of Java (Pasuruan, Probolinggo, Lumajang, Jember, Bondowoso, Situbondo and Banyuwangi). Meanwhile, the scope of the discussion, namely, how they view "Madura women" in the perspective of their work, both prose and poetry.

Based on initial readings, women's issues presented in the works of writers in the two regions, both those from Madura or writers who write about Madura have thematic linkages with local wisdom, environment and social politics. Therefore, this research will focus on women's narratives on the thematic with an ecofeminist approach. This is an urgent matter to be investigated, because so far Madurese people tend to be understood from the figure of Sakera as a tough man and other stereotypes, for example, sickles, *carok*, satay, scrap metal and so on.

This study will also discuss more deeply, examining Madurese people, especially the existence of women and aspects of nature in literary works. How humans and the nature of Madura are interpreted in literary works as a medium in

responding to the development of relations between the environment and humans on ethics or behavioral values towards the nature they inhabit. This is in line with Indrayani's concept (in Candraningrum & Hunga, 2015:163) that ecofeminism discusses *First*, the interaction of women with nature is a reciprocal. Women understand that women's bodies are productive, as do women's understanding of nature and the environment; *second*, when women take natural products, women's actions do not constitute a relationship of domination or possession. Women do not own women's bodies on earth, but women cooperate with other women's bodies and the earth.

METHODS

This research was conducted using an ecofeminist approach. In ecofeminism, there are two disciplines, namely ecology and feminism. According to Tong (2006:366-367) Ecofeminism is a new thought that understands all forms of human and non-human relations (nature) on a feminist basis and tries to save it from oppression or damage caused by the domination system which is reflected in the poetry and prose of Madurese and east of Java. Data sources include the poetry anthology *Pesan Laut Kepada Perahu* by Muhammad Lefand (2020: Bukuinti); an anthology of short stories from *Mata Blater*, especially the short story *Kasur Pasir* by Mahwi Air Tawar (2010: Matapena).

Data collection technique in this research is documentation technique. Data collection techniques in the form of documentation, namely studying documents related to all data needed in research. The data collection procedure in this study was carried out by mapping, classification, and codification based on the research focus, namely the fragment of Madurese women in the context of ecofeminism.

The data analysis technique in this research is descriptive interpretive. After completing the data collection stage, the researcher then analyzed the data. The steps of data analysis in this study, namely (1) preparing and processing data, (2) reading the data contained in the works of writers from Madura and East Java, (3) analyzing more deeply and codifying, (4) interpreting or

interpreting the data in the work. writers of Madura and East Java (5) drawing conclusions.

DISCUSSION

Talking about “Madura women”, of course, many perspectives will be present, both socio-culturally and historically. Madurese women have been portrayed as hard workers, unyielding, obedient to their husbands and upholding the dignity of the family. This is reflected in their daily lives, both those who trade in the market, work in the fields, as well as those who work hard at fish auctions and salt ponds.

Observing the work of several young writers in eastern Java, it is enough to give an impression of the approaches they take to problems in society. One of them, how their work slices the female life of a Madurese woman. These writers include writers who were born, grew up and grew up in Madura, but lived in the eastern part of Java (Muhammad Lefand - the poet), and writers who grew up and worked in Madura, and lived in the eastern part of Java (Ali Ibnu Anwar - the poet). , Fandrik Ahmad - prose, Nurillah Achmad - prose and Gusti Trisno - prose).

Some of the works written by the writers above, found interesting points of view, how they judge the figure of a Madurese woman with the furniture of the problem. It can be said so, because even though they do not live in Madura, the memory of Madurese women in Madura, or Madurese women living outside Madura—can be traced from the way of dialogue—is quite intriguing. At the same time, it gives a new perspective on how Madura culture actually influences the perspective and attitude of Madurese women, who are outside Madura. Quite a variety, apparently.

Fragments of Madurese Women in Poetry

There are two poems of Muhammad Lefand, which will be sampled. Namely, a poem entitled *Madura* and *Mother*. In a poem entitled *Madura*[1], Muhammad Lefand writes:

MADURA

Kukirimkan rindu
Kepada tanah madura
Ingatan menjadi perahu

Kukirimkan rindu
Kepada seorang ibu
Airmata menjadi laut

Madura dan ibu
Detak di dada
Waktu kularung rindu

Jember, 2020

Lefand describes the figure of a mother, equivalent to Madura, who is very closely related to sea and boat diction. At titimangsa, this poem was written in Jember, where Lefand now lives. The image that is felt in this poem is an image of taste. How does a child feel, when he is hit by endless longing, because he is far from his mother and Madura, who gave birth to him. At first, the author felt a longing for his homeland, by: *kukirimkan rindu/kepada tanah madura*. Then, that longing brought memories of his journey, when he had to leave and enter Madura, by sea. Thus, he wrote: *ingatan menjadi perahu*. Of course, the reader feels how memories, whether childhood, or adolescence, pass like boats passing by in the ocean.

In the next stanza, Lefand writes: *kukirimkan rindu/kepada seorang ibu*. And because of that longing, without feeling something welled up in his eyes, so he wrote: *Airmata menjadi laut*. Why the sea? Why not a well? Well, this is where Lefand positions a Madurese woman, especially a mother, as a place to get a taste of salt in her life and journey. Mother, in Lefand's eyes, is the breadth that leads him to wander everywhere. If D Zawawi Imron describes “mother” as a “hermitage cave”, then Lefand expands his metaphor into a “sea”, which will never be finished to be navigated.

In the last stanza, Lefand positions “mother” and “madura” as two of the same material, namely the source of life. *Madura dan ibu//Detak di dada//Waktu kularung rindu*, why which is both of them have always been the spirit of life and life, as well as a place to anchor their longing. How noble and honorable Madurese women are, in the eyes of

their children, so that Mother is described as life itself.

In the second poem, Lefand still maintains his position on diction that cannot be separated from the element that brings the reader closer to Madura: the sea, in the poem entitled *Ibu*[2], as follows:

IBU

Ibu adalah laut
Menyimpan segala denyut
Tangis dan harapan

Ibu adalah laut
Tak pernah surut
Pada angin badai

Ibu adalah laut
Sedang aku perahu
Berlayar dengan doanya

Jember, 2020

In this poem, Lefand is more assertive in narrating "mother" as—or perhaps not only as, but also as—the “sea”, which *Menyimpan segala denyut* for her *tangis dan harapan*-nya. As the sea, he also describes the "mother" who *Tak pernah surut* under any circumstances, even *pada angin badai*. And as a child, Lefand realized that he was a boat. *While I am a boat*, which will not be able to sail or cross the ocean, except with the prayers and blessings of the Mother. Lefand puts awareness on how important a mother's prayer is, as a medium to usher in her success.

The aesthetic phenomena presented in Lefand's poetry related to the existence of Madurese women tend to be spiritual. Meanwhile, spiritual ecofeminists draw strength from various earth-based spiritualities and tend to focus on worshipping ancient goddesses (Tong, 2006:380). In addition, spiritual ecofeminism draws an analogy between the role of women in biological production and the role of "Mother Earth" or "Mother of Birth," as the giver of life and the creator of all that exists (Tong, 2006:381). The Madurese woman, in this context is the mother, is imagined as a sea full of mystery and depth. However, it is precisely in its depths that something special is stored, to deliver the generations after it, to know the

wider outside world. Far from the narrative of Malin Kundang, who wanders, to forget someone who has given birth to him.

The Fragment of Madurese Women in Short Stories

The issue of environmental advocacy carried out by Madurese women can be found in the short story *Kasur Pasir* by Mahwi Air Tawar. This short story presents the story of Nyi Marfuah's struggle in saving the coastal environment of Legung, a coastal village north of Madura, this story is compiled in an anthology of short stories eco-feminine side, along with the *Mata Blater* published by Matapena in 2010 and is interesting to discuss from an quote.

Tapi, ah, itu dulu. Kini, Nyi Marfuah sudah tiada. Dan pasir yang serupa gunung itu pun sudah rata, dijadikan jalan beraspal oleh pemerintah. Kini, setiap pagi, di tepi pantai di sekitar tempat tinggal Nyi Marfuah, yang terlihat hanyalah bungkus-bungkus makanan yang berserakan, botol-botol yang menumpuk—entah dari mana datangnya sampah-sampah itu. Orang-orang sekitar tak peduli. Bahkan warga setempat turut serta mencemari pantai dengan membuang tulang-tulang ikan di sembarang tempat.

“Nyi Marfuah meninggal,” kata orang itu
“Gara-gara sampah,” kata Madrusin tak acuh
“Termasuk paku yang sengaja mpean buang dekat kuburan!” kata Madrusin
“Jaga mulutmu!” sentak orang itu
(halaman 56-57, *Kasur Pasir*)

Based on the quote above, it can be seen how evil intrigues and conspiracy are carefully planned to harm the main character in the short story—Nyi Marfuah—who is keen to fight environmental destruction in any name. These efforts were met with obstacles, both regulatory and criminal acts that eventually claimed his life. This can be categorized as a form of natural ecofeminism that has a cultural-radical background and seeks to

strengthen, rather than weaken, nature's relationship with women. Nature ecofeminists believe that nature/women are equal or perhaps even better than culture/men. In addition, it is women's traditional values that can encourage better social relations and a less aggressive and sustainable way of life (Tong, 2006:373).

Kasur Pasir tells the story of an old widow from the village of Legung known as Nyi Marfuah. She has lived alone around the beach since her husband died. The coastal woman daily works as a seller of white sand which is used for sleeping mats. The white sand is said to be a very sacred thing and it is only with this mattress that the villagers of Legung can sleep soundly. That said, if a person sleeps on the white sand it will avoid various kinds of diseases. Not infrequently white sand is also used for sleeping mats for newlyweds. Therefore, the cleanliness of the white sand on the beach is the most important thing. For Nyi Marfuah, white sand has a deep sacredness, even too sacred to be polluted by garbage. However, an unfortunate thing happened to the woman, Nyi Marfuah died and the beach sand was increasingly polluted by garbage.

In this case, it can be interpreted that Nyi Marfuah is a Madurese woman who is narrated as a woman who has the character of a nurse. During his life, he took care of the beach to avoid trash on his own free will. Although the main goal is not to pollute the sacred sand, Nyi Marfuah's action is a form of cultural-nature ecofeminism movement. This can be proven in the following quote.

Jangan lupa pula, bila saatnya kalian datang berkunjung, mampirlah meski sesaat ke tempat tinggal Nyi Marfuah, yang telah ia tempati selama bertahun-tahun. Maka di sana akan kalian temui foto-foto pasir putih, yang tinggi serupa gunung. Foto-foto itu terpampang tanpa bingkai. Nyi Marfuah mendapatkan foto-foto itu dadi seseorang yang dulunya pernah berkunjung. Gunung pasir, Nyi Marfuah menyebutnya.

Tapi, ah, itu dulu. Kini Nyi Marfuah sudah tiada. Dan pasir yang serupa gunung itu pun sudah rata, dijadikan jalan beraspal oleh pemerintah. Kini, setiap pagi, di tepi pantai di sekitar tempat tinggal Nyi Marfuah, yang terlihat hanyalah bungkus-bungkus makanan berserakan, botol-botol yang menumpuk-entah dari mana datangnya sampah-sampah itu. Orang-orang sekitar tidak peduli. Bahkan warga setempat turut serta mencemari pantai dengan membuang tulang-tulang ikan di sembarang tempat.

(Tawar, 2017:48)

The absence of Nyi Marfuah resulted in the contamination of the beach with garbage. Now, on the edge of Nyi Marfuah's empty house, it always looks dirty due to garbage such as scattered food wrappers, bottles, and even fish bones. The pollution of the beach can be said to be the result of the displacement of the sand mountain near Nyi Marfuah's house by the government to be used as a paved road. With the paved road access, it is possible that the garbage comes from road users and irresponsible local residents.

Before the eviction, it could be interpreted that Nyi Marfuah really took care of the beauty of the beach so that the sacred white sand was always clean when it was sold. This reflects that the indigenous women of the coast really care about the state of the beach. His actions, which are based on the cleanliness of white sand on the beach, certainly have a big impact on the safety of the coastal and marine ecosystems. Nyi Marfuah's thought that saves white sand and belief in its magical function is the same as Shiva & Mies' (2005:117-118) opinion that considers that land is survival, land is a womb that is not only for the reproduction of biological life but also cultural and spiritual life. and is 'home' in the deepest sense. In this case, the survival of the white sand is a cultural and spiritual life for the Legung residents. According to Nyi Marfuah, besides being sacred, the white sand has many benefits. The sand can eliminate all kinds of diseases and relax stiff muscles and

function as an antidote to magic. Not only that, the sand is also believed that the newlyweds who sleep on it will avoid all forms of household disasters.

His closeness to the natural beach made Nyi Marfuah emotional when the government flattened the sand mountain near where she lived to become an asphalt road, moreover she did not have the heart to take more white sand and sell it. The even distribution of the sand dunes really has a bad effect on the beach sand area.

Ketika pemerintah meratakan gunung pasir untuk dijadikan jalan beraspal, Nyi Marfuah tak berani lagi mengambil pasir di sana. Di samping memang rata, juga kotor, tiap hari sampah berserak di sekitar tempat itu. Sementara untuk menegur agar orang tak membuang sampah di sembarang tempat, ia bingung, karena ia memang tidak tahu siapa yang membuang sampah ke laut. Dan untuk menegur orang-orang sekitar agar tak membuang tulang ikan di sekitar pantai, Nyi Marfuah pun tak sampai hati. Lalu, apa yang bisa dilakukan perempuan setua dirinya?

(Tawar, 2017:52)

The eviction of the sand mountain to become a paved road occurred before Nyi Marfuah died. Since the sand dune was flattened, the area where it has become polluted with garbage has increased day by day. This made Nyi Marfuah reluctant to take the sand to sell. As a result of the scattered garbage, Nyi Marfuah's mind and heart became at war with each other. He was alone, it was impossible if he himself had to clean everything up. The only way is to warn or remind people not to litter, especially in the area, but Nyi Marfuah feels pessimistic because she is just an old woman and doesn't have the heart to reprimand the surrounding community. The pollution of the area made Nyi Marfuah no longer take sand to sell. Dirty sand certainly reduces the value of sacredness and quality for use as bedding. Nyi Marfuah's main purpose in selling the sand is for the

convenience of the Legung residents. If he continues to pick up sand in a dirty area, the comfort of the Legung residents will be disturbed.

Based on the data above, it is reflected that Nyi Marfuah is worried about the consequences of pollution by garbage in the sand area. The sacred sand that he has been selling as a symbol of his cultural and spiritual livelihood has been polluted. The dirty area will certainly have a bad impact on the surrounding ecosystem. The turmoil that emerged from Nyi Marfuah's heart also reflected that the woman really cared about the cleanliness of the beach sand. He seemed to be the one who knew best the bad consequences that would occur from the pollution. Unlike other people who litter, Nyi Marfuah seems to have a close relationship with the coast so she feels very uneasy if garbage is scattered around her. This is in line with the view of cultural-nature ecofeminism which states that the nature of women who cares and nurses emerges biologically from within them. Women feel they have a special duty to take action against things that destroy the ecology through their characteristics and experiences (Shiva & Mies, 2005:15).

The sand mattress itself is a form of hereditary tradition of the residents of the Legung village. The area is also known as the sand village, precisely in the northern coastal area of Madura, Sumenep Regency. Residents there have a habit of sleeping soundly on the sand which is believed to have many benefits. Mahwi Air Tawar has succeeded in elevating the local north coast of Madura through the story of Nyi Marfuah and touching it with a cultural-nature ecofeminism perspective. Nyi Marfuah reflects the people of the sand village who really love the sand bed tradition. Almost all of their activities are done on the fine sand, from relaxing to sleeping. Even husband and wife activities to the delivery process are carried out on sand mattresses, newborn babies are immediately put to sleep on it (Suyami, 2012). Through Nyi Marfuah's story, the author seems to imply a message for people who have to worry if garbage pollution occurs in the area. In this case, the author also warns that all levels of society should participate in maintaining the beauty and cleanliness of the coast, especially in the sand village area.

CONCLUSION

Ecofeminism reading of the Madurese literary work entitled *Kasur Pasir* by Mahwi Air Tawar and the eastern Javanese writer entitled *Madura* and *Ibu* by Muhammad Lefand as stated in the research methods subsection on the previous page. Some of the findings in this study are as follows. *First*, Madurese literature—whether written by Madurese or eastern Javanese writers—successfully emerged from the thematic confines of its predecessors, in the generation of writers born in the 80s, maturity is presented with a more daring and straightforward interpretation. *Second*, it is not easy to find environmental issues that have a narrative relation to the existence of Madurese women. In fact, the current condition of Madura's natural environment needs a lot of attention, especially the coastal areas. As the closing sentence of this research, it takes commitment and social, environmental and humanitarian sensitivity by all parties, especially Madurese and eastern Javanese writers in narrating the relations of Madurese women and their nature and culture.

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[1] Muhammad Lefand, *Message of the Sea to the Boat* (Bukuinti: Jember, 2020). p. 8

[2] Ibid. p. 8