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Women's Attention to the Natural Environment in the Novel Particles by Dewi (Dee) Lestari: An Ecofeminist Study

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ABSTRACT: Literary works are one of the vehicles to convey solutions to natural environmental problems. Through literary works, authors as part of society can voice their hearts about the phenomena they see and/or experience. For this reason, it is important to conduct research that examines literary works. This research is in line with UNNES' position as a Conservation University, especially related to the first pillar of 'Biodiversity Conservation' which aims to protect, preserve, utilize, and develop the environment, flora, and fauna wisely and sustainably. In addition, this research correlates with the SDGs goal 15 "Terrestrial ecosystems", which is to manage forests sustainably and stop land degradation. This research uses a theoretical approach to ecofeminism, while methodologically it uses a qualitative descriptive approach. The results of this study are expected to provide a clear picture of the form of women's attention and the way women respond to natural environmental problems.

1. INTRODUCTION

Natural environmental issues have become a hot topic in daily life. As is well known, in recent decades, there has been significant climate change that has negatively impacted the preservation of the natural environment. Forest destruction, water and air pollution, and declining biodiversity are the impacts of uncontrolled human activities. This raises awareness among humans that nature must be maintained to remain sustainable, even though, economically, exploiting nature brings benefits to the industrial world and certain groups of people. Discussions about the environment and awareness of its preservation certainly need to be amplified as widely as possible. Many scientists and writers are seeking solutions and sharing their thoughts on the matter.

This phenomenon is also found in literary works. As expressed by Goldman (Geleuk et al., 2017), literature is one of the means by which culture and society are represented, in which it voices desires, needs, and life problems [1]. One novel that voices this problem is Partikel by Dee Lestari. This novel explores identity as Zarah searches for her missing father. Parah studies nature and makes it home wherever it visits. So, he is not only friendly with nature but also takes care of everything he encounters, like a house where life and peace are created [2].

Based on this background, the formulation of this research problem is as follows: (1) What is the form or form of attention of female characters to environmental problems contained in the novel *Particle*?; (2) How do the female characters respond to environmental issues in the novel *Particle*?

The theoretical approach used in this study is the feminist approach, especially ecofeminism. According to Diamond and Orenstein (1990), ecofeminism is a social concept that addresses environmental problems, women, and women's spiritual movements, reflecting concerns among various parties about the usefulness of the earth and all aspects of life on it [3].

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Ecofeminism seeks to show the relationship between various forms of oppression of human and female culture related to nature (Tong, 1998). In Ecofeminism, the conceptual, linguistic, and symbolic relationship between women and ecological issues is studied [4]. Meanwhile, according to Hapsari (2013 in Ecofeminism, the earth is seen as a mother figure who needs to be protected from all kinds of dangers, damage, and destruction [5].

As for the methodological approach, this study uses a qualitative descriptive approach. According to Moleong (in Sugianto, 2020), qualitative research is a type of research to provide an understanding of various phenomena experienced by research subjects, which can be in the form of motivations, perceptions, behaviors, and actions carried out thoroughly, using words and language, in a special natural context, and by utilizing various existing natural methods [6].

Based on the theoretical and methodological approaches described above, the following is the research procedure that will be carried out. First, researchers read novels to collect data. Second, identify and classify the data according to the problem formulation. Third, analyze the data using ecofeminist theory.

3. RESEARCH GAP

There are several studies relevant to this research proposal, both regarding the approach used and the object (novel). These studies include: Khikmawati (2018), Putri et al. (2019), Harfiyani (2019), Mursalim and Irma (2020), Setiawan and Musaffak (2020), Mayandri et al. (2022), Sumartini et al. (2023), Paramita and Ngusman (2023).

Khikmawati (2018) [7] researched the novel *Particle* with the research title "Representation of Environmental Damage in the *Particle* Novel by Dee Lestari: An Ecological Study". It uses an ecocritical approach. As a result, there are 5 types of environmental damage: environmental pollution, critical land degradation, ecosystem damage, forest destruction, and the extinction of various forms of biodiversity. The cause of environmental damage is a lack of knowledge about the environment, as well as economic, humanitarian, and lifestyle issues.

Putri et al. (2019). [8] in their research entitled "Saving Nature in the Novel *Particle* by Dewi Lestari in the Relationship of Gender Narrative with Nature as a Discourse on Identity Recognition" concluded that men and women are able to have a fairly close relationship with nature. Putri et al. use the theory of ecofeminism, thinking Marti Kheel, with the concept of holistic environment, nature, and humans have a complete or cohesive attachment.

Harfiyani (2019) [9] conducted a research entitled "Spirituality of Nature and Main Characters in the Novel *Particle* by Dewi 'Dee' Lestari (Ecofeminism Perspective). She examines the forms of natural spirituality and ecofeminism of the main characters in the novel *Particle* by Dewi Lestari from the perspective of ecofeminism.

Mursalim and Irma (2020) [10] conducted a study titled "Life Choices of the Character of Parah Amala in the Novel 'Supernova Episode: Particles' by Dee Lestari: A Study of Liberal Feminism". She uses the liberal feminist theory developed by Wolf, namely Feminism of Power. Setiawan and Musaffak (2020) [11] examined the novel *Particle* using a Literary Sociology approach with the research title *Javanese Mysticism Practice in the Particle Novel by Dewi Lestari*. The result is that Javanese people practice Javanese mysticism at the level of *sarengat/sharia* and *tarekat*. This can be seen in the belief in *jinn* and *demons* and belief in *myths*.

Meanwhile, Mayandri et al (2022) [12] wrote an article titled 'Value Of Ecocentrism in The Novel *Supernova 4: Particles of Sustainable Goddesses*'. Mayandri et al. analyzed the ecological crisis, the impact of the ecological crisis, and the values of ecocentrism in the novel *Particle* using the literary ecocritical approach according to Garrad and Glotfelty.

Furthermore, Sumartini et al. (2023) [13] wrote an article entitled 'Characteristics of Environmental Love in a Child in Particle Novel by Dewi Lestari: An Ecofeminism Study'. In the article, it is revealed about the formation of the character of environmental love in children in the novel Pparticles by Dewi Lestari which is studied using a phenomenological approach.

Paramita and Ngusman (2023) [14] examined the novel Particle from the aspect of language with the research title "Explicit Speech in the novel Pparticle by Dewi Lestari". They analyzed the types of expressive speech acts and the context in which speech strategies are used in expressive speech in the novel Pparticles by Dee Lestari using a qualitative descriptive method.

From this description, it is known that research on the form of attention of female characters in the novel Particle has never been carried out before and this research will complement the results of previous research.

4. METHODOLOGY DESIGN

Research Data and Sources

The data of this research is in the form of words, phrases, sentences, clauses, and fragments of discourse contained in the novel Pparticles by Dee Lestari. The source of data for this research is the fourth edition of the novel Pparticles by Dee Lestari published by the publisher Bentang Yogyakarta in 2015.

B. Data Collection Methods and Techniques

The method used in this study is the semiotic method through heuristic reading. Heuristic reading is a first-level reading based on the principles of linguistic and linguistic theory [15]. The data obtained were then classified based on the research criteria, namely the form of women's attention to natural environmental problems and the way women leaders responded to the problem.

The data obtained were classified based on the form of women's attention to natural environmental issues and the way women leaders responded to problems in the data card.

C. Data Analysis Methods and Techniques

The data analysis technique that will be used is the hermeneutic technique, namely the second level of semiotic reading. After performing the first level reading based on the rules of language, the researcher must perform the second level reading. Through hermeneutic reading, researchers interpret and interpret words and sentences based on literary, social, and cultural rules.

D. Methods and Techniques for Presenting Data Analysis Results

In presenting the results of the analysis, the researcher used an informal presentation method. This method presents data informally through the use of words that are often used even with technical terminology. Therefore, the use of ordinary words is a technique that results from the elaboration of the presentation method (Sudaryanto, 2015:145) [16].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The following is presented the results of Women's Attention to Natural Problems in the novel Particle by Dee Lestari.

TABLE 1 A FORM OF ATTENTION TO NATURAL PROBLEMS IN THE NOVEL *PARTICLE*

Yes	Page	Quotes
1.	13	Dad found a way to make his own fertilizer and medicines. He empowered the mothers to collect <i>kirinyuh</i> bushes and organic waste, then built composting machines with pedaling power. In a hut, hundreds of kilograms of compost and jerrycans of liquid fertilizer are produced every month.
2.	13-14	For pest control, Dad asked the community to plant as many neem trees as possible. Most of them are planted around the fields, interspersed with <i>poop</i> flowers. Dad said that the plants repel

		disturbing insects naturally. If needed, he makes extracts from leaf and neem seed water to be sprayed into the field. The rest is used for household antiseptics.
3.	14	The village has also never been hit by a food crisis. They are untouched by cases of malnutrition because my father appeals to every house to plant moringa trees that are rich in nutrients and do not know the season. Moringa leaf vegetables are a daily food in Batu Luhur, as most people consume spinach or kale.
4.	14	Batu Luhur has never run out of water. Bogor, the city with the highest rainfall, was used by my father by designing a rainwater reservoir connected to a reservoir. In the reservoir, rainwater is filtered with moringa seeds, gravel, and palm oil until every drop of water produced is drinkable.
5.	14	He then distributed the harvest from Batu Luhuras to herbal medicine producers. Medicinal plants that are being sought after by people are always expensive.
6.	28	In Batu Luhur, there is no critical land, whether it is during drought or rain. Since Dad stopped using chemical fertilizers and synthetic drugs, he rehabilitated the soil layer in the residents' fields with mycelium. Like spreading a magic tapestry, soil rehabilitation with mycelium succeeded in decomposing the pile of pollutants and restoring the freshness of the fields in Batu Luhur.
7.	28-29	One after another, the concept of plantation in Batu Luhur has also changed. It is no longer homogeneous of one plant, but mixed. Dad called it permaculture. Residents call it 'acakatut field'.
8.	29	My father then educated them, explaining that planting plants homogeneously in the long run would damage the soil. As a result, they will become increasingly dependent on chemical fertilizers and synthetic drugs in order to achieve a satisfactory harvest. The acakatur field will ease the burden on the residents because all living things in the field will work hand in hand by themselves. Under plants that need a lot of sunlight are grown fungi that do not need much light; Leaf shedding becomes humus; Chicken droppings that roam into fertilizer; parasitic wasps; pest repellent plants will protect vegetable crops, and so on.
9.	198-199	The forests of Kalimantan are not as crowded as I imagined. There were wide holes everywhere. The remaining forest is history. The spread of roofs and the density of human settlements look like cancer cells that spread. Eating away at the greenery of the forest. From up here, I saw the wounded Borneo
10.	211	There we carried out the ritual of planting ironwood seedlings. While planting the fifty-centimeter high tree seedlings, I thought, how illusory this activity is. The noble intention of replanting trees can never replace forests that have been formed naturally through a process of tens of thousands of years.

11.	214	Inga Dominykas was a native Lithuanian woman of Canadian nationality who founded the camp. There is no human on the planet who understands orangutans like Inga Dominykas.
12.	214	Twenty years ago, Inga and her husband came here as researchers. Never before has there been an in-depth study of orangutans. Orangutans at that time were still mysterious primates, disguised in the shadows of the forest with their cool orange rampits, without anyone knowing their behavior patterns, how many children they could have in their lifetime, how long they were pregnant, how they interacted socially, interacted with their habitat. Arguably, almost everything known in the world today about orangutans is the result of Ibu Inga's research.
13.	214	Although Mrs. Inga is a foreigner, with foreign citizenship, she is <i>de facto</i> the number one figure in Tanjung Putting. His experience, knowledge, evidence of care and affection for orangutans has stood the test of time. The people here are reluctant to Ibu Inga more than anything else.
14.	217-218	Zarah decided to become a volunteer That night I also decided, I would not return to Java. The next day, my decision not to return to Jakarta shocked the whole kelotok. Through a fierce argument that ended with me signing a waiver agreement, I managed to stay. I apologize to Pak Mansyur and the Mermaid crew because they seem to be hit by the conflict that is happening on their peaceful kelotok.
15.	225	Zarah and Ibu Maryam became orangutan foster parents. I am the closest person to the position where Mother Inga stands. Her eyes that seek to get mine. Nothing is softer and more fragile than the gaze of a baby orangutan. My hand automatically stretched. With her tiny arms, she jumped up to grab my hand, climbed up to her armpits, and she hung tightly on it. I was amazed to find an orange-haired creature sticking to my body. Everyone immediately looked at the two of us. Just as gawking. I heard Mother Inga sigh deeply.

DISCUSSION

Currently, environmental issues are a crucial problem in human life. Climate change and environmental damage are very important and urgent environmental problems to be addressed. Climate change has caused a variety of negative impacts, such as rising sea levels, extreme weather, and biodiversity loss. Environmental damage due to excessive human activities has also caused various problems, such as increased air and water pollution, reduced forest areas, and land level drop.

Facing the above problems, authors/writers as one of the members of society who have concern for the problems around them do not stay silent. Through their works such as novels represented through the actions and thoughts of characters, writers provide ideas, ideas, or solutions to various problems that occur in society. Dee Lestari in the novel Partikel provides various

ideas related to solutions in overcoming various environmental problems represented through the characters of Firaz (Father) and Zarah in the following quote.

Dad found a way to make his own fertilizer and medicines. He empowered the mothers to collect kirinyuh bushes and organic waste, then built composting machines with pedaling power. In a hut, hundreds of kilograms of compost and jerrycans of liquid fertilizer are produced every month. (Lestari, 2015: 13)

From the quote above, it is known that the father does not use chemical fertilizers to make plants and soil fertile, but uses organic fertilizers produced from the remains of waste. Father figures have an awareness to maintain the sustainability of biodiversity. One example of organic fertilizer is compost made from natural materials such as dried leaves, organic waste, and animal waste. Compost can improve soil fertility, improve soil structure, and provide nutrients needed by plants. The use of organic fertilizers can also help improve crop quality and reduce production costs as well as reduce dependence on chemical fertilizers that can damage the environment. Meanwhile, the use of chemical fertilizers for a long time will actually make the soil lose its fertility and damage the balance of the ecosystem. Excessive use of chemical fertilizers can also harm human health because chemical fertilizers contain toxins that can enter food.

Likewise, in terms of eradicating pests, the father figure does not use chemical drugs, but uses various plants and certain animals to repel insects which is one of the pests that often damage plants. This method of eradicating pests naturally is very safe for human health and life because it does not use harmful chemicals and does not pollute the environment. This natural method can help improve the balance of the ecosystem because it does not kill pests en masse, but only controls its population.

For pest control, Dad asked the community to plant as many neem trees as possible. Most of them are planted around the fields, interspersed with poop flowers. Dad said that the plants repel disturbing insects naturally. If needed, he makes extracts from leaf and neem seed water to be sprayed into the field. The rest is used for the use of household antiseptics (Lestari, 2015: 13).

On the other hand, through the characters in her novel, Dee Lestari also highlights the problem of forest destruction, especially the forest in Kalimantan and the problem of the decreasing orangutan population in Indonesia. The female character Zarah (Firaz's daughter) feels concerned when she sees for herself the forests of Kalimantan which are no longer as dense as they were in her mind.

The forests of Kalimantan are not as crowded as I imagined. There were wide holes everywhere. The remaining forest is history. The spread of the roof and the density of human settlements look like cells cancer that spreads. Eating away at the greenery of the forest. From up here, I see the wounded Borneo (Lestari 2015:198-199)

Based on this quote, it can be seen that Zarah's character was so surprised to see that the forests of Kalimantan were not as large as they used to be. Kalimantan's forests, which were once very dense, have now experienced extensive deforestation in some areas. The sentence with wide holes everywhere is a marker of this. Within the Grain horizon, forests provide natural resources such as timber, medicine, and food. In addition, forests also serve as water buffers, prevent soil erosion, and reduce the risk of natural disasters such as floods and landslides. Utanis a habitat for various species of plants and animals. The state of the forest, which is contrary to Zarah's knowledge of the forest, makes Zarah start thinking about the existence of orangutans who are one of the inhabitants of the forest of Kalimantan. Her conscience was aroused to participate in environmental rescue, especially related to forests, Zarah decided to volunteer in Kalimantan to become a foster parent for orangutans as seen in the following excerpt.

That night I also decided, I would not return to Java.

The next day, my decision not to return to Jakarta shocked the whole kelotok. Through a fierce argument that ended with me signing a waiver agreement, I managed to stay.

I apologize to Pak Mansyur and the entire Mermaid crew because they seem to be devastated by the conflict that is happening on their peaceful kelotok. (Lestari 2015:217-218)

Another figure who also pays attention to environmental issues, especially the preservation of orangutans, is the figure of Mrs. Inga. The elderly woman is a researcher from abroad who devotes herself to researching orangutan species.

Inga Dominykas was a native Lithuanian woman of Canadian nationality who founded the camp. There is no human on the planet who understands orangutans like Inga Dominykas.

Twenty years ago, Inga and her husband came here as researchers. Never before has there been an intensive study of orangutans. Orangutans at that time were still mysterious primates, disguised in the shadows of the forest with their reddish-orange hair, without anyone knowing their behavior patterns, how many children they could have in their lifetime, how long they were pregnant, how they interacted socially, interacted with their habitat. Arguably, almost everything known in the world today about orangutans is the result of Ibu Inga's research. (Lestari 2015:214).

Ibu Inga realizes the importance of preserving orangutans from extinction both caused by forest destruction and poaching. Orangutan conservation is essential to the survival of this unique and intelligent species. The preservation of orangutans is not only beneficial for the species itself, but also for the forest ecosystem as a whole. Orangutans play a role in helping to maintain the balance of the forest ecosystem by spreading the seeds of wild plants in the forest. In addition, orangutans can also be used as indicators of fertility and forest degradation.

Inga and her community and volunteers are trying to save orangutans by establishing conservation areas, caring for orangutans injured by poachers or caring for orangutans whose mothers have died. Once they are old enough and adaptable, orangutans are released back into their natural habitat so that they can reproduce naturally so that their populations are maintained and do not go extinct. Mrs. Inga also provided counseling to increase public awareness about the importance of protecting this species.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussion, it can be concluded that the characters, both female and male characters in the novel Partikel has a great deal of attention to environmental and natural issues. This is represented by the characters of Zarah, Ibu Inga, and male figures, fathers, and other figures. The leaders have a high awareness to preserve the environment and nature by, among others: (1) using organic fertilizers derived from food scraps and leaf waste, (2) using animals and plants to repel and eradicate pests, (3) establishing conservation areas in the context of forest and orangutan conservation.

SUGGESTIONS

The next research can make teaching materials related to ecology and environmental conservation based on the results of research from the study of ecofeminism, one of which is from this research. As for the community, the community can imitate the good practices carried out by the characters in the novel.

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