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**Exploration of the Role of Women in the Novel
Baitun Nakhil by Tarek Eltayeb:
A Study of Ecofeminism**

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Abstract

Keywords:
Ecofeminism;
Environmental
Ethics;
Feminism;
Vandana
Shiva.

Women have a close relationship with nature, especially in traditional environments, so patriarchy and environmental damage are related from the perspective of ecofeminism. This research was conducted to understand and criticize feminine principles and characters that can protect the environment and nature. This research is descriptive qualitative. Primary data is obtained from narratives and dialogues contained in the novel, while secondary data comes from various books and journal articles related to the theme of discussion. Data were collected using reading and note-taking techniques and then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman method: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. From this study, it can be concluded that the ecofeminism activities contained in the novel *Baitun Nakhil* are (1) colonialism and patriarchy in the narrative that describes the exploitation and domination of marginalized people and nature, such as the attack of armed groups on villagers and authoritarian family heads; (2) women's role in the sustainability of nature is in the form of environmental education and women's ability to maintain and provide the necessities of life; (3) social and environmental justice that can be assessed by the negative impact of deviant and dominating hierarchies such as the urbanization that occurred in the city of Al-Shams which resulted in the extinction of animal and plant habitats and ecosystems. Thus, the novel *Baitun Nakhil* by Tarek Eltayeb indirectly voices the message of ecofeminism in the form of narratives and dialogues that show that loving, caring, and sensitive attitudes are the initial capital to be able to care for nature and the environment.

Abstrak:

Kata Kunci:
Ekofeminisme;
Etika Lingkungan;
Feminisme;
Vandana Shiva.

Perempuan memiliki hubungan yang dekat dengan alam terutama dalam lingkungan tradisional, sehingga patriarki dan kerusakan lingkungan memiliki keterkaitan dalam sudut pandang ekofeminisme. Penelitian ini dilakukan sebagai upaya memahami serta mengkritisi prinsip feminim dan karakternya yang dapat menjaga lingkungan serta alam. Penelitian ini bersifat kualitatif deskriptif. Data primer diperoleh dari narasi serta dialog yang terdapat pada novel, sedangkan data sekunder berasal dari berbagai buku maupun artikel jurnal yang terkait dengan tema pembahasan. Data dikumpulkan dengan teknik baca dan catat, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan metode Miles dan Huberman; reduksi data; penyajian data; dan penarikan kesimpulan. Dari kajian ini dapat disimpulkan bahwa aktivitas ekofeminisme yang terdapat dalam novel *Baitun Nakhil* adalah (1) kolonialisme dan patriarki dalam

narasi yang menggambarkan eksploitasi serta dominasi terhadap kaum marginal dan alam seperti penyerangan kelompok bersenjata pada penduduk desa maupun kepala keluarga yang otoriter; (2) peran perempuan dalam keberlanjutan alam berupa pendidikan lingkungan serta kemampuan perempuan dalam memelihara dan menyediakan kebutuhan hidup; (3) keadilan sosial dan lingkungan yang dapat dinilai dari dampak negatif hierarki yang menyimpang dan mendominasi seperti urbanisasi yang terjadi di kota Al-Syams yang mengakibatkan punahnya habitat hewan dan tumbuhan serta ekosistem. Dengan demikian, Novel *Baitun Nakhil* karya Tarek Eltayeb secara tidak langsung menyuarakan pesan ekofeminisme dalam bentuk narasi maupun dialog yang menunjukkan bahwa sikap penyanggah, merawat, dan sensitif merupakan modal awal untuk dapat merawat alam beserta lingkungan.

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INTRODUCTION

Today, the environmental crisis is not just an ecological issue. It has become a global social, cultural, and gender issue that shows that environmental destruction is closely related to unequal and unfair social systems. Therefore, ecological studies are important because the beauty and role of nature in sustaining life can only be obtained if humans succeed in preserving nature (Yunus & Efendi, 2024). Ecofeminism combines the ecology and feminism movements because of the historical and emotional closeness between women and nature to critique structures of domination and patriarchy that cause oppression (Gebreyohannes & David, 2022).

Ecofeminism is a branch of the feminist movement that focuses on the issue of women and the environment as two elements bound together in reciprocal aspects and the equation of both as objects of domination and exploitation carried out by a patriarchal society. This issue has become a social and political campaign in voicing women's human rights as a minority group (Boswell, 2023; Gebreyohannes & Ambachew, 2022; Sultan & ElSherbini, 2023). Humanity can live longer on earth by limiting exploitation and balancing structural dominance in society, meaning that fighting for women's rights is the same as fighting for the rights of nature. It is not just a voice for justice as a victim but a movement to preserve the environment and maintain women as the center of production and reproduction of life, both socially and biologically (Shiva & Jhamtani, 1997).

Ecofeminism generally highlights issues related to gender, social movements, environmental movements, and peace movements (Shiva & Mies, 2014). Ecofeminism has a role in shaping how one treats women, people of color, marginalized groups, and the nonhuman natural environment in a relationship (Warren, 1997). The goal of the

ecofeminism movement is to fight for hierarchical equality against the domination and oppression of women and the exploitation of nature by masculinity (Sarkar, 2022). Ecofeminism is a movement that unites social warriors from various forms of oppression in race, class, gender, and nature (Plumwood, 2019). Therefore, the study of ecofeminism is inseparable from multiple criticisms of the socio-political-economic system in building equitable relations.

The legendary Chipko women's action is a tangible form of ecofeminism in India. A woman named Amrita Devi led 300 members of the Bishnoi community to oppose the government's deforestation policy. They are willing to give their lives to protect the sacred Khejri trees by hugging them when heavy equipment starts moving to destroy the trees (Shiva & Jhamtani, 1997). In the context of literary and cultural studies, narratives in literary works can be a medium for representing conflicts between ecology, feminism, and power that not only consider human relations with nature but can offer analysis of gender dimensions and social class, such as the story in Tarek Eltayeb's *Baitun Nakhil*.

The element of ecofeminism in the Novel *Baitun Nakhil* by Tarek Eltayeb is illustrated in Hamzah's behavior as an animal lover; the character is formed from the education of her mother, who cares about the environment where they live, directly adjacent to nature. Rural life, which still holds traditional principles, makes women obliged to maintain and provide the necessities of life for their families, so rural women usually depend more on the needs of their families on natural products. The novel briefly tells the story of Hamzah's life as an immigrant in Vienna, and readers will be taken directly to see Hamzah's life journey that intersects with gender and ecological issues and the surrounding humans who affect the preservation and destruction of nature.

To see in detail the form of the relationship between women and the natural environment in the novel *Baitun Nakhil* by Tarek Eltayeb above, researchers use the theory of ecofeminism from the perspective of Vandana Shiva, who is an environmental activist and anti-globalization writer who will focus on defense and social and political campaigns because of the oppression of masculinity against women and nature (Christou, 2024). The perspective of ecofeminism becomes a crucial process in addressing the political relations of reproduction and the damage caused by injustices that occur in nature (Kitch, 2023).

In the theory of ecofeminism, ecological damage and chaos are created because of the logic that dominates and becomes the point of view of modern society (Suka,

2012). This means that the biological type of gender does not affect whether the person is a victim or perpetrator of environmental destruction because nature is symbolized as the bureaucracy of the feminine principle, so anyone can be said to be a warrior for ecology or femininity because ecological destruction and imbalance are consequences of patriarchal domination in modern society. While women have a special position in maintaining feminine principles, nature is therefore symbolized as a feminine entity similar to women who can produce life and provide food (Shiva & Jhamtani, 1997).

Existing ecofeminism studies have only tended to address four important issues. The first is women's perception of nature (Gebreyohannes & Ambachew, 2022; Gebreyohannes & David, 2022), conservation (Prakash, Engheepi, & Sinha, 2024), and reclamation (McNeil, 2022). The second is history (Sultan & ElSherbini, 2023), conflict (Briones Marrero, 2024), social (Liu, Anser, & Zaman, 2021), pandemic (Afrin & Shammi, 2023), and politics (Christou, 2024; Kitch, 2023). The third is the role of women (Ahmad, 2016; 2021, الشقرفي), women in film (Chang, 2023), modernization (Nirmala & Basid, 2024), and the contemporary issues surrounding them (Liu, 2024). The fourth is religious issues (Štante, 2024; Haq, Imran, Ahmad, & Farooq, 2020; Muhammad, 2022).

From the four trends above, the novelty of this research compared to previous studies on ecofeminism is the positive narratives about feminine principles that can give birth to positive individual characters regardless of gender, which indirectly plays a role in educating the next generation who will always be able to protect the environment and nature. Like Hamzah's character in the novel, he is portrayed as a man with feminine traits but not weak, such as being gentle, loving, affectionate, sensitive, loyal, and empathic towards his social environment, both when interacting with animals, the environment, and fellow humans. These characters born from the feminine principle ultimately make individuals sensitive and able to move to save nature. Differs from the narratives of ecofeminism in previous studies that tend to be built in the portrait of women, where women are always tough and strong in defending nature or their dignity.

This research proves that feminine traits can be reflected in gender neutrality. This means that it is not always attached to just one gender. Sometimes, women have masculine characteristics, and men have feminine traits. Both are equally good if by their portions. Still, in the study, empathy and care as feminine characteristics become important in ecofeminism, which is closely related to the behavior of traditional women, such as women in India who are still actively involved in the agricultural system. Therefore, the author uses the concept of Vandana Shiva's framework as an

interconnection between environment and feminism in the narrative of the novel *Baitun Nakhil* by Tarek Eltayeb.

METHOD

This type of research is descriptive qualitative because the study approach does not require statistical methods in the form of numbers. The findings produced are only based on data research obtained by the author from various platforms, such as books or journal articles related to the theme of the discussion. That way, the author is expected to be able to deeply understand a phenomenon or social event in depth through a qualitative approach (Sulistiyo, 2023). The author needs to be descriptive in analyzing the data and describing the results of the problem formulation. Thus, the author can explore the role of women in the novel *Baitun Nakhil* by Tarek Eltayeb with a study of Vandana Shiva's ecofeminism.

The data source used is narration and dialog in the novel *Baitun Nakhil* by Tarek Eltayeb. This 406 page novel was published in 2006 by Dar Al-Hadharah. In collecting data, the author uses reading and note-taking techniques, in which the author reads the novel as a whole and records data containing feminist principles related to the study of Ecofeminism. The data found and then read using existing theories and preliminary studies to validate its suitability for the research study.

The validated data was analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2014) analysis method, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The available data will be filtered again according to the characteristics and main points of the study. Then, the data is classified according to the existing theoretical elements, such as criticism of patriarchy and colonialism in the form of settlement colonialism and forms of patriarchal actions; the role of women in the sustainability of nature in the form of women's roles in environmental education and women's roles in maintaining and providing needs; social and ecological justice. Then, the author draws results and conclusions from the interpretation of data that refers to the theory of ecofeminism and previous studies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ecofeminism is a social movement born from women's awareness of opposing the destruction of nature, which was initiated by ecological disasters that occur continuously (Shiva & Mies, 2014). Human existence will be completely dependent on the existence of nonhuman life (الشقرى, 2021). Ecofeminism also examines women's relationships with

other people, black people, and social classes on the one hand and explores how one interacts with the nonhuman environment on the other (Warren, 1997). The researcher found three aspects of Ecofeminism in the novel *Baitun Nakhil* by Tarek Eltayeb based on Vandana Shiva's perspective, including colonialism and patriarchy, the role of women in the sustainability of nature, and social and environmental justice.

Colonialism and Patriarchy

Colonialism

[1] لحسن حظه لما عاد في المساء شاهد عن بعد فظائع لا يتصورها أو يتحملها بشر من سلب بهائم وحرقت بيوت وقتل رجال ونساء وأطفال واغتصاب فتيات هرب بأعجوبة لقريب له هنا في الخرطوم

Fortunately, when he returned at night, he saw from a distance atrocities that no human being could imagine or bear, such as the looting of livestock, the burning of houses, the killing of men, women, and children, and the rape of girls. She managed to escape to her relatives' home here in Khartoum miraculously (2014, الطيب, طارق, p. 63).

Data (1) describes a young man named Abel Karkami, who survived the massacre. He escaped because he was looking for firewood and chased a deer into the forest. Fortunately, before returning, Abel was able to see the killings where cattle were forcibly taken away, houses were burned, villagers were killed, and village girls were raped from a distance so that he could escape first.

In data (1), the attack of the armed men is an illustration of superior domination, where the strong (the armed men) oppress the weak (the villagers). The principle of asymmetrical relationships where everything that is not masculine must submit to domination (Suka, 2012). Masculinity's influence on white supremacy, extractive capitalism, and settler colonialism shapes the principles of exploitation. It makes them colonize the resources and people of the conquered territories, such as kidnapping or slavery (Kitch, 2023).

Rape is a form of colonialism because the colonizers did not rape the female population just as an outlet for their desires but as an attempt to show dominance and power over the colonized population or territory. Harassment that takes away women's honor will indirectly attack and break men because traditionally men are obliged to protect women (Sultan & ElSherbini, 2023). Such exploitative actions will disrupt ecosystems and local livelihoods (Efendi, Ahmadi, Indarti, & Kurniawati, 2025). Women and weak communities are always targeted because they are considered weak points and are always used as a means of revenge by the enemy.

Settlement colonialism is an act of domination and exploitation of a territory that harms and undermines the feminine principle. The nature of nurturing and safeguarding will certainly be subdued by the potential to control, dominate, and exploit. It happens

because of the dominance of masculinity that destroys the balance of nature's philosophy. A social hierarchy causes humans to compete to be in the highest position as a measure of success, so many will oppress those weaker than them, as illustrated in data (1).

Women will always be the most vulnerable party as long as invasion, subjugation, or colonialism is a form of power as well as destroying nature with various motives and specific goals by destroying or exploiting the environment. Therefore, domination and oppression must end immediately because the domination of nature is built on the domination of humans; only a life of love and responsibility can liberate the land and people (2021, الشقرفي).

Patriarchy

[2] العقول كلام الله يدخل الدماغ ما يدخل البطن!

رد أبي بتواطؤ وبصوت واطئ:

ما نسمع كلام حريم ونسوان ناقصات عقل ودين !

"knowledge is the word of God, it permeates the mind, not the stomach!" My father responded in a concurring tone and low voice. "we do not listen to the words of women who lack reason and religion!" (2014, الطيب، طارق, p. 31).

Data (2) illustrates the discrimination of a family head against his wife. The discrimination in the data takes the form of dialogue that denigrates a woman's status as a human being who does not have reason or religious knowledge, which then makes Mrs. Hamzah's opinion not worth considering.

[3] ثار أبي يومها قائلاً أن الخفاض مذكور في القرآن وهو وفاية للبنات من الفتنة. ولما أرادت الاستفسار أكثر ونفت أنه في القرآن تركها على عادته في الهزيمة وانصرف. في اليوم التالي كان قد جاءها بالحجة المبينة والفتوى المصيبة من لسان الشيخ الفكي بأن خفاض البنات يُكثر من الخلف أي يجعل المرأة ولوداً ويحميها من الجماع مع الجان. لأن الجان كثيراً ما يطمأ النساء غير المخفوضات. أصيبت كريمة المسكينة بسبب هذه العملية المربعة على طريقتنا السودانية المشينة، باستئصال أكثر الأعضاء حساً ثم رتقها بعملية إغلاق وترك فتحة صغيرة للتبول.

"My father was angry at the time and said that circumcision is mentioned in the Quran and is a protection for girls from slander. When my mother wanted to ask further and denied that it was in the Quran, he left her as usual when losing an argument. The next day, he came with a strong argument and a precise *fatwa* from a scholar that female circumcision increases fertility and protects them from copulation with genie. Because genie often have intercourse with uncircumcised women. Poor Karima, due to this cruel procedure performed in our Sudanese way, had most of her sensitive parts removed and then stitched up leaving only a small hole for urination." (2014, الطيب، طارق, p. 378)

In data (3), Hamzah tells how his father holds the full decision in the family. As the head of the family, Hamzah's father seems authoritarian and does not want to lose in an argument with his wife. Because of his father's decision, Karima must bear the risks after circumcision.

[4] "مجتمع ذكوري سلطوي متناقض مهووس يبحث عن كل صفات تقوية الرجال جنسياً وعن هوانها في النساء. وحين تنكبت وتقمع هذه المتعة عند الزوجة بفرح الزوج لأن الزوجة أصبحت عفيفة بلا رغبة. لكنه سرعان ما يغضب ويثور لأنها بلا رغبة ويبحث عن بديلة."

"This authoritarian and contradictory patriarchal society is obsessed with finding every way to sexually strengthen men and weaken women. And when the wife's pleasure is suppressed and repressed, the husband is happy because his wife becomes chaste without desire. But he is soon angry and resentful that she has no desire and seeks a substitute." (الطيب، طارق, 2014, p. 379)

Data (4) illustrates how the culture in Sudan disadvantages women one-sidedly. Female circumcision is known to be highly controversial because of the risk to the health of women's vital organs. There is no subjective reason or evidence for the benefits of circumcision, but this culture makes girls in Sudan suffer. It is as if they are only prepared to satisfy men's sexual desires on their wedding day, which will strengthen men's position and dominance over women.

In data (2), (3), and (4), it can be seen that Hamzah's father, as the head of the family, has full authority in determining decisions in the household. In data (2), Hamzah's father rejects his wife's argument because he thinks women lack religious knowledge. Meanwhile, in data (3), Karima becomes a victim of her father's stubborn argument. In data (4), it is explained how the patriarchal culture that takes place in Sudan is very detrimental to women. Therefore, ecofeminism is present as a social and political movement (Sultan & ElSherbini, 2023) because the ecofeminism movement encompasses the rejection of the exploitation of nature as well as gender domination that stems from patriarchal activities (Gebreyohannes & David, 2022).

Colonialism and patriarchy are closely related and mutually reinforcing as both are built on hierarchies of power. In times of war or colonialism, small people, especially women, are easy targets for conquest because culturally women are a symbol of national honor, so if the colonizers rape, kill, and seize indigenous women, it can be interpreted as a form of threat and opposition from the enemy (Sultan & ElSherbini, 2023).

Women who are considered lacking in knowledge so that their opinions cannot be considered, become victims of the selfishness of one-sided arguments and the culture of a society that is still strongly bound illustrates how women are marginalized by patriarchal culture while bearing the burden of colonialism as third world women (Sani, 2023). Like many women in developing countries, Sudanese women can generally be categorized as 'third world women' because historically Sudan was affected by colonialism which led to the takeover of social structures in the culture of the people, so the character of domination often brings patriarchal values that are used to dominate local communities, especially women.

Hierarchy becomes patent between the dominating and dominated parties in the postcolonial concept, so identities, mindsets, and social structures will be affected

(Lestari, 2020). Although colonialism did not completely give birth to the patriarchal system that already existed in the culture of society, it could strengthen the hierarchical system of power that harms both nature and women as victims of the preservation of traditions or exploitation for various purposes.

Mobilizing for justice against the oppression of nature is the basis of the ecofeminism movement, which manifests in the defense of race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities, and oppressed species (Gaard, 1993). Not only the authority of men in leading, but female circumcision is also included in feminist issues because it is a form of oppression of women in the name of culture, as described in data (4). Ecofeminism also reinforces this, which looks at cultural dualism as gender, where men and masculinity affiliate with culture, while women and feminism affiliate with nature (Sultan & ElSherbini, 2023).

Women will be silenced and put in an inferior position as Mrs. Hamzah and her younger sister was because of the double oppression caused by patriarchy and colonialism. In postcolonialism theory, women's position in gender dualism also causes women's identity in society domestically to be trapped in patriarchal domination. In contrast, as a colonized society women will be trapped in the domination of colonialism (Wijayanti, Alayya, & Susanto, 2024). As a result of this hierarchical domination, women and nature will eventually be equally marginalized and exploited.

Patriarchal actions stem from overly dominating masculine behavior. The attitude of nature and women in nurturing turns out to be an object of oppression due to the powerlessness of both in resisting the culture and behavior of masculinity that is not to their liking. Has led to rejecting the principles of care, gentleness, and patience in patriarchal societies. However, on the other hand, the principles of femininity can be a weapon to fight the dominance of masculine behavior by uniting nature and women in one feminist hierarchy. It will bring freedom, peace, and happiness.

Women's Role in Nature Sustainability

Women's Role in Environmental Education

[5] لم أكن أدع أي لقمة خبز يابسة أو طرية في عرض الطريق. علمتني أمي أن أقبل ما يقع مني أو من غيري على الأرض وأن أجنبه مداس الأقدام أن أضعه في ركن جدار، فلربما يكون من نصيب طائر أو دابة فما وقع هو حساب مقدر لحق الحيوان والطير – هكذا قالت لي، لكن أين أنا الآن من نصيب الإنسان أولاً من هذه الأكوام من النفائات. إن أشد الألم أن تكون وسط هذا الركام من الطعام
I would not let any dry or soft bread lie on the street. My mother taught me to pick up what fell from me or others on the ground and put it in the corner of the wall, because it could be the sustenance of birds or animals. She told me what falls is part of the rights of animals and birds. But where am I now from human rights first over this pile of garbage? It hurts to be in the middle of this pile of food and feel hungry (2014, الطيب، طارق, p. 24).

Data (5) illustrates that the role of a mother occupies an important position in education. Mrs. Hamzah teaches her son always to put food scraps in the corner of the wall so that animals can easily find the food scraps. Women become figures for their children in a developmental phase to discover how to behave towards the surrounding environment. Good education and understanding for children is the hope that they will always love the environment, both animals and plants.

Data (5) describes a mother who successfully educates her son with a good understanding of the surrounding environment. A sense of care and compassion was instilled in Hamzah from an early age, even with small actions such as putting food scraps in the corner of the house, but it turned out to have great results on Hamzah's life in the future. Hamzah is a male figure who is compassionate towards animals, because generally women have a natural potential to love and care for nature and the surrounding environment (Liu et al., 2021). The bond between humans and nature that lives by nurturing and protecting each other contrasts with the view that humans are detached and dominate nature (Shiva & Jhamtani, 1997; Jannah, & Efendi, 2024).

The habit taught by Mrs. Hamzah explains the awareness that humans coexist with the ecosystem. Therefore, humans must also give up some of their rights to other living things in the environment they live together. Not only can women biologically produce and reproduce life. Through social activities, women can provide for their families (Shiva & Jhamtani, 1997). Mrs. Hamzah has a direct social role in her son's education, which gave birth to the figure of Hamzah as a man who loves animals and is sensitive to the sustainability of the ecosystem in his environment. These activities are indirectly part of the ecofeminism movement, due to women's attention to the environment and the reciprocal factor between the two (Boswell, 2023).

By Shiva's description of women's relationship with nature in India. Women have a crucial place in nature in imagination and everyday life. Nature symbolizes the creation of the feminine principle in a hierarchy. At the next level, nature is nurtured by the feminine nature to be the source of life and sustenance. (Shiva, 1988). In traditional interpretations, humans are also symbolized as animals, plants, stones, and spiritual beings like our ancestors. Means that humans are not superior to other nonhuman beings, because all creatures on Earth are together to construct the world (Štante, 2024).

The role of women in environmental education is very important for preserving nature, because only beings with feminist principles can be role models in maintaining and developing ethics and wisdom values in the world order (Liu, 2024). If the feminist

principle becomes extinct, there will be no bond between humans and nature. That way, slowly, the world's ecosystem will be damaged and become the beginning of the world's destruction.

Women's Role in Maintaining and Providing The Necessities of Life

[6] بدا أنهم كانوا منشغلين في أعمالهم من رعي وزراعة كما يظهر من أحمالهم فهذه امرأة على صدرها طفل يرضع وفي يدها فأس، وهذه أخرى تمشي وعلى رأسها حزمة كبيرة من القش وعلى ظهرها قماط بطفلة تنام في سبات. وهذا يبدو مثل راع من ملابسه وعصاه التي على كتفه كانوا يتكلمون بلغة لم أفهم منها أي كلمة عرفت أنني الآن وقعت أسيرًا في أيدي الأعداء (6)

It looks like they are busy with their work, such as herding and farming, as seen from the loads they carry. There is a woman with a nursing baby on her chest holding an axe, another walking with a large pile of hay on her head, and a toddler asleep on her back. Another person looks like a shepherd from the clothes and the sticks on his shoulders. They spoke in a language I didn't understand a single word of, but I knew now I had fallen captive in the hands of the enemy (الطيب، 2014, طارق, p. 155).

Data (6) illustrates that these women have healthy and strong bodies, this is evidenced by the loads they carry such as piles of straw when herding and farming, they do this for no other reason than to meet the basic needs of the family such as vegetables and fruits as well as meat and milk from the fields and livestock they graze. However, the heavy field work did not prevent women from caring for their children.

[7] كريمة المسكينة عانت لمدة عام على الأقل من جراء هذه المنبحة. أصيبت بنزيف حاد كادت تموت فيه ثم وصفت لها كل وصفات وقف النزيف. بالبن وبزيت الزيتون وزيت الخروع وعرق البلح ولم تفلح هذه المحاولات ثم تعهدتها أمي بمنقوع الشيح والصبار البري وبعض الأعشاب البرية التي كانت توجد في منطقتنا حتى برئت لكنها أصيبت في هذه الأثناء بالحمى وأصبحت لا تنام ليلاً ولا نهاراً.

Poor Karima suffered for at least a year from this massacre. She had severe bleeding that nearly killed her, and was given various concoctions to stop the bleeding, such as milk, olive oil, castor oil, and date juice, but all attempts failed. Then my mother treated her with a concoction of sage, wild aloe vera, and some wild herbs that were in our area until she recovered, but during that time she developed a fever and could not sleep day or night (2014, الطيب، طارق, p. 378)

Data (7) illustrates how the negative and cruel impact of circumcision on girls, Karimah, who has been circumcised, must endure pain and experience heavy bleeding for one year until she almost died, and the role of a mother who patiently and painstakingly treats her daughter using herbal ingredients. This fact proves there is a closeness and connectivity between women and nature, in the form of their similar nature in terms of maintenance.

Data (6) and (7) illustrate the role of mothers as women who can work hard and care for their children very well. Generally, women who live in rural areas will depend on nature for their needs. Nature is represented as the embodiment of the feminine principle (الشقرى, 2021). On the other hand, women are raised with feminine behavior so that in the future, women can reproduce life and provide food (Shiva & Jhamtani, 1997). Shiva assumes that providing survival is the definition of productivity, so this would starkly contrast with the dominant perspective that defines productivity as the process of accumulating capital (Shiva & Jhamtani, 1997).

When the natural environment is damaged and polluted, women are the first to suffer, as it affects their productivity in providing food and other necessities for their families. The villagers' livelihood is generally sufficiently fulfilled by the harvest from the fields and livestock without the need to overexploit natural resources. In India, ecofeminism has an important role; Indian women even know every tree to the smallest part of their nature, whereas men are seen as ignorant of their surroundings (Bhat & Ganaie, 2021).

Ecofeminists argue that although humans and nature have similar traits that are intertwined, women are still superior to men, because both (women and nature) need each other (Ersöz, 2022). The relationship can be referred to as the "concept of motherhood" because both women and nature have the role of mothers who care for and provide for their needs (Mickey & Vakoch, 2018). The nurturing and cooperative nature and bond between the natural environment and women are shown in women's dependence on nature (Plumwood, 2019), as depicted in the novel *Baitun Nakhil*.

This research illustrates how the role of women in maintaining and providing needs indirectly occupies a crucial position in the ecosystem. The feminine principle as an indicator of care and outpouring of affection is an image of a mother. Where the symbolization of the word "motherhood" is also pinned to nature that always produces life like a woman who reproduces biologically and cares for her children with great care (Liu, 2024; 2021, الشقرفي). Therefore, nature and women are located in a hierarchy of femininity; if one of them is damaged or disappears, it will cause an imbalance in the feminist principle.

Social and Environmental Justice

Social Justice

[8] ربما ستستغرب. فإنه أمر بديهي لدينا أن تحكم المرأة أيضاً. لقد حكمت خلال السنوات العشر الماضية امرأتان. ومع ذلك يا بني فنحن أيضاً بشر ولا يخلو البشر من شرّ فمكاننا هذا ليس بجنة. هنا أيضاً الضغائن والمناحرات والخلافات والحروب الخفيفة على الكلا والمراعي. لكنها في حدود ضيقة يحسمها المجلس

When he saw my surprise, he continued his conversation: "You might be surprised. For us, it is natural that a woman also rules. In the past ten years, two women have ruled. Nonetheless, my son, we are also human and are not free from evil. This place of ours is no paradise; here, too, there are grudges, disputes, and petty wars over pastures and grazing grounds. But the rules here are set by the council" (2014, الطيب، طارق, p. 160)

Data (8) illustrates that women in Sudan's rural tribes also deserve the same rights and opportunities as men regarding leadership. They think a leader's role and ability are the most important thing. The election process is also done democratically, where the residents will stand in a line in front of the house of the person they feel is suitable to

lead. The house with the longest line will be crowned. In the last ten years, the villagers have elected two women leaders.

Environmental Justice

[9] هذا المكان القديم اليوم شيء. عمر المكان بنوع آخر من العمار وازدحمت مدينة الشمس واختفت البيوت القديمة الرحبة وضاع الخضار في الصفار وتاه الصفار في الغبار والأسمنت وغارت الآبار بلا رجعة. اختفت الهداهد والبلابل وأنواع الكناري الأصفر والأحمر واليمام الأبيض وأنواع لا تعد ولا تحصى من الطيور التي كانت أعشاشها في الأشجار وماؤها قريباً وخيرها عامراً
This place that once meant so much has changed. The age of this place has been replaced with a new type of building, and Al-Syams City has become congested. The old spacious houses have disappeared, the vegetables have been lost amidst the debris, and yellow amidst the dust and cement. Wells have been abandoned with no hope of return. Songbirds, nightingales, and various types of yellow, red, and white doves have disappeared. Many more species of birds have nests in trees close to water. (الطيب, 2014, p. 248).

Data (9) describes how the impact of urbanization and injustice occurs in the ecosystem in the city of Al-Syams. Plants and animals disappeared and were displaced from their habitats, wells vanished due to the actions of humans who continued to expand development, and bird nests in the trees were also displaced. Traditional spacious houses that hold tightly to environmental ethics have been replaced by various new buildings that fill the city of Al-Syams. Like a dune, the green valley has turned into a dusty yellow.

Data (8) illustrates the social justice women feel in the rural tribes of Sudan, where men and women have equal ability to lead the group. If the population finds someone worthy of being a leader, they will democratically elect them regardless of gender. Meanwhile, data (9) shows how natural environmental injustice occurs in Al-Syams. Deviant development is a form of human value that discards feminine roles and principles (Shiva & Jhamtani, 1997).

Shiva explained that humans are only a part of nature, not the masters of nature. Ethical, ecological, and economic deviations stem from the intellectual power of lifestyle over biological resources, where human activity and its environmental footprint can lead to climate change and the extinction of various animal species (Ersöz, 2022). This study's results align of this study are in line with the concept of Dao De Jing, which emphasizes that coexistence with nature is very important. Quoting chapter 25, Laozi wrote, "Man follows the laws of Earth, Earth follows the laws of Heaven, Heaven follows the laws of Dao, and Dao follows the laws of Nature." The text directly illustrates how the relationship of all elements requires adjustments between human activities and the rhythms of the Earth and cosmos. All living things are interconnected, so anyone who lives on Earth must respect and honor the existing entities (Liu, 2024).

While in research (Boswell, 2023) describes how managing coastal sites of tourism companies and luxury hotels still strongly holds the principle of environmental conservation. Evidenced by the ongoing local cultural heritage activities, such as underground wine tasting, eating and drinking under trees, and doing Ashtanga yoga in nature. The manager of Hotel Lux Grand Gaube says they are working with marine biologists to protect and preserve the biodiversity of the Lagoon Sea.

Traditional communities use cultural narratives to form harmonious relationships between humans and nature, such as moon-based fishing for Sama-Bajo, ritualistic water conservation of Sasak communities, and sacred management of Madurese mangrove forests. Traditional communities tend to express environmental management through rituals and folk tales to safeguard and preserve the ecosystem to keep it in balance (Efendi, et al., 2025).

Social and environmental justice between humans and nonhumans will never be achieved if humans do not pay attention to ethics and protect the rights of others when living together with nature. If humans control and dominate nature, then nature will automatically withdraw the energy and power that generates the source of life for Earth's creatures. The patriarchal indifference backfires on them and humanity as a whole because humans are part of nature. When all sources and energy from nature are gone, plants and animals will slowly become extinct, as well as humans.

CONCLUSIONS

There are several elements of ecology and feminism in the novel "Baitun Nakhil" by Tarek Eltayeb that can be grouped by the author with the concept of ecofeminism theory from Vandana Shiva's perspective. Among them are (1) colonialism and patriarchy in the narrative that describes the exploitation and domination of marginalized people and nature such as the attack of armed groups on villagers and family heads who lead authoritatively; (2) Women's role in the sustainability of nature in the form of environmental education and women's ability to maintain and provide the necessities of life; (3) social and environmental justice which can be assessed from the negative impact of deviant and dominating hierarchies such as urbanization that occurred in the city of Al-Syams which resulted in the extinction of animal and plant habitats and ecosystems, so that the city of Al-Syams which was previously so green because of the fertility of the land turned into dusty yellow like a desert.

The value of Ecofeminism found by the author in the novel *Baitun Nakhil* by Tarek Eltayeb illustrates that the existence of women and feminine principles occupies a

crucial position in the sustainability of life on earth. The similarity of the nature of women and nature in maintaining and producing plays an important role in balancing and protecting the survival of ecosystems from the attack of masculinity that is inclined towards domination, exploitation, and greed, which mostly always causes irregularities and damage to nature and harms marginalized people. Ecological boundaries and ethics must always be considered by placing humans as part of nature, not the ruler of nature, by applying feminine principles in human life alongside nature.

The data found in this research object is quite minimal, so the author is limited in expanding the results of the analysis and interpretation. Thus, some elements of Vandana Shiva's ecofeminism perspective in the novel *Baitun Nakhil* by Tarek Eltayeb are considered subjective. Therefore, future researchers are expected to find and use objects with more relevant themes so that women's struggle for nature will be more exposed and the results of further research can contribute to voicing the rights and importance of the role of women and nature in the balance of life on Earth.

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