

## Mountains and women's struggle in Southeast Asian short stories: a case study of ecofeminism

*Gunung dan perjuangan perempuan dalam cerita pendek Asia Tenggara: studi kasus ekofeminisme*

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### Abstract

This study aims to compare the relationship between mountains and women in two Southeast Asian short stories, namely A.A. Navis's *Angin Dari Gunung* and Leeyee Lim's *The Mountain of Longing* originated from Malaysia and Indonesia. Although mountains are mostly viewed as a place where nature thrives and a spiritual place in Southeast Asia, they also can be viewed as a place of belonging and provider, especially for women in dealing with others. Seeing this, ecofeminism is chosen and used as the lens to examine the nature-women relationship that exists in the stories. The qualitative method is added to provide the primary and secondary sources that can help analyze the relationship between the mountains and women. The result of the analysis shows a close relationship between mountains and women. It is presented in a narrative of the chaotic life the female characters deal with, with mountains as the relief provider, comfort, and new life to them. This is considered the way mountains nurture women in their way.

### Abstrak

Studi ini bertujuan untuk membandingkan hubungan antara gunung dan perjuangan perempuan dalam dua cerita pendek Asia Tenggara, yaitu *Angin Dari Gunung* karya A.A. Navis dan *The Mountain of Longing* karya Leeyee Lim yang berasal dari Malaysia dan Indonesia. Meskipun gunung sebagian besar dilihat sebagai tempat di mana alam berkembang dan tempat spiritual di Asia Tenggara, itu juga dapat dilihat sebagai tempat kepemilikan dan penyedia, terutama bagi perempuan dan cara mereka menangani orang lain. Melihat hal ini, ekofeminisme akan dipilih dan digunakan sebagai lensa untuk menguji hubungan alam-perempuan yang ada dalam cerita-cerita tersebut. Bersama dengan itu, metode kualitatif juga ditambahkan untuk menyediakan sumber utama dan sekunder yang dapat membantu di dalam menganalisis hubungan antara gunung dan wanita. Hasil analisis menunjukkan hubungan erat antara gunung dan perempuan yang disajikan dalam narasi kehidupan kacau yang dihadapi karakter perempuan, gunung sebagai pemberi kelelahan, kenyamanan, dan kehidupan baru bagi mereka. Ini dilihat sebagai cara gunung memberi makan perempuan dengan cara mereka sendiri.

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## A. Introduction

Mountains are earth parts that naturally rise and reach a certain height, commonly larger than hills. In addition, according to Britannica, the geomorphic characteristics of some mountains vary depending on the geographical landscapes (Molnar, 2024). In Asia, especially Southeast Asia, mountains are primarily volcanic, either active, dormant or completely inactive. For instance, in 8 countries, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Philippines, Laos, and Myanmar, there are 331 volcanoes; Indonesia possesses the most active volcanoes of 147 mountains. The lowest is Malaysia, which has only one mountain. The other 122 mountains are either dead or remain inactive for a long time (*Volcanoes in Asia*, 2024; *Volcanoes in Indonesia*, 2015; *Volcanoes of Malaysia*, 2024). Besides being home to animals and plants, mountains also have a relationship with humans, which is beneficial or disadvantageous.

Regarding human benefits, mountains offer a protector and a place to worship. According to Allerton (2009), in Southeast Asia, there is a common understanding that the world inhabited by humans intersects with the spirit, which is called animism. Through this practice, humans and nature benefit each other as nature provides the natural resources and protects them while humans help to conserve the provider. One of the places the spirit resides is a mountain. For example, in Karo, highland Sumatra, people associate *keramat*, or a benevolent spirit, with Mount Sibayak, which protects them from unfortunate things like accidents while hiking if you give them an offering. While in the Philippines, Mountain Apo. It is considered a place where the spirits abode, and because of that, it is sacred (Allerton, 2009). Therefore, mountains act not only as natural objects but also as the protectors of humans and religious objects.

Besides the benefits, the relationship between humans and mountains can be destructive. They perform shifting cultivation and wood logging. Shifting cultivation is an act of the agriculture system of slashing and burning the forest for agricultural purposes. According to Rasul, shifting cultivation is the act in Southeast Asia, like Thailand and Laos, which respectively have lost 5 and 17 million ha of mountains' forests, causing the increased rate of declining soil fertility, increasing weed pressure, soil erosion, and flooding (Rasul & Thapa, 2003). Wood logging also causes the same problem as the biodiversity hotspots located in the mountains are home to 85% of the animal species, yet the rapid loss of the mountain forests has become twice as bad over two decades, causing the possibility of extinction (He et al., 2023; Kimbrough, 2023). Therefore, although humans have already received benefits from the mountains, instead of repaying them in the same way, humans exploit them.

This act of benefitting only a particular party happens similarly to women. For example, in Indonesia, according to Sutinah and Kinuthia, there are 860 cases of human trafficking involving women and children ranging from 2011 to 2015. They are exploited and manipulated to do numerous dirty jobs, such as forced employment of domestic and abroad sex workers, transnational arranged marriages, beggars, and domestic workers or helpers with less payment to support themselves and abundant abuses from the work. An analysis towards *Nona Kedi yang Tak Pernah Melihat Keajaiban* has confirmed precisely this symbolization of women as capital (Fatkhurridho & Rusdiarti, 2022). Similarly, in Malaysia, according to Adib, Hussin, and Ahmad, women are being exploited by their spouses, controlling and abusing them physically and mentally within their relationship. With that, the women are stuck with two decisions: to stay in the house despite being abused or leave the house. Therefore, women are similar to mountains in terms of engaging in relationships, as the others exploit both.

These ideas of looking at nature as a healer and the exploitation from patriarchy and society towards nature and women differ from what Tassel describes in her paper. In Tassel's analysis, she aims to redefine pastoralism in the context of contemporary agrarianism, acknowledging the increasing industrialization and economic growth of the farming industry. Rather than nostalgically reverting to the old American agrarian myth of a romanticized view of agrarian life, Tassel argues that such an approach would be problematic. Instead, she advocates for a hybrid model that integrates the traditional values of agrarian myth and modern methods presented by the female farmers in the two stories. Therefore, through examining Kingsolver's and Frazier's works, Tassel proposes a new definition of agrarianism that balances respect for historical agrarian values with the realities of present farming. This revised model emphasizes relevance, self-sufficiency and a meaningful attachment toward agricultural life while avoiding the outdated agrarian ideal (Van Tassel, 2008).

Tassels' position of balance reverberates in an article by Prakoso et al. (2024) on the idea of *keselarasan*. By exploring Ahmad Tohari's *Di Kaki Bukit Cibalak*, they concluded that *keselarasan* means harmony. In the analysis of Mulyani's presence and Pambudi's courage, Tanggir Village can harmonize with groups of people who were once marginalized. This harmonization should be set as a guidepost for solving problems of domination against women and nature.

By looking at this similarity between women and mountains and previous studies that only focused on redefining the old term, this paper will analyze the stories using an ecofeminism lens that focuses on examining the relationship, the dominance over women and nature, and resistance towards it (Dewi, 2020) as well as providing solution towards the problem. In other words, ecofeminism is a new perspective in dealing with the problems in nature and women and finding a solution for every side.

To analyze using ecofeminism, it is essential to have the stories' bases first. The first story is *Angin dari Gunung* by Indonesian author A. A. Navis. It is a story of a conversation between a man and a woman named Nun, who meet again five years after the war. From the conversation, it can be seen that both of them were lovers in the past. However, due to war, their relationship becomes intricate. Both of them get separated. The man begins his new life with another woman and has a child. The Nun, who is beautiful and loved by others, faces a harsh life as the wound from the war causes her face to change and her body to a disabled one. Despite that, Nun finds her comfort in the mountain by supporting her in communicating her feelings. At the end of the story, Nun leaves the man and continues her life on the mountain (Navis, 2005).

The second story is *The Mountain of Longing* by Leeyee Lim, a Malaysian author. This story combines the present time and a flashback of the narrator as she reminisces about her life, her family, her husband and his family, and her divorce. It starts with her remembering her grandpa and his story in the mountains. Then, the story moves to her returning to her hometown after facing a divorce from her husband, Daniel. In her mother's house, the narrator is having difficulty communicating with her mother about her struggles, especially with the divorce, which is uncommon and is often considered a 'disgrace' in Asian culture. Frustrated, the narrator then goes to a nearby mountain, Rindu Mountain, to ease her mind. When she arrives at the mountain, she feels relief as she can lay out the problem and memory she keeps inside her head. At the end of the story, she manages to clear her mind (Lim, 2020).

The reasoning behind these two stories being picked was the study conducted by Intentionalia in 2020, elaborating on the patriarchy that happened in both Indonesia and Malaysia, especially in political participation and active citizenship. Although the study is in terms of political participation and active citizenship, the idea of patriarchy is still deeply ingrained and can be imagined to happen in ordinary folks. For instance, in Malaysia, political women activists are obligated to remain silent and cannot advocate for women's agenda other than celebrating International Women's Day. In other words, Malaysian women, in general, are often shunned and unable to make decisions without their husband's permission. Similarly, in Indonesia, women's societal roles are limited to only mothers, wives, or people who manage the house (Intentionalia, 2020).

Another reason relates to how both stories represent Indonesia and Malaysia's geographical landscapes. Both stories offer rich portrayals of environments, which can be analyzed to understand how these landscapes reflect the journey of the female characters. This also adds depth to the ecofeminist analysis by linking nature's actions and women's resolutions.

By combining these elements, the exploration of patriarchy from Intentionalia's study (2020) and the depiction of geographical landscapes in the stories, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how ecofeminism can reflect the relationship between women and nature, especially in Malaysia and Indonesia context. Other than that, it also uncovers the women's resolution after they go to the mountain.

## B. Method

This paper uses two approaches. The first one is ecofeminism as the theoretical framework to seek instances of connection between women and nature in a structured manner. Ecofeminism was first coined in 1974 by French thinker Françoise d'Eaubonne in the book *Feminism or Death*, highlighting the dualities within the gender and environment (Öztürk, 2020). Since then, ecofeminism has gradually developed as a movement advocating for women, the environment, and other marginalized groups. It highlights the source of the dualities and relationship between women and nature, which comes from the male-centered hierarchy, causing them to become inferior and dependent. For example, according to Sultana, India has a traditional philosophy that sees nature as the living process or, in other words, where life arises, the same as women's ability to conceive life. However, there are instances where, instead of seeing them as the wonders of life, this ability to conceive and nurture life is reduced as the only characteristic of the female human and nature (Sultana, 2021). Further down in the findings and discussion section, we will use the word "relationship" to indicate essential points in the connection between mountains and women. This connection is synonymous with the common denominator concept mentioned by Haun Saussy. The common denominator, or *tertium comparationis*, makes two things similar (Saussy, 2011). This common denominator or similarity relationship will be further elaborated in the discussion to fit the narrative or goal, which aims to protect nature and

women. This theory focuses on three principles. The first one examines the relationship between women and nature. After examining the relationship between women and nature, the second principle points out dominance over women and nature. Lastly, it examines the source of dominance from patriarchal discourse (Dewi, 2020). Therefore, using ecofeminism, this paper will highlight the narrative that favors patriarchal and other discourses, advocating for ecology and gender justice and challenging domination over women and the environment as interconnected issues.

The second approach is the qualitative method. Aspers and Hugo describe the qualitative method as centered on interpreting data by collecting numerous data, focusing on the objective and subjective meaning (Aspers et al., n.d.). In addition, Highnett & McDermott agree with this definition as they also state that the qualitative method posits itself as a perspective that requires primary and secondary data to understand an experience or event (Highnett & McDermott, 2015). By the definition being set, the qualitative method complements the paper by expanding the available data from each principle. The data gathered from the three principles of ecofeminism will be further elaborated through the context from other parts of the story, considered upon other perspectives, and highlighted its essential parts in order to reveal a more profound philosophy of ecofeminism. This is done with the hopes of expanding the ecofeminism discourse.

## C. Results and Discussion

### 1. The Relationship of Women and Mountains

The relationship between the women within the two stories and the mountains is interconnected. In *Angin dari Gunung* by A. A Navis, the relationship between the woman and the mountain, is highlighted at the beginning of the text when the main character, Nun, is meeting with her past lover on a mountain or a place near the mountain, as follows,

*“Sejauh mataku memandang, sejauh aku berpikir, tak sebuah jua pun mengada. Tapi angin dari gunung itu berembus juga...Dan dia berkata lagi. Lebih lemah kini, “Kau punya istri sekarang, anak juga. Kau bahagia tentu” (Navis, 2005).*

From the above quote, it is clear that Nun is having difficulty receiving the news from her past lover. However, after some time, grieving her life, Nun decided to meet with him again to finish what was once a love relationship that she built with the man, knowing that she was left with no hope after the news of her ex-life and family. Seemingly wanting to help Nun communicate her feelings, the mountain sends a wind to encourage her, reminding her that her resolution has ended her past. The fact is that from the beginning, Nun has decided to take care of the little girl and grandmother.

After that, the main character, Nun, continues to talk about her feelings and their memories, starting from their childhood to how beautiful, kind, and desirable she was by everyone and the man when she still had her body. However, all of them were changed once she was disabled. Still, the mountain kept sending wind as support when she spilt her thoughts approximately six times, including her last decision. The involvement of the mountain in supporting Nun's last decision can be seen as follows,

*“Tapi dia tidak menoleh lagi. Hilang di balik belukar itu. Dan belukar itu bertambah ria menari ditiup angin dari gunung...angin itu yang...meniup Nun” (Navis, 2005).*

This relationship with the mountain is similar to the character, the woman, and her interactions with the mountain in Leeyee Lim's story *The Mountain of Longing*.

In the story, the woman is distressed due to her divorce. Everything around her is affected, starting from her marriage with Daniel, her life in Sydney, her family in Kuala Lumpur, and, ultimately, her status as a divorced woman. Amid her problems, the woman, Anna, decided to run to the mountain that had existed since her grandmother's time. Her journey to the mountain can be seen as follows,



As I push deeper into the jungle and higher up the mountain, I imagine the exhilaration he must have felt [...] bringing down some creature as beautiful as it was influential as it was lost. The day I told my mother that Daniel and I were filing for divorce, she stayed quiet on the phone for a long time. "Why?" she finally asked" (Lim, 2020).

The quote above shows Anna's flashbacks of her memories during her hiking on the mountain. At first, the mountain reminds her of her late grandfather's favorite activity: exploring the rainforest. However, it ended with the death of a deer, which was later interpreted by Anna as seemingly beautiful, yet still ended up losing its life. She then moves to the next flashback of the day, when she tells her mother about her divorce from Daniel. From these two flashbacks, one is used as a symbolic representation of the other, proven by the sequence order and the words used in the two flashbacks. The sequence is described in order as the first and second flashbacks. Meanwhile, in terms of words, Anna describes the dead deer as the losing side, symbolically representing her divorce. Looking at Anna's flashbacks, the relationship between Anna and the mountain can be identified as the mountain becoming the tool for Anna to reevaluate her problem.

## 2. The Dominance over Women and Mountains

The two stories' dominance over women and mountains is in the war, societal expectations, littering, and men's perspective of women. Regarding *Angin dari Gunung*, Nun is affected by the men's perspective of women. This is written as follows,

*"Tiba-tiba kuingat pada pusat rehabilitasi di Solo... 'Bagaimana? Setuju? Kalau kau setuju jangan kaupikir apa-apa. Aku yang uruskan semua.' [...] 'Kalau perlu ... Ah, tidak, Aku sendiri yang akan mengantarkan kau. Barangkali tidak lama kau di sana, kau sudah bisa pulang lagi. Dan selanjutnya kau sudah bisa berbuat sesuatu lagi, seperti dulu'" (Navis, 2005).*

If we look at the passage above, it might seem that the male character cares about Nun's disability. Some may add that it is something genuine coming from him to help her due to the guilt of him leaving her. While that may be true to some extent, it is necessary to look at Nun's effort in successfully managing herself to survive during and after the war and several years before meeting the man again. The thoughts of disrespecting her efforts cannot be avoided by giving her a solution, as if she is incapable of doing something.

Another one is how much the woman is valued if she is not giving benefits according to the man's perspective. This can be seen from the first encounter of the Nun and the man, as follows,

*"... Seperti tadi saja. Kalau bukan aku yang menyapamu, kau takkan tahu siapa aku, bukan? Sedang mata pertamamu melihat aku tadi, kau seolah melihat pengemis yang dijijiki. Alangkah cepatnya segalanya berubah. Dan lebih cepat lagi seorang melupakan seseorang lainnya, meski pernah orang itu dicintainya" (Navis, 2005).*

Judging by the quote above, the man, instead of feeling restless about not finding Nun for four years, finds himself a new placement of Nun by marrying someone else. Not only that, he forgets Nun's face, proven by how he does not recognize her and thinks she is a filthy beggar, worsened by her decapitated hand. The idea of him quickly forgetting and replacing Nun shows that he values Nun for her beauty. Not only that, it also paints him with the idea that a man would see a woman in terms of whether it is beneficial for him to use. If it brings benefits, he will keep them, and the opposite if not. This is very patriarchal, as women are seen only as tools for men to use and exploit it like a thing.

As for nature, not necessarily the mountains, it is possible that nature in the short story is affected by the existence of war. This is proven by Nun her self's condition, and several instances of the word 'war' are mentioned several times. Not only that, despite the effect on nature not explicitly mentioned in the story, the effect can be seen from the after-war survey; for example, according to McCarthy, the bombing and method of warfare have a significant effect of up to 90% of damage to biodiversity (McCarthy, 2022), meaning that the war destroys the environment is most likely happen.

In *The Mountain of Longing*, unlike Nun, Anna receives dominance from societal expectations and the need to know that without being told in the first place, specifically from her parent. This can be seen from Ma's words, as follows,

“You think Ma don’t know why you married that Daniel? So young, you got married, only twenty-one...”

...

“Marry Daniel already then no need to come home la right? You wanted that life so badly, didn’t you? All the dinner-dinner parties with all those ang moh friends of yours, standing around your big house, drinking wine like so elegant like that. You wanted to be that woman, isn’t it? Wear high heels everyday, expensive perfume, talk good English...” (Lim, 2020).

The quote above shows what Anna is expected to do at her age. One should not marry at such a young age. Two, it is a must to visit your parents after your marriage. The third is that being too attracted to a lifestyle and culture different from your previous culture and lifestyle is wrong. Moreover, the fourth one is to know these societal expectations without being told to. However, since she is not following these societal expectations, probably because she does not know and ends up in divorce, she is being ranted by her mother and slightly degraded for her choices in life. This is the act of patriarchy being supported by the society in which the mother unconsciously supported the idea that her daughter should live a 'certain' way 'to be considered a good daughter.

The mountain, specifically the rainforest, on the other hand, is facing dominance from an obvious threat, as mentioned below,

Every few paces I see a cigarette butt or two on the ground and think about bushfire warnings in Australia.

...

[...] just as the last of the cool morning fades away, I reach the peak, a plateau dotted with grey rocks and littered with cigarette butts (Lim, 2020).

The passage above shows that during the journey to the mountain, Anna encounters this dominance in the form of cigarette butts in the ground. Not only that, it is also mentioned later that another litter of cigarette butts appeared at the peak of the mountain. These cigarette butts can have many effects on the mountains; for example, according to Dey and Bauri, the contained toxic within cigarette waste can reduce the fertility of the soil, making plants to have difficult in producing in maximum potential (Dey & Bauri, 2022). Another survey from the WFCA (Western Fire Chiefs Association) mentioned that in 2017, a single cigarette butt became the culprit of a wildfire that destroyed 6 hectares of land and 6 billion USD in property damage (WFCA, 2022). These mean that by littering cigarette butts, the mountain is susceptible to being destroyed.

### 3. The Resistance toward the Dominance Forces

After the relationship and dominance toward the women and mountains have been explored, the next one is the resistance against the dominant forces. To resist this, the women and mountains within the story collaborate to solve the problem.

In *Angin dari Gunung*, the resistance is located in how Nun keeps on confronting the man about the pain she has been dealing with after they got separated, presumably by the war, inflicting emotional guilt on the man. So, what Nun is doing through her confrontation with the man she emphasizes her disability and the fact that her youth is seemingly over, as follows,

“Jari-jariku itu sudah tidak ada lagi kini. Kedua tanganku ini, kau lihat? Buntung karena perang. Dan aku tidak lagi dapat merasa bahagia seperti dulu...Masa mudaku habis sudah ditelan kebuntungan ini” (Navis, 2005).

This infliction of emotional guilt, however, is not for the sake of her wanting to get back with the man, but instead for the intention of she is finally OK with her condition right now, yet to make her 'relief' a little bit, the man needs to suffer a little bit and the mountain that keeps on supporting her. She then finalizes her resistance of wanting to live independently without the man's involvement, yet still wanting him to suffer can be seen as follows,

*"Lalu dia melangkah. Tapi sebelum dia hilang di balik belukar yang bergoyang ria ditiup angin dari gunung itu, kukatakan kepadanya, "Besok aku datang lagi ke sini, Nun." Tapi dia tidak menoleh lagi"* (Navis, 2005).

Meanwhile, in *The Mountain of Belonging*, the resistance is located in how Anna is persistent in climbing to reach the mountain's peak. During her journey, she carefully walked as the trees could fall anytime and the steep road and conserved her energy as the journey took 2 hours to complete. Her journey is mentioned below,

The trail up to the peak of Gunung Rindu lies just off the main road, a narrow path [...] The ground is pebbly, and there is an occasionally fallen tree trunk to climb over, but otherwise, the path is clear.

...

I make my ascent up the mountain for the next two hours, and then [...] I reach the peak [...] and littered with cigarette butts (Lim, 2020).

Her persistence in climbing the mountain allows her to confront her inner and outer problems. Here, similar to *Angin dari Gunung*, the mountain becomes her support system way of providing her with a place to think about her grandfather's past in exploring the rainforest, the danger of the littering of cigarette butts, her past events of her discussing her decision to divorce with Daniel and her mother. You can see this in the subchapter of the relationship between Anna and the mountain. After that, her final resistance can be seen after she arrives at the mountain, as follows,

I sit until the heat grows unbearable and until I see the pinprick figure of my mother come out on to the porch for her morning calisthenics. I think of all my possessions in storage lockers in Sydney and of the warmth that awaits me here. Before I leave, I pull the yellow fu from my pocket and tuck it underneath the rock I've been sitting on. Then I turn my attention away from the town and make my way back down the mountain towards my grandmother's house (Lim, 2020).

It is known from the quote above that Anna has arrived at the mountain's peak. There, she can see her mother, think of her belongings in Sydney and the vibe she received in Malaysia, and leave a yellow fur. Like the relationship between Anna and the mountain, what is in her mind and actions can be seen as symbolic representations. Firstly, her looking at her mother can be symbolized as Anna looking at her current condition as a divorced woman who has lost a partner and the place she used to live, needing to switch back to her family. Then she compares it by illustrating her life when she used to have Sydney as her belongings in Sydney and the life with her grandmother and mother as the waiting warmth. Her final resistance then is located in her decision to use yellow fu or an amulet, the one that is supposedly believed to keep her safe. Instead of keeping it, Anna decided to leave it on the mountain, which is a sign that she is already OK with her decision to divorce; therefore, it is no longer needed.

#### 4. The Solution for Women, Nature, and Dominance Forces

As mentioned in the subchapters, the three ecofeminism foundations offer insights into how women and nature, specifically the mountains in A. A. Navis's *Angin dari Gunung* and Leeyee Lim's *The Mountain of Longing*, are interconnected in terms of having a relationship, facing against the dominance forces, and resisting toward these forces. After noticing this, this essay proposes solutions to the challenges faced by these women based on the stories.

The first one is empowerment through self-reflection on nature. One of the solutions to overcoming dominance and societal pressures is fostering self-reflection and connection with nature. In *Angin dari Gunung*, Nun's interactions with the mountain provide her with emotional support. The wind from the mountain is a metaphor for the strength she needs to confront her past and embrace her present. In the real world, this may be achieved through informal nature-based education aimed at respect toward nature (Kriswanto & Rohman, 2022).

Similarly, Anna's journey in *The Mountain of Longing* demonstrates how nature can serve as a space for healing. By hiking up the mountain, Anna reflects on her past and current struggles, eventually finding the courage to move forward. Other than the stories, this solution is strengthened by the studies conducted by Bratman and other scholars. According to them, by adding natural sources, such as trees, each additional tree per kilometer can be associated with 1.38 fewer antidepressant prescriptions (95% confidence interval, 0.03 to 2.72) per 1000 population per year (Bratman et al., 2019), meaning that by engaging more with nature, it can help them gain perspective, reduce stress, and find inner strength. This is strengthened by van den Berg's studies, which mentioned that it is solid that within green space, there are some positive environmental impacts on people's mental health and well-being (van den Berg et al., 2015).

The second one advocates the theory that can reduce men's expectations and biases. In both stories, the protagonists face societal pressures and the inability to be independent, according to men's perspective. Nun is undervalued due to her disability, while Anna deals with her mother's societal judgments about divorce. Addressing these issues requires a solution that targets the perpetrators of the problem, which are men and the patriarchal culture. Therefore, using The Advocates and Allies concept, developed by North Dakota State University, is one of the possible solutions. This theory addresses the role of masculinities and male culture in shaping men's behavior and institutional climate to promote gender equity. By increasing awareness about unconscious bias, helping men develop personal motivation, utilizing role models, facilitating male-only dialogues, and involving men in solution-building, the initiative aims to engage men effectively in gender equity work (Bilen-Green et al., 2015). Through this theory being implemented in society, the reduction of the expected societal and male expectations can be at least achieved.

The third solution is to add more policies and strict procedures to protect nature. In both stories, nature is proven to help women deal with their problems, yet nature is still bothered by war and littering problems. In that case, adding more policies and strict procedures should be one of the steps that should be enforced worldwide. According to Reynaert et al., this is crucial as policies, especially protected areas policies, are crucial in society as they are vital in preventing and counteracting the chance of nature being lost (Reynaert et al., 2024). Therefore, by adding more policies and restricting procedures for nature conservation, nature will be less likely to be destroyed rapidly and can be prevented.

#### D. Conclusion

Ecofeminism is a theory that focuses on the advocacy of women and nature from the dominant forces, such as patriarchal culture and others that pressure them. In *Mountain of Longing* and *Angin dari Gunung*, ecofeminism appears in both stories, indicating the supportive relationship, the dominance of the war, societal expectations, littering, and men's perspective of women, and the resistance of the dominant forces by being independent and persistent from both women and nature.

Through these three factors and findings, solutions are provided. The first is empowering the self through nature. Here, nature acts as the healing provider for humans, enabling both of them to form a relationship to be dependent towards each other, and at the same time, neither one is placed above the other. The second is advocating the theory that can reduce men's expectations and biases. By focusing on the fundamental problem of the patriarchal society, the theory can challenge, transform, and ultimately reduce the ongoing exploitation that happens towards women. The last solution is adding policies to protect nature. The enactment of more official and regulated policies for protecting nature creates a mandatory standard for individuals, groups, and businesses in protecting and preserving natural resources. This may lead to lesser exploitation towards nature quite significantly. Therefore, ecofeminism clearly shows that in *Mountain of Longing* and *Angin dari Gunung*, women and nature are interconnected in dealing with the dominant forces of society and men.

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