



Women's Leadership through the Context of Rembang Movement

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Abstract

This study aims to explain the strength and leadership of women in order to maintain their living space. In addition, this study aims to portray the concept of nature conservation through water, soil, and earth that fought relentlessly to reject the establishment of the Indonesian Cement factory in the village Tegaldwo and Timbrangan, District Gunem, Rembang. An environmental issue in Rembang is important to be discussed in deep scale. In the deep discuss area, we can look at the exploitation of natural resources massively without seeing the objective conditions around it. Permission for the establishment of a cement factory given by the district government of Rembang to PT. Semen Indonesia did not consider the existence of citizens who depend on the region. Licensing mine will certainly undermine the determination of the mountains of North Kendeng and Cekungan Air Tanah (CAT) Watuputih in the conservation area. This research used a critical research method and analyzed with leadership and ecofeminism theory. Plans to build a cement factory were the beginning of the social problems that existed in rural areas and Tegalombo Krembangan. This caused rejection action undertaken by the majority of women and mothers who worked as peasants. The rejection action was an effort to save the environment in the region of CAT Watuputih.

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INTRODUCTION

Rembang, a small town in the eastern part of Central Java, has a significant natural resource in Kendeng Moun-

tain. Semen Indonesia owned by Portland Cement Company wanted to explore natural resource in this area. In the early of 2016, Kendeng's women made a movement against the Semen Indonesia's plan to explore the Kendeng

Mountain.

Dewi Candraningrum, Editor in Chief Indonesian Feminist Journal (*Jurnal Perempuan*), in her previous research, stated on *Jurnal Perempuan's* website about their experience in Rembang Site. Candraningrum argued that the mining industry in Rembang make women in Rembang become subordinated because all of the mining profession focused on man. (Detail of Candraningrum experience in <http://www.jurnalperempuan.org/blog/dewi-candraningrum-politik-rahim-perempuan-kendeng-menolak-tambang-semen>). In 2014, women in Kendeng made a movement with illegal occupation in Semen Indonesia Rembang site. In other research, Lestariningsih (2015: 168-169) found that the resistance from women movement could be rooted from the history of women national hero, Kartini who was buried near Rembang area.

Women in Kendeng Mountain basically live in the agricultural industry. Women have a significant role as cleaner of weed, grinder the rice, and worker preparing the soil after the harvesting time. In correlation with Candraningrum's experience, the Semen Indonesia destroyed the women's live and took out their husband to move in the mining industry. Goodman, Fields, and Blum (2003) in Klenke (2004:5) found that women usually filled in a lower management position, higher management turnover, and lower average management salary levels, place greater emphasis on development and promotion of employees, and operate in nonmanufacturing industries. However, in Kendeng Movement, women became a leader and significant role against Semen Indonesia.

Since this research article was written, the effort of legal steps through the review of the Supreme Court has ruled in favor of peasants in Kendeng mountainous, Rembang City. The victory cancels an environmental permit issued by the Governor of Central Java to PT Semen Indonesia. This is based on the official website of the Supreme Court, which decided the lawsuit on October 5, 2016 (Ihsanudin: 2016). The verdict was in favor and canceled the object of disputes. In this case, the object of the dispute in question is the environmental permits mining activities and the construction of a cement factory owned by Semen Indonesia Company in the district Gunem, Rembang dated 7 June 2012.

Legal measures taken by Rembang women were not for the first time, but have been repeatedly. Numerous times they attend the hearing of the dispute mining objects with the Semen Indonesia Company and even Governor of Central Java. There are several findings of fact that the women's movement Rembang which then makes them optimistic in making claims, they are:

- (1) Semen Indonesia Company violated Presidential Decree No. 26 of 2011 concerning the restriction of establishment of Basin Groundwater in "Cekungan Air Putih" (CAT) Watuputih. Meanwhile, the Mining Business License (IUP) PT. Semen Indonesia is located in the area of CAT Watuputih;
- (2) Semen Indonesia Company violated Bylaw Spatial Plan (RTRW) Java 6 The year 2010 Article 63 which states Watuputih as "Region Water Additives";

- (3) Semen Indonesia Company violated Bylaw Spatial Plan (RTRW) Rembang No. 14 of 2011 article 19 which states that the area has been designated as 'Geology of Protected Areas';
- (4) According to Rembang's Bylaw Spatial Plan (RTRW) No. 14 of 2011 section 27, the area of forest in the village Kadinowo, District Bulu, Rembang is not intended as a large industrial area;
- (5) Semen Indonesia Company unilaterally set Factory Region as National Vital Objects, but not in accordance with the Decree of the Minister of Industry No. 620 / M-IND / KEP / 12/2012 on national vital objects of industrial sectors;
- (6) The EIA (Environmental Impacts Analysis) (AMDAL) of Semen Indonesia Company has contained an error, untruth even falsification of data information. The article mentioned in the EIA data does not correspond to the real conditions of the field. The falsification is for example: the number of cave which is said to be 9, while actually, there are 64 caves, springs which is said to be 40 while actually, there are 125 springs. Later in the EIA, they do not mention any Ponor but in fact, there are 28 points of Ponor;
- (7) The number of false testimony from the Semen Indonesia Company in Semarang administrative court hearing, such as: a) Two UGM academics saying that Kendeng has no water source including young karst; b) in addition, there are also false testimony of Head Gunem and one of the teachers at the Administrative Court during the hearing Gunem in Semarang, they said that Joko Prianto had followed the socialization, but the fact is not like that;
- (8) Semen Indonesia Company will also make the unemployment rate increase after the construction of the plant. That, when the plant is in operation, according to the EIA, would only require 356 employees. This is contrary to the discourse of the cement plant which will absorb many of the public servants;
- (9) Data from the taps, Rembang relies heavily on CAT Watuputih area that drains hundreds of springs;
- (10) The land that will be a candidate for the mine is not yet fully liberated. (This data were collected from Rembang Movements documentation lawsuit. Data were made for private of movement purpose).

This data are factual data that cannot be ignored even by law enforcement authorities and even Central Java Governor who has the authority in its territory. In addition, legal action undertaken by peasants and Rembang women is directly permitted by the governor. It means that regardless of the outcome of the decision of the court, all parties must be able to respect him. For Rembang women, it was a part of them in a democracy.

RESEARCH METHOD

Critical Research Method was used as a method in this research. Chomstock (1982) argues that "Critical social research begins from the life problems of definite and

particular social agents who may be individuals, groups, or classes that are oppressed by alienated from social processes they maintain or create but do not control. Comstock (1982, 378) argued that the method of critical research starts from the real social problems experienced by individuals, groups, or classes of oppressed and alienated from the social processes that are growing.

Deep interview was used as a tool to reach the data and information about the women leadership in Rembang movement. The researcher used 2 informants, they were an activist of Rembang movement and the leader of the movement. Miller and Glassner (2004: 129) stated research starts from a belief that people create and maintain meaningful worlds. It means that people by their selves create the meaning.

In this research, feminism view was also used as an approach to help researcher explore the data. Critical research method with feminism approach used different point of view in understanding women's issues from a perspective that tended to masculinity (Susilo and Kodir 2016, 320).

“Conducting “research that involves gender is a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micro-political activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine natures” (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 126) in Klenke (2004, 13)

Saukko (2003,44) stated, “The methodological programme of critical, contextualize studies is, thus, driven by an interest in seriously studying the practices of the subjugated groups, such as misbehavior at school or reading romances, which may appear trivial or foolish.” Saukko made analysis about the study in critical that must concern subjugated groups. That’s the point and concern how critical research strength is. In the context of Rembang movement, subjugated groups are the women who lead the movement against the Semen Indonesia. Women leadership in the context of Rembang movement created a significant issue in national media.

STRENGTH WOMEN TO PRESERVE HER HOMELAND

Efforts to win this time were the fruit of a process of so long resistance trip. Still, very clearly remembered the memory Ms. Murtini as one of the female fighters to reject the cement factory, she stated that the rejection action was undertaken by these mothers since 2012 when the cement plant was about to operate. However, the efforts of their movement were not massive. However, the movement experienced a peak on June 16, 2014. At that time, it was the right moment for them to make substantial resistance. The rejection action was organized by mothers when the first stone was placed symbolically by the Semen Indonesia Company (Interview with Ms. Murtini on August 16th, 2016 at 17.07 pm.).

The rejection action began with the road closure action by women who impede the arrival of the company that is also guarded tightly by security forces soldiers, police and security companies. According to one of their statements, the action takes place in an uproar (Interview with

Ms. Garwani on August 15th at 08.35 am.). It then led to physical violence committed by the data safety. Many women were thrown into the undergrowth, causing bruised part of their body, and some even fainted. But the incident later did not dampen the efforts of their struggle. They then decided to set up "Struggling Tent".

Establishment of the tent became a milestone in their struggle to reject and oppose the establishment of a cement factory in the area of their farm. Until now, the tent is still standing. "I'll leave the tent if the cement plant is also out of our territory" (Interview with Ms. Murtini on August 16th, 2016 at 17.07 pm). The struggle done by the mothers to retain activities in tents were quite unique. They do not abandon their farming activities. So, they agreed to create a rotating system to stay in a tent. At least, there is one woman who struggles daily living in a tent. So, in a week, they served to stay in the tent during the day. They also brought food and worship thing with them. The shift usually starts at 5 pm, when they have finish working. Moreover, when they live in tents, their husbands also accompany them in the evening before returning home the next day to start their farming activities. This is due to the unpleasant experiences like threats or intimidations from unknown parties. Intimidation they get is in the form of destruction of the tent. One of them states that the person suspected is the messengers of the company.

Efforts to fight do not just stop at the tent struggle. There are many ways to go through legal action or resistance symbolically addressed to the state. They repeatedly attended the trial held in the Administrative Court and the Administrative Court Semarang-Surabaya from Rembang; engaged in dialogue with the governor (Rofiudin, 2016) and even with the President; took action to denounce the witness UGM academicians¹ who played role as expert witnesses in the trial of disputes between peasants twilight with Semen Indonesia Company (Edi, 2016); set up a struggling tent in front of the president's palace; do a long march of hundreds of kilometers of Pati - Semarang ; conduct cultural rituals. There was one action taken by the mothers of Kendeng: nine members placed their feet in cement when they were in Jakarta. For them, it was nothing. They will remain consistent and do a variety of ways to cement factories so that they don't do mining in the mountains Kendeng.

On the other hand, it is very interesting that the various mobility actions by the women in Rembang are doing the funding independently. It means that any activities that demand women to travel far are financed by them independently. They hold regular payments for women around 2.000 Rupiahs when they are in the tent. The budget is then

¹ In this case the mothers questioned the neutrality of the expert witness gesture Eko Haryono as a lecturer at the University of Gadjah Mada judged to be siding with the people. "UGM is a campus of the people and financed by the people so it should side with the people. Supposedly lecturer of UGM also siding with the people who are currently struggling to save the environment and defend their rights," said Sukinah. Berita Jogja, "Kecam Pernyataan Saksi Ahli Ratusan Warga Rembang Demo UGM", Beritajogja.id, <http://beritajogja.id/kecam-pernyataan-saksi-ahli-ratusan-warga-rembang-demo-ugm.html> (accessed on October 13th 2016).

to meet every need of their action. However, due to the frequency of activity that was extremely high, it required more funding. They did not hesitate to use their deposits in the form of cash, and sometimes sold some of their crop inventories and even their livestock. However, until now, they still get a stigma that their movement was funded by certain parties. Some even thought that they had something to do related to the communism. It was thought as a propaganda tool of the new order in Suharto regime. The propaganda is the rejection of the model of development policies related to the agrarian sector.

However, many developing discourse question the position of men in the resistance. Many people make criticisms that women were sacrificed. Ms. Asha, as one informant, stated that the insurgency led by the mothers was one of the strategies of resistance (interview with Ms. Asha was on August 14th, 2016 at 15.30 pm). They learned from previous resistance effort led by men that has always led to the forcible dissolution action and led to acts of violence committed by security forces against the peasants. So it was decided collectively that the mothers became the vanguard of the resistance effort. Nowadays, the actions taken by the mothers are considered very effective. The first, when doing demonstrations dealing directly with security forces, violence can be minimized so that the purpose of these actions can be achieved. Moreover, it would be easy to form a public opinion to give effect to the community to have the action of solidarity with Rembang women through social media.

IMPLICATION OF ECOFEMINISM ON REMBANG MOVEMENT

Ecofeminism is part of the third wave feminists who try to explain the relationship of nature and especially women who become the focal point at the destruction of nature which is of direct relevance to the oppression of women. According to Vandana Shiva, Indian Eco-feminist, Third World development experienced childbirth myths are increasingly putting its citizens in the unfair conditions. Developed Western countries always use psychological violence, economic, and physical thing (Khalid, 2008).

According to Shiva (in Khalid, 2008), humans are the cause of the destruction of the earth quality. Human are judged too selfish, regardless of the result of the earth. The environmental damage is caused by mental and anthropocentric reasoning that is not friendly to nature. Anthropocentrism undermines the sanctity precisely ordained by the epistemology of science. Modern science is bad news from western patriarchal ideology.

Ecofeminism perspective stated the earth is the mother who must be saved from the threat of damage done to the corporation-backed international financial institutions and governments. Women are the first hand (first hand) that come into contact with natural resources because that's the women themselves who later became the group more vulnerable to the risks and environmental damage.

Ecofeminism in Khalid's view (Khalid, 2008), is actually the point of view to analyze the environmental problem by using a knife feminist analysis. Feminism is clear

in assessing the root of the problem and the impact, in particular on the specific vulnerable groups include women.

Ecofeminism as a tradition of universal criticism cannot be separated from the capitalist opposition groups and religious fundamentalist groups. Developments in Indonesia put a new study of ecofeminism as the widespread acceptance of feminists and activists environment and censure from religious fundamentalist groups. In the religious fundamentalist view, ecofeminism is part of feminism and is said to be against God's nature. Claims that the earth and nature can be undertaken for the benefit of the people become a justification for the rejection of ecofeminism.

Researcher were tracking and comparing the women leadership in the social movement. In the research of Sarkar (2014: 175-177), the women movement in India against the landlord of paddy field focused on relations about labor and landlord. Women played the significant role as a trigger to keep their nature in this movement. Compared to Rembang movement, they had the same characteristic that was to keep their land and nature. People in Rembang are the owner of their land. CAT Watuputih is their homeland, but the Semen Indonesia wanted to explore their land in the name of capitalism needs. Women in Rembang concern about the environmental conservation. Rumini, one of our informants told us about their worries if the cement factory was built in their land (Interview with Rumini, 15 August 2016). Rumini worried if their environment would change and was destructed after the factory established. Horkheimer in Sindhunata (1982: 109) said the natural instinct of a human is about to self-preservation of their nature and homeland.

In the implication of ecofeminism approach, the researcher took some data and analogy from the informant to look up how the context of the motherland in their mind became the inspiration of this movement. Women in Rembang made a campaign in public sphere (social media) about ideas relations of the motherland, nature, and her movement.

The move becomes easy to remember by the public because the public's understanding also intensified that women have a natural bond that is so strong with the earth. The women in Rembang believe that their presence on earth is to care for nature. Ms. Asha (interview on August 14th, 2016 at 15.30 pm) tried to reflect itself that the earth is like a pregnant woman. She was pregnant. They will keep the baby by maintaining diet and resting and hoping that the baby would be born perfectly. Even when the baby is born, the mother will be solely responsible for caring them.

In addition, Ms. Garwani (interview on August 15th at 08.35 am) assume that the earth and its contents are a gift for them, because until now all the needs of the mothers met by mother earth. Therefore, they realized to thank Mother Earth for providing everything to meet their families' needs from previous generations until now. If there is no land and water, they will not be able to live. Therefore, the fight is one way for them to thank the earth.

There are two things of interest to researchers in view of their initial journey in the struggle to reject the establishment of a cement factory. Among others are the absence of fear and tireless spirit to keep fighting until today.

Initially, both of these become a problem at the beginning of their fight, but now it has been lost. At the very first time, they were often intimidated or threatened by security forces or the agents of the company. Their house were often visited by certain parties to ask them not to continue the action of refusal. However, these issues did not deter them from keeping fighting. The more often they are intimidated, the more the step forward. Ms. Murtini stated that "why should I fear, if this land is my right" (Interview with Ms. Murtini on August 16th, 2016 at 17.07 pm.).

Besides the problems that often arise at the beginning of their struggle, there is tired feeling. Ms. Garwani (interview with Ms. Garwani on August 15th at 08.35 am) stated that, as a man, he considers that feeling tired in the fight was a very human thing. It is also influenced by their considerable physical exertion or cost they spent to keep doing the fight. It's been long enough them to fight (2 years). Then they remembered the fate of their children and grandchildren later when they gave up. When there is no more land to be left for their children and grandchildren.

Not only that, the struggle of the Rembang women's certainly will not succeed if there is any other party that also helped. They no longer think of the land or water is owned by the current. However, they also want to express the solidarity of Kendeng mountainous rescue effort aside in Rembang. So the conception of nature is not only limited by everything they get, but to all humans.

In reality, woman always become dominated side by the capitalist. In this context, women in Rembang got warmed up because of government policy and Semen Indonesia factory that took off their land. The women in Rembang, together with their family and their children used to live and work in the agriculture sector, but it was changed by the industry sector. In the fact, industry destroyed life and their environment. Women who used to work with nature disappeared as a consequence of Semen Indonesia factory that explored Mountain of Kendeng, just for having the benefit of their greed.

In the theory aspect, the state will give the legality of domination practice towards women. State as a manifestation of high capitalist imprisons woman rights that want to survive their nature. Foucault with his theory said that this was a new version of state total institution to marginal women (Neal, 2013: 215). State and its power shut the woman's mouth off with sweet promises. Discourse for protecting, sheltering and saving just become a promise and a dream for a woman in Kendeng. There is no presence of state and women will be isolated from their nature. The woman, in the reality, pulls up with nature, so the intruder comes to destroy their nature. We know the woman become a leader for their family and herself. If nature is destroyed, you will be ready for facing the movement from Rembang's woman.

According to the theory of nature, the woman is really soft, merciful, and comfortable. The basic character of a woman is the same concept with nature. It gives the comfortable thing for human life. If we compare to nurture theory, it says differently. A woman cannot work harder, irrational thinker, and cannot survive in a bad situation. But, in this case of Rembang's, woman will break up the nurture

theory. This discourse will examine with critical thinking theory, Beauvoir explains how the woman is implicated as "the other or second sex" for man needs. The woman can serve herself become "a self (servant)" for their master (state) as the only domination to woman's body (Hutchings, 2013: 93). The state does not regard woman as part of nature cycle where the hard job is done just by man. It is not true, all of us know the woman will serve the nature from her everyday life. The man just do their job in public sector, while the women in domestic sector that do many and more job that is interacted with nature.

The natural environment that destroyed as Consequence Mountain Kendeng's exploitation sure can make the woman stand against that activity. The woman became angry because their nature is destroyed by certain power. They fight for their rights and their nature taken by Semen Indonesia factory that cannot give the responsibility towards nature. It started from mobilizing mass until it brought a lawsuit to the court, but there is no positive response from the state. It is kind of woman's leadership that becomes part of woman's existence from their nature. The woman can take the movement for defending their nature. They are able to strike for their rights that are discriminated by capitalist and state. Who are on the front side? They are women, not man. It is the evidence that woman has the power of herself. If the comfortable from women's life and their nature are disturbed, you have to be ready for the consequences. The women are stronger than the man because they are leaders for their selves and their families.

In the view of Lestariningsih and Wariyantun (2015:171) Rembang's movements, with women as the leader of the resistance, are fully backed up by the support of religious leaders in Rembang and surrounding areas. Islamic Preacher and National Figure like KH Ahmad Mustafa Bisri (Gus Mus) declared why resistance of Rembang's Women became important. He asked us to consider the environmental impact of mining activities, not only in Rembang but also in Indonesia (Lestariningsih and Wariyantun 2015: 171).

NEXT STEP FORWARD: WOMEN LEADERSHIP AS TRIGGER OF MOVEMENT

Human in the reality lived together and made friend with nature. If nature is destroyed and disturbed, human will make the movement for saving the nature. State as master of water, earth, and land should protect the nature and use more of it for citizen prosperity (Indonesian Constitution 1945). However, in fact, state that has the highest power betrays the nature. The state is doing domination towards nature. Adorno with his critical theory explains that domination is channeled through capitalist practices with taking off nature's rights and the recourses on it (Peoples, 2013:15).

The women that lived around Kendeng's mountain used to interact with nature. They did their activity for cooking, washing, and the household job with nature. Semen Indonesia factory does not think the long impact from the exploitation. The women who live with nature need to re-

lease their rights. The women want to show their existence by doing the movement, challenging the state and the power of capitalist for nature survival. The resistance is done with many aspects and methods, like protest movement until law path. However, state and capitalist always break up the women spirit. The indirect state wants to force the women's body to stand against their self and their nature. The elite are examining women's powerlessness to fight the injustice. The frontal movement did not only become the job for man but also become the job for women. They can stand against suppression towards their body.

Those movements are done because the elite and the capitalist manifested in Semen Indonesia factory disturbed their nature. Nature will be said as pregnancy woman. They will give their everyday life for serving and protect nature, the place they life. They are loyal to entrust soul and life for protecting the nature from irresponsibility side. This is one of the movements from Rembang's woman in

Kendeng for surviving the nature as a part of woman's life. No one can predict when the women in Rembang struggle. However, the movement is still alive for nature and the struggling of their lives.

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