

Wadon Wadas: The Wadas Women's Movement Against the Quarry An Ecofeminism Study

Jun Firmansyah^{1*}, Robingah^{2*}

Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir, Universitas PTIQ, Indonesia

English Literature, Faculty of Letters and Cultures, Universitas Gunadarma, Indonesia

Article History

Received : 15 July 2025

Revised : 25 July 2025

Accepted : 05 June 2025

Published : 15 June 2025

Corresponding author*:

robingah411@gmail.com

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.56127/ijml.v4i2.2100>

Abstract: When exploitation, capitalization, or land conversion occurs, it will certainly lead to conflicts between local communities and the private/government or even the State. Damage to nature due to exploitation and land conversion has a negative impact on women's bodies and their lives. Wadas is a village located in Bener sub-district, Purworejo, Central Java. The name Wadas has been widely discussed due to the discourse of andesite/quarry stone mining in the village. The quarry stone is the raw material for the construction of the Bener dam, one of President Jokowi's National Strategic Projects. The purpose of this research is to analyze the factors of resistance carried out by the Wadon Wadas movement, a movement carried out by Wadas women as a form of resistance to mining in their village, and to analyze the forms of resistance undertaken. The method used is descriptive. Data was obtained using documentation techniques, through news in digital media and social media. To find out the forms of resistance, the authors use James C. Scott's resistance theory. The finding was that Wadon Wadas applied a structured, observable form of open resistance to defend their land.

Keywords: Wadon Wadas, Land conflict, gender, ecofeminism, resistances

INTRODUCTION

Wadas is a village in Bener Sub-district, Purworejo Administrative Region, Central Java. Wadas has been widely reported in the national media since a conflict broke out in the village between residents and police in February 2022. The conflict arose as a result of the government's discourse to mine quarry/andesite stones from Wadas village. Andesite/quarry stone is the material that will be used for the construction of the Bener dam, which is included in the National Strategic Project (PSN) in the era of President Jokowi's administration. According to WALHI, the National Strategic Project (PSN), which is predicted to be a solution to the equitable distribution of infrastructure development, is actually a problem for rural communities. WALHI data showed that there were a total of 211 programs and projects, covering 13 sectors, of which 39 percent or 83 projects were located in Java (WALHI, 2022). PSN funded by investment, in Java alone, reached 1,527 trillion rupiah, and according to WALHI, this PSN is not an urgent project because part of the financing comes from debt (WALHI, 2022).

Conflicts between the people of Wadas village and the government, police, and the private sector are still ongoing to this day. Land for people in Wadas Village is not only their living space, but also has other functions, such as social functions, interaction, mutual cooperation, religious functions, historical functions, and socio-cultural functions. Land is the source of their economy. The majority of their work is farming and gardening, which cannot be separated from their land. Land is an important part of their lives. Prosperity for Wadas residents is when they can cultivate their land, and this is different from the concept

of prosperity offered by the government. For the government, land is only of economic value, only managed for profit.

The mining of andesite/quarry stone, which is the construction material for the Bener dam, will result in environmental and ecosystem damage, loss of clean water sources and trigger natural disasters. The adverse impacts of andesite mining will not only be faced by the men, who rely on the natural products of their land, but will also be experienced by women. Women have always been tied to nature, the land, the earth. Even the land is also represented with 'Mother' not 'father' in the concept of gender. We know the term "*Ibu Bumi*", "*Ibu Pertiwi*", not "*Bapak Bumi*". "*Ibu Bumi*" or "Mother Earth" is a symbolization that places the earth as a generous.

According to (Hunga, 2013) women are the group that is in the most vulnerable position when natural resource conflicts occur. In addition, the ecological crisis that occurs cannot be separated from three related things, namely the approach to exploiting nature, the availability of natural resources, and consumption patterns. In the society that makes nature and land as the source of life, the relationship that is created is not only a material relationship, but there is also a deep relationship among the earth, the land and the community (Shiva, 2005; Hunga, 2013). In a study conducted by Ernest and John entitled "Decoding Gender Justice in Land Conflicts Resolution in Rwanda, in conflicts over land rights in Rwanda", women are the most vulnerable party (Ernest & John, 2018).

Ecofeminism is a fairly new movement in Indonesia. Ecofeminism takes an ecological and feminist approach. As the name suggests, this approach takes ecological and feminist concepts, as explained earlier, that in terms of gender concepts, nature and land are always closely related to women and represented by female gender. Ecofeminism was introduced in the 1980s, and became popular when people protested against environmental degradation and ecological disasters (Shiva and Mies, 1993; Hunga, 2013). According to Françoise d'Eaubonne in her book "*Le Feminisme ou la Mort*", there is a strong connection between the oppression of women and the oppression of nature that can be observed in economic, socio-cultural, culture, and even politics (Hunga, 2013). Meanwhile, according to Chen, ecofeminism is an ecology-oriented feminism that seeks to find the relationship and origin of natural domination and gender domination (Chen, 2014).

Ecofeminism is a social movement responding to the ecological crisis that occurs, which moves on the concept (theory) and practice on the issue of the crisis of human and human relations, as well as human relations with nature (Darmawati, 2002 in Hunga, 2013). In line with the opinion of Baiju (2019) who emphasizes that ecofeminism connects women and nature and emphasizes the reconstruction of traditional gender-biased society and rejects gender discrimination and oppression of nature and women (Baiju, 2019). According to (Danardono, 2013) the negative impact of natural destruction caused by exploitative processing has a negative impact on women's bodies and their lives.

Land conflicts between local communities and corporations and governments occur in many places around the world. Many studies on land conflicts have been conducted, not only in Indonesia. Scientific research conducted in Kenya's Mau Forest with the title "The Nexus Between Land Cover Changes, Politics and Conflict in the Eastern Mau Forest complex, Kenya", occurred between local residents and the government regime. The results showed the existence of spatio-temporal conflict triggers, forest degradation and other triggers, namely politics and ethnic competition (Kweyu, Thenya, Kiemo, & Emborg, 2020). In Indonesia itself, according to research conducted by Sunawarda, Suhendrayatna and Jamil, conducted in Aceh, showed that in Aceh province, from 2017 to 2021, there were 120 land conflict complaints filed to the Local Government. Conflicts that occurred included HGU, land acquisition, customary land, etc. (Sunawarda, Suhendrayatna, & Jamil,

2022). When land conflicts occur, the most affected groups are local communities, indigenous peoples, and neighboring communities. This is in line with the findings of research conducted by (Acquah & Acquah, 2021) on land use conflicts among vegetable farmers in Denu. Land, which is the only source for the surrounding community, when a land conflict occurs, causes negative impacts, especially regarding the economy, livelihoods.

The rejection and resistance carried out by local residents/communities against the exploitation of nature both for industrial and mining interests in Indonesia itself, has actually been going on for a long time (Prayogo, 2008 in (Astuti & Asteria, 2021)). Conflicts over land, natural resources are caused by various factors and involve various groups, such as family, ethnicity, government, institutions, and corporations (Agustiyara, 2017). Various motives/methods of resistance are carried out by residents from one region to another. In the case of mining in Indonesia, conflict of interest is the main reason for the rise of resistance (Astuti & Asteria, 2020; Kurniawan, 2013; Prayogo, 2008; Regus, 2008). According to (Kurniawan, 2013 in (Astuti & Asteria, 2021) the difference in significance and lack of understanding about mining in an area forms two different groups of people, namely those who oppose/reject/resist because of their assumptions about the impact of environmental damage and other negative impacts, and pro groups who support mining on the pretext of encouraging economic progress (Fringka, 2015 in (Astuti & Asteria, 2021)).

There have not been many studies on resistance by women where there are land/land conflicts in their area either as a result of mining, or industry, or changes in land functions. Here are some studies related to the topic of this research: 1) The research entitled "The Role of Ninik Mamak in Land Conflict Resolution" written by Nice Widiani is an example of research where there is a role of women in resolving land conflicts. In her research, Widiani analyzed land conflicts in Muara Dilam Village, Kunto Darussalam Subdistrict, which were carried out by Ninik Mamak (Widiani, 2019). 2) Astuti and Asteria write about women's resistance and struggle over their land. She wrote about the complexity and resistance of women farmers in Sumergeneng Village, Tuban Regency using ecological theory and feminist politics. These theories are used to see forms of resistance and power relations that are considered unbalanced experienced by farmers in the village (Astuti & Asteria, 2021). The third research on resistance was conducted by Iswan Kaputra and Prathiwi Widyatmi Putri entitled "The Precarity of Peri-urban Resistance: A Resistance to the Forced Eviction of Pasar VI Village and the Development of Kualanamu International Airport, North Sumatra". In this research, the authors aim to highlight the complexity of conflicts between agencies, institutions and structural relations, as well as the resistance carried out by urban and marginalized rural communities (Kaputra & Putri, 2020).

Based on the background and previous research, the author intends to explore the forms of resistance carried out by women in Wadas Village who are formed in the "Wadon Wadas" movement which rejects the andesite/quarry stone mine in their village which will be used as construction material for the Bener dam. Secondly, the author wants to find out what factors cause the resistance carried out by Wadas residents, through Wadon Wadas. This research is important to raise because until now, the struggle of Wadas residents, especially the struggle of women, is still ongoing. They still have to continue to resist, fight against the government, the authorities, seeing that the Bener Dam Project is a large-scale project, a project included in the PSN of President Jokowi's administration. In addition, there are also political issues in this PSN.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Women in Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism, an umbrella term for various theoretical and political perspectives, helps us understand social and ecological conditions. Feminism encourages social and political change in relation to the ecology and well-being of our planet (Federici, 2022). Ecofeminism is the relationship of women's engagement with land, earth, nature, especially in the powerlessness and unfair treatment of both. Francoise d'Eaubonne introduced the concept of ecofeminism for the first time in her article entitled "Le Feminisme ou la Mort" (Feminism or Death), an article whose content expects women to lead the revolution to save the earth (Danardono, 2013). Ecofeminism applies an ethic of care to realize social justice ecologically, applying the value of femininity and opposing patriarchal culture. Ecofeminism criticizes patriarchal culture, capitalism, production and reproduction culture in relation to the dangers of industrial technology development and women's safety.

Ecofeminism ontologically views nature and humans as interrelated entities. Humans cannot live separately from other creatures and their environment (Suliantoro, 2011). Epistemologically, ecofeminism means "admiration" as the main activity to gain knowledge in a feminist way. Through a sense of 'admiration', the social reality of the universe can be known. Knowledge based on 'admiration' leads to positive environmental empowerment (Suliantoro, 2011). The ecofeminism movement originated from criticism of the liberal feminist movement and socialist feminism, by Susan Gordon in her book "The Prisoner of Men's Dream". She revealed that feminists have become destroyers of the world and made women imitators of men in a patriarchal system. According to her, men and women, what must be equalized is the quality of life (Fatimah, 2017).

Ecofeminism criticizes the perspective of modernity where modernity places nature and women as objects that can be exploited (Waren in (Tong, 1998)). Ecofeminism provides an opportunity for women to carry out resistance strategies against exploitative rulers. The Wadon Wadas movement promoted by women in Wadas Village is relevant to this concept of ecofeminism.

Environmental Justice

Along with ecofeminism, the concept of environmental justice can be used to explain the unjust management of natural resources. According to Martin et al. 2014 in (Hein & Dünckmann, 2020), the concept of environmental justice began to become a popular narrative by advocacy groups fighting the distribution of unhealthy facilities in the US, until then this concept was recognized throughout the world. Environmental justice, according to (Asriani, 2015) offers space, especially for marginalized groups, to fight for their human rights to natural resources, the environment, which is part of their daily lives. Environmental justice is an idea that emerged out of racial tensions in South Africa. The idea further emphasizes that modern science actually results in unproductive groupings. It criticizes forms of natural resource management that lead to unequal relations, where white people are represented as progressive, educated, noble, and therefore powerful. Meanwhile, groups of color who historically have a cultural relationship with nature are considered as objects, poor, and left behind, so they are considered disproportionate in managing natural resources properly (Asriani, 2015).

Furthermore, environmental justice is not only related to race and skin color. In its development, it can also be used to see injustice, inequality that occurs in marginalized people, which in this context are women (Asriani, 2015).

RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of this research article is to find out the reasons that encourage Wadon Wadas to carry out resistance and find forms of resistance carried out by women in Wadas Village through the Wadon Wadas movement. To explore forms of resistance, the authors use James C. Scott's theory of resistance. Resistance, according to James C. Scott in (Susilowati, 2018) is an action by the sub-ordinant aimed at rejecting, fighting the super-ordinant. Resistance is organic, systematic, cooperative, for the benefit of the communal/group/many people, consequences and revolutionary. Resistance according to Scott is categorized as open resistance (public transcript) and hidden resistance (hidden transcript) (Susilowati, 2018).

This research article applies a qualitative approach, as stated by (Taylor, R., & M., 2015) that qualitative methods in a broad sense refer to research that produces written, descriptive data in the form of writing and words from the objects observed. Data sources were taken from news published on digital news portals, social media Instagram, and the official website of LBH Yogyakarta. The data are in the form of news articles published in digital media that report on the conflict in Wadas and the resistance carried out by Wadas residents, especially Wadas women in the Wadon Wadas movement. The data was collected through the documentation process. Khatib explained that the documentation technique is a procedure carried out by researchers by collecting notes, pictures, charts, diagrams, (Khatib, 2018). The data analyzed refers to the social phenomena of the Wadas village community, especially the Wadas women related to the form of resistance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Factors behind the resistance of Wadon Wadas

Conflict due to the quarry/andesite mining plan in Wadas Village, Bener Sub-district, Purworejo, Central Java occurred between the Wadas people, the government (central and local government) and the police. Wadon Wadas is an informal association of women from Wadas Village Purworejo who are members of the Dewa Earthquake Organization: Community Movement for Nature Care (Facebook LBH Yogyakarta). Wadon Wadas (Wadon meaning woman), was established in early 2021. Wadon Wadas strengthened the resistance of the Wadas community who had previously formed the core organization Gempa Dewa (projectmultatuli.org). Some of the factors behind the women in Wadas Village joining the Wadon Wadas movement are: 1) the impact of environmental damage such as the sustainability of agriculture, plantations, forests, as well as threats to flora and fauna ecosystems, such as eagles; 2) according to an expert on dam construction from Gajah Mada University, one of the impacts of mining is the destruction of residents' agricultural land, the loss of water sources (himajipun); 3) loss of economic resources, residents' income; 4) possibility of natural disasters such as floods and landslides, as well as drought in the dry season (Asep Komaruddin, Greenpeace Indonesia); 5) loss of identity, (*perseduluran*) brotherhood that they have built since long ago (muhajadah, fatayatan, yasinan, berjanjenan) (LBHYogyakarta).

Forms of Resistance

According to Scott, there are two categories of resistance carried out by oppressed communities, namely open resistance and closed resistance. Based on the analysis conducted from data sources found in the media, especially digital media, only an open form of resistance was found by the Wadon Wadas movement. Open resistance is resistance that is carried out openly, can be observed and is concrete in nature.

1. Demonstration



Figure 1. Wadon Wadas demonstrates against the Andesite rock quarry. Image source: purworejo24.com)



Figure 2. Wadon Wadas demonstrating at Tugu Yogyakarta. Image source: Instagram account wadas_melawan

Figures 1 and 2 show the form of open resistance carried out by Wadon Wadas. They protested by demonstrating, taking action, and voicing their rejection of andesite/quarry stone mining in their village. In the protest, Wadon Wadas also conveyed the violence committed by the police against them. The protest action carried out by Wadon Wadas was not only the first or second time. They have been fighting against the mining plan in their village since 2016, when the mining project was first discussed by the local community (Imel, a member of Wadon Wadas). According to Imel, the struggle to defend living space, land, in her village is not only carried out by men, not based on gender alone. Both men and women are obliged to defend their living space (purwerojo24.com).

2. “Weaving” as a Resistance by Wadon Wadas



Figure 3. Wadon Wadas weaving bamboo into baskets in the Courthouse of PTUN Semarang, Central Java, August 2021. Image source: LBH Yogyakarta

The weaving activity symbolizes the form of resistance carried out by Wadon Wadas. In Figure 3, the women of Wadon Wadas are seen weaving bamboo sheets, making baskets, which were carried out at the Semarang State Administrative Court. The weaving activity is interpreted as a symbol, a form of protest against the Governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo, who issued a permit to extend the designation of land acquisition location for andesite stone mining, which is the main raw material for the construction of the Bener dam on June 7, 2021.

Wilahan or weaving bamboo into boxes, containers, completes and covers is part of the daily activities carried out by Wadas women. *Besek* or container is one of the handicraft products that has economic value. They earn income from weaving bamboo into *besek*. *Besek* made from bamboo, which of course, they do not need to buy, they can get it from their lands is one proof of the importance of Wadas land for them. This is also related to the concept of ecology, the concept of ecofeminism, where nature and women are connected.

The weaving activity presented is interpreted as a symbol of resistance. *Besek* or bamboo box is a symbol of the unity of Wadas women who have the ability to maintain and care for the fertile Wadas land. This unification is connected to the bamboo plant which is the basic material in making *besek*. From generation to generation, sustainable, the tradition of weaving bamboo carried out by Wadas women has existed, so this activity is the identity, culture and community of Wadon Wadas. If their land is mined, their identity, culture and history are also lost (LBH Yogyakarta).



Figure 4. Wadas women are weaving *bese*k while monitoring the arrival of outsiders to their village. Image source: [projectmultatuli.org](#)

Mining has resulted in the destruction of bamboo trees and other plants that characterize Wadas Village, such as coffee, aren palm, *kemukus* (pepper), coconut, mahogany and others. Symbolically, the loss of these bamboo trees breaks the chain of life that connects Wadas with Wadas women. The Wadon Wadas identity that has been intertwined/united since long ago is integrated intact, even able to provide them with material/economic value without having to exploit, destroy their nature, their land. Weaving bamboo into baskets is also a symbol of ecofeminism, where women protect nature, protect the earth.

CONCLUSION

Women and nature are inseparable. Women have an attachment to nature, to the land. The struggle to defend rights, to defend the land, the earth from capitalist activities, exploitation should be carried out by all lines, regardless of gender differences. Men and women are obliged to protect, defend, and defend their living space when there is interference from outsiders.

Wadas is a village located in Bener sub-district, Purworejo, Central Java. The village is facing conflict, a major conflict between the local community, the local people, and the authorities (government). They are struggling to defend their living space from the threat of land acquisition that is planned to be mined. Various forms of resistance are carried out by local communities, including forming community organizations, one of which is Wadon Wadas. Wadon Wadas is an organization of Wadas women who reject mining. They carry out various activities as a form of rejection, a form of protest. The activities they carry out such as do demonstration and weaving a bamboo into baskets are categorized as forms of open resistance, which is in line with Scott's theory. This struggle, resistance will continue until they win. The movement of Wadas women is also in accordance with the concept of ecofeminism which emphasizes concern for the environment, nature, land, earth. 'Weaving' activities as one form of evidence of the concept of ecofeminism applied by Wadas women.

REFERENCES

Books:

- Hunga, A. I. (2013). Ekofeminisme, Krisis Ekologis, dan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan. In D. Candraningrum, *Ekofeminisme: Dalam Tafsir Agama, Pendidikan, Ekonomi, dan Budaya*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.
- Khatib, A. J. (2018). *Metodologi Penelitian Sastra*. Depok: Gunadarma.
- Tong, P. (1998). *Feminist Thought*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra

Journal Article:

- Acquah, J.-G., & Acquah, H.-G. (2021). Land use conflict among vegetable farmers in Denu: determinants, causes and consequences. *Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences*, 115(7), 89-99.
- Agustiyara. (2017). AN ASSESSMENT AGRARIAN CONFLICT DYNAMICS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION PRACTICES IN CENTRAL BORNEO. *ASEAN/Asian Academic society International Conference Proceedings Series*.
- Asriani, D. D. (2015, 8). Perempuan Mollo Merawat Tubuh & Alam: Aleta Baun, Paham Nifu & Pegunungan Mutis. *Jurnal Perempuan*, 20(3).
- Astuti, I. S., & Asteria, D. (2021, Desember 2). Perempuan Petani, Akuisisi dan Perjuangan Atas Tanah (Studi Kasus Perempuan Petani Desa Sumurgeneng, Kabupaten Tuban). *Jurnal Sosiologi Pendidikan Humanis*, 6(2).
- Baiju, A. (2019, 6). Redefining Power: Ecofeminism in Krishna Sobti. *IJELLH (International Journal of English Language, Literature in Humanities)*, 7(6).
- Chen, L. (2014). Ecological Criticism Based on Social Gender: The Basic Principles of Ecofeminism. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 7(1), 67-72.
- Danardono, D. (2013). Ekofeminisme: Kontradiksi Kapitalisme dan Etika Kepedulian. *Ekofeminisme I Dalam Tafsir Agama, Pendidikan, Ekonomi dan Budaya*, 43-54.
- Ernest, U., & John, M. (2018, 5 1). Decoding Gender Justice in Land Conflicts Resolution in Rwanda. *African Journal of Land Policy and Geospatial Sciences*, 1-20. doi:10.22004/ag.econ.304727
- Fatimah, S. (2017, 7 17). Ekofeminisme: Teori dan Gerakan. *Alamtara: Jurnal Komunikasi dan Penyiaran Islam*, 1(1), 6-19.
- Federici, E. (2022, 12). Why Ecofeminism Matters: Narrating/translating ecofeminism (s). *Iperstoria: Journal of American and English Studies*.
- Hein, J., & Dünckmann, F. (2020). Narratives and Practices of Environmental Justice. *DIE ERDE Journal of the Geographical Society of Berlin*, 151(2-3).
- Kaputra, I., & Putri, P. W. (2020). The Precarity of Peri-urban Resistance: A Resistance to the Forced Eviction of Pasar VI Village and the Development of Kualanamu International Airport, North Sumatra. *PCD Journal of Power, Conflict and Democracy*, 49-67.
- Kweyu, R., Thenya, T., Kiemo, K., & Emborg, J. (2020). The nexus between land cover changes, politics and conflict in Eastern Mau forest complex, Kenya. *Applied Geography*, 114.
- Suliantoro, B. W. (2011). REKONSTRUKSI PEMIKIRAN ETIKA LINGKUNGAN EKOFEMINISME SEBAGAI FONDASI PENGELOLAAN HUTAN LESTARI. *Bumi Lestari Journal of Environment*, 11(1).
- Sunawardi, S., Suhendrayatna, S., & Jamil, T. M. (2022). The Role of Aceh Government Through Land Conflict Settlement in Aceh. *AL-IJTIMA'I: INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCE*, 7(2).

- Susilowati, E. Z. (2018). Resistensi Perempuan dalam Kumpulan Cerita Tandak Karya Royyan (Teori Resistensi-James C. Scott). *BAPALA*, 5(2).
- Taylor, S. J., R., B., & M., D. (2015). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Method: A Guidebook and Resource*. John Wiley & Sons.
- WALHI. (2022). *Membangkang Konstitusi, Mewariskan Krisis Antar Generasi*. Jakarta Selatan: Eksekutif Nasional WALHI.
- Widiani, N. (2019). Peran Ninik Mamak dalam Penyelesaian Konflik Pertanahan. *Jurnal Demokrasi & Otonomi Daerah*, 17(1).

Web Page:

<https://lbhyogyakarta.org/2021/08/09/wadon-wados-menganyam-perlawanan/> diakses pada 28 Desember 2022

<https://projectmultatuli.org/wadon-wadas-menjaga-alam-untuk-anak-cucu/> diakses pada 28 Desember 2022

Newspaper Article:

<https://www.purworejo24.com/2022/10/kesetaraan-gender-dan-perjuangan-wadon-wadas-dalam-mempertahankan-ruang-hidup/> diakses pada 28 Desember 2022

<https://bisnis.tempo.co/read/1558729/warga-wadas-penolak-tambang-andesit-yang-ditangkap-polisi-diduga-bertambah> diakses pada 28 Desember 2022

Aku Instagram Wadas_melawan