

## THE CONNECTION BETWEEN FEMALE OBJECTIFICATION AND THE PORTRAYAL OF WATER IN THREE JAVANESE FOLKTALES

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the connection of female objectification and water control in the light of eco-feminism existing in three Javanese folktales: “Sangkuriang”, “Jaka Tarub and the Seven Apsaras” and “The Legend of Banyuwangi River”. Thus, two research questions are proposed: how is female objectification portrayed in the Javanese folktales in terms of bodily experience? (1); and, how is female objectification connected to the portrayal of water in the Javanese folktales (2)? The nature of this study is qualitative and employs textual analysis. The findings of this research discover that the female characters are objectified regarding their bodily experience; denial of subjectivity is present and their beauty comes with misery. Furthermore, water is portrayed as a witness and medium of resistance against female objectification.

**Keywords:** Ecofeminism, female objectification, Javanese folktale, water control

### **Introduction**

Water is an inseparable element of life for every living creature. The vast expanse of the ocean has historically facilitated intercontinental travel, enabling individuals from different nations to embark on expeditions and establish connections. Noteworthy is the imperial Chinese fleet commanded by Zeng He, which exerted significant dominance over the world's oceans during the 14th century. Embarking from China, these maritime expeditions fostered extensive trade engagements and interactions with the nations encountered along the routes traversed by Zeng He and his fleet. Similarly, the ocean has historically served as a gateway for European travelers such as Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal, opening up new horizons for European expansion. The expansion of heterogenous civilizations is also borne by rivers functioning as the cradle of major world civilizations or ‘river-valley civilizations’. Notable examples of such civilizations include the Mesopotamian civilization (around 4000 BC), the Indus Valley civilization (discovered in the 1920s), the Egyptian civilization (circa 3000 BC), and the Chinese/Yellow River civilization (dating back to around 9500 BC). All of these cannot come true without the indispensable role of water.

In the Southeast Asian context, water functions greatly as a channel of trade, irrigation, and also the formation of gender relations in Southeast Asian cultures. This fact explains why Boomgard (2007) describes that the heart of the Southeast Asian cultural dynamic lies in the interaction between people of different backgrounds facilitated through water-related activities (Boomgaard, 2007). However, as history proceeds, mother nature silently witnesses the growing greed of mankind dwelling in this patriarchal world, impacting not only the society's behavior towards the water but also towards women driven by the masculine conquest.

Departing from a literary and academic point of view, literature holds an important function to raise awareness of this issue through the lens of ecofeminism as a critical approach

to engaging this discussion with the society from educational level. It should be taken into account that the education system in this digital age provides a global platform to connect with an international audience to engage in this dialogue through literacy and critical thinking. Thus, many studies published digitally have voiced their concern about this issue. For example, Indriana et al. (2021) discover that Javanese folklores function as a mitigation strategy to anticipate natural disasters as shown in *Timun Mas*, *Rawa Pening*, and *Nyi Roro Kidul*. Then, Sukmawan & Setyowati (2017) discusses environmental messages discovered in 17 Indonesian folklore, and they draw relations of this folklore in teaching foreign language classroom not only to develop the students' cultural literacy or respect towards nature but also to raise their environmental awareness. Next, Retnowati et al. (2018) inform from the analysis of the story of *Timun Mas* that when a human is greedy, the environment becomes the victim. Meanwhile, Novianti (2022) unveils that Indonesian folk narratives are crucial to the formation of national identity, national values, and character education. Drawing a closer connection to water, Dewi (2020) shares how the theory of ecofeminism is suitable for the readings of Southeast Asian fiction as rivers, resistance, and the oppression of women are closely related to each other as shown in Indonesian, Malaysian, and Vietnamese fictions. It can be concluded that the discussion of mankind's subjugation over women and nature is already facilitated by something which the people are familiar with, something present within society's arms' reach; in this case, folktales come in handy to function as the tool to raise critical thinking of this issue.

Through the means of ecofeminism, the evasive spread of anthropocentrism, silenced (or erased) non-human voices, and political power relations between gender are brought into the light. To draw relevance of this research to the world today, it should be noted that the examination of this issue resonates with *The Future We Want*, the document of outcomes adopted at the Rio + 20 United Nations Conference discussing Sustainable Development, underscoring the need for protection of the environment, empowerment of women, equality of opportunities and children's protection, survival, and development through education (Gough et al., 2017). The significance of this discussion is also supported by the research done by Gough et al. (2017), highlighting the collective need of placing gender as the centre of environmental education because girls, women, and other marginalized groups "have been overlooked in much environmental education practice, theory, and research, subsumed under the notional category of 'universalized people'" (Gough et al., 2017, p. 5). Therefore, to resonate with the concern, this article aims to examine the connection between female objectification and water control present in three Javanese folktales, namely: "Sangkuriang", "Jaka Tarub and the Seven Apsaras" and "The Legend of Banyuwangi River" (Folklore Lover, 2015; Indonesian Folktales Wiki, n.d.; Times Indonesia, 2020). Thus, two research questions are formulated: how is female objectification portrayed in the Javanese folktales in terms of bodily experience? (1); and, how is female objectification connected to patriarchal society's control over water in the Javanese folktales? (2).

### **Theory of Objectification**

The theory of objectification is an important tool that helps one to trace the root of the patriarchal subjugation of women and nature in the selected folktales. This theory states that the process of objectification occurs when a person's personhood, is reduced or degraded and when their humanity is not acknowledged by the objectifier (Rector, 2014). The main problem

of objectification is centred on how one perceives another as their tool, projection, or reflection of desire at one's own expense or through denial of the objectified person's will which eventually leads to ethical problems in the world (Rector, 2014, p. 15). For example, in the digital world, women are highly objectified, and treated as sexual objects for male viewers in many music videos (Qamar et al., 2021). The same thing also occurs in the selected folktales, and this research defines that phenomenon as 'female objectification'. Thus, John Rector (2014) wraps up the concepts of objectification put forward by Martha Nussbaum and Rae Langton, where there are ten existing categories of objectification as follows (Rector, 2014, p.19). Instrumentality: treating other people as instruments for one's purpose (1); denial of autonomy and denial of subjectivity: to deny other's will and experience (including feelings) (2) (3); inertness: treating others as if they do not have agency or capacity to do an action (4); fungibility: to treat others based on their function, which makes them replaceable (5); violability: trespassing others' boundary and integrity by deeming them worth violating, smashing or penetrating (6); ownership: treating someone as if they are a property worth selling and buying (7); reduction to the body and appearance: reducing others from their personhood to their body, appearance, and appeal (8)(9); silencing: muting the voice of others as if they cannot speak (Rector, 2014, p.19).

### **Ecofeminist Approach**

The second important tool which goes hand-in-hand with the objectification theory is the ecofeminist approach, which can draw connections between the socioeconomic condition with existing political systems that resonate with the domination of human beings over non-human items (such as nature and animals) in line with the domination of male over women (Gough and Whitehouse, 2019, p.2). In other words, ecofeminism is an important approach that underscores the similar suffering and subjugation of ecology and the female sex under a patriarchal system. It questions the position of humans (men, in this research's context) on this planet, the relationship of gender, society, economy, science, and politics as well as the hope that transformation of harmony can be achieved as the end goal (p.2). Therefore, ecofeminism challenges the long-standing, anthropocentric idea that human beings are superior to "the rest of a [categorized] nature" which leads to the act of domination of others (p.2). To simplify, in an ecological and feminist way, ecofeminism allows one to criticize the power-play in the subtle and visible mechanism of objectification between the *self* (as the objectifier) and *other* (as the objectified; in this case, nature, and the female sex).

### **Method**

The method employed in this article is qualitative research. In qualitative research, a detailed and descriptive analysis is provided as events in the selected texts are examined closely. The selected folktales under discussion are dissected into more specific parts, compositions, and sub-structures because they belong to a greater unity at work; this is done to find out how these elements can draw the attention of readers (Simanjuntak, 2023). Elements such as point of view, perspective, and other variables are considered crucial in qualitative research (Mulia & Pardi, 2020; Usman et al., 2021).

Therefore, this research aims to investigate the connection between female objectification and the portrayal of water in the light of eco-feminism present in three Javanese folktales: "Sangkuriang", "Jaka Tarub and the Seven Apsaras" and "The Legend of Banyuwangi River"

provided digitally online. To achieve the aim of this research, the theory of objectification is utilized to analyze how the female characters are objectified in the story. The first step paves the way for the second, where discussion of the examination of the portrayal of water is facilitated through the ecofeminist approach.

## **Findings and Discussion**

There are several findings which are discussed in this section. The first one is the case of female objectification of the characters related to their bodily experience in the selected Javanese folktales. The second discusses how the female characters are controlled by the patriarchal system as water control is identified with male prowess, where women and nature are both seen as objects.

### **Female Objectification of Bodily Experience**

The female characters in the three Javanese folktales experience female objectification in different ways. Yet, two important points stand out as the common ground between the three folktales. All of the female characters (Dayang Sumbi, Nawang Wulan, and Sidapaksa's wife) are denied their subjectivity in terms of their feelings and/or experience. Furthermore, their beauty comes with misery.

### **1 . Denial of Subjectivity**

In the story of “Sangkuriang”, Dayang Sumbi's personhood is denied when she is fought over by the princes from every part of her country. She feels uncomfortable when many men try to win her as if she is an object worthy to be owned. However, she does not express her dislike and stays silent – this can be categorized as the indirect act of silencing done towards the objectified individual by the patriarchal society, where a woman is viewed as the object of conquest. As a result, Dayang Sumbi decides to move into a faraway place so no one will know who she is.

Another instance of the denial of Dayang Sumbi's subjectivity is when her son insists to marry her. Growing up as a handsome and athletic man who likes to travel to many places, Sangkuriang one day reaches his house and forgets that he used to live there. He meets his mother, falls in love with her, and refuses to cancel his marriage with her after eventually Dayang Sumbi remembers that he is her son. Dayang Sumbi's personal experience, feelings, and voice as the one who bears Sangkuriang are put aside by him. Sangkuriang even threatens his mother that he will use his power to destroy things in his path; this marks the potential of violability and inertness in terms of female objectification. Afraid of his son's god-like power, she decides to come up with an idea to stop Sangkuriang's plan: she eventually requests him an impossible plan to build a big lake along with a boat in it. Long story short, her son fails to accomplish the mission with his genies because Dayang Sumbi lights up a fire, tricking the spirits that dawn already arises.

The next story is “Jaka Tarub and the Seven Apsaras”. Denial of subjectivity is evident in how Jaka Tarub treats one of the apsaras taking a bath in the river, namely Nawang Wulan. Unlike the study conducted by Yulianto (2016) which contends that the story of Nawang Wulan is about a wife who loves her husband and child, this research argues that Nawang Wulan's story is about her experience of being sexually objectified by Jaka Tarub. When Jaka Tarub spies on the beautiful mythical women taking a bath in the river, he purposely takes away one of the shawls belonging to them. As a result, Nawang Wulan cannot return to heaven

without it and she keeps looking for it. At this point, Jaka Tarub shows up and pretends to help her; it can be said in this part that Jaka Tarub does not only deny Nawang Wulan's feelings of how her shawl is very important to her but also her experience as a mythical being not used living on earth. Eventually, they get married, but later Nawang Wulan angrily discovers that her shawl has been taken away by her husband on purpose. In the end, she returns to heaven and comes once in a while to take care of her baby daughter or provide for her family.

The last instance of female objectification is the story of Sidapaksa's wife in "The Legend of Banyuwangi". She is objectified as her subjectivity is denied and her voice is silenced. After giving birth to her son, her mother-in-law throws her son into the river. Coming home from an expedition, Patih Sidapaksa is angered when he hears the lie from his mother, that his wife murders their baby and throws it into the river. Here, female objectification is evident when Sidapaksa refuses to acknowledge his wife's point of view, experience, or feelings (denying her subjectivity) – that a loving mother cannot murder her child. Moreover, his action also silences her voice. Violability too is seen when Sidapaksa wants to kill his wife. His wife is sad that he does not believe her, and instead of being killed by Sidapaksa, she makes a shocking decision to cast herself into the river. She says that if the river gives out fragrance, then it means that she is telling the truth. Thus,

## 2. Beauty Comes with Misery

Departing from the discoveries of Masykuroh and Fatimah (2019) on the ideal femininity in Indonesian folktales from linguistic perspectives, it is found that beauty is one out of three ideal Indonesian femininity, other than virtue and passivity of a woman. Similarly, beauty is a gift and also a 'curse' for the female characters in these three folktales. All three of the female characters experience female objectification in terms of reduction to the body and/or appearance. Furthermore, other categories of objectification also trail behind. This is so because the mechanism of female objectification explains that the types of objectification may overlap with one another, representing the multifaceted face of evil and the dark side of what humans can do (especially in a patriarchal society that subdues women and nature in the same time) (Rector, 2014).

First, Dayang Sumbi is not viewed as a whole person by her suitors, who fight over her, because she is a beautiful woman. Her personhood is also degraded to her appearance and body when her son insists to marry her because she remains forever young like a girl. Implicitly, from this particular point in the story, Dayang Sumbi's eternal and youthful beauty gives readers a hint that the patriarchal society has a particular standard on women, that they are first measured by their physical appeal. In the end, Dayang Sumbi's misery is to suffer the threat of her son marrying her – or else, he will use force. Here, evidence of female objectification in terms of violability and also inertness is present.

Contrary to the study conducted by Windianto (2022) which argues that it is also Dayang Sumbi's fault to cause her son to insist on marrying her (because his amnesia towards his mother is caused by her hitting a spoon), this research argues that Dayang Sumbi's objectification done by Sangkuriang is still problematic; his sickness is still not an excuse for Sangkuriang to objectify a woman. As the figures of Sangkuriang and Dayang Sumbi are created by a patriarchal society in Java, Sangkuriang's amnesia, which 'justifies' his action toward Dayang Sumbi, is an excuse for the patriarchal society to silence the experience and misery of a woman. When a woman is sexually objectified and silenced, she is inevitably

treated as an instrument to reflect the desires of men (Rector, 2014) – in this case, a patriarchal society desires to objectify and silence women as represented by Sangkuriang.

Second, Nawang Wulan is also not viewed based on her whole personhood by Jaka Tarub, but by how her beauty by appearance and appeal of the body catches Jaka Tarub's male gaze as he spied on the bathing apsaras. She too, besides being reduced to her appearance and body, is treated as a tool (instrument) of Jaka Tarub to achieve his sexual desire. Furthermore, Jaka Tarub perceives Nawang Wulan based on her function (female objectification in terms of fungibility) to fulfill his desires, since he randomly takes the shawl of the apsaras. One may speculate that Jaka Tarub may say to himself when stealing the shawl without choosing, that any girl (the apsaras) will do, as long as he gets what he wants. Thus, departing from Nawang Wulan's beauty, she has to suffer female objectification and is a victim of Jaka Tarub's deception in their marriage (which she finally discovers); her misery begins the moment Jaka Tarub gazes at her body.

Third, Sidapaksa's wife is indirectly objectified in terms of reduction to the body. When Sidapaksa arrives home and believes the lie that his wife kills their child, he does not think long but recklessly acts to murder his wife. If one examines this a closer look and produces speculation, Patih Sidapaksa may love his wife because of her body's ability to produce offspring. If he truly loves his wife and considers her as a whole person, he will not act so but instead listen to her explanation first. At this point, his wife also suffers from female objectification when her voice is silenced and when she is threatened with violence (similar to what Dayang Sumbi experienced). Sidapaksa's act of silencing his wife is in line with Masykuroh and Fatimah's discovery that passivity (such as women's silence) is one of the feminine ideals found in Indonesian folktales (Masykuroh & Fatimah, 2019). In the finale, Sidapaksa's wife's misery is to kill herself by drowning her body in the river to unite with her son, proving to her husband that she is innocent as the river gives out fragrance. Most tragically, her death and misery – not only as a woman but also as a sacrificing mother – are symbolized by beautiful flowers in a painted Ophelia-like manner.

#### Connection of Female Objectification and the Portrayal of Water

The next step draws the connection between female objectification and the portrayal of water. There are several points discovered as follows. First, water is portrayed as a witness of female objectification. Second, water also functions as a medium of resistance to female objectification.

### 1. Water as Witness of Female Objectification

As seen in the light of ecofeminism, the rise of a patriarchal society causes women and nature to be subjugated at the same time. In the three folktales, water, directly and indirectly, witnesses the subtle process of female objectification. In Dayang Sumbi's story, the water witnesses the male desire of Sangkuriang to wed his mother as he gathers the genies and spirits to assist him to control the water by building the lake and boat at the same time. The *Tangkuban Perahu*, or upside-down boat, is a reference to water and the water control system. The shape of water as rivers is witness to the masculine conquest, as the misery of Nawang Wulan and Sidapaksa's wife is symbolically contained within the rivers. The male gaze of Jaka Tarub is inflicted upon the apsaras' (including Nawang Wulan) bodily appeal when they were bathing in the river. Interestingly, the female deities in Indonesian folktales with Hindu backgrounds (including Nawang Wulan), are closely related to water and seen as protectors, such as

protectors of the ocean (2020). However, nature is no longer protected when men start objectifying nature and women at the same time. Returning to the context of Nawang Wulan, the river is the witness of the starting point of female objectification, leading to the woman's misery. On the contrary, in the legend of Banyuwangi, the river is the end point of female objectification and misery suffered by Patih Sidapaksa's wife as she drowned herself in the river, uniting with her son. Thus, the beautiful and fragrant flowers represent her suffering and misery not only as a woman but also as a mother who lives under the subjugation of a patriarchal society. This finding is in line with Nurhayati's study which discusses the issue that many Indonesian folktales objectify women to sustain patriarchal superiority by denying the biological capacity of a woman to give birth and by undermining a woman's social capacity to maintain future generations (Nurhayati, 2019). It can be inferred from the cases of the female characters that their existence is synonymous with the river's existence. Therefore, the water is symbolizing the patriarchal control over women and nature.

Taking the context of the portrayal of water in Southeast Asia, the irrigation system advances greatly in Southeast Asian civilizations. Yet, a significant impact is also experienced by nature and women: as control over water increases, control over women also increases. Here, the patriarchal system shows that water control is associated with male prowess, and unequal gender relation between men and women is established, as seen in the female objectification in the three folktales. This notion is supported by Boomgaard's analysis that water control in the Southeast Asian context shapes how economic, political, cultural, and power relations and behavior are formed from time to time (Boomgaard, 2007, p. 15). As a result, Caretta (2015) describes the unequal political power relations between men and women in irrigation systems as 'hydropatriarchy' since most of the time water management and masculinities often go hand in hand as they are manifested in various forms ranging from farming skills or even engineering projects, or the fact that men are mostly the sole controllers of water government systems in formal or informal institutions (Zwarteveen, Chancellor, Joshi, Asaba, Casarotto & Kappel, Zwarteveen & Boelens and Watson et al., as cited in Caretta, 2015, p. 389).

In addition, Strang (2014) informs that as society developed irrigation, there is a noticeable change in the portrayal of deities; deities began to display gendered personalities instead of being portrayed as totemic animals, bird species, serpents, or earthy greenness (Strang, 2014, p. 93). Thus, the expansion of agriculture and water managerial systems introduced the concepts of property and ownership to people; as a result, it enables a more intensified worship of masculine and powerful deities instead of worshipping goddesses or serpents (Strang, 2014). Strang wrote, commenting upon her explanation of the change from *hydrolatry* to *idolatry*: "Just as Nature [including water] was recast as the subject of male agency, so too were women" (p.98). When nature is objectified, women too also experience objectification at the same time; in this context, water is the witness. Therefore, it is inferred that this phenomenon of female objectification is one of the inevitable consequences of social inequalities caused by a change in the perception and treatment of water by society, as informed by Baldassarre et al. (2019) through the lens of socio-hydrology that hydrological change plays a significant role in shaping human society, including exacerbating social inequality (p.6630).

## 2. Water as a Medium of Resistance against Female Objectification

Another fascinating portrayal of water is that water holds the role of a medium of resistance against female objectification. However, this point only applies to the stories of Dayang Sumbi and the wife of Sidapaksa. In the story of Nawang Wulan, the river only functions as the starting point of female objectification done by Jaka Tarub.

Water acts as a medium of resistance against female objectification when Dayang Sumbi comes up with an impossible request to cancel her son's marriage with her. When her subjectivity is denied and her beauty comes with misery, Dayang Sumbi remains resilient by formulating a water-related strategy. She asks Sangkuriang to build a lake, yet eventually, she stops her son's efforts with the genies and spirits by lighting up the fire – causing them to run away, leaving Sangkuriang alone with his task incomplete. In this context, Dayang Sumbi has placed her hope of refuge towards the power of water.

Dayang Sumbi's action is in line with the pre-irrigation society's perception of water. Throughout human history, there has been a pervasive awareness of water's ominous potential: its ability to submerge or carry away objects, the lurking dangers hidden within its depths, and the perceived divine qualities attributed to water through practices such as 'hydrolatry' which ascribes reverence and significance to water's life-sustaining properties while seeking to appease and honor the powerful water deities (Strang, 2014). For instance, Southeast Asian society perceives that water is a powerful element from their belief of a giant watersnake or *naga* (Boomgaard, 2007); this is shown in the motifs of Indonesian *batik* cloth where figures of Javanese and Chinese *naga* are often present, representing wisdom, strength, and knowledge in the Eastern perspective (Widayat, 2022). In Javanese mysticism, the society believes in the existence of a dangerous deity or goddess living in a palace under the ocean named *Ratu Lara Kidul*, or Goddess of the South Sea where she consists of her victims' bones and hair (Boomgaard, 2007, pp. 4–5).

Yet, hydrolatry experiences a change into idolatry, as Strang (2014) informs previously, as the water control system develops throughout time and offers a more gendered-based, masculine, fierce personas of deities. This is symbolized in Sangkuriang's action of controlling the water with the help of spiritual beings and a systematized way of working to fulfill his masculine conquest over Dayang Sumbi's body. Thus, the image of water as Dayang Sumbi's tool of resistance is changed into Sangkuriang's instrument of invasion over nature and women. This idea of conquest over the female body in association with water is also shown in Nawang Wulan's story, yet there is no direct involvement with water when she eventually discovers her shawl hidden by Jaka Tarub.

Lastly, water as the medium of resistance is depicted in the legend of the Banyuwangi River. Although the river Banyuwangi is deeply correlated to the intentional suicide of Sidapaksa's wife triggered by his objectification done towards her, the river also subtly acts as a channel of protest to prove that Sidapaksa's accusation towards his wife is false; it is a rebellion against the denial of subjectivity. Furthermore, on one hand, the beauty radiated by the flowers in the river may remind one of the wife's misery as a woman and self-sacrificing mother. Yet, on the other hand, the power of the river to produce beautiful, fragrant flowers refers to ancient society's belief that water is also a unique generative element.

Water is uniquely viewed as a dominant force in an animated and sentient environment, possessing agency that may equal or even surpass that of its human inhabitants, thus further emphasizing its influential role as a generative element. Interestingly, water too is universally



recognized as a vital element that sustains life, as evident in various cultural origin myths that depict it as a fundamental force responsible for the creation of life. This idea is exemplified in the Rainbow Serpent of Aboriginal Australia, a serpent made of water that is believed to be the creator of humans, animals, and plant species (Strang, 2014, p.90). The belief in water as the power of life is also shown in the Ur-Babylonians, who believe that the primordial waters of Nun create the earth. Meanwhile, the Egyptians draw close ties between Osiris and the Nile as the river annually floods vegetation. In addition, the Greeks also believe that a serpentine water cycle named Okeanos is the source of freshwater that unites the earth and sky (Strang, 2014, p. 93).

Departing from this thought, in this way, Sidapaksa's threat of death is countered by Sidapaksa's wife's response to 'life'. Her death marks an end of female objectification and also a transformation of the murky and dirty river into clear, fragrant waters. Implicitly, this transformation of the river alludes to the generative ability of women and mothers who have the powerful capacity to bring life as water in this context is associated with the feminine character. Again, this discovery resonates with Nurthayati's aforementioned study that women in folktales are objectified according to the patriarchal society's agenda by denying their biological and sociological capacities to give life to uphold male superiority (Nurhayati, 2019).

## Conclusion

To conclude, the findings and discussion centering on the connection between female objectification and the portrayal of water in the three Javanese folktales have shown several important points as follows. First, female objectification is closely related to the female characters' bodily experiences. Their subjectivity (experience and emotion) is denied in this process, and that their beauty also comes with misery. Furthermore, on one hand, water is portrayed as a witness of the starting point or ending point of female objectification experienced by Dayang Sumbi, Nawang Wulan, and Sidapaksa's wife. On the other hand, the portrayal of water takes a different form where it becomes the medium of the female characters' tool of resistance. Thus, to enrich the scope of this study, future studies can address the pedagogical application of developing eco-feminist critical thinking through folktales in classrooms for the Indonesian context. Finally, it is hoped through this research, readers are eventually equipped to think about the meaning behind every folktale or other form of the narrative surrounding one's environment and re-think the actual meaning of humanity as a whole through the lens of objectification and ecofeminism.

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