

Intersecting Struggles: Reveiling the Ecofeminist Undertones in Local Film *Encret* (2019)



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ABSTRACT: This study examines the Indonesian local film *Encret* (2019) through an ecofeminist lens, revealing the film's powerful critique of the power dynamics and structures that perpetuate environmental exploitation and gender inequality. Utilizing film analysis perspective, the paper analyses the narrative, mise en scène, and character actions to unveil the ecofeminist undertones present in the film. Drawing on Karen J. Warren's perspectives, the analysis explores how *Encret* (2019) challenges dominant power structures through awareness, critiquing patriarchy, and promoting empathy and solidarity. The study also highlights the film's visions of ecofeminist resistance and transformation, emphasizing interconnectedness, challenging traditional gender roles and hierarchies, and fostering empowerment through community action and solidarity. Based on the analysis of the film, it shows that the victims of environmental exploitation, especially in river pollution and sanitation, is a girl, who is the most vulnerable because she is considered to have the lowest hierarchy. The *Encret* provides a satire about a polluted river with bad sanitation wrapped in a comedic element, through its emotionally gripping narrative and striking visuals, *Encret* (2019) contributes to the ongoing struggle against environmental exploitation (polluted river) and gender inequality, inspiring viewers to question and challenge the systems that perpetuate environmental issues.

KEYWORDS: Ecofeminism, Environmental Exploitation, Gender Inequality, Local Film, Sanitation

1. INTRODUCTION

Local films offer invaluable insights into the cultural, social, and environmental dynamics of a region, often illuminating the complexities and nuances of issues that are deeply rooted in the community. Through their unique narratives and storytelling techniques, these films provide a platform for addressing and critiquing pressing socio-environmental concerns. By applying an ecofeminist lens to the analysis of local films, we can gain a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness between gender, power, and the environment, which is often central to the stories they portray (Gaard, 2015).

The cinematic landscape of Indonesia has been enriched by a variety of local productions that shed light on different aspects of the nation's culture and society. The increasing involvement of Indonesian women in the film industry behind the camera as directors, producers, trainers, publicists and distributors since the end of President Suharto's New Order regime (1966-1998) is explored through film viewings and interviews with women in the industry. The article suggests that Indonesian women are creatively using fictional genres to challenge representations of women and present a more nuanced view of individuals and their relationships, while also using documentary niches to examine problems faced by women and other socio-political phenomena resulting in a more diverse and heterogeneous film culture (Hughes-Freeland, 2011). Among these films, *Encret* (2019) directed by Zulfani Yuninda, stands out as a poignant exploration of the complex dynamics within a family and its tragic consequences.

This article examined the film from an ecofeminist perspective, seeking to uncover the intricate connections between the natural environment, gender relations, and social hierarchies that shape the characters' experiences and the outcome of the story. Through a close reading of the film's narrative and visual elements, we will delve into the underlying themes that link the personal tragedy of Sawiyah's untimely sick with broader socio-environmental issues.

Encret (2019) tells the heart-wrenching story of Mahmud, a young man who, against his mother's wishes, challenges his ailing sister Sawiyah to a bicycle race instead of taking care of her. Throughout the race, Sawiyah suffers from worsening symptoms, including severe stomach pain and diarrhea, which ultimately lead to her critical condition on the road due to lack of timely medical intervention. The film explores the characters' relationships with their environment, each other, and their social roles, all of which are deeply intertwined with the tragic events that unfold.

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Ecofeminism, offers a unique lens to analyze Encret (2019) as it seeks to unveil the interconnections between the oppression of women and the exploitation of the natural environment (Warren, 1990). Ecofeminism is a critical framework that explores the intersection of ecological and feminist thought, positing that the oppression of women and the exploitation of the natural environment are inherently linked (Warren, 1990). By examining the ways in which these interconnections manifest in local films, we can uncover the subtle and overt ways in which filmmakers address and challenge the power structures that contribute to gender inequality and environmental degradation (Rocheleau, 2015).

Ecofeminism is a theoretical framework that examines the relationship between the oppression of women and the degradation of nature. This perspective asserts that the exploitation and subjugation of women are inherently linked to the exploitation and degradation of the natural environment. Ecofeminists argue that the patriarchal power structures that perpetuate gender inequality also perpetuate environmental destruction.

One area where the intersection of ecofeminism and healthcare is particularly evident is in the lack of access to healthcare for marginalized communities, particularly women. Women's health issues are often neglected, and they face significant barriers to accessing healthcare services. This lack of access to healthcare is often linked to broader societal issues such as poverty, lack of education, and discrimination.

This article will examine how the film's portrayal of gender dynamics, particularly the responsibilities assigned to Mahmud and Sawiyah, reflect broader socio-cultural norms and how these norms contribute to the tragic outcome of the story. Additionally, we will investigate the ways in which the film's representation of the natural environment serves as a backdrop to the characters' struggles, shedding light on the ecofeminist assertion that environmental degradation and gender inequality are inextricably linked (Plumwood, 1993).

By employing an ecofeminist perspective, this article aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which Encret (2019) weaves together personal tragedy, gender relations, and environmental concerns, ultimately highlighting the urgent need for greater awareness and action on these interconnected issues.

II. METHOD

This study will employ a qualitative research design, utilizing textual and film analysis techniques to examine Encret (2019) through an ecofeminist lens. By analyzing the film's narrative, dialogue, visual elements, and themes, this study aims to reveal the ways in which Encret (2019) engages with ecofeminist concerns and contributes to a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness between gender, power, and the environment. This section will outline the specific steps taken in the research process and explain the rationale behind the chosen methods, drawing upon reputable sources and scholarly discussions on ecofeminism and film analysis (Gaard, 2015; Ivakhiv, 2013; Krippendorff, 2018).

The primary data for this study will consist of the film Encret (2019). To ensure an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the film's narrative and visual elements, multiple viewings of the film will be conducted. Additionally, this study will draw upon secondary sources, such as scholarly articles, film reviews, and interviews with the filmmakers, to provide context and insight into the production and reception of the film.

This method involves the close examination and interpretation of textual data, such as dialogue and narrative structure, to identify themes, patterns, and meaning (Krippendorff, 2018). In this study, textual analysis will be employed to analyze the film's narrative, focusing on the ways in which it engages with ecofeminist themes, such as the interconnectedness between gender, power, and the environment (Warren, 1990). Relevant sections of the film will be transcribed and coded to facilitate the identification and analysis of ecofeminist themes. As a complementary method, film analysis will be employed to examine the film's visual elements, such as mise-en-scène, cinematography, and editing (Ivakhiv, 2013). By analyzing these elements, we can uncover the subtle and overt ways in which the film communicates ecofeminist themes and critiques the power structures that contribute to gender inequality and environmental degradation. The data gathered through textual and film analysis will be synthesized and interpreted to reveal the ways in which Encret (2019) engages with ecofeminist themes and contributes to broader socio-environmental debates. This analysis will be supported by relevant literature on ecofeminism, film studies, and Indonesian local cinema, providing a well-rounded and comprehensive understanding of the film's ecofeminist implications.

III. RESULTS

GENDER, POWER, AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

A. The Role of Patriarchy

In "Encret 2019," the influence of patriarchy is evident in the relationships and power dynamics between the characters. Mahmud, the brother, exercises power over his sister, Sawiyah, by challenging her to a bicycle race despite her illness. This decision reflects

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the ingrained patriarchal belief that men hold authority and control over women and their well-being. Consequently, this power imbalance negatively impacts Sawiyah, as her physical condition worsens throughout the race.

The film also highlights the broader implications of patriarchal systems on the environment. For instance, the bicycle race takes place in a landscape marked by environmental degradation, with scenes of pollution, deforestation, and littering. These visual cues link the patriarchal dominance exhibited by Mahmud to the exploitative behaviors that contribute to environmental destruction. This connection between gender dynamics and environmental degradation echoes ecofeminist critiques of the patriarchal systems that perpetuate both forms of oppression (Warren, 1990).

B. Women's Relationship with Nature and Vulnerability

Sawiyah's deep connection to nature in Encret (2019) reflects a recurring theme in ecofeminist literature, which often posits that women share a unique bond with the environment (Gaard, 2015). Throughout the film, this connection is explored and emphasized, particularly through women interactions with her surroundings. For instance, as Mother of Sawiyah she frequently seeks comfort in nature. There are scenes where she warned Mahmud "did you take bath in the river, Mud? It's raining, the river is dirty, lots of trash..." (figure 1) Whereas Mahmud did not care about this, because he considered river water to be only an object used for bathing, not part of himself. These moments reveal the nurturing and healing qualities of nature and underscore Sawiyah's Mom's innate connection with the environment.



Figure 1. Sawiyah's mother warned Mahmud about the dirty river Timecode 01:31:00

However, the film also highlights the vulnerability of both Sawiyah and nature within a patriarchal society marked by environmental degradation. The landscapes depicted in Encret (2019) shows signs of pollution, deforestation, and waste, reflecting the consequences of exploitative human activities. Sawiyah's deteriorating health and eventual death can be seen as symbolic of the declining state of the environment. As a female character, she bears the brunt of these ecological issues, a reflection of the ways in which women and marginalized communities are disproportionately affected by environmental crises (Warren, 1990).

Moreover, the film demonstrates that the patriarchal system not only oppresses women like Sawiyah but also perpetuates environmental degradation. Mahmud's decision to challenge his sick sister to a bicycle race exemplifies the patriarchal disregard for both women's well-being and the environment's fragile state as shown in figure 2. These parallel highlights the interconnected nature of women's vulnerability and the vulnerability of the natural world. Encret (2019) delves into the complex relationship between women, nature, and vulnerability by portraying Sawiyah's deep connection to the environment and her simultaneous fragility. By examining these themes, the film contributes to the ecofeminist discourse and underscores the need for a more compassionate and equitable approach to both human and environmental well-being.



Figure 2. Mahmud, Sawiyah's brother and Rosidi participated in a bicycle race Timecode 04:48:00

THE CONSEQUENCES OF ENVIRONMENTAL EXPLOITATION

The film's portrayal of environmental exploitation offers a stark commentary on the consequences of unsustainable human activities and their impact on vulnerable communities. The consequences of environmental exploitation, especially in river pollution in the film can be analyzed through two primary aspects: the direct effects on the health and well-being of the characters and the broader implications for society and the planet.

A. Impacts on Women and Marginalized Communities

Encret 2019 effectively highlights the ways in which environmental exploitation disproportionately affects women and marginalized communities. Sawiyah's illness, which is exacerbated by the polluted and degraded environment, serves as a powerful symbol of

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the suffering experienced by those most vulnerable to the effects of environmental degradation. Her weakened state throughout the bicycle race and her ultimate death underscores the tragic consequences of unsustainable practices and the urgency of addressing environmental issues. By depicting the struggles faced by the characters, the film provides a microcosm of the larger issues faced by vulnerable populations in the region. Jember, located in East Java, Indonesia, is a region known for its agriculture, particularly tobacco, coffee, and rubber plantations. However, unsustainable agricultural practices, such as the overuse of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, have led to environmental degradation in the area. These practices have direct and indirect consequences for women and marginalized communities in Jember, as exemplified in the film.

The polluted water and degraded environment in Jember could be the source of Sawiyah's sickness, symbolizing the risks that local women and marginalized communities face due to exposure to pollution and contaminated resources. These health impacts further perpetuate cycles of poverty and disempowerment, as the affected individuals may struggle to access proper healthcare and maintain their livelihoods.

Encrets portrays the social and economic impacts of environmental exploitation on the characters and their community. The landscapes in Encret (2019) show evidence of resource extraction, deforestation, and pollution, all of which can lead to the loss of livelihoods, displacement, and increased poverty. These negative outcomes further exacerbate the vulnerability of women and marginalized populations, perpetuating cycles of oppression and disempowerment. The film also touches on the social impacts of environmental exploitation in Jember. The suffering of Sawiyah and the community's inability to protect and care for her can be seen as a reflection of the broader social consequences of environmental degradation. The burden of environmental exploitation often falls disproportionately on women and marginalized communities, who may face social exclusion, gender-based violence, and disempowerment as a result of their precarious circumstances.

B. The Significance of Sawiyah's Suffering

Every single element that appears within the frame contributes to the overall effect of the image, and directors select, arrange, and coordinate these elements in order to create an expressive whole (Bordwell, 2013) like Sawiyah's suffering throughout the film serves as a potent symbol of the consequences of environmental exploitation. As her health deteriorates, Sawiyah's struggle highlights the immediate and long-term effects of environmental degradation on human health, including the spread of disease, increased mortality rates, and diminished quality of life. Her tragic fate serves as a cautionary tale, warning of the dire consequences



Figure 3. Polluted River Timecode 08:29:00

of unsustainable human activities on both the environment and the well-being of vulnerable populations. In Encret (2019) Sawiyah's suffering serves as a potent symbol of the consequences of environmental exploitation, as well as the plight of women and marginalized communities. By examining the film's mise-en-scène, we can find the significance of Sawiyah's suffering and its role in communicating the film's central themes.



Figure 4. Sawiyah who is suffering from diarrhea Timecode 05:36:00

Setting and Environment: The settings chosen for Encret (2019) effectively highlight the degraded state of the environment in Jember. Scenes of polluted waterways, deforested land, and litter-strewn landscapes create a visually striking backdrop for Sawiyah's struggles. These settings not only emphasize her vulnerability but also serve as a constant reminder of the environmental destruction that directly and indirectly contributes to her suffering.

Lighting and Color: The film's use of lighting and color plays a crucial role in conveying the atmosphere of despair and hopelessness surrounding Sawiyah's suffering. The natural lighting, which often appears dim and overcast, reflects the bleakness of her situation

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and the oppressive weight of environmental degradation. Additionally, the muted color palette, characterized by earthy tones and subdued hues, underscores the film's somber mood and the gravity of its themes.

Costume and Makeup: Sawiyah's costume and makeup further communicate her vulnerability and the consequences of environmental exploitation. Her disheveled appearance, simple clothing, and increasingly pale complexion as the film progresses all serve to emphasize her deteriorating health and the severity of her suffering. These visual cues also highlight the ways in which women and marginalized communities bear the brunt of environmental destruction and its repercussions.

Composition and Framing: The composition and framing of the film's scenes often place Sawiyah in positions of vulnerability and powerlessness. For example, eye-angle shots that depict her struggling to keep up with her brother during the bicycle race visually convey her subordinate position in both their relationship and the larger patriarchal society as shown in figure 5. In contrast, high-angle shots of Sawiyah looking up at the sky or seeking solace in nature suggest her yearning for relief and escape from her suffering.

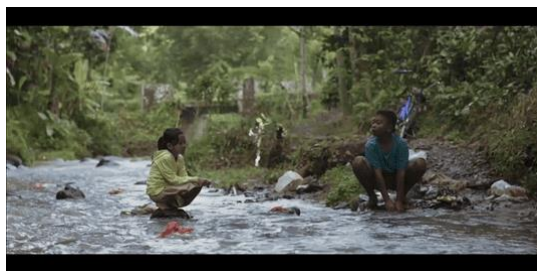


Figure 5. Sawiyah was defecating in the river Timecode 08:29:00

Acting and Movement: Sawiyah's physicality and expressions throughout Encret (2019) effectively convey her pain, vulnerability, and desperation. Her labored movements, pained facial expressions, and moments of emotional distress all serve to underscore the gravity of her suffering and its symbolic significance within the film's narrative.

The mise-en-scène of Encret (2019) plays a crucial role in communicating the significance of Sawiyah's suffering and its connection to the film's central themes of environmental exploitation and the oppression of women and marginalized communities. Director Zulfani Yuninda employs various visual and narrative techniques to emphasize the ecofeminist themes in Encret (2019). The use of natural landscapes as the setting for the bicycle race serves to accentuate the characters' connection with the environment, while also highlighting the destructive consequences of human actions on nature. The uphill struggle faced by Sawiyah during the race can be interpreted as a visual metaphor for the uphill battle faced by women and the environment in a patriarchal society (Plumwood, 1993). By carefully crafting the visual elements of the film, Zulfani effectively underscore the urgent need for change in both societal power structures and our relationship with the natural world.

IV. DISCUSSION

INTERCONNECTEDNESS AND THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Encret (2019) poignantly illustrates the interconnectedness of environmental exploitation, gender inequality, and the suffering of marginalized communities. By examining the complex relationships between these themes, the film encourages the audience to recognize the pressing need for change in societal attitudes and approaches to both social and environmental issues.

A. Challenging Dominant Power Structures

Utilizing bell hooks's perspective on challenging dominant power structures, this section of the analysis focuses on the ways Encret (2019) addresses the interconnected issues of environmental exploitation and gender inequality. hooks (2000) advocates for transformative pedagogy as a means to address issues of power, privilege, and oppression through education, awareness, critiquing patriarchy, and promoting empathy and solidarity. In the following subsections, we examine how Encret (2019) incorporates these elements to effectively challenge the dominant power structures that perpetuate inequality.

The film utilizes Sawiyah's suffering and Mahmud's dismissive attitude as powerful educational tools, raising awareness about the consequences of environmental degradation and patriarchal systems. Through its emotionally gripping narrative, Encret (2019) encourages viewers to critically examine the power dynamics at play and question the societal norms that contribute to the marginalization of women and the exploitation of the environment. hooks (2000) emphasizes the importance of critiquing and dismantling patriarchal systems to challenge dominant power structures. In Encret (2019) the detrimental impact of patriarchal attitudes on women and vulnerable communities is showcased through the portrayal of Mahmud's dismissive behavior and the tragic consequences for Sawiyah. The film underscores the urgency of addressing patriarchal systems that perpetuate gender inequality and exacerbate the effects of environmental degradation on marginalized populations.

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Empathy and solidarity play a significant role in the struggle against oppressive systems (hooks, 2000). Encret (2019) generates empathy for Sawiyah and the community in Jember by vividly depicting their suffering due to environmental pollution and patriarchal attitudes. By fostering empathy, the film encourages viewers to recognize the interconnectedness of these issues and inspires them to challenge dominant power structures in pursuit of social and environmental justice. Encret (2019) in conclusion effectively challenges dominant power structures by incorporating bell hooks's perspective on education, awareness, critiquing patriarchy, and promoting empathy and solidarity. Through its powerful narrative, the film contributes to the ongoing struggle against environmental exploitation and gender inequality, inspiring viewers to question and challenge the systems that perpetuate these issues.

In order to understand the ecofeminist implications of Encret (2019) it is crucial to examine the roles assigned to the two central characters, Mahmud and Sawiyah. Mahmud, as the male protagonist, embodies the traditional gender expectations placed upon men in Indonesian society. His decision to challenge Sawiyah to a bicycle race, despite her illness, can be seen as a manifestation of the masculine desire to assert control and dominance over both women and the natural environment.

Sawiyah, on the other hand, represents the marginalized and vulnerable aspects of society and nature. Her physical suffering and eventual death serve as a metaphor for the consequences of environmental degradation and gender inequality. As an ecofeminist symbol, Sawiyah's plight exposes the interconnectedness of women's oppression and environmental destruction (Warren, 1990).

Furthermore, the film's narrative structure, which revolves around the tragic consequences of Mahmud's decision to challenge his sister, illustrates the inherent dangers of ignoring the interconnectedness between human actions, social hierarchies, and environmental degradation. The untimely death of Sawiyah serves as a stark reminder of the need for a more holistic and compassionate approach to addressing issues of gender inequality and environmental sustainability.

B. Visions of Ecofeminist Resistance and Transformation

Karen J. Warren (2000) proposes an ecofeminist ethic that emphasizes the interconnectedness of all forms of life and advocates for an ethic of care, which seeks to nurture and protect both the environment and marginalized communities. In Encret (2019) the consequences of environmental degradation and patriarchal systems on Sawiyah and the community in Jember illustrate the interconnected nature of these issues. The film encourages viewers to recognize the importance of an ethic of care as a means to challenge the dominant power structures that perpetuate environmental exploitation and gender inequality.



Figure 1. The women (mothers) help Sawiyah to go to the health center (Puskesmas) Timecode 18:23:00

Warren (2000) argues that ecofeminism necessitates challenging traditional gender roles and hierarchies in order to create a more equitable and sustainable world. Encret (2019) critiques the patriarchal attitudes and behaviors exhibited by Mahmud, demonstrating the importance of challenging traditional gender roles and hierarchies in the pursuit of social and environmental justice. By highlighting the consequences of patriarchal systems on women and the environment, the film underscores the need for a transformative approach that empowers women and promotes gender equality. ecofeminist resistance and transformation require community action and solidarity in order to effectively challenge dominant power structures. Encret (2019) illustrates the potential for empowerment through community action by depicting the struggles faced by Sawiyah and the community in Jember. The film encourages viewers to recognize the importance of collective action and solidarity in addressing environmental exploitation and gender inequality, fostering a sense of hope and empowerment in the face of adversity.

Encret (2019) presents visions of ecofeminist resistance and transformation through Karen J. Warren's perspective, emphasizing interconnectedness, challenging traditional gender roles and hierarchies, and promoting empowerment through community action and solidarity. Through its powerful narrative, the film contributes to the ongoing struggle against environmental exploitation and gender inequality, inspiring viewers to question and challenge the systems that perpetuate these issues.

V. CONCLUSION

This study has unveiled the ecofeminist undertones present in the Indonesian film Encret (2019) through a careful analysis based on film analysis perspective. By exploring various aspects of the film, such as the narrative, mise en scène, and the implications of the

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characters' actions, this study has illuminated the ways in which Encret (2019) addresses the interconnected issues of environmental exploitation and gender inequality.

Throughout the analysis, the film has been shown to effectively challenge dominant power structures by raising awareness of the consequences of environmental degradation and patriarchal systems, critiquing patriarchy, and promoting empathy and solidarity. Moreover, the study has demonstrated how the film presents visions of ecofeminist resistance and transformation, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all forms of life, challenging traditional gender roles and hierarchies, and promoting empowerment through community action and solidarity.

Encret (2019) serves as a powerful critique of the power dynamics and structures that perpetuate environmental exploitation and gender inequality, contributing to the ongoing struggle against these issues. The film's emotionally gripping narrative and striking visuals inspire viewers to question and challenge the systems that perpetuate these issues, ultimately fostering a sense of hope and empowerment in the face of adversity. Encret (2019) stands as an important contribution to the growing body of ecofeminist cinema, highlighting the potential of film as a medium to raise awareness, inspire change, and promote social and environmental justice.

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