

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1.The Background of the Research

In the past time, women in patriarchal cultures are portrayed as enervate creatures. They are lack of education. Other than that, they also have to work at home and take care for children. According to an article by Amy M. Blackstone entitled “Gender Roles and Society” (2003) said that Gender roles are shaped because of the expectation of the social environment for each gender (335). The expectations of men which they are known as controller, confident, and competent. To build those expectations, men have the responsible to adjust it in society. Like men, society expects that women have to stay at home and pursue the rules in society.

Women are known as enervate creatures in the social environment; besides, women have their way of showing capability. Women as humans have an affection for nature. I can recognize it from the way women preserve their territory or how they treat nature. They are cognizant of nature for example awareness of environmental cleanliness. That is a small thing but not all humans habituate it in this world.

In literature, women's role toward nature is captured in an American novel entitled *Sula* by Toni Morrison and an Indonesian novel entitled *Tanah Tabu* by Anindita S.Thayf. First, *Sula* published in November 1973. It is the second novel by the author after she published *The Bluest Eye* in 1970. With her famous name Toni Morrison, Chloe Anthony Wofford Morrison was an American novelist, essayist, an editor of some books and also a professor in college. She was born in Lorain, Ohio, and she had graduated from Howard University in 1953. Morrison got some notable awards like the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the National Humanities Medal, the Nobel Prize in Literature, and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

*Tanah Tabu* was written by Anindita S.Thayf published in Jakarta, 2009, constituted Pemenang Sayembara Novel DKJ 2008 and contained 189 pages. It has translated into the English by Dalang Publisher, one of the American publishers entitled *Daughters of Papua* (2014). The author comes up with the story of live and the women's role toward nature in Papua. She was born in Makassar, April 5, 1978 and she was graduated from Electro Engineering, Hasanudin University in Makassar. Thayf has published some novels which are *Keajaiban Untuk Ila* (2005), *Tirai Hujan* (2006), *Dunia Pink-Pink* (2006), *Aku Enggak Mau Mati Jomblo* (2006), *Jejak Kala* (2009), and *R'nB : Love in the jungle* (2008).

*Sula* and *Tanah Tabu* are novels that concern and raise the problem regarding nature. There are some interesting issues to discuss, such as the men and women's role toward nature and how the women deal with their lives in the society that practiced strong patriarchal system. However, the role of women in both novels are the representation of the reality of environmental conditions in the United States in the 20th century and Indonesia, especially in Papua in the early 21st century.

*Sula* talks about a settlement in the hills called Bottom, which is an all-black neighbourhood. This hill is above the once all-white town of Medalion, Ohio. White people present this hilly land to the black slave, convincing the land was worthwhile by claiming that it is closer to god because it is higher. Since that time, the community has a good life in Bottom. Besides the good life in the community, it has one girl that survives her life in the Bottom which applied patriarchal system in their society. It gives the limitation for women to do everything and many rules that they have to follow in their life. Sula is a woman who is opposed to patriarchal system, and she wants to reconstruct the perception of women in the Bottom society.

Meanwhile, *Tanah Tabu* tells about how the Papua's women try to take care of their culture and try to preserve their territory from the greedy people and want to control the land of Papua. This novel expresses the unequal position between

men and women in Tanah Baliem that applied the strong patriarchal system. Therefore, unequal rights between men and women are seen in this novel. Mabel is the main character who deals with oppression by her husband nor although the soldier in her whole life.

These novels voiced how the women confront the strong patriarchal system in their territory and provide how they survive the world without depending on men in their lives. The differentiation between men and women's role is essential to investigate in these novels because I would like to uncover how the patriarchal system in the United States notably in Ohio and Indonesia specifically in Papua gives the impact to the gender roles in society and also to reveal the comparison between the patriarchal system in both nation. So, the tittle of this research is **“The Role of Women in *Sula* and *Tanah Tabu* Toward Nature: An Ecofeminism Reading.”**

## 1.2. Identification of the Problems

*Sula* and *Tanah Tabu* imply deep views regarding how the men and women's role in the social environment, the differences and similarities of women's role in these novels. *Sula* showed how she and her family included her best friend, survive the patriarchal system. *Tanah Tabu* also shows Mabel's experience to pass all the oppression that happens to her for a long time which is caused by patriarchal system.

Those novels specifically potray the gender of the roles in society. I argue that women and men's roles are affected by forceful patriarchal system that present in the novels. I am interested to compare *Sula* and *Tanah Tabu* because it gives the knowledge regarding how the patriarchal system applied in two different nations and also how the patriarchal system gives an impact to the men and women's role in the society.

## 1.3. Review of Related Literature

To support this research, I have read some articles and journals that I got from the internet and the other sources that discuss the same novels: *Sula* and *Tanah Tabu*, the same topic or issue which is the role of women toward nature and has the same theory ecofeminism. The purpose is to make me take more profound understanding to explain the issues.

First, an article was written by Laila Rosdiana, Imam Basuki, and Erna Cahyani entitled "Sula's Rebellion Against the Black Conventional Values as the Indicator of her Feminist Spirit in Toni Marrison's *Sula*" (*Publika Budaya*, vol. 2, no.2, 2014, pp.43-48), they claim that the skin colour would have an impact on a human's life. It means that skin colour is one of the factors that can establish how other people treat you in society (Rosdiana et al. 45). Black and white people treat differently because of racism that happened in there. By combining marxism and afro-American feminism, they got the result that black women suffer two things in society which are racism and patriarchal system. From this article I comprehend the feminist spirit as seen in *Sula* to obtain equal position with men.

Second, an article was published in *Madah* entitled "Perjuangan Perempuan Papua Dalam Novel *Namaku Teweraut Dan Tanah Tabu*" (2018) by Sarip Hidayat. The writer claimed that both novels contain Papua women's life by following the rules in their tradition. He stated that in these two novels, the women are aware that education is one of the best solutions to get a better life, and it can change their future and some aspects of their lives. Education is the way how the women can get the same position as the men in the society (Hidayat 147). From his statement, *Tanah Teweraut* and *Tanah Tabu* have the exact solutions to get an equal right between women and men. In my mind, the condition of the social environment in Papua is apprehensive because many Papua's children can not get an education even though they know that education is essential for their future, but the government gives them hard access when they want to apply in school.

Third, entitled "One and One make One: A Metacritical and Psychoanalytic Reading of Friendship in Toni Marrison's *Sula*" (1993) by Alisha R. Coleman

published in *CLA Journal* talks about psychoanalysis in *Sula's* novel by Toni Morrison. According to this article, the writer said that Nel and Sula are two characters that present two parts of psychology. Nel is a good girl who always follows the rules in Bottom society; it is included in the superego. Unlike Nel, Sula presents the desire of humans to get equal rights with men. She wants to be strong and wants to prove that women have the same position as other people. I approve her statement because Nel is a woman that follows the norms in Bottom. On the other hand, Sula tries to avoid it and never follow women's rules in Bottom. In my view, the way of the researcher explains the point of this article is well. She has explained the point with the shared word and made the readers easier to find the point from this article.

For the next review is an article coming from *Semiotika: Jurnal Ilmu Sastra Dan Linguistik* written by Moh. Badrus Solichin entitled "Ketika Alam dan Perempuan Lembah Baliem Diperkosa oleh Antroposentrisme Kapitalis: Kajian Ekofeminisme dalam Novel *Tanah Tabu*"(2018). The author claims that Mabel's removal from nature will make it easier for greedy people to exploit all the Baliem Valley's treasure. Meanwhile, Mabel is positioned as a resistance character because Dani women still maintain and support feminism and conservatism towards their ancestors (49). I assume that if the main character has been removed, it will greatly affect the course of life in nature. In *Tanah Tabu* Mabel dedicate herself to be an protection in territory. She has a big power than other women in Tanah Baliem. When Mabel has been removed by the colony, it is the time for invaders colonizing the land of Papua easily. Unfortunately, the researcher just give a little bit information regarding the capitalistic anthropocentrism, the researcher focuses to expound the theory which is ecofeminism by Vandana Shiva.

Fifth, it was written by Izzul Millati Umami (2018)," Women Struggles Against Oppressions as Viewed by Transformative Ecofeminism in Han Kang's *The Vegetarian*." Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim. This thesis focuses on oppression and transformative ecofeminism. The researcher wants to uncover what kind of oppression the main character suffers in

Han Kang's *The Vegetarian* and explains what factors make the main character against the oppression. The writer said that "Women have their own rights and movement which make them can struggle for their rights." Movement is essential to women to strive the equal rights between men and women. If they are able to speak loudly about their rights, it can change the condition. Besides of the complete explanation, unfortunately some analysis in this thesis just retell the condition in the story as the researcher's mentions before.

The last review comes from *Vivid: Journal of Language and Literature* entitled "The Mutual Relationship between Human and Nature on *The Secret Garden* and *Sarongge: An Ecocritical Reading*" (2009) by Ignadhitya Herdiana and Eva Najma. The issue in this article is the mutual relationship between humans and nature towards the mental and physical healing of humans and the relation to reality. The characters (Mary and Colin) do not experience any significant mentally and physically changes from their outdoor interaction until they are in the garden. While the second novel *Sarongge*, the forest they take care of becoming the media of Husin and Karen to fulfill their needs. The author of this novel said that nature tends to give an element of joy, freedom, peace, and health to the characters while interacting with nature. My conclusion is between nature and humans have deep relations each other. Besides of nature presents all human's need, it can be medicine for human to heal disease.

#### 1.4 Research Questions

There are several issues about the role of women in *Sula* and *Tanah Tabu* toward nature. To limit the scope, I have made two research questions, they are :

1. How do the authors depict women and men's role toward nature in *Sula* by Toni Morrison and *Tanah Tabu* by Anindita S.Thayf?
2. What are the differences and similarities of women's role in *Sula* by Toni Morrison and *Tanah Tabu* by Anindita S.Thayf?

#### 1.5. Scope of the Research

This thesis focuses on the role of women toward nature in *Sula* and *Tanah Tabu*. Having different cultures, languages, and nations I think it will make different roles of women in the United States and Indonesia, especially Papua. I analyze these novels from society because, in my opinion, the situation in this novel is based on the situation that is existence at that time. What distinguishes of this research is I correlate the novel's story and the reality of women's condition in society in the United States in 20th century and Papua in 21st century.

### 1.6. Objectives of the Research

*Sula* and *Tanah Tabu* have the same issues which is how the women try to survive their life in the strong patriarchal system, and the authors from these novels demonstrate the women's role in the United State notably in Medallion Ohio and Indonesia especially Papua. I think because of these novels show the same thing, it will be a good project if I compare both novels to identify some points which are: first, the differences of the women and men's role toward nature in the novel *Sula* and *Tanah Tabu*. Second, to analyze the differences and similarities in women's role in Medallion, Ohio, and Tanah Baliem, Indonesia. After I have analyzed these novels, they give the knowledge regarding how the patriarchal system applied in two different nations and also how the patriarchal system gives an impact to the men and women's role in the society.

