

Genesis Fertility View from the Perspective of Ecofeminism

Roescoe Wignjodipuro

Faculty of Law Universitas Warmadewa Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia

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Corresponding author: Roescoe Wignjodipuro, Faculty of Law Universitas Warmadewa Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia

Abstract

Ecofeminism is the third wave of feminism, and it is the latest direction and research focus of literary criticism to discuss female sexism with the combination of ecological view and female. The phenomenon of female discrimination in the bible has always been the focus of feminists and scholars who study gender discrimination. From the perspective of eco-feminism, this paper takes Sarah, rebekah, Rachel and Leah as examples to explore the discrimination against women contained in the concept and phenomenon of female fertility in the genesis.

Keywords

Ecofeminism, Patriarchy, Childbearing, Discrimination against Female

1. Introduction

The concept of Ecofeminism was first proposed in 1974 by the French feminist thinker Françoise d'Eaubonne in her book «feminism · destruction», she proposed to combine the views of ecologism and feminism and mobilize and unite women to launch the ecological movement of protecting nature and saving the earth. The idea got many supports from feminist researchers, as a new kind of feminism research paradigm quickly spread to areas such as literature, philosophy, art, from the view point of protecting ecological natural feminism, attacked the western promoting center of patriarchy and anthropocentrism, reveal the level of thinking, value dualism in the western culture for the oppression of women and nature, through analyzing women and natural similarities as well as the inner male rule and the rule of human nature of inner link, maintaining and promoting women's rights and natural resume [1] [2].

Nature is the mother of all things, and women are the mother of human beings. From the perspective of sexism, this paper discusses the phenomenon of biblical misogyny with the example of Rachel and Leah's view on fertility in genesis.

2. Ecological feminism and the concept of fertility

Mary Daly mentioned in the transcendence of the father that the relationship between god and all things is "i-it", "ego-other" and "subject-object" [2]. In the binary opposition relation, compared with human and male, nature and female are both excluded and belittled as "others". Western "Logocentrism" or "Phallogocentrism" emphasizes that the world is dominated by men, and all the explanations and meanings of the world are determined by men. What it represents is actually the patriarchal centralism, and what it shows is a world dominated by the male-centered mode of thinking. The male image of god in the bible well illustrates the fact that it is both a theocratic text and a patriarchal text. The world is the difference between "I" and "it". Males are the "self" of the world of "Phallogocentrism", while females are the "other-me" of binary opposition. Men dominate and

dominate, and women are the objects of domination and dominion. Women are often marginalized in the bible, and their voices are weak and feeble against the background full of theocracy and male voices. The concise description of a small number of women is also for the purpose of connecting the story with nature, and most of them are for the role of family continuity. In a patriarchal society, the core value of women is to bear children and carry on the family line for men. Women's ability to conceive is highlighted and advocated, which seems to be the only value of the existence of women and the only value that women are highly valued in society. As the mother of all things, nature coincides with the maternal value of women. Because of their isomorphism, ecofeminism and feminism converge and overlap, and ecofeminism and ecofeminism criticism paradigm are constructed.

The birth and breeding process of women becomes the process of self-redemption. Women must be reborn through suffering and regain social respect and family status. Fertility has changed from an ability born by women to a responsibility and responsibility. If a woman cannot fulfill the responsibility and complete the process of fertility in her whole life, then she has not completed the process of self-redemption and failed to restore her status and dignity on earth. Obviously, women are deprived of rights and lose the right to speak when they are equal partners of men. Women's womb is the core of women's ability. The exaggeration and concentration of fertility and functions weaken women's characteristics as independent people. From the perspective of feminism and sexism, the advantages of men are highlighted. They are born to be independent person, not bound by family, marriage or birth. In order to be fully human and independent, women have to go through the process of reproduction, which is obviously not in the balance with men. Such a situation is obviously biased towards men and derogatory to women, which is a typical manifestation of gender discrimination. The author will analyze the manifestation of female sexism in the bible from the birth path of female ancestor in the book of genesis combined with eco-feminism.

3. Fertility in Genesis

In Genesis 9, after the flood, god blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. All the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air will be afraid of you. Deliver into your hands all the creatures of the earth and all the fish of the sea. Every animal that comes along may be your food, as I have given you the garden plants." (gen 9:1-3). The fact that women are used as reproductive tools stems from their subordination to men, their relationship in marriage and their relationship in the family. In the patriarchal society, women and nature were both degraded and became "others". Men deny both nature and women. Having children and reproducing offspring becomes the only task and function of women in genesis, and their value in the text will gradually disappear with the birth of children, even in the subsequent genealogical narration.

Jacob's wives -- Rachel and Leah

In the book of Genesis, Jacob cheated the blessing that should belong to his brother Esau, and he was afraid that his brother would seek revenge, so he had to leave his hometown and went to his mother Rebekah's brother Laban. Laban met Laban's daughter Rachel and fell in love with her. Jacob was willing to work for Laban for seven years and seven years in order to marry Rachel. Jacob loved Rachel and not Leah, but God had mercy on Leah and kept her fertile, but Rachel was barren. "And when the Lord saw that Leah was not well favoured, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren" (gen. 29:31). Leah gave birth to four sons at the very beginning. Although Rachel is Jacob's love, but has not been able to get pregnant and give birth to a child, she tried to follow the example of Sarah, through her handmaid to complete the mother's duties, to establish a family property. Her servant Bilhah did not disappoint her and gave birth to two sons in succession. But Leah did not give up. She followed in her sister's footsteps and also had two sons born to Jacob by her maid Zilpah. And Leah bore two sons, and a daughter. Finally, by the grace of God, Rachel became pregnant. "God remembered Rachel and answered her and opened her womb. And Rachel conceived, and bare a son, and said, God hath taken away my reproach" (G30:22-23). The word shame is used here, incapacity to have children, incapacity to be a mother, which seems to Rachel, or to the social context of the day, to be a disgrace and a lack of

social status, as if women had no other function than to have children, no other identity than that of a wife or a mother. This is obviously a great disparagement and parochization of women.

Rachel and Leah, two sisters who spent their lives fighting for children, were locked into Jacob's wife's social relationships. Their sense of self is solidified and identified in the "other" culture at the center of patriarchy. Patriarchal culture frames women in the social and economic relations and the family relationship between husband and wife, unable to build a society of equality and harmony between men and women. Ecofeminism emphasizes the harmony between man and nature and between men and women. Men and women belong to nature and material, human and spiritual existence, there is no good or bad points, high or low points. Rachel struggled to bear children all her life and died in childbirth. Here, women's natural fertility is not respected, but becomes a burden and fatal force, which is a deformed description of the human nature endowed by nature.

4. Conclusion

Rachel and Leah are just a few of the many women in the Bible who are famous and well documented as the ancestors of Genesis. However, relative to their husbands, they merely foil, is raising children helper for her husband, is God promised Abraham and his descendants many channels, describing their length is relatively less, all tells the story of their process of a wife motherhood, seems to be that is the only value of their existence. Of course, in addition to the them, another famous woman in Genesis, Tamar, also went to the trouble of pretending to be a prostitute and having sex with her father-in-law, Judah, in order to fulfill her reproductive duty. Abraham's two nameless daughters, including his nephew Lot, complete their reproductive duties despite incest with their father. Such stories may sound absurd now, but they are not surprising in the context of the way women are portrayed in the Bible. In the very beginning of the world, the woman was as the helper of the man, from the man's body of a rib was created, such a way of existence, decided that the female is subordinate to the male existence. Women are out of men, and to return to men, so marriage is a woman to find the inevitable way home. And the birth of children is a woman because of the sin against God, abetting men, to obtain redemption only way. Without these two paths, a woman will not be a perfect human being, nor will she be spiritually enhanced by God's forgiveness. Using procreation to imprison and devalue women is a manifestation of discrimination against women in the Bible. The idea of male domination, as advocated by Phallogocentrism, is the object of criticism of ecofeminism. As a model of realism, the Bible reflects the ideology of the ruling class and the power class at that time. Discrimination against women had already existed when it entered the patriarchal society and the patriarchal center. Hopefully, with the development of ecofeminist research and the progress of gender equality, the phenomenon of female sexism can be alleviated, and new interpretation and understanding of biblical sexism can be achieved.

References

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