

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Subjugation of Women and Nature in Buck's *The Good Earth* and Roy's *The God of Small Things*

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, T. U.

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in ENGLISH**

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July 2024

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled “Subjugation of Women and Nature in Buck's *The Good Earth* and Roy's *The God of Small Things*” submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu is an original work written under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota, Head, Central Department of English, Kirtipur. No part of it has ever been submitted to any university before for any degree or published in any form before. I shall be solely responsible if any evidence is found against my declaration.

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Letter of Recommendation

Rajan Gwachha has completed his dissertation entitled “Subjugation of Women and Nature in Buck's *The Good Earth* and Roy's *The God of Small Things*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from January 2019 to June 2024 carefully. I hereby recommend his dissertation to be submitted for the final viva voce.

.....

Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota

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Letter of Approval

This dissertation entitled “Subjugation of Women and Nature in Buck's *The Good Earth* and Roy's *The God of Small Things*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Rajan Gwachha has been approved by the undersigned members of Research Committee.

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Acknowledgements

In an academic pursuit like this research work, inspiration is more imperative than perspiration, so I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota, my thesis supervisor and Head of the Central English Department, T. U. Kirtipur, for his inspiring advice to select an environmental study and for being supportive in the implementation of this project.

I am indebted to my respected professors, Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi, Prof. Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Prof. Dr. Anirudra Thapa, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hari Adhikari, Prof. Dr. Beerendra Pandey and Assis. Prof. Dr. Shiv Rijal who taught me to become critical and confident during my M.Phil study with their valuable insights. I am equally thankful to Prof. Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, Prof. Dr. Dhurba Karki, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Toya Nath Upadhyay, Assis. Prof. Dr. Komal Phuyal, and Assis. Prof. Pradip Raj Giri for their warm support and scholarly suggestions for this thesis. I am humbled by the scholars who shared intellectual ideas and platforms, both formally and informally, across the program who truly contributed to the realization of this project.

Last but not the least, I would like to express my gratitude to my seniors, colleagues, and classmates who have inspired me. My better half, Nabina, deserves her fair share in this matter.

Rajan Gwachha

July 2024

Abstract

This research work entitled “Subjugation of Women and Nature in Buck's *The Good Earth* and Roy's *The God of Small Things*” explores the domination done to nature and women in both novels using ecofeminist perspectives of Carolyn Merchant, Karen Warren, Vandana Shiva, Maria Mies, Greta Gaard and so on. Ecofeminism is the theory that shows the connection between nature and women and tries to end all kind of suppression done to both of them. Patriarchy and capitalism are the key agents of subjugation of women and nature along with the idea of hierarchical thinking and value dualism that lie at the root of environmental degradation as well as social injustice.

Buck's novel *The Good Earth* shows how women are presented as inferior, uncivilized people and slaves to the powerful men of the society. Men consider both land (nature) and women as their sole property which they can use in any way they like. In the novel, *The Good Earth*, it's not just land even women are sold and bought as animals by so-called superior men in that society. Buying and Selling of both land and women are common in practice. The major character Olan was sold to Hwang family when she was young, later Hwang family sold her to Wang Lung, who later became her husband. This is a cruel practice that was prevalent in pre-revolutionary China. Women are given less value. Girls are sold to the rich families for few pence. The birth of sons is taken as good luck for the family whereas the birth of daughter is taken as bad luck to the family.

Similarly, in the novel, *The God of Small Things*, both Meenachal River and Ammu are the two pathetic figures of the novel. Both are the victim of patriarchal mindset of the society. Both Ammu and Mammachi are beaten by their husbands. It illustrates how patriarchal society creates boundaries to the women and how its

protagonists Ammu, Mammachi and Rahel strive to dismantle those preset boundaries. As the principal theoretical tool employed in the thesis is ecofeminism, this thesis also shows how the Meenachal River and surrounding nature are polluted and destroyed by anthropocentric human beings.

This project tries to deconstruct the anthropocentric perspective of men and shows the need of social and environmental justice for harmonious society. For the harmonious and egalitarian relationship between Nature and Culture and for the suitable environment and just society, injustice done to both women and nature should be ended. Anthropocentric exploitation of nature and all kinds of domination in the name of race, gender, class and caste should be eliminated.

Key Words: Ecofeminism, Patriarchal domination, Hierarchal society, Pollution, Equality

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Chapter-I

Introduction: *The Good Earth* and *The God of Small Things* and Ecofeminism

This study attempts to analyze the eco-feminist issues that are depicted in Pearl S. Buck's masterpiece *The Good Earth* (1931), a novel that got the Pulitzer Prize in the year of its publication and later became chief work for achieving the prestigious Nobel Prize in literature in 1938 for her writings set in China and Arundhati Roy's debut novel, *The God of small Things* (1997) by showing the connection between women and nature. Ecofeminist critics claim that the issues of women and ecology are interrelated as both are the victims of the patriarchal world view which justifies the domination of women and exploitation of nature.

According to Ecofeminism, the hierarchical thinking and value dualism lie at the root of environmental degradation as well as social injustice. In order to address environmental issues, one needs to challenge this value hierarchy (hierarchical thinking) and value dualism. Value hierarchy arranges everything hierarchically up and down and anything that is hierarchically up or above the others is given greater value. Similarly, value dualism is also connected to value hierarchy and talks about opposite pair or binary opposite, where one is given more value than the opposite entity. Some of the common examples of value hierarchy and value dualism or binary opposite include culture/nature, male/female, human/nature, reason/emotion and so on where culture, male, human and reason are considered superior to nature, female, nature and emotion respectively. The problem of this value hierarchy and value dualism is that they make those entities opposite rather than considering them as complementary to each other and justifies the domination or subordination of one by the other. Male is considered superior to female, so male thinks it as his right to dominate female. Similarly human tries to justify the domination of nature using the

same hierarchical thinking. Therefore Ecofeminists view that to address environmental issues; one also necessarily needs to address social injustices as women and nature both are dominated and exploited.

Pearl S. Buck's *The Good Earth* (1931) is a story about Wang Lung, a dedicated and hardworking Chinese farmer, who loves his land more than anything else. The earth is really good and humble to everyone. Whatever Wang Lung got in his life, he got from the Earth. Due to which Wang Lung is deeply connected to the land. Though he cares his land properly, his perspective to land as his property is anthropocentric in nature. This novel is about the struggles of a Chinese family, Wang family and its financial ups and downs. It is the first volume of the House of Earth trilogy. The other two were: *Sons* (1932) and *A House Divided* (1935).

The novel begins with the day of marriage of poor farmer Wang Lung and O-Lan, who is a slave at the House of Hwang. Hwang family is the prosperous landlord family of the village but due to the bad money management skills and excessive use of opium, the Hwang family is slowly losing its position and sinking into the lake of poverty. But Wang Lung slowly rises due to his hard work and support of his wife, O-Lan. He buys a few plots of land from the Hwang family. Two sons and a daughter are born during this period.

The birth of sons is taken as good luck for the family whereas the birth of daughter is taken as normal event. Later the whole village has to suffer famine period. Due to which the daughter suffers from mental retardation. Wang Lung calls her 'Poor Fool'. The second daughter, who was born in this hard time of starvation, is mercilessly choked and killed immediately after her birth by O-Lan herself as there isn't enough food to feed the family members. Whole village suffers from starvation. Villagers search for food at rich men's house. They even break into Wang Lung's

house thinking that he might have hidden grain in his house. Since he bought land from the House of Hwang, villagers think him as rich man. But he himself is bankrupt. So, he, along with his family members and villagers, goes to a large city in the south in search of fortune and to keep family alive in that hard time selling everything he possesses except his house and lands he bought. O-Lan and her children beg on the street to keep themselves alive there. But Wang Lung's doesn't choose to beg instead he works there as a rickshaw puller to support the family. They live a miserable life in the hut by the road for long time. They earn merely enough for food, but not sufficient for returning their village.

One time his son steals meat and brings it home but he becomes very angry and throws the meat because he doesn't want his son to be a thief. O-Lan, who thinks practically, picks up the meat and prepares it. But later Wang Lung himself becomes involved in the riot and along with the mob, which was looting a rich man's house, he also reaches inside the big house where he gets money from the rich frightened house owner to buy his safety. O-Lan finds precious jewels and pearls in that house. With that money and pearls, Wang family remains no more poor and helpless. They return to the village and buy a new ox and plough to cultivate his land. He hires servants also to get help in farming. He buys the remaining lands of Hwang family. He even sends his two sons to school. O-Lan further gives birth to twins- a son and a daughter. But the more he becomes rich, the more he becomes away from land and his wife, O-Lan. He buys a concubine named Lotus and gives her the two pearls of O-Lan. Due to this betrayal of her husband and continuous insult her health and morale worsen and eventually dies after beholding her first son's wedding. After her death, Wang family moves into town and stays in the big house which once belongs to rich Hwang family. He wants peace in the family but due to the constant disputes of his two sons and their

wives, he couldn't get peace. His third son joins the red army and his third daughter is married to the rich merchant family in town at the age of thirteen. At the end of the novel, the old Wang Lung overhears his two sons planning to sell his land, which he has earned working hard together with O-Lan.

Similarly, *The God of Small Things* (1996) is the debut novel of Arundhati Roy which got the Booker prize in 1997. The story of the novel is set in a town named Ayemenem in south Indian state, Kerala during the post-independence times. There is absence of sequential or linear narration in this story. The major events of the novel occur in the past in 1969 and the present 1993. The whole setting of the story shifts back and forth between these two times. The novel starts at the end and ends in the middle event of the story. The novel ends with the major characters Ammu and Velutha making love, the act which was the cause of their misfortune. There are lots of flashbacks and flash forwards in this non sequential narration that describes the events that took place between the two points of time, 1969 and 1993. The novel begins with the returning of Rahel, who is now 31 years-old, to Ayemenem in 1993, after twenty four years to meet his twin brother Esthappen (Estha) who also has returned to Ayemenem from Calcutta. Most of the major events of the novel took place in 1969, when Rahel and Estha were just 7 years old. They got separated in the same year.

Pappachi (Shri Benaab John Ipe), an entomologist, is an ill-tempered father of Ammu and Chacko, who used to beat his wife, Mammachi, a skillful violinist, to calm his frustration of not being recognized as the scientist who discovered the new moth, calling it just the abnormal breed of an already-existing species. Ammu who wants to escape his father goes to stay with relatives in Calcutta, where she meets Baba and gets married and goes to live in Assam with her husband. After having the twins-

Rahel and Estha (Esthappen Yako) in 1962, she realizes that her husband is an alcoholic and lazy, due to which he loses his job. His English boss assures him not to fire him from job if he lets his wife, Ammu to sleep with him. When Ammu refuses this proposal, she is beaten, so she returns to Ayemenem, leaving her husband.

Chacko also returns to Ayemenem from England getting divorced with his pregnant wife, Margaret, a white woman as she falls for Joe. But Joe dies in a car accident. So, later sad Margaret and Sophie Mol, Chacko's daughter, are invited to Ayemenem to celebrate Christmas. To receive them at the airport, the Ipe family goes to Cochin where they see their servant Velutha, who works at Paradise Pickles and Preserves, the family factory started by Mammachi, waving a red flag and participating in the huge rally of communists. He disappears into the crowd when he is called. Knowing that Velutha, a worker from untouchable caste, is a communist, the family gets tense in the car. That night, they go to see the movie named *'The Sound of Music'* at a theatre, where Estha is molested by the Orangedrink and Lemondrink Man in the lobby. This unexpected event traumatized Estha and fills him with undying fear. Sophie is given more importance in the family than the twins.

Ammu begins to like Velutha when she sees him playing with her son and daughter. Estha asks Valutha to fix the small rowboat so that they could go across the Meenachal river to the History House that was the deserted house of an Englishman. One day Velutha's father, Vellya Paapen comes to the house of Ipe family in anger to slay his own son with his bare hands after knowing the love affair of Ammu and Velutha, which is taken as unsocial act as Velutha was from untouchable lower caste. Baby Kochamma, Ammu's aunt locks her in her room and Valutha is banished. Ammu blames the twins for this tragedy due to which they decide to run away to that abandoned house at night. Sophie, their cousin, also joins them. But unfortunately, the

boat is collided with log and capsizes. The twins swim across the river, but, Sophie drowns into the river and dies. They sleep that night in that abandoned house without knowing that sad Velutha is also in the same house that night. It is the house where he used to meet with Ammu frequently at night. So he is blamed for kidnapping the twins and raping Ammu by Baby Kochamma. He is arrested and beaten badly in jail and finally he dies there.

But later, the police realize that Velutha was not kidnapper. Since, he was a communist; there might be unrest if the truth is revealed. So to be safe from that matter, Baby Kochamma compels the twins to tell lies about Velutha by blaming them as the cause of Sophie's death. Baby Kochamma, who is afraid of being exposed for false accusation, persuades Chacko that Ammu and the twins were guilty for the death of his daughter, Sophie. Chacko expels Ammu out of the house and sends Estha to Calcutta to live with his father. Ammu, who was suffering from a lung disorder, dies at the age of 31 alone in the city. Later, Rahel goes to Delhi to study architecture, marries Larry McCaslin and moves to United States with him. But she gets divorced as he is troubled by the distance she seems even while they are making love. After doing different jobs in New York and Washington for many years, she returns to Ayemenem after knowing that her twin brother Estha has returned. Rahel and Estha, who are now 31, feel so connected and intimate that they end up having sex in Ammu's former bedroom not because of passion but because of hideous grief. The last chapter describes the romantic love affair of Velutha and Ammu in the abandoned house across the Meenachal River.

Statement of Problems and Research Questions

Nature and women both are exploited in both novels. Men consider women and nature as their sole property which they can use in any way they like. Selling of

land, thinking land as their sole property, is common in practice. In the novel, *The Good Earth*, it's not just land even women are sold and bought as animals by so-called superior men in that society. The major character Olan was sold by Hwang family to Wang Lung, who later becomes her husband. This is a cruel practice that was prevalent in pre-revolutionary China. Women are given less value. Olan, for example, in this story is a loyal but unappreciated wife of Wang Lung, in spite of hard work and contribution for the prosperity of the family. Girls are sold to the rich families for few pence. Wang's uncle sold all her daughters without any hesitation due to which Wang hates his uncle. Patriarchy is pushing both women and nature toward the weaker zone, thinking them wild, submissive and weak. Similarly, in the novel, *The God of Small Things*, both Meenachal River and Ammu are the two wretched figures of the novel. Both are the sufferers of patriarchal mindset of the society. Though Ammu was the daughter of rich and educated parents- a Syrian catholic family living in Ayemenem, she never got proper love and care. Her frustrated etymologist father- Pappachi, who was angry for not being recognized as the scientist for finding a new variety of moth, always tortured his wife Mammachi. He thinks that sending girls to school is waste of money.

This study tries to seek the answers of the questions such as, what is the position of women and nature in patriarchal and capitalist society. What significant role does nature play in human's life? Why do men feel themselves superior to women? How can we establish a harmonious and egalitarian relationship between Nature and culture?

Hypothesis

Due to the careless activities of human beings such as exploitation of nature, deforestation, unplanned urbanization, they are destined to face different ecological

problems like flood, landslide, and drought and so on. Tropical forests are shrinking, deserts have been expanding, different species of animals and birds are being extinct, and rivers are being polluted. This is the result of injustice done to the nature.

Similarly women are seen as powerless and senseless objects in both novels. For suitable environment and harmonious society, injustice done to both women and nature should be ended.

Methodology and Theoretical Perspectives

The primary texts *The Good Earth* and *The God of Small Things* will be thoroughly analyzed from the qualitative research method using the ecocritical perspective in general and Ecofeminism in specific. Lots of researches and papers on different novels and books are done to study the ecofeminist issues. Among them I have taken Pearl S. Buck's *The Good Earth* and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* to analyze the unequal relationship between men/women and human/nature applying the ecofeminist perspective. I have chosen these novels as I am more inclined to know the socio-economic condition of our neighbouring countries – China and India.

Different works of other writers, scholars and critics along with library research and net study will be taken into consideration for this thesis. Extensive library research and reading of critical insights from research journals, articles, and previous dissertations will be taken as the secondary sources along with the insightful guidance of the supervisor.

There are different trends of Ecocriticism like- Arcadian discourse, ecosystem discourse, environmental justice discourse, deep ecology, ecofeminism, ecomarxism, toxic discourse, environmental justice discourse, environmental apocalypticism, and so on. Among the different trends of Ecocritical perspective, I am going to analyze the

primary texts using the trend- Ecofeminism. Ecofeminism is the theory that connects the domination of women and exploitation of nature. The major types of ecofeminism are: Cultural Ecofeminism, Socialist Ecofeminism and Spiritual Ecofeminism.

Different theoretical insights like eco-critical ideas of Cheryll Glotfelty and eco-feminist ideas of Greta Gaard, Carolyn Merchant, Karen Warren, Vandana Shiva, Maria Mies and so on will be taken for the analysis of the main texts *The Good Earth* and *The God of Small Things*. In *Death of Nature*, famous American ecofeminist Carolyn Merchant claims that due to the Scientific Revolution of 17th century, the perspective of human beings towards nature has been changed. Earlier, until the mystery of nature was rarely known, nature was considered as the mother Earth and there was a sense of reverence towards nature. Now, it is viewed simply as an object or atom as science atomized or objectified nature by dissecting its mysteries.

Similarly, popular Indian ecofeminist Vandana Shiva and renowned German Marxist feminist Maria Mies, in their book *Ecofeminism* state that the dominant stream of modern science is not simply an objective and unbiased science. It is merely the projection of patriarchal Western men's ideas and values. So, it can't be accepted without critical insight. Men are at the centre to decide what is scientific and what is not. Due to industrialization of plant reproduction and medicalization of childbirth, ecofeminists believe science is used for profit maximization of capitalist men in cost of degradation of nature.

In Eco-criticism, we study literature that explores the relationship between human and nature. Similarly, Eco-feminism, the branch or trend of Ecocriticism, is a feminist movement that raises voice against the domination and exploitation done upon women and nature trying to bring justice. The oppression of both women and the earth can no longer be addressed in isolation. This project tries to deconstruct the

anthropocentric perspective of men and shows the need of social and environmental justice for harmonious society.

Ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary field of study which studies and analyzes how the natural world is portrayed in literature, typically in relation to technologically advanced modern society and its environmental concerns. In *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996), the initiator and crucial advocator of American ecocriticism Cheryll Glotfelty defined ecocriticism as “the study of the relationship between literature and the natural environment” (124). She further pointed out that:

Simply defined, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender-conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts, ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies. (138)

Ecocriticism connects natural environment with literature and brings the environmental issues and problems as the matter of study to create awareness among the students of literature.

Stewart Brand believes that “What we call natural and what we call human are inseparable. We live one life” (154). If nature is harmed, doubtlessly human beings are also affected. So, destroying nature is similar to destroying ourselves.

According to Lawrence Buell, who is the Professor of American Literature at Harvard University, “Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and environment under the spirit of supporting the practice of environmentalism” (430). Ecocriticism studies the texts from the outlook of earth-centrism rather than anthropocentrism. It has significant interdisciplinary features as it pulls lessons not

only from the environmental science, but the knowledge and theory of other relevant disciplines, such as cultural studies, history, geography, psychology and philosophy.

Similarly, Ecofeminism, the branch of Ecocriticism, especially deals with the issues of women and nature. Ecofeminism is a multi-disciplinary term including a wide array of concerns resulting from different forms of oppression. It was first coined in 1974 by Francoise d'Eaubonne in the book *Le Feminisme ou la Mort* [Feminism or Death]. Broadly speaking, it is a social movement which tries to dismantle all kinds of hierarchies based on gender, class, race, nature etc. created by the dominant patriarchal order. Each ecofeminists intensely consider that the domination of women as well as the devaluation of nature goes parallel to each other and undoubtedly the patriarchal order is the root cause behind their exploitation. Although different wings of ecofeminism attempt to end the dualist hierarchical patterns, they embrace varied means for the restructuring of the existing power structures.

Though the environmental degradation, global inequity may seem beyond the scope of feminist analysis as environmental degradation affects everybody, the Eco feminists affirm that the environmental issues are more feminist issues since women and their children are the one who suffer first the consequences of injustice and environmental degradation.

Carolyn Merchant, an eminent ecofeminist, states: "The image of the earth as a living organism and nurturing mother had served as a cultural constraint restricting the actions of human beings. As long as the earth was considered to be alive and sensitive, it could be considered a breach of human ethical behaviour to carry out destructive acts against it" (276). But consumerist human beings is treating it merely as the natural resource which they can exploit to the extend they wish.

Arundhati Roy has clearly warned the anthropocentric humans to be alert about the nuclear war: "If there is a nuclear war, our foes will not be China or America or even each other. Our foe will be the earth herself. The very elements – sky, the air, the land, the wind and water – will all turn against us" (6). She wants human beings to be more sensitive towards nature lest the same nature may be our enemy.

The accumulation of property brought power to men due to which they began to exploit nature and women. According to Frederick Engels, the development of private property also led to "the world historical defeat of the female sex" (120). According to him, with the introduction of private property, men were, for the first time, able to accumulate wealth, which they wished to pass on to their offspring. These conditions led to what Engels called the overthrow of mother right, which was the beginning of the decline in the social status of women.

According to Marilyn Waring, "the water rural women carry from the wells to their homes has no cash value, but the water carried through pipes has value" (263). She wants to show that women do lots of tiresome household work but are not given much value as household works like cooking food, rearing children, fetching water aren't counted as income generating activities. She thinks this is injustice done to women.

Karen J. Warren has highlighted the significance of the women-nature relation. According to Karen J. Warren "any feminism, environmentalism, or environmental philosophy that doesn't recognize important women-nature connections is simply insufficient" (21). Warren is aware about the alike condition of both women and nature.

According to Ariel Kay Salleh, “Ecofeminism argues that the current global environmental crisis is a predictable outcome of patriarchal culture” (138). Earlier, ecofeminism is taken as a theory that highlights the significance of interrelationships between humans and the natural environment (the earth and animals, plants on it), but now it is viewed in a larger perception as a movement working against the interrelated subjugations of class, gender, race, and nature. It asserts that every form of suppression is interconnected so, they shouldn't be treated separately rather should be addressed in their totality.

However, Janet Biehl, a social ecologist and feminist, has criticized ecofeminism for emphasizing too much on a mystical connection between women and nature and not enough on the actual conditions of women. She claims “Ecofeminism is an anti-progressive movement rather than being a forward- moving theory, for women” (122). But I don't believe that ecofeminism is an anti-progressive movement. In fact, this theory has provided an insight to women about the domination they are facing and a determination to terminate that suppression.

Similarly A. E. Kings has also criticized ecofeminism for limiting only on gender and the environment, neglecting an intersectional approach. Kings believes that “though ecofeminists claim to be intersectional, they seem failure on their commitment until recently” (135). Every theory may have its own limitations which can be omitted by revising and further detail analysis of it.

Objectives of Study

This work shows the importance of earth or nature and women in our life. One of the objectives of the study is to show the miserable condition of women and nature in both novels and to highlight the contribution of nature in our life. Nature is good to us until we are good to it. Sometimes nature shows its cruel face to punish our

careless activities. Similarly this study shows the patriarchal social structure based upon the hierarchy as the main cause behind the feeling of men as the superior beings to women and nature. Through critical analysis of Buck's presentation of peasants and their relation to land and Roy's presentation of suffering of women, this research aims at constructing the idea of co- existence and equality between human beings and nature; as well as between men and women. Moreover, the study also aims at establishing the importance of environmental justice and gender equality.

Even though this study makes significant use of concepts developed in ecofeminist studies and literature; it does not offer a comprehensive analysis of pure environmental science theories. I have chosen two novels from our two neighbouring countries- China and India. The major objective of the study is to demonstrate the exploitation of women in then feudal Chinese society and capitalist Indian society presented in the texts *The Good Earth* and *The God of small Things* respectively by using eco- feminism as the theoretical tool for the analysis of the primary texts.

Literature Review

Several readers and critiques have studied the novels *The Good Earth* and *The God of Small Things* from different perspectives. Regarding *The Good Earth*, Hanan Abbas Hussein sees O-lan as psychologically traumatized woman. He argues:

The psychological trauma of O-lan begins from the first stage in her life as she was sold by her family to become a slave. She came to Hwang house when she was only 10 years old in a year of famine because her family had nothing to eat. Being a slave woman means she lives unbearable pains that affect her mentally and physically. (108)

However, I don't think O-lan as a psychologically traumatized character. In fact, she never herself felt about trauma though she was dominated and had to remain slave at big house. She is very meek, obedient and caring.

Michael H. Hunt, professor of history at Yale University and specialist of Chinese- American relations, views *The Good Earth* as the depiction of the plight of Chinese peasants, especially victimized poor women. In his words:

The protagonists of the story were Wang Lung, a man of the soil, and his devoted and long-suffering wife, O-lan. When the city explodes into riot, Wang Lung and his wife carry off enough treasure to return to their good earth and assure recovery of their prosperity. But wealth loosens the family's ties to the soil, signaling the onset of its decline. (38)

Hunt further elaborates that wealth is the cause of distancing from the soil (land), which was the only source of the Wang family's rise.

Stephen Spencer claims that due to the publication of *The Good Earth*, the attitude of White Americans toward the Chinese people changed drastically. Chinese were taken as threat in America before its publication, but as they knew about the hardships and struggles of Chinese farmers against poverty and natural disasters, American became more sympathetic toward Chinese immigrants. Spencer writes:

Historically, racism was directed more overtly toward Chinese immigrants than any other immigrant group in the United States. Most Chinese immigrants were men who had migrated to the "gold mountain" of America in hopes of making money and returning to China as wealthy men or bringing their wives and families eventually to America. However, the severe immigration laws almost completely stopped further immigration, trapping many Chinese men alone and poor in the United States. Racism and anti-

miscegenation laws made the prospects of marrying a white woman slim. By 1900, violence against Chinese workers had pushed them out of manufacturing, agriculture, and railroad jobs. By the time of *The Good Earth's* publication the Chinese were no longer perceived as a threat to white labor and were even poised to become objects of sympathy when the United States was drawn into the war between China and Japan in the 1930's. (125)

Spencer further suggests about the novel about Chinese people being so popular in America at a time when isolation and entrenched racism dominated American society. She says:

As I have argued in another essay about the literary history and popular appeal of *The Good Earth*, the novel certainly reflects the values of middle-class and working-class Americans in the decade it was first published. It reflects their valuing of the land and nostalgia for rural life in a time of expanding industrialism and urbanization. (125)

She believes that *The Good Earth* has played significant role in maintaining the good relationship between American and Chinese people. Especially those migrant Chinese who were staying in America felt the positive effect of the novel since it changed the stereotypical perspective of American towards Chinese.

I. M. Juliarta has studied the novel *The Good Earth* from linguistic approach. She explains:

This study is important to be conducted to figure out the form of an adverb of manner found in the novel *The Good Earth* and their translations into Bumi yang Subur. This study also tried to find out types of shifts of adverb of manner that occur in the translation of *The Good Earth* into Bumi yang Subur.

The shift is interesting to be discussed to know that shifts sometimes occur in the translation process of relative clauses from English into Indonesian. (10)

Translation of literary works from one language to next language is definitely a sensitive job, as such translation may not carry the exact emotion or cultural understanding from one language to next due to grammatical and phonetic barriers.

Chris Suh, in his article talks about the potential of women calling them gunpowder and need of struggle for equal right using Feminist approach. Comparing the American and Chinese women, she claims that though comparatively American women were more educated and free from cultural boundaries, they failed to live up to their potential:

Through provocative comparisons between Chinese and white American women, Buck alleged that educated white women had failed to live up to their potential, and she demanded that they earn social equality by advancing into male-dominated professions outside the home. Although many of her readers disagreed, the novelist's challenge was welcomed by the National Woman's Party (NWP), which sought to abolish all gender-based discrimination and preferential treatment through the introduction of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). This story revises our understanding of the post-suffrage era by showing the vibrancy of feminist debates in the final years of the Great Depression, and it provides a new way into seeing how racialized thinking shaped American conceptions of women's progress between first- and second-wave feminist movements. (175)

Definitely after seeing the domination of male upon women in the then feudal Chinese society as described in the novel, American women became alert about the need of equal rights based on gender.

Elizabeth Outka clarifies the novel as the perplexing amalgamation of different times- present, past and future, and traumatic experience of characters. She writes:

Roy's novel reflects, however, another critical aspect of blended time that the stylistic and political readings of the novel have so far missed: the central role of trauma in creating the temporal mix experienced by the characters. One of the most noted aftereffects of traumatic experience is, in fact, a disordering of time, when past events threaten to take over the present, returning repeatedly to haunt the current moment in the form of flashbacks, hallucinations, or dreams. Trauma reorders time itself, and thus in Roy's novel, the temporal mixture must be read not simply as a feature of a postmodern or postcolonial narrative, but also as the sign of traumatic experience. (21)

The victims of patriarchal domination can't lead a creative and joyful life, but live in a traumatic experience.

Miriam Nandi has analyzed the postcolonial ambivalences of the characters in the novel. Chacko's pride of having read at Oxford, his marriage to Englishwoman, the family's exasperating admiration for the former colonizers, Pappachi's refusal to believe the sexual harassment by her husband's British boss and emphasis on speaking English with proper pronunciation but practicing native Indian cultures show the ambivalence nature of the Ipe family members. She clarifies further:

First, the British colonizers saw themselves as the symbolic fathers of their native subjects, as Kipling's poem "White Man's Burden" demonstrates.

Second, the colonizer irrevocably separates the Indian elite from its mother country and mother tongue. The Anglicized subject has, of course, attempted to resist and rebel against the colonial regime, a process that has been much analyzed in postcolonial theory. My own thesis is that the post-colonial elite

reacted with a series of affects and fantasies to the fracturing of identity under colonialism. On the one hand, they sought to rebel against the colonial “father” in undermining his hegemonic discourse. On the other, however, the Anglicized subject also realized that they were separated from their native culture, and developed a sense of nostalgia or even melancholia for their lost “origin”. In the process, the postcolonial elite started picturing the non-Anglicized, rural, lower class “subaltern” classes as more authentically “Indian”, more firmly rooted in tradition and heritage. (177)

Most of the Anglicized people in India still believe that one who can speak English is civilized and superior to the one that can't. Former British colonization of India is the cause of this mindset.

According to Brinda Bose, Roy has presented protagonists who are eager to break the social "Love laws" and die for their desire and love. Brinda thinks that the incestuous lovemaking of Rahel and Estha is simply the proof of subversive powers of desire and sexuality to violate all the biological norms and gender discrimination prevalent in the society.

Ammu of the earlier generation catapults across caste/class divisions to pursue an erotic desire for the Untouchable carpenter, *The God of Small Things*, Velutha. Daughter Rahel, after a youth gone awry, returns to her childhood home and her soul-twin Estha to rediscover his pain and to offer him her body as an unnamable balm. Both violate the most basic "love laws" that govern their social existence; the transgressions are the result of conscious decisions by the emotionally overcharged characters. The very circumstances of their choice(s) affirm the political judgment that surely it could not simply be bodily need; the sublimely erotic experience is also the pursuit of a utopia in

which ideas and ideals, greater than what a momentary sexual pleasure offers, coalesce. (60)

Rahel and Estha, sister and brother in relationship, keep incestuous relation to break the prevalent love laws in the society. Though it may be a kind of rebellious act, I think it is not a right way to bring a change in the society.

Dipendra Raj Regmi highlights the need of eco-critical vision for the sublimity and blissful pride in the world in his thesis done on *The Good Earth* and *The God of Small Things*. He writes:

Both the novels project the interconnection of human beings and nature through land and water resources. These protagonists and other characters from both novels claim that mistreatment of land and water resources brings pain to human life. They speak for the need of harmony and integration with nature as the harbinger of joy and bliss. This research aims to highlight and explore the ecological sensibility the protagonists live through. From the perspective of protagonists, eco-critical vision is a gateway to experience the sublime world and attain blissful pride. (v)

Regmi believes that mistreatment of natural resources like land and water resources will bring pain in human life. It's true. The destruction done to the nature is causing harm to ourselves. Due to the deforestation we are facing different natural disaster like flood, landslides, pollution and so on.

Rewati Acharya, using the concept of feminism and patriarchy as the major theoretical tool for her study, discusses about the domination done to Chinese women in the then patriarchal Chinese society. She writes:

Chinese women are destined to prejudice since their birth because the society is based on the concept of patriarchal domination. Women were consistently

mistreated and thanklessly used as tools to make the lives of their husbands better. Women, no matter how clever, beautiful, or helpful, are subservient in their roles as children, as wives, as mother, as slaves, or as the general members of the society. (13)

Women were sold like cattle in then patriarchal Chinese society. It was such a cruel and pathetic picture of old China.

Kamal Lamichhane states that just like women of India are silent, environment of nature itself is also remaining silent bearing all the filth and dirt deposited by the selfish human beings. He writes:

Arundhati Roy, as a socially committed writer, shows her deep concern over environment in *The God of Small Things*. She has presented environmental problem as one of the small things which is neglected for a long time in Indian society. Like the Indian women who remain silent against the patriarchal social oppression, environment has been enduring a wanton destruction for ages which stirs Roy's eco-conscious mind. (10)

Both women and nature are enduring destruction and exploitation for ages. Earlier rivers were in their best form; now covered with plastic and sewages.

Devi Prasad Siwakoti has clearly analyzed the bias and partial Indian society which dominate the lower class, caste and marginalized groups. Focusing on the gender and caste based Indian society, Siwakoti writes:

Roy presents the stereotypical society which is snared by the social vices such as the prevailing category of touchability and untouchability as well as the multiple discrimination based on gender, caste and class. The society is run by the patriarchal norms and values, rules and regulations which are bias and

partial, and which privileges males as superior and degrades females as inferior. (73)

It is not just women and nature that are dominated, even the male from lower caste and poor class are dominated equally.

Research Gap

Pearl S. Buck's *The Good Earth* and Roy's *The God of Small Things* have been researched into by literary critics and researchers from different perspectives like Marxism, feminism, ecocriticism, postcolonial trauma, linguistic approach, ecological sublimity and so on. However, still very little has been done in study of these works under the theory of ecofeminism. In consideration of the worsening situation of Eco crisis in the present time, it is of great significance to reexamine *The Good Earth* and *The God of small Things* from the perspective of ecofeminism. Therefore, this research work will apply ecofeminism to analyze the primary texts.

Organization of the Study

This research paper contains three chapters as a whole with relevant titles and subtitles under each and are placed accordingly in order to give cohesive, coherent and meaningful order to the texts and thereby to meet the objective of the study.

The first chapter "Introduction: *The Good Earth* and *The God of Small Things* and Ecofeminism" contains introduction to the patriarchy and capitalism as the key agents of subjugation of women and nature along with the idea of hierarchical thinking and value dualism that lie at the root of environmental degradation as well as social injustice and brief introduction of the texts- *The Good Earth* and *The God of Small Things*, by applying ecofeminist perspective. And the major theoretical frameworks that I used in this thesis are the ecofeminist ideologies of Greta Gaard, Carolyn Merchant, Karen Warren, Vandana Shiva, Maria Mies and so on.

The second chapter, under the title "Women and Nature as victims of Patriarchal Mentality in *The Good Earth and The God of Small Things*" is the textual analysis to reveal how both novels have included the instances of domination done to women and nature. It shows how women are presented as inferior, uncivilized people and slaves to the powerful men of the society. It illustrates how patriarchal society creates boundaries to the women and how Roy's protagonists Ammu, Mammachi and Rahel strive to dismantle those preset boundaries. As the principal theoretical tool employed in the thesis is ecofeminism, it also shows how the Meenachal River and surrounding nature is polluted and destroyed by anthropocentric human beings.

Finally, the last chapter, "Necessity of Harmonious and Egalitarian Relationship between Nature and Culture" makes conclusive analysis of the whole study along with valid justification to this research paper. In this chapter I come to the conclusion that for the suitable environment and harmonious society, injustice done to both women and nature should be ended. Anthropocentric exploitation of nature and all kinds of domination in the name of race, gender, class and caste should be abolished for the real and just society.

Chapter II

Women and Nature as Victims of Patriarchal Mentality in *The Good Earth* and *The God of Small Things*

Ecofeminism is the theory that establishes the connection between nature and women as the bridge to reinforce both feminist and ecological movement that tries to find to end the repression of Nature and women. Ecofeminism appeals for the end to all kinds of oppression. It sees the connection between the exploitation of women and environment and calls for ends of the oppression of both women and nature by the patriarchal Western society to create an egalitarian, collaborative society where there is no one dominant group.

Ecofeminist theory seeks the associations between nature and women in culture, economy, religion, politics, iconography and literature. Women and nature are seen as the property of dominant men. Ecofeminism emphasizes in the need of respect to both nature and women. Women are linked to the environment because of their traditional social role as a nurturer and caretaker.

Patriarchy is a long-standing social system in which men are privileged to dominate others, especially dominance over women. In patriarchal society, men take it as their right to dominate over others by keeping control on property. Patriarchy is related to a set of ideas that attempts to explain and justify this dominance.

Harold D. Fishbein articulates that the work of great Greek philosopher “Aristotle portrayed women as morally, intellectually, and physically inferior to men. Aristotle saw women as the property of men and claimed that women’s role in society was to reproduce and to serve men in the household. Aristotle thought that male domination of women is both natural and righteous” (27).

Furthermore, adding about Aristotle, Gerda Lerner states that “Aristotle believed women had colder blood than men due to which women couldn’t evolve into men, the perfect and superior sex” (246). Aristotle’s notion regarding women is really bias and unfair.

The Good Earth

Traditional Patriarchy has given more privilege to men over women, behaving women as lower class citizen who can be suppressed. Emphasizing the domination done to women in patriarchal society, Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies state, “Violence against women is as old as patriarchy. Traditional patriarchy has structured our world-views and mindsets, our social and cultural worlds on the basis of domination over women, and the denial of their full humanity and right to equality” (xiii). To show the patriarchal mindset of men, Buck in *The Good Earth* exemplifies:

Every morning for these six years the old man had waited for his son to bring in hot water to ease him of his morning coughing. Now father and son could rest. There was a woman coming to the house. Never again would Wang Lung have to rise summer and winter at dawn to light the fire. He could lie in his bed and wait, and he also would have a bowl of water brought to him, and if the earth were fruitful there would be tea leaves in the water. (3)

When O-lan is brought to that house as a new bride, they thought that all the domestic chores, from now on, will be the responsibility of the bride, O-lan. Buck writes, “It was the last morning he would have to prepare food for the old man” (6). Wang lung has transferred all his household duty to O-lan after getting married to her. Buck writes:

And then he lay in his bed warm and satisfied while in the kitchen the woman fed the fire and boiled the water. He would like to have slept, now that he

could, but his foolish body, which he had made to arise every morning so early for all these years, would not sleep although it could, and so he lay there, tasting and savoring in his mind and in his flesh his luxury of idleness. (26)

Even those men who used to do household works, think that doing such chores, after having wife, is matter of shame. In *The Good Earth*, men think wives are slaves who have to do all the domestic works and obey their husband without any questions.

Wang Lung used to do all works himself before getting married. In patriarchal society, women's subordination is considered as a common phenomenon. Sylvia Walby states that "patriarchy is a system creating structures of social practice, which allows men to dominate, exploit, and subjugate women" (31). It makes women inferior in all aspects, depriving them from decision making and accessing resources. Women are merely taken as objects which could be either bought or sold as per man's need. Wang Lung meets a poor man in town who says:

When the rich are too rich there are ways, and when the poor are too poor there are ways. Last winter we sold two girls and endured, and this winter, if this one my woman bears is a girl, we will sell again. One slave I have kept-the first. The others it is better to sell than to kill, although there are those who prefer to kill them before they draw breath. This is one of the ways when poor are too poor. When the rich are too rich there is a way, and if I am not mistaken, that way will come soon. (118)

The harsh reality of the then Chinese society is depicted in this words by a man whom Wang Lung met in town. The man is, without any hesitance and shame, talking about selling her daughters to survive the famine. He also mentions that somewhere daughters are even killed before they draw breath. Girls and women are taken as slave, who could be sold just like animals. O-lan herself was also sold to the Hwang

family by her parents. Later she was sent with Wang Lung as his wife. Before bringing O-lan to the house, Wang Lung's father explains to Wang Lung: "With weddings costing as they do in these evil days and every woman wanting gold rings and silk clothes before she will take a man, there remain only slaves to be had for the poor" (8). He means that due to poverty, slaves are only choice as a wife. He further illustrates:

And what will we do with a pretty woman? We must have a woman who will tend the house and bear children as she works in the field, and will a pretty woman do these things? She will be forever thinking about clothes to go with her face! No, not a pretty woman in our house. We are farmers. Moreover, who has heard of a pretty slave who was virgin in a wealthy house? All the young lords have had their fill of her. It is better to be first with an ugly woman than the hundredth with a beauty. (8)

Since they were farmer, they need a strong woman who can work as a slave without tiredness. They don't want pretty woman because pretty woman only thinks about good clothing and facial beauty rather than working as slave. Besides, pretty women are rarely virgin in that big house. Pretty women are exploited sexually in lord's house. Young lords think pretty slaves are their toys which they can play with anytime they desire.

Women are judged as pure and impure according to their virginity before marriage. Patriarchal Society has created this boundary for the women whereas there is no such boundary to the men in our society. Even those men who might have lost their virginity, demand virgin girl for marriage. And it is taken as matter of pride to be "first with an ugly woman than the hundredth with a beauty" (8). Giving advice to his uncle Wang says, "Although it is not for me to presume to advice the brother of my

father, I will say this: it is better that a girl be married away while she is yet virgin, and whoever heard of a bitch dog who was allowed on the streets who did not give birth to a litter” (60). The Old Lord in the Hwang family in the great house controls the great house of his own where there are so many slaves and concubines. He might have "filled" all of the slaves in the house. He is free to choose any slave he wants to sleep with him. He just wants the pleasure from the slaves he sleeps with.

The landlady of the big house orders Wang Lung to “take her and use her well” (18). According to her, O-lan is “good slave, although somewhat slow and stupid and she was like a faithful, speechless serving maid, who is only a serving maid and nothing more” (29).

Birth of girl child is taken as evil sign. When she delivered a third baby, a girl child, she herself said to her husband from bed more feebly, “It is over once more. It is only a slave this time, not worth mentioning” (65). And when Wang Lung heard that the third child is a girl child he “stood still. A sense of evil struck him. A girl! A girl was causing all this trouble in his uncle’s house. Now a girl had been born into his house as well” (65). He thinks that a girl child is an uninvited trouble in the family. But for him boy child is good fortune. He was so happy to get two sons earlier. His happiness is explained as, “Sons every years; the house was full of good fortune – this woman brought him nothing but good fortune” (57). Sons are given more priority than daughters.

Chris Suh explains that Pearl S. Buck has given more emphasis on the miserable condition of Chinese peasant women who are sold as slaves. She writes:

Although the story was told from the perspective of a male peasant named Wang Lung, *The Good Earth* showed that Buck was particularly interested in portraying the struggles of Chinese peasant women. Wang Lung’s wife, O-lan,

is sold by her parents as a slave to a wealthy family who then gives her away to Wang Lung to be his wife. She toils side-by-side with her husband in the fields when she is not nursing their children, and she enables her family to survive a great famine. She eventually allows her husband to achieve upward social mobility as a wealthy landowner, while receiving little credit for her role. Although O-lan dies in *The Good Earth*, women continued to play important roles in Chinese families in Buck's subsequent novels, including *Sons* (1933), *The Mother* (1933), and *A House Divided* (1935). (180)

O-lan's interest and emotion are not valued. She was controlled by her father, who sold her, in the beginning; later was controlled by the landlord in the great house. After her marriage, she was controlled by her husband, Wang Lung. She just played the role of submissive slave in her husband's progress by toiling side-by-side with her husband in the field as soon as she gets free from household chores. Though she worked so hard, she didn't receive much credit for her role.

Patriarchy is nothing but a power relation between men and women, where men hold the larger portion in power and are allowed to abuse and control women. Abeda Sultana declares "In patriarchy, women's subordination to men is common. It makes woman inferior in any aspects such as in making a decision and accessing resources. Women are conditioned to feel powerless and discriminated because of the existence of power relation in which men are more powerful than women" (7). Abeda Sultana clarifies, "Patriarchy presents the notion of masculine and feminine - Where Masculine refers to the ability, power and desire to dominate and control over others and Femininity refers to the attitude and characteristic of women that are caring and nurturing. The close relation of masculinity with power and control leads to domination and subjugation" (46).

Steven Goldberg underlines that “men’s tendency of domination is caused by their willingness to sacrifice that which is necessary to maintain the dominance and control. Women can do the sacrifice for a different reason, which is to care and nurture. Their sacrifice is out of love, as, for the sake of the children” (20).

The feminine is less privileged and subjugated and because of the power relation in patriarchy. Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies assert that the notion of masculine and feminine is an ideology construction. It comprises the legitimization to masculine to dominate feminine. She emphasizes that “gender relations has excluded all that has been defined by culture as feminine and legitimized control over all that counts as such” (47). Moreover, ideology construction indicates everything that is not masculine as femininity. This notion justifies that feminine must be subjected to dominance. O-lan is always treated as slave- before and after marriage. They further explains:

Men are considered to be ‘warriors’ by nature. If they are not warriors, they are not true men. But violence of men against women and other ‘enemies’ is not determined by our genes. Men are not rapists by nature, nor are they genetically programmed to be killers of our Mother Nature, the origin of all life. This violence is a consequence of a social paradigm which began some 8,000 years ago. Its name is patriarchy. (xxvi)

Even after serving her husband and taking care of the family for whole of her life, ultimately, her heart is broken by Wang, her husband, bringing a whore named Lotus to the family. Wang Lung demands the pearl which was allowed to keep with her. It was symbol of love and consideration for his wife. But to present it to the whore, Lotus as a gift, he demands it back without caring even a little bit about O-lan’s feelings:

Then slowly she thrust her wet wrinkled hand into her bosom and she drew forth the small package and she gave it to him and watched him as he unwrapped it; and the pearls lay in his hand and they caught softly and fully the light of the sun, and he laughed. But O-lan returned to the beating of his clothes and when tears dropped slowly and heavily from her eyes she did not put up her hand to wipe them away; only she beat the more steadily with her wooden stick upon the clothes spread over the stone. (262)

O-lan weeps softly and continues to do her domestic works whereas the indifferent Wang laughs looking at the brightly shining pearl and thinking about Lotus. Without any complaint, she engages herself into the never-ending house chores as a dutiful wife, despite the indifference and disrespect of her husband.

One of the major themes of the novel *The Good Earth* is the nourishing power of the land. If you respect nature, nature will provide in abundant, but if you dissociate yourself from nature, your decadence and corruption will start. Wang Lung was connected to the land due to which he became successful in increasing his material wealth. His inner goodness, moral piety and good sense were result of his respect for nature and a strong work ethic. The local Hwang family was alienated from the earth; to produce harvest, they kept hired labour. As a result they were slowly facing the downfall. The wasteful ways of the wealthy are due to their distancing or estrangement from the land.

In short, the decline of the Hwang family is the result of detachment from land and the prosperity of Lung was the result of his attachment with land. Selling land for opium or concubines is never ethical.

The family that nurtures the land or nature is nurtured by the land; whereas the family that think themselves above the land is prone to their own downfall. In this

novel Wang Lung is deeply attached to the soil or land so he and his family is nurtured by the land, but Hwang family is declining as this family is not attached with the land.

Explaining the importance of land in his life, he says, "To those at the great house it means nothing, this handful of earth, but to me it means how much!" (55). He knows the value of land due to which he was valued by the nature by returning him material success. He further says, "If I have a handful of silver it is because I work and my wife works, and we do not, as some do, sit idling over gambling table or gossiping on doorsteps never swept, letting the fields grow to weeds and our children go half-fed!" (63). Wang Lung hates those people who sit idling over gambling table and doing nothing useful. He has no time for gossiping on useless things. He knows that he has a handful of silver only because he works hard and cares land. When the famine strikes the whole village, he also falls victim to it. But he is confident that good time will return as he has land which he loves most. He says, "At least I have the land – I have the land" (88). Buck has described about the connection of Wang Lung and Olan to the land emphasizing the cyclical nature of the earth:

There was only this perfect sympathy of movement, of turning this earth of theirs over and over to the sun, this earth which formed their home and fed their bodies and made their gods. Some time, in some age, bodies of men and women had been buried there, houses had stood there, had fallen, and gone back into the earth. So would also their house, some time, return into the earth, their bodies also. Each had his turn at this earth. They worked on, moving together—together—producing the fruit of this earth. (29)

Wang and Olan were always busy in caring the land and turning it over and over to the sun to make fortune. This recurring motions of “turning this earth of theirs over

and over” is parallel to the image of people, homes, and fortunes rising up and falling back into the earth over and over again. It shows Wang Lung’s ethical and spiritual connection to the land. It also shows the permanence of earth and temporariness of human beings and their houses.

Wang Lung and Olan cared the land or earth, therefore they were also cared by the land. Even when he had to get separated from his land during famine and had to stay in town struggling for the livelihood, he never stopped thinking about his land:

But Wang Lung thought of his land and pondered this way and that, with the sickened heart of deferred hope, how he could get back to it. He belonged, not to this scum which clung to the walls of a rich man’s house; nor did he belong to the rich man’s house. He belonged to the land and he could not live with any fullness until he felt the land under his feet and followed a plow in the springtime and bore a scythe in his hand at harvest. (121)

Wang Lung, who was now in the city, looks back on his land with longing. His connection to the simple life, his longing for the tangible connection to land indicates the acute loneliness he feels in town. He could not live with any fullness until he felt the land under his feet. But, the more he became wealthy, the more he detached himself from land, hiring laborers to work in his land. And the more he got separated from land, the more he became heartless and decadent. Wealth played the role of destroyer of traditional values. As Wang Lung’s riches rise, he becomes more immoral and more similar the amoral Hwang family. Hwang family loosen their connection to the land due to wealth and spend rest of their life in idleness and leisure. The Old Master of the Hwang family was obsessed with women and the Old Mistress was addicted to opium. As Wang Lung got wealthier, he too began to hire laborers and became obsessed with women such as Lotus forgetting the love and support of his

wife Olan. He bought the house of the Hwang and moved into it. Wang Lung's sons who grew in luxurious house could neither maintain the religious observances of the family nor could show the sense of duty to their father and respect for the land, which was mainstay of the family.

Wealthy people are heartless. During famine, Wang complains about them saying, "The hearts of these rich are hard like the hearts of the gods. They have still rice to eat and from the rice they do not eat they are still making wine, while we starve" (90). Rich people do not care about the difficulties the poor are facing.

In the novel, *The Good Earth*, rich people are not connected to the land or nature. But poor people are connected to the land. And those who are connected to nature are morally sound. Wang, once, threw the meat stolen by his son angrily. "We will eat meat that we can buy or beg, but not that which we steal. Beggars we may be but thieves we are not" (111). He threw the meat upon the ground without paying attention to his younger lad's howling. In fact, wealth has corrosive effect on morality. The young lords of the House of Hwang used to abuse young and beautiful slaves sexually. The Old Master himself was involved in whoring and Old Mistress was opium addict. All these immoral activities are the result of disconnection from the land and corrosive nature of wealth.

Wang Lung, who bought the house of Hwang, also faced same downfall due to wealth. After the death of his wife, O-lan, Wang Lung overheard his sons talking about the sale of land. Experience taught him that close connection to land is path of success, whereas disconnection to land is path of downfall. So, he suggests them to hold their land: "Now, evil, idle sons—sell the land! . . . It is the end of a family—when they begin to sell the land . . . Out of the land we came and into it we must go—

and if you will hold your land you can live—no one can rob you of land. . . If you sell the land, it is the end” (357).

At the end of the novel, he beseeches with his sons not to sell his land. But his sons were dogged to sell their land. They assure him that they wouldn't sell his land in his face, but smile over his head which signal their deception.

So, in short, I found that until there was respect to nature as the mother earth and sustainable farming was in practice, there was harmony between culture and nature. As soon as the capitalist and patriarchal men began to run after money and became money minded focusing only on profit, they view both women and nature merely as objects that can be exploited for profit. Wang Lung kept lots of workers and helpers in house to look after his land and gain more profit. He detached himself from land and became busy in immoral acts and concubines. The more Wang Lung detached himself from land, the more he became heartless and corrupt. Only those who are connected to nature are morally sound. His inner goodness, morality were the result of his respect for nature. But due to industrialization and advancement in modern science, the respect towards nature has been decreased and nature is simply viewed as object to gain profit by anthropocentric people who think nothing in wrong in exploiting nature and dominating women. Ecofeminism demands the end of domination done to both women and nature.

The God of Small Things

Both Nature and women are exploited in patriarchal and capitalist society described in *The God of Small Things*, as capitalism replicates only patriarchal values. Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies in their book, *Ecofeminism*, pronounce that “the new forms of exploitation are seen as the traditional patriarchal society blends with capitalist patriarchy” (65). Ecofeminist theory argues that capitalism only reflects

patriarchal values. This concept suggests that the influence of capitalism has not benefited women and has created a destructive gap between nature and culture. In the 1970s, early ecofeminists argued that this gap could only be repaired with a comprehensive knowledge of women's natural instincts and processes. Profit-oriented capitalists look for increasing profit rather than doing social service. For raising more profit, they can go to any extend. Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies inscribe:

Violence against women has taken on new and more vicious forms as traditional patriarchal structures have hybridized with the structures of capitalist patriarchy. We need to examine the connections between the violence of unjust, non-sustainable economic systems and the growing frequency and brutality of violence against women. We need to see how the structures of traditional patriarchy merge with the emerging structures of capitalist patriarchy to intensify violence against women. (xiv)

In traditional patriarchal society women were exploited treating them as slaves. Mohammad Ekramul Hassan argues that “*The God of Small Things* simply determines how nature is threatened with destruction” (67). In addition, Hassan describes that “as an eco-feminist, Arundhati Roy wishes to end patriarchal domination over both women and the environment and encourages women to work to create a healthy atmosphere and end environmental damage” (67). Vandhana Shiva and Maria Mies claim that women are treated as objects or commodity in this capitalist patriarchy. They write, “The economic model shaped by capitalist patriarchy is based on the commodification of everything, including women” (xvi). In the police station, Ammu, who went to meet Velutha, is mistreated by Inspector Thomas. He was staring at Ammu’s breast with greedy eyes. “Inspector Thomas Mathew stared at Ammu's

breasts as he spoke" (8). He taps her breast with his baton as if he was choosing mangoes from a basket in the market.

He even insulted calling her whore. He said that "the police knew all they needed to know and that the Kottayam Police didn't take statements from veshyas (whores) or their illegitimate children" (8). Single women are treated as whore, though they might be separated from their husband due to physical and mental violence. Their legitimate children are tagged with the tag of 'illegitimate children'. And corrupt people of the society try to take inappropriate advantages from those isolated women.

It isn't only isolated women who are treated badly. Even the married women are treated unjustly. Most of married women face violation of their alcoholic and cruel husbands. Mammachi is the victim of violence done by her husband. Bucks pens, "On her scalp, carefully hidden by her scanty hair, Mammachi had raised, crescent – shaped ridges. Scars of old beatings from an old marriage. Her brass vase scars" (166). She had lots of scars of old beatings on her scalp. Later Chacko, her son, prevented Pappachi from beating her. "The day that Chacko prevented Pappachi from beating her (and Pappachi had murdered his chair instead), Mammachi packed her wifely luggage and committed it to Chacko's care. From then onwards he became the repository of all her womanly feelings. Her Man. Her only love" (168). As Chacko prevented her from being beaten, special kinds of affinity was developed between Mammachi and her son, Chacko. Seeing the violence at home, Mammachi's daughter, Ammu developed the feeling of hatred towards her father. She stopped liking the Children story of lovely family of Father Bear and Mother Bear. Instead of lovely and caring Father Bear, she saw the cruel and insane Father Bear who represents her own cruel and sad father, Pappachi. "As a child, she had learned very quickly to disregard

the Father Bear Mother Bear stories she was given to read. In her version, Father Bear beat Mother Bear with brass vases. Mother Bear suffered those beatings with mute resignation” (180). Ammu is familiar with the hypocritic nature of her father. He has maintained his public profile as a generous and sophisticated man ready to donate money to orphanages and leprosy clinics. But he is cruel and monstrous with wife and children. He used to beat them to vent his anger for not being acknowledged for his discovery of new species of butterfly:

In her growing years, Ammu had watched her father weave his hideous web. He was charming and urbane with visitors, and stopped just short of fawning on them if they happened to be white. He donated money to orphanages and leprosy clinics. He worked hard on his public profile as a sophisticated, generous, moral man. But alone with his wife and children he turned into a monstrous, suspicious bully, with a streak of vicious cunning. They were beaten, humiliated and then made to suffer the envy of friends and relations for having such a wonderful husband and father. (180)

Ammu, later learns to live with this situation as she is brought up being bullied. She becomes used to with quarrels and confrontations.

As she grew older, Ammu learned to live with this cold, calculating cruelty. She developed a lofty sense of injustice and the mulish, reckless streak that develops in Someone Small who has been bullied all their lives by Someone Big. She did exactly nothing to avoid quarrels and confrontations. In fact, it could be argued that she sought them out, perhaps even enjoyed them. (182)

There are lots of traces of casteism along with gender discrimination. Ecofeminism seeks end of all kinds of domination done to marginalized groups. Since Velutha is from so called untouchable caste, society has not given him freedom to choose the

career he enjoys. People in the society from so called upper caste are unwilling to let paravans choose the profession they do. They don't want to see him as a carpenter. However, Mammachi hires Velutha as the factory carpenter and even makes him in charge of general maintenance:

Mammachi rehired Velutha as the factory carpenter and put him in charge of general maintenance. It caused a great deal of resentment among the other Touchable factory workers because, according to them, Paravans were not meant to be carpenters. And certainly, prodigal Paravans were not meant to be rehired. (77)

Mammachi has hired him as a factory carpenter not because she respects him but may be due to the reason that she doesn't have to pay him much as to those Touchable carpenter. She hadn't allowed him to enter the house to make other touchable carpenter happy.

To keep the others happy, and since she knew that nobody else would hire him as a carpenter, Mammachi paid Velutha less than she would a Touchable carpenter but more than she would a Paravan. Mammachi didn't encourage him to enter the house (except when she needed something mended or installed). She thought that he ought to be grateful that he was allowed on the factory premises at all, and allowed to touch things that Touchables touched. She said that it was a big step for a Paravan. (77)

Mammachi thinks that she has done a lot by putting him in job, so Velutha should be grateful to her. Untouchable people are treated as if they are not even human beings. At the same time, English people were treated as superior and divine in the society. Anglophile like Pappachi believed that only English were civilized and cultured. They can never make any mistakes: "Pappachi would not believe her story – not because he

thought well of her husband, but simply because he didn't believe that an Englishman, any Englishman, would covet another man's wife" (42). When Ammu told Pappachi that she left her husband, Babu due to her husband's boss Mr. Hollick, he refused to believe her. Mr. Hollick, an Englishman and owner of the Assam tea estate asked Babu to send his wife, Ammu, to sleep with him if he wanted to secure his job. Mr. Hollick's offer was the catalyst for the divorce between Ammu and Babu. Dr. U R Anusha claims that woman emerges as the object of the male gaze in the patriarchal cultural world whereas the non-human emerges as the object of the human gaze: "In a patriarchal culture the re-presentation of images creates both the subjectification of men and the objectification of women. While the woman in the cultural world emerges as the object of the male gaze, the non-human in the natural world emerges the object of the human gaze" (72). Patriarchal society has reduced women to merely objects.

The river near the Ayemenem house shows the power of nature which gradually declines as time passes. At one time, it "had the power to evoke fear" and to "change lives," but as time passes, the river has become a "slow, sludging green ribbon" (8). With the encroachment and exploitation of British imperialism and selfish modern society. The river is choked with human urine, feces, sweat and garbage.

The degradation of nature and the suppression of women are being operated parallelly. More broadly, Ecofeminist Theory underlines the needs of the interrelationships between humans and the natural environment (earth, animals and plants) and is now seen in a larger outlook as a movement against the interconnected oppressions of gender, race, class and nature.

Novelist Roy has mentioned lots of instances that illustrates the connection between Ammu and the river. Roy inscribes, “After the demise of Ammu, many years later, when Rahel meets the river, she remembers how Ammu was choked to death by a heartless patriarchal society” (32). Rahel feels close to the Meenachal River as her own mother.

It is noteworthy that immediately after the episode with the man 'Orange Drink', Estha instinctively craves the river, just as she craves her mother's protection. The connection between the river and the woman is also powerfully expressed in the way Roy compares Ammu to the river during the Velutha-Ammu conjunction. Roy says: “She was as wide and deep as river in spate” (337). Nature, both pleasure-giver and nurturer, clearly occupies a central place in these images. So, in another dimension, the river acts as a surrogate mother, feeding and teaching the twins. Rivers, which once reflected the whole of nature with their diversity and perfect beauty, now present a tedious picture. The river is termed to have “smelled of shit, and pesticides bought with World Bank loans” (13). The river's flow appears to have decreased and visibility is unclear.

Lori Gruen places this dilemma within the context of feminist and animal liberation theory, arguing that “traditional theories uphold and perpetuate unnecessary and unsustainable dichotomies (between nature and culture, of course, between reason and emotion). Ecofeminist theory could provide an alternative, predominant framework for freedom movement” (7).

Ellen Mortensen says that *The God of Small Things* shows the consequences of exploiting nature in the name of civilization. Mortensen argues that “*The God of Small Things* does more than just illustrate the consequence of exploiting Mother Nature in the name of progress. It also symbolizes rebellion of nature” (188).

Ecofeminist writer Carolyn Merchant (1993) proclaims that "the image of the earth as living beings and nurturing mother shapes the culture of human behavior. As long as the earth is considered alive and sentient, Violence against Mother Earth will be considered as an unethical behavior of human beings" (276). The modernization process has reduced people's respect for nature, and the ecological damage is largely based on the subordination of women.

Arundhati Roy uses her debut novel, *The God of Small Things*, as a vehicle to express her social and environmental concerns. Her female characters are silent victims of patriarchy, like ever subjugated river Meenachal and the pinned butterflies.

Men's yearning for comfort is always a trouble for the nature and women hood. Today's women (even educated and working women) define themselves as subjugated, abused, used and deformed beings along with nature.

The 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s saw increased ecofeminist activities by women in the anti-nuclear, environmental, and feminist movements. Greta Gaard and Patrick Murphy claim that "Ecofeminism not only raises the issues of the exploitation of women and nature in patriarchal societies but also recognizes the linking of this domination with class exploitation, colonialism, neocolonialism and racism" (3).

Rivers play significant role in the development of civilization. She is referred to as the supporter of life and is always equated with women having a caring role. The Meenachal river originating from the Ayemenem has a close association with Ammu, the mother of the twins. The river mothered the fishermen of Ayemenem village and earned them their daily living. However, when she turns into a monster in the rain, she can terminate everything by her side. Ammu has a face as calm as a river, but inside there is a dormant volcano ready to erupt at any moment" (44). Meenachal too had this twofold face. Kuttappen warns about the wilderness of the Meenachal river to the

twins “You must be careful. This river of our – she isn’t always what she pretends to be. I can hear her at night – rushing past in the moonlight always in hurry” (210).

Ammu and Meenachal are two miserable characters struggling to survive in the novel. Like the three generations of women depicted in the story, Ammu is a victim of patriarchy.

Ammu isn’t allowed to go to college because her father thinks educating girls is a waste of money. While Ammu tries to find comfort and solace in marriage and the twins, she is betrayed by her hubby, who asks her to satisfy his English boss’s hunger for sex. When she realizes she couldn’t breathe, she grabs her children and runs home, hoping their parents would accept them. But she has to face the real evil of life. Amu is frustrated by the indifference of her family, who see them as unwanted pests. His younger brother Chacko went through a similar divorce but he is privileged and inherits many rights from his parents. To show her love for him, his mother had the factory girls enter Chaco's room without disturbing the rest of the family. When they learn about Amu's relationship with Velutha, they are determined to keep everything a secret. Roy writes, “That it really began in the days when the Love Laws were made. The laws that lay down who should be loved, and how. And how much” (33). They imprison Ammu and punish her severely, they even plan to kill Velutha and finally did it. After Velutha dies in police custody, she leaves her home and comes to Allepy, where she dies tragically at Bharath Hotel. Roy vividly portrays Ammu's difficult situation in denouncing patriarchal dominance in society. The impact of patriarchy on Ammu is similar to the impact of modernization on the Meenachal River.

The Meenachal River passing through the lands of Ayemenem is an epitome of both fear and beauty. Twenty-three years ago it was impulsive, devastating and the

most powerful, but now it has changed into a mere withered ribbon. What caused the death of this river is nothing but human selfishness to gain more profit from urbanization and industrialization. Now the river is full of garbage and household waste. Green shores, once forested, are now disturbed by human settlement. Children defecate in the mudflats of the river, which is a dirty and disgusting participation. But like Ammu, the abandoned woman who lost her life and love for the fancies of caste-based society, the river flows with all its filth and eventually mixes with the sea.

John Ipe Pappachi exercises his patriarchal control over his meek and weak wife, Mamachi. Mamachi's married life has always been turbulent. She is just a mannequin in the hands of her husband. Pappachi is seventeen years older than him, which makes him jealous of the gender in him. Since he is a narrow-minded, self-centered, possessive, and jealous, he uses his physical power on his unfortunate wife and daughter. When his wife's teacher passes positive remarks on her violin lessons and makes great efforts to break his violin and throws it into the water. Eventually, Mamachi starts a business called Paradise Pickles and Preserves to escape her abusive husband.

Mamachi is a stereotypical Indian woman who dedicates her life to being the best wife of the Pappachi), while her daughter Ammu tussles against the silence of the marginalized group. Ammu is also punished for going against society's gender norms. Chacko After her death, Ammu's daughter, Rahel is ignored by the family.

The problem with all the female characters in the novel is like the butterflies pasted on cardboard by entomologist John Ipe. Their identities and dreams are hindered by the rules and norms of male domination. Throughout the story they seek freedom, life, love, acceptance, recognition and happiness.

Roy has unveiled different layers of hierarchies such as white/black, man/woman, upper class/untouchable, culture/nature, adult/child, etc., where one is given more privilege over other. Apart from revealing the sufferings of the lower class, Roy also makes the reader aware of the shattering dangers of tourism disguised as globalization. It presents a society where colonial legacy and whiteness is emphasized; family structures that do not allow women's equality and independence; Love Laws that change norms based on race, gender, and social status; globalization, which has changed the ancient landscape beyond recognition. The concepts of race, class, and family are all used to justify slavery and endorsement of commercial exploitation. However, the characters in the novel show a level of courage and resistance that allows them to transcend fixed boundaries and become fluid and permeable. Rahel thinks “Perhaps, Ammu, Estha and she were the worst transgressors. But it wasn’t just them. It was the others too. They all broke the rules. They all crossed into forbidden territory. They all tampered with the laws that lay down who should be loved and how. And how much” (31). The first practice of hierarchical dualism stems from a deep commitment to the history of colonial powers. Although India is a democratic country at the time of the novel (1967), the bourgeois society tried to maintain its dominance by following Western culture. Fair skin symbolizes beauty and virtue. The history, language, culture and beliefs of the White people were imposed on the people who once lived in the country and are considered as superior culture.

Pappachi and his sister, Baby Kochamma are prime examples of devoted anglophiles who pride themselves on integrating all the attitudes, values and lifestyles of the British people. When her daughter Ammu tells Pappachi that her husband's white employer wants her to have sex with her for securing her husband's job,

Pappachi refuses to believe her: “ Pappachi would not believe her story – not because he thought well of her husband, but simply because he didn’t believe that an Englishmen, any Englishmen, would covet another’s wife” (42). He believes that Englishmen are civilized and they can’t make us silly mistake. This law defines the consent of the female body, which can be exchanged like a commodity. White is associated with goodness; Black symbolizes evil and dirt.

In the novel, the dwarf maid Kochu Maria lives in illusion that white skin is precious beauty after being astonished by Sophie Mol's whiteness. She taunts Rahel that Sophie Mol will grow up to be the next Kochamma and will patiently increase her remuneration and give her a nylon saree for Onam as gift. It is important to understand how Maria balances white skin with virtue and benevolence.

The novel tells the story of the misfortunes that befell Ammu and her twin children, Rahel and Estha. These three characters are cornered by their families and society. His father Pappachi does not allow her to pursue higher education, and his younger brother Chacko is sent to Oxford University for higher education. Ammu marries to escape her abusive father, Pappachi. She is later shocked to learn that her husband is an alcoholic who beat her and even forced her into prostitution. After giving birth to twins Estha and Rahel, she leaves her husband and returns to her parents' home, where she becomes an unwilling guest. Due to the family arrangement and inheritance laws that exist among Syrian Christians, the daughter has no right to her father's wealth and is therefore restricted. After Ammu's relationship with Velutha became known, Chacko expels Ammu from the house: “Get out of my house before I break every bone in your body!” (225). She started a love-affair with lower caste Velutha as a protest against society's strict rules of acceptable behavior. In the novel, Ammu and Velutha are criminals who break strict laws and conventions. Binary

oppositions such as man/woman, black/white, Dalit/upper caste, and nature/culture are deeply rooted in the minds of Ayemenem people, and any attitude that exceeds or overlaps the established sphere is inappropriate and will be punished. Velutha is kept at periphery of the main stream due to his dark skin and low caste while Ammu is marginalized due to her "feminine" identity.

Ammu is portrayed as a rebellious, outspoken family girl who goes against the established social order. When Velutha is falsely accused of being responsible for the drowning of Sophie Mol, Ammu goes to the police station to fight against the hatred of the lower class, and fights against arrogance and hypocrisy. Ammu and Velutha are victims of a strict culture in which interaction with paravan, especially sex, is strictly forbidden. Therefore, the upper castes take on the role of the Almighty God who give legitimate punishment to lawbreakers.

In the novel, men persistently beat and abuse their wives' bodies as a form of oppression that prevents women from achieving independence and freedom. Mammachi is frequently beaten by her husband Pappachi, an imposing entomologist.

Rosemary Reuther traces the tactics men use to reduce women to merely 'commodities': "The reduction of woman to the body-object of male use is enforced by a vast network of control, ranging from the most subtle to the most brutal. Direct physical assault is certainly the ultimate weapon that males assume they hold in reserve over women" (147). She continues further: "Control over woman's body involves objectifying woman's body and viewing it as a commodity. This involves various mutilations; woman's body is twisted and distorted to make it an object of display and conspicuous consumption" (148). After Sophie Mol's funeral, Ammu reaches Kottayam police station to report the events leading to Sophie Mol's death. Inspector Thomas Matthews embarrasses her by calling her whore and her offspring

illegitimate. There was obvious lust in his eyes: “He stared at Ammu’s breasts as he spoke” (8). He taps at her breasts with a baton as “though he was choosing mangoes from a basket. Pointing out the ones that he wanted packed and delivered” (8).

Ammu refuses to conform to the banal roles assigned to her gender by the patriarchal decision. Her smoking and setting her housemistress’s stolen false hairbun on fire are seen by others "as if she didn't know how to be a girl" (17).

Roy exposes scheming and deteriorating politicians who attacked whites for their own selfish gain and turned on each other to control local bastions of power. Like the innocent colonial masters, Comrade Pillai is the epithet of all the unpleasantness and deceptions of the corrupt political tradition. Ironically, Pillai belongs to the Communist Party, which is committed to protecting the interests of workers and is determined to protect its members from all forms of social exploitation. But Pillai's leadership is built on loud and empty rhetoric. He only used Velutha as a tool to win the battle without any attacks against the Paradise Pickles.

The small town of Ayemenem becomes a commercialized point. Besides commercialization, Meenachal River is also being polluted: “Years later, when Rahel returned to the river, found it greeted her with a ghastly skull’s smile, with holes where teeth had been, and a limp hand raised from a hospital bed” (124). The river flows from its youth. It once had the power to create fear, to change lives, but now his teeth are gone and his soul is gone. Now it is just a slow, muddy green ribbon: “Once it had had the power to evoke fear. To change lives. But now its teeth were drawn, its spirit spent. It was just a slow, sludging green ribbon lawn that ferried fetid garbage to the sea. Bright plastic bags blew across its viscous, weedy surface like subtropical flying-flowers” (124). Plastic bags glistened like subtropical flowers on its slimy, overgrown surface. The poison level seems to be beyond the replacement levels: “The

view from the hotel was beautiful, but here too the water was thick and toxic. No Swimming signs had been put up in stylish calligraphy” (125). Though the view from the hotel is very beautiful, the water or river here has become thick and poisonous. Estha also notices when he returns that the river banks reeked of fertilizer and pesticides purchased with World Bank loans. Biodiversity is falling while "most of the fish had died. The ones that survived suffered from fin-rot and had broken out in boils” (13). The fish are dying due to pollution. The surviving fish have their fin rot.

Roy's novel is set in a middle class Christian environment and is full of references to the Anglican language. Chacko is a complete "mimic man" (Bhabha 125). “He is very proud of studying at Oxford University” (55). He shows his superiority over the rest of the family by speaking loudly. He is also once married to an English woman.

Other members of the family also express an vexing appreciation towards the former colonizer. For example, Pappachi refused to believe his daughter when she complains of sexual harassment by her husband's British boss; he has strong belief in the moral integrity of the British colonizers. Similarly, Chacko's former English wife, Margaret Kochama, and their daughter, Sophie, are treated with subservient respect by Mammachi and the twins' aunt, Baby Kochama. The latter is particularly remarkable in this respect; when she decided to punish the twins by making them speak “proper English”:

Baby Kochamma eavesdropped relentlessly on the twins' private conversation, and whenever she caught them speaking Malayalam she levied a small fine which was deducted at source. From their pocketmoney. She made them write lines . . . I will always speak in English, I will always speak in English. A hundred times each. . . . She had made them practice an English car

song for the way back. They had to form the words properly, and be particularly careful about their pronunciation. Prer Nun sea ayshun. (36)

The Kochama 's ban on speaking English is a reference to an old order given to educated Indians during the colonial regime. I read this scene as both a reference to the Anglicization of India's upper classes and a critique of violent attempts to create English as their dominant dialect. Chacko, as a dominant male and a capitalist, has both the cultural and economic supremacy to gaze at the images of Velutha and Ammu. The adoption of the "male gaze" combines Amu's image of the woman with the image of the non-human being of forest.

Family relationships in the text illustrate the superior model of natural logic in which men are superior to women. As an ecofeminist novel, *The God of Small Things* represents the unfair relationship at different levels of class, nature, gender, age and race. While patriarchal dualism serves as the foundation, the text also explores various forms of oppression, including imperialism, patriarchy, classism, adultism, and naturalism.

In short, the process of degrading women, nature and children occurs simultaneously with economic oppression and child abuse, giving context to the patriarchal view of power. In *The God of small things*, oppressed such as women, untouchables, and nature are at the bottom of the hierarchical ladder. The masculine gaze creates re-presentations that explains women and non-humans alike. Ammu, the woman is shrunk to a trivial object from a vibrant lady love; the social outcast Velutha is reduced to a statistic to be erased from the records, and the Meenanchal River is converted to the drainage covered with sewage. Meenachal River is in its worst condition due to the selfish and anthropocentric view of human beings.

Chapter III

Necessity of Harmonious and Egalitarian Relationship between Nature and Culture

The key purpose of this research was to find connection between the domination of women and exploitation of environment in the primary texts *The Good Earth* and *The God of Small Things*. Patriarchal Society has created a boundary for the women based on the hierarchies in the society shown in the primary texts. Women and nature in both novels had to suffer due to the patriarchal mindset and capitalist society. In traditional patriarchal society, women were exploited treating them as slaves. Both Nature and women are exploited in patriarchal and capitalist society as capitalism reproduces only patriarchal values. Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies in their book, *Ecofeminism*, transcribe that new forms of exploitation are seen as the traditional patriarchal society blends with capitalist patriarchy.

The novels of Pearl S. Buck and Arundhati Roy portray the need of harmony among human and nature. From an ecofeminist perspective, both novels offer rich insights into the intersections between environmental degradation, gender inequality, and social hierarchies.

Buck's *The Good Earth* talks about the mistreatment done to women. Women and nature are seen as the property of dominant men. Women are associated to the environment because of their traditional social role as a nurturer and caregiver. Buck portrays the interconnectedness between the land and the lives of the characters, highlighting the ways in which patriarchal structures exploit both the earth and women. The novel depicts the exploitation of land and the commodification of nature as part of the larger oppression faced by female characters like O-Lan, who toils on the land while being subject to the whims of her husband. Buck's portrayal of the

protagonist Wang Lung's relationship with the land and women in his life reflects the ways in which patriarchal structures exploit both nature and women for their labour and resources. The subjugation of the protagonist's wife, O-Lan, and the exploitation of the earth for its fertility is conducted in parallel manner. The degradation of both women and the land are interlinked in the narrative, emphasizing the necessity of challenging hierarchical power structures that perpetuate such exploitation.

Girls and women are sold and bought as objects. There isn't any regard for the feeling of women. They are treated as an object or commodity in this capitalist patriarchy. Women are judged as pure and impure according to their virginity before marriage. Even those men who might have lost their virginity, demand virgin girl for marriage. Birth of girl child is taken as evil sign. When O-Lan delivers a third baby, a girl child, she herself says to her husband from bed more feebly that it was just a slave that time. And when Wang Lung hears that the third child is a girl child he stands still. A sense of evil strikes him. A girl was causing all this trouble in his uncle's house. He thinks that a girl child is an uninvited trouble in the family. But for him boy child is good fortune. He was so happy to get two sons earlier.

Similarly, in *The God of Small Things*, Roy weaves a narrative that digs into the complexities of caste, gender, and environmental degradation in post-colonial India. The destruction of the environment mirrors the oppression and silencing of women and marginalized communities in it. Roy's portrayal of the river as a central symbol of life and death underscores the ways in which gendered and environmental violence are intertwined in the novel. The characters' interactions with the natural world and their marginalized positions in society illuminate the intersections between gender, caste, and environmental degradation. The novel's exploration of forbidden love and societal norms underscores how oppressive systems harm both individuals

and the environment. The novel critiques the commodification of nature and women, emphasizing the need for resistance against exploitative practices. Traditional patriarchy has given more privilege to men over women, behaving women as lower class citizen who can be suppressed.

The novel unveils how human beings are cruel and careless to nature to satisfy their need. It presents how suppressed women and nature can demonstrate rivalry against the prevalent social oppression. There has been an endeavor to uncover layers of hierarchies which prolong dualisms as white/black, male/female, upper caste/untouchables, culture/nature, adults/children, where one term is privileged over the other. The marginalized characters in the novel are trapped in various discursive and social establishments that shape their identity.

The degradation of nature and the suppression of women are being operated parallelly. It isn't only isolated women who are treated badly. Even the married women are treated unjustly. Most of married women face violation of their alcoholic and cruel husbands. Mammachi is the victim of violence done by her husband. John Ipe Pappachi exercises his patriarchal control over his meek and weak wife, Mamachi. Mammachi's married life has always been turbulent. She is just a puppet in the hands of her husband. Since he is a narrow-minded, self-centered, possessive, and jealous, he uses his physical power on his unfortunate wife and daughter. The hypocritic Pappachi has maintained his public profile as a generous and sophisticated man ready to donate money to orphanages and leprosy clinics. But he is cruel and monstrous with wife and children. He used to beat them to vent his anger for not being acknowledged for his discovery of new species of butterfly.

Likewise the Meenachal River is in its worst condition due to the selfish and anthropocentric view of human beings. Though the view from the hotel is very

beautiful, the water or river here has become thick and poisonous. Estha also notices when he returns that the river banks reek of fertilizer and pesticides purchased with World Bank loans. Biodiversity is falling and most of the fish had died. The ones that survived suffer from fin-rot. The fish are dying due to pollution. The surviving fish have their fin rot. With the encroachment and exploitation of British imperialism and selfish modern society, the river is filled with human urine, feces, sweat and garbage.

There are lots of traces of casteism along with gender discrimination. Since Velutha was from so called untouchable caste, Paravan, society has not given him freedom to choose the career he enjoys. Untouchable people are treated as if they were not even human beings. At the same time, English people were treated as superior and divine in the society. Anglophile like Pappachi believed that only English were civilized and cultured. They can never make any mistakes. In the novel, Ammu and Velutha are criminals who break strict laws and conventions. Binary oppositions such as man/woman, black/white, Dalit/upper caste, and nature/culture are deeply rooted in the minds of Ayemenem people, and any attitude that exceeds or overlaps the established sphere is inappropriate and will be punished. Velutha is kept at periphery of the main stream due to his dark skin and low caste while Ammu is marginalized due to her "feminine" identity.

Ecofeminism is a social movement which seeks to disassemble the hierarchies (based on gender, class, race, nature) created by the dominant patriarchal order. All ecofeminists sturdily believe that the oppression of women as well as the devaluing of nature run closely parallel to each other and the patriarchal order is the root cause behind their exploitation.

This research places emphasis on the unity and integrity of both gender and human and nature for the smooth running of life, equality and justice for all. It sees

the connection between the exploitation and domination of women and environment and calls for ends of the oppression of both women and nature by the patriarchal Western society to create an egalitarian, collaborative society where there is no one dominant group.

In conclusion, both *The Good Earth* and *The God of Small Things* underscore the urgent need to dismantle systems of oppression that exploit both the earth and the most vulnerable members of society. The analysis of both novels elucidates the ways in which gendered power dynamics are intrinsically linked to environmental exploitation. By centering the voices and experiences of women and nature, these novels remind us of the interconnectedness of all living beings and the importance of striving towards a more just and sustainable world. Through a critical examination of the interconnectedness of patriarchy, capitalism, and ecological degradation in both narratives, the study concludes the urgency of advocating for social and environmental justice.

For this purpose, I found ecofeminist issue more relevant than other literary theories. The novels conferred in this research can further be examined from different perspectives like environmental justice, social justice, and neocolonial aspect and so on.

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