

Tribhuvan University

Nature Vs Culture: Questioning Nature Exploitation in Mishra's

*The Soul of the Rhino*

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**Letter of Recommendation**

Mr. Amir Maharjan has completed his thesis entitled “Nature Vs Culture: Questioning Nature Exploitation in Mishra’s *The Soul of the Rhino*” under my supervision. I hereby recommend him thesis to be submitted for viva-voce.

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**Letter of Approval**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “Nature Vs Culture: Questioning Nature Exploitation in Mishra’s *The Soul of the Rhino*” by Amir Maharjan, submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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### **Abstract**

This thesis focuses on studying a relation between human and nature on a memoir by Hemanta Mishra's *The Soul of the Rhino*. It explores how human actions are responsible for the destruction of the prime habitat for 'one horned rhino' in Chitwan, Nepal, in particular and bias nature of human constructed culture regarding the protection of animal and nature. This thesis tries to uncover the human stereotypical notion that certain person, group, and countries have reserved all the rights to exploit over others including nature on the basis of power. In the book, Mishra provides details how animals have been exploited by humans throughout the history based on his experience working for the protection of one of the endangered species in this nature. While studying the animals, this research also tries to explore identity of women in patriarchy society as well as people in power dominated society in parallel relation with animals using the of eco-feminist and eco-Marxist. Humans have created conflict not just between human and nature but within human race on the basis of power which later becomes the criteria for the superiority. Also, development planned created in the vacuum is equally responsible for the exploitation of nature besides growing the human population.

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## I. Nature and Culture in Collision

The earth is only the living planet known to the humans. This universe exists or simply “is” in a certain arrangement or harmony with each component playing a pre-determined ‘role’, contributing to the universal rhythm. Even from the microbes to birds, animals, plants, and including nonliving objects have significant contribution in smooth operating this nature. Nature’s design entails, that everything we have to work with is already here- the stones, the clay, the water, the air etc. Also, that all the materials provided by nature are constantly returned back, that is, it is cyclic process. The ‘energy’ provided from the sun in the form of light drive nature to continuous cycle. For example, the plants create food with the help of sunlight, and death of one being is food or breeding ground for the plants.

All population sizes are limited by various environmental factors, such as food availability, space, and light. Populations tend to increase in size until equilibrium is reached. Hence, population size generally remains approximately constant over a period of time related to the length of the organism's life cycle. The continuous competition between individuals for environmental resources creates a 'struggle for existence'. Whether this competition is within ‘same species’ or ‘different species’ is affecting the size of the individual population but it will imply that certain organisms will fail to survive or reproduce. The key factor in determining survival is adaption to the environment.

The word environment has been derived in English from French word, 'Enviornier' meaning 'to circle' or 'to surround' (Cunningham 4). In English the same word is used as 'environment' to define social and cultural conditions that surround an individual or community. The word "environment" stands for manmade and the natural world. Environment literature focuses upon the governance of the same law for man and nature in which both should be responsible to each other equally. The

Cambridge International Dictionary of English provides two definitions of the word environment focused on human and in broad including human and non-human too. The first one defined "the conditions that you live or work in and the way that they influence how you feel or how effectively you can work" and later as Nature" (the quality of) air, water and land in or on which people, animals, and plants live." That means it's a global home to all living organisms where they use and enjoy the nonliving things on the earth for their sustenance and pleasure. Virtually, there is no any such place or climatic conditions on the earth where humans have not survived and exploitation of nature has been not done.

The damage to the nature caused by human has created questioning on the sustainability of all the creatures living on this earth including human themselves. In the present context environment study has become one of the trending topics of study using different perspective by the scholars because of its relatedness in their field. Purohit&Ranjan, in their book *Ecology, Environment and Pollution* asserts that with increasing human population and time there is change in the human lifestyle and to accommodate the growing needs human has ruthlessly exploited and destroyed wildlife habitats (Purohit557). Loss, fragmentation or transformations of habitats have been mainly due to changes in land such as urbanization, industrialization, agricultural development, vegetation manipulation, shifting cultivation, introduction of exotics, etc. which was necessary because of high living standard and to accommodate an ever increasing human population, human has ruthlessly exploited and destroyed wildlife habitats.

Natural habitats are under tremendous pressure due to increasing population densities and activities of human beings. Wildlife habitats are getting destroyed at an alarming rate with disastrous effects on the biodiversity. While a large number of species have become extinct in the recent past, the survival of many others is



threatened. For the goodness of one individual species "human", other species and nature are suffering. Dominance of human over other creatures is bringing conflict between human and animal in which 'nature' has been misbalanced. Palmer in her book *Environmental Ethics* writes it is difficult to define "environment" because of human made environment and the natural environment. She support her argument with an example of the conifer trees which are "natural" since trees are not human made but also it is "human" because of plantation and seeds produced by human (Palmer 4). Because of the mix of human actions in the nature to define environment is not easy. Palmer precise the environment in broad sense means "wilderness" and ethics means ideas what humans "should" or "ought to".

*The Soul of the Rhino* explores the relationship between human and nature especially based on decreasing number of rhinoceros in wild and necessary for the conservation of this critically endangered Asiatic species of rhino "Great one horn rhino". Besides dealing about the particular Asian species of rhinos the book provides the overview of the conditions of other species in the world and how human are responsible for their degradation of nature. The population of the rhinos is rapidly decreasing from Nepal with the growing human population and human activities. The book raises the issues concerning importance of the rhinos and the challenges in the conservation of these rare species from being extinct from the world.

Rhinos are important symbol for Nepalese culture, economy as well as from the scientific perspectives. From cultural point of view rhinos are one of the most wonderful creations of the gods but within "Hinduism" rhinos are facing dualism. Some Hindus believed dead rhinos and their organs are important religious symbols whereas for others survival of the rhinos are precious because they are one of the master piece of the gods creation. In the conflicting religious situation dead rhinos value more than the living. There is also culture in Nepal that the king of Nepal must

hunt the big male rhino and perform the ritual inside the dead body of the animal for the peace and prosperity of the country. There is long history of these animals being good source of entertainment and important big game trophy animal for the royal and elite people killing them in large numbers.

The horn of the rhinos is believed to have important medicinal value. A kilo of rhino horn is supposed to fetch thousands of dollars in the international black market and rhinos have become big target of the poachers for the easy money. Besides poaching and hunting these animals had to suffer physical and mental torture for the sake of scientific experiments and for the selfish motive of humans. From very poor to very rich everyone is exploiting this wonderful creature. Alias asserts,

The ability in human to understand, describe and define natural forces make them (human) free and empowered. This 'awareness' and '(self) confidence' in them bring two consequences either 'desire to dominate the world' or 'sense of respect and appreciation or the natural world' which they then knew and understood. (Simona43)

The decreasing number of rhinos makes people realize their importance. For the sake of hunting, religious importance or medicinal value surviving of rhinos is very important. In present context like rhinos many animals, plants, and natural environment need protections because of their usable and aesthetic value.

Humans are haphazardly destroying this natural beauty with development. If no measures for the protection of nature and wildlife are taken timely, soon this beautiful earth will be deserted. The establishment of Chitwan National Park was an initiative in the conservation of the environment and protection of the rhinos including other wildlife. Mishra believes the national parks have not only "recreational" or "aesthetic value" but also "spiritual" that connects human with the mother earth (69)

and national parks cannot be best managed without the help of the people. In the review of the book former US ambassador to Nepal, (1984-87) Leon J. Weil writes:

The book is much more than a story about rhinos. It is an account of the tradition, customs, and rituals of the people who live in the southern Terai region of Nepal Known as Chitwan. It is also a story about how one man embarked on a cause to save this sacred national symbol from the effects of rampant habitat destruction and illegal poaching. (Paperback)

As told by Weil, it is fact that human are not complete without the animals and nature. Nature is associated with human so deeply that while studying human text, nature has always much influence in the development of human culture and religion.

The beautiful creature 'rhino' has become victimof the various human actions whether for the cause of the entertainment, trophy hunt, scientific research, culture purposes, and so on. Val Plumwood writes, "Human centeredness promotes various damaging forms of epistemic remoteness, for by walling ourselves off from nature in order to exploit it, we also lose certain abilities to situate ourselves as part of it" (Plumwood162). Human believes this nature has been created just for the purpose of the human and we have all the rights to use other on this for our benefit. We forget the 'intrinsic value' of nature and value only when nature can be served or used for the benefit of human.

Human consider other creature as inferior because they lack the human cognitive for the bizarre thought and for the positive capacity of the many animals have. Anthony Lawrenceasserts:

We also have to understand there are things that we cannot understand. Elephants possess qualities and abilities well beyond the means of science to decipher. Elephants cannot repair a computer but they do

have communication, physical and metaphysical, that would make Bill Gate's mouth drop open. In some very important ways they are ahead of us. (Lawrence 3)

Nature has gifted every creature with different abilities and intelligence so that every creature is unique in its own way. Animals are not inferior and be underestimated just because we have made progress in science. If humans cannot understand the language of the animals, it's not the problem of animals.

Deep ecology argues the natural world is a subtle balance of complex interrelationship in which the existence of organism is dependent on the existence of others within 'ecosystem'. The term ecology (= Oekologie) was first used by Reiter in 1885 followed by Ernst Haeckel in 1886 (Gr. Oikos-house, logos- study). It was initially meant for animals only and was defined as "investigations of the total relations of the animals to its inorganic and organic environment". S.S. Purohit & R. Ranjan in the book *Ecology, Environment and Pollution* gives definition of Ecology by various ecologists, 'Warming considered ecology to mean "the study of organisms in relation to environment". According to Misra has defined "ecology" as the study of interactions of form, function and factors. While for Krebs ecology is the scientific study of interactions that determine the distribution and abundance of organisms' (Purohit 2). The definition was later enlarged- the study of reciprocal relationship between living organisms and their environment. Presently, it is also considered to be the structure and function of ecosystems.

For the understanding of environmental problems and its solution, understanding culture can be an essential part. To understand this catastrophe, it has become necessary to closely understand the nature and its importance in human life. Greg Gerrad asserts, 'Deep ecology identifies the anthropocentric dualisms humanity/nature as the ultimate source of anti-ecological beliefs and practices'

(Gerrad26). Animals have vital role in the lives of human from providing food, being companion, helping in their daily work to contributing in many scientific experiments which are benefitting human. Also, animals are important part of culture and religion of many civilizations. In spite of much importance of the animals in the life of people they have been very much exploited by humans even though much effort and money had been spent on the conservation but the result achieved is not as been targeted.

Aldo Leopold writes "Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land. Despite nearly a century of propaganda, conservation still proceeds at a snail's pace; progress still consists largely of letterhead pieties and convention oratory" (Leopold 40). Leopold here land does not mean just soil but includes the entire living creature and also nonliving things that human should give respect. There are always lots of works done in paper work than in actual practicality. We have many conventions and rights mentioned about the animal welfare and environment conservation but remains mostly on paper than in reality.

Nehru gives the translation of the verse from the old *Sanskrit* book "For the family sacrifice the individual, for the community the family, for the country the community" (Nehru 8). Which means for the good or the wellbeing mass is more important than the individual. Environmental problem were not the new topic for the humans. All problems and topic related to environment were studied as different branch of science instead of including it into literature. Most of the Greco-Roman philosophies present the reflection of living god in all natural objects. Because of this attitude, they were called natural philosophers. They were the first to take steps in the direction of logical reasoning. Since then, environment, as nature, is always believed to be in a constant state of transformation as a flower unfolds its leaves and petals.

The world around us, is thus, thought to be an organism, a unity, within which, its potentialities constantly develop. Therefore, a communion between man and the

physical ecosphere is essential. For this, Commoner states: “Any living thing that hopes to live in earth must fit into the ecosphere or perish” (Commoner 11). Nothing on this earth is permanent every birth is followed by death at some stages which is continuous process. Even, non-living thing like soil, rock, etc. they changes their shapes and sizes with time creating something new.

Many classic authors regarded earth as a living being. The earliest philosopher, Thales, considered all life forms as holy and said that all should live in harmony causing no harm to other life form. Similarly, Anaxagoras perceived natural world to be built up of an infinite number of minute particles that we could not perceive (Gaarder 32-38). Even in such smaller parts, there are fragments of all other beings. It means; we are connected to all other beings. Similarly, Darwin drew attention to the great similarities between humans and animals, ‘The Descent of Man’ advancing the theory that men and anthropoid apes must at one time evolved from the same progenitor. While, Sigmund Freud studies of the unconsciousness revealed that people’s action were often the results of “animal” urges or instincts.

The main sources of such philosophical understanding about environment have been always determined by different cultures and religions of different societies. Most of the eastern cultures believe upon maintenance of right relationship with the earth. However, Christianity, as the religion of the west, has internalized the hierarchical understanding of the earthly creatures since its origin. It has ignored the biocentric value of ecosphere as it sets humans against nature only to prove the belief of human superiority over nature.

The religious book of Christianity, *The Bible*, itself follows the same belief and presents human beings as a special creation of God. Man is supposed to be living according to the wish of God by ruling over all other beings in the world. According to this belief, man’s role is to exploit nature. The belief of considering men’s

superiority has been causing disaster in a nature around because The Bible itself suggests humans to have dominion over all other creatures: “Let us make in our image, according to our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (Gen 1:26)

Lynn White Jr., an American historian, therefore, blames Christianity for giving overpowering position to men to rule over nature and creatures. He argues: “We are superior to nature, contemptuous of it, willing to use it for our slightest whim. We shall have worsening ecological crisis until we reject Christian axiom that nature has no reason but to serve man” (146). It is the god, the creator who gives over all power to humans so that they could rule and dominate other elements of the earth. This anthropocentric conception has still strongly taken hold over the Christian culture which regards nature only for utilitarian purpose. It is because of this, the Euro-American cultures give less importance to nonhuman objects. They never value the land in comparison to themselves. When the objects become useless because of their exploitation, they consider them to be valueless.

Also, Mishra relates the female with the nature where they are being used by the male for their benefit. Simone de Beauvoir denied the existence of a basic “female nature” or “male nature”. For instance, it has been generally claimed that man has a “transcending,” or achieving, nature. He will therefore seek meaning and direction outside the home. Women has been said to have the opposite life philosophy. She is “immanent,” which means she wishes to be where she is. She will therefore nurture her family, care for the environment and more homely things. Nowadays we might say that women are more concerned with “feminine values’ than men.’ Her main work, published in 1949, was called ‘The Second Sex.’ ‘She was talking about women. In our culture women are treated as the second sex. Men behaved as if they are the subjects, treating women like their objects, thus depriving them of the

responsibility for their own life' (Gaarad 382). Endurance, silent, peaceful nature of the female is considered weakness by the by males on this ground they are being exploited. Ecofeminist claims their relatedness to the nature.

Greg Garrard asserts, "Ecofeminism also blames the androcentric dualism man/women. Androcentric distinguishes men from women on the grounds of some alleged quality such as larger brains size, and then assumes that this distinction confers superiority upon men" (Garrard 26). In spite of female having equal position to men, in practice they are much dominated with limited rights to be enjoyed by them. Women are supposed to be shy and constrained with household works while male takes cares of other affairs.

In Eastern culture, Hindus have deep respect for nature. They worship nature as necessary part of human life. In its creation myths, five great elements, "panchatatwo"—sky, air, fire, water, and earth are believed to be emerged out of "prakriti", the earth (Rao 26). These elements are the essence of every creating force. Hence, the essence of every creating force is latent in five elements of prakriti; nothing can be alien and hostile rather they are inseparable ones. The *Bhagwat Gita*, another important aspect of Hindu religion, also inhabits the value of all living beings. It regards earth as mother and all other creations, its essential parts.

Majupuria writes, "In Nepal, the Shaktas (worshipper of power goddess) follow the custom of sacrificing animals as part of ritualistic worship of certain deities. The logic behind this custom is that it imparts vigor, vitality and strength to the divinities" (Majupuria103). While translating The Bhagvad Gita, A.C. Prabhupada has said: "Nature is said to be the cause of all material activities and efforts, whereas the living entity is the cause of the various suffering and enjoyments in this world" (Prabhupada 645). It occupies the same value as *The Veda* in the context of nature. In The Bhagvad Gita, Brahma is supposed to be the creator of the whole universe:



By me, by my manifestation form  
 the whole world is pervaded.  
 All beings subsist in me...  
 Myself is the source and support  
 Of all beings. (ix)

It is because the source of all life is same, the mother earth, no life form gets either superior or inferior place in the same earth. Hindus worship all life forms like cows, dogs, crows, snake, and oxen during different festivals, and also feed animals like dogs, monkeys and ants. They even worship plants like bar, peepal as a sacred one. They expect a good fortune admiration their admiration of all life forms in nature. Recognize such intrinsic value in the natural world and in non-human species, the share an ecologically friendly attitude.

In the same manner, another Eastern religion, Buddhism, says; “Do not serve mean ends. Do not live in heedlessness. Do not be a world-upholder” (Ikede 152). Buddhist thinkers are also very common to Hinduism while concerning about nature. This religion acquires the message of love for all the creatures. Buddha has said:

Whatever living beings are there, feeble or strong, all either long or great, middle-sized, short, small or large. Either seen or which are not seen, and which live far (or) near, either born or seeking birth, may all creatures be happy-minded. (Miller 3-6)

This religion has a deep concern for all life forms and their happiness in the universe. Like Yogies in Hinduism, Buddha had a belief that to be an “Ariya’ the man has to have pity on all living creatures. Therefore, Buddha himself taught his disciples to love and respect each creature equally. In *Buddhism: The Living Philosophy*, Ikeda mentions: “Ever since the time of Shakyamuni, nearly three thousand years ago, Buddhism has explained the nature of life from the standpoint that life itself is latent

in nature, the universe, and all things” (Ikeda 23-24). In this way, all things are believed to have their assimilation with every other thing in this religion and man also cannot be apart from this environment.

According to Buddhist culture, only man is fortunate to achieve enlightenment but, it does not mean that other natural entities acquire less importance. They believed birth as human is one of the part of the ‘reincarnation’ the birth cycle. Different birds and animals like monkeys, parrots, trees, and oxen are worshipped believing them to be the reincarnation of Buddha. It suggests humanity not to forget other living creatures. Therefore, human beings should reflect not only on themselves but, also on the world.

Jainism, another religion from the East, strives towards harmonious coexistence with all beings. ‘Ahimsa’, non-violence is their core precept and for them all life is sacred. Even the job/work they undertake is generally eco-friendly. “It is ecological shepherding taken to its logical conclusion” (Tobais 140). All organisms, everything, the whole evolving biosphere is heaven itself and that behind all sorrow in the world is this false alienation between oneself (humans) and the rest of the world. This earth is all that is of any significance. In pursuit of harmony, Jains believe in the ‘live and let live’ philosophy, in inner attentiveness which embraces the outer form, the earth and all its beings.

Majupuria writes the word 'animism' came from the word "animae" which was first used by the British anthropologist Sir Edward Burnett Tylor in 1971 to theorize that all religion had developed from early people's first ideas of souls in human beings and of spirits in parts of nature (Majupuria32). Cultures believing in Animism did not exploit nature because they believed that every entity of nature has a spirit of its own. Reading through ancient Hindu scriptures, like the Ramayana, one finds Lord Rama speaking to the plants and animals while looking for Sita, or praying for permission

for the Ocean to cross it to go to Lanka. These are not merely fairy tales but a way of life in those communities.

MohamadedSalim in *Islam The Ultimate Faith* writes during Neolithic period, human acquired knowledge of the agriculture which was not enough for them without the help of animals. Salim describes:

Egyptians believed super powers behind every phenomenon of nature, but the sun-god remained supreme, worshipped in several forms. Other major gods represented god of other world... The annual gods, also called as the local gods, sometimes represented by symbols such as bull, hawk, crocodile, serpent...were also worshipped and Egyptians 'allowed some of these creatures to roam in the temples with the same freedom that is accorded to the sacred cow in India today.

(Mohamaded15-19)

Men's inability to understand the process of nature brought feeling of insecurities.

Because of this they started to believe that the community welfare was tied up with animals, so the animal dependence shifted their belief. Now, animals, birds, and trees became his totems, saviors and ancestors.

Mishra brings the importance of rhinos as one importance nature's gift to human providing job to the people and generating revenue for the country through tourism industry. Nature should be protected for the benefit for the human ultimately.

He writes:

The rhino was an important national symbol of Nepal. It was even embossed on the one-hundred-rupee note, the highest denomination of Nepali currency at that time. Besides Mt Everest, the rhino was the best-known icon of Nepal. Nepalis often say, 'We have Mt Everest. We also have rhinos and elephants.' (47)

It has become a challenging job to protect rhinos in the south and Mt. Everest in the North from human action. While Mt. Everest is facing pollution because of the overflowing population, on the other hand, rhinos are suffering death on the hands of poachers who trade for their body organs as well as people who hunt them for pleasure. Besides being killed, they have suffered human development projects and human invaders.

## II. The Study of Human-Nature Relation in Literature

Since the "ecocriticism" was introduced in 1990's as a new topic in the field of environment literature to see an official and direct response from the literary academic community to the environmental debate. All perspectives within its framework, it examines how the concepts of the nature are constructed and perceived by the people in different culture, religion, and places. In 1995 established Harvard scholar and Professor Lawrence Buell, with his long experience of study on Thoreau and the Transcendentalist movement, published a book – *The Environmental Imagination* – that placed the theretofore marginal genre of nature writing within the scope of mainstream and canonical American literature. His work provides a thorough and in-depth definition of nature writing also it offers a critical reflection on the way in which the environment has been and still is represented and constructed in literature. What he essentially does is to define virtually the object and subject of ecocriticism.

Concerned that literature should represent also environment as other human issues been represented in the literature, Professor Cheryl Glotfelty and Associate Harold Fromm published *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996) which define ecocriticism as:

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." (xviii)

This book outlines the genesis of the literary response to environmentalism. Ecocritics interpret associating culture and nature in the text. In any oldest recorded writing there is influence of the environment but they were studied using different prospective or

tools until the ecocriticism came into existence. Studying of ecology was different branch of science rather than literature.

Glotfelty writes "Literary studies in our postmodern age exist in a state of constant flux. Every few years, it seems, the profession of English must "redraw the boundaries" to "remap" the rapidly changing contours of the field" (Glotfeltyxv). For example, *The Bible* which was previously read from the religious point of view is important for the feminist to relate how woman has been suppressed by the male. In a similar way, ecocritics try to find the relation of culture and nature.

This analysis allows ecocritics to access how the concepts of nature and the natural are constructed in different cultures and expressed in a variety of their practices. It has developed interest in nature writing, pastoral settings, and literary ecology. It claims the rural environment and wild nature as its area of study. It is of no doubt that different cultural critic's reject the ecocriticism's focus on different literary genres, but an unavoidable reality it that ecocritical movement has been now considered an important genre of literary writing. Therefore, the task of ecocritic is to reexamine cultural attitudes towards nature through its history. For this task to become possible, plays, films, poems, stories, science fiction, journals, essays novels of the past become necessary parts. While going through these means, ecocriticism avoids the earlier egocentric western concept in which man was considered little lower than the angels and all above the rest of earthly creations. In this sense, man was the almighty of all others.

But, a newly emerging ecocritic paradigm has a deep respect for the integrity of all other forms of life with which humankind shares the earth. Therefore, ecocriticism greatly emphasizes on the biological processes and relations that precede and contribute to the socio-cultural production of space. If we appreciate this process, it can help restore harmonious balance between nature and human cultures. As

literature, culture, and language are produced from physical environment, nature gets its importance for what it conceptually means.

Nature in literature is important not for what it physically is, but for what it conceptually means. In this sense, Kern cites:

ecocriticism ultimately a form of environment advocacy, is primarily a critical and literary tool, a kind of reading designed to expose and facilitate analysis of a text's orientation both to the world it imagines and to the world in which it takes shape, along with the conditions and contexts that affect the orientation, whatever it might be. (Kern 260)

The classic writers were also unwittingly doing ecocritism for centuries even when the genre had not been introduced onto the academic scene. Religious activities and creation myths were the sources of eco awareness. Later on, sharing the idea of organic whole, American transcendentalists and British Romanticists gave it consistency. These acts contributed a lot for the emergence of ecocriticism which took place as a literary criticism only since 1990.

During Renaissance, the writers mediated on how nature should be treated. It was a positive attitude toward nature as Mckusick has mentioned, "Francis Bacon had called upon scientists to investigate nature rather than books, and his appeal eventually bore fruit [...]" (Mckusick21). At this time, literature widely mystified nature using it symbolically. The *Tempest*, written by Shakespeare, idealizes the landscape and this idealized nature is given extreme supremacy in form of Prosperos' wisdom to create all powerful.

The study of the relations between animals and humans in the Humanities is split between philosophical consideration of animal rights and cultural analysis of the representation of animals. A remarkably recent phenomenon, it derived impetus primarily from Peter Singer's revolutionary *Animal Liberation*, which examined an

issue then discussed in passing by moral philosophers but seldom fully explored. Singer drew upon arguments first put forward by Utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), who suggested that cruelty to animals was analogous to slavery and claimed that the capacity to feel pain, not the power of reason, entitled a being to moral consideration.

Singer gives the label speciesism to the irrational prejudice that Bentham identifies as the basis of our different treatment of animals and humans. Just as, say women or African have been mistreated on the grounds of morally irrelevant physiological differences, so animals suffer because they fall on the wrong side of a supposedly insuperable line dividing beings that count from those that do not (Singer 8). Yet it turns out to be impossible to draw that line in such a way that all animals are excluded and all humans are included, even if we turn, as many have done, to the faculties of reason or discourse: for Bentham “a full-grown horse or dog is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as a more conversable animal, than an infant of a day or even a month old” (Singer 8). The boundary between human and animal is arbitrary and, moreover, irrelevant, since we share with animals a capacity for suffering that only the hand of tyranny could ignore.

Similarly, eco-feminist studies the relation of female with nature and repressive attitude towards women’s sexuality. Vandana Shiva believed colonization process did not end but continued in different form as development project of “wealth creation in modern western patriarchy’s economic vision, which was based on the exploitation or exclusion of women (of the west and non-west), on the exploitation and degradation of nature, on the exploitation and erosion of other cultures” (Shiva 183). Louise Westling reading Thoreau’s *Walden* suggests the Thoreau’s attitude toward the physical world is gender dynamic which is due to contradiction and



dualism 'embedded in the rich dialogic texture'. He compares the pond, the earth, and Nature with female (Westling262).

On the other hand, eco-Marxists were also interested in the studies of the nature vs. human as the class struggle, since where there is nature there is people and class struggle. With the development rise the technologies making more human feel powerful than the nature so human start exploiting nature. Leo Marx believed, "For it is industrialization, represented by images of machine technology, that provides the counterforce in the American archetype of the pastoral design" (Gaarder105). The conversion of vast wilderness of the Chitwan into concrete jungle is the result of the development of the technology.

This research focuses on the ecological calamity on the memoir of Mishra that reinforces the natural vision and connectedness of human and non-human elemental world of nature giving prior focus to the art account than any other moral idea that can promote awareness towards the environmental understanding. Then the further chapter analyzes the memoir critically into the textual stand point and a number of its magnitudes. The last part, closing observation provides concluding remark.

### III. Human Society and Culture as the exploitative Force in *The Soul of the Rhino*

Mishra shares his experience of working in the field of conservation of the beautiful creatures 'Great One Horn Rhino' in the southern flat land of the country known as 'Terai'. He was born in Kathmandu among Hindu-Buddhist well to do family, educated in Nepal, India and US. He is one of Nepal's foremost tiger and rhino conservationists. He began his career in 1967 as part of the government's pioneering team that created *Chitwan* National Park in 1973. Besides he has also contribution on to help establish a network of protected areas in the *Terai* and the Himalayas.

In 1987, he was awarded with the prestigious J Paul Getty Conservation Prize for his outstanding efforts in protecting the country's endangered species. He has written other books two books *The Bones of the Tiger* (2010) and *Royal Chitwan National Park* (2008) both are related with the conservation of the nature and animals. He faced many challenges in saving these animals from local community, poachers, politician to bureaucrats. Although conservation of the rhinos is the main concern, the book gives the vivid portraits of the Nepalese society, tradition, culture and political situation. The books also deal with the women issues and marginalized people and try to relate them with the animal.

The main cause of the decreasing number of the rhinos from the Chitwan is overgrowing human population in the area which is because of the mass migration of population bringing animal in direct conflict with human for the territory. Mishra writes:

Habitat destruction was the prime cause. Before 1950 virtually all of the Rapti Valley in the Royal Chitwan National Park, except for a few hamlets, was covered with pristine forests and grasslands. By the sixties, more than 65 per cent of rhino habitat was lost to agricultural encroachment. Likewise, the human population of Chitwan increased

form a few thousand to more than a lakh by 1969. Before 1950 a few Tharu cattle used to graze in the forests, with little or no competition with rhinos. (58)

Overgrowing human population can be perceived as main cause for the conflict of the animal with human. It is also right of the animals to be angry with human as they destroy their habitat and turn them into agriculture field. It is invaders who have no respect for the life of the animals who inhabited the area for centuries. While the native have provided the space to the animals creating harmony with them.

E.A Smythies who chronicled many of the royal hunts, called Chitwan "one of the most beautiful places on earth saturated with tigers and rhinos were positive nuisance" (qtd. in Sunquist, 40). At the time of environmental injuries and disruption through human exploitation, bioregional learning to live in place has become an important issue because sustainable life depends on how we use and conserve our resources and our environment. For some years we have begun to think about preserving our environment for the sake of our sustenance. But indigenous people always considered this universe and its elements a valuable part of human life since their origin. Therefore, to recognize the rights of indigenous people and minority communities can become an important way to protect natural resources and environmental quality.

Indigenous people of any place are generally considered to possess distinctive culture in which, they traditionally, have a deeply rooted sense of place and relationship with wholeness of the natural world. Mishra accounts:

Besides the Tharus, ethnic groups such as the Bote, musahar, and Kumal have lived in Chitwan for hundreds of years. Botes are fishermen. They make a living by selling or bartering fish or transporting people across rivers in their dugout canoes.

Musahar means mouse eater...Kumal are potters. They supply the village with clay pots and other household items. (31)

Indigenous people like to live in their traditional homelands in harmony with other creatures of the world. Even if they are poorest and more oppressed, they possess valuable ecological knowledge and act as the guardians of nature because their unique cultures are disappearing, along with biological diversity as natural habitats are destroyed to satisfy industrialized world appetites for resources.

The sense of nature conservation and protection of the animals is explicit with the suggestion given by Tapsi, (the elephant driver and native of Chitwan) to the author, "The survival of rhinos is at best uncertain," he (Tapsi) 'Currently, they are all in one place here in Chitwan. What if a disease or any other sickness wipes out the rhinos from Chitwan? We need a second home for rhinos' (12). It is true what the ideas shared by the Tapai to the Mishra that epidemic might spread anywhere and anytime. In such cases at once all the rhinos living in one place might be killed making these animals critically endangered or extinct from the world. While breeding those endangered species at other areas in wild will protect them from disappearing from the world. The concern for the survival represents the native people's view of nature as 'intrinsic value'. It does not need to serve for the benefit of the people. The natives might have conflict over the destruction of their farmland by the animals but they have love and affection for these animals.

Indigenous knowledge itself is a gift from the creator which not only instructs humanity but assigns roles and responsibilities to all creatures also. For them, self exists within a world that is in a flux. They live in their particular relationship with creation. Unlike the most of the Western cultures and Hindu who lives in the urban cities for the natives or indigenous rhinos are very important and they have different stories of the creation. Tapsi narrates,

Brahma (creator god) commanded 'Viswakarma, make me a new and perfect creature. It must not resemble any beast in this world in shape, size, or personality.' ... The Almighty's (Lord Shiva) advice was short and simple: 'Create an animal as elegant as BiplankeGhoda, the flying horse; as holy as the River Ganges; and as fat, strong, and arrogant as Nandi, my bull.' Shiva placed his right hand on Viswakarma's forehead and blessed him. 'Even humans shall not destroy the new animal you create', proclaimed Shiva. 'They shall preserve your extraordinary creation forever.' (24-25)

The tribal people's culture is alive because their myths and stories are alive. They are the sources of strength to them in a world dominated by urbanized culture. They believed one cannot live happily ignoring the relationship with other creatures because one's survival is dependent on the existence of another.

Natives believe it is important to please the nature especially in context of the native of Chitwan forest goddess 'Bandevis' before commemorating any activities in the forest. The author narrates, 'The shaman ceremony required Badai (native village shaman) to wait for the animal to shiver its head and body. No goat could be sacrificed without the ritual of a goat shiver, which is a signal of permission from the goat to be sacrificed' (116). Many societies' religion has developed from "animism" that is worship of animals because of a belief that everything in nature has souls. Nehru gives the translation of the verse from the old *Sanskrit* book "For the family sacrifice the individual, for the community the family, for the country the community" (Nehru 8). Early humans lived difficult life as hunters and food collectors wandering different places until they had knowledge of agriculture. Also humans were afraid of "nature and of natural phenomena" due to lack of knowledge, offering and worshipping of nature is done to prevent terrible calamities. The natives

are people who lived in association with the nature and they required to please the nature for the good of all.

Consequently, what happens in one part of the ecosystem will impact another. Whereas, the same animal which is very important for the natives as living are not much of importance for the people same nation, and religion living in the other part of in the same country. As much as life of the rhinos are important for the natives, only the body organs of the same animal are revered by the people who lives in the cities. For the city dwellers performing the ritual on the body organ of the rhino will appeased the soul of the dead. Mishra shares his first experience touching the rhino horn while he was just five years old and its importance in the family ritual:

‘Oh, my dear,’ my father replied with a loving smile, ‘it is a cup made out of rhino horn. The souls of our ancestors will not be appeased if I do not offer them milk and water from the khaguto during the Saradya.’ I fetched the khaguto, which was hidden, as if it were a precious piece of jewellery, in a compartment of a huge iron safe anchored to the floor of our attic. Yet it was only a dark, bony, lightweight cup hardly three inches in diameter and an inch deep. My father ...it was more valuable than any earthly diamonds. (xv)

It is the superstitious belief of the so called educated people or city dwellers who finds culture as excuse for the exploitation of the animal. There is no valid reason on why the ancestors should be pleased to have food being served on animal’s body parts.

If Ancestors are offered food on the some precious metal like gold or silver plates and cups, it could have made some sense for ancestor to be pleased. Since, when human are alive they always admired to have collected the precious metal like gold, silver, diamond, and pearl. In Nepalese culture during first rice feeding ceremony of new born child to be done and clean plates are to be used if possible new

that represents child are vulnerable to the diseases if used plates or utensils are used. Today, with people who are rich and can afford, using precious metals plates that are made of gold or silver have become the culture that indicate the culture also changes as growth of purchasing power.

All the cultures are dynamic and changes according to the need of human. It can be justified that also the culture represents the dominance of the class in the society. The family has linked with the people 'Rana' who ruled the country during 1948-1950 as told by the author that his mother was 'dharmaputri' of then ruling prime minister. Also, it is related to domination over the native to make them believe they are as powerful as god, since native believed that the rhinos are blessed by the gods that they shall not be destroyed by human. Within the same Hindu culture rhinos face dualism of importance of life/death. For the natives life of rhinos are important while other believed in the use of body organ for the same animal or the dead.

In Nepal king is considered to be the incarnation of lord Vishnu and father who is symbol of protector for everyone. As per the culture king of the country once in their life time they must perform 'Tarpan' a religious ceremony that required male rhino be killed by king and rituals to be done entering into the body of dead rhino.

Mishra narrates:

King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, successor to King Mahendra in 1971, had decreed that he was going to perform the Tarpan ceremony in the Royal Chitwan National Park. The Tarpan rites required Nepali kings to hunt and kill a male rhino and then make an offering of the beast's blood to the monarch's ancestors and pray for peace and prosperity in the kingdom... Furthermore, I was a member of the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural

Resources (World Conservation Union)...Rhinos topped the list of  
 rate, and endangered species in the Union's Red Data Book. (147)

For then King performing Tarpan was his act of following his culture and fulfilling his duty towards his people but it raise the question on him that he failed to protect species whose number was already decline.

While relating to culture Lynn White Jr. writes, "What we do about ecology depends on our ideas of the man-nature relationship. More science and more technology are not going to get us out of the present ecologic crisis until we find a new religion, or rethink our old one" (White 151). King was the most powerful person and ruler of the country. Had he wished, he could have avoided this ritual since rhino was among the list of endangered species and conservation was the top priority. King performed it amid publicity to make himself innocent as he was just undertaking his responsibility. The act of king represented, he had instinct for the hunting of the animals just like his predecessors did. Since, he was sole powerful person to change the laws of nation and king had genuine reason for bringing changes also in this inhuman culture.

Religion has significant value in the life of Nepalese. Almost 80% of the people are follower of the Hinduism and 10% Buddhism. From early start of the day till the end of the day payers and rituals is the part of their daily life. Majupuria in their book *Religions In Nepale* eloquently give details:

In Nepal, there are about 35 ethnic groups and some of them practice a religion which strictly speaking, is neither Hinduism nor Buddhism. No doubt they have been influenced both by the Lamaism of the Himalayan people living immediately north to them and Hinduism of the middle hills and southern Terai. Thus some of these ethnic groups are animists or have an element of animistic in them (Majupuria33).



Nepalese celebrate lots of festivals at least one festival every month, almost all the festivals celebrated are associated with nature and animals, to name few *Gaijatra* (festival of cows), *GhodeJatra* (horse festival), *Naga Panchami* (Festival of snakes) etc.

Mary M. Anderson records importance of culture in her book *Festivals of Nepal*, "The Nepalese people say that somewhere every day in the little Asiatic Kingdom of Nepal there is a festival, and the gods have provided them with a perfect setting" (Anderson 19). Celebrating festivals is not just a medium of entertainment but also to show their respect to the nature and gods. Nature, animals and birds (dead or alive) have significant role in Nepalese religion practices, worshipped as symbol of gods, goddess and power. The cows are symbol of goddess of wealth, elephants are regarded as incarnation of Lord Ganesh and many other animals like snakes, bull, peacock, etc. are sacred animal for Hindus.

Also, in the same religion in which animals are sacred and worshipped in many occasions to please gods, goddess, and nature the sacrifice of animals and birds are necessary. Mishra narrates:

During such rituals, many goats, chickens and pigeons were sacrifice to please the deities. On the village level, shrines are located in the centre of most villages. These are usually represented by pieces of stone or wood to symbolize various gods. The main god is Brahamaawaa, who is supposed to relish goats and pigeons. In contrast, one of the lesser deities, called Parihar, likes pigs, while Jakhim prefers chickens and is supposed to provide good harvests. (30)

In contrast to the Hindu or Buddhist teaching of non-violence the people practice killing of animals. But in nature killing for maintaining the food chain and nature

cycle is also important. Whereas while performing such rituals animals which are domesticated are mostly used and meat is taken as food.

Hindu religion has deep respect for the female. They are the symbol of knowledge, wealth, and power. Even when sacrifices are to be made male animals are the choice. While king perform Tarpan, male rhino has to be sacrificed since female are consider as mother earth who gives us life. In contrast to what they believe, in practical life female are subjected as inferior to the male by patriarchy society. Mishra finds female and animal are treated with same status that both should serve for the male. Although there are many children in his (author's) family his parents wanted for the male child as society permits only male child to perform 'Sarayda' ritual that opens door to the imaginary, mythical world 'heaven' after the death. Female are just the source of entertainment and had to serve for the male purpose. Mishra writes:

Mother had borne sixteen children, nine girls and seven boys. I was number fifteen and my younger brother who was born five years later, was number sixteen. Only seven, five girls and two boys, survived infancy. Having lost all five male children before me when they were less than six months old, my mother desperately wanted a son.

Daughters are not allowed to perform the last rites of the dead. In short, a Nepali son provides security for his parents in their old age and facilitates the passage of their souls after they are dead. (14)

Mother here is symbolized as baby producing machine and has no right of her own. The society has been so male dominated that even being mother, herself as female, she does not have respect for the girls and wished for the boy.

The female has so much power to protect the male from the death but they fail to realize their importance with male. Mishra recalls his mother has to convert him into female to protect from the death:

The Praying Virgin threaded a needle with a black string. While a priest prayed, she pierced the left nostril of my nose and sewed on the black string like a nose ring. Consequently, the Praying Virgin made a girl out of me... Kasai woman, a member of an untouchable caste, picked me up out of the bush. She took me to her home and breastfed me. (16)

Hindu mythology portrays women as not just passive, intuitive, emotional, weak, and submissive but if required they can take form of 'Kali' to possess the power to destroy all. There are many stories in Hindu mythology in praise of female power one such story of 'Lord Shiva' who is regarded as god of destroyer being chased by demon called 'Bhasmasura' after Lord Shiva bestowed him boon that he shall have power to destroy anyone on whose head he puts his hand. To confirm the gift was true Lord Shiva was chased by the demon and Lord Shiva had to call Lord Vishnu (lord of protector) for help. Lord Vishnu has to then take manifest into female called 'Mohini' who could only destroy the demon.

Val Plumwood writes radical exclusion and homogenization/stereotyping function jointly to set up the typical polarized structure characteristic of dualism" and bring forth ideas of Marilyn Frye:

To make domination seem natural, it will help if it seems to all concerned that the two groups are very different from each other and ...that within each group, the members are very different from one another. The appearance of the naturalness of dominance of men and subordination of women is supported by the appearance that... men are very like other men and very unlike women, and women are very like other women and very unlike men. (Plumhood167)

Each and every individual is different and unique in own way. But is quite important to understand the creation of life is possible only with harmony of difference.

Scientifically it has been proved that negative and positive attracts while only positive charge particle repels. This harmony of male and female is depicted in many Hindu temples with the carving statues of Laxmi-Vishnu, Shiva-Parvati etc. in which half represents male and half female.

*The Soul of the rhino* deliberately focuses on this fact reflecting Mishra's ecological consciousness. Concentrating on his view on human beings he creates a family comprised of both humans and animals in which he depicts the positive as well as the negative aspects of human beings. Nevertheless he seems to accept some of the hegemonic sides of human beings regarding their supremacy over animals; yet these can be justified or neutralized by his eagerness to keep on with his positive and sympathetic views on animals. His views on human beings can be seen as negative relying on the fact that man is the disturber of the chain of world's organism which implies a critique of human behavior: "Esmond's studies revealed that almost 40 percent of black-market rhino horn, amounting to about 22,645 kilos, was used in Yemen for making dagger handles" (47). The Esmond's studies bring into highlight that human behavior as exploiting nature. The report mentioned by Mishra represents the imbalance relationship between human and animals and if at the same reckless ratio we humans continue on slaughtering anything with all the modern weapons it doesn't take long for these species to disappear for the world not by the natural cause but due to the insane human act.

The making of decorative daggers known as "jambiyas" with handcrafted rhino-horn handlesto present young relatives and guests of Yemani nobleman to mark a coming-of age ceremony (140) represents objectification of the life of others creatures. Humans do not have value for the life for other animals but for the specifics

body parts so that they can use them for decorative purposes and gift items. When single Yemeni community is responsible for the killing of 40 percent of one single species. It does not take long for the extinction of whole species if similarly few more other tribes or community practice same culture. There is not any standard for measuring the power. But the evaluation of power has been always made on the base who wins the fight and mighty is the one who kills or dominates other whether the method may be fair or not. What will these people feel proud of themselves once all these animals get wiped out is still questionable.

In nature or ecosystem the purpose of killing is always for the sustenance of one's own life and maintaining the balance in the nature but killing for the sake of getting body organ to be used as decorative purpose neither fulfills the basic conditions of nature nor is creating the natural harmony. Human considered themselves to be superior compare to other living creatures because of their ability to use their knowledge, think for the future. Inability to foresee that their important culture will end when there will be no single rhinos left reflects only the cruelty. Considering the ability to use knowledge and intellectuality of human the use of other metals which are renewable or sustainable would have added the value of the culture. The gift of the dragger with decorative handle of rhino horn to the young is symbolic that Yemeni are teaching their young one or new generation that they should be cruel, with dragger taking life of other and using them in decoration.

Barry Commoner grounds a kind of interconnection or web in which "Everything is connected to everything else" (Commoner 33). All the other living creatures have their own intelligence and something of common among all. Mishra is sympathetic to the situation of calf that has been separated with the mother and caged. Mishra describes:

The calf did not like the pit and was hopping mad. In a fury she charged several times at the wall of the pit. For the next hour she would attempt to climb out of the pit. Her feet would slip and she would fall flat in her nose. She would often stop and stare at the humans squatting around the top of the pit, lose her temper and charge the mud wall of the pit again and again. (124)

This ecological truth has to do with Mishra's views on human and animal. As there are many differences between humans and animals also there is kind of web in between them. If differences count the supremacy then similarities should also be reflected for the respect. No any single human are equal physically or mentally due to the diverse in the qualities has made it possible for beautifying or in the development of human.

The baby rhino in the pit has no scape but has best effort in fighting the situation. If human could understand only the ways human behavior then the act of the calf has innocent as the act of Alita (Mishra's daughter) who could not differentiate between wild rhino and wanted to feed some cabbage by her hand as to the domesticated buffalo (101). Every animal in this world in different and all have their unique ways of communications but having difference the ways of expressing the emotions is common for all the creatures including humans. The reaction expressed by the baby rhino for being separated from its mother is very painful and heartbreaking.

The body language expressed is not different than any human although verbal language is different. Also the writer has humanized using the pronoun "She" and "Her" for the baby rhino. Capturing and separating the baby from its mother shows human selfish nature that they only care for their self-benefit. It is not the wish of the baby rhino to move to America but rhino has been victim of the diplomatic relation of

the two nations where the nation with power has greater influence. There is imbalance of power within human being and those human who have feeling and love towards the other creature have no power to protect them except to carry out the action as their duty.

Mishra find himself as one of victim of the power as the rhino. He was the conservationist working to protect the rhino destiny made him to perform the act which is against his ethics. He asserts, 'You are a servant of the king', my wife said. 'And as a civil servant, your job is not to ask and reason why.' ...Actually I had two choices: either resign, in contempt of a government order, or save my job by staining my hands with rhino blood. Greed for the job won (148). The author was not alone who was victim of the ruler but the other servants of the king who were on the mission to capture the rhinos for the king. The servants of the king expressed the situation as 'painful' while they had to kill the mother rhino and prison the calf that was 'preoccupied with pushing her mother with her snout as if pleading with her to wake up' (103). The situation of the rhino is not very different than those human who had to obey the king's order. Their situation is pity as rhino because of they had no choice of their own but to obey the order.

Besides the mental torture the poor villager had to tolerate physical assault as Tapsi has been attacked for the fault he did not make. Mishra narrates the situation of Tapsi the elephant driver who was punished by the prime minister for missing the target as:

'You idiot!' the prime minister screamed in anger and frustration at TapsiSubba. 'You ruined my shot.' Tapsi shrugged. He did not say a word. But his expression implied, 'Don't blame me or my elephant if you can't be quick and shoot straight.' Furious, the prime minister

lifted his rifle and slammed the butt into Tapsi's face, breaking most of his teeth. (29)

Mishra compares the silent revolt of Tapsi with the furiousness of the rhino that was hunted by the king during his 'Tarpanritual' as 'The big black ovals were bloodshot with anger, even in death' (181). Although much anger in the heart and eyes the situation was not on the favor and they had to accept the defeat before the power. But the silence is their only reply.

Marx assumed there has always been conflict among different classes throughout the history between with the time only the class of people has changed. During the slavery, struggle was between 'free citizen and slave'. While in the feudal society of the Middle Ages, it was 'feudal lord and serf; later on, between aristocrat and citizen'(Gaarad 328). But in Marx's own time, in what he called a bourgeois or capitalists society, the conflict was first and foremost between the capitalists and the workers, or the proletariat which was also explicit in the Mishra's *The Soul of the Rhino*. So the conflict stood between king and servants as well as human and animal. And since the "upper classes" do not voluntarily relinquish their power, change can only come about through revolution".

As already discussed the rhinos and nature were easy target of those bourgeois victim. Mishra gives long history of how rhinos were exploited from the hand of kings, Knight Men and others in the long period of history. During the early sixteenth century, rhinos were highly prized objects as they held a mysterious fascination for popes and potentates, royalty and commoners throughout Europe. Mishra accounts the history as:

By 1740, the rhino was an object of much curiosity in Europe. An enterprising Dutchman imported a Javan rhinoceros to Vienna from the Dutch colonies of the East Indies – modern day Indonesia. He fed the



rhino hay, French wine, and Dutch beer...mistress of Emperor Louis XV, was one of the rhino's most ardent admirers. She liked to stroke the rhino's body and feed him orange peels while singing the praises of his beautiful face. (143)

The history reflect that people in power has widely exploited the animals as giving it away as gift to get the permission to colonize the country as well as to please their mistress by the king.

The exploitation of animal did not stop as giving animals away as gift by colonizer and businessman to the Pope or king to get the favor but it went beyond as Mishra writes:

Babur, the Muslim ruler who established the Mugal dynasty across northern India in 1526, killed a thousand rhinos in the floodplains of the Indus River. Babur hunted rhinos from horseback, often employing as many as three thousand people to help him make his kills...His cavalry were allowed to feast on rhino meat, but Babur took the heads to decorate his courtyards in Delhi. His knights made walking sticks and shields out of the rhino's thick hides to protect the human body form swords or arrows. (145)

As the extract reveals, the maharajahs' interest in hunting rhinoceros for fun and feast contribute equally on the decline in the number of rhinoceros as done by the mass migration of human to the land of these animal. Their belief on "feasting on testicles of rhinoceros for strengthening virility to satisfy dozens of mistresses" proves how the powerful people were apathetic towards animals at that time.

As in the past history, rhinos have been exploited to appease the Kings and high class people, later the same animals have been exploited by the poachers who killed rhinos for their horn which was believed to carry medicinal value. The greed of

rich make poor their victim to conduct the act for small sum of money bagging huge amount by themselves. Mishra writes:

Taiwanese government even arrested Princess Deki Wangchuck, a powerful member of the ruling family of Bhutan with diplomatic immunity, in a sting operation in Taipei's Chiang Kai-Shek International Airport in 1993. The princess was caught red-handed with twenty-two illegal rhino horns in her expensive suitcase . . . However, her cousin Prince Namgyal, a South Asian royal of unimpeachable reputation, bailed her out of prison . . . Som had been a poacher for three years, yet this was only the ninth rhino that he had poached. He told me that he was paid two thousand Nepali rupees at the most for each rhino horn. (53-55)

It was blamed to the poor for carrying out the poaching but behind the scene were rich or powerful. The fact reveals that although laws are formulated these will be either effective only to the poor while the people with power make easy escape. The act of princess reveals the fact that people from very well-off family misusing their power and royal privilege are behind the scene promoting such crimes. The law enforcement of the Taiwanese government is praise worthy to bring out the fact that the real person behind the scene are very different than what is presented.

Polly Higgins in 2010 submitted to the United Nations an amendment to the Rome Statute, proposing the "ecocide" be legally recognized as the fifth international Crime Against Peace. The Rome Statute currently acknowledges four crimes against peace: genocide; crime against crimes against humanity; war crimes; and the crime of aggression. Each of these crimes affects *human* victims. While Higgins' proposed definition of ecocide attends to inhabitants' "peaceful enjoyment", the victim the amendment is primarily promising to protect is not human but environmental. "The

word ecocide is prefixed with “eco”; it derives from the sixteenth-century Greek word *oikos* meaning “house, dwelling place, habitation, family.” The suffix “cide” means “killer”, from the use of the French *-cide*, from Latin *caedere* “to strike down, chop, beat, hew, fell, slay.” To eradicate ecocide means to forcibly remove the systems that are killing and destroying our habitat”(Higgins XI).Chopping the trees in unplanned way for the timber factories may benefit few hundred and thousand people but if we think of global it will impact on climate change, depletion of ozone layer etc. beside killing of wildlife.

The supremacy of humans should not be on what humans have but on what others have. The humans are powerful and smart just because of the technology and if there had been no technology humans would have been most weakest animal in this planet. Also the use of expression “parrot-nose American” (37) for comparing the nose of human with that of animals can be both positive and negative. Although there is imbalance relationship between human and animals, no one can deny that there is a kind of web in between them and human required support of other animals to compare themselves how good or bad they are at certain things. Parrot is beautiful bird and use of this metaphor to describe qualities in human is positive. Also it express negativity because it expresses the parrot nose to be ugly, pointed, curved. It is only human ego to find other creatures ugly or beauty with others but in fact animals have special physical structures which is according to their need for the adaptation in nature rather than to make them look beautiful or ugly.

Paul W. Taylor in *The Ethics of Respect of Nature* disagrees the human superiority over other species because of the claim is strictly from the point of view of human. He puts forward questions like "In what sense are human alleged to be superior to other animals?" then "[...] why should these capacities be a mark of superiority?" to "Why should standards that are based on human values to be the only

criteria of merit and hence the only true signs of superiority?" (Taylor 79-80). Human judgment of superiority is in compare with what other lacks rather than considering other species superior what they poss.

Human are very creative they can reproduce the beauty of the nature through different medium language, poem, art, and so on but they can never beat the beauty of the nature that mesmerize It elaborates that natures is beautiful in itself before people poured down here. The author states "noisy diesel generator", "buzzing with the sounds of priests chanting" to compare ugliness of human creation in compare to the beauty of the nature as "snow-capped Himalayas loomed high, peacefully in the distance", "the steady sound of the River Rapti flowing quietly in the twilight" (185-188) that is quite, calm, serene that gives peace.

Ultimately, Mishra compels everyone to support on the conservation of nature because they are sustainable which ensures the secure lives of everyone. One dead rhino feeds one or two families on the other part same one live rhino feeds millions through ecotourism. So, both can live in harmony with win-win situation. Paul W. Taylor believed, "The well-being of the humans is dependent upon the ecological soundness and health of many plant and animal community, while their soundness and health does not depend on the human well-being" (77). Since the survival of human depend on environment wellness he proposes the attitude of respect for nature which is termed as "the biocentric outlook on nature." So, conservation is important for the sake of humanity and nature which according to Aldo Leopold, "Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land. Despite nearly a century of propaganda, conservation still proceeds at a snail's pace; progress still consists largely of letterhead pieties and convention oratory" (40). As much culture, poverty, religion, plays vital role for and against the nature protection development activities have equal contribution.

Mishra blames for the development plan that are designed in 'vacuum' for the negative impact on the nature benefitting less to the natives. He asserts:

USAID, then called the United States Operation Mission (USOM), launched a successful programme to eradicate malaria, to expand farmland in the Terai area of southern Nepal . . . within a decade, settlers and lumbermen had destroyed 65 per cent of the forests of Chitwan and fed them into the American funded sawmill. Most of the sawn timber was exported to feed the Indian markets. Ironically, the American-funded Timber Corporation of Nepal exported some of the prime-quality lumber to the Soviet Union. (59-60)

Development is important for the change and with the growing human population there will be rise in the demand for everything. Development is must with the changing time but while development projects are planned they should be planned in such a way that it maintains the harmony with the nature. There should be long term vision rather than quick benefit.

"The sixth great extinction spasm of geological time is upon us, grace of mankind." Wilson writes "Humanity is part of the nature, a species that evolved among other species" (153-157). For example invention of nuclear power is important from development perspective but mishandling of it becomes much greater problem than one could have imagined. Development activities should not benefit just some groups who invest but it should have positive impact upon the nature and the local people. Development of eco-tourism can be considered the positive as it provides employment opportunity to the local building up harmony with the nature.

#### IV. Advocating Harmony between Human and Nature *The Soul of the Rhino*

Nature is the common home for all living and non-living beings. As a common home, it combines everything in its lap. The earth is part of it and the earth is home for all creatures. This nature contains us all in the cycle of growth, maturity, and decay. Ancient man had advanced and gradually encroached upon wild nature. He cut forests and built the houses and tilled the land. Man is supposed to have conquered nature to some extent. People talk of the conquest of nature. This is loose talk and is not quite correct. It is far better to say that man has begun to understand nature, and the more he has understood, the more he has been able to co-operate with nature and to utilize it for his own purposes. But human-nature relationship and attitudes towards nature vary with culture and religion of people of different place. Every religion has their own creation stories, some regarding human-culture integral part of nature while some separate.

Human occupies superior position to nature in western culture because of their religious book, *The Holy Bible*, which suggests things in terms of its utility purpose. However, eastern cultures like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and many other accords significance to nature. Humans are believed to be small part of the vast nature. In Hindu culture natural elements like water, fire, wind, earth, plants, and many animals occupy special place. Similarly, Buddhist culture is governed by their philosophy of love and peace for all living and non-living entities.

Mishra's *The Soul of the Rhino* as a non-fiction gives details of his experience of working being into the 'wild'. He shares pros and cons of the culture, difficulty and challenges of working in the sector wildlife conservation. He outlooks religion and culture as integral part of human life interconnecting with nature but people manipulate the essence religion for the short term benefit forgetting themselves as part of nature and their negative action will later return to them. The regime of power first

and foremost between human vs. nature, then within human between: male vs. female, capitalist vs. workers, invaders vs. native, and conservationists vs. destructionists.

Summing up human actions has great impact upon destruction of nature.

Exploitation, manipulation and destruction of the life in nature can be a source of money and profits but neither can ever become a source of nature's life and its life-supporting capacity. It is all a matter of what policies are adopted, and the evidence suggests that increasing affluence is the best route to the adoption of policies that protect the environment. Changes in social structures, political pressures, public awareness, and, above all, the resulting policies adopted by the authorities have also been important. The main reason for expecting economic growth to be good for the environment, in the longer run, as well as bad for it in specific instances and particular time periods because policies to combat pollution have to be introduced mainly in richer countries, since they have the resources to implement their shift in priorities.

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