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Appeal for Biotic Community in Daniel Quinn's *Ishmael*

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Letter of Recommendation

Naresh Chaudhary has completed his thesis entitled "Appeal for Biotic Community in Daniel Quinn's *Ishmael*" under my supervision. He carried out his research from August 2017 to February 2018. I hereby recommend his thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "Appeal for Biotic Community in Daniel Quinn's *Ishmael*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Naresh Chaudhary has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

*An attempt has been made to analyze Daniel Quinn's *Ishmael* through the perspective of ecocriticism in which he ignores anthropocentric outlook of the world and appeals humankind for biotic community. Representing an animal, Quinn speaks on behalf of preserving and conserving environment, nature and ecosystem of the earth. Moreover, he seeks for unity among community of different natural entities. This paper emphasizes on how humans tend to exploit and deteriorate environment and nature exposing their superiority. But human superiority is going to be more tragic for human themselves to see their own dooming existence. The theoretical concept of Aldo Leopold's "The Land Ethic" and Paul W. Taylor's "Respect for Nature" are drawn in this paper.*

Key Words: Biotic community, Ecosystem, Nature, Human superiority, Ecocriticism, Anthropocentrism.

Introduction

Daniel Quinn in his novel *Ishmael* criticizes anthropocentric view in order to balance earth's ecology. Author stands against human perception of understanding the world that it is made for human beings. The novel reacts the period of 1960s when people radically fought for their rights. There were different movements during the time in America. The achievements of those movements were deserving and admirable. But Quinn says that all those movements were root cause for the world to lead towards injustice. He talks about the myth of 'Taker' culture in the text, what he calls their culture as harmful to the earth. Author presents an out casted gorilla named Ishmael who converses to the narrator. He gives different lessons to Walter, Rachel and the narrator too. He explicates the world view of biological community, ecosystem, food chain, environmental degradation and evolution. He also says that human civilization has led this earth into ecological crisis today. Representing an animal to teach human, about maintaining ecosystem and biosphere; Quinn critiques human-centered approach of treating environment and nature. And thus, he appeals humans for biocentric unity.

The novel *Ishmael*, published in 1992, is a story of a gorilla. The novel deals with Ishmael's (title character- a gorilla) experience of world, concerning moreover with environmental issues. Ishmael gives lesson to the narrator about environment, human civilization and the history. Daniel Quinn engages his readers to think seriously about environment and natural world which are going to be deteriorating these days by humans. It reflects the earth's worsening condition caused by human activities or so-called human civilization. The author is more conscious about caring our living planet: the earth for the existence of each species. For balanced ecology and good nature, it is far more necessary to internalize the devastating condition of the

earth by humans. The author, therefore appeals humans return back to conserve and protect nature for earth's longevity and eternity.

The problems created by human activities push the existence of earth into a critical condition. Human are deeply rooted to anthropocentric value.

Anthropocentrism regards others as inferior to human beings. Eventually, they misuse, and destroy natural resources to fulfill their desires. People today invent many scientific machineries and industries without thinking about nature and natural world. The natural resources are misused by humans. As a result, existence of the earth and ecosystem is going to be collapsed, undoubtedly human existence too. Human civilization nevertheless, is going to turn out to be self- destructive for humans.

This dissertation vitalizes the nexus between human, non-human, and the natural world. Every living species exist in this earth in nature's protection. Environmentalists and biological activists believe that the existence of earth depends on symbiotic relationship between each and every living and non-living beings. The existence of all entities of this earth is interwoven in a single thread. So, to preserve our own existence in this earth, it becomes to be our moral responsibility to undergo caring for all things. The writer in the novel advocates for biocentrism. The aim of this dissertation is therefore, why the author criticizes human centric approach of seeing the world and how humans tend to exploit environment and nature in the name of civilization and culture without caring rest of the beings of the earth.

Daniel Quinn was born in Omaha, Nebraska in 1935. He earned a B. A. in English from Saint Louis University. Afterwards, he studied at the University of Vienna in Austria, and Loyola University in Chicago. He worked in publishing house for many years. His breakthrough came in 1991, when he wrote his best known novel, *Ishmael*. Quinn won the prestigious Tomorrow Turner Award. Following the success

of *Ishmael*, Quinn wrote two other philosophical novels about anthropology and the environment: *The Story of B* (1996), *My Ishmael* (1997).

Ishmael is an environmental fiction which raises the issue of environment and environmental degradation. Two major characters: narrator and Ishmael meet each other in course of visiting to office building by the narrator who is intrigued by newspaper advertisement that seeks pupil who must have earnest desire to save the world. Ishmael later in the novel gives lessons for saving the earth. He communicates to the narrator and says that he is kidnapped by humans from Africa as a baby, born in 1930s. He after onwards lives his life as a captive in a circus sold by human for their financial benefits. He is being objectified and used for commercial purpose. It shows self-centered attitude of humans who just see one-sided advantage by using other beings. The financial mindset has been rooted to human today, consequently harming to all living species and the earth.

We become familiar with Ishmael's mind and spirit being conscious about devastation of the world. Gorilla junctures with both the mind and the spirit from initiation of the narrative till its end. He gives moral lesson on how human civilization takes control over nature of this planet. Interestingly, the novel follows a Socratic pattern i.e. dialogue between gorilla and narrator, teaching by question and answer. Through dialogue, novel keeps on moving forth advising to save our environment, nature and the earth.

The novel exposes the theme of ecology and nature being disturbed. Ecology is being disturbed by human tendency of using natural resources excessively these days. People use natural resources without thinking of further consequences that would affect human too. Our vision of ecology seems defective to ourselves which ultimately leads the ecosystem into crisis. Quinn envisions the deteriorating condition

of the earth and instantly gives suggestion to maintain our ecology. Through the text, Ishmael teaches about Takers' and Leavers' culture to the narrator. For him, Takers are those who believe themselves as superior to Leavers. Takers deny others' significance and need in this earth. Leavers and all other species are neglected by Takers. Takers think that others should live as they live and as they want to live. They manipulate their plans and take control over natural world and begin to rule and ruin them. Unfortunately, Takers' control mechanism fails and leads to breakdown the relationship between human and the natural world.

Few critics and writers have observed the text from different perspectives. I have studied Ian J. Drake, Raymond A. Horn, Jr., Rebecca Raglon and Maria and C. A. Hilgartner's observation of the text. Drake explores Quinn's novel in the line of environmental studies. In his article, he asserts: "*Ishmael* is a didactic novel, which utilizes a fantastical plot to instruct readers on environmental change, population pressures, and the possibilities for altering and reforming human's relationship with the natural world" (569). Drake shows association of human beings to other natural components. All the components of environment are more or less connected to each other in different ways. Drake indeed, contends that human beings are altering and reforming relationship with other natural world. He suggests that novel includes the subject matter of environment and fears of environmental degradation. Humans behave as if they are the only creatures of the world. They forget to give space to other creatures. Eventually, they misuse natural resources and exploit the world. Drake thus, suggests this novel- a didactic novel that gives information about environment and its devastating condition.

In a similar manner, Rebecca Raglon and Marian Scholtmeijer advocate for nonhuman beings to live equally on earth. Beside this, they say that humans place

themselves at the place of god. They assert: "Quinn focuses on the cultural rather than the natural environment, but, like many environmental writers, he is interested in examining the "root" causes of environmental crises. Much of his analysis is focused on showing how humans developed a story that cast them in the role of all-knowing gods" (125-26). Raglon and Scholtmeijer make point that *Ishmael* talks about culture; on another it raises the issue of environment. Quinn quests for root cause of environmental degradation. Similarly, humans cast them as god, knowing all things. In the text, we find that human have made the story of knowing all things and reflect themselves as god. We admit this story in conversational form; not by direct actions of human character in the novel.

Raymond A. Horn, Jr. mentions alteration of educational system and its delirious impact in western societies: "As the story unfolds it becomes apparent that this being (gorilla) is as much a representation of what humankind will lose with destruction of environmental diversity, as it is a victim of humankind's relentless oppression of the environment" (50). Horn's argument offers a resonance of saving the earth through education system. Humans create myth and culture for their survival with the best lifestyle. On contrary, they do not become aware of dominating and oppressing other beings. Gorilla in the novel talks about destruction of environmental diversity. Education is also the product of culture that obstructs the change. Consequently, education system lacks to save the environment. Horn opposes the idea of myth, so that in the name of myth and culture human beings tend to deteriorate the world. So, Horn makes an analysis on Quinn's text that challenges the educational system of Westerners who are not much aware of planet in which they survive. Representing gorilla as a master of human, author's prediction of earth to be doomed, is reflected in the novel.

C. A. Hilgartner, also examines Quinn's *Ishmael* through semantic analysis. Although he studies the novel semantically, he asserts the notion of human-centric approach of understanding the world. His comprehensive argument supports non-anthropocentrism and writes that human beings are devastating the earth day by day:

Ishmael and his pupil make it plain that what we do to our environment that progressively makes the planet less and less habitable, does not happen by accident or mistake. Instead, it occurs as the direct result of living the way we live. By enacting the story we enact, we commit our full forces, as individuals and as a culture or a collection of cultures, to the pursuit of species suicide and extinction. Whether we say we do so, or not. (170)

Our planet is gradually becoming non- existential day by day. Hilgartner's interpretation of *Ishmael* makes us clear that human beings have inclined to enact stories which will ultimately lead this planet to collapse. We take part to endangering all living creatures, and non-living as well. It is non another than human way of living that compels other species to be extinct. Human culture makes rest of the creatures to live their lives tragically under human control. Human culture underestimates other species and keeps them in threat. Human beings knowingly or unknowingly take action against the earth which leads to its destruction.

Ishmael can be read as environmental text which suggests humans to be aware of our earth. We human are killing the earth and digging our own grave by our activities. Our wrong activities against earth make us to be panic and victim of our own activities. In regard to environmental crisis, we are too late to save our earth and ourselves. In this regard, this dissertation suggests reading *Ishmael* to gain consciousness and awareness to save our planet. This paper therefore, analyzes

Ishmael from the perspective of ecocriticism concentrating more on human-centered attitude of seeing the world invoking for biocentrism.

Ecocriticism is a criticism that views a literary text from environmental perspective. The term 'ecocriticism' was first used by a US critic William Rueckert in 1978. This criticism became a recognized movement since the beginning of 1990s. In regard to ecocriticism, Cheryll Glotfelty defines: "Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment . . . takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies" (xviii). Richard Kerridge similar to Glotfelty defines as "literary and cultural criticism from an environmentalist view point. Texts are evaluated in terms of their environmentally harmful and helpful effects" (Waugh 530). Greg Garrard states: "Ecocriticism is a unique amongst contemporary literary and cultural theories because of its close relationship with the science of ecology" (5). The above mentioned definitions of ecocriticism come to have a common ground in understanding environment. It deals with the relationship between human, non-human and the physical world through literature.

Human beings control and dominate the world without caring others. So, Ecocriticism also studies anthropocentric approach of seeing the world. In anthropocentric approach, humans see others as inferior and separate. Human beings keep others aside and stand in the utmost rank. In regard to anthropocentrism, Rob Boddice contends: "It is in tension with nature, the environment and non-human animals" (1). Nature, environment and non-humans fight against human agency in order to save their existence. Nature confronts with human world and thus tension arises. Similarly, Kerridge states: "Anthropocentrism is the placing of humanity at the centre of everything; so that other forms of life will be regarded only as sources to be consumed by human beings" (Waugh 537). From this point we come to know that

human place them at the centre and others at periphery. Moreover, they rejoice consuming natural resources alienating others. Val Plumwood's concept of anthropocentrism sounds: "A major feature of human-centered frameworks is the denial of human dependency on nature" (Palmer 284). Human beings knowingly or unknowingly deny their dependence on nature. They think that they could survive alone without depending on others. Human activities are basically human-centered today. Plumwood says that humans neglect nature and insist on living their life in their own way. Thus, this is an advocacy for biotic world which ignores human way of living their lives.

Quinn represents gorilla as a mouthpiece of nature and revisions anthropocentric outlook of nature. Ishmael advocates not only for animals' justice but all natural forms which all are in the state of extinction and disappearance these days. Internalizing this very point, the researcher in this research paper applies Aldo Leopold's concept of "The Land Ethic" and Paul W. Taylor's concept of "Respect for Nature". Including various aspects in their ethics, they both go on suggesting for preserving our nature and giving justice and equal rights to all living creatures. However, their notion of ethics plays crucial role in re-visioning anthropocentric gaze and consequently will help to establish unity among biotic community.

Aldo Leopold mentions various ethical aspects of land. He clearly states, "The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants and animals, or collectively: the land" (39). He argues that soils, waters, plants and animals are members of a community. Along with human all those belong to a single community, what Leopold calls the 'Land' collectively. Furthermore, Leopold mentions, "Land ethics changes the role of *Homo Sapiens* from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow

members, and also respect for the community as such" (39). It is the land ethic which changes the role of human beings from becoming the ruler and conqueror of the world.

Similarly, Paul W. Taylor proposes a concept of environmental ethics i.e. "Respect for Nature". His idea of environmental ethics is all about respecting all forms of natural components that exist in this earth. Human beings suppose themselves as superior to all creatures of the earth. They keep themselves at height among rest of the creatures. Taylor therefore, opposes human-centered approach of treating the world. Rather he emphasizes more on life-centered environmental ethics. He writes, "When a life-centered view is taken, the obligations and responsibilities we have with respect to the wild animals and plants of the Earth are seen to arise from certain moral relations holding between ourselves and the natural world itself" (12). From this point, the researcher points out that all the plants and animals are members of a single community. So, we all humans have some moral value to respect nature.

In *Ishmael*, the story takes place in an unnamed American city in the late twentieth century. Daniel Quinn is eager in writing about environmental issues. Quinn in his text reveals some terrible issues which are going to cause this earth to be doomed. Moreover, he does not remove back in criticizing human interference to nature. He presents an animal as one of the major characters in the novel who plays vital role in shaping the novel.

Quinn advocates for biocentrism to balance ecology and maintain the natural state of the earth. All the members of living community inherit equal worth and responsibility because each have its own importance in its own place to take part in maintaining ecology. Every member of a living community has close relationship among them. To keep their relationship strong enough, they keep on performing their

best in evolutionary process. But human agency interfere pure bond and affinity of all beings, involving in different activities. Their activities definitely cause harm to environment and nature where we live. Taylor writes natural world as an organic whole:

To accept the biocentric outlook and regard ourselves and the world from its perspective is to see the whole natural domain of living things and their environment as an order of interconnected objects and events. The interactions among species-populations and between those populations and the physical environment comprise a tightly woven web. (116)

Everything in this world are connected to each other. The connection and interaction among one another play crucial role in balancing ecosystem. It establishes good relation between living beings and the natural world and simultaneously leads this earth to work in a balanced order. If any of the components fails to function, the order is disturbed, and arise chaos in the earth. So not to let occur crisis and chaos in earth, integrity and unity among every living community is necessary.

Similarly, Barry Commoner's the first law of ecology is "Everything is connected to everything else" (qtd. in Glotfelty xix). The whole earth is a form of unified whole. Everything of this earth are internally connected to each other. Survivability of everything, either living or non-living things remain in a single thread and certainly depend upon one another. Human, non-human and nature are bounded to each other. For human survivability and existence in this earth, the affinity among all natural entities should remain intimate and stable.

In the text, we notice Ishmael's lesson to the narrator which deals with food chain too:

It is in fact an orderly community. The green plants are food for the plant eaters, which are food for still other predators, and some of these predators are food for still other predators. And what's left over is food for the scavenger, who returns to the nutrients needed by the green plants. It is a system that has worked magnificently for billions of years. (Quinn 117)

Every living creature relies on another for their survival. Food chain plays significant role in maintaining ecosystem. Food chain continues until and unless single species go on extinction. Human beings depend more on other beings for their survivability. But humans kill, destroy and consume natural resources unlimitedly abandoning others' existence. They do so for their satisfaction rather than for their normal survival. Humans harm, destroy and exploit nature and natural resources for their individual satisfaction. Leopold for instance, presents a pyramid of food chain that completely depends to each other:

The pyramidal form of system reflects the numerical progression from apex to base . . . Each species, including ourselves, is a link in many chains . . . The pyramid is a tangle of chains so complex as to seem disorderly, yet the stability of the system proves it to be highly organized structure. Its functioning depends on the co-operation and competition of its diverse parts.

(43)

In pyramidal chain of food, humans are at the ultimate level; at the top. The pyramidal formation illustrates that food chain functions by interconnectedness of every parts. So far, ecosystem is an organized structure of different chains; interwoven and interconnected. This interconnectedness works as a part that makes the earth to exist in a proper way. Reversely, human beings deploy their strength to malfunction the ecosystem.

There is an intrinsic relationship between nature and living organisms. All living creatures depend on one another for their proper survival. Human existence relies more on other beings rather than rest of the species. But human behavior is flawed in consuming others. They excessively consume natural resources and other beings for their individual satisfaction. Their unlimited use of resources as a result, disturbs the flow of ecosystem. Nature seeks ecological balance in the earth and thus, there is a reciprocal relationship between nature and creatures. This relationship establishes continuity of ecosystem. In this regard, author criticizes humans' unjust and unfair activities which go against natural law. The text therefore, tries to establish harmony among all the natural entities.

Representing gorilla, author depicts the worsening condition of our earth. Humans are eager to discover new inventions in present days. Due to their inventions and discoveries earth has to bear its suffering. The biological diversity has been affected and damaged by those inventions. The global temperature rises because of human deed to reach up to ultimate success. So, in course of their inventions, they harm life-supporting planet; the earth. Instead of caring it, they become blind by their ambition to conquer the world. As a result, the whole existence of the world is going to be catastrophic. Ishmael informs the narrator about the devastating condition of the earth. Ishmael says, "Diversity is a survival factor for the community itself. A community of hundred million species can survive almost anything short of total global catastrophe" (130). It means that diversity of this earth is the only survival factor for living community. But this biological diversity is undergoing with human threat. The threatening diversity consequently is going to cause tragic end of the earth. The narrator responds to Ishmael that "Diversity is exactly what's under attack here. Everyday dozens of species disappear as a direct result of the way Takers compete

outside the law" (130). Quinn exposes the fatal condition of existing earth caused by Takers. Takers outstrip beyond natural law, it affects dozens of species to disappear and extinct from the earth.

Massive use of natural resources by humans causes vanishing of species from the earth. Arne Naess advocating for nature says: "Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening" (29). The excessive human interference to non-humans and other natural resources affects the earth. But human are not careful about their activities. Although they know about worsening situation, they remain silent about their activities. In spite of their awareness, they keep on moving forth to screw and chew the earth. Ishmael in the novel also shows his dissatisfaction with human interference and states while conversing with narrator: "Whole species are disappearing as a result of your encroachment- and they are disappearing in greater numbers every year" (109). Ishmael exposes his disappointment to human encroachment to nature and the natural world. They destroy the surrounding where they live. Their disturbances to environment affect different species. Consequently, great numbers of species are disappearing every year. Ishmael promotes his pupil to stop human encroachment towards nature that harms species to vanish.

Quinn traces vast differences between Leavers and Takers. According to author, the formers are the people taken as primitive and ancient who came into existence into this earth since three million years ago. Whereas, the latter group of people are comparatively new people who existed ten thousand years ago. For more, Takers are the modern people. They adopt agriculture. Takers deny the role of Leavers. They take them as hunter-gatherers. Narrator says, "Leaver peoples are always conscious of having a tradition that goes back to very ancient times. We have

no such consciousness. For the most part we're very 'new' people" (201). Takers believe that they are new and modern people. They think that they are superior to all of the other creatures and suppose to know everything about the world.

Moreover, Quinn attacks flawed human attitude to appreciate and understand the psychology of animals. Grace Sokolow in the novel shows unjust attitude to Ishmael and misbehaves him. Her behavior depicts human nature of treating animals. Once when narrator visits to Ishmael; Ishmael recalls his past where he was fed up. He lived in Sokolow's house when he was small. There, he was treated well by Walter and Rachel. But Grace, Walter's wife, Rachel's mother treated him in an ill-mannered way. He says to the narrator, "Mrs. Sokolow viewed me as a peculiar and alarming pet and began agitating for my speedy removal and disposal" (22). Animals do not have any certainty for their disposal and excretion. They do not have fix place for their excreta. Ishmael does have to face the problem due to his removal of excreta. Mrs. Sokolow becomes agitated by his activities at her home. His removal and disposal makes her ill-tempered. Finally, she sets plan to abandon him from her house. He says, "She renewed her campaign to have me sent away, predicting that my presence would hamper her daughter's social growth" (23). Mrs. Sokolow teases badly to Ishmael after Walter's death. She supposes that Ishmael's presence near to her daughter would hamper her daughter's social and psychological growth. Indeed, Rachel becomes more interested towards Ishmael as her father. She learns many things from him. Unfortunately, she fails to grasp the lesson of Leavers and Takers that Ishmael gives to her. Ishmael afterwards gives lesson to the narrator of Leavers and Takers.

Quinn's text opposes human superiority by disregarding Takers. Since humans creation, it has been supposed that humans are at the apex among all living and non-

living beings. With reference to the text, Takers believe themselves as rulers and conquerors of the world. Takers, however keep on digging out their destiny with their doomed fate. Indicating Takers, Quinn accuses whole humankind who do not care about others. He thinks human existence as something harmful for this planet. In course of giving lesson, Ishmael poses very interesting questions to the narrator. The question goes like this:

But what about the rest? Did entire cosmic process of creation come to an end three million years ago, right here on this little planet, with the appearance of man . . . Did even the planetary process of creation come to an end three million years ago with the appearance of man? Did evolution come to a screeching halt just because man had arrived? (57)

Ishmael shows dissatisfaction with humankind's activities on this earth. It is because humans go on destroying environment and nature for their beneficiary mentality. Human beings use different natural resources exposing superiority over all.

Taylor, on another side, challenges human superiority. He questions on what it meant to be a human superiority:

In what sense are human beings alleged to be superior to other animals? We are indeed different from them in having certain capacities that they lack. But why should these capacities be taken as signs of our superiority to them? From what point of view are they judged to be signs of superiority, and on what grounds? After all, many nonhuman species have capacities that humans lack. There is the flight of birds, the speed of a cheetah, the power of photosynthesis in the leaves of plants, the craftsmanship of spiders spinning their webs, the agility of a monkey in the tree tops. Why are not these to be taken as signs of their superiority over us? (129)

Taylor speaks on behalf of non humans rather than humans. He speculates on human superiority whether they are above all. He denies human judgement of being superior. There are many creatures that hold capacities that human beings lack. But why humans show their superiority to other beings? It happens so that the human superiority is judged from human stand point. They do not judge them from others' point. Non-humans thus, are excluded by humans and regarded as inferior to human beings.

Use of animals by humans for different purposes indicates the failure of human superiority and consciousness. Human beings use animals for various purposes. In the novel, Ishmael has been used in circus, zoo and menagerie. Ishmael, a gorilla born in Africa in 1930s, kidnapped by humans and was taken to circus. He is disappointed being displayed in zoos and circuses. Animals have been used in circuses and zoos. People use animals as an object so that they could be bought and sold. Moreover, they could entertain people by exposing them in circuses and zoos. Humans use animals for economic purpose. In Laurence Simmons and Philip Armstrong's book *Knowing Animals*, Tanja Schwalm in her essay "No Circus Without Animals? Acts and Ideology in The Virtual Circus" argues that circuses keep human-animal relation close to each other. It has positive connotation in relationship between human and animals. Reversely, she also contends that animals are used for financial purpose and for entertainment:

What is that attraction of watching a captive, often exotic animal perform tricks? As a form of institutionalized animal entertainment, the circus is an integral part of mainstream Western Culture. In consumer capitalist economics where animal practices are highly industrialized . . . The circus is subject to

criticism directed not only at instances of animal abuse, but also at the principle that permits the use of animals for entertainment. (79)

Animals are used in circuses by humans to earn money as well as to give entertainment to people. Similarly, in course of conversation between Ishmael and the narrator in the novel, Ishmael asks the narrator, "Do you happen to know anything about animal collecting for the zoos and circuses?" (10). Question posed by Ishmael, startles the narrator and he responds that he knows nothing at all about animal collecting. Furthermore, Ishmael says, "Johnson sold me to a zoo in some small northeastern city" (11). Ishmael had been sold by Johnson in a zoo. Therefore, what I say is, humans undoubtedly use animals for financial advantages.

Commercial mindset has been deeply rooted to human today, instead of thinking seriously about the world. Human beings use animals to earn direct money. Their intense desire to gain economic success is far more responsible for enslaving and torturing animals. Human fails to incorporate the feelings and sentiments of animals. In this context, I point a condition in the novel when Ishmael gets bargained by carnival owner, Art Owens and the narrator. The narrator visits to carnival where Ishmael has been kept after his trapping. In order to rescue him, narrator bargains with Owens. He asks how much would he pay for taking Ishmael. Owens replies, "Would take about three thousand" (234). The narrator shows no interest in Owen's answer and instantly requests to reduce the price. They go on bargaining. Narrator expects more to reduce the price. Finally, they come to eighteen hundred. In this way, they bargain for Ishmael. In this case, I pinpoint the fact that humans depend on other creatures for their economic growth.

Quinn, in the novel, tries to give space to non-humans. Every creature inherits right to live freely in this earth because earth belongs to all. But non-humans are

deprived of their right to freedom. The human agencies grab fundamental rights of non-human creatures, and kick them to live a painful life. Human species claiming themselves as a superior being discriminate and privilege their dominion over other creatures. Humans no more get apart from snatching others' right and cause them harm. Ishmael for instance, in the novel feels displeased being deprived of his right. He says: "I had been unjustly deprived of some inborn right, such as the right to live as I pleased" (16). It is not another than humanities who make non-humans deprived from their right to freedom. Ishmael, born in Africa is kidnapped by human force from his family and kept in zoo and menagerie for exposure for human entertainment and fun. So, Ishmael complains the narrator for the right to freedom for every living species. This projects Quinn's interest to give justice to non-human beings appreciating their basic right to live freely.

Furthermore, Quinn counters the Western Christian norms and values who defines human as an image of God. Humans according to Christianity are central to everything else. Human beings take control over all the things. Everything belongs to human and is in their hands. To some extent, author attacks Christianity because of human-centered thought and belief. Here to this point, Ishmael states that human religion is not responsible for caring anyone: "The religions of your culture aren't reticent about it. Man is the end product of creation. Man is the creature for whom all the rest was made: this world, this solar system, this galaxy, the universe itself" (57). *Ishmael* dismantles the religious thought of Western people. According to Christian theology, people believe man, the greatest in the whole universe. They believe humankind, the last creature to evolve; know all about the planet, world, solar system, galaxy and universe. Anna L. Peterson in her book *Being Human* asserts, "Most

Western belief systems define humans as unique among the rest of the life" (2). She furthermore asserts:

In the Christian tradition, human claims to uniqueness rest on the assertion that human alone . . . have a rational soul, the image of God and thus of the trinity. The souls links humans' origins, capacities, and ultimate destiny of God and, thus, forever divides them from "nonspiritual" part of creation . . . the soul is not just an added piece of equipment but a singular dimension that transforms the meaning of humanness. (29)

Above mentioned quote suggests us that humans only have a soul or a rational soul. The other creatures lack it. Human soul makes them unique than others. The soul gives the meaning of humanness, according to Christianity. So, the Christian religion is anthropocentric in the view that human place them at the centre of all and take control over the world. Humans in the name of religion, exploit environment and nature. Ishmael in the text too criticizes religion as part of human culture which seems to take control over the world.

Creation of human in this earth has led the planet into crisis. Evolutionary process is a continual process since the very creation of the earth. Bacteria, microorganisms, amphibians, reptiles and mammals appeared in earth. Gradually, small critters and niches evolved. Finally, man appeared three millions years ago. From this, we come to know that human is the last creature to evolve in this earth. But from humans' creation, the earth has gone suffering a lot with human activities and experimentations. Human, among all creatures define themselves as conscious and intelligent being. Along with their consciousness and intelligence, they keep on exploiting the world. They began to exploit nature and natural resources since the very beginning of their creation. They began experimenting new things in this earth

destructing nature. Bob Douglas mentions that humans are responsible for exploiting the earth being at the top:

Humans generally believe that they are at the apex of evolutionary pyramid and the Earth has been created for us to exploit. But, as Tony pointed out in the introduction to *Planetary Overload*, 'Humans are new comers to our planet with no special immunity against the usual fate of biological species on Earth, namely extinction'. (608)

Humans believe them to be at the highest level above all. Accordingly, they tend to exploit the earth. In an evolutionary process, human is supposed to be the final creature evolved on this earth. Although being the last creature, they become the first to ruining and exploiting the earth. Bob Douglas with reference to Tony Michael's *Planetary Overload* contends that humans are new comers in the earth; they exploit, destroy, and devastate the world. But whatever and however they do to ruin the world, they too have to extinct from this earth one day. In a like manner, Ishmael also comments on human creation saying that humans are flawed: "Man was born to turn the world into paradise, but tragically he was born flawed. And so his paradise has always been spoiled by stupidity, greed, destructiveness, and shortsightedness" (83). Humankind look only for their benefit and advantage. They harm and damage the earth by doing various experimentations relying on nature. They deteriorate earth fulfilling them without caring others. They do not think for long term consequences whether their activities will cause any harm or not to others. They have greedy mind to earn a lot, eventually perform stupid acts that destructs the earth. They are shortsighted; do not care about further consequences. Hence, Quinn suggests his readers to preserve this planet from being extinct.

Nature posits the highest significance for maintaining order in the earth. Nature is a source of healer. It acquires healing power in it which helps to heal physical and mental illness. It gives relief and solace to people. People who are mentally exhausted feel released from sufferings when they get close to nature. People in these days suffocate and exhaust due to rapid urbanization and industrialization. Their suffocation and exhaustion hamper their health until and unless they get attached to nature. To get relief from burdensome, human should have to be engaged with nature. Quinn in the text valorizes nature and its importance for human welfare. He praises the vitality of nature which benefits humans for diagnosing mental illness. While Ishmael talks about Takers and Leavers story to the narrator, narrator comes to the point that nature is beneficial for humans to cure mental and physical illness. The narrator says: "People living close to nature tend to be noble . . . Living close to nature is wonderful for your health" (147). Ishmael says that Takers are new or modern people. They do not care nature and environment whereas, Leavers care nature and environment. So here, Leavers are good people who live close to nature. On another, Takers are bad people and mentally unhealthy because they are out of nature. They ignore rest of the world and do not care about the importance of nature. But nature has healing capacity that gives relief and solace to people. It is not only for unhealthy people, in fact for all human beings that nature keeps our mind healthy, fit and sharp. So, it becomes to be our responsibility to care nature for our welfare.

But human attitude towards nature today has begun to undergo transformation. Human beings fail to realize the greatness of nature today. Nature balances ecosystem of the earth. Our earth is rich in natural resources like: hills, mountains, plains, oceans, seas, rivers, rocks, forests, animals, birds, insects, and so on. The richness of

earth has now been decreasing day by day because of human interference to nature. Human beings interrupt and obstruct ecosystem, and food chain. Humans utilize far more natural resources not for their survivability rather for economic purpose. Even though, we are recognizable of depletion of natural resources by our activities, we no longer remain apart from destroying them. We misuse natural resources and let our environment and nature deteriorate. We excessively use natural resources and diminish nature. By extensive use of natural resources we are digging our own grave. So, author suggests humans not to diminish nature and natural resources.

Takers belong to modern people those who believe themselves unique than those of Leavers. Although we do not admit direct actions of Takers in the novel, Quinn through conversation between Ishmael and narrator attacks Takers culture. Takers suppose of possessing optimum success and eventually screw Leavers for their desire and satisfaction. They disobey natural law and show their brutality to the world. Narrator speaks of the Takers that "It was the Takers who introduced disorder into the world" (146). While Ishmael asks to narrator about Takers, narrator says that Takers introduced disorder into the world. According to text, Takers culture began ten thousand years ago into this world with the rise of agriculture. Takers started settling down depending on agriculture for their livelihood. Subsequently, division of labor, technology, trade, commerce, and scientific invention rose up which led the world into a critical condition.

Ishmael hates Takers because of some negative characteristics they obtain. Once Ishmael says, "Takers culture riddled with greed, cruelty, mental illness, crime, and drug addiction" (147). Ishmael ignores Takers due to the very qualities they possess. But for Leavers all those things are great rarities. Ishmael again says that "Takers systematically destroy their competitors" (127). To become the master of all,

Takers systematically set plans to destroy their competitors. They involve in different bad activities which cause others as well as their own destruction. By their activities they affect Leavers, non-humans and the whole earth. Author thereby resists Takers culture because their culture seems dangerous for earth's healthy existence.

A biotic community consists of various small communities. The earth is a common place and shelter for all natural entities. So, it does not belong to any single species. Ishmael in the novel says, "Man is not alone in this planet; he is a part of community, upon which he depends absolutely" (99). Our earth consists of various species and natural resources. The earth is a form of community that includes numbers of members. Each and every member has interrelation and interconnection by which the community moves ahead. Hence, there is a nexus between members of community and is inevitable.

Likewise, Ishmael says, "The world was not made for any one species" (145). Numbers of species survive on this earth. All living species maintain their existence cooperating with others. No species alone can make the earth come into existence. Since very long of earth's creation various creatures evolved and vanished. Even a single species ever controlled and ruled the earth. But, humans are trying to rule the world and take in their hands. Criticizing human Ishmael states that "Man does have a place in the world, but it is not his place to rule" (243). Humans, like other beings hold a place on this earth. So every living being have equal right to live. No any creature have right to rule the world. Humans regarding themselves as superior, conscious, intelligent, and rational being, attempt to dominate the world. They try to grab the whole world in their hands. They think of ruling and conquering world. Quinn, therefore notices human that the earth is not only the place for humans but for all creatures.

According to Quinn, humans have gone beyond gods. Gods are supposed to know all the things. Gods have wisdom and knowledge to rule the world, to manipulate creatures. But humans today have gone beyond gods. They try to gain knowledge and wisdom of gods. They are taking the place of gods to rule the world. In this context Ishmael in the text says: "Man can never have the wisdom the gods use to rule the world, and if he tries to preempt that wisdom, the result won't be enlightenment, it will be death" (183). Humans try to enlighten themselves by gaining gods' wisdom. They want to gain knowledge and wisdom of gods to rule and conquer the world. In an ambition to conquer the world, human are heading towards their own destruction. Human attempt of conquering the world finally is going to be 'extinction' of the earth.

Author in the novel emphasizes more on importance of biotic community as I mentioned earlier. Ishmael says global community a peace-making law. And it promotes order in the earth. Global community or biotic community maintains balance in nature. Community seeks order for maintenance of the earth and its ecosystem. Every small parts of community plays vital role in balancing earth's ecology. Peace-making law means a natural law which should be followed by every species. But humans break the law of nature and make their own law. Consequently, their law is taking the whole earth into a crisis. The narrator in the novel states: "The creatures who act as though they belong to the world follow the peace-keeping law, and because they follow that law, they give creature around them a chance to grow toward whatever it's possible for them to become" (246). It is human responsibility to give space to every creature because every creature has to live in this world depending on another and vice-versa. So, humans should also have to appreciate others' existence in this earth too.

Ishmael blames human civilization in the sense that it hampers all living species of the world. In the name of civilization human exploit environment, nature and motherly earth. Humans have developed different things for their fulfillment of desires. "Does being civilized mean that you have to destroy the world?" (246), the question inquired by Ishmael to narrator denotes that human civilization is faulty. It tends to devastate and destroy the world. Furthermore, he again asks: "Does being civilized make you capable of giving creatures around a little space in which to live?" (246). Ishmael's questions notice readers that human civilization alters rest of creatures to live an unpleasant life: pain, agony, suffering, starvation, suffocation, and catastrophe. Human culture and their civilization have failed to give space to other creatures except humans. Humans are incapable to give justice to other beings. Thus, Quinn critically raises questions through his character Ishmael to give a little space to all living species and keep this earth in balanced order.

Ishmael finally in the novel advices narrator to teach humans about the world what he has taught to him. He tells him to give knowledge about our deteriorating world and preserve the biotic world. He wants to make humans conscious and aware about devastating and worsening condition of the earth. He says, "You must change people's minds" (249). He mostly blames Taker people who put the earth under crisis. The entire human race is under crisis due to Takers' culture. So it is necessary to change people's mind; to make them think differently about biotic community, environment, nature, and the earth.

To conclude, Quinn revisions anthropocentric outlook of the world. He advocates on behalf of non-humans and the natural world. He represents a gorilla as a mouthpiece of nature eventually; gorilla seeks justice for all living creatures. Moreover, Ishmael wants to free the world from human encroachment to nature. He

does so in order to preserve the existence of the earth because 'the earth' is the only living planet where living species survive. On contrary, humans attempt to exploit the earth in the name of civilization and culture. As a result of their modern civilization, culture and their inventions our environment, nature, ecosystem and the whole earth is going to be collapsed one day. Quinn, therefore, critiques human-centered attitude and appeals humankind to preserve biotic world for balanced ecosystem and longevity of the earth.

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