

I. Margaret Atwood and Her Ecological Concern

Human induced factors that directly or indirectly have brought great changes in ecosystem, which become a cause of birth of ecocriticism. After the second half of the twentieth century modernity, science and technology, astronomy, medicine and development reached in the peak of success. Aftermath of the World War II science and technology has created a great space for the growth of industrialization and capitalism by diverting man's mind and relationship from nature to the matter and money. Industrialization's direct and adverse effect lies upon the nature and it brings a great crisis in environment. Besides these, technology has helped in developing a sense that nature is made by human beings themselves. Man nowadays has started thinking that he can create everything of the nature with his products. This illusion of the modern technocratic world has disrupted the harmonious relation between nature and the human beings. When man thinks ownself independent of nature, there emerges a crisis in the environment, or man's own creation itself operates as a destructive force of nature.

Socio-cultural and political changes are the most significant factors over the large changes on the ecosystem. Both economic growth and population growth lead to increased consumption of ecosystem services. These are the harmful environmental impacts of any particular level of consumption depends on the efficiency of the technologies used in the production of the services. These factors interact in complex ways in different locations to change pressures on ecosystems.

In the name of progress human beings have gone beyond the capacity of nature. The recent development and diffusion of scientific knowledge and technologies are annihilating and exploiting the nature. The twentieth century has tremendous advancement in understanding how the technocratic world works

physically, chemically, biologically and socially and in the application of that knowledge to human endeavors. Animals are used for medical experimentation, plants are used for physical construction and birds are used for decoration. Human beings involve ecosystem to provisioning services such as: food, timber, fiber, genetic services and biochemical which cause the rapid climate change.

After the second half of the twentieth century, as the product of political and economic power nuclear immunizations was established which produces carbon emission – is now also traded internationally. M. H. Abrams, in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, notices this environmental crisis of the twentieth century as a great harm of biosphere. He says:

By the later part of the century there was a widespread realization that the earth was in an environmental crisis, brought on by the industrial and chemical pollution of the biosphere, [...] the depletion of forests and of natural resources, the relentless extinction of plants and animal species, and the exploitation of the human population beyond the capacity of the earth sustain it. (72)

According to Abrams, the experimentation has gone against the earth. Even the moon and other planet have become the matter of experimentation. The rapid climate change is also caused by the activities of twentieth century people.

The modern human civilization now becomes the exploiter of the earth. They are talking about the global climate change but in practice they forget that they are responsible for the present situation. Earth's climate system has been changing since the pre-industrial era. Due to the wars they projected, continue to change the climate throughout the twentieth century.

In such circumstances, some literary writers and critics show their interest on

the decline of ecosystem through their literature and criticism. Most prominently some Canadian writers resist against the modern way of exploitation of the nature in the name of development and modernization. Margaret Atwood shows her concern towards the ecosystem and environmental crisis by rejecting the so called American modernization in her novel *Surfacing* (1972).

After 1960s, some Canadian writers tried to adopt a Canadian environment in literary writings at a time when new technologies and scientific development are annihilating the boundaries of environment. In the year 1970s, Canadian cultural nationalism deployed wilderness as a mark of differences as well as an article of ecological faith. If there is one distinguishing element that sets Canadian literature apart from most of the other national literature, it is the influence of the nature. Margaret Atwood's early works reflect this preoccupation with wilderness, which reinforce the native Canadian way of life centering on nature.

Margaret Atwood is a Canadian poet, novelist and critic, whose works are very much popular for raising the voice of marginal group and marginalized issues of her society. She is famous as a feminist writer. Besides her feminist concern, some of her books deal with the Canadian nationality, wilderness of the native land and native lives. She assimilates her character in the nature while they get depressed in the urban way of life which shows the importance of nature for human beings. For Atwood, nature is a soul healer for the technocratically wounded man.

Atwood was born in Ottawa, Ontario in 1939 and spent much of her life in northern Ontario and Quebec. She has been described as one of the most important writer of contemporary literature. She has published more than fifty books of fiction, poetry and critical essays. She is an international best seller and winner of the more than fifty literary awards including the prestigious booker prize for literature; as well

as won Governor General's Literary Award for both fiction and poetry. Her *The Blind Assassin* won the 2000 Booker prize. Some of her works including *The Handmaid Tale* are classified as feminist text. She begins dealing with themes such as growing up female; role of female in patriarchal society; national issues and most prominently she deals with her native land and wilderness. *The Blind Assassin* (2000), winner of Booker prize is a saga of family tragedy. In poetry, her subjects include the social roles of women, nation, nature and those who have been marginalized.

Atwood puts nature, Canada and women in a single parameter because all of these three are exploited and marginalized. Nature is exploited by science and technology, Canadian land is exploited by American camps and women are exploited by male.

Her ecological concerns can be seen in short stories collection *Wilderness Tips* (1991); in criticism collection *Survival; A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (1972) and in a children's book *Up in the Tree* (1978). In all these books she finds the real happiness in the nature but not in technology. In *Wilderness Tips*, Atwood memorizes the childhood experiences while she was in the camp; she has experienced the wilderness of the nature. She memorizes: "They are picture of convoluted tree trunks on an island of pink, wave-smoothed stone, with more islands behind; of a lake with rough, bright, sparsely wooded cliffs; of a vivid river shore with a tangle of bush and two beached canoes, one red one grey" (110). She has memorized the picture of island which she experienced in pink colour, wave as smooth stone but lake as rough and bright. In these lines Atwood expresses her eco-friendly experiences of her childhood.

Atwood's fiction demonstrates the wilderness productively explored in relation to other genre of nature writing the artistic presentation of environmental

meanings of landscape and exploration of different aspects of nature through the character's experience of comparative way of lifestyle of urban life and rural life is notable for the eco consciousness. She ironizes the American awareness of wilderness which is motivated by the profit.

In *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian literature*, Margaret Atwood defines the boundaries of her imaginative universe which covers the Canadian soil. In this book she urges for the critics to be aware about ownership of Canadian soil. She is aware of that Canadian soil is being trapped in the hand of man made technological prison.

In her *Up in the Tree*, she shows the nature as an alternative of science and technology. The true pleasure can be gained only in nature which is far more greater than the technological pleasure in the poem the unnamed two children enjoy themselves in the tree not in telephone, pancakes and tea.

Oh moan! Oh groan!
 There is no telephone!
 We've run out of pancakes,
 We've run out of tea,
 We've to eat LEAVES
 Up hear in our tree! (16)

In this poem Atwood sees the life force in the nature. The two boys eat leaves for their survival by rejecting the pancakes. The capitalized word 'LEAVES' contains the life force power of nature.

Surfacing was studied from the perspective of post colonialism, feminism, neocolonialism and as a quest of family relation. Her resistance against the American modernization is looked as a post colonial consciousness. Exploration of her own

personal history on the land and seeking of her own language and adaptation of the vernacular is to resist the colonial hangover and identity with a self respecting ordinary Canada. Some critics regard the appearance of Americans technological use in Canadian land as imperialism. Valerie Broege writes in his book *Margaret Atwood's American and Canadians* ironizes the motif of American as: "Through out the novel the American are consistently portrayed as despoilers of the landscape, with the implicit contrast of the Canadians having more of a sense of a kinship with nature and its creatures" (67). In this regard, Valerie Broege sees the Americans kinship with Canada as motivated by the colonization of the nature and its natural resources. The kinship is a new form of colonialism which is known as imperialism.

Feminism as one of the themes of the novel, some critics have explored through the perspective of female narrative, exploring the ways how women are marginalized in their professional and private lives. The individual personality of the protagonist is disordered and isolated because of her father. Frank Davey observes "the narrator of *Surfacing* understands her anguished personality and she is the carrier of her parents' limitations" (qtd. in Peter Klovin 2). She suffers only because she is a daughter of her family.

The importance of family relationship is demonstrated in the narrator's central quest. Peter Klovin focuses on the series of 'families' the narrator has experienced.

He focuses:

Her family of origin, her attempted family with her "husband", surrogate family with David, Anna and Joe -- all have left their mark upon her, such that she manages to become her own person only after learning a new "language" a new way of perceiving herself which in turn enables her final vision of her ghostly parents. (3)

In Kloven's view, the narrator's quest for her missing parents is the quest of her origin, her relationship with the family.

These are some examples of different perspectives on *Surfacing* but ecocriticism seems to be a new area of research. The present researcher's methodology to look at this novel is environmentalist view point. Atwood's Ecofeminist concern is one of the major issue in this novel. She relates female body with the nature and strongly resists against both the anti-environmental thought and patriarchal domination. For Atwood Christianity also remain one of the cause for the environmental decadence which has legalized the technocratic world view.

Ecocritics analyze the history of concept such as 'nature' in an attempt to understand the cultural developments that have led to the present global crisis. Ecocritics observe the environmental harmful or helpful effects conducted by the human activities in the literary texts.

The novel *Surfacing* is set in the isolated island Quebec, the northern Canada. In this novel, she shows her deep concern in the environmental crisis caused by the modern American technocratic world view. Her protagonist is forced to examine her self-proclaimed victimization encroached upon the Canadian wilderness. By the effect of modern technological advancement that encroaches upon the wilderness, she transforms her woman protagonist into wild animal in a transgress rite of passage indicating the madness to define as at once subversive and counter to the hegemony of the modern science and technology. Over the course of this madness, the narrator comes to accept that the modern American scientific technologies are responsible to bring the destruction of their wilderness. The transformation also suggests the self introspection of her with the nature. She tries to assimilate herself with the nature.

The ecological consciousness is seen in Atwood in the perception of an

essential difference in the way in which animals are regarded by her protagonist and Americans. Americans symbolize the so-called modernity for whom hunting and killing animals is a heroic deed, conforming man's ability to conquer the force of nature from which he has become so alienated. It is almost like a coming of age ritual for man to mount their trophies on the wall. This mystique associated with the hunting and killing of animals indicate to her the general imperialism of modern cast of mind in nature. For Atwood nature is god and she hates modern Americans because they had turned against the god. She wishes that she could press a button and make the modern technocratic world vanished. In general, she opposes the modern science and technology which Americans tries to implement in her land in order to exploit the nature.

The present thesis has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents a brief introductory outline of the context, theme, writer and brief review of the novel. It gives an introduction to the present research work along with the general survey of the novel. The second chapter tries to develop a theoretical methodology as a perspective for textual analysis of the novel. It throws light on the introduction to the ecocriticism and environmental criticism and discusses the terms related to it. The third chapter analyzes the novel from the perspective of ecocriticism and some of its dimensions. The concluding chapter summarizes the finding of the research and in a nut shell presents the ecological awareness in Atwood. The research follows a list of works cited at last.

II. An Introduction to Ecocriticism

Ecocriticism explores the ways in which we imagine and portray the relationship between human beings and the environment in all areas of cultural production, literary genre, nature documentaries and environmental researches. Ecocriticism has emerged as a new field of literary expression of human experiences from an environmental view point. It evaluates the texts in terms of their environmentally harmful or helpful effects. It is a literary and cultural effort which analyzes history of concept of nature and attempt to understand the cultural developments that have led to the present global ecological crisis. It is an interdisciplinary bridge between criticism and other disciplines such as written texts, media, history, philosophy, anthropology, religious texts, painting and so on. It also covers the neglected part of theological relationship with environment. In short, ecocriticism designates the critical writing which explores the relationship between literature and the biological and physical environment, conducted with an acute awareness of the devastation being wrought on that environment by human activities.

Ecologist seeks to demonstrate the reality of plants and animals in relationship with human activities. Ecocritic Cheryl Glotfelty defines “[...] ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (xviii). It means ecocriticism is a theoretical aspect which examines the role of nature or environment in any texts. It takes an earth centered approach to literary texts. It shares the fundamental premise that human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it.

The term was first coined in 1978 by William Rueckert in his essay “Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism”. Ecocriticism for Rueckert is “the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature” (qtd.

in xx Glotfelty). His definition specially connects with the science of ecology which includes all possible relationship between literature and physical world.

This relationship concern with the literature of the environment encompassed all continents of the earth. M. H. Abrams defines the function of ecocritical writing: “[...] while the other movements in criticism are directed towards achieving social political justices, a number of ecocritics are impelled being out, ultimately, the survival of human race” (72).

For Abrams ecocritics do not share a single theoretical perspective or procedure; instead of this they are engaged with environmental literature manifested in a wide range of mode of analysis of socio-political-cultural aspects with various diversities.

Barry Commoner, relating everything develops his first law of ecology as; “everything is connected to everything else” (34), ecocriticism connects man to man with man and the entire cosmos. It is not only related to the conservation of nature, in literature and documentaries but it conducts on interconnectedness and integrity of all things. Michael P. Branch also explain it as: “not just a means of analyzing nature in literature; it implies a move toward a more biocentric worldview, an extension of ethics, a broadening of humans’ conception of global community to include non-human life forms and the physical environment” (xiii). Michael P. Branch relates everything to the physical environment as a means of analyzing nature in literature.

The word ‘eco’ itself implies the interdependent communities, integrated systems and strong connection among constituent parts. The etymological meaning also shows the interdependence between human beings and the land. Howarth asserts it as:

Eco and *critic* both derive from Greek, *oikos* and *kritis*, in tandem they mean “house judge”[...] ecocritic is a person who judges the merits

and faults of writings that depict the effects of culture upon nature, with a view toward celebrating nature, berating its despoilers, and reversing their harm through political action. (69)

Ecocritic try to rebel such participation by reflecting our living in more than a human world and all texts have an influence of this world in any sense because all texts are literary and imaginatively situated in a place.

Environmentalism began to take its concrete shape after the second half of twentieth century in response of scientific advancement is now dangerous in the environmental damage it has made. This movement grew partly out of tradition of enthusiasm for wild nature but in different from this tradition. But the environmental writing has very deep historical root. In every philosophical writings, there is an influence of nature. In this sense, environmental literature has a root with the emergence off philosophy itself. Influence of environmentalism was there either in the form of archetypal image or in the form of creation stories. Then environmentalism is rooted with the religious texts too. The ‘Garden of Eden’ in the Bible is an example of nature writing in religious text. Likewise in the eastern cultural tradition there too is the influence of nature. For Hindu, nature is a part of god. They worship five great elements as “*Panchatatwo*” - - air, fire, water, sky and earth- - are believed to be emerged out of “*prakirti*’ the earth (Rao 26). According to Buddhism, Lord Buddha was enlightened in the nature in *Bodh Gaya* not in the palace. So nature has the importance in any religion or culture.

In western culture human relationship with the nature has a very long time remained unquestioned because the domination over the world was anchored in God’s word. In this regard Hans Bertens, in his essay “Ecocriticism” opens this abused authority of God over nature as:

God himself, in Genesis 1, verse 26 (King James Version), ordained that we, human beings, would have special place in his creation, and would have domination over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over the earth, and over every creeping things that creped upon the earth. (198)

The exact meaning of domination in this particular concept was indeed debated by theologians – after all domination give rise to all sort of practice. In order to practice the god’s message in the earth human beings develop science and technology as a tool to dominate the nature.

Christianity carries an anthropocentric view which always privilege man at the centre and exploiting the other elements of the world specially nature at periphery. Lynn White, Jr. in his essay “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis” writes “especially in its western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen” (9). Nature for the Christianity is only a subject to be tamed and God’s purpose on the creation of man was also the same. Clarifying this Christian view of anthropocentrism and God’s purpose of creating man for sucking the nature for his benefit and advantage, Lynn White, Jr. points, “God planned all of this explicitly for man’s benefit and rule: no item in the physical creation had any purpose to serve man’s purpose. And although man’s body is made of clay, he is made in God’s image” (9). Christian attempt of muting the nature and foregrounding the human is the main cause for the environmental crisis and it caused the birth of counter ethics demands a revision in the Christian notion towards the nature.

Science and technology on the other hand, are not minimizing the environmental crisis and the environmental degradation but are functioning as a lubricant for the promotion of the exploitation of nature by increasing the

development of the modern world aims at great benefit and profit to the human beings. This is the major cause of environmental crisis.

The scientific revolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries involuntarily facilitated a utilitarian, calculating view of natural world that not much later would become the dividing force behind its violation and exploration by the industrial revolution. Hans Bretens addresses this revolution as:

The large majority of the population man and nature were bound together even if on unequal terms, in one organic whole, overseen by a benign Devine Being, for those who embraced the scientific discoveries of Isaac Newton and others and accepted that the universe was nothing but a vast machine governed by eternal natural laws, there was no reason whatsoever to look bat nature with anything but indifference. (199)

The scientific discoveries try to make the universe a machine which only functions according to human will. The scientists broke the law of nature and posit them in the god's position. Because of the over domination on the nature the crisis befall.

Besides the scientific discoveries, the uncontrolled use of agricultural pesticides becomes the major problem of ecological damage. In 1962 Rachel Crason in her book *Silent Spring* states the urgent warning that “we were talking irresponsible risks with our natural environment led to a broad environmental awareness which, in its turn, led to a strong, even if heterogeneous ecological movement”(62). It is that movement which in the early 1990s inspired the branch of literary and cultural studies that is now called ecocriticism.

Environmentalism in the Late Industrial Era

After the second half of the twentieth century, industrial pollution is the main

threat, along with destructive ways of consuming natural resources, such as excessive fishing and the clear cut logging of forests. These are modern phenomenon, products of industry and application of industrial methods to traditional harvest and husbandry. Environmentalism is a critique of industrial modernity and another product of it, a distinctively modern movement in which an indispensable role is played by science; by methods and technologies. In the late 1970s reports began to appear of concern among scientists about climate changes thought to be occurring because of increasing level of carbon-dioxide in the earth atmosphere. The possible consequences are flooding, deforestation, famine, eco-wars over diminishing resources, and millions of environmental refugees. The climate change then termed as global warming which becomes the political agenda now.

Many features of global warming defy political response and cultural representation its extent is global. Richard Kerridge in his essay “Environmentalism and Ecocriticism” expresses his view towards the present global warming as:

Fifty years may pass, or more, before the effects become plain. It confronts us with possibilities so frightening as to demand urgent action, yet, even when few scientists deny that it is happening, a degree of uncertainty remains that those who want to do nothing can seize upon. (qtd. in Wough 533)

These can easily seem to be tomorrow’s problems and if pushed aside by, the more immediately the earth will turn into the desert.

Regardless of what name it goes by, most ecocritical work shares a common motivation; the troubling awareness that we have reached the age of environmental limit, a time when the consciousness of human action are damaging the planet’s basic life support system. Either we change our ways or we face global catastrophe,

destroying much beauty and exterminating countless fellow species in our headlong race to apocalypse. If we are not part of solution we are part of problem.

Many of us in colleges and universities world wide find ourselves in a dilemma. Our temperaments and talents have deposited us in literature department, but as environmental problems compound work as usual seems the effort uncompleted. Then the question arises how literature can contribute to environmental restoration, Can the capacity of professors of literature provide any part of solution? The answer lies in recognizing that current environmental problems are largely of our making, are in other words a by product of culture. As historian Donald Worster explains:

We are facing a global crisis today, not because of how ecosystem functions but rather because of how our ethical system functions. Getting through the crisis requires understanding those ethical systems and using that understanding to reform them, historians alone with literary scholars, anthropologists and philosophers, cannot do the reforming, of course, but they can help with the understanding. (8)

Worster and other historians are writing environmental histories, studying the reciprocal relationship between humans and land, considering nature not just as the human story is acted out, but as an actor in the drama.

The years of depression and World War II turned ecology even more strongly towards public narrative. Many preservationists involved ecological principle to save wilderness or protest military-industrial research, so by the 1960s some observer saw ecology as subversive, a vital component of leftist politics. To radical feminist, science becomes an oppressive, male-authored enemy that insisted on the biological necessity of sexual reproduction. These voices reflected how much ecology had

become a medicine sung by modern shamans to heal a sick world.

Ecology advanced from description to advocacy after 1960s as its stories presented ethical choices that affected land and people. As explained by William Howarth in his essay "Some Principles of Ecocriticism", he says, "just as telescope and satellite photographs provided new maps of the earth, so did ecological study shape a new ethics in landscape history" (75). This altered vision of land-use also revised histories of American culture, since most of its early myths (frontier, virgin land, garden) derived from the imperious natural science that drove European exploration and settlement across the new world.

In twentieth century the American story of limits reached and strained, a time of sobering recognition that human growth can destroy natural resources. The Americans do not realize any sense of loss in the nature. If they are aware of that they only are of America. They are totally indifferent towards the native lands like Canada, northern Alaska and other Caribbean islands. Remote and unpopulated places also turned into desert land after the touch of American technology.

Within ecological studies we find the movement of 'deep ecology', which finds real authenticity and purity only in the virgin wilderness and it attributes intrinsic value to all lives. The Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess coined the term "deep ecology" in 1972 which is the latest branch of ecological philosophy to consider human kind as an integral part of the environment. It takes human not as a separate but as an organic entity of the nature and advocates for the concept of 'economy of nature'. Human life has a role in the ecosystem; therefore, it is an inseparable part of the environment. It strengthens the voice of green movement as well as that of environmental ethics. Similarly deep ecology places more value in species, ecosystems and processes in nature that is allowed by established environmental and green

movements, and, therefore, leads to a new system of environmental others.

Deep ecologists do not go for the remedial process like 'save the animals, sow the planets, central the garbage' etc. but instead (of it) they argue that man does not have any right to cut and destroy the earth, to cut and plant the trees, build the ways etc. In this regard Greg Garrard in his book *Ecocriticism* argues that:

...deep ecologists, see the first point as distinguishing their position from environmentalism; whereas 'shallow' approaches take an instrumental approach to nature, arguing for preservation of natural resources only for the sake of human, deep ecology demands recognition of intrinsic value in nature. It identifies the dualistic separation of humans from nature promoted by western philosophy and culture as the origin of environmental crisis and demands a return to monistic, primal identification of humans and ecosphere. (21)

Human beings even do not have right to touch the earth. So their main urge is to ban for man to touch, love or hate the earth. They always speak for the autonomous and single but their own world for those excluding of men.

Similarly there are other ecologists emerging these days. They are like social ecologists, ecomarxists, ecofeminists, and ecopoetics. Social ecologists always believe that there is a similar kind of environment in social structure as it is in the ecology. It is made up of different elements. In social ecology, until and unless the injustice is not illuminated and the quality is not brought in the society the natural ecology cannot be preserved. The upper-class people are the main cause to compel the lower class people to run their lives by hunting animal, and chopping trees for food and fuel etc. are compelled to destroy the nature. These people, who are completely dependent upon the natural resources for their survival, should be provided an option.

In the world such life style of people like hunting, poaching, chopping trees, running after the fuel and mine etc. now has become very harmful to the ecology.

Unlike deep ecologist social ecologists have distinctive view of the place of human in nature. They claim, the ecocentric monism enjoyed by deep ecologist is disingenuous because although humans are supposed to be a 'part of nature', many of the things humans do are still portrayed as 'unnatural'. Opposing this 'false' monism a dialectical perspective that envisages the evolution of human culture, or 'second nature', from first nature (nature itself) in an ongoing process in which each defines and transforms the other. But there must be a perpetual balance between first nature and second nature.

Eco-Marxists are more close to social ecologists. For them, environmental problems are caused by anthropocentric attitudes alone but follow from systems of domination or exploitation of human by human. Like social ecologist, eco-Marxists lament the individualism and pervasive mysticism of deep ecologists. Eco-Marxist says that technology modifies the dynamic of nature both by initiating new demands, and through production process, offsetting scarcity. The scarcity is not natural. In order to fulfill the 'created scarcity' the capitalists change the political structure of society so that they can produce in large scale. For that they can compel the law to give them authority to use the natural resources in order to fulfill the 'created scarcity'.

In line with traditional Marxist thought Eco-Marxists argue that there is a structural conflict between workers and the owners of the means of production. In which the owner cream off the surplus value created by the labour of the proletariat. This objective exploitation is at the heart of all other forms of exploitation and oppression. For D. Pipper, post revolutionary classless society is capable of withering

the environmental disruption, patriarchy and economic exploitation. Arguing this issue he writes; “The true, post-revolutionary, communist society will be classless, and when it attained the state, environmental disruption, economic exploitation, war and patriarchy will all wither away, being no longer necessary” (207-8).

But some eco-Marxists disagree with Pipper’s argument. Before the establishment of classless society the oppressed workers have no way out of depend on the natural environment. In the period of revolution too they have to depend on nature, because capitalism will not give them any survival in the society. In this regard one or other way environment is used as means of production for capitalist or as shelter for the exploited.

Ecofeminism on the other side raises the issue of female relating them to the nature. A basic tenet of ecofeminism holds that the patriarchal domination of women runs parallel to the patriarchal domination of nature. In 1974, Sherry B. Ortner in her essay, “Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?” raises a serious issue that female is always placed passive, secondary and subordinate to man whereas man is active and superior to her. It means female is close to the nature, that is to say, man has taken nature in his possession from a long past and is trying to do the same with female too. Ortner’s essay declares if the man’s domination over women is made legal that would even legalize the destruction of the environment. Such relating of female to nature is to present her as a fragile, soft, delicate, dependent and perishable. Richard Kirridge, in this regard points out different female writers who debate about the woman’s identification with the land or nature. He, in his essay “Environmentalism and Ecocriticism”, writes:

Some ecofeminists argue that the identification of women with nature should now be seen as a source of strength. Other, such as Janet Biehl,

are worry of any strategy that, by accepting women as essentially less estranged from the nature, and problematizing rationality too prohibitively, risks leading women back into the old space. (Wough. 538)

This shows that among the ecofeminists, there, too is a debate between these groups of ecofeminists one who identifies women with nature and other who find itself a problem.

As deep ecology identifies the anthropocentric dualism (human/nature) as the source of ecological destruction, ecofeminism also blames the androcentric dualism: men/women as a problem. This androcentric dualism mostly distinguish human on the ground of man as soul and woman as body, which makes the men's superiority over women. Ecofeminism involves the recognition that the logic is only logic of domination. Davion forwards this idea as: "women have been associated with nature, the material, the emotional, and the particular, while men have been associated with the culture, the non-material, the rational, and the abstract" (qtd. in Garrard. 23). This suggests that the patriarchy treats nature and women by showing the common features. Both women and nature have been controlled and manipulated to satisfy the masculinist desires.

One of the aspects of ecofeminism is to redefine the connection between women and nature on the basis of productivity of biological feature. Both the nature and women are biologically productive. This is the positive aspect of identification of women with nature. The production is the production of new generation and production of wealth as well, which the capitalist and patriarchal paradigm of society fails to perceive this interconnectedness of women and nature. Vandana Shiva claims that women have a special connection to the environment through their daily

interactions with it that has been ignored. She argues:

Women in substance economies, producing and responding wealth in partnership with nature, have been experts in their own right of holistic and ecological knowledge of nature's processes. But these alternatives modes of knowing which are oriented to the social benefits and sustainable needs are not recognized by the capitalist reductionist paradigm, because it fails to perceive the interconnectedness of nature, or the connection of women's lives, work and knowledge with the creation of wealth. (8)

Her implication is that women have active role in environmental protection and conservation than that of the men, because women have some sense of oneness. But men see the nature and women only the perspective of profit and use.

In the later 1990s, ecofeminists have developed a new perspective on the basis of radical cultural feminists, which provides a framework for seeing the interlocking system of operation of gender, race, class and environmental degradation in society. They seek as Anne Stathem says in her book *Environmental Awareness and Feminist Progress* “[...] a transformed social order, in focusing upon the capitalist economic system which is functioning in the operation of women and nature” (1). In this regard ecofeminists are close to Marxist. For ecofeminists a major insight involves the “seeing through” social convention to observe the connections between exploitation of nature and women in society. Ecofeminists like Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies focuses on global capitalism as a major reason for environmental exploitation. In this regard Ariel Salleh says:

[...] the fundamental contradiction in the capitalist patriarchal system is the Nature-Women-Men relationship. Capitalist patriarchy only

aggravates the domination of woman and nature and the global assault on nature; women and indigenous communities has to be understood this perspective. (15-16)

She negates the claim that development benefits the women and indigenous communities. Capitalism always exploits the women, the nature and the right of indigenous community. This shows that ecofeminists have some concern towards the indigenous people.

Ecofeminists emphasize the environmental justices to a far greater degree than deep ecologists. Their logic is that the domination is implicated in discrimination and operation on the ground of race, sexual orientation and class as well as species and gender. Where as the deep ecologist finds anthropocentric dualism (human/nature) as a means of destruction on nature.

Radical ecofeminism functions as an inspiration to many to change their lives, but as a critical philosophy its irrationalism and essentialism are serious limitations. For them, if women have accepted the association with nature the attack on hierarchy is worthless because the association is motivated to show the irrationality, emotion and non-human or body only. This is against the culture, reason and mind. The radical ecofeminists urge that the ecofeminist should involve in literary and cultural criticism. They have to identify the self position in the literary texts. For them the association is not completely false but that is misrepresented by the patriarchal system. The complex analysis of ecofeminist can make of, both the identification and preservation of nature. The true identification of nature is possible only through a self-inspection in female themselves as well as in males. To preserve the identity of women is to preserve the identity of nature. Ecofeminist have also provided sharp critiques of globalization and international development projects which are politically

oriented towards the making of benefits both politically and economically.

Pastoral writing deals with the urban nostalgic image of the peace and simplicity of the life of shepherds, rural people, rural way of life and other rural folk in an idealized natural setting. Pastoral work, which opposes simple to complicated life, to the advantage of the former: the simple life may be that of the shepherd, the child or the working man.

Pastoral remains significant for Canadian and American ecocriticism, oriented towards the revaluation of non-fictional nature writing, because it continues to supply the underlying narrative structure in which the protagonist leaves civilization for an encounter with non-human nature, then returns having experienced epiphany and renewal. Moreover, the more domesticated forms of pastoral seems in American literature and cultural to emphasis agrarianism, a political ideology associated with Thomas Jefferson that promoted a land owning farming citizenry as a means of ensuring a healthy democracy. Greg Garrard in *Ecocriticism* says, “American writing about the countryside emphasis a working rather than an aesthetic relationship with land” (49).

The implication of pastoral for Americans is motivated by the dominating metaphor. Americans produces pastoral literature to feminine the landscape. Annette Kolodny’s psychohistorical study *The Lay of the Land*, which argued that pastoral, was more than an imaginary constructs for American pioneers. He says:

At the deepest psychological level, the move to America was experienced as the daily reality of what has become its single dominating metaphor: regression from the cares of adult life and a return to the primal warmth of womb or breast in a feminine landscape. And when America finally produced a pastoral literature of her own,

that literature hailed the essential femininity of the trained in a way European pastoral never. (6)

Unlike American pastoral European pastoral literature never made nature landscape as feminine for domination on the nature but at the core level European romantic pastoral literature also motivated by the colonial psychology.

The wilderness signifies the nature in a state of uncontaminated by civilization. It is a construction to protect particular natural habitats and species. Wilderness is a search of peace for those who are tired of the moral and material pollution of the city. Wilderness has a value which has an authentic relation of humanity on the earth. In simple sense wilderness has a therapeutic value for those who are wounded by the science, technology, morality and Christian theology. Unlike pastoral the concept of wilderness only come to cultural prominence in the eighteenth century, and the wilderness text discussed by ecocritic are mainly non-fictional nature writing, almost entirely neglected by other critics. But in the twentieth century the concept of wilderness is taken as a soul healer in the literary texts like novels and poetry. Most of the ecological literature of the twentieth century, the protagonist who is frustrated in the urban way of life, assimilates with the nature in order to get solace. So the wilderness of the nature works as a soul healer in the late capitalized industrial era. William Cronnon in his book *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, has identified this wilderness as a unfallen antithesis for the civilization:

Wilderness is the natural, unfallen antithesis of an unnatural civilization that has lost its soul. It is a place of freedom in which we can recover our true selves we have lost to the corrupting influences of our artificial lives. Most of all it is the ultimate landscape of authenticity. (80)

On the one hand, wilderness functions as a soul healer for the technocratic wounds and on the other hand, the same human's activities cultivated the wilderness which has brought a great trouble in it. Henry David Thoreau in his book *Walden* highlights the human conception on nature which is the main cause of decadence of the wilderness: "It is difficult to conceive of a region uninhabited by man. We habitually presume his presence and influence everywhere. And yet we have seen her thus vast, and derer, and inhuman. [...] This is the earth which we have made chaos and old night" (71).

This vision has clarified that the purity of nature is lost and human beings are entirely raped such purity. Bill McKibben in *The End of Nature* (1990), declares that purity of wilderness is become a myth now. Population, industrialization, atmospheric nuclear weapon tests are the cause of the loss of wilderness which causes the global warming. This climate change or global warming has changed the situation fundamentally contaminating the whole planet. He says:

We have changed the atmosphere, and thus we are changing the weather. By changing the weather, we make every spot on earth man-made and artificial. We have deprived nature of its independence, and that is fatal to its meaning. Nature's independence is its meaning; without it there is nothing about us. (54)

McKibben's horror is justified by the scientific evidence too. The present global environmental crisis is caused by the carbon-di-oxide emission. The global concentration on the climate change has provided a little bit hope for the conservation of nature and ecosystem as well. However, McKibben's concern of the nature reinforces an idea of wilderness, in which any modification of the environment is a form of contamination.

Nature in its most familiar meaning is what the earth is and does with out human intervention. In this sense it is the only thing that human being cannot alter or change. Ecocriticism too insists in the fact that everything either living or nonliving in this world are ultimately dependent upon the same earth i.e. nature. We must value the natural ecosystem and acknowledge our dependency on them without forgetting the nature is a series of changing cultural constructions that can be used to praise and blame. Frederic Turner in his essay “Cultivating the American Garden” insisting upon the blurring of the wall between human and nature says:

If we define nature as opposed to human, we must face the fact that we are “scientific” creations and should be on the site of those who would have the school boards ban even the mention of evolution. If we define natural as that which is opposed to social and cultural; while insisting that humans are natural than we will have revealed our adherence to a theory of human nature [...] assisting that human kind is naturally solitary and unsocial, a theory that all of the human science- anthropology, psychology, pale-anthropology, linguistics, ethology emphatically deny. (40-41)

Culture is not an autonomous entity but an outcome of the nature itself. The attempt to isolate the human beings from the nature has backed the dichotomy up between nature and culture. Richard Keridge in *Environmentalism and Ecocriticism* explains this issue:

The separation of humanity from nature has a long history. Ecocritics have paid most attention to its root in Christian and post Christian western culture, because industrial capitalism first appeared in Western Europe and was spread by colonialism. An imported part of

ecocriticism's philosophical and historical work has been the analysis of this tradition of man/nature dualism. (Wough. 593)

Keridge's point here is that culture is being hostile to nature due to the man's achievements. Science and technology looks at nature with the utilitarian eyes whereas the Christian beliefs encourage man to exploit nature, dominate and rape it. But ecocriticism's effort is always on diminishing such hostility that is possible only when man values other non-human elements of the ecosphere.

Ecocriticism tries to resolve the debate of nature/culture dichotomy by blurring the wall between them. When deep ecology brings the concept that man is an integral part of the nature, the culture which is the product of man automatically falls under nature. Removing the illusion of nature/culture difference, Frederic Turner in his "Cultivating the American Garden" writes:

Nature bears the weight of our activities, but in the long run renews itself and remains just as it was left to itself, nature settles into a balance, a rhythm that is eternal and unchanging [...] Nature is dangerous but purifying, innocent yet wise, the only real touchstone of what is good and right and beautiful. (42)

Man is the product of nature itself. In his earlier days man had no idea about detaching himself from the nature. Primitive groups of people did not find any difference between wild and domestic because for them these both terms were the same. Clarifying this idea in *Nature and Silence*, Christopher Manes points "many primal groups have no word for wilderness and do not make a clear distinction between nature and domesticated life, since the tension between nature and culture never become acute enough to raise the problems" (18).

The gradual development of man in nature led him towards the progress and

new innovations. Man's achievements in the field of science and technology helped them to be detached from the nature itself. The growing distance between nature and man created a kind of dichotomy between them and started making a concept of culture that is the technology. In another word, technology itself became the culture so by distancing man from the nature. Frederik Turner shows this difference between nature and culture (the product of technology) and writes in his essay "Cultivating the American Garden":

For American, culture means to a large extent technology; indeed, the later might well be named more frequently as the opposite of nature. If nature, in our myth, is eternal, unchanging, pure, gentle, wise, innocent, balanced, harmonious and good, then culture (technology) must be temporary, progressive, polluting, violent, blind, sophisticated, distorted, destructive, and evil. At its best, technology is for as a Euphoric from nature, at its worst; diabolical destruction of it. (45)

This very concept of culture developed by technology become a great cause for the split between man-nature, relationships. Distancing man from nature has frightfully created an ideology that brings as opposition between culture and nature. The distance between nature and culture without having any mediating term is the only way to produce the serious ecological imbalance in the earth. This very ideology teaches the modern man to exploit and consume the nature by being hostile to the earth itself. It provides no alternative to the consuming of the earth which intensely backs up the growing distance between nature and culture whereas ecocriticism attempts on minimizing the tension created out of it. The mutation of nature for placing culture at top is the main problem ecocriticism that it attempts.

Culture was used to define the realm of the human beings which marked its

ontology off from the sphere of the merely natural. This concept of culture does not allow us to identify ourselves to the nature but a sole product of the culture. In this stage, we try to understand nature through our vocabulary of symbol, which are primarily linguistic and in time increasingly elaborate into other forms like customs, convention, habit and even artifacts. Culture so appeals for the unification for the people of the world that is to say, culture is the common domain of human beings. But on the other hand, as a social category culture can be defined as the whole way of life. It incorporates all the social constructs.

Though the modern technocratic world has made its attempts to detach nature from the culture, culture in its base form is the evolution of the nature itself. Ecocriticism tries to bring a harmonious relationship between nature and culture by resolving the growing hostility between these two entities. One should not be examined in isolation but should be treated in relation to the other entity. The intimate relationship between nature and culture should not be overlooked.

III. Ecological Consciousness in *Surfacing*

Nature in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing works* as a soul healer to overcome the destruction of the modern world or civilization through its force to make people realize the interdependency and interrelationship between and among the natural elements and human beings in the world. The whole novel moves around the lake which is located in isolated island. It presents the dynamics of nature which basically highlights the interrelationship and interdependency with the existence of human life. On the other hand, Atwood exposes the harmonious life style in the nature which is itself is a good message to the modern technocratic people who are always after the nature trying to exploit it. The whole novel is full of the ecological message and issues.

The novel begins with the journey of the unnamed protagonist who is also a narrator of the story. Her journey is towards her childhood home in the northern Canadian Wilderness together with her lover Joe, and a couple David and Anna. Her journey is for the search of her missing father. Her father, who is a botanist, has been living in total isolation on a lake island after the death of his wife. The wilderness as the setting of the novel has a multi-dimensional symbolic significance. It is the setting of the protagonist's childhood and at the same it is the symbol of lost innocence and happiness in nature. Her quest of her missing father is a quest of her identity, her root her happiness and her origin and all these things are rooted in that island. Her quest of identity and her childhood way of life is symbolic for the innocence of nature. The journey stand for a departure from the realm of existence outside of alienating materialistic, ecologically and spiritually polluted urban way of life, which is the protagonist and companions are part of the wilderness stands for journey towards the nature which is appropriate and victimized by human society. The wilderness

provides the background against which the protagonist's thought and feelings about an exploitative and destructive civilization take space.

Atwood begins the novel with the description of the lake by her unnamed female protagonist. After a long time she returns to her origin land "I can't believe I am on this road again" (Atwood 1), which is beside the lake. Her external quest is her father and soon is paralleled by an inner quest which is a quest of nature itself. As soon as the journey starts the protagonist provides the information about the wilderness, and she accounts the changes: "We moved through flattened cow-sprinkled gills and leaf trees and dead elm skeletons then into the needle trees and the cuttings dynamited in pinks and gray granite and the flimsy tourist cabins, and the saying GATEWAY TO THE NORTHERN" (3). Her journey moves towards the deep wilderness of the nature but she indicates that the wilderness is affected by the modernity and development. "Tourist cabins" (3) indicates that the tourism industries are established as the business camps in the northern wilderness of Canada.

The journey moves through the American camps in Canadian wilderness: "now we are passing the turn off the pit the Americans hollowed out. From here, it looks like an innocent hill, spruce-covered, but the thick power lines running into the forest give it away" (3). Atwood sees the purpose of American's settlement in the forest is to dig the land, find out the mines and make the deep hole in the land which is making Canadian soil hollow. The power lines which are produced in the Canadian soil are running towards America. For the American power company, David says "Rotten capitalist bastards" (6). This is what the detachment from the capitalism which is represented as an evil for ecosystem. Because of the power company, "an eighteenth century fountain in the middle, stone dolphins and a cherub with part of the face missing" (6). In the gas station they saw an American flag is waving.

In *Surfacing*, Americans function as the main symbol of destruction power, or power over the nature. Earlier in the novel, they are simply the representatives of a national spirit characterized by egotism and exploitation and a country contaminated by urban pollution and decay, soul killing machinery, and artificiality. They intrude on nature, living behind nothing but garbage. In the name of power companies they are the 'mental killers' who come to the Canadian wilderness for hunting and fishing. They kill for fun, or to satisfy their greedy and narcissistic urge for exploitation and violence. During the fishing expedition the protagonist and her friends come across a dead heron with smashed eyes, hanging from the branch of a tree. War, people killing each other, is seen by the protagonist as just an extension of killing animals:

"Anything we could do the animal we could do to each other" (15). This expression of the protagonist suggests as Barry Commner's expression do that everything is connected with everything else. Killing a bird that is not great things for Americans but the purpose of killing is "To prove that they could do it, they had the power to kill. Otherwise it was valueless [...] It must have been the Americans; they were in there now, we would meet them" (110-11). In these lines the protagonist realizes that who is the killer that is not important whether they are Americans or others but killing even a single heron is a very important role to disconnect the interrelationship or ecological chain in that wilderness because that may cause a great problem for the harmony of the nature. She realizes that those killers are spreaded as a destructive force to hamper the natural harmony. She says:

Since they kill the heron, they are still Americans no matter what country they are from and they are what is in store for us, what we are turning into, they spread themselves like a virus, they get into the brain and take over the cells and the cells change from inside and the once

that have the disease can't tell the difference. (123)

Here, the protagonist attempts to indicate towards the native Canadian people also who are influenced by the Americans. Because those Americans entered into the brain of native people and they wash-out their consciousness towards their land and they are following the so called American technocratic exposition on their own soil. She thinks that the American's hegemony into the nature is also responsible for wasting the brain of native people like virus.

The death of the heron by Americans is a representative event in the novel. But this event shows that they use to kill with out any purpose. They just want to satisfy their killing instinct. "A dead bird [...] it's a heron, you can't eat them. I could not tell how it had been done, bullet, smashed with a stone, hit with a stick" (110). The death of a bird which is a central metaphor for victimization in the novel that brings the consciousness in protagonist. She is very sympathetic towards the victim. She further expresses her environmental consciousness: "I couldn't any more, I had no right to. We don't need it. Our proper food is tin cans. We were committing this act, violation, for sport or amusement or pleasure, recreation they call it these were no longer the right reason" (114). When the protagonist sees the pathetic dead body of a humble bird, something emerges from her heart which is a spontaneous ecological consciousness and this consciousness makes her to promise for not killing the innocent animals this is what is an ecological consciousness on the part of the protagonist.

Atwood sometimes attempts to present the interdependent relationship of nature and native people. In course of long journey towards the northern Quebec sometime she happens to visit the tribal people in the wilderness who are unaffected by the touch of modernity or the technologies. Their lives are as simple as nature. For

them wearing “shorts were against the law [...] “they were ashamed to put on bathing suits” (19). They are out of the touch of modernity which only aims to annihilate the nature. In nature, native or tribal people themselves are the part of nature. For native people nature is both the source of life and service of life. But when this balance on the nature is disturbed the native people are the first who have to suffer first. When this balance circle is hampered by the outer force than there will be a disturbance on the eco-circle which is the cause of environmental decadence for Atwood. In the novel, she gives the references of cabins “Blue Moon cabins, to run us down the lake” (23), which are established for the business purpose besides the lake, which Atwood noted as external force on the nature. Those who are running the cabins, their purpose of fishing are to run the restaurants. But the native people use to fish for their survival.

She explores the implications of victimizations of native Canadian by the technological advancement which is implemented by Americans in Canadian soil. The issue is both the national identity and ecological conservation for the protagonist. Canada is a geo-political body embodying the Canadian nation, to be taken possession from within by resisting the environmental and cultural colonization by power structures. Canada and Canadian wilderness are plundered and amputated by the technological money-making machinery. Canada is economically and culturally colonized by America and its direct effect is seen in natural world. She laments “my country, sold or drowned, a reservoir; the people were sold along with the land and the animals” (126). The sense of collective guilt is evinced in the protagonist’s idea that it was a “bargain a sale” (126).

The protagonist regrets by seeing the American hegemony in her land. She sees the bad impact on the lake by the human conduct activities. She contrasts the condition of lake: “I dressed and went down to the lake and dipped my face into it.

This water was not clear like the water in the main lake” (199). She thinks that: “the Americans were up, they were alive; they were setting out in their canoe, the front one had his fishing rod trailing over the bow” (121). In her first expression, she laments on the impurity of water in the lake and in her second expression she finds that Americans are the responsible for that impurity because they use the canoe and fishing rod over the lake.

At the end of the novel, she plunges into the lake to surface again empowered with the determination to refuse victim hood: “this above all, to refuse to be a victim...I have to recant, give up the old belief that I am powerless and because of it nothing I can do will ever hurt anyone. A lie which was always more disastrous than the truth would have been. The word games, the winning and losing games are finished” (185). This is the self consciousness which is emerging within her. Now she is determined to refuse the American power which is implemented upon “innocent victims”. This is the curse of the issue of power in the moral implications of the dominator too. To suppose own self as powerless is a lie. So if one has to survive power must be generated within own self. Here Atwood has a deep influence of Charles Darwin’s theory of survival of fittest. One has to struggle to survive in the nature which is also a law of ecosystem. But the struggle should not be hampered by outer force like science and technology. The spontaneous struggle between and among the natural elements become the part of nature itself.

The protagonist, not having name in the novel is also an indication of her sense of alienation. Having grown up in the city, she has always been a half way outsider to the destructive civilization she is repulsed by. She recounts that as a child, she feels “I was the one who didn’t know the local costumes, like a person from another culture: on me they could try the tricks and minor tortures they’d already up

on each other” (66). Her rejection of conformity to the norms of proper female behavior and sanity also started easily in childhood. As a girl she displayed a certain resistance to learn to be civilized as her mother called it. Ironically her mother was not “civilized” because she was a stranger to the ways of civilization. For instance her mother hated doctors and hospitals because they would steal from her the natural death she wanted to die and what she feared actually happened. The protagonist does not like to be civilized like her mother because for her also civilization is something which is against the law of nature and which is totally anthropocentric.

As a rejection of anthropocentric civilization, discarding her human identity, the protagonist starts living like an animal, thus completing her rejection of culture. She reverses the mirror in the cabin so that it no longer traps her: “I reverse the mirror so it’s toward the wall, it no longer traps me, Anna’s soul closed in the gold compact, that and not the camera is what I should have broken” (169). Initiating shamanistic initiation rituals of meeting nature and nature’s own terms, she discards from her body and from the cabin every object reflecting the artificiality of civilization, she starts her life living like natural elements in the Canadian wilderness. “Everything from history must be eliminated, the circle and the arrogant square pages” (170). For Atwood, human history of civilization is the history of domination, and human beings dominated the nature from the birth of god itself (as stated in bible in Genesis 1, verse 26 in king James version). And this is her personal history and the history of linear time, by which western civilization measures itself. She clears a space for herself in the cabin, one that is symbolically outside culture. For her the culture in which she is living is also hybrid culture in which the influence of western civilization is distorting her native people and culture. Because of the influence of American culture in Canada David thought himself as a good hunter: “David thinks, he’s a great white hunter [...]

He brought along a borrowed fishing rod, though I warned him he might not have chance to use it” (23). Atwood sees the cultural imitation as a problem in ecosystem and conservation of the environment. Because of the influence of modernity the native people also turn against the nature which she calls a “bad civilization”.

Canada at first is the part of the wilderness, than a part of North America and the British Empire, than a part of the world. Canadian environmental awareness emerged at a time when new scientific techniques, industries and means of communications, are annihilating the boundaries of that environment. It seems that Canadian sensibility on environmental consciousness has been working with the identity of nationalism is not decreased so much but it is disturbed by the white American sensibility on their wilderness.

In the year 1970s, (the time when Atwood wrote this novel *Surfacing*) Canada was “small neutral country” facing American power on one side and European power on the other, but it was a country where nascent hopes of nationhood with the worries of environmental conservation were vitiated by internal conflict with the island Quebec. During 1970s brought the invocation of the war measures act, the royal commission on bilingualism, biculturalism and public outrage about the storing of American rockets on Canadian soil.

Surfacing is a prose anatomy of Canadian writing up to 1970. Canadian literature in English is the whole tradition of the Canadian search for the political identity and its articulation. Canadian literature is not separate from its native culture and tradition. *Surfacing* is the celebration of nature in their native land and culture. Atwood is an environmentalist and nationalist in Canada. Unlike in the United States of America and England, national identity is rooted in literature which is predominately masculine world of culture production. Nature writing was dominated

by some romantic poets in England and transcendentalist poets in United States. Nature is deified in romantic and transcendental literature. But Margaret Atwood attempts to present the nature in its own condition. Her concern is not to deify the nature but to preserve the nature. She is also aware about the ecological circle of nature and human beings. At the same, she is worried of that being a part of nature human activities are going against the nature to disconnect this eco-circle by the use of technocratic and industrial empowerment.

The Quebec environmental situation is evoked in *Surfacing* with the presence of “creeping Americanism” which refers to the American missile and these missiles are infecting the Canadian thickness of nature. American “bunkers” are established in the Canadian wilderness, and this term becomes a catch-all for the agonies of a post-industrial world and is associated with war, mechanization and death. As a matter of post industrial consciousness she refers Americans as: “we met two of them once on the way to the base lake, they were carrying their tin motorboat and motor over portage” (60). They were fishing and trading the fish from Canadian lake by using the means of post-industrial technologies. As a result Canadian wilderness is soon to be finished.

Atwood is very much worried about the environmental decadence. She concerned about deforestation because trees have been cut down and used for the physical constructions. She writes: “the trees will never be allowed to grow that tall again, they ‘re killed as soon as whales” (40). As an effect of industrialization big trees are like whales which are near to disappear from this world if the human behavior remains same on the nature. Nature is the place of solace to get healed from the physical and spiritual wounds. But in the post materialistic world industries snatch the source of nature. The protagonist is back there in her childhood wilderness

Quebec but she find out that “after fourteen years; the trees they’re cut on and have grown swollen edges around the wounds, scar tissue” (40). The wounds and scars are symbolic for both the physical and psychological wounds and scars which was made by human being own self.

Atwood portrays an anti-American sensibility in the post industrial era in her *Surfacing*. She examines the complexities of the imagined community of the ‘nice Canadian’ in the late 1960s while she simultaneously critiques the artifice of niceness by tracing her unnamed narrator’s descent into madness in the wilderness of Quebec. It implies the ecological destruction of land under American economic imperialism. *Surfacing* traces the experiences of an unnamed female narrator as she journeys with her lover Joe and her married friends, David and Anna, to her family’s island in the wilderness of Quebec in search of her missing father. Over the course of the narrative, the protagonist is forced to examine her self proclaimed victimization by the American tourism industries and technological advancement that encroaches upon the Canadian wilderness.

Atwood is clear about the American’s motive in Canadian land. Once when the protagonist happens to meet an American man and she asked for his identity. The man replies “I am a member of the Detroit branch of the Wild Life Protection Association of America; we have a branch in this country, quite a flourishing little branch” (88). Wild Life Protection Association is an American agency in Canadian land and they are not for wild life preservation rather they are there for fishing in the “lake Erie”. Moreover the Americans are working as an agent for CIA in Canadian land and they are preparing for some kind of war against some weak country like Canada. The narrator of the novel is aware about the hidden motive of America:

It’s obvious. They’re running out of water, clean water, they’re

dirtying up all of theirs, right which is what we have a lot of, this country is almost all water if you look at a map. So in a while, I give it ten years, they'll be up against the wall. They'll try to swing a deal with the government, get us to give them the water cheap or for nothing in exchange for move soapflakes or something, and the government will give in, they'll be a bunch of puppets as usual. (90)

She sees the preparation is for war and for that the Americans are trying to influence the Canadian government for the help. And the government becomes ready to provide their forest area as a shelter for American agent. As a result the Canadian wilderness is turned into a bare land, like battle field. But the native Canadian people are not ready to provide their land to be abused by the Americans, so by that time they started a nationalist movement which if for the preservation for their land and their wilderness. She further says:

But by that time the nationalist movement will be strong enough so they'll force the government back to down; riots or kidnappings or something. Than the yank pigs will send in the marines, they'll have to; people in New York and Chicago will be a black market in water, they'll be shipping it in tanks from Alaska. They'll come in through Quebec, it will have separate by then; the pepsi will even help them, they'll be having a good old laugh. They will hit the big cities and knock out communications and take over may be shoot a few kids, and the movement guerrillas will go in to bush and start blowing up the water pipelines the yanks will be building in places like this to get the water down there. (91)

Atwood sees the vivid image of war in her land through the secret agent of America.

In close level, the American agents have colonial motivation on the Canadian soil because they were tempted by the richness of Canadian wilderness. In this process some native Canadian are also accompanying with the American agencies because as a value of money in post capitalist era American are influencing the native people through money. But the nationalist movement attempt to save their land somehow from the Americans.

During the fine days, the narrator transformed from a woman into a wild animal in a transgress rite of passage indicate that Canadians are as responsible as American for the destruction of their wilderness. The narrator's sense of self is obtained at least a part from her interaction with her world through images and languages which she uses with the natural elements assimilating her self with the nature.

Margaret Atwood's novel *Surfacing* demonstrates the complex question of identity for a socially isolated woman in an isolated island. Identity, for the protagonist has become problematic because of her role as a victim of patriarchal and colonial force by Americans and their technocratic imperialism. The protagonist is victimized by the internal and external force. Her father's identity is attached with her which functions as internal force; and she is sexually abused by her lover Joe and her friend David which is a kind of society and it functions as an external force to dismiss her individual identity. The protagonist recognizes herself with the nature. She is aware of that she and the lake both are abused by for the purpose of satisfaction of male greed. She expresses her experiences, how she is abused by the patriarchy:

He kissed me; I stood on my side of window when his head drew away
I said "I don't love you" I was going to explain but he did not seem to
hear me, mouth on my shoulder, fingers at the clasp behind my back,

then sliding sown my flanks, he was pushing on me as though trying to fold up a lawn chair, he wanted me to lie down on the ground. I stretched out inside my body twigs and pine needles under me. At that moment I thought, perhaps for him I am the entrance, as the lake was the entrance for me. The forest condensed in him, it was noon, his face was invisible, the sun's rays coming out from a centre of darkness, my shadow. (140-41)

The underlying idea is that the protagonist woman is close to the nature. This helps to explain the acquiescence of women in their own subordination: they accept the general logic of human domination on nature. To legitimize the operation of women is to legitimize the environmental degradation. This is what Atwood's ecofeminist key insight. Atwood, focus on certain effects and issues of exploitation on the female body and nature, she makes her protagonist aware of her importance about the individual' construction of identity. The protagonist does not easily accept the male domination. She resists against male sexual abuse upon her body. Her word "you're interfering" is her self consciousness about her identity.

As ecofeminism raises the issues of female relating them to the nature Atwood appears as ecofeminism in her novel *Surfacing*. She raises a serious issue that female is always placed passive, secondary and subordinate to man where as man is superior to her. For Atwood female is closer to nature, that is to say man has taken nature in his possession from a long past and trying to with female too. Such relating of female to nature is to present her as a fragile, soft, delicate and dependent. The protagonist celebrates the potentiality of reproduction of female body as nature also has the same potentiality of reproduction. But most often it does not happen deliberately. Male character imposes their will upon female body as modern science and technology is

imposed its experimentation on nature. in the following line Atwood's protagonist rejects her potentiality which is "unwanted" for her because her potentiality is also used by male.

But I couldn't have brought the child here, I never identified it as mine; I didn't name it before it was born even, the way you are supposed to. It was my husbands, he imposed it on me, all the time it was growing in me I felt like an incubator. He measured everything he would let me eat, he was feeding it on me, he wanted a replica of himself; after it was born I was no more use. I couldn't prove it though, he was claver: he kept saying he love me. (28)

Now, Atwood creates a parallel condition of her protagonist and the wilderness. The protagonist is abused and dominated by her male comparisons and relatives as the Canadian wilderness is abused and consumed by the neighboring country and its people. The domination is for the purpose of pleasure and satisfaction. She is used as an object to be played on and the Canadian nation and its ecological surrounding is used for pleasure and profit. Atwood' protagonist meets the same condition of her in the Canadian forests while she was in the quest of her missing father in island:

I heard a sound, human sound. At first it was like an outboard starting; then it was a sharl. Chainsaw, I could see them now, two men in yellow helmets. They'd left a trail, trees felled at intervals into the bay; trunks cat clearly as though by a knife. Surveyors the paper company or the government, the power company. If it was the paper company I knew that it meant: they were going to raise the lake level as they had sixty years ago, they were plotting the new shoreline. Twenty feet up

again and this time they would cut off the trees as they had before, it would cost too much, they would be left to rot the garden would go but the cabin would survive; the hill would become an eroding sand island surrounded by dead trees. (107)

Here, the power company is a representative of the most destructive forms of industrial development. As ecocriticism explores the balance between human beings and non-industrial culture it celebrates the thick forests, wild animal earth and water in its own state. But the white American industrial capitalism is making important presence in the new lands like Quebec. The cut off the trees and from the lake they plan to establish a power company. Here, the American exploitation in Quebec and patriarchal exploitation on her seems similar.

Atwood searches for the environmental justice throughout her novel. The female protagonist always searches a kind of harmony in the nature which is hampered by the presence of American industrial capitalism. The environmental justice movement is a collective term for the efforts of poor communities and countries to defend themselves against the dumping of toxic waste, air, food and water, the loss of their lands and livelihoods and the indifference of governments and corporations. The protagonist searches for the environmental justices in her native land and nature but the “government” and the “Wildlife Association” are against or indifferent towards the conservation of nature; rather they are the agent of capitalism and industrialization which is based on the forest. She also brings the questions of gender, class, race and colonialism in to the ecocritical evaluation. The existing binarism between male/female, rich/poor, white/black and colonizer/colonized are some major challenging problems for the environmental justices.

Atwood recognizes that industrial pollution is the main threat, along with this

destructive ways of consuming natural resources such as excessive fishing and the clear cut logging of forests are similar with the exploitation of female body and nature. David is one of the representative male character who thought both female and fish are same. Once he says: "I am gonna use my own rod" (57). The rod stands for both the fishing rod and his male sexual organ which according to patriarchal thought regarded as power and a means of consumption and domination. Those "fishing rod" and "motor boat" are the modern phenomenon products of industrial tools which are used to annihilate the way of environmental life known as ecocircle.

According to Atwood the White American civilization is always running after the nature with an interest of comforting the human life by exploiting the nature to its plane. White Americans are all the time trying to tame and control the Canadian wilderness. In this attempt of comforting their lives, they have completely neglected the importance of the nature for the existence of human beings. They have forgotten that a blind eye to the preservation of nature costs more to human beings.

So, she makes her protagonist rejects the American civilization on her land because the interest of the science and technology has slightly moved away from its promise of enriching the human life. She is very conscious to preserve the human life by preserving the ecosystem. Because the sole source of human life is connected with the lives in the nature and if this connection breaks once the human life also finishes forever. So that she curses the over access of modern science and technologies like "paper company" and "power company" in her land which keep it busy in destructing the nature rapidly. This is how the American civilization has taken nature merely as an entity to consume and exploit but has forgotten that the lives in the world are possible only when the ecosystem preserved in the nature.

Atwood has a deep concern towards the role of Christianity also. In general

she is not against the Christianity but particularly she disagrees the overall view of Christian doctrine which regards this earth as a garden to be consumed by men. Atwood says that Christianity does not care the feeling of natural objects but it makes possible to exploit the natural beings. Atwood, through the narrative of her protagonist says that when she started school, she wanted to go to the “Sunday School” (49), but her father did not approved and he rejected as if she asked to go to “pool hall”. She says: “Christianity was something he’d escaped from, he wished to protect us from its distortion” (49). Even she does not have any faith on Christ because he could not save the nature rather he allowed human beings to consume it and legalized in bible. She further says: “Jesus, who didn’t have throngs and ribs but was alive and draped in a bed sheet, tired-looking, surely incapable of miracles” (49). For her, even the god is tired of saving the earth from modern science and technology because first he himself legalized the exploitation and now he is unable to perform any miracle to save the earth. So, for Atwood the Christianity also appears as a problem in ecosystem.

Ecocriticism’s main concern is the nature and more importantly the earth centered interpretation of the texts. Earth for the ecocritics is the base for everything. That is what one should learn to respect. Nothing exists beyond the earth. Atwood’s novel depicts a bond between man and the landscape which enables her to acquire the life force. For Atwood there is a reciprocal relationship between the life of individual and the life of land and creatures that exists on the earth that is always invisible and intimate. Her protagonist has a deep understanding and respect of the ecological relationship: “A mosquito lights on my arm and I let it bite me, waiting till its abdomen globes with blood before I pop it with my thumb like a grape. They need the blood before they can lay their eggs” (67).

Mosquito, an insect which is sucking her blood but she has a respect towards its life. She is aware about the fact that they cannot survive without blood. So her insight let the mosquito to suck her blood, which is her great respect towards the existence of ecosystem. She, time and again emphasizes on the ecocircle of human beings and other creatures that exist on the nature: "I curl with the blanket over my head. There are mosquitoes, they bite through; it's best not to slap them, the blood smell brings others" (172). The protagonist is aware of that if the mosquito disappears from the chain of ecosystem; it may cause some kind of hamper in ecology. So, for her every life is equally important in the nature.

The protagonist's act of respecting, identifying and relating herself to the nature makes her life live in good relation to the beautiful and harmonious nature. She realizes her life in the city and she feels how it was poor there only after her arrival on the nature. She says: "How I have been to so long in the city, it wasn't safe. I always felt safe here, even at night" (67). In this present wilderness, there are not any great buildings and any technological achievements rather she is surrounded by the natural elements and her life is safe there. It is that very realization in the nature, which emphasizes on the fact that human life is invested in the nature. And human life has union with the nature but respect should be maintained between and among the natural elements and human beings, only than co-existence remains possible.

Atwood's novel shows the need for the presence of ecological elements that only completes the ecosystem and makes every life possible, beautiful and harmonious. Even the land in the absence of the lives in it turns out to be a barren and ugly place. But the presence does not mean the destruction on the ecocircle and natural harmony. If the harmony is maintained the life and the beauty of the places are provided the lives living over there. Atwood's protagonist surveys on the particular

landscape with the harmonious scenario of the nature:

The water was covered with lily pads, the globular yellow lilies with their thick centre snouts pushing up from among them. It swarmed with leeches, I could see them undulating sluggishly under the brown surface. When the paddles hit bottom on the way across, gas bubbles from decomposing vegetation rose and burst with a stench of rotten eggs or farts. The air fogged with mosquitoes. (109)

In these lines, Atwood projects the beauty of nature with natural harmony. The natural elements are at the state of their naturalness and altogether they are interrelated and creating a whole beauty of nature. In the nature, nature itself does not hamper its other element, it is the presence of human beings with the tool of science and technology who hampers the harmony of the nature. There is a good cooperation between living and non-living beings. Altogether there is the real beauty of nature which is unaffected by the presence of human beings. But this is the condition of nature before the arrival of Americans on that wilderness.

In course of the journey, Atwood transforms her protagonist into the form of wild animal in a transgress rite of passage indicating the madness to defend the hegemony of the modern science and technology. Over the course of her madness, the narrator comes up with the resistance against American scientific hegemony. Because she thinks that the American's technocratic mind do not have any sense of respect towards the nature, rather they always try to consume it in order to satisfy their greed.

The next significant thing is that the transformation from human form to animal is symbolic to the 'self introspection on the nature'. She assimilates herself with the natural elements in order to understand the essence, life and force of the

nature. She says:

In shore a loon; it lowers its head, then lifts it again and calls. It sees me but it ignores me, accepts me as part of the land. When I am clean I come up out of the lake, leaving my false body floated on the surface, a cloth decoy; it jiggles in the waves I make, nudges gently against the dock. (172)

In these lines she completely assimilates herself on the nature which is known as self introspection on the nature. In the shore, even a bird (loon) does not care of her presence thinking that it is a part of land, because she does not hamper the life of the bird. That is because of her respect towards the nature. In course of her madness she was completely nude on the nature. She did not have any cloths which represents the modernity. It implies that she was in natural state. She becomes an element of nature. When she came out from the lake, she happens to nudges against the dock, and the duck could not realize her as a human being. At last of her madness she realizes the force of nature and its cause of decadence. She realizes that in nature ecosystem is endangered because human beings left over the sense of respect and run before the consumption only. After her realization, she comes up in her previous state leaving the body of an animal.

Summing up, Margaret Atwood, in her novel *Surfacing*, employees some of the patterns of ecosystem, it's cause of decadence and some solutions, with the resistance against the American technocratic culture which is motivated by the sense of colonization in her soil. In one hand she resists against the imperialism on her land by the means of modern science and technologies and on the other, she celebrates the harmony and beauty of the nature in the Northern Quebec. She is proud of her land and her way of life and no more accepts the modern American way of life.

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