



Intersecting dimension of nature of women: An Ecofeminist reading of Temsula Ao's selected short stories

By-Charu

Abstract

Ecofeminism, arising from feminist movements, amalgamates scholarly critique with political activism. Positioned as a political ideology, ecofeminism amalgamates concerns of sexism and environmentalism, asserting that the interplay of patriarchy and capitalism is accountable for the subjugation of women and the degradation of the natural environment. In nations like India and other developing/underdeveloped regions, ecofeminism assumes heightened significance, elucidating the exploitative practices of industrialized nations in the pursuit of globalization, urbanization, and development within our ecological systems. This ideology underscores the intricate connections between humanity and the natural world, other sentient beings, and diverse gender identities, shedding light on multifaceted gender issues. Functioning as both an ideology and social movement, ecofeminism contends that societal norms and practices steeped in patriarchy are irrevocably entwined with perspectives and behaviours towards the environment and women. Tracing its roots to literary works, my research will centre on Temsula Ao's narratives, particularly those reflecting ecofeminist principles within the post-colonial context of the Indian socio-political and cultural milieu. The aim is to resist the encroachment upon land and life in the pursuit of a more equitable and sustainable global order for all genders. The core objective of this research is to meticulously deconstruct and elucidate the textual and conceptual nuances of ecofeminism as embodied in Temsula Ao's short stories. This necessitates an extensive literature review, critically examining ecofeminist ideas and perspectives.

Keywords: Ecofeminism, feminism and environmentalism, literary criticism.

Introduction

The study of women's relationships to the natural world is known as ecofeminism or ecological feminism (Ecofeminism | Sociology, Environmentalism & Gender Equality | Britannica, n.d.). Furthermore, we might add that "ecofeminism is defined as a philosophical and political theory and movement which combines ecological concerns with feminist ones, regarding both as resulting from male domination of society," as stated in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary. The major aim of the work is to deal with the oppression of patriarchal power structure in the natural world as well as in the life of female characters, also we can correlate nature with women in various aspects such as nature is the provider and female being the nurture and both are exploited by the patriarchal power structure. Some other movements fought by the women to safeguard nature are; Indigenous Women's Movements: Indigenous women have played a crucial role in environmental activism, as they often have deep connections to their lands and are directly impacted by ecological destruction. Indigenous women's movements, such as the Indigenous Environmental Network and the International Indigenous Women's Forum, have been instrumental in advocating for the rights of Indigenous communities, protecting traditional knowledge, and fighting against resource extraction projects that harm the environment.

Environmental Justice Movements: Historically, women have played key roles in environmental justice initiatives that seek to reduce the disproportionate impact of pollution and environmental risks on underserved areas.

Grassroots Activism: Women's grassroots movements have been instrumental in raising awareness about environmental issues and advocating for sustainable practices. Women-led organizations and initiatives promote

sustainable agriculture, waste management, renewable energy, and conservation efforts. They work at the community level to create sustainable alternatives and empower women as change agents.

Climate Justice Movements: Women are disproportionately affected by climate change, particularly in developing countries where they often bear the responsibility of managing natural resources and securing livelihoods for their families. Women's climate justice movements highlight the intersectionality of gender and climate issues and call for gender-responsive climate policies, equitable access to resources, and the inclusion of women's voices in decision-making processes

These examples illustrate how women's movements have played a crucial role in safeguarding nature and promoting environmental sustainability

Also, we see there are a deep connection between women and nature hence in India itself there have been various movements or revolt to safeguard nature at thrtnorthernt Some of the co-movements follows;

Chipko Movement: The Chipko Movement, which began in the 1970s, saw women in Uttarakhand hugging trees to prevent them from being cut down by loggers. This nonviolent environmental movement gained widespread attention and helped raise awareness about deforestation and the importance of forest conservation.

Save Silent Valley Movement: The Save Silent Valley Movement, initiated in the 1970s in Kerala, was led by women activists who protested against the proposed construction of a hydroelectric dam in the ecologically rich Silent Valley. Their efforts eventually led to the protection of the valley and its diverse flora and fauna.

Navdanya Movement: Vandana Shiva, an environmental activist and scholar, founded the Navdanya Movement in India. It focuses on biodiversity conservation, seed sovereignty, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. Women play a crucial role in this movement, advocating for traditional farming methods and preserving indigenous seeds.

Jharkhand Anti-Bauxite Mining Movement: In Jharkhand, women from tribal communities have been at the forefront of protests against bauxite mining, which threatens the livelihoods and environment of the region. These women have organized resistance movements, demanding the protection of their lands and forests.

Narmada Bachao Andolan: The Narmada Bachao Andolan, led by activist Medha Patkar, includes significant participation of women. The movement opposes large-scale dam projects on the Narmada River, highlighting the displacement of local communities and the destruction of ecosystems. Women have played a critical role in voicing concerns and mobilizing support for the cause.

These are just a few examples of women-led movements and initiatives in India that have focused on safeguarding nature and promoting environmental conservation. Women's active participation in these movements highlights their commitment to preserving the environment and advocating for sustainable practices. Their efforts contribute to raising awareness, influencing policy decisions, and creating a more environmentally conscious society.

The researcher is going to do the eco-feminist reading of *These Hills Called Home: stories from a war zone* (zuban classics) written by Temsula Ao in year 2006. Temsula Ao took birth in Jorhat, Assam, in October 1945, and she had a troubled childhood. She attended the oldest university in Nagaland, Fazl Ali College in Mokokchung, where she graduated with the highest honours. Before earning her PhD at North-Eastern Hill University in Shillong, Meghalaya, she obtained her M.A. in English from Gauhati University in Assam and her Post-Graduate Diploma in the Teaching of English from the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages in Hyderabad. Her writings have been translated into Assamese, Bengali, Hindi, German, and French.

Aim and Objective of this Paper

This research will analyse 4 short stories from this collection based on the dimensions of feminism, ecofeminism, the struggle of northeastern people, environmentalism etc. The proposed article aims to demonstrate how humans and male-dominated societies, respectively, abuse, torture, and oppress both nature and women. For the sake of advancement, Humans consistently harm the environment despite technological and scientific advances, endangering the flora and fauna of the natural world. Following are the short stories which will be dealt with in this research: Laburnum for my head, The simple question

Introduction

Temsula Ao, a prolific author with five poetry collections, two sets of short tales, and a literary critique titled "Henry James and the Literary," explores diverse themes such as identity, gender, cultural traditions, and the intricacies of Naga society. Her writings delve into the lived experiences of women, revealing the challenges and aspirations within a patriarchal context. Ao's distinct storytelling and lyrical quality capture the essence of Naga life, customs, and folklore, addressing core issues like woman-nature relationships in the Northeast. Emphasizing the need to balance human, animal, and plant relationships for progress, Ao advocates for environmental protection and the value of women in society.

Ao's notable work, "These Hills Called Home," published in 2005 by Zubaan, a feminist publishing firm in New Delhi, focuses on the Naga people's struggle for an independent Nagaland and their ongoing identity quest amidst conflict. The stories depict the challenges faced by common people dealing with violence, negotiating power, and seeking joy amid dread in the face of industrialization and conflict.

In her latest collection, "Laburnum for My Head," Ao provides psychological insights into women's experiences through a connection with nature. The stories, such as "Death of a Hunter," "The Letter," and "Flight," offer straightforward descriptions that highlight the intersectionality of women's experiences and nature.

As an ecological poet, Ao portrays nature both as a powerful, regenerative force and a destructive one. Her poems like "My Hills," "An Old Tree," and "Distance" depict the destruction of nature, while others like "Garden," "Lesson of the Mountain," and "Bonsai" explore its regenerative aspects. Ao's literary contributions underscore the intersectional nature of feminism and environmental protection, making her a significant voice in contemporary literature.

Interconnectedness of femininity and nature in Laburnum for my Head

Laburnum for My Head, the title tale by Temsula Ao, gives readers a look into the life and personality of such a lady, Lentina. Lentina coveted these sunshine-hued blooms because they represented everything feminine to her: "The way the laburnum flowers hung their heads earthward appealed to her because she attributed humility to the gesture." (Laburnum for My Head,

n.d.). So, she made a conscious decision to plant these blossoms in her yard. Despite her greatest efforts, she was unable to cultivate laburnum trees in her garden. Yet she never gave up hope. Following local tradition, Lentina's spouse was laid to rest in the village cemetery after his death. Latina chose to go on his last adventure with him. Women were not permitted to take part in funeral ceremonies. Lentina took a courageous stand for a lady. Thus, "the specimens of human conceit have crowded into this sacred ground." (Ao, 2009, p. 9) For this reason, Lentina requested that no burial markers be placed at her grave. The author states that "...all she had craved for was a spot to be buried where a laburnum tree would bloom every May," (Laburnum for My Head, n.d.). thus she would have a laburnum tree planted on her tomb. I want to be buried somewhere where there would be nothing but lovely trees growing over my tomb, just like the laburnum tree will stay over hers forever (Laburnum for My Head, n.d.). Lentina's wish to have laburnum trees planted in her honour reflects her deep connection to the natural world. She seems to be against the practice of erecting artificial headstones on human graves, seeing it as a representation of hubris and pretension on the part of the living. Her deed demands that we alter our outlook on the natural world.

Ecofeminist reading of laburnum for my head

Women are well suited to protecting the environment. In their daily lives, women often interact with and rely on many forms of nature. Women and men see the natural world in different ways. As a means of liberating women and the environment from patriarchal control, eco-feminists work to establish environmental movements. Women are at the forefront of ecological movements around the globe, from the West to India. The Love Canal Movement in the United States and the Greenham Common Movement in Britain are the two major eco-feminist movements in the West. Both of these environmental movements were started by women who were protesting the patriarchy by focusing on the welfare of future generations and the planet. Village women in India also actively protected trees as part of two ecological initiatives, the Bishnois and the Chipko Movement (Saranya-Syno. Pdf, n.d.). The complex connection between women and the natural world may be dissected through the lens of eco-feminism. Including descriptions of landscapes and other natural features enriches literature because

it shows how humans feel about and interact with the natural world. In the same way that women have been admired and exploited, so has nature. The patriarch is both the hero and the villain in these stories. To make ends meet and defend his patriarchal beliefs, the patriarch shockingly views it as his right to oppress nature and women. Ao does an excellent job of depicting women amid thorny social and psychological issues. We also learn how they have been seeing their emotions and repressing their wants. Without taking into account the extent to which her female characters are intertwined with the natural world, any understanding of her work would be incomplete. In some narratives, nature or the environment is a fellow victim of the patriarchal system, while in others, it is an objectification of women's endless pleasures and tragedies, and in still others, it is something that might give a woman a feeling of immortality. Lentina's desire for this natural splendour might be seen as a rejection of patriarchal social norms.

Ecofeminism had begun 2 distinct schools of thought;

1) Essentialist eco-feminism- Because of shared maternal traits,

women and the natural world is seen to have a special bond in the eyes of essentialist ecofeminism. Women and nature are the sole sources of admirable traits like generosity, compassion, knowledge, empathy, and sympathy. They're both helping to bring new life to Earth. Babies are born to mothers, while trees and plants are born from Mother Nature. Women and the natural world are both seen as primary incubators and life-givers. Essentialist eco-feminism provides or helps Latinas to gain a voice for themselves and assert their identity. so, we can say that environment or the nature that is the laburnum flower is the nurturer cemetery.

2) Constructionist ecofeminism- According to constructionist

ecofeminism, the patriarchy is responsible for creating artificial barriers between women and the natural world. In ancient cultures, both women and nature are revered as mothers. Eventually, this perception is altered, and they are both debased and exploited. Men are given authority in society, allowing them to oppress women and the environment. By attending the funeral of her own will, the heroine Letina defies Naga's patriarchal conventions. To the author, "Lentina surprised everyone, including herself, by announcing that she was going to accompany her husband on his last journey"(Laburnum for My Head, n.d.). In addition, her driver was horrified when she told him that she intended to purchase a plot to be buried in after her death, and he exclaimed, "But madam, your place is already earmarked beside my master!"(Laburnum for My Head, n.d.). This remark has left her feeling quite downtrodden. She hasn't forgotten her intention to have yellow laburnum flowers adorn her gravestone (Ao, 2009). A setting with nothing but lovely trees above my burial is what I need. The narrative depicts the ambitious lady who is willing to abandon the customs of her rural community.

Latina as an Audax character

Latina symbolises resistance against patriarchy and capitalism in several ways. Firstly, the laburnum tree represents a source of beauty, freedom, and resistance for the protagonist. In a patriarchal and capitalist society that values profit and control over nature, the laburnum tree serves as a symbol of alternative values and perspectives. By valuing the laburnum tree and its beauty, the protagonist can resist the dominant societal values that prioritize exploitation and profit. The story illustrates the angelic beauty of nature and how nature bestows positive energy on females to combat the patriarchal society which is beautifully revealed through this work. Nature and man always share a symbiotic relationship between the two. Laburnum for My Head projects the main character's urge to be one with nature after her death. The Laburnum tree is juxtaposed with the worst circumstances of females in a Patriarchal society. Lentina is in utter indignation when she observes that her husband rests under the shadow of the Laburnum tree after his death. But she is refused by the society. Lentina, as a female, is very courageous and tries to break the deep knot of patriarchs. She sells her half properties to buy a plot from the town committee for her grave. At last, she fulfils her heavenly dream by resting under the shades of the laburnum tree after her death. Furthermore, Lentina's hope that at least one sapling would survive demonstrates her optimistic nature and resilience in the face of challenges. Despite setbacks, she continues to hold on to the possibility of success, highlighting her perseverance and determination to create beauty in her surroundings(Raj & Davidson, n.d.).

Overall, from the given excerpt, Lentina can be seen as a character who values and appreciates nature. Her desire to have laburnum bushes in her garden reflects her aesthetic sensibilities and her longing for a specific kind of beauty. Additionally, her persistence and emotional attachment to her gardening endeavours reveal her commitment to creating a nurturing and harmonious environment.

Nature and Feminine Sensibility: Laburnum for My Head

Nature is often portrayed as a source of inspiration, solace, and reflection, while feminine sensibility is associated with emotions, intuition, and a deep connection to the natural world. This association of femininity with the laburnum flowers highlights how individuals often project their own cultural and personal interpretations onto nature. It also illustrates how nature can be viewed through a lens of gendered symbolism, with certain elements or aspects being attributed to femininity or masculinity.

As the French existential feminist, Simone de Beauvoir comments, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman." (One Is Not Born, but Becomes a Woman | TORCH | The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities, n.d.).

Tamsula Ao also irradiates the same incidence through this story wherein her husband is allowed to rest under the shade of a laburnum tree. But she is refused to do the same thing. Lentina is valorous enough who breaks the tradition of this patriarchal or male-centred culture. At last, she fulfils her dream by resting under the shadow of a laburnum tree. This story depicts the deep relationship between females and nature. No one tries to understand the predicaments of females except nature. Nature can only make them happy. Lentina identifies herself as a new woman, who goes against the tradition and attends the funeral ceremony of her husband. Virtually, Indian females are disdained to attend funeral ceremonies in reality.

Psychosocial Impacts of War and Trauma in Laburnum for My Head

Tamsula Ao is one of the most well-known English authors to come out of Nagaland, and her powerful stories capture the real-life sorrow of fighting in the region. The northeastern states of India are renowned for their distinctive culture, which has strong ties to mythology, folklore, and the natural world. As we see in the story Latina creates the connection with nature while she was alive as she wanted the laburnum to bloom in her garden, but she failed to do that hence she wanted herself to unify with nature after death. She wanted to use the nature-built crown (crown of laburnum) to bloom over her head every spring season. Violence and political upheaval in India's NorthEastern regions go hand in hand in interrupting people's daily life, as Poimila Raman (2018) writes in his paper. Ao also shares her thoughts on how difficult it is for women to keep up with the demands of our ever-changing contemporary culture. In the first words of the book, the author writes, "Stories live in every heart; some get told, many others remain unheard..." It is clear that the author intended for these "sometimes prayers; and those that are not always figments of the mind but are, at times, confessions" to convey the emotional upheaval felt by the people living in the combat zone. We also look upon the fact of alienation as while buying land for a cemetery there was no one to whom she could discuss the affairs regarding this matter, at the end she trusted her driver and went to do all formalities with him. So, one can say that it is because of trauma that leads to a lack of bonds as they fear losing their near and dear ones and not only losing but a female also fear the domination that they'll face.

The tough part of Simple Question

In the short story "A Simple Question," an uneducated peasant called Imdongla frightens an army commander into freeing her husband by asking a plain question. The story depicts a society torn apart by competing demands from the government and the criminal underworld. The Gaonburah, Imdongla's husband, was subjected to intense pressure from both of them. Always keeping the underground's demands hidden from the government, he has been a reliable ally. But as time progressed, the demands increased, and any disagreement or protest was greeted with harsh beatings of the offender, as well as of the Gonburahs and the elders. Imdongla knew about the scenario several times, and he and his pals have always agreed with the underground's wishes without letting on to the authorities. But as time went on, the demands grew, and any opposition was met with brutal beatings from the Gaonburahs and the elders. Tekaba was often spared defeat thanks to Imdongla's strategic planning. Text from Tamsula Ao's "Laburnum for My Head," page 82 (bolded emphasis added) Imdongla was always sympathetic to

her husband's stress, and she did all she could to alleviate it. A twofold increase in demand from the criminal underworld in a bad year frightened Tekaba and the wise men of the community. Imdongla tried to provide some wise counsel, but Tekaba admonished her, "Keep quiet, woman, you know nothing." Later on, however, it becomes clear that this uneducated lady (beyond the basics of housekeeping and hard labour) is essential to spare her husband the punishment he faces from the military for his participation in the criminal underworld. When she asked, "What do you want from us?" the military commander may have a moment of self-reflection. So here we have an uncomplicated woman acting courageously while men would have made a mistake. She was able to unite two very different male subcultures: one that lived in artificial communities like towns and military camps, and another that retreated underground to commune with nature!

Relevance of the title

In all the stories by Ao all the women characters are innately strong and wise in "Laburnum for My Head," Lentina gets her way; in "Three Women," Lipoktula, Medemla, and Martha are a mother-daughter-granddaughter trio; in "Sonny," the main character, who has lost her lover to his noble cause of fighting for the motherland, the mother promises her daughter, "Whatever you do, I will always understand." Ironically, the great hunter Imchanok can only be consoled and assisted in casting out his dread by his wife Tangchetla when he is plagued by the ghost of his prey also in the story (kaur) "Imdongla woke up that morning with an uneasy feeling; she was sure she'd had a bad dream but could not remember what it was about." Throughout the story, we see how firstly, her dream or we can say her inner consciousness was ignored by her husband, secondly, she being a devoted wife fulfils her duty to save her husband "It was Imdongla's quick thinking that had prevented Tekaba from being beaten several times (Laburnum for My Head, n.d.)" the author writes.

Imdongla is portrayed as a complex and nuanced character, with both strengths and weaknesses. She is determined to assert her independence and pursue her dreams but also faces obstacles and setbacks along the way. Overall, she is a sympathetic and relatable character who embodies many of the challenges and opportunities faced by young people in contemporary Naga society. Hence a simple question is from the side of Imdongla, who represents the voice of the females who reside in the Naga community in general and the simple question is why the women are treated as secondary beings? Why are they denied the right to education? why are they denied their identity? Why are their roles fixed in society to serve the family while denying knowledge; Knowledge is a type of familiarity or awareness. It is frequently interpreted as knowledge of facts or as practical abilities, but It may also mean being used to something or someone. Propositional knowledge, also known as factual information, is a kind of knowledge that is separated from mere speculation or hearsay by the availability of hard data to back up the claim (as per Theorists - Google Search, n.d.). To them? As the entire society is bourgeois-centric, which favours capitalism, capitalism works as per the person who is in power and it is the mere infrastructure or superstructure of the society that is built on the values or the base that always favours the male gaze, male perception, etc. so the simple question is from all the women of the society to all the males those who control the structure.

Intersectionality of different forms of discrimination

Ecofeminism recognizes the intersections between gender, race, class, and other social categories. It acknowledges that different forms of oppression and discrimination are interconnected and that addressing one without considering the others is insufficient. Firstly, we see a clash between the 2 classes of men bourgeois and proletariat as bourgeois to show their dominant status "men representing each clan to join their army, failing which they threatened to burn down the village granaries" (Laburnum for My Head, n.d.) as in domination the men who abide their created norms would suffer by losing their resources provided by the nature. Secondly, the division between the natural resources is man-made hence there is again the clash between the owning and destroying insurgence of power. Thirdly, it is the gender roles that have been created by society and there is the status of a man which enables him to accept any kind of favour from men, or they fear if they would accept the female's decision or help then the female would start enjoying the upper status which in turn will create the crisis for the masculine power of men to function in the household, which is the smaller unit of the society 'Listen, I've had a very weird dream, something bad will happen today. So don't shoot your mouth off like you always do and stay at home only' (Laburnum for My Head, n.d.).

Environmental justice

Ecofeminism advocates for environmental justice, recognizing that marginalized communities, particularly women in the Global South and Indigenous women, bear the disproportionate burden of environmental degradation and climate change. It seeks to address the inequities in access to resources, decision-making power, and environmental benefits. It is not Ecofeminism promotes sustainable practices that respect the interconnectedness of human and non-human life. It emphasizes the need for ecological balance, biodiversity conservation, and the rejection of exploitative and extractive practices that harm both the environment and marginalized communities.

It's worth noting that Temsula Ao's works primarily focus on the experiences of tribal communities in northeastern India. While she may not have explicitly used the term "environmental justice," her writing often reflects the concerns and realities of marginalized communities, including their relationship with the environment and the impacts of development on their lives and livelihoods. "The sky was indeed turning dark with rain clouds. The man looked at her for some time, gestured to his soldiers to gather the rice and left the village at a running pace, (Laburnum for My Head,

n.d.)leaving both her husband and the villager dumbstruck. Temsula Ao often writes about the experiences of marginalized communities, including tribal groups in northeastern India. These communities are in many cases more helpless against the effects of natural debasement and environmental change due to their limited access to resources and the marginalization they face. The scene above provided by the researcher may reflect the precariousness of their situation and their dependence on weather patterns for sustenance. Also, the darkening of the cloud shows how the cloud tries to favour the degraded or the dominated section of the society similar to Imdongla who helps the male of her society to be secure from the state. This marks how nature treats all the section of society as equal and shows concern for the dominant section similar to women who tries to save men of their society under the influence of their emotion while it's the men who feel insecure to take the favour of female thinking that their masculine power will be under crisis.

Environmental justice calls for inclusive participation and the recognition of community voices in decision-making processes. In the passage, the man takes charge and makes decisions on behalf of the villagers, leaving them surprised. This could reflect a power imbalance, where decisions about resource management and environmental concerns are made without the full participation or consent of the affected community, perpetuating environmental injustice.

Ecofeminist reading of the story

The story sheds light on the silencing of women's voices, the interdependence between women and nature, and the impact of environmental degradation on marginalized communities. By exploring these themes, an ecofeminist reading can deepen our understanding of the connections between gender inequality and ecological issues in Temsula Ao's work. Ecofeminism argues that the domination and exploitation of women and nature are interconnected. In the story, Imdongala's desire to question and understand the world mirrors the need to challenge established power structures that perpetuate gender inequality and environmental degradation. "Imdongla decided that if she did not intervene both the men would be beaten mercilessly. Dashing inside, she grabbed a basket of freshly husked rice and came out shouting, 'Hey, Toshi, why don't you tell this man that I could not return this rice to you this morning as promised'" (Laburnum for My Head, n.d.). This moment in the story demonstrates themes of conflict resolution, community dynamics, and the power of communication. Imdongla's intervention and manipulation of the situation reflect the complex social dynamics within the community and the various strategies females as an individual employ to navigate and defuse tensions in the community.

This excerpt showcases Imdongla's agency, resourcefulness, and ability to think on her feet. Temsula Ao uses this character to explore themes of community, conflict, and the potential for creative solutions in challenging situations.

Ecofeminism suggests we need to investigate the intersection between women and the natural world because it may prompt us to wonder why the two are so intrinsically linked in the first place. Nonetheless, some ecofeminists dispute the link (Woman, Culture, and Society - Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, Louise Lamphere, Joan Bamberger - Google Books, n.d.). Some argue that the connection between women and the natural world

is tenuous (JSTOR Home, n.d.). But ecofeminists believe that it can be maintained based on ideology, biology (Globalization from Below: The Power of Solidarity - Jeremy Brecher, Tim Costello, Brendan Smith - Google Books, n.d.), ontology (Birkbeck Institutional Research Online, n.d.), and a history of the merchant.

Some might think that it is only men who are harming nature not women. So first let's talk about feminism as an individual concept; Feminism, as defined by social theories and political action, is an interdisciplinary approach to concerns of equality and equity based on gender, gender expression, gender identity, sex, and sexuality. One might argue that why put only males in opposition to females for the prospect of gender equality? As we see the society in which we live or the structure or infrastructure or superstructure as per Marx; The cultural, institutional, role, ritual, mediatic, and political aspects of a society that are not directly involved in production are known as the superstructure. See also: Base and superstructure on Wikipedia and everything else is built on top of those foundational ideals. The forces and relations of production (such as employer-employee work conditions, the technical division of labour, and property relations) into which individuals engage to generate life's requirements and comforts constitute the basis. Power in government is the authority of an individual or group's right to wield power by making choices, offering directions, and demanding compliance, and these values are derived from the person in power. The beneficial uses of such authority include the advancement of a country and the pursuit of societal ideals. All knowledge is possible and takes place only within a vast network or system of power relationships that allow that knowledge to come into being, for statements to be accepted as "true" in any context, and for order for what counts as knowledge to be generated in the first place and this power can be used for evil if authority is placed in the wrong hands. Some theories believe that education is largely a process that happens throughout activities like schooling, teaching, and learning and that this is how knowledge and power are gained. Some people don't see it as a process at all, but rather as the result of something else. Meaning that the whole system is centred on the bourgeoisie or the social order ruled by the so-called middle class and that education is what educated people have. Karl Marx (1818-83) and his followers popularised the term "bourgeoisie" in the realm of political and social theory. so one can bourgeois is those who have means of production of economic value as a result they are the holder of a capitalistic society. Also, capitalistic society favours industrialisation, these industries are a threat to nature as they cause global warming as a result it is the men who are in power who rule over both nature as well as women.

Also, we can see the selfish nature of humans as for there on a need they are disturbing the ecological cycle but in turn, nature never becomes selfish similar to the women as the nurturer in human beings though the patriarchy try to oppress and destroy their identity but still women never end to be the nurturer. The standing of women hasn't changed over time either. Both in patriarchal and matrilineal social structures, violence against women is a very common occurrence. Violence can be physical, mental, social etc. They are consistently disregarded and seen negatively by the dominant male group. Also, women are treated as the 'other' in the society. Hence my research aim is to deal with the text in a detailed manner and become the voice for nature as well as women.

There are timeless and modern concerns raised in the books highlighted above. The people of Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh have never known a time when they weren't confronted with problems like conflict and brutality, death and devastation, oppression and exploitation, anxiety and the crisis of identity. People on the periphery of society (such as women, children, and the elderly) are disproportionately affected by these problems. When it comes to groups of men, they are constantly at the mercy of the stronger ones. The postcolonial ideas of limited access to resources, relocation, loss of a sense of belonging, and identity crisis are all vividly brought to life in these chosen works. Similarly, the choice texts make clear the ecological devastation that humanity has wrought in the name of technological progress. Several accounts illustrate the degradation and devastation that humans have inflicted on the natural world. The interconnectedness of nature and women, and their dominance and subjugation under a patriarchal social order and capitalist economics, is graphically shown in these chosen works. The reading selection emphasises the critical need of preserving the earth's ecosystem and giving women their rightful place in society. It is hoped that by studying this body of literature, readers will gain a deeper understanding of ecofeminism, commit to respecting women and the environment, and ultimately undermine the power structures that uphold patriarchy.

To begin, critics hold the belief that in societies, women and nature have both been seen in the prevalent social paradigms as being of lower value than other entities. The fact that these two occupy the same position creates a

relationship between them. The history of oppression, to which both women and the natural world have been subjected, is the second factor that links the two. Thirdly ecofeminists scholars believe that women's material reality is such that when nature is damaged women's lives are also altered. Considering that feminist and ecological theory both strive towards egalitarian, non-hierarchical systems, eco-feminism is an attempt to unite the two schools of thought. And last but not least, there is a link that can be characterised by references to spirituality. Scholars and sceptics alike have shown a significant amount of interest in the Western concept of spirituality.

Ecofeminism's strength is in its recognition of the interconnectedness between women and the natural world, which affects them on several levels (biological, reproductive, discriminatory). One of the most important academic, philosophical, and even practical approaches to tackling environmental issues is ecofeminism. As a result, the theorist believes that ecofeminism is a movement which states that nature and women are interrelated so to protect nature then they have to protect the rights of women.

The advocates of this view believe that the only way to stop environmental deterioration is for people to abandon their patriarchal attitudes and behaviour towards both women and the natural world. Ecofeminism advocates for the eradication of patriarchy, the centrality of women's lived experience within the ecological movement, and the necessity of the ecological movement's close connection with regional and global women's liberation movements to achieve women's liberation; it values diversity and difference, actively incorporates the most recent advances in ecological theory alongside feminist principles and combines with regional and global ecological movements to bring about women's liberation.

Ecofeminism is still one of the most exciting developments in radical environmental theory, despite its flaws. Ecofeminism can overcome its problems, such as its reliance on women's biological functions to create a connection between women and nature, it is uncritical privileging of women's experiences, its inaccuracy in designating ideal female characteristics, and its retrograde political effects. Ecofeminism is not only a critique of dominance; it is the knowledge we need right now because it places value on women, people, and the nonhuman world; it asserts a broad conception of knowledge that embraces good science along with the knowledge that emerges from experience, culture, and creativity. While it does have its flaws, ecofeminism is a significant development in feminist philosophy and an endorsement of women's agency. Ecofeminism, in a word, is a blessing and not a burden. Ao's works often explore the complex relationship between human beings and nature, highlighting the importance of environmental sustainability and the inherent value of non-human life forms. Additionally, her writings frequently challenge patriarchal norms and offer a nuanced portrayal of gender dynamics. Through her literary works, Ao demonstrates a keen awareness of the interconnectedness between gender and the environment. She recognizes that the oppression faced by women is often mirrored in the exploitation and degradation of nature. By intertwining these themes, Ao's works reflect key aspects of ecofeminism. Furthermore, Ao's writings emphasize the need for a more harmonious relationship between humans and the natural world. She encourages a shift away from exploitative and hierarchical systems towards a more compassionate and sustainable approach. This resonates with ecofeminist principles, which advocate for the recognition of nature's intrinsic value and the adoption of ecologically responsible practices.

While ecofeminism may not be explicitly discussed or labelled within Ao's works, her exploration of gender dynamics and the environment aligns with its core principles. By examining the themes and messages conveyed in her writings, one can discern a resonant ecological and feminist consciousness, emphasizing the need for justice, equality, and harmony among all beings.

Ao uses female characters' feelings of insignificance and effacement to highlight women's inherent submission. As long as she doesn't stand up for herself and demand her rights loudly, women will always be attractive in our male-dominated world. The tone of many of her works hints that the marginalised role is not the most fulfilling for women, even if no explicit protest is voiced. The author's perspective on life is informed by her gender and the experiences she has had up to this point in her life. An uninhibited woman serves her loved ones without expecting anything in return. Because she has learned to set no limits on what she gives, she is completely unselfish in her giving. This poem conveys a profound sensation of anguish, the kind that is endured without surrender and faith in relief. Up until her last breath, the lady does what is expected of her. Though she is born "to bear the burden, to hold the seed, and feed every other need hers," she is seldom the centre of attention and is rarely cared for. There is a feeling of sadness at the thought that man would always have "a timeless dominion" over women. In this way, the author seems to be protesting the injustice of societal expectations, which tend to view women only in the position that they fulfil best out of habit and compulsion. Temsula Ao is vehemently

opposed to any actions that will lead to the deterioration or destruction of natural resources. Major themes in her work "Lament for the Earth" include the destruction of natural riches and the redirection of nature's path to satisfy the excessive greed and luxury of contemporary man. There is an abundance of natural beauty, natural riches, and wildlife in northeastern India. The region of Nagaland is very lush because of its location there. Ao feels terrible sorrow as she sees the merciless act of deforestation, which threatens the native flora and animals of her country.

Poetry written in English in the Northeastern Indian region reflects ecological awareness substantially and also follows the desire for roots, a theme in postcolonial literature. Recent research on a few of Tamsula Ao's poetry has shown their relevance. The destruction of India's natural environment has been a widespread problem for quite some time. However, only K.N. Daruwalla, A. K. Ramanujan, and a few others can be found in the canon of mainstream Indian poets who have briefly expressed ecological concerns in their poetry. Even though northeast India is a biodiversity hotspot, the area has been rapidly experiencing ecological imbalance. As a result, the poets of the area have a distinct ecological focus. This scholarly endeavour, which takes a canonical approach, is very commendable, as it significantly advances the practice of theory in the present day and its reflection in postcolonial literature. Tamsula Ao, via her poetry, discusses the symbiotic link between female dominance and natural dominance. Her poetry reflects her ecofeminist viewpoint and environmental consciousness, which manifests itself in a variety of ways, including a glorification of nature on the one hand and a protest against the exploitation of the land on the other. With these considerations in mind, Ao's accomplishment as a leading Indian ecofeminist poet from the northeast area starts to take form. She mostly focuses on women's stories and the degradation of their surroundings. Some of Ao's poetry shows how women and nature share dominance, challenging longheld ideas about women's roles. This study concludes that ecological concerns surface prominently in her writings and that she finds her poems a suitable medium to create awareness against the dangers of environmental degradation because she sees herself as a woman and writes from the perspective of a woman about the experience of women in nature and the devaluation and exploitation of both women and nature. Ao writes about the sanctity of trees and how they are essential to human life, particularly for future generations, in her poetry. This is why, as an ecofeminist poet, Tamsula Ao stresses the need of appreciating our planet, upon which our very survival depends

Bibliography

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/id/eprint/19693/>

(n.d.). Retrieved from

https://books.google.co.in/books?hl=en&lr=&id=As1FDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR5&dq=related:z1mCsPtMu9AJ:scholar.google.com/&ots=CxX5HGKdxX&sig=NRGvsffodjyh9aQ6M6Z3jATuNnE&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

(n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/345324?journalCode=signs>

(n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/004056397603700228?journalCode=tsja>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://wgs.eku.edu/what-feminism0#:~:text=Feminism%20is%20an%20interdisciplinary%20approach,social%20theories%20and%20poli%20cal%20ac%20vism>

(n.d.). Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Base_and_superstructure (n.d.). Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Base_and_superstructure

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://study.com/learn/lesson/poli-cal-power-sources-achievements.html>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.zacharyfruhling.com/philosophy-blog/foucaults-concept-of-power-knowledge-explained>

(n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education#:~:text=According%20to%20some%20theorists%2C%20it,is%20what%20educated%20persons%20have.>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/bourgeoisie>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge>

(n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://www.binaagarwal.com/downloads/apapers/The%20Gender%20and%20Environment%20Debate.pdf>

ao, t. (2006). these hills called. delhi: zubaan. Retrieved from

https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/These_Hills_Called_Home/0HjL2d9vawC?hl=en&gbpv=0

ao, t. (2006). these hills called home : stories from war zone (Vol. 1). delhi, delhi , india : zubaan.

Retrieved april 28, 2023 , from

https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/These_Hills_Called_Home/-0HjL2d9vawC?hl=en&gbpv=1&pg=PA1&printsec=frontcover

