



Exploring Postcolonial Ecofeminism in Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* and
Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

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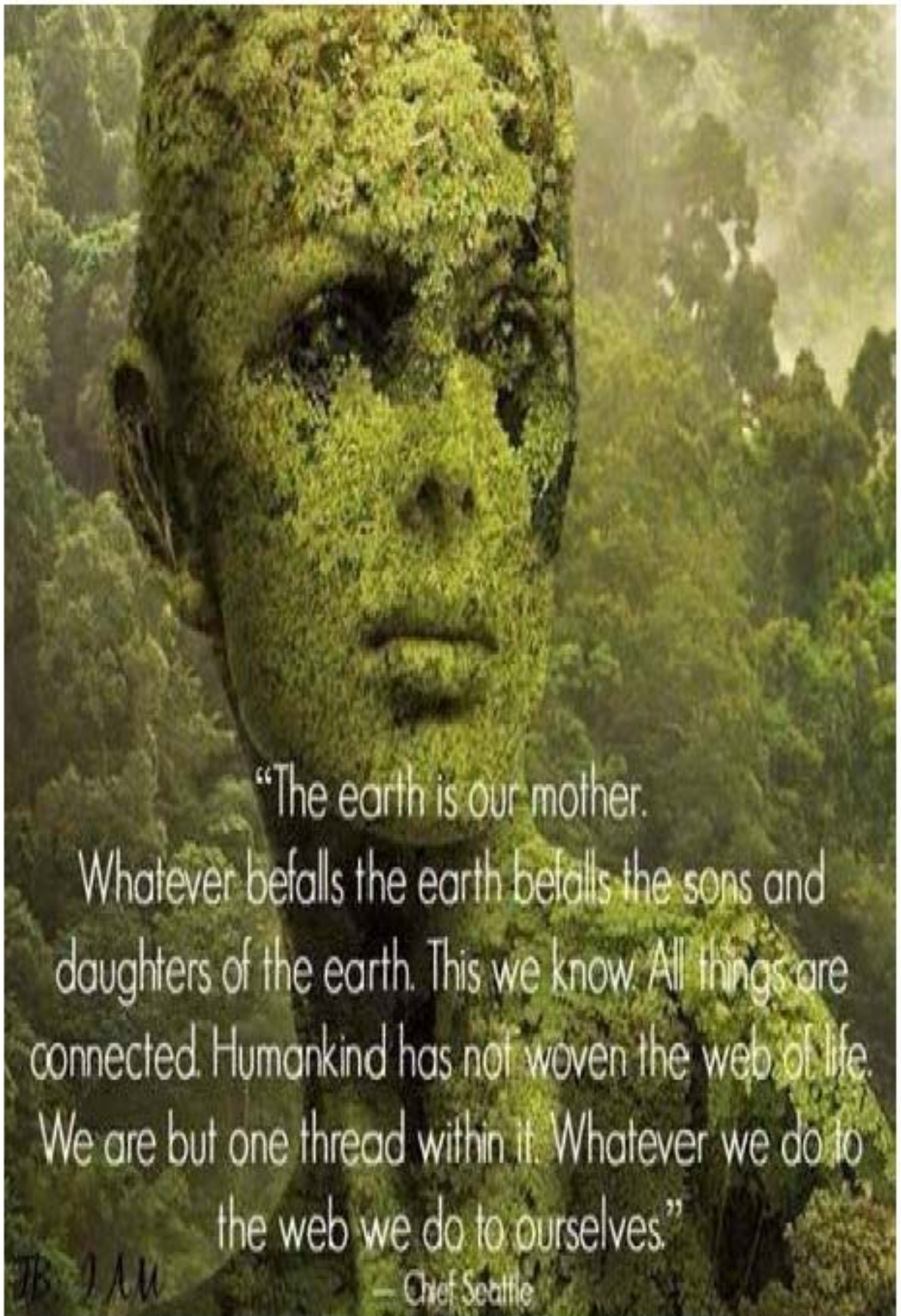
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Abstract

This paper examines postcolonial ecofeminism in Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* and Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. Nowadays, ecofeminism is considered as one of the major disciplines in literature due to its active association of bridging the gender and environment conspicuously in ideological terms. The ecological crisis due to the massive environmental destruction and the oppression of women in male dominated society adjoin the fact that race, class, caste and gender are intrinsically interconnected. In this context, this paper explores how the concept of ecofeminism forms the ideologies of postcolonial regions, specially South Asian and African-American spheres. Rukmani, in *Nectar in a Sieve* represents an ordinary feature of a South Asian rural woman, who maintains an outstanding bond with nature, ultimately turns into the victim of the postcolonial industrialization. On the other hand, Pecola in *The Bluest Eye*, is the victim of racial discrimination in the American society. Therefore, this paper takes an ecofeminist approach to highlight women identity crisis and seeks to outline how nature is degraded by humans and women are oppressed by men. This paper also presents a comparative analysis between the ecofeminist features of these two novels and shows how the identities of the protagonists are shaped in the postcolonial capitalistic grounds.



“The earth is our mother.

Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons and daughters of the earth. This we know. All things are connected. Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web we do to ourselves.”

JB JAU

— Chief Seattle

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Introduction

The term ecofeminism exposes the connection between the lives of women and nature. In broader aspect, it represents the merged idea of being a woman means being natural, her works and duties towards her surroundings including familial circumstances. In this present era, nature is largely being explored in academic writings, media discourses, different kinds of social schemes, national and international diagrams to deal not only with nature or physical environment but also with all those patterns which are closely associated with nature. Throughout the centuries, human beings try to explore their connectivity with the nature considering different critical aspects. Some of them are needed to be scrutinized in a greater attention since the negative rates of change of those aspects are solely responsible for the materialistic shift of the society and culture. The severity of this change has become more exponential in the ever-changing ground of postcolonial studies. Under the consequence of the emerging field of ecocriticism, the environmental phiz of colonialism and globalization are progressively spearheaded. As a matter of fact that earth-centered consciousness of humans immensely chose the form through the increasing environmental argument of global warming as well as global destruction of internal ecological sphere, in the long run, which caused poverty and migration. However, these sorts of research and discussions have been flourished as a highly spirited vessel in literature. As an important organ of literature, the thought ecofeminism in marginalized portions links gender and environment preeminently in ideological terms. The increasing objection for the massive environmental destruction and the fight for existence in the third world countries affix the fact that gender, class and caste are inwardly interconnected. Hence, defining the notion of postcolonial ecofeminism from its own perspective is not enough to perceive it entirely, rather it is necessary to explore how this idea shapes multiple discourses

in the post-colonial territories not only in South Asian but also African-American communities. In this context, this study focuses primarily on women identity crisis merging with the association between degradation of nature by humans and exploitation of woman by male dominance. Therefore, in the purpose of analysis, this research examines two different novels: One is Indian writer Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* and another is African-American writer Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. Through an ecofeminist view, this study also emphasizes how the identity of two female protagonists Rukmani and Pecola from two different novels is framed with concepts of race, class, gender, colonialism and neo-colonialism in a patriarchal society. To elaborate all these issues distinctly, this paper is divided into four chapters. The first chapter initially explores the idea of ecofeminism and puts forward the possible theories and its association with the *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The Bluest Eye* and then, presents the historical background of it to bring out that when the concept of ecofeminism basically emerged and came to the throne of literature as a context of discussion. After that, to exhibit the picture of the political and socio-economic background of the societies of Rukmani and Pecola, chapter two reveals the notion of postcolonial ecofeminism along with the history of Indian colonization and the new world imperialism. Chapter three applies an ecofeminist approach on *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The bluest Eye*. The last chapter of this study presents a comparative analysis between these two novels. Finally, this study draws a comprehensive conclusion based on the overall analysis of these two novels in terms of postcolonial ecofeminism.

Chapter- One

Idea of Ecofeminism and its association with the *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The Bluest Eye*

Ecofeminism is a new-minted idea; the rise of this concept as a social and political movement is more than 20 years ago. It is also called as ecological feminism that recounts some specific philosophies which combine feminism with ecology. The term is known to have been introduced by the French writer and feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne in 1974. She used this term ecofeminism for the first time in her book *Le Féminisme ou la Mort (Feminism or Death)*, where she expresses society's contempt and disrespect for women is equal to negligence for nature or environment. Unlike many other feminists, ecofeminists come forward to highlight the issues and manners human beings disregard and repress as well as it centers on the subjection of the nonhuman world by human beings. Greta Gard as one of the leading scholars of ecofeminism remarks that "Ecofeminism is a theory that has evolved from various fields of feminist inquiry and activism: peace movements, labor movements, women's health care, and the anti-nuclear, environmental, and animal liberation movements. Drawing on the insights of ecology, feminism, and socialism, ecofeminism's basic premise is that the ideology which authorizes oppressions such as those based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities, and species is the same ideology which sanctions the oppression of nature". In accordance with Mary Mellor, The concept ecofeminism is spontaneously a movement which shows the imminent relation between the collapse and exploitation of environmental periphery and the domination and oppression of women in a male-governed society. She asserts, "Ecofeminism is a movement that sees a connection between the exploitation and degradation of the natural world and the subordination and oppression of women. It emerged in the mid-1970s alongside second-wave feminism and the green movement. Ecofeminism brings together elements of the feminist and green movements,

while at the same time offering a challenge to both. It takes from the green movement a concern about the impact of human activities on the non-human world and from feminism the view of humanity as gendered in ways that subordinate, exploit and oppress women". (Mellor 1997, p.1).

According to Mellor, in ecofeminism, two doorways of the link between women and nature can be marked off, one is a forthright connection, a material or mental affinity. As she mentions, women get on nature by their anatomical functions like menstrual cycle, childbearing, giving birth or by some extra sensorial perceptions such as tranquilizing and protecting values. This way of mental and physical affinity is verily visible in Rukmani, in Markandaya's creation and Pecola in Morrison's brainchild. Both of them contain a female body and give birth of children and also struggle for their identity. These facts of ecofeminism are quite similar to radical or cultural feminism which is valued to be considered as subjective or ideological in perspective of advancing the exclusive values or sensibilities of women. The second way, Mellor discusses, meets the conditional affinity between the repression of women and the domination of environmental orb. The contiguity of servitude of women and nature gets through at a chronicled coherence and that is western patriarchal capitalism. This affinity is also perceptible in Markandaya and Morrison's several female characters in these particular novels, who are the subjects of western patriarchal capitalist treatment. This very substance of ecofeminism is mostly familiar to socialist feminism. Somehow many of these feminists got heavily involved and they worked with great force during the ecofeminist movements.

Vandana Shiva, a leading Indian ecofeminist, claims that women have a very distinct relationship to nature through their regular communication which has been neglected. She says "Women in sustenance economies, producing and reproducing wealth in partnership with nature, have been experts in their own right of a holistic and ecological knowledge of nature's processes.

But these alternative modes of knowing, which are oriented to social benefits and sustenance needs, are not recognised by the 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". (Shiva 1988, p.23). From Shiva's point of view, the emancipation of the socio-economic world of women from male dominated condition is not possible to attain without a coexistent effort for freedom of all people of this world from the powerful capitalist and patriarchal standpoint. Markandaya's representation of the subaltern resistance is shaped in Rukmani's body and mind which creates a multi-potential standard. Her strength and virtue get stuck in the Indian patriarchal mind. In this regard, ecofeminism differs from the remaining theories of feminism and follows the hierarchical understanding of the western world. Shiva mentions, alternatively, it is seen that rather trying to exceed this division of hierarchy, a good number of women just mixed up this idea. As a result, women can be recognized as overhead than men.

Ecofeminism naturally synthesizes the oppression and subjugation of women with that of the environment and also endeavors to establish that woman and nature assuredly convey a primitive relationship from the very beginning of mankind. The conjecture of ecofeminists implies that this relation is expounded by conventional maternal values such as, nurturing, reciprocity and cooperation. These are existent in women and nature at the same time, as they are unseparated by their analogous background of exploitation by man ruling Western society. Professor Karen J. Warren, a notable ecofeminist scholar, discusses that the western patriarchal world and the people of it, and their primary values, notions, ethics and attitudes have been constructed by a dictatorial patriarchal theoretical ground. Though it aims to rationalize and continue relationship of repression in commonplace but it connotes subservience of women in

particular. In Morrison's projection of Pecola's father Cholly, whose background shows his humiliation by the white people in his adulthood which is truly pathetic, but, when we look on the lives of Pecola and her mother, it seems more pathetic than any other male characters in the novel. Their beliefs and attitudes are verily constructed by the western patriarchal standard. According to Warren, dualistic, dictatorial and hierarchal form of the idea of patriarchy has constantly injured women and nature. As it has been conventionally said that women are the symbol of nature, Warren also highlights how both entities are intertwined by their characteristics. She asserts that women are 'naturalized' particularly when they are defined in animal terms like cows, cats, foxes, chicks, serpents, bitches etc. Pecola is dehumanized by this reviling comment like "nasty little black bitch" in *The Bluest Eye*. Likewise, nature is feminized when she is tempted, raped, mitigated, controlled or subjugated by man, which is embodied in Pecola's rape and submissiveness. Also nature is feminized even when she is idolized, apotheosized or worshipped by men, which meets the Indian leading religious belief of goddess. If the superiority of man over nature is ensured, then nature's analogous element woman also has to go through the same level of dominance as nature goes through. But sometimes there are disagreements among some feminists and ecofeminists. For example, Rosemarie Tong in her book *Feminist Thought*, discusses that women's contribution to childbearing and child-rearing is basically a strength for women. "Radical-cultural" feminists agree with her but "radical-libertarian" feminists decline this very idea. Similarly, there is a conflict between "cultural or psychobiologicistic" ecofeminists and "social-constructionist" or "social-transformative" ecofeminists regarding the issue of women's knowledge and consciousness about environmental affairs and their involvement with nature.

Along with some notable feminists, Simon De Beauvoir is a mentionable one who evaluates the connection between women and nature. But, she also insists women to go beyond their relation to nature for the sake of outdoing their position as a “second sex”. She thinks, women’s identity as a second sex naturally has come from their biological fact. She also expresses that women are not physically strong enough like men; women’s association with childbearing and childrearing responsibilities and their biological features do not carry any good for them. Like de Beauvoir, Sherry B. Ortner, another feminist also anticipates that the inseparable bracing between women and nature is implicitly an adopted sense by every society. She views the society considers women as in-between of nature and culture because of their bodily structure, house-holding tendency and typical feminine spirit. She believes that the ongoing position of women in the society is not possible to change unless the society shifts from the outlook of women as in-between. Though Ortner and de Beauvoir admit the association of women and environment, on the other hand, they deliberate that the liberation of women is not impossible to achieve without achieving the liberation of nature. Because they emphasize on casting aside the affinity of women and nature in order to surpass women’s position as subservient being in the society. But, the radical-cultural feminists who support environmental movements like Mary Daly reject this idea. They recommend embracing the bond between women and nature. Unlike de Beauvoir and Ortner, Daly emphasizes women’s reproductive power, endurance, nurturing tendency like nature and considers these features of both entities as instinctively tied with each other. Indeed these characteristics of women are not socially developed, rather these attributes are women’s biological and naturally constructed sensibilities. The chain between female entity and natural world is not being declined but the question arises when this chain is being bypassed. In *Nectar in a Sieve*, the condition and experience of

Rukmani in the urban space is not pleasing at all. Even after repeatedly suffering from natural disasters in the village life she must return there, where she can mingle herself with every piece of natural elements, which unveils not only physical but also a strong psychological tie between nature and Rukmani. This can be considered as an inherent characteristic of women and nature. Though nature-centered economists are claimed to decline the notion of the illiberality of women and nature and also the supremacy of man and culture, as a substitute, they argue that female and natural entities are not inferior to male or cultural being, rather both entities are superior in some extents. They stress it by granting the conventional virtue of women without considering the traditional virtue of man. Therefore, they believe by fostering this idea, the social bonds and affairs could be more balanced and restful.

The classical religions are deeply structured by the prospect of patriarchy. The people in the society of *Nectar in a Sieve* are the followers of Hinduism; some stories of Hindu mythologies reveal the condition the important female characters had to go through under the male dominance. For example, the exile and trial by fire (Agnipareeksha) of 'Seeta'. And, Morrison's *Pecola* grew up in an American society where the religious dominance profoundly relied on Christianity. Ecofeminist Rosemary Radford Ruether believes, the freedom of women and the liberation of nature is a combined frame. Her book *Ecofeminism- The challenge to Theology* investigates the structure of the theological mode of Christianity from very ancient spring to its development and sets forth a challenge to the standard of the man dominated social form and also talks over about the reformation of this theology from an ecofeminist point of view. In this context, it can be relevantly asserted that all the ancient religions are densely constructed by the worldview of patriarchy, which is also reflected in the society and treatment of Rukmani and Pecola.

Dorothy Dinnerstein and Karen J. Warren try to highlight that the dualistic threat to devastate the balance of human society is a socially constructed idea. They think that abandoning the western dualistic concept is a fundamental necessity, to abolish all sorts of stress and subdual of human and nonhuman beings who/which have been disregarding since early of the human society. Therefore, this eruption must be started with the reformation of sexist dichotomy. The dualism is fairly responsible to generate the class distinction in *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The Bluest Eye*. Warren thinks that women and nature, men and culture carry specific needleless meaning in a capitalist patriarchal society, which is nothing but creates social division. But in a balanced society, that could certainly be different. Socialist/materialist ecofeminism views environmental problems as “rooted in the rise of capitalist patriarchy and the ideology that the Earth and nature can be exploited for human progress through technology” (Kaur 2012, p.191)

By considering all these affairs, ecofeminism as a social and political movement creates a ground by juxtaposing the exploitation of environment and the domination of women. Ecofeminists show a paradoxical feminist view of conventional patriarchal system of connecting materials to the environment. Janis Birkeland presents about ecofeminism in *Ecofeminism: Linking Theory and Practise* (1993) “ecofeminism is a value system, a social movement and a practice, but it also offers a political analysis that explores the links between androcentricism and the environmental destruction. It is “an awareness” that begins with the realization that the exploitation of nature intimately linked to western man’s attitude toward women” (Wright 2010, P.128). The multiple definitions and viewpoints of ecofeminism echo the idea of dualism, the ultimate impact of which is the hierarchical construction of social pattern that stays in-between of dominance and possession, which is the focused ground of ecofeminism. It implies that all people in the society go through a binary and hierarchical build of thought and social practices.

These binary practices are the substance of the concepts of social class, race, caste, spatiality and neo-colonialism. One portion of ecofeminism excoriates the dualistic system of white patriarchal form of western society which is very significant to mark off. According to Greta Gaard “dualism such as self/other, man/woman, human/animal, culture/nature and white/non-white, which construct white male human identity as separate from and superior to the identities of women, people of color, animals, and the natural world” (Gaard 1998, p. 9). Ecofeminism hypothesizes that there will be a continual scheme of practicing patriarchy until dualism inhabits as a prevalent basis of a social structure and justification. Griffin uses the phrase “divided against” to imply the societal condition of humanity due to dualism and all other binary forms of oppression and inequality which must be dispelled for social and ecological prosperity. Ecofeminism urges to knock down all these negative and prejudicial splits which are nurtured by western dogmas.

A brief background of Ecofeminism as a Movement

Aldo Leopold is an American ecologist and environmentalist who coined the term and theoretical framework “The Land Ethic” in his essay “A Sand County Almanac” (1949). It is an archetypal text of the environmental movement which describes a new relationship between human and environment and also embeds the basis for the new conservation movement. He conveys his view of land ethic based on ecological perception which backtracks the concept of human-centered environmentalists and emphasizes the maintenance of sound and self-energizing ecosystems. “A Sand County Almanac” was the first methodical writing of a comprehensive ecological approach to the environment. Leopold’s theory suggests human beings to regard environment and maintain a friendly relation with it, for the sake of benefit for all.

A book *Silent Spring* was published in 1962, written by Rachel Carson, where the writer signaled Americans about the condition and possible future of the environmental sphere which tends to care about of environment. Because of the extreme use of toxic chemical, lethal weapons and many other adverse dynamisms, the environmental ambience (including air, water, and wildlife) started being contaminated which could lead ecosystem towards a precarious and dangerous future in a way. Due to the ongoing global warming, animal farming, reduction of ozone layer and energy conservation, an ecological consciousness took shape among humans which directed them raising an environmental movement particularly in the United States and later on, India and other parts of the planet.

Although ecological concerns were developed by few writers almost 50 to 60 years ago, day by day the concept of ecofeminism started to thrust the consciousness of many feminists. If this study looks for the practical background of ecofeminism, it can be said there were legionary factors involved to evaluate the field of ecofeminism as one of the major fields in literature. Different revolutions throughout the centuries for developing human civilization caused a noticeable damage in non-human elements. In the cost of those elements, humans had been able to invoke the economic as well as social revolutions. The ecological crisis due to those revolutions posed a great threat for the world which ultimately caused to evaluate ecofeminism as a hot topic among environmentalists. In the continuous process of modernization and industrialization, ecological domain also chose the path of pollution. For meeting the modern facilities in the society, it became inevitable to exploit the natural resources more, whereas the amounts of industrial as well as human wastage were increasing alarmingly which most of the cases discharged to nature. The ecological crisis arose when the usages of resources, as well as the waste disposals were beyond the ecological capacity of the natural ecosystem. Different

kinds of natural disasters were the ultimate results of this crisis. In the same way, women also had been experiencing threats in different steps of their life in the male dominated modern society. Nobody cared or considered women as the valuable part of society which is convincingly comparable with nature. The condition of this crisis was further worsening in the third world countries, especially after the postcolonial era which will be discussed in the following chapter of this study.

As a matter of fact, modern agriculture and industrial wastage destroys the soil fertility. It affects severely not only the quantity but also the quality of the agricultural products since residual chemicals remain in the products which are causing a chain reaction to the human body, especially the women body. It causes infertility of women and hinders the natural way of breeding. In the modern world, the women are getting more chances to go outside work like men. In this way, they get exposed to the industrial environment more than before which increases the possibility of suffering from industrial pollution. This also might cause great harm to the body and mind of the women involved in the production. Consequently, this directly affects the quantity and quality of population reproduction. Modern free world promotes women's right by providing them more freedom to work as they wish. At the same time it increases the risk factor of not being mother or proper reproduction system which imposes a social deprivation to them, especially in the third world where being mother is the only socially imposed goal of a woman. All these facts are true for Rukmani, the heroine of Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* in which the society faces severe ecological crisis. As a consequence of all these crises, ecofeminism has emerged as an active field to focus on the solution of ecological problems from a social gender perspective. Though the women have started to walk with the pace of modernization the oppression and dominance also go with the same pace. Race, class,

caste discriminations also follow the same motion. Conspicuously, black women are the great victims of these discriminations. And, these impacts are avowedly shown in Peola projected by Morrison.

Though the consciousness arose among the eco-friendly people and women in many days ago but the last several decades were seen as the time of an immense interest of women's movement as well as ecological movement among the feminists. Most of them debated that the objectives of both these movements actually strengthened and energized each other and eventually got attached to the advancement of the outlooks and demeanor which are not relied on the structure of oppression or dominance. In *New Woman New Earth* (1975), Rosemary Ruether wrote "women must see that there can be no liberation for them and no solution to the ecological crisis within a society whose fundamental model of relationships continues to be one of domination. They must unite the demands of the women's movement with those of the ecological movement to envision a radical reshaping of the basic socioeconomic relations and the underlying values of this [modern industrial] society." (Keller & Ruether 2006 p.1111). According to Warren's overview, during the following period, ecological activists plus environmental feminists wrote about it which supported the key point of Ruether. Warren writes that there are very familiar links between feminism and environmentalism, recognition of which is a precondition for the progress of women's and the ecological movements.

Though there are so many issues and arguments but the people who supported ecofeminism as a movement came to a single point of philosophy that emphasized on saving environment from the enormous exploitation by humans which is eminently similar to saving women from the oppression by male dominance. Based on this belief, the movements were started throughout the world. Some feminists, female-right activists and some dedicated

environmentalists continued the rhythm of those movements. In the late 19th and also in the early decades of the 20th century, women fought and supported to protect wildlife, food, air and water. American professor and ecofeminist Susan A. Mann remarks in her writing that women in the United States provided powerful effort and played significant role particularly in conservation and preservation of wildlife. They also took part in the activism which exhorted fresh food, pure water and clean air in the central city life. Her work particularly emphasizes more on the means and approaches how the environmental decomposition invades the way of living of women of color, their attempts and struggles against environmental apartheid. In Morrison's novel, we can see Pecola's obstructive condition which clarifies the original status of black women in postcolonial American social strand. Nevertheless, to unfold the problems and suffering of all types of women, they introduced a rule based on the idea that the minor or peripheral groups must be involved in the activist and theorist spheres as well as they must be engaged in the relative discussions of environmental issues.

Among many other ecological movements, some remarkable movements are The Anti-military movement occurred in Europe as well as the United States, the Chipko movement in India led by Shiva and some other feminists and activists, Green Belt movement in Kenya and also there in many other countries which have been marked as "ecofeminist" movements. These movements endeavor to illustrate the root-levels of power and dominance and dig out the association between women and environment. The people directing the movements assert to contribute to a perception of the interdependent interaction of the control of people and environment by class, race and gender. From 1970s to 1980s, ecofeminism came out in the western part as a consequence of peace, feminist and ecological movement. As it has already been mentioned, the term ecofeminism was coined by Francoise d'Eaubonne in 1974, but later

this concept was promoted by Ynestra King in about 1976. After that, it was fully formed as a movement in 1980. “Women and Life on Earth: Ecofeminism in the 80s” was the first ecofeminist conference held in the United States that accentuated the bond and cue between feminism, militarism, health and ecology. It was succeeded by the structures of some special actions conducted by women which are called as Women’s Pentagon Action, a feminist, anti-militarist, anti-nuclear war weapons group. In her book *Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature*, Warren refers to Ynestra King to demonstrate the connection between sexual assault, militarism and environmental exploitation and also to explain how these distant elements are eventually connected in ecofeminism. Ynestra King as one of the leading ecofeminists who thinks that the term “ecofeminism” is the combination and harmonization of theory and practice which concerns about the natural phenomenon of this planet and its destruction by the corporate giants and nuclear eradication from the military combatants. This element ultimately echoes the masculinist concern which conveys the declining tendency to female right on their organism and sexuality standing on different types of control and political power to hold its way. Women always protested against different kinds of devastations like nuclear threat on human and nonhuman lives, environmental annihilation, technological reproductions and many other destructive attempts. But whenever women raise their voice against those activities, eventually they discovered the band between patriarchal domination and outrage against women, more particularly the people who are colonized, non-white, and immigrants along with nature. As Karen Warren states: “Ecofeminism builds on the multiple perspectives of those whose perspectives are typically omitted or undervalued in dominant discourses, for example Chipko women, in developing a global perspective on the role of male domination in the exploitation of women and nature. An ecofeminist perspective is thereby...structurally pluralistic, inclusivist,

and contextualist, emphasizing through concrete example the crucial role context plays in understanding sexist and naturist practice”. (Merchant 1995, p.7). The world basically supports and gives importance to those perspectives which are predominantly powerful. Thus, it is effortlessly apprehensible that without succeeding the liberation of nature and saving it accordingly, the liberation of women will not be materialized. Therefore, despite many reduced circumstances in different phases, ecofeminism endeavored to track down the right way with the aim of obliterating the degradation of nature and patriarchal form of dominance.

Chapter- Two

Postcolonial Ecofeminism

Since the aim of this paper is to seek postcolonial ecofeminism expressly, it urges to portray the pictures and evidences to project how postcolonial way of advancement has tremendously influenced the exploitation of natural world and degradation of women which are intertwined in a single plexus. To understand this fact, first of all, it is necessary to identify what is Postcolonial ecofeminism? Postcolonial ecofeminism is an idea and belief which is one of the ongoing discourses in literature but still at the rising stage. In point of fact, both the postcolonial ecocriticism and ecofeminism, as disciplines are not attentive enough to address the discourses of postcolonial ecofeminism appropriately. The adhering disciplines of postcolonial ecocriticism and ecofeminism have been controlled by the traditional Euro-American perspectives till this period. Nevertheless, both areas require to admit “the “double-bind” of being female and being colonized” (Campbell 2008, p.92). However, postcolonial ecocriticism and ecofeminism can be examined in an integral interpretive view, in which it must be pointed out, how the violence of women and absorption of natural realm are unified with the concept of race, class, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Postcolonial ecocriticism usually highlights the order and interconnection of postcolonial and ecological issues. Postcolonialism is claimed as congenitally human-centric by some critics from the stream of deep ecology and environmental affairs are subordinate to other stuffs which have chronically fomented to the racial discrimination. On the other hand, ecocriticism chooses to unveil the ecological and bioethical adherences on one side and reproaches for overpassing the universal history of colonialism on the other side. In the discourses of purity, women, who are colonized, have been portrayed as “repeatedly naturalized as objects of heritage to be owned, preserved, or patronized rather than as subjects of their own

land and legacies” (Sheoran 2015). Therefore, to challenge the existent imperialist tones and colonial treatments, it is essentially significant to put postcolonial and ecological issues in one container which also includes women as their essential segment.

To demonstrate the concept of postcolonial ecofeminism explicitly, this research necessarily requires to mention the postcolonial countries, which can be considered as the pioneer in the path of evaluation of ecocriticism as academic discipline. The history of environmental activities in the postcolonial countries in Africa and South Asia supports this claim, the growing environmental consciousness among which were the key to emerge ecocriticism as academic discipline. As an evidence of this claim, it is worth mentioning the name of a Nigerian author and environmental activist and Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was executed in 1995 due to his actively campaigning and fighting against the demolition of farmland and fishing waters by the oil giant companies of western world such as Shell and Chevron. These companies established a neo-colonialist era which has been severely backed-up by the local governments. The sacrifice of Ken Saro-Wiwa has not been highlighted as it should have been. His writings are not even included in the relevant literature of western dominated environmental studies. Just some man ruling Anglo-American decrees were the “prioritisation of “extrahuman concerns over the interests of disadvantaged human groups” as well as the marginalization or even omission of both “feminist and ecofeminist literary perspectives” (Kaur 2012, p.188). Correspondingly, an initiative of saving forests for their own livelihood, the women of the mountain regions in India started to protect their forests by themselves from the deforestation for commercial purpose sometimes even at the cost of their lives, which is known as famous Chipko Movement in 1970s. The “conceptualization of this movement” was organized due to the thriving commercialization of the state and impoverishment of the Garhwal region in India, and

provincial women were affected by the allowance of state authority which empowered private leaseholders about cutting trees to fabricate cricket bats. As a result of this approval, an enormous deforestation was executed by the contactors, and due to this fact the most withering flood and destructive erosion appeared in 1970. After that, the women of that region had been forgathered to create this movement which has achieved an emblematic success and is considered as a highly recognized paradigm of environmental movement in neocolonial India. This movement not only gained the recognition of women but also worked as the vaccine that enables them to move forward.

The Colonial impact in Indian Society

Few questions arise about the female principle which is supposed to work out well and about to reclaim and rediscover the feminine principle. Most of the ecofeminists analyze the disappearance of female principle from the societies by exemplifying the ultimate impact of colonization among Indians which completely destroyed their own thought, knowledge and culture and also overturned the traditional goddess value of women. Though it is uncertain about the starting point of this social disaster, still most of the ecofeminists like Shiva and Mies condemned the colonization and continuation of the very effect that colonization is responsible for demeaning the values regarding nature and women. Evidently, colonization severely changed the whole course of ecological and participatory ways of social knowledge which subsequently undermined the women's social values.

In the issue of capitalist patriarchy, Shiva and Mies castigate this pattern and its practice for shifting the culture and traditional life style of people as well as the natural surface of the third world countries towards inversion. This capitalist patriarchal system of the western world is

considered as the endowment of colonization to the less developed countries which is the track of enrichment and path of the newly developed way of living. Because of this sidelong development of capitalism, Shiva and Mies criticize it validly and call it “maldevelopment”. Professor Dr. K.N. Shoba discusses in his article that the system of economic growth is built in such a way that eggs on the maximum profit from third world countries such as India, Bangladesh or many other African countries. The affairs that included in the researches and investigations of ecofeminists of the third world or under-developed countries are : i) the use of natural resources; ii) the labor and exertion from these countries; iii) the preferential glance of some principal monetary institutions like World Bank, IMF; iv) the world economy is controlled by the corporate sector and some powerful countries; v) the indiscipline and corruption of the free trade market; vi) the destruction of horticultural sector by corporatization; vii) the diverted role of health, chemical, fertilizer field and etc. Shiva believes, the western propagation of this development is also the sign of masculinist structure of advancement which is basically the headway of wealth and capital hinged on the extinction of different kind of valuable resources grown by women and nature. Hence capitalist patriarchy can be termed as another version of domination of women and environmental ambience by first world’s industrial or machine-made culture. In prevalent nature of patriarchal form, women are equivalent to nature and men are regarded as culture. According to Nancy Hartsock, the matrix of these dualisms, later on, runs up a constitution of power, “a way of looking at the world characteristic of the dominant, white, male, Eurocentric ruling class, a way of dividing up the world that puts an omnipotent subject at the center and constructs marginal Others as sets of negative qualities” (Kaur 2012, p384). This does not signify only nature and gender, it actually implies the groups of colonized and ignorant people. Women and nature are subordinate to men and culture together with the dualistic

position of owner and servant is applicable to colonizer and colonized. Therefore, we can say that nature, female and colonized are inferior to culture, male and colonizer. From the beginning of the seventeenth century and then onwards, the African, Indian, the Pacific and the Americas territories were colonized by Europeans which brought off a colonial revolution greatly in ecological circumference. The system the colonizers followed in revolution was not well-disposed for native people's modes, rituals and the way of living. The complex shape of European elements including human and nonhuman bodies were excessively disruptive for colonized people as they (colonizers) came with the sorted resources to establish their trade on the global market and fix a pillar in the new lands.

The possession of Indian Forest by British Colonizers

If this paper looks into the depth of the sub-continental Indian colonization in order to dispose the colonial treatment towards the natural perimeter, it is relevant enough to discuss how the British colonizers occupied Indian forests to accomplish their interest and establish the military power in the Sub-continental land. Since the local people were not highly educated and mostly unconscious of their properties and natural resources, the colonizers took this advantage to incessantly hold down their woodlands. In order to do that, they changed the local law of authority, local needs, and the system of local knowledge and also changed the concept of forest to a harmful industrial meaning. The western patriarchal representation of natural forestry as "Commercial or Scientific Forestry" bluffed the locals whose lifestyle completely depends on the forest by cunningly reducing the ecological contents, the ultimate effects of which causes the increase of poverty level among those people. In most of the cases, the local rural people were responsible for deforestation. Because they were not fully concerned about their natural resources. Because of the modernization and commercial demands, the ultimate outcome moved

them to the large-scale forest extermination. The women who earned their livelihood primarily depended on the forest was substituted by the profit-making economy of British colonialism. They did not initiate to colonize the forests because of their scientific knowledge or management on forestry, rather they did it simply to set up their authoritative military need and power. An initiative was taken after fifty years of extreme forest obliteration by British dominion only because of their commercial favors. It was taken to pull up the unrestrained exploitation of woodlands by colonizers. The first Indian forest act (VII of 1865) was approved by the Supreme Legislative Council and it sanctioned the government to notify the forest and wastelands as treasured. By that legislation, it was actually the inception of 'scientific management' of forests; it grew up genuinely to the official demarcation of the degradation of forests and of the rights of native people to forest procreation. For few years, the government authorized the large spectacle of the forest without facing any difficulties. They easily managed the former authority for a limitless period and went through a way that local demands were also fulfilled. In many regions, they also convinced people and administration in a way that forests was the hindrance of cultivation, especially when they considered some land as the source of small profit for the colonizers.

The colonial impact in the village of Rukmani

The imbalanced deforestation by the colonizer mildly impacts the economic interest of those categories of society, who are basically the women and tribal groups, the livelihood of whom completely depends on the balanced ecosystem. Their continual effort to survive considerably developed a natural instinct among them to protect the environment. Especially, soil and water stabilization, and the provision of food, fodder, fuel, and fertilizer are the most valuable assets for those groups of people. Moreover, in the present world, numerous obstacles encountering third world women are the consecutive fate of colonial mergers between the first and third worlds. Colonization is considered as accountable not only for subjecting third world women but also demolishing and scrounging the natural resources which are divine and earnestly preserved by the third world native community. Rukmani, after her marriage, happily learns the chores of peasants and passionately embraces the life and works as a peasant woman. Usually the rural people manage their food and expenditure from tilling; most of the families in *Nacter in a Sieve* are also involved with this occupation. But they start encountering the natural disasters and losing their land gradually due to the impact of utmost industrialization. The principles of village trade are influenced by the neo colonial rule. The landowners seize the crops or money from foodless indigent farmers who cannot even manage their everyday meals. The young boys start working in the factory for prosperity leaving their patriarchal profession of tilling. After being abounded by the tannery Rukmani's two sons cannot get back to their land, they leave village for working in the tea garden, which create another scope of being exploited by the neo-colonial concept of development.

The colonial background of the United States

All these discussions presents the colonial history of sub-continental India based on its culture and natural resources. But what about the narrative of New World imperialism? In this part, this paper would like to focus briefly on the colonial and racial condition in American culture.

The literature of New World imperialism is full of sexualized contents which become the imperialist practice by the European colonizers. The sexual nature of the land and its discovery were the highlighted things on this imperialism. The level of eroticization was so severe; the colonizers described the shape of the earth as a woman's breast, sometimes as a virgin land. They preferred to describe each and everything which routed around women and sexuality. The concepts of this New World imperialism also encouraged the sexual exploitation of black women. As a result, the black women have become the subject of dual-oppression for being black as well as women. In modern America, the rates of sexual abuse experienced by the black women are really high. Some critics claimed that these high sexual abusing rates of black women are mainly rooted in the colonial imperialist framework, which keeps continuing as it becomes an imperialist practice. Even the colonizers tried best to give these ill-practiced a scientific view, in which they considered the black people as subhuman and inferior in sexual nature. These ill-scientific finding further escalated the rates of dehumanization of black people by the whites. The slave owners started to escalate the rates of sexual abusive treatment of black women by validating these using scientific findings. The sexual and reproductive properties of black women are their only social value. Different white-based literature and ill-scientific exploitation continuously encouraged the sexual exploitation and rape of black female slave by white slave owners. Even in this modern era, the American concepts of hyper-sexualized black

woman encourage others to do those kinds of inhuman practices, which were the subjects of colonial era, while women of all colors are reduced to sexual commodities by a patriarchal system.

The postcolonial status in America

After the Colonial era, the severity of racism and ethnic discrimination escalated abruptly in the United States. All the socio-economic privileges and rights were sanctioned for the white Americans, especially the Anglo American, which were not equally granted for all the other communities such as: Native American, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latin Americans. This had been one of the noticeable issues over the period of time extending from the 17th century to the 1960s. Even among the whites there were those who belong to non-Protestant immigrants, particularly Irish, Poles and Italians, had been gone through xenophobic exclusion and other forms of ethnicity. In a word, all the resources and socio-economic power had been controlled by the Anglo Americans. Rests of the groups no matter their skin color were the subjects of discriminations. These kinds of racial discriminations were formally banned in the mid-20th century after experiencing the social disasters by the white Americans. Racial stratification continues to occur in noticeable margin during the Great Migration when the African Americans started to move from Southern states to more affluent northern states. Perhaps the purpose of that movement was to get better life style and equal socioeconomic privileges. But their dream remained as a dream since they had been gone through the same kinds of systemic racial stratifications as they experienced in South, especially in job and housing sectors. However, these sorts of afflictions and discriminations are still continuing in the societies of the United States even in the neo-colonial period. Therefore, all these issues eventually indicate the inferior position of colonized people in the entire world. Similarly, the people as female,

colonized, and colored encounter more ambivalent experience than people as male, colonized and colored. In this manner, Postcolonial ecofeminism would put the order in modern patriarchal form as nature> female> colored> colonized, subordinate to culture> male>white> colonizer. Postcolonial women are increasingly being affected by the colonial politics of oppression and exploitation and nature is the only witness of their suffering.

Colonial excoriation in the Pecola's community

This is not a new phenomenon in literature portraying incest as the partial eventuality of being colonized which is particularly imprinted in black literature. Not only Morrison but also Alice Walker, Shani Mootoo and some other novelists project the protagonist as being raped by her father. They show rape and incest as the colonial legacy; even after being liberated from the web of colonization, colonized people do not forget to practice those deeds they obtained from colonizers. Pecola's father Cholly is also raped by the white men with their flash light and gun while he was having physical relation with the girl he loved in his adulthood. His contaminated sexuality with aversion and outrage is also the gift from white colonizers. Beside these, Pecola's illusive desire for the blue eyes, young black girls' obsession with the white image of Shirley Temple and overall inferiority complex due to their black skin tone all are made by the colonial attitudes of the American society. The black people of Pecola's community mostly are uneducated, poor and belong to working class. The particular light skinned group known as colored who run after the fake desire of being included in the sect of colonizers. Their attempt is to embrace the Eurocentric values of materialism and leave own cultures and communities. White people of the social sphere stay with the colonial belief on slavery of black people who never get the opportunity of playing the role as master; they only work like bound slave. The churches of Pecola's community are blown with the religious hypocrites like soaphead. And, the

capitalist society doesn't even pay any glance to the victim who rambles by losing consciousness at the edge of a deeply occupied metropolis. Even no one feels responsible to seek the reasons behind that and does not give a try to resolve the problems generated by race, class and other forms of discrimination.

Chapter- Three

Ecofeminist exploration of Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve*

Kamala Markandaya (1924-2004) is the literary name of Kamala Purnaiya Taylor who has secured her place as one of the distinguished Indian women writers in English, more specifically, as an Indian novelist and journalist. Markandaya designated herself as an Indian emigrant even after a long period of her relocation to Britain, just after Indian independence. At the same time, she also started writing, particularly novels, Markandaya, as a diasporic writer was intoxicated with the clash between East and West or custom and innovation. She also reflects the urban and rural prospect of India which shows the ongoing condition of Indian people's socio-economic lifestyle. Markandaya, in her writing, portrays not only socio-economic, but also socio-cultural and spiritual spectacles of Indian societies. Her novels basically deal with the subjects of social relations, instability, impoverishment, starvation and exploitation, and her first published novel *Nectar in a Sieve* also reveals such issues but adds the concern about women in relation to nature as well. It was published in 1954 and was a top selling literary item, which was specified as "American Library Association Notable Book" in 1955. This novel reflects on the transitional period that Indian people went through, particularly women, after the independence. It shows how they encountered newly developed world and adopted the social and economic changes. Markandaya represents how women are awfully

dominated and marked down in the male-prejudiced communities. Likewise, another marginalized entity nature has also been persecuted, depreciated and brutalized by the provincial subjection of industrial governance. Hereafter, women and environment are degraded, exploited and depreciated in the same pattern of patriarchal ascendancy which has become a crucial topic in the South Asian peasant portions, especially among those women who took initiative vindicating devoutness for women and environment.

As Markandaya examines inconsistency, perplexity and hardship of working class women and environment, *Nacter in a Sieve* is an exhibition of how the women and nature are bonded, and how they are vulgarized and bridled by the patriarchal system and the forerunners of urbanization due to their unprivileged status. In this novel, Rukmani, the protagonist, Rukmani's daughter Ira and nature are delineated as inferior entities. Rukmani's involvement with the garden and the sources of earning livelihood are densely lodged with the nature as she cultivates in her land and works hard to survive. During that time, political and socioeconomic condition in India was highly unfavorable due to poverty, hunger and starvation. The reasons behind these man-made disasters were communal disruption and political rampage. As a result of industrialization in the working class ground, people like peasants, laborers, tribal groups and the people from lower and lower-middle class were unbearably affected by economic dread of famine which lead them to embrace the lowest level of working condition. Markandaya used these types of political and socio-economic references in order to set up the major theme and perception of disregarded entities which worked as the essential ingredients of *Nectar in a sieve*. It is manifested in the novel that Rukmani is obliged to walk with the same pace of promptly transferring India symbolized by onward economic mobility, organization of central power and industrialization. But Rukmani is opposite to her nearby residents who were earnest enough to

clasp the change rapidly by overlooking the previous lifestyle though ultimately they surrender to the organic form of lifestyle. Especially, Rukhmani cannot take to the impetuous transformation of the social and economic bounds in her country. Considering all these aspects, it can be said that *Nectar in a Sieve* is a chronicle melodrama where the entire story revolves around Rukmani's effort to reminisce and get back to her root that she deeply felt about. She misses severely the very connection with her community, land and above all the simple ways of rural life. To negotiate with modernity and the complex way of urban life, she repeatedly struggles and compromises even with her inner mind. The advancement of Rukmani as an adaptive and modern woman dismisses her state as a typical village woman which has been discussed in the traditional readings. These readings do not emphasize her discussions with the Kenny, the foreign, white-skinned doctor, through which Rukmani improves her social critique and develops her own views on India's future. However, by considering all the aspects we can evidently assert that there is an ecofeminist portrayal on Rukmani's character which highlights the relationship between rural women of the global south and the environment. We can notice that her closeness with land through her act of gardening which has been represented in early ecofeminist writings. This closeness is somewhat deemed due to her severe dependence on the land for survival. Moreover, her adoption of a young boy strengthens the ecofeminist view since it can be seen as a land based community ethic that emphasizes it as a beyond-human connection.

The novel *Nectar in a Sieve* follows the same pattern as one of the earliest postcolonial novels, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, where the traditional pattern of rural village life is drastically changed by an external element. Following the same pattern, the novel *Nectar in a sieve* highlights Rukmani's relationship with the land and her environment in the very beginning

of the novel. Rukmani's oration about the early days of her conjugal life: "While the sun shines on you and the fields are green and beautiful to the eye, and your husband sees beauty in you which no one has seen before, and you have a good store of grain laid away for hard times, a roof over you and a sweet stirring in your body, what more can a woman ask for?" (Markandaya 1954, p.6). The simple way of her description, in particular discovering the link between the beauty of the field and the beauty her husband discovered in her, represents a complete and joyous conjugal way of life. The novel begins with young Rukmani's marriage to Nathan, a lessee farmer. We can see in the early days of Rukmani, when she moves to Nathan's village, Nathan's only aim is to impress Rukmani. In this endeavor, he promises her by grabbing some grain as "Such harvests as this, you shall not want for anything" (6). Thus, the commitment of better life is portrayed in the competent mentality of her husband's confidence on his land, which established a symbolic relationship between the farmers and nature. Subsequently, the farm soon becomes the integral part of their conjugal life. At the beginning of the novel, the development of a sheer bonding between Rukmani and the nature is shown. This bond starts to strengthen further after her marriage with Nathan. So, we can remark that the relation of Rukmani with nature that most of her daily activities are environmentally driven, which arises an ecological consciousness in this novel.

It is observed that *Nectar in a Sieve* implicitly exploits the importance of nature by considering it as an independent entity. The importance of nature is portrayed in the Rukmani's extravagant narration during the journey to her husband's house. The gentle breeze feels to her as the sound of different birds. Despite making journey by cart and arriving at a mud house, she embraces all the things in a blessed way due to the natural entities. Farkhanda Nazir argues that Rukmani's love for nature actually does not indicate her equality to nature. Rather Rukmani tries

to establish nature as independent and essential entity by developing her association with nature. Another noticeable point is that both the women and men have the same expectations from nature. It can be found in Vandana Shiva's explanation about the historical and colonial reality that feminine principle is the only way to explain peasant and ecological societies. Consequently, men are also considered as feminine, still the superiority of men over women is common. Men in the colonial writings have been characterized as destructive while women as constructive by developing a sheer bonding with the nature. Therefore, we cannot but consider the nature or environment and women as the most active entities rather than considering them as passive. Similarly, Rukmani is such an Indian woman who knows how to sacrifice for family and rejoice within a tiny, poor circumstance. She is a symbol of traditional Indian mother and housewife who just cares for family from morning to night. Despite being literate Rukmani blames her fate when she gives birth of a baby girl as her first child which signifies her stereotypical mentality as a South Asian woman, who wants to produce sons for their familial well-being, because they can help the family by working in the land. Her tears for being a mother of a baby girl is the remark of weakness and intense dejection or loss of expectation as a girl cannot help her father to continue the agricultural labor on the land. It shows, a woman is an inborn burden, an unexpected being in the Indian society. She craves for sons and finally succeeds by giving birth of six sons in a short time. On the other hand, her only daughter Ira gets married to an impoverished farmer at the very early stage of her teen age and initially cannot be able to give birth to any child. Consequently, the patriarchal rule forces her to return to her parents. But, Rukmani as a mother cannot behave harshly with her daughter; she cures her daughter's infertility by consulting with Dr. Kenny without Nathan's concern. Even after being cured from barrenness, she cannot be retaken by her husband as her husband has already received another

woman and Rukhmani's husband Nathan supports his son-in-law's decision. Ira stays as a burden for her parents since they are poor and lower class people in the society which ultimately heads her towards prostitution. In spite of all these troubles, Rukmani's effort and motherly affection is always mercurial to maintain the family's bond. In that sense, Rukmani can be called as the luster of a gloomy sky or the arbor in a burning desert. As a third world woman, another example of her typical sentiments is visible when she fears about losing her husband Nathan, because of the rumor about his extra-marital affair with Kunthi. Kunthi is another female character in the novel, who works as a prostitute. As Nathan is the most precious thing to Rukmani, she strongly fights to protect her husband's prestige and to save him from any deceiving attempts of that lady. Her insecure mind narrates, "I need you, I cried to myself, Nathan my husband I cannot take the risk because there is risk since she is clever and I am not". This shows her devotion and dependence on her husband and the unconsciousness about her right. She is the figure of submissiveness throughout the novel as she takes in the fate tied with her husband and shares all her well and woe with him until he dies. We can see in the novel that Rukmani, after giving birth of her daughter Ira, is condemned for a six years gap of producing the next child, more specifically for producing no son for her husband. In spite of Rukmani's literacy, she learns to be prejudiced in a patriarchal society. She goes to Dr. Kenny to treat her infertility without her husband's concern. She does the same for her daughter Ira, when her husband abandons her because of her infertility. As a stereotyped South Asian woman, Rukmani has to maintain the cycle of patriarchal practice, like calling her husband only as a "husband" and she is not supposed to call by his name Nathan. In her narration, "My husband, whom I will call here Nathan, for that was his name, although in all the years of our marriage, I never called

him that, for it is not meet for a woman to address her husband except as “husband”” (3). This sort of social system actually forces postcolonial women to become subordinate to men.

Markandaya, through her mastery of words implicitly explains the similarity between nature and woman in terms of their biological roles of reproduction. To exemplify this fact, it can be observed at woman’s maternal state and then nurturing state and finally, at the supporting state for their children, the life cycle of which is same as one seed goes through: first seed, then seeding and becomes plant which becomes support of future seeds. Reproduction ability is considered as the primary task of a woman in Rukmani’s society. That’s why the early stage infertility of a woman like Ira does not get the proper treatment as she is supposed to get from her husband. So, the similarity between women and nature can be illustrated based on the reproduction, childrearing and nurturing tendency, which ensures the resemblance of these two entities.

Along with the interpretation of biological connection of women and environment, most of the early ecofeminists tried to illustrate the connection between oppression of women and nature by using the historic associations of women with nature. One of those writings tried to explain this women-nature connection as spiritual ways and very much rooted in bodily experienced (Tong 260). Supporting this context, reproduction metaphor has been used as a way to change Western value system by Starhawk. Unlike those early ecofeminist writings, Markandaya, in this novel, took into account all the direct experiences that Rukmani and her surrounding went through. For Rukmani’s role as safeguard as nature, this novel can be analyzed from the Shiva’s point of view about the potential of rural women of the global south to act as a safeguard of the land. During Shiva’s entire life, she always opposed the application of Western ideas of development, the idea of which can be found in other ecofeminist writers like Carolyn

Merchant. According to them, the general perception of the Western development ideas is completely based on division and reduction. Shiva's *Staying Alive* and Merchant's *The Death of nature* are the sources of these discussions. Shiva's idea of maldevelopment and its impact on rural people, especially women and their lives put on an extra degree to the context of women, body and nature. She displays the negative impacts of western concept of development and betterment of nature which was initially welcomed by enthusiastic peasant people, particularly women in Sub-continental India like Kunthi and Rukmani. Shiva believes that division and reduction role of Western ideas clearly destroyed the creative or intrinsic force of nature. According to Shiva, this intrinsic force is also feminine one if one looks at it from particular religious point of view in India in which nature connotes as 'prakriti' or life force. These traditional features of Indian women with relation to nature are authentically portrayed in Rukmani's relation to her land. Shiva notices a secret vow among the women in south to keep the nature or this creative force safe. This secret vow is also noticeable in Rukmani. From the bio of Rukmani, it can undoubtedly be asserted that the creative force existing in nature encourages her to be proactive and adventurous in her conjugal life.

From the postcolonial ecocritical points of view, one of the noticeable elements of Markandaya's novel is the way her texts first offer, and then resist. As in *Nectar in a Sieve*, there is an understudy phenomenon about resistance where she depicts nature as simply a sacred figure. Rather, there exists confusion and ambiguity mixed with an appreciation or love for one's surroundings. For example, the explanation of the farms bring-forth the picture of a folksy, fertile, countryside land that is calm and quite, and always nostalgic for all the features that one perfect village farm includes which a sense represents the positive side of the nature. On the contrary, she also depicts the negative or downsides of country life or the nature. The

contradictory description about nature can be found in the texts as well where the devastated form of the nature is sketched in the explanation of storm-ravaged farm.

The argument between the pastoral and anti-pastoral is a very common theme in postcolonial literature. The ecocritical study adds more spices on this argument which helps to perceive the devastated loss due to the colonialization. In this novel, the reflection of this loss is portrayed by using the land-grabbing mechanization phenomenon of the tannery, the ultimate effect of which is flood and drought. These disasters ultimately take everything away from the villagers. Even the tannery is also built in an open field, where the village children were used to play in. In Rukmani's words: "They had invaded our village with clatter and din," she recollects, "had taken from us the maidan where our children played, and had made the bazaar prices too high for us" (4). There is an echo of a pattern of division and privatization of land which has been the 'basic-mantra' or first step of initiating colonization, according to Shiva and Mies. The intrusion of this industrial colonization also brings its characteristic features of observing everything based on their commercial values. Basically the freedom of women has also been intruded with the presence of male strangers along with capitalism. For this reason, Rukmani always keeps her daughter Ira close to her. It is arguably illustrated in the novel that not only the freedom of people around Rukmani but also the freedom of animals has been disrupted due to this industrialization. So, this industrialization or in other word neo-colonization in the form of tannery is solely responsible for destroying the balance of ecosystem.

In the novel, Rukmani's affection for the adopted son Puli resembles her fondness of nonhuman beings which is clarified by her words when she parallels them by mentioning that the street children act beastly around food due to extreme poverty. This parallelism between children and animal is the evidence of Rukmani's ecological prospect.

The speciesism idea that the tannery possesses by getting profits from the non-human animals is one of the main reasons for social disaster in Rukmani's community which she strongly condemns. The outcome of this disaster generates an unknown fear in Rukmani's mind for her daughter safety. Rukmani's fear for her daughter's safety can metaphorically be explained through the feminist theories of Carol J. Adams and Josephine Donovan, where they highlight the subjugation of women and the slaughtering of non-human beings which are often the case of direct physical suffering at the hand of men. Although Markandaya emphasizes more on the suffering of women and nature, but the killing of Rukmani's son by the watchmen at the tannery generalizes this suffering that this is not only about gender discrimination but also for class and caste vulnerabilities at the society.

The tannery of Rukmani's village can be seen as the post and neo-colonial outcome which creates a large-scale impact on different levels of people and extensively shakes their way of living. It does not bring positive change in everyone's life rather it makes people even more sensitive and defenseless. The impact of this helplessness and shaking condition of peasants is also observed in the regional marketplace because the industrialists welcome them to join and work at the factories and at the same time make the rural people separated from land by demotivating the dependence on agricultural living. It is seen that before founding the tannery, Rukmani used to live by farming in the land and sell the crops or vegetables in the local mart. Because of the growing prices of the goods the small farmers like Rukmani do not get their proper profit from the capitalist traders who improperly control the trade of buying and selling. Thus, the ultimate upshot of the establishment of the tannery is the eradication of poor rural people of the village, specifically those who do not have their own land for farming. The sons of these small peasants like Rukmani leave the farming and start working at the tannery as paid

labors with the prospect of a better life. But their fate does not follow their mind. So Rukmani and her husband cannot be able even to pay their dues, as a result of which the landowner follows the path of selling their land to the tannery owners. Because of that fact Rukmani cannot get rid of her fear of being inactive. Just because of her patience and mental strength she can repress her anger. Thus, the tannery did not shut all the possibilities of living; it creates the spaces for new employment for the villagers. Most of the third world women like Kunthi, Rukmani, and Janaki were impassioned to be flourished by the tannery. Rukmani and her husband start dreaming for better days when their son Arjun and Thumbi begin to work there. Likewise, the sons of other peasant families are also employed in the tannery; for example Janaki's sons believe that working in the tannery is better than working in the land. In these aspects, it is shown that the emergence of urbanization is not entirely sinister; it causes prosperity of many people in multiple ways. But, the condition of some people, basically working class people like Rukmani, face hindrance to continue even an ordinary. They are compelled to pay the high rent for their land and struggle with the adversity of environment.

After analyzing so many aspects, it is noticeable that Rukmani's identity crisis arises when she is compelled to leave her home and go to another place and also loses the possession of her land. Gurupreet Kaur refers to NityaRao: "land is a key element in the identities of indigenous people. Many of their struggles for recognition begin with land, which takes multiple meanings" (Rao, 2008). She also refers to Stephen Chan for the term "condition of abjection" who defines it as mental and tangible uprooting like apartness, ouster of any people from their home. Kaur refers to demonstrate the actual condition of Rukmani due to the impact of losing her land. And the land signifies the general idea of home, one's own identity. People usually feel confident when they are assured about their status, as they can dream for something. But people,

on the other way become hopeless without the root and identity which is primarily conjugated to land. It is a fundamental fact that the land plays an immense role for rural women as the source of their hope, opportunities and possibilities which also provides the consciousness of their root and identity. For these particular classes of people, without a piece of land no one can give them a commitment for a secure life or financial safety. By possessing an asset as land means their courage and reliance is also grounded with it. Bina Agarwal also agrees with this argument as she points out that “for many, it provides a sense of identity and rootedness. It is an asset that has a permanence that few other assets possess.” (Agarwal 2002, p.2). This assertion of Agarwal becomes more visible particularly when Rukmani becomes alone after her husband’s death in the city and suffers from lack of food and minimum financial safety. This implies that if women are nurtured in such a way that they could be self-dependent, they would get their own identity unlike Rukmani’s who suffers to run family after her husband’s death. For Rukmani, there is no other way except developing her own identity so that she would not face the same fate as Old Granny, the death of whom due to abject poverty arises this possibility. Thus, Rukmani as a literate woman tries to negotiate with the modern aspect of her surroundings with an appeal for identity. By befriending Dr. Kenny she takes support and treats her and her daughter’s infertility. And becoming mother is also an identity of a woman which resembles nature. In this aspect, women and land are equated here as they both can be fertile or unfertile for cultivations and children are like crops of the land. It is proved that land and women are the submissive and productive objects which are used and farmed by the men. Therefore, the tannery symbolizes the new identity of rural working class people as the result of capitalistic or neo-colonial development of the country. It is also depicted in the novel like that, after so many natural

disasters, the homes which made by natural objects, land and crops are ruined and displaced but the tannery still remains as the new developed identity of third world women like Rukmani.

Ecofeminist approach to Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

Toni Morrison (1931-), original name Chole Anthony Wofford, is a distinguished personality in the history of Afro-American people, especially in the ground of American literature. Morrison is a Nobel laureate and also a Pulitzer Prize winning Afro-American novelist, editor and Professor. She is remarkable for her epic theme, vivid dialogue and for largely circumstantial African-American characters. *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula*, *Song of Solomon*, *Beloved*, *Love and Mercy* are among the best known novels of her. Morrison was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993 as the first Afro-American. She was born in Lorain in a working-class family and is the second child of her parents out of four children. Her parents were gifted story tellers which greatly influenced her to write. Morrison's family migrated to Ohio to escape Southern Racism which enriched her father's collection of Afro-American folktales. Her father used to tell those folktales which were mostly the story of bitter experiences that the blacks had been gone through. To most of the critiques, those stories are the foundation of Morrison's writings, which is reflected on her each and every work.

Morrison's writing career began from an informal group discussion of poets and authors at Howard University. The sole purpose of this group discussion was to know and get feedback about the individual works. In one of such discussion, she discussed about a black girl who desires to have the bluest eyes. Later she developed this story as her first novel, *The Bluest*

Eye, which becomes one of the noteworthy works in American Literature. From that awesome starting of her writing career, she did not have to look back. Through her mastery of writings, she started to write masterpieces one after another, the recognition of which is noticeable in the number of the awards she received. In her writings, she powerfully brings into light the legacies of displacement and slavery that have fallen upon the Afro-American Community. Her works got noticeable acceptance among psychoanalytic critics, postcolonial critics and feminist critics. She has been able to establish new literary theories for getting the big picture of society and race through the characters of her novels. Through her works, she gains much attention from all communities which are not only influenced by the histories and traditions of African American Literature but also mastered by western culture. Thus, both the reversion of traditions and the procreation of new theories are accommodated in her writings.

Morrison's works are mostly investigated based on the issues of race, gender and identity while paying less attention to ecofeminist concern although her works are full of natural depictions. Unlike traditional American environmentalist, she illustrates the bonding of nature with the women based on the African American view, giving importance on the impact of culture over nature. According to Morrison, there exists a universal bonding between African women and nature. Nature has been the victim of ill-exploitation since the beginning of the human civilization. In the same way, African American women have been oppressed and rolled for a long time by the white dominance and nature is the witness of this torment and humiliation as both of them are not treated as essential entities of the human civilization and thus being objectified and treated as others. In addition, Morrison also expresses her special concern about African American women's spiritual ecological situation. She also shortly demonstrates different dimensions of spiritual trauma out of the friction of the white people's prevalent culture and

historical difficulties left by slavery. In a word, the sufferings of African-Americans from the white capitalistic society as well as from their own community are portrayed adroitly which has been highly accepted and recognized as state-of-the-art representation in the American Literature. *The Bluest Eye* is a suitable creation of examining these issues which display an eleven years old black girl named Pecola, who suffers from inferiority complex for her skin color and overall appearance. The narrative revolves between the viewpoints of Claudia MacTeer, (as a child and adult) and an anonymous narrator.

Analyzing the ecofeminist contexts of Tony Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, it is inevitable to highlight the dual oppression: patriarchal oppression of women and human domination of non-human nature. More specifically, it is necessary to focus on how women and nature are intimately connected to each other, belonging to a subordinate position within capitalist America. This novel is all about the suffering of black children, particularly female children in the American contexts where race, gender and class discrimination play an important role to shape their daily life as well as their existence in white-supremacy domain. To understand the actual contexts of oppression that African men and women had gone through, it is necessary to know how meticulously the colonizers oppressed them which can be found in other literary works written by some renowned authors. One such novel is Morrison's *Beloved*, where she explains the suffering of black people as slaves who are equated to animals, chained like domestic pet and beaten for working like domestic animal. The trails of slavery of Africans passage from Africa to America and the level of suffering remains the same and in some cases increases by some margin. For replying to the ultimate query about the reasons for this discrimination, the race factor appears as the central issue while gender and class add extra flavor of bitterness. Black women and children are compared to the animals of low-consciousness, sometimes even lifeless

or unconscious beings. So, the white people use the similarities between blacks and animals as a weapon to humiliate as well as marginalize. Professor Srma Nandy refers to Steve Baker who thinks that the study which concentrates on searching the similarities between humans and animals is opposite to anthropomorphism (Garrad 143). The comparison between human and animal actually fulfills the satirical purpose. Nonetheless, the ecofeminists views seek to identify how women and children are paralleled to animals. It is obvious to say that most often humans experience better to raise animals rather than humans. This obvious observation can be found in *The Bluest Eye*, where human beings feel difficult to raise another human being rather they feel comfortable to raise an animal. Mrs. MacTeer has the same feelings when she learns that her daughters are playing nasty. Here, the adult is in the authorized position of possessing dominance whereas the children are in marginalized state for being powerless. From this, it can arguably be asserted that the animalistic discrimination is not only the task of mainstream but it can also be found within the marginalized section itself. The mother scolds her children as: “What you all doing? Oh. Uh-uh, Uh-huh. Playing nasty, huh? ... “I’d rather raise pigs than some nasty girls. Least I can slaughter them!” (Morrison 1993, p.30). The comparison that she made about her children is actually the outburst of her poverty and inhuman labor for her family’s livelihood enforces her to make such unconscious blabbering over her own daughters. As Mr. MacTeer earns their livelihood from coal mining and Mrs. MacTeer does hard work to raise their daughters healthily, it reveals the association of nature and their living. Their prop and subsistence is largely relied on the natural resources. In this sense, the lives of these girls are linked to the nature which exposes an ecofeminist feature in the novel.

Black children are compared with all the animals that signify the ugliness and dirtiness as like “Pigs”. There have been emerging a group of blacks named as “colored” who consider

themselves neither blacks nor whites. Deploying these sorts of filtering, not only the white oppressors but also the members of the “colored” groups are proud of themselves for being superiors to the blacks. These groups are basically created by the white oppressors to rule over the entire blacks by not involving them directly. Though this sort of people stay in their community but they desire to live like their oppressors by forgetting their own culture and community. The pride of colored families in the community knows no bound. Geraldine is a social conscious aristocratic black woman in *The Bluest Eye* as well, who overdraws the fact that she holds a better position than other black people in the society and also more civilized than any other black women in her community. Being the parts of glorious colored groups, Geraldine strictly forbids her son Junior to play with Black children. According to her, the black children are dirty and loud while the colored people are neat and clean, which can be found in this statement: ...“his mother did not like him to play with niggers. She had explained to him the difference between colored people and niggers. They were easily identifiable. Colored people were neat and quiet; niggers were dirty and loud. He belonged to the former group: he wore white shirts and blue trousers; his hair was cut as close to his scalp as possible to avoid any suggestion of wool, the part was etched into his hair by the barber” (87). So, there exists an established concept that Blacks is the symbol of ugliness or dirtiness which metaphorically associated with pigs. This kind of established concept is accountable for developing the idea that Blacks are born to be subjugated by the oppressors from white community as well as from their own community. To narrate the oppression from own community further, the author states: “The line between coloured and nigger was not always clear; subtle and tell tale signs threatened to erode it, and the watch was constant” (87). The colored boy Junior does not care about teasing and molesting girls because of the power he feels from his colored group as well as the

psychopathic joy he feels when making them yell and escape and be gratified if they are in trouble. For the same psychopathic joy, he used to play with the Black boys because “He wanted to feel their hardness pressing on him, smell their wild blackness, and say “Fuck you” with that lovely casualness. He wanted to sit with them on curbstones and compare the sharpness of jackknives, the distance and arcs of spitting” (87). Geraldine’s son Junior bullies Pecola by accusing her for incidentally killing his mother’s favorite cat and Geraldine abuses Pecola by uttering “Get out,”... “You nasty little black bitch. Get out of my house.”(92). Basically, this type of rarefaction and supremacy is the eventual effect of racism and colonialism. It seems to be the eternal gift from colonizers who set the mind of the community that everything possessed by the whites are standard way of living. This illustrates how the colonizers divided the community in two distinct parts-Colored and Blacks. The former one is used to dominate over the later-one. These affairs are the concerns of ecofeminists who sees these inequalities still are killing the consistency of the planet which must be eradicated.

To signify the ecofeminist concern further, it is worth mentioning the unrealistic desire of Pecola in Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye* for blue eyes. “A little black girl who wanted to rise up out of the pit of her blackness and see the world with blue eyes” (174) is the heart-touching statement of her little mind. The severity of her desire is so intensified that she loses her sanity for blue eyes. Her helplessness after being victim of racism as well as patriarchy can be equalized with the natural world. Being black becomes a curse for her. Only due to this physical quality, she has been despised and ignored by all. The teachers, the respect of who are sky-touching to her, avoid her by forcing her “to sit alone at a double desk” (45). The bitterness she experiences from the teachers, the candy shop keepers and the classmates is comparable to non-

human nature where both are ignored and are not being treated as the essential entities in the patriarchal set up.

Vandana Shiva emphasized on the biological view of human reproduction and industrial view of ecological consciousness. Maintaining the same stream, Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* portrays the women destiny with nature. In addition to that, it also explores the effect of colonialism in the form of racism where the dual-oppression a black woman goes through for being a woman and black. Toni Morrison, in her explanation brought the dandelion, a wild flower, to discover the connection of woman with its nature. Being a common wild flower, nobody gives as much importance as it is supposed to get. But to Pecola, it is too beautiful and not understandable to her about people's negligence of its beauty. This negligence is fur more noticeable when the garden of Miss Dunion is totally cleaned by uprooting all the wild plants including the plant of dandelions, the effect of which is definitely ecologic imbalance. The understanding of Pecola about uprooting them comes later which can be found in her words "They are ugly. They are Weeds" (Morrison 1993, p.50). Because of their ugliness and wilderness, they have been cleared from the field. It is worthy to compare Pecola with the dandelions because both of them are unwanted and ultimately obliterated. Pecola is unwelcomed by the whites and her own community for being a black girl. But they have used her as much as for odd jobs discerned for the black home maids. The dandelions are also going through the same treatment as the head of the dandelions are thrown away while the leaves are used for making the dandelion soup and wine, stated in Pecola's words "Hunkie women in black babushkas go into the fields with baskets to pull them up. But they do not want the yellow heads—only the jagged leaves. They make dandelion soup. Dandelion wine. Nobody loves the head of a dandelion. May be because they are so many, strong and so on" (Morrison 1993, p.47). Reconciling the nature

and women in a binary thought system, it can evidently be stated that both of them fall on the unprivileged section of the system, the system which always neglect their existence as an integral part of balancing ecosystem.

From the very beginning of the human society, a paradoxical truth is the blackness has never been considered as a virtue; rather it has been used as the symbol of failure, weakness and the sign of subordination. Being black and also poor, Pecola has to go through the same kind of experiences, first domesticated and then raped. The equivalence of Pecola's rape by her drunken father and the destruction of dandelions are treated in the same measurement. Both of them can be considered as the rape of the earth, the twin symptoms of the same disease. Thus, the ecological balance is disturbed and tampered. Along with Pecola, her mother Pauline also experiences very acute forms of oppression. She, as a crippled black woman tries to find her consolation for being isolated. The vainglory of the contemporary women in America and the existent negligence for black people fling her to loneliness. In her position, she is simply ardent to believe that the only course to happiness is being beautiful, and white skin tone is the only requirement of standard beauty. She dreams about looking like a white celebrity from the movies and fantasizes about an elusive life of her as Pecola is also obsessed over a white child celebrity in her time. Pauline's pleasure of being an affluent woman, desire for a white child is grown from the sphere she works at as a housekeeper. The utmost physical and mental torture by her husband, the unprivileged condition of her familial ambience and the abusive negligence by the social community force her to lie in the fantasy world and believe the ideas conveyed by white culture. Intrinsically, Pauline's presence in the American society is as colonized as her daughter Pecola.

For every human being, family and society play very significant role during their growing period. One can be insane if one does not get proper take as one supposed to get during the growth. While getting proper care from the family and the society, one can be sensible, sound and mentally strong to adapt with the world. For being in the former category, having parents like Cholly and Pauline, Pecola loses her sanity, while Claudia and her sister Frieda grow up in a sound and genial environment falling in the latter case. In this novel, black-blues and Aunt Jimmy's funeral are the portrayal of the society of black people. Morrison, in this novel, through her mastery of words illustrates the delicate form of racist ideology. Moreover, it depicts dexterously the mutual relationships existing between nature and women. Each episode of the novel is affiliated to the nature and detailed with the ecological explanations. The novel is clustered into four seasons, but there exists ambiguity to meet the basic requirements of individual seasons. The environmental temperament is linked to the every instance of the novel. The initial part of the novel is designated as "Autumn" but it focuses more on "Fall" which ultimately provides the metaphorical explanation of the pathetic situations of the Black people. Being the black, Frieda and Claudia, possessed a fine form of jealousy to Maureen Peals' richness and ownership in her possession. The first part of the novel also emphasizes the fall and pollution of the natural world. The panoramic beauty of ravine is completely molested by dumping industrial trashes from the Zick's Coal Company. The second part of the novel more illustrate the "Winter" and the initialization of which is instigated by the description of the rich girl Maureen Peal that the winter disrupts the beauty of autumn and spring by taking position in-between two. These seasons imagery is explained as "This disrupter of seasons was a new girl in school named Maureen Peal. A high-yellow dream child with long brown hair braided into two lynch ropes that hung down her back. She was rich, at least by our standards, as rich as the

richest of the white girls, swaddled in comfort and care. The quality of her clothes threatened to derange Frieda and me” (Morrison 1993,p.62). The describer relates as “A hint of spring in her sloe green eyes, something summery in her complexion, and a rich autumn ripeness in her walk” (p.62). The third and the most thrilling part of the novel brings the “Spring” which is considered as the rebirth of everything. It is the season when Claudia got whipped with a switch instead of a strap. And it is the season when Pecola is raped by her drunken father. The last part of novel brings forth the “Summer” where it draws a conclusion and conveys the most valuable messages including the fact that humans are entirely unable to provide contributory activities for the land which is a representative object of earth, especially when it intends to hug an imperious act of destroying herself. It is the season when Claudia and Frieda sacrifice their own desire to help Pecola by symbolizing it with planting seeds of Marigold which suggests Morrison’s intention to mingle the idea of birth of a human child and the production of a natural element which emerges from the land. The seeds of Marigold and the sprout of Cholly (Pecola’s father) are the lineage of nature and Pecola. So the women body is compared to the “land” which presents the image of the earth. Pecola essentially calls her own destruction when she craves for the beautiful, aristocratic blue eyes. In the discriminatory American society, her thrust and passion of a pair of blue eyes evokes the mischievously rearmost result for Pecola’s life. Her miserable condition is described “she flailed her arms like a bird in an eternal, grotesquely futile effort to fly. Beating the air, a winged but grounded bird, intent on the blue void it could not reach—could not even see—but which filled the valleys of th” (p.204). She is felicitously paralleled to the nature once again even after losing the psychological balance and conveying a meaningless life in a meaningful racist society in America. The ecological interpretation along with the formidable narrative is the catching part of this chapter in *The Bluest Eye*.

Pecola's identity is disrupted throughout the novel, in different ways. She loses her identity in her "ugly" appearance, particularly when she starts believing that whiteness is genuinely the standard of beauty and that her own blackness is congenitally the symbol of dirtiness and awkwardness. The first meeting with Pecola in the novel shows that she is homeless as her father fired their home. She takes shelter with her friend Claudia and her sister Frieda, children of another black family. She is teased by the other children in her school, victimized by almost all the people and eventually raped by her father Cholly. As a young girl she is unable to fulfil any of her dreams which ultimately forces her to the superficial world which is the only zone to absorb all her pain and provide a minimum shred of pleasure. She loses herself in the desire of having a pair of blue eyes, according to her belief which can release her from all sort of afflictions. At the end of the novel, she fancifully starts believing that she has blue eyes but only at the price of her sanity. Being black, poor, female and colonized, Pecola is neither dead nor a living existence. She is just the symbol of a self-hating Afro-American girl who despises her appearance due to the so called ugliness. At the concluding segment of the novel Pecola is identified as the scapegoat or easy mark for the plenary society of Black people in America where Pecola's ugliness gives scope for others to feel blessed and beautiful; her speechless attendance basically allows others to voice. But the loss of her sanity, the unrestrained footing at the edge of the burg restlessly runs after the entire community. She remains as the unwanted dandelion in the prejudiced, cynical yard of America.

Chapter- Four

A Comparative Analysis of Postcolonial Ecofeminism between *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The Bluest Eye*

All the discussions and explanations represent how the idea of ecofeminism is bluntly delineated in *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The Bluest Eye*, where the lives and identities of women are blended with the natural environment. In this contextual connection, there are some similarities visible between these novels. First of all, before discussing about the analogous features of them, the paper urges to show some similarities between the writers. Kamala Markandaya was an Indian emigrant in England and Toni Morrison is an African-American who was born and still living in America; they both have colonial root and influence. Both of them pens for and about women and deal with some powerful feminist issues of the postcolonial world. To describe the similarities between *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The Bluest Eye*, it is important to bring forth the resemblances of the topics, themes and ideas of them. Markandaya as an Indian rooted litterateur, writes and values Indian tradition and cultures. Likewise Morrison as an African-American writer, notably depends on the African cultures and heritages which are radiantly illuminated in their writings. Though Markandaya migrated from India to England where she spent rest of her life and Morrison was born and still residing in America, they were never alienated from their roots and subjects. Their works highlight the anguish of their folks and ancestors and their own experiences of colonial and postcolonial mobility. Markandaya's works focus on the rural life, poverty of rural people, exploitation, physical and psychological fustigating, class, caste, displacement and etc. endured by postcolonial Indian People. On the other hand, Morrison also unravels the histories of labor and distress of Black people, the actual image of slavery, the gothic story of brutality, race, class and gender discriminations in living

America. Markandaya and Morrison's mastery of language, supremacy of ideas and descriptions and majestically detailed characters are the commonness in both of their writings. *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The Bluest Eye* are the flawless paradigms of all these natures.

In these two novels, there are many common features noticeable between the characters, motives and styles. The protagonists of these novels are female whose lives are full of struggles and sufferings. The similarities in terms of the colonial influence and the theme of ecofeminism are so vibrant in both novels. The ecological symbols and images are gingerly illustrated in them. Both Rukmani and Pecola are the admirers of nature and natural beings. *Nectar in a Sieve*, shows how Rukmani praises the natural ambience of her husband's home and environment, when she recalls the past days she enjoyed with her husband as a young wife. She recites the admirations of the sunshine, birds, greenery and etc. Similarly, Pecola is also a fan of natural components. For example, it is substantiated when she considers that dandelions are beautiful flowers whereas other people try to remove it away from the yards. Pecola even compares this with herself and other black women in her community.

In *The Bluest eye*, the four episodes are named after the four seasons and the way of narration also goes with the seasonal temperament in every episode. For instance, the period of Pecola's rape, the season of reproduction, the condition of cultivation and the status of socio-economic life are illustrated in four episodes in the novel. People's dependence on natural resources, working in the coal mine, planting the seeds of marigold with a benevolent wish for Pecola's unborn baby these all signify the contiguity of human life with the natural atmosphere. Equivalently, in *Nectar in a Sieve*, there is also frequent depictions of the environmental states together with the narratives of Rukmani and other characters of the novel as the environment is injured by drought, flood, famine and other natural disasters. For example, the monsoon rain, just

after Ira's marriage destroys all their crops and eventually brings misfortune for Rukmani's family and later on, when the crops waste away from drought, her family goes starved once again. Rukmani's reliance on land and farming, such as planting vegetables and earning livelihood by selling them in the local market, learning and practicing the chores of a peasant's wife and later, working in the stone quarry are also the pictures of ecological dependences of working class people.

Displacement is another harmonious feature of these novels. In *Nectar in a Sieve*, Rukmani is displaced by losing her land due to the high rent she has to pay to the landowner in a changing socio-economic condition of postcolonial headway. She is compelled to leave the village due to the extreme poverty her family goes through. Lack of food, killing of her fourth son Raja for stealing calfskin from the tannery, the death of her last son Kuti due to starvation and the rush of landowner are responsible to shake Rukmani's position. On the contrary, Pecola is also introduced as homeless in *The Bluest Eye*. She is the daughter of an alcoholic man who burns the family's house. She literally does not possess any home in a sense, as there is no bond exists between the members of her family. Pecola feels atrophied and disappointed when her parents shout and fight almost every morning, and, she asks God to make her disappeared. The miserable financial condition, unbearable relationship with her parents, being despised by the surrounding, being raped by her father and the death of her premature baby force Pecola to lose her sanity and become shelterless. Her entire existence is displaced by the racial, inequitable treatment of Black people in postcolonial American society.

The culture of prostitution is a corresponding issue in *The Bluest Eye* and *the Nectar in a Sieve* which is shown as the result of patriarchy in a sense. The three prostitutes in *The Bluest Eye*, named Miss Marie, China and Poland simply do not like men and seek opportunities to

humiliate them. Because of their experiences about men and male concerned affairs are somehow capitalistic in the American patriarchal society, which is more violent in the African-American communities. These girls attain hatred and detachment from others because of their profession in the commercialized American circumference, whereas men like Henry Ford, a child abuser stays as a respectable elderly person in the society. Soaphead Church, a religious hypocrite who seduces young girls, is not condemned for on his fraudulent acts, while the prostitutes gain contempt and humiliation for their profession in the capitalist ground of America. It is an ordinary characteristic of patriarchal western thought in which women always become scapegoats. Pecola's rape by her father and torture of her mother also confirm this very truth. On the other side, the prostitution in India also took a vivid shape during the postcolonial advancement. In *Nectar in a Sieve*, Kunthi and Ira get involved in prostitution. When Ira is unable to bear a child, her husband forsakes her and leaves her at parents' house. After taking the treatment she gets rid of the barrenness but in the meantime her husband gets married to another woman. She stays with her parents' family where everyone goes hungry due to draught and monsoon strike. Afterwards, Ira starts harlotry in order to support her impoverished family, especially to feed her little brother Kuti who is near to death. In this regard, women are the victims of capitalism and patriarchy which reinforces the profession of prostitution.

Rukmani and Pecola have many analogous features. Both of them urge to fulfil their longing for making a happy living. Rukmani goes to Dr. Kenny for treating her infertility and she weeps out at the feet of goddess to get rid of the natural disasters, when they suffer from lack of food due to draught. On the other hand, Pecola goes to Soaphead, a so called canonist with the desire of having a pair of blue eyes. When Rukmani and Pecola have no one to support and no means to remove their bad luck, they try to depend on the religious ground like going to church

or temple. Both Rukmani and Pecola essentially long for a lovely, smooth and better way of living.

Therefore, this comparative analysis exposes many latent aspects between *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The Bluest Eye*. By exploring these resemblances between these two novels, we can say that the fate of women and nature are bonded with the same tie.

Conclusion

The investigation of postcolonial ecofeminism in *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The Bluest Eye* basically unveils many social and economic aspects of South Asian as well as African-American societies through the perceptions of Kamala Markandaya and Toni Morrison. Over and above, this study substantially justifies the truth about the kinship of women world with the natural domain. Rukmani's evaporative anxiety and endearment for land and rural community shows an implicit association of Rukmani with nature. Despite tremendous hardship and cumbersome experiences in both rural and city life, Rukmani draws up an exquisite alliance with nature in a postcolonial socio-economic state. She encounters a woeful surrounding at the threshold of her journey at Nathan's house, where every sequence of her miseries terminates with the fellowship of nature. Even when she tries to survive in the urban tract, she misses the company of rural community and the moisture of village atmosphere. Rukmani represents the ordinary features of all South Asian rural women who despite receiving low-bred treatment and outrage of patriarchal system, sacrifice all their flesh and blood to hold down a salubrious circumstance for their family and surrounding. In the same manner, Nature also provides such categorical love and ingredients for the prosperity of human beings. This acute relationship of Rukmani with nature and the harmonious features of them position Rukmani as an approaching segment of the natural frame.

Pecola, on the other hand craves for a perdurable home where love will be the only force for survival. Her autumn, winter, spring and summer would maintain their characteristic orders in her life in which no marigold would be withered in spring and no land would convey the depressed people who are disgraced, ignorant and invaded by the fear of racism. The only listener of Pecola's desires is nature which can be considered as the silent observer of Pecola's torment. The repression and humiliation of women by men and exploitation of environment by mankind is not a new convention of this planet. It was initiated from the emergence of human society and later on, has achieved a more virulent shape in the postcolonial lands and communities. Therefore, to translucently symbolize all these issues, this study is an evidence of exploring an ecofeminist perspective in Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* and Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*.

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