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Editor's Note

The Investigator is an International Peer-Reviewed Multidisciplinary Journal published quarterly (March, June, September and December), launched under the auspices of the academic community *Association for Cultural & Scientific Research* (ACSR). Keeping the panoramic scopes of research as a vibrant path, *The Investigator* intends to reflect on the skilled minds attitudinally conjuring from humanities to other disciplines. The journal explores the currents of criticism and unleashes divergent thinking. It welcomes original, scholarly unpublished papers from the researchers, faculty members, students and the diverse aspirants writing in English. It is a peer reviewed journal that brings the scholarship of academicians and practitioners around the world. *The Investigator* hopes and wishes to provide a self assuring means to you for your further accomplishments.

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**Barbara Kingsolver's *Prodigal Summer*:
An Ecofeminist Perspective**

This paper aims at discovering how Barbara Kingsolver in her novel Prodigal Summer deals with the modern issues threatening the continuity and stability of life in the forest and the various methods the female protagonists follow in order to achieve ecological balance and sustainability, to save life in the forest, as well as to break all the impediments that hinder contemporary man from achieving a life of harmony with nature. This paper, furthermore, aims at clarifying how Prodigal Summer helps awaken our consciousness about our roles as effective community members. In some situations, references will be done to Aldo Leopold's philosophy of "land Ethic" which mainly deals with human beings relationship to the land, animals, and plants living on it. As a result to the parallel between Kingsolver's fiction and nonfiction works, a reference is done here to some of her nonfiction works like "Small Wonder" which resonates with most of the ideas projected in Prodigal Summer and thus provides more clarification about the novel.

Forests are among the most important repositories of terrestrial biological diversity. They play an essential role in mitigating climate change and in providing products and ecosystem services that are essential to the prosperity of human beings. In general, forests offer very diverse habitats for plants, animals and micro-organisms and thus the importance of forests cannot be underestimated. We depend on forests for our survival, from the air we breathe to the wood we use. The very essential and indispensable role nature plays in the life of human beings has been starkly emphasized by writers throughout history. Henry David Thoreau is considered as the first great American writer who wrote about the environment and his great book, *Walden*, is a reflection upon simple living in natural surroundings. Thoreau once said, "I frequently tramped eight or ten miles through the deepest snow to keep an appointment with a beech-tree, or a yellow birch, or an old acquaintance among the pines." (qtd in Colleen). Other great writers in this field are like John Muir, Joseph Wood Krutch, Aldo Leopold, Edward Paul Abbey, and Annie Dillard have shown their advocacy for environmental issues with much more interest directed to the significance of forests in enriching both human and nonhuman worlds. Other famous environmental writings are like *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson written for alerting Americans about the dangers of heedless pesticide uses and other works by writers like Ursula K. Le Guin, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Jean Auel, Octavia Butler, Barbara Kingsolver, and Mary Oliver.

Among all these writers, the notable American novelist, poet and essayist, Barbara Kingsolver has been selected for the discussion of this paper as her works reflect a keen awareness of the natural world. Kingsolver's works are reflections of her deep sense of feeling and responsibility towards the world in which she is living. She writes, "I have stories of things I believe in: a persistent river, a forest on the edge of night, the religion inside a seed, the startle of wing beats when a spark of red life flies against all reason out of the darkness" (*Small Wonder* 21). The credibility of Kingsolver's works whether fiction or non-fiction is the result of her "appreciation for

nature and her degrees in the natural sciences” (Stahl 150). All her writings emphasize the significant role of place and the natural world in the forming of one’s personality. Kingsolver says, “I grew up with both feet planted in nature and a house full of field guides; I was a biology major in college (though I also studied and loved music, literature and anthropology); and my graduate degree is in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology” (qtd in Stahl 151). She writes about contemporary issues like the environment, injustice and human rights (Pavlos 5). Integral to Kingsolver’s philosophy is that human beings’ relationship to nature should not be built on fear rather its very basis should be love and understanding. Richard M. Margee refers to *Prodigal Summer* as an ecofeminist text. He argues:

Kingsolver’s [*Prodigal Summer*] fits well into a number of the constructs outlined in modern ecofeminism. All the main female characters clearly represent nature, and the men agri (culture). . . . Not only do the women represent nature, but they also represent different stages of nature. Deanna is the primitive, maternal (by the end of the novel she discovers she is pregnant), and primal earth-goddess. Nannie Rawley is the old woman with her life- time of natural folk wisdom stored-up in her head. Lusa is the modern, educated woman who uses her intelligence as well as her fierce determination and family attachments to become a more ecologically sensitive farmer than any of the men who farm around her could hope to be” (71-72).

Prodigal Summer is an ideal ecofeminist text. Its setting is the forested mountains and the small farms of Southern Appalachia. It models how “humans can participate in a restoration of relationships and bonds with the environment” (Lawhorne 8). The novel presents characters in a rural Appalachian community struggling for the protection of their land from “insecticides, irrational fear of predators such as coyotes, and reliance on cash crops like tobacco” (Lawhorne 3-4). This novel reflects on Kingsolver’s perspective about the complexity of human beings’ relationship with their surrounding world. To solve such complexity, Kingsolver presents environmentally-conscious female protagonists to reveal the details which “go unnoticed in the world” (*Prodigal Summer* 170). The characters’ resistance against such issues is motivated by their belief in the interconnectivity of human beings with their natural environment and such matters might break the bond between humans and their land. The novel’s three female protagonists work to “restore a symbiotic relationship among people, land and animals” (Lawhorne 4). They play the roles of activists aiming at raising peoples’ awareness and understanding of their relation to the land as well as of the fact that “life is not defined as humanity” (4).

An effective method Kingsolver uses in order to refer to the link between human world and natural world is her use of elaborate Darwinian conceits. In addition to being used for showing the link between the two worlds, such conceits are used to show how the two worlds are “similar in needing variety to sustain the health of a complex interdependent ecosystem” (Jones 84). This Darwinian principle is clearly shown towards the end of the novel when the organic grower says, “There is nothing so important as having variety. That’s how life can still go on when the world changes” (390). Darwin views difference as “an important resource for survival” (Jones 84). Kingsolver’s presentation of non-native human and nonhuman species

living in the same area lies at the very centre of Darwin's theory of diversity. Lusa Maluf is the embodiment for diversity on the level of human beings as she is an urban intellectual with ancestral roots in Poland and Palestine and a family religious heritage of Judaism and Islam. Kingsolver presents characters with a mindset based on the notion of diversity as integral for creating ecological balances. This perspective of diversity is shown through various situations in the novel. One example is related to retired agriculture teacher Garnett Walker and his act of importing the non-native Chinese chestnut because of his need for a hybrid species of American chestnut which has the ability of resisting fungus. Another prominent example is related to the forest ranger and wildlife ecologist Deanna Wolfe who does not judge coyotes, which are migrating to Southern Appalachia, as "invasive" but rather she finds in them a good chance in resolving the imbalance in the ecosystem caused by the absence of other predators such as wolves and mountain lions. Kingsolver does not only clarify the solutions to ecological problems, she even explains the reasons for such ecological imbalance. According to her, human ignorance is the main cause for environmental imbalance. The novel teaches lessons about the consequences of human ignorance on the environment and human livelihood as it creates imbalances in the natural environment. Kingsolver emphasizes "the need for an environmental ethic of care to bring balance to the ecosystem and prosperity to local farmers" (Jones 85).

The novel's three female protagonists work as activists raising others' awareness about the importance of protecting the forest resources. Their actions reflect on the significance of establishing a relationship of harmony and respect between human beings and animals, plants, and land. The female protagonists and the male antagonists hold contradictory environmental perspectives. While the female protagonist stand of environmental consciousness, understanding and protection, the male antagonist stands of environmental ignorance, animosity, aggressiveness and sense of superiority.

The women in the novel are Arcadian ecologists while the men are imperial ecologists. Arcadian ecology and imperial ecology are two schools of ecology and both take different approaches towards the relationship between humans and their surrounding natural environment. While Arcadian ecology advocates for a relationship of harmony and understanding between human beings and nature; imperial ecology advocates a relationship of domination suggesting that nature has been existed merely for the benefits of human beings. Henry Thoreau represents the Arcadian tradition and Charles Darwin stands for the imperialistic tradition. Through their interaction with their environment, the protagonists undergo a process of rediscovering, reconnection, and recreation. The job of the women characters in the novel is to motivate a change in the community's perception about their surrounding environment. People in modern times have developed a kind of mindset through which they aim to set themselves apart from the natural world.

A major concern of these women is the extinction of the red wolf and the possible extinction of the coyote. Deanna, throughout the novel and through her various actions, shows great love and motivation for the protection of the forest. Her sense of attachment to the forest life is clearly shown in the very outset of the novel as "She loved the air after a hard rain, and the way a forest of dripping leaves fills itself with

sibilant percussion that empties your head of words” (1). This poetic language refers to women’s sense of harmony with nature presented in the novel through the forest. Her body “was free to follow its own rule: a long-legged gait too fast for companionship, unself-conscious squats in the path where she needed to touch broken foliage, a braid of hair nearly as thick as her forearm falling over her shoulder to sweep the ground whenever she bent down” (1). Deanna is well aware and well-experienced about the hatred farmers carry in their very deep hearts for coyotes. That hatred might be so powerful that the farmer “would sooner kill a coyote than learn to pronounce its name” (31). Deanna sees in nature a better companion with whom she can have conversation as all methods of communication with nature are lost. Replying to her letter, Deanna writes, “When human conversation stopped, world was anything but *quiet*” and so she “lived with wood thrushes for company” (54).

Through her fiction and non-fiction works, Kingsolver “reminds her readers that the extinction of animals *is* taking place in the world *in which we live*” (Narduzzi 60). The discussion of the novel’s first section is insufficient without making a reference to Kingsolver’s nonfiction “Small Wonder” which mainly reflects on the phenomena of animals extinction through the reference to the real story of the Iranian toddler who was saved by a she bear nursing him for three days in her den. “Small Wonder” provides more keys for understanding Kingsolver’s life politics and philosophy. In “Small Wonder”, she writes:

Whether we are leaving it or coming into it, it’s *here* that matters, it is place. [...] Our greatest and smallest explanations for ourselves grow from place, as surely as carrots grow in the dirt. [...] People *need* wild places. Whether or not we think we do, we *do*. We need to be able to taste grace and know once again that we desire it. We need to experience a landscape that is timeless, whose agenda moves at the pace of speciation and glaciers. To be surrounded by a singing, mating, howling commotion of other species, all of which love their loves as much as we do ours [...]. Wildness puts us in our place. (39-40)

Kingsolver believes that “the things we dread most can sometimes save us” (“Small Wonder” (6). Her love for the landscape and the living creatures inhabiting the forest is nurtured by her great sense of responsibility, respect, as well as her feelings of interconnectedness with the surrounding natural world. Her feelings are largely motivated through the “ghosts” she sees of extinct animals. Deanna enjoys feelings of passion and desire for the protectiveness of the environment and it is these feelings which fuel her actions of protecting the environment. It can be said that Deanna, in the story, represents Kingsolver herself as she performs the same job done by Kingsolver herself, reminding the readers of their responsibility in protecting their environmental world. As the coyotes in the story work as reminders to Deanna, similarly Kingsolver herself stands for reminding us about the great jobs we human beings can perform through our contributions in changing peoples’ attitudes regarding the natural world. As an environmentalist, Kingsolver, in both her fiction and non-fiction, reflects on human beings relatedness to the landscape, animals and plants. *Prodigal Summer* is an embodiment of Kingsolver’s environmental ethic and deep as well as comprehensive ideology about the environment. Kingsolver conceptualizes this universe as not created merely for the benefits of human beings; rather human beings must be aware of their real places and should not ignore the roles other

creatures play in the creation of the balance in the ecological system. Human beings are no more than one element encompassing the ecological system. Kingsolver, in “Small Wonder”, makes a reference to real facts about the extinction of bears all over the world because of the phenomena of hunting. She writes:

Bears are scarce in the world now, relative to their numbers in times of old; they're a rare sight even in the wildest mountains of Iran. They have been hunted out and nearly erased from the mountains and forests of Europe, much of North America, and other places that have been inhabited for thousands of years by humans, who by and large find it difficult to leave large predators alive. Bears and wolves are our fairy-tale archenemies, and in these tales we teach our children only, and always, to kill them, rather than to tiptoe past and let them sleep. [...] We need new bear and wolf tales for our times, since so many of our old ones seem to be doing us no good. [...] [We must] stop in our tracks [...] before every kind of life we know arrives at the brink of extinction.

(10)

Attributes of love and understanding are assigned to female characters in the novel while opposite attributes of violence, hatred and animosity are assigned to their male counterparts. As Deanna in *Prodigal Summer* plays the role of the protector bearing the responsibility of protecting the coyotes from the human intruders shown in the novel through the character of Eddie Bondo, in the same way the female bear in “Small Wonders” curls herself around him in an attempt to protect him from “these fierce-smelling intruders in her cave” (“Small Wonders” 4). This picture of the missing baby found with a bear in her den, “alive, unscarred, and perfectly well after three days” is very symbolic as it deeply refers to our own attitudes as human beings and also to our duties to take inspirations from the natural life surrounding us. As the bear is driven by her “pure chemistry of maternity” to take care of the little child and to hold him strongly to her belly, similarly human beings should be driven by their “pure chemistry” of humanity to care for the natural world. This story is a proof of “the unconquerable force of a mother’s love, the fact of the DNA code that we share in its great majority with other mammals” (“Small Wonder” 4).

The ecological dimension is the most prevalent in the *Prodigal Summer* and sheds the light on the negative impacts of human intervention on the ecosystem. One example about ecological interconnectedness and balance in the ecosystem is regarding the problem of the cocklebur, “a plant whose seeds grow in burs that cling tenaciously to everything they touch, especially the pants and socks of unsuspecting hikers” (Magee 72). The two perspectives held by Deana and Garnett reflects their contradictory views regarding the ecosystem. While Garnett believes in the uselessness of the cocklebur, Deanna shows deep realization and understanding of the roles such plants can play in the lives of other creatures and how they can effectively contribute into the balance of the ecosystem. According to Deanna, Garnett is wrong in his perspective because cockleburs were not created in vain by God as their existence is of great significance to other creatures, being the primary food to Carolina parakeets. Human meddling and heavy hunting led to the extinction of the parakeets which in turn caused the uncontrolled proliferation of the cockleburs. Deanna regards human intervention as the main cause for the disorder in the ecosystem. A key factor preventing the uncontrollable proliferation of the cockleburs is the existence of the

Carolina Parakeets which have been unfortunately hunted to extinction by human beings.

Deanna in her conversations with the hunter points at the complexity of the human and non-human worlds arguing that both form one strongly connected chain with predators occupying “the top of the food chain” and the insurance of the predators safety ultimately means the safety of their prey otherwise “something ‘s missing from the chain” (*Prodigal Summer*13) . Kingsolver, through the presentation of Dianna, living in complete solitude from human beings, refers to a major catastrophe of humanity; lack of understanding and communication between human beings in modern times. As a way of escaping such kind of life, Deanna turns to nature, where she finds the substitute. Nannie sends a letter to Deanna asking her how she can manage living alone in the forest and Deanna replies, “when human conversation stopped, the world was anything but quiet”. Losing the kind of healthy relationship to nature, Deanna “lived with the wood thrushes for company” (*Prodigal Summer* 54). Deanna, in the novel, is the embodiment of what Leopold calls, “the extension of the social conscience from people to land” (qtd in Lawhorne 70).

In different situations throughout the novel, Deanna reveals to the hunter her feelings of love towards animals. In one situation, she says, “I love [animals] as whole species. I feel like they should have the right to persist in their own ways. If there’s a house cat put here by human carelessness, I can remedy that by taking one life, or ignore it and let the mistake go on and on” (179). She considers killing a predator a “sin”. Challenging the hunter, Deanna says, “If you find any coyote pups around here and kill them, I’ll put a bullet in your leg. Accidentally” (184). Deanna’s care about the welfare of the coyotes reaches the extent that even in her absence from the forest, she keeps caring about them and the hardest job for her had been the protection of the coyotes during her absence. At the same time, Deanna’s deeply-rooted sense of love and compassion to nature is an indication of women’s natural and instinctual feelings towards the natural world. These feelings Deanna shares with nature stand in contrast with the cultural implications of wildlife throughout history. Human beings in general share the tendency of animosity against wildlife. Kingsolver writes, “It was a dread built into humans via centuries of fairy tales: give man the run of a place, and he will clear it of wolves and bears. Europeans had killed theirs centuries ago in all but the wildest mountains, and may be even those holdouts were just legend by now” (*Prodigal Summer* 31). Through Deanna, Kingsolver reflects on the great contradiction between women attitudes and men attitudes toward nature. Whereas Deanna’s actions in the story reflect her “scientific and compassionate eyes”, Eddie’s actions are representative of men’s violence and animosity against nature. She sees in the coyotes a chance for the restoration of the ecosystem balance:

The ghost of a creature long extinct was coming in on silent footprints, returning to the place it had once held in the complex anatomy of this forest like a beating heart returned to its body. This was what she believed she would see, if she watched, at this magical juncture: a restoration. If she was not too lazy or careless. And if she did not lead a killer to their lair. (*Prodigal Summer* 63-64)

The different arguments carried out by Deanna with the hunter reveals the serious repercussions that might result from intensive and unorganized hunting processes. Deanna makes her utmost efforts to convince the hunter about the great negative consequences the extinction of coyotes might cause to the entire ecosystem. To her, “To kill a natural predator is a sin” (181). This principle of holism and ecosystem interconnectedness has resonated in the writings by great writers such as Marti Kheel in her “The Liberation of Nature: A Circular Affair” in which she argues, “In place of dualistic thinking, feminists have posited a holistic vision of reality in which everything is interconnected and thus part of a larger whole” (qtd in Meire 45). Kheel was deeply concerned with the entanglement of “male violence, sexism and the killing and eating of animals” and she has “consistently critiqued the Western culture of hunting” (Sturgeon 155). To support her argument about the significance of diversity in the ecosystem, Deanna refers to the experiments performed by the biologist R.T Paine as he “removed all the starfish from his tide pools and watched the diversity of species drops from many to very few” (64). Referring to Paine experiment, Deanna comments, “No one had known, before that, how crucial a single carnivore could be to things so far removed from carnivory” (64-65). Deanna argues that the extinction of the coyotes might have serious consequences on other living beings such as plants.

In her opinion, all creatures on earth have been created for certain purposes in order to complement each other. To support the interconnectedness of the entire ecosystem organism, Deanna refers to the beneficiary roles of snakes and spiders. She argues that such creatures have been created for saving humankind from a severe “rodent plague” (268). Deanna considers predation as “honorable” as it “culls out the sick and the old” (320). Her argument is that all the parts of ecosystem are firmly linked to the extent that the destruction of one part of the ecosystem might lead to the damage and destruction of the whole system. Though Deanna is assigned the job of the protection of all the species living in the forest, she shows deeper concerns with the protection of predators specifically the coyotes. Her efforts are proved to be of great success as Kingsolver writes, “Two years after her arrival, one of the most heavily poached ranges of Southern Appalachia was becoming an intact ecosystem again” (59).

The novel’s second chapter “Moth Love”, like the first chapter, begins with a description of solitude, “Lusa was alone, curled in an armchair and reading furtively—the only way a farmer’s wife may read, it turns out—when the power of a fragrance stopped all her thoughts” (2). The author’s emphasis on the idea of solitude is significantly related to the characters’ intellectual and emotional growth. In her efforts to protect her crops, Lusa stands out against the application of pesticides in farming. This chapter presents an urban female character; Lusa who left her job as an entomologist only to become a farmer’s wife. After her husband’s death, she finds herself with the great responsibility of managing her dead husband’s tobacco farm. As a scientist and insect lover, Lusa stands out against the use of pesticides for killing the insects as well as against the farmers’ act of killing the predators in order to save their livestock. Lusa, though being a non-native, succeeds in forming a successful relationship both with the land and the community. Though a city girl, she could easily adapt herself to her new life in the forest. After her marriage, she moved to her husband’s house in the Zebulon Mountain where she “learned to tell time with her

skin, as morning turned to afternoon and the mountain's breath began to bear gently on the back of her neck" (34).

Philosopher Norman Wirzba suggests that a world view which has perceived soils, waterways, and forests as "simply resources to feed cultural ambition" has led to "an animosity between the country and the city, each side claiming for itself moral purity or human excellence": "Farming folk have routinely described their way of life as conducive to peace, balance, and simple virtue, and the ways of the city as promoting strife, ambition, and greed. City folk, on the other hand, have considered cities as the entry into sophistication, creativity, and enlightenment, and farms as places of ignorance, provincialism, and limitation" (qtd in Jones 88). *Prodigal Summer* is an attempt on the part of the author towards the deconstruction of such simplistic oppositions. The character of Lusa is the portrayal for such kind of deconstruction. Lusa is not only a city girl as her husband and the other relatives look upon her, rather she is someone who spent her childhood "trapped on lawn but longing for pasture" and "sprouting seeds in pots on a patio" but "dreaming" of the expansive garden she realizes on the Widener farm (*Prodigal summer* 35, 375).

As Deana furiously battles against the extermination of the coyotes, similarly Lusa fights against the "elimination of honeysuckles" (*Prodigal Summer* 35). Barbara Kingsolver through her portrayal of the character of Lusa persuades her readers to get rid of their anthropocentrism and to tend farms without the use of pesticides. Lusa feels impatient at the idea of people, "determined to exterminate every living thing in sight" (35) and she is so indulged with the natural world that "She'd neatly mastered the domestic side of farming in less than a year" (37). Lusa's husband with his fossilized mentality and limited understanding is not able to understand that "she'd spent her whole sun burnt, freckled childhood trapped on lawn but longing for pasture? spent it catching butterflies and moths, looking them up in her color-keyed book and touching all the pictures, coveting those that hid in wild places" (38). Lusa believes humanity should be inspired by nature. The moths though have no mouth, face no difficulties in their communication with each other. Human beings are the opposite; they lack communication and live with disputes with each other. Thus, it is through the surrounding nature that we can put an end to all our disagreements and build a bridge of communication and understanding.

In all her novels, Kingsolver emphasizes on the value of a simple life lived in tune with nature but this message is most prominent in her *Prodigal Summer*. Lusa is the clear embodiment for human beings preference of this kind of life as she sacrifices her prosperous life as a professor of ecology in the city only to be a farmer's wife advocating a life of simplicity and dedicating her time for changing people's deeply-rooted ethics related to modern methods of farming. Most of the events presented in the novel are reflections of some events and personal experiences in the life of Barbara Kingsolver. DeMarr writes, "Although Dr. Kingsolver's profession might have given the family middle-class status, young Barbara always identified with the children of the poor tobacco farmers who made up the majority of citizens of the county and who were looked down upon by those who lived in town" (4). Lusa refers to the horrible effects of spraying insecticides on fields which results in the murder of "beautiful creatures" on the land. In her opinion, the act of spraying insecticides on the land is like "dropping a bomb on a city just to get rid of a couple of bad guys"

(301-02). She does not use any chemicals for the raising of her goats as she hates pesticides.

The significance of maintaining the diversity of the ecosystem and complex bond between all the living creatures is pointed at by Lusa. In her opinion, all the diverse elements of the ecosystem are deeply connected to each other and are inseparable. Trees are beneficial for bugs which in return are useful for birds. The ecosystem is “a whole complicated thing with parts that all need each other, like a living body. It’s not just trees; it’s different kinds of trees, all different sizes, in the right proportions. Every animal needs its own special plant to live on. And certain plants will only grow only next to certain other kinds” (*Prodigal Summer* 357).

The novel’s third section “Old Chestnuts”, like the second section, focuses on the harmful effects of insecticides. It makes an argument against the belief that “Success without chemicals was impossible” (*Prodigal Summer* 89). The message in this chapter is presented through the character of Land Rawley, an organic farmer whose conversations with her neighbor, Garnett Walker, reflect her views regarding the use of weeds instead of herbicides.

Nannie tries to educate Garnett about the importance of establishing a relationship of cooperation, love and understanding with nature. She “claimed the wind caused the weed killer on [Garnett’s] side to drift over into her orchards” (88). Replying to Nanny’s claim about the danger of his herbicides on her apple farm, Garnett explains, “One application of herbicide on my bank will not cause your apple trees or anybody else’s to drop off all their leaves” (88) and she replies saying:

That god-awful Sevin you’ve been spraying on your trees every blooming day of the week! You think you’ve got troubles; a *tree* came over on you? Well your position has been coming down on me, and I don’t just mean my property, my apples, I mean *me*. I have to breathe it. If I get lung cancer, it will be on your conscience. (275).

Nannie describes Garnett as a “regular death angel” as his pesticides are the very efficient tools bringing about death to her pollinators and songbirds. She tells Garnett that the fact that he is a man and she is a woman should not determine the way he treats her. This fact should not imply that his chestnuts are much more important than her apples.

To conclude, it can be inferred that *Prodigal Summer* represents one of the greatest works in the bulk of modern environmental and ecofeminist literature. It can be described as the window through which readers can get familiarity with Kingsolver’s environmental concerns and affinity with the natural world specifically her interest about the integrity of life in the forest. The novel provides a very integral ecofeminist perspective through its presentation of three female protagonists living in harmony with the various natural components within the setting of the forest. The forest is portrayed as the domain through which the protagonists of the novel seek the fulfillment of their identities. It “provides readers with more information about the interconnectivity of the ecosystem” (Stahl 150). Deanna is a forest ranger, Lusa is a scientist who married a farmer, and Nanny is an organic farmer and they all

contribute to the continuity and sustainability of the forest life. The forest in the novel represents the motivating power encouraging the female characters to free themselves from the domestic space of the house and embrace a much wider domain of identity. The novel briefly says that “So much detail goes unnoticed in the world” (*Prodigal Summer* 170).

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Some Reflections on Environmentalism: A Buddhist Viewpoint

Religion has been an unavoidable part of human life transcending time and space. The life of an average human being has been considerably influenced by the value systems of religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam or any religion for that matter. Life of humanity from birth to death has been moulded by various philosophical doctrines and religions. Religion can be explained as certain faiths, certain observances and certain kinds of behaviour, to be held, observed and practised in this world, with facilities which this world provides, along with people of this world, and with a view to secure peace, satisfaction, happiness and welfare in this world, and additionally in another world if there is one.

During ancient times a number of religions and philosophical thoughts emerged in India. Religious beliefs and practices of Aryans were grouped together as Hinduism. They personified nature and natural phenomena and worshipped it. Thus they have God of Thunder, Goddess of Earth and so on. Whereas some schools of philosophy denied the presence of God and rejected the complicated ritualistic practices of Vedic religion. Among these schools Buddhism became very powerful and originated itself into a major belief system.

Buddhism has played very significant role in the development of cultural and religious currents in India. Siddhartha, son of king Suddhodana sought refuge in asceticism in the sixth century B. C. He renounced his luxurious life to find an explanation to humanity's suffering through rumination and penance. Then he achieved enlightenment and emerged as Gautham Buddha. The teachings of Gautham Buddha have come to be known as Buddhism, which preaches the achievement of supreme enlightenment called as *Nirvana* by the abstinence of worldly desires. Buddhism is unorthodox and it stands against Vedic sacrifices and rituals. Buddha denies the existence of God. What is God to other religions is morality to Buddhism. Buddha also opposed the caste divisions of society. Buddha never supplicates any supernatural rudiment, nor did he render any miracles to prove his supernatural mastery. He remains as a common man and preached *ahimsa* or non- violence. The Buddha taught his followers Four Noble Truths: (1) Life is subjected to suffering; (2) suffering is caused by ignorance; (3) suffering can be eliminated by removal of desires; (4) it is possible to end suffering if desire is eliminated. According to him, to attain *Nirvana* one should follow the eightfold path namely:

- (1) Right Understanding,
- (2) Right Thought,
- (3) Right Speech,
- (4) Right Action,
- (5) Right Livelihood,
- (6) Right Effort,
- (7) Right Mindfulness,
- (8) Right Concentration.

Buddha wanted human beings to liberate themselves by following the eightfold path. Buddhist followers are divided into two sects, *Hinayana* (The lesser vehicle) and *Mahayana* (The greater vehicle). The Mahayana school believes in a completely different dogma than the traditional Hinayana school of thought which stems from the Buddha himself.

Some basic precepts of Hinayana school of thought are taken into consideration in this paper to analyse environmental concerns on various spheres. While other religions are bothering about God and life after death, Buddhism teaches love and equality. The aim of Buddhism is to eradicate suffering and contribute good to mankind. The present world is under the threat of environmental problems. Nature is deteriorating in both developed and developing countries. This paper seeks to bring out traditional Buddhist notions that are helpful even today for the continuance of an effective environmental ethics.

It is a widely accepted fact that environmental crisis stems from our scientific and technological advancement. Nature was not treated with importance until we realized that our resources were diminishing. Human beings have the ability to change the world for better or for worse. Reckless exploitation of natural environment, occur to a very large extent due to the wrong doings of humanity. Only when a self awakening takes place ecological disasters can be dealt with effectively. Buddhism is seen as a religion with environment friendly tradition and to a great extent it can supply answers to the questions of environmental ethics.

Traces of environmental ethics present in Buddhist texts, lead to the formation of a philosophy of nature with deep imprint on the protection of natural resources. Buddhism is essentially a way of life meant to annihilate human suffering. The moral philosophy of Buddha is to adopt a lifestyle that leads us towards happiness, welfare, harmony and liberty of all. This also means cultivation of virtues like compassion and non-violence.

Human and nature share a deep-seated relationship in Buddhism. The values like compassion, non-violence and many other components sustain this assumption. According to Buddhist doctrine a compassionate person cannot endure the desolation of others. It is impossible for such a person to kill any living creature. When compassion originates violence slips away. It means such a person can maintain kindness towards all beings.

Buddhism is one such religion which shares strong ecological ethics, but Buddhist doctrine of environmentalism has always been firmly rooted in spirituality. Traditional Buddhism has always supported conservation and protection of natural resources. Nature is the fountainhead of human culture. The Pali equivalent of nature is *Pakati*. Nature belongs to all living creatures not merely to humans. In Buddhism it is considered fallacious to exert control over everything that belongs to natural environment. This stands in opposition to Christian belief system, which claims a right to dominion over the Earth. But in Buddhism there is no such segregation in terms of superiority. The sense of superiority stems from an impure mind; which can create various forms of destruction. A superior mind can also be the prime reason for the violation of Four Noble Truths of Gautham Buddha. Over consumption, depletion

of resources, idleness, ignorance all these negative traits sprout from a superior mind. Buddha teaches us that mind is the forerunner of all things. Depletion of our resources and pollution takes place only if our mind is polluted. If one wants a clean and serene environment, then they must obtain a lifestyle that springs from a pure mind.

The inevitability of kinship with nature is the essential source of Buddhist culture. The way in which humans treat their natural surroundings is an integral part of this culture. Natural surroundings consist of rivers, lakes, ponds, forests and mountains. From ancient times human beings prefer to live in communities. Such communities developed into villages and later people transformed it into cities. These notable changes are a part of life and it cannot be avoided. Culture is the refinement of one's lifestyle. Increasingly material welfare became an important part of culture. This material greed of human beings need to be controlled by morality principle, otherwise our surroundings will turn out to be the most unsuitable place to live. Buddhism is one such religion which has no existence without morality. What is God to other religions is morality to Buddhism. Buddhism believes that nature and natural process are affected considerably by the morals of man. Nature is not a human creation; hence it becomes his responsibility to maintain *dhammata* and *niyama* (natural law or way) for the well being of all. Continuance with moral life can eradicate boastfulness, ego, uncultured and untrustworthy tendencies. But it is evident that a wrong Dharma is monopolizing the present terrene; the Dharma of destruction, Dharma of selfishness, Dharma of intolerance and Dharma of exploitation. This gets extended to the nature around us.

Many Sattas from Pali Canon tells us about the strong connection that exists between human beings and environment. Buddha taught that there are elements at work in the cosmos which makes things happen. Buddha called it as Five Niyamas (*Panca niyama dhamma*). Our present life largely depends on these Five Niyamas,

...namely *utuniyama* (lit. season- law), *bijaniyama* (seed-law), *cittaniyama*, *kammaniyama* and *dhammaniyama*... These five laws demonstrate in a reciprocal casual relationship as changes in one necessarily bringing about changes in the other.

(Kumar 119)

- (1) *Utuniyama* is a natural season law which determines the change of seasons and climate.
- (2) *Bijaniyama* is the law of all living matter and it is applicable to all life, plant and animals.
- (3) *Kammaniyama* is the law of moral causation.
- (4) *Dhammaniyama* deals with manifestation of reality.
- (5) *Cittaniyama* is the law of consciousness. *Citta* means heart. It shows how our minds lead us throughout our lives.

These five laws authenticate why people and environment share a reciprocal relationship. It brings awareness that everything in nature, including human life is momentary. Impermanence (*anicca*) is considered as the relentless principle of nature. What accelerated this process of change especially in natural world is “the

moral deterioration in a man . . . which is adverse to human well being and happiness” (117).

One of the basic characteristics of Buddhism is to observe *Pancasila* (Five Precepts) which is a minimum moral conduct expected from a Buddhist. *Pancasila* clearly states to refrain ourselves from injury to life. This law prevents a Buddhist from killing all living creatures. It means protecting every animal from experiencing inconceivable torments. The wild animals which share our human world live in constant fear. Hunters threaten their lives with nets, traps and guns. Some animals are killed for their horns, furs, skins, tusks and flesh. “It is a terrible affliction that the very body with which they are born is the reason for their being killed” (Rinpoche 77).

Buddhism prescribes the practice of *metta* means ‘loving -kindness’ towards all creatures. Buddhist doctrine urges us that whenever you see animals being tortured put yourself in their place and imagine in detail all they have to undergo. Treat your pets with kindness and love. Because all animals, even the smallest bee have feelings of pleasure and pain.

Buddhist doctrines reckon on rebirth of human beings. According to this belief system beings who are ignorant, stupid without any idea of Dharma can create causes for yet more lives in lower realms as animals. So humans should apply themselves with great sincerity when it comes to bewail their own wrong doing from the past; disclosing the guilt and testify to abstain from it.

Buddhism emphasizes the intrinsic value of human beings and nature. Natural forests cultivate a path that leads to supreme happiness and helps to overcome encroachment of greed, hatred, violence and delusion. Buddha himself had great respect for the forest, the place which discloses life in its pristine purity. In Buddhism no human being has the right to break even the branch of a tree which provides shelter. Buddhists always maintain a benevolent attitude towards large-gigantic trees. Such trees are called *Vanspati* ‘lords of the forests’. It may also be remembered that forests and nature have played a significant role in the thinking and lifestyle of the Buddha. Buddha was born under a tree in Kapilavasthu. It was at the foot of Bodhi tree in Bodhgaya that he attained Enlightenment and freedom. He took his last breath under the Sala grove in Kushinagara. The members of early Buddhist Sangha used to reside under trees. Even today his disciples follow his path by maintaining their habitats in nature. They are called forest monks and they live in forests by creating monasteries there, where they could fervently immerse themselves in meditation. They also take up the role of environmental activists and raise their voice to protect local humans and other beings from the threat of deforestation.

Today we are no longer a part of the world with abundance of resources. Technological progress has expelled us out from our natural riches. We are often confined in the concrete jungles. By living inside the machine we have generated, our beliefs, our reasoning, our attitude and even our livelihood have all been affected. Influences of our colonial culture made us forget all the aspects of environmental ethics and gave importance to humans. We need to find a solution to rise above it.

And the solution is not just protection of nature, but rather an active restoration of it by following our spiritual traditions.

The interconnection between a pure mind, pure living beings and pure nature is the structural core of environmentalism in Buddhism. But today, Buddhism is in search of establishing new and effective practice of environmentalism. It can be achievable only by reframing the 2500 year old Buddhist philosophy and practice according to the necessity of current era. From the above mentioned tenets of Buddhism, it is clear that every human being has the responsibility to protect and preserve nature individually; likewise there is a possibility that this ethics could remain ineffective because of the current status of morality of individuals. It is also a truth that Buddhism can guide us to get rid of the sinful effects on human civilization through a sustained social revolution of education. Furthermore Buddhism can create a symbiotic relationship with nature based on its traditional notions.

By reflecting some basic tenets of Buddhism this paper explains how important it is for us to go back to the traditional practices which gives importance to nature. Buddhism is not the only solution for all environmental problems. Yet attempts can be made to re-establish the ecological dharma through right education. Because right education is the substructure of right awareness. By doing this, we can pave way for the interdependence of everything in this world. Thus it is possible to restore the balance between the human and the rest of creation. At the same time we must remember that Buddhism can only point towards the right path. It is a difficult task to alter the current situation. Still, the decision of protecting every living creature and letting nature to be in harmony, is apparently the best thing one can do.

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An Ecocritical Reading of *Expectation and the Event*

Ecocriticism, one of the most recent critical movements of our times, is unique in several ways. It looks at the natural world through human eyes while simultaneously questioning human perception of the natural world – it questions anthropocentrism while acknowledging its own inevitable anthropocentricity. It simultaneously moves back and forth, spanning geological and human time, going back to an undisturbed natural world while engaging seriously with current ecological crisis, bringing back indigenous practices into the sway of modern culture. In this light, the short story “Expectation and the Event”, written in 1913 by Ammani Ammal and translated into English by Subashree Krishnaswamy, becomes particularly interesting because it employs a school tale narrative to reflect on the much larger paradigm of development, on the rise in the historical times of the story’s setting in modern India. This paper attempts an analysis that looks at how the story responds to ecological crisis and imbalances in lifestyle allegorically, and also how its layered narrative achieves the same effect.

The story begins with the inner narrative of the casuarina tree, who longs to be “of use to the world” (2) and subsequently, gets chopped off and transported via ship to a factory that makes paper. It experiences innumerable difficulties and suffering, and is finally made into newspaper, which a maid flings into the fire for fuel. The tree, upon whom human aspirations have been imposed, finally meets its tragic end by being burnt up – it is evident that this is only the culmination of a series of reductive, destructive events that happen to the tree. However, the story pulls the rug from under the reader’s feet when it reveals that the narrative of the tree is a story within the story. The reader is transported to the classroom where the students have just finished reading the story, with the didactic teacher awaiting a moral response to the story from the students, only to be subverted when an impacted student exclaims, “The moral is, these wretched newspapers should be banned!” (4).

The story employs a layered perspective that at once looks at the tree’s story as the story of the modern man wishing to climb the social ladder in the rapidly urbanising, developing modern world, and at the dynamics of didacticism imparted to schoolchildren, which encourages materialistic ambitions as part of its didactic package, privileging it over thinking and creativity. The story therefore becomes a sensitive commentary on its times, mostly through the figure of the casuarina tree. The casuarina tree is placed in an interesting position, as far as this story goes. There is an evident imposition of human aspirations onto the figure of the tree, but the presence of other humans in the story, and antagonistic humans at that (such as the insensitive woodcutters), problematises the certainty of this interpretation. It simultaneously refers to an anthropocentric and biocentric world view. William Rueckert writes in *The Ecocriticism Reader* that “in ecology, man’s tragic flaw is his anthropocentric (as opposed to biocentric) vision” (113). Therefore, the tree can be seen as a tragic figure in the story, whose tragic flaw is that its central reference point is the *human* world – it aspires to be of use to a world which is completely removed from any sensitive understanding of the natural world. One of the constant reminders of ecocriticism is that the natural world has meaning and value in itself, irrespective

of its usefulness to the human world. The tree (upon whom human inspirations have been imposed) lacks this understanding. In fact, the tree's fall can even be seen to echo the Biblical Fall, in that it thirsts for knowledge of the human world, which is essentially insubstantial and empty. It can also be interpreted that the tragic flaw of the tree is that it desires something *which is not part of its nature* – to roam about the world may be part of a bird's natural abilities, but this is certainly not the case for a tree. In that sense, its *disrooted-ness*, quite literally, becomes its tragic flaw. The emptiness of the human world and all of its words and actions is a motif in the story. This is seen in instances such as the collective sigh of the trees, saying "Whatever has been said of the world is highly exaggerated" (3), the crude headlines on the newspaper, upon which "not a single thought-provoking word [was] to be seen" (3), and the "grandiloquent philosophical" moral statements the teacher expects the students to proclaim (4). The emptiness of the anthropocentric world is contrasted with the self-sufficiency and seamless interconnectedness of the forest, brought out best in an instance where the tree gets the mark put on by the woodcutters "rubbed off with a squirrel's tail" (1). It is noteworthy that the natural world is aware of the goings-on in the human world, because the birds and trees supply the casuarina tree with knowledge about the human world, but the human world is caught up in a rush of empty, maddened industrialization, not in the least sensitive to the natural world.

The story defamiliarises common understanding of a tree's body. Usually, trees are just looked at as physical objects, as items which provide wood for human use. The story questions such a perception subtly, with its central character of a tree who thinks and feels. This could lead us to understand that the tree has body *and mind*, and therefore, an *awareness* of its body. The treatment that the tree undergoes at the hands of humans (or machines) reminds us of bodily violation, or rape. This is reinforced at a later point in the story, when the tree is being made into newspaper: "One night, our tree (the paper) was taken to the printing place, where under the press, unable to breathe, it lost consciousness. When it came to in the morning, it found letters imprinted on its body." (3). This makes literal the common feminist idea of hegemony as inscribed on the (female) body. The tree is not just raped, but also fragmented. The image of the tree as a wound-up roll of paper suggests a transformation that has fragmented it and made it hollow, because it has lost its organic nature. Further, the idea of the press as an oppressive institution is also hinted at. The point of newspapers is to bring together, or integrate information from different parts. Whether that happens meaningfully, first of all, is questioned by the story; secondly, the story raises the issue of the price to be paid for it to happen, and who pays the price, because it is seen to happen at the cost of the natural world.

It is noteworthy that the only god who finds mention in the story is the serpent-god, Adishesha. This points to the centrality of the natural world in the story. It is also seen that most of the conversations in the inner story happen within the nonhuman world. As the text moves from the inner narrative to the outer, we note how the setting immediately becomes more controlled, clinical and judgmental. The attitude of the teacher, who asks the children for "the moral of the story" (4) is lifeless. The discourse the teacher represents furthers the motif of human speech as empty. The trope of didacticism through a classroom situation was common in literature of this period, and was often directed towards a narrative of "progress" and "development". These notions of "progression" were invariably distanced and severed from the natural world, unlike indigenous culture which functioned as part of nature. The

modern narrative, on the other hand, emphasizes *becoming* over *being*. This discourse is deconstructed by the young boy's comment on the story, which subverts not just the didacticism but also the anthropocentrism. The story hence becomes a nuanced, multi-layered depiction of the impact of modernisation on both the human and nonhuman worlds, employing multiple narratives that impact the reader at several levels, playing with the imagination of its times and beyond.

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Ecological Stimulation in Romantic Poets

Romanticism and ecology are intertwined in English Literature of the Romantic period. These works were the words of Green Language of Romanticism. Writers who are inspired by the power, beauty and majesty of the nature have portrayed the wellness of the forests in their works of literature. They brought ecology closer to romanticism which is spot on the book of Jonathan Bate who popularized the phrase 'Romantic Ecology' by titling his book so. This paper focuses on the works of the romantic poets who used the so called 'Green Language' in their poems. It explains how they have shown their love, respect, faith and devout towards nature.

Human's relationship with nature is an unbreakable chain. Man is completely dependent on all the elements of nature without which he cannot make survival. Poets, who illustrated about God and human values moved to focus on nature during the romantic period. The wide spread nature becomes the inspiration for poets of the Romantic period. They admired the nature in their works. They started to live with nature and portrayed all the moves of it in their poems. This made them to move with nature as they found happiness, consolation for sadness, rest for mind, beautiful sceneries for filling the eyes, fresh air to refresh and a lot more. This paper will deal with the exciting factors that made the Romantic poets to love nature.

Nature possesses lot of life serving sources which helps all people for their survival. Poets who got inspired by the majestic beauty of the wild nature started explaining it in their works. In the beginning works were about God, His values, principles and faith. At that time plays saying the story of God and disciples were enacted within the Church. Then people started to focus on moral values, this made the writers to produce works regarding moral values and this brought the plays out of the Church and they enacted plays saying morals. Nature was a predominant romantic theme in the light of Industrial revolution, which is not only a threat to its preservation but also been a contriving force for the human mind. After these the focus of the writers moved towards nature which provided enormous beauty to explain in their works. They started to say the relationship between man and nature. Forests are one of the major sources in nature which inspired the writers.

Review of Literature

The metaphorical correspondence between land and text is such that writers frequently allegorize the acts of reading and writing by walking us over hill and dale. John Milton's Paradise Lost concludes its justification of God's ways to men as Adam. At the other end of the long eighteenth century, William Wordsworth parses the Wye Valley's "steep and lofty cliffs" for "the language of the former heart" as in Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey". And John Keats likes the experience of reading Homer to command a "wide expanse" and traveling through "realms of gold", wherein "like some watcher of the skies".

Research Questions:

The following questions are framed to explain the ecological stimulation in the romantic poets: How romantic writers related nature and human feelings? How the beauty of nature explained? What are the consoling factors in nature?

Thesis Statement:

This paper aims to explain the power of nature in changing the mentality of human and the retrieval of human feelings.

Discussion:

Ecological atmosphere creates different feelings in the minds of the people. A happy tone makes a person feel happy, a sad tone makes one feel sad, likewise the scene, smell, and sound of nature stimulates different moods in human. Romantic poets have produced best examples that show how human minds were controlled and driven by the moves of nature. William Wordsworth, John Keats, Percy Bysshe Shelly, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, William Blake and Matthew Arnold were some of the notable poets of the romantic period. They have shown how the nature driven their frame of mind to fulfill their needs from the nature.

Writers have shown the relationship between nature and human feelings as they have given the power of sentimentality to all the organisms of the nature. They have explained the pleasure in the nature as well as the pleasure derived from the nature in terms of science as said in Darwin's "On the Origin of Species". Pleasure from the nature is the concept of the Romantic Poetry and Romantic Science. They have explained the pleasure existed in the non-human world and pleasure taken by humans from the natural world are intermingled with romantic metaphors.

Wordsworth presents a portrayal of nature in 'Tintern Abbey', where the persona returns to the country after five years and feels a sense of nostalgia as he beholds 'These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs'. The flowing imagery demonstrates how they provide a 'tranquil restoration' from 'the din / Of towns and cities', making the universal experience of visiting the countryside subjective, as it corresponds to the persona's individual thoughts. The persona here feels happy as he sees the running river which takes away his worries also as it takes away all the unwanted sediments in the river bank.

Romantic poets are also called as Nature lovers as they have explained the beauty of nature no less than a lover explains his lady love. Poets sought to demonstrate this through, as Carl Thompson observes, their 'appreciation of landscape, and especially of wild or what was often termed "romantic" scenery' in their work. Moreover, natural forces and iconic landmarks were also associated with the 'sublime'; an aesthetic theory defined by Edmund Burke is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling: fear and awe, which inspire imagination to the greatest degree. Keats praises the artistic beauty of nature in his poem Ode on a Grecian urn. He addresses the Grecian Urn as "unravished bride of quietness and a foster-child of silence and slow time". He also calls the Grecian urn a "Sylvan historian" because of the rural and forest scenes carved on its surface. Keats also goes on to say that music which is imagined is much sweeter than music which is actually

heard. Keats presented the artistic beauty of nature through his poems which can also enlighten humanity. This work of art has created immortal figures. Nature in any form like art will bring happiness to the world.

Keats is one of the greatest lover and admirer of nature. He expresses the beauty of both real and artistic forms of nature. Everything in nature for him is full of wonder and mystery-the rising sun, the moving cloud, the growing bud and the swimming fish. His love for nature is purely sensuous and he loves the beautiful sights and scenes of nature for their own sake. He believes that "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever'. He looks with child-like delight at the objects of nature. In his poem ode to a Nightingale, he feels happy for the Nightingale and he says that his aches with numbness pains are flown away as he had drunk when he hears the sound of the bird. Keats is astonished to see happiness of the Nightingale. Before the hearing of song of the bird, he tried many ways of forgetting worries Keats believed he has either been poisoned or is influenced by drug. But Keats felt a tranquil and continual joy in the song of Nightingale and makes him completely happy. It indicates to unite with nature gives eternal happiness for the mankind. Nature works as a source of generating happiness and is a best guide for human beings to live a happy life.

Romantic poets used a special language for the description of nature in their works which explained the beauty, power and sensibility of nature which is termed as the Green Language. They are the best in explaining a beauty, the metaphoric language they used is a special credit for their works. Their extraordinary explanations about the nature proved their love for the ecology which surrounded them. These thoughts of the romantic poets earned them a title called Romantic Ecologists as their works explained the power of nature and the relationship between the wide-spread nature and the life of human.

This paper dealt with the metaphoric imagery used by the Romantic Poets to explain the wild beauty of the nature. Wordsworth's imagination isolates and focuses, Keats imagination fills in and enriches and Shelly's imagination dissolves and transcends human minds towards nature. It shows how they related human feelings with the natural pleasure acquired from the nature. It explains how nature becomes a part of humans understanding about the various moves of nature in relation to the various mind sets of human. Romantic poetry proves the stimulation that the poets had from the nature to explain the innovative thoughts to make the readers feel the scene and the ease as they felt while writing it.

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All Sentient Beings: An Ecocritical Reading of *The Old Man and the Sea*

The 19th century biologist Charles Darwin's legacy is synonymous today with his theory of 'natural selection' and 'survival of the fittest'. These ideas that suggest competition over cooperation have had a continued influence on our understanding of the world today. The motto "Greed is good" in the 1987 cult classic Wall Street is indicative of the great hold Darwin's theory has had on the modern capitalist state. However, David Loye's rereading of Darwin's lesser known work, The Descent of Man reveals that Darwin had, in his later years, identified the significance of mutuality and cooperation. Loye reveals that Darwin writes only twice of 'survival of the fittest', but 95 times of love.

By the 1960s, biologists had begun studying instances where animals, even microbes were cooperating. In his work *Super cooperators*, Martin Nowak suggests that altruism could actually further one's chances of survival. Indeed, it seems audacious to believe that altruism and cooperation can better one's life, when one is inundated by the message of individualism and competition.

This study attempts to understand how the latter message has been propagated as opposed to the message of cooperation. By revisiting Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, and discussing areas of ecocriticism and epistemology, I will discuss how the novel is anthropocentric in most regards, and is indicative of a culture wherein nature is silenced and man's ideology of dominance is implicit. In decentering man in the novel, we may be at a better position to understand nature and our place in it.

In the novel, Santiago exhibits many traits of the classic hero: immense strength, valour and moral uprightness, that Hemingway summed famously as "grace under pressure". His hero Santiago says, "I'll kill him though," "In all his greatness and his glory... But I will show him what a man can do and what a man endures" (Hemingway 32). In *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*, Ursula Le Guin speaks of the reduction of narrative to conflict. She writes, "Male activity of hunting has produced a tradition of death- linear plotlines, larger than life hero, inevitable conflict" (Cody Jones. Web). Hemingway suggests that Santiago is a hero because he struggles till the end; the marlin is ravaged by sharks, as is his pride, but Santiago's glory lies in his grit and determination to fight his own battle till the end. He is exalted to a Christ-like status; on returning home, Santiago struggles up the hill with his mast on his shoulders, evoking parallels with the scene where Christ carries the Crucifix to Calvary. The old man also has stigmata- like wounds on his wrists from his struggles at sea.

Still, he expresses that he is lucky to have found such a worthy opponent in the marlin: "But what a great fish he is and what will he bring in the market if the flesh is good. He took the bait like a male and he pulls like a male and his fight has no panic in it" (24). This dichotomous theme of man vs. nature is further implied in the title, pitching Santiago against the natural forces of the sea, the tides and the giant marlin. Once the sharks destroy the marlin, the old man apologises to the marlin. He concedes that he had caused their undoing: "Fish that you were. I am sorry that I went

too far out. I ruined us both" (56). In these lines, one can register a sense of guilt felt by the old man. The symbolism of having gone too far is not lost on the reader. It conveys how the old man's ecological consciousness is blinded by greed and pride.

Hemingway writes, "The old man always thought of her [the sea] as feminine and as something that gave or withheld great favours, and if she did wild or wicked things it was because she could not help them. The moon affects her as it does a woman, he thought" (14-15). Here, he employs the ubiquitous metaphor of land- as- woman, feminising nature, using the only code of signification he knows. In *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters*, Annette Kolodny critiques this practise, exposing it to be the root of "our aggressive and exploitive practises" (9). In her introduction, she asks, "was there perhaps a need to experience the land as a nurturing, giving maternal breast because of the threatening, alien, and potentially emasculating terror of the unknown?" (9). William Van O'Connor writes about Hemingway's world:

It is of course, a very limited world that we are exposed to through him. It is ultimately, a world at war- war either literally as armed and calculated conflict, or figuratively as marked everywhere with violence, potential, or present, and a general hostility. The people of this world operate under such conditions- of haste- as are imposed by war. (187)

Certainly, Hemingway has drawn inspiration from the experiences of his generation that had witnessed the World Wars. He wrote in an age when all ideals had fallen, when accepted institutions of faith had crumbled. In the following lines, the violence he inflicts on the marlin is evident: The shaft of the harpoon was projecting at an angle from the fish's shoulder and the sea was discolouring with the red of the blood from his heart. First it was dark as a shoal in the blue water that was more than a mile deep. Then it spread like a cloud. The fish was silvery and still and floated with the waves. (46)

However, it would be reductionist to consider Hemingway as an entirely ego- logical writer. His attitude to nature remains, at best, highly ambivalent, marked by a reverence for nature *and* the desire to overpower it. After he kills the marlin, he feels no sense of victory. Rather, he feels as though he has betrayed it; "I am only better than him through trickery," he thinks, "and he meant me no harm" (48). For him, the sharks' attack is not a matter of chance or bad luck; "the shark was not an accident" (49). He saw it as punishment for his having killed the marlin. Hemingway presents nature as friendly and affectionate, though cruel at times. The old man catches the marlin and also kills it but there is a sense of awe and admiration he feels towards it: "Then the fish came alive, with his death in him, and rose high out of the water showing all his great length and width and all his power and his beauty" (46).

In another instance, Hemingway writes, "He took about forty pounds," the old man said aloud... When the fish had been hit it was as though he himself were hit" (50). Here, one notices his absolute respect and admiration for the fish, his adversary, whom he also takes to calling his 'brother'. Considering the dignity the marlin shows in its death, he feels nobody would deserve to eat of it. For three days, Santiago holds onto the line that links him to the fish; he has deep bruises on his hands, a cramp

develops in his arm and his back aches terribly. Hemingway seems to suggest that this physical pain allows him to forge a connection with the marlin- a connectedness to the world around him that elevates him spiritually.

Most of the novel is in the form of the old man's interior monologue. He speaks to himself to carry on: "Now you are getting confused in the head, he thought. You must keep your head, dear. Keep your head clear and know how to suffer like a man" (45). Lines such as these, offer the reader a clear view of Santiago's state of mind, his motivations and desires. He speaks to the warbler, the marlin and the sharks. Yet, the animals are never shown as capable of communication. They remain mute spectators, who gain their identity solely from Santiago's representation of them.

The social theorist Foucault believed that knowledge is a form of power that knowledge can be gained from power. It is so interlinked with power that he often termed it as 'power/knowledge'. He saw power as a producer of reality: "it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth" (Foucault 19). In his 1980 lectures, he added the dimension of *subjectivity* to his treatise on the regime of truth. From his lectures, one tangible conclusion may be drawn- the possibility of overwriting the accepted anthropocentric regimes of truth by employing one's subjective experience of nature. This alternate discourse elicits the possibility of a race that values democracy and compassion over self- interest.

According to Cheryl Glotfelty, the true concern of ecocriticism should be "how nature gets textualised in literary texts" to show how literary ecology is merely human signification of the natural environment. In doing so, she wished to create "an ecoliterary discourse that would help produces an intertextual as well as an interactive approach between literary language and the language of nature" (Oppermann. Web). Ecocriticism, in this framework, offers an "analysis of the cultural constructions of nature, which also includes an analysis of language, desire, knowledge, and power" (Legler 227).

At one point, Santiago expresses his oneness with the marlin, thinking, "You are killing me, fish . . . But you have a right to . . . brother. Come on and kill me. I do not care who kills who" (45). With this realisation, the reader comes to terms with Hemingway's understanding of the natural world - everything in this world must die, and, only a brotherhood between men or animals, can help one face this truth. Even as the marlin dies, it is charged with life: "Then the fish came alive, with his death in him" (46).

Christopher Manes suggests that Deep Ecology has attempted to create this counter-ethics by listening to the nonhuman world and reversing environmentally destructive practises of modern society. He terms it the "language of ecological humility", echoing Bill Devall who suggested that deep ecology involves learning a new language. In his essay "Nature and Silence", Manes writes,

We require a viable environmental ethics to confront the silence of nature in our free from contemporary regime of thought, for it is within this vast eerie silence that surrounds our garrulous human subjectivity that an ethics of exploitation regarding

nature has taken shape and flourished, producing the ecological crisis that now requires the search for an environmental counter-ethics. (Manes. Web.)

However, there arises the discursive problem of nature speaking for itself using a human mode of signification. This requires “constructing a new mode of understanding and perception that surpasses, if not eliminates, the nature/culture dichotomy” (Oppermann. Web). As Santiago watches the weary warbler fly towards the shore, he says, “Take a good rest, small bird, ..” “Then go in and take your chance like any man or bird or fish” (27). Thus, he refers to the same end that meets all creations, that of death.

Paul Ekman speaks of his discussions with the Dalai Lama, when he read a Darwin quote to him. The Dalai Lama’s translator, Jinpa, made a surprise discovery- Darwin had used the phrase “all sentient beings”, which is the exact English translation of the Buddhist description of the all-encompassing compassion of a *bodhisattva*. This incident while asserting the connectedness and unity of all living beings reinforces Barry Commoner’s ecological law that everything is connected to everything else.

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**When the Secrets behind the Moustache Becomes a Naturalist's Envy:
Introspecting the Ferocious Sandal Smuggler and His Comrades**

Many centuries ago, India was known as the land of bounteous resources. India was known for its beautiful natural landscapes which includes the thick forests with wild beasts. Our flora and fauna is a rich source of many treasures and this had lured traders from all around the globe to plunder our resources. It's not about any foreigner, rather someone who ruled the jungles of south India for almost three decades. The very name which was a nightmare for many officials and even the governments of three states; a sandalwood smuggler, a famous poacher- he goes by the name Veerappan!

We all know him as a notorious Bandit, a cold blooded murderer, someone who kidnaps for ransom. But as we say opinions are always subject to change, Veerappan, India's most dreaded bandit has a strange mix of cruelty and humanity. No one ever bothered about the humane side of Veerappan except two persons. Krupakar and Senani who wrote their gripping anecdotal account with journalistic simplicity in 1998 titled *Birds, Beasts and Bandits 14 Days with Veerappan*. Veerappan was a loving husband, a keen observer of nature, someone who knew every inch of the forest. The south Indian forests were his home. He grew up on the lap of nature. The man whose pride rests on his moustache, hides many things.

Our paper has mainly focused on Veerappan and his comrades as portrayed by the two wildlife photographers and environmentalists, who were kidnapped and kept in captivity for 14 days. They had a very different tale that could shatter hopes of a reader who had read about Veerappan. What is told in the book is something that would make every reader question the authenticity of information told in newspapers. Krupakar and Senani were wildlife photographers who believed that they knew the nook and corner of Bandipur forests. They had been instrumental in the formation and functioning of "Namma Sangha", one of the most successful nature conservation movements in India. Mistaking them to be government officials, Veerappan and co. stormed into their house in the forest and abducted them. The journey to the unknown thus began.

Veerappan's knowledge of the Tamilnadu – Karnataka forests were extra ordinary that would put many forest officials and environmentalists to shame. He was a great story teller. He reconstructed the events in the wild that made his guests to stand mesmerized as it was so real. The hostages got a close look at the plant and animal diversity in the forests. Well, that was just the beginning. Senani and Kripakar did not know Veerappan was a surprise package.

But it was Senani's turn to surprise the hosts. He introduced to them Kaajaanas a bird that could sing 28 kinds of melodies. The hosts didn't believe until the bird sang 10 of them. The little bird had captivated the dacoit. Then came the Barbet. He told them the song was not from a single bird, but a duet. It was a kind of duet between the learned guests and the jungle dwelling guests regarding who knew the forest well. Veerappan has several spiritual discourses. The six foot tall Bandit with the trademark moustache began his day smearing his forehead with sacred ash and paying respect to God Muneswara.

Veerappan is rumoured to have killed about 2000 elephants. He enquired Senani on the number of tuskers still alive in Bandipur. He replied that due to heavy poaching, it's not more than 7 big males. Veerappan then asked his men the same question that fetched the same answer. They were astonished to know the investigation done by the hosts and the animal count they have. But Veerappan says that it had been very long since he killed an elephant. There are 25 killer gangs currently working here yet they hold him responsible for whatever happens in the forests.

Veerappan then narrates the story of his childhood. The story of a small village Gopinatham, at the foot of Mahadeswara hills. It was the place where he grew up. The land was known for the dense population of elephants, tigers and green blanket of trees. He describes how the landscape was vanished after the "Whites" stepped in during the pre-independence era. The short people from Japan hunted rouge elephants, chopped off their legs and tusks and killed crocodiles. The whites slayed everything that moved; cut down trees; blasted rocks and ran a granite business and converted the golden land into a graveyard.

When he narrated his encounter with a bear and tiger we can sense how deeply he observes animals. He killed both the bear and tiger in the encounter, but he found an unnatural behaviour in the tiger. Then he found that the tiger's heart was almost struck by a porcupine's thorn. He hated the wild boars. He called them wretched creatures as they raided the tummies of dead elephants. At several points we can find the philosophical musings that encourages Veerappan to love his co-beings including the birds and animals!

The most interesting part came when the hosts finally decided to give up the usual food menu. This time it was monkey meat. Senani laughed as they did not sight even a single monkey during their trail. Moreover it was difficult to spot one as they have ventured into the sensitive areas to the forests that haven't seen humans. Veerappan smiled and sat down putting his finger on his mouth. What happened next made the guests dumbstruck. He imitated the monkey calls so perfectly that he got replies from distance. "You call like this, the monkeys would come where you want to" -said Veerappan

People who hunt for food feel grateful for whatever that comes his way. But this man calls animals according to his taste; chooses one and shoots it. Not only a langur, Veerappan could imitate the sounds of a charging elephant and how they vocalize during different situation; death cry of a hare caught by a wild dog etc. The sounds he produced were so authentic that no one could match his mastery in it.

Finally Veerappan decided to set them free. The fourteenth day of their journey wasn't a pleasant one. Deep inside his butcher's heart, there was a pool of compassion. He pleaded Senani not to sell the house so that he could pay a visit sometime. Rangasamy, who once threatened to shoot Senani is the one who is sobbing like a kid. He even asked Senani to inform police about Madeva. He had a good gun and he is the one responsible for the elephant deaths. But always it is Veerappan who gets blamed for all the events happening in the forest. Veerappan was really concerned of the alarming death of elephants in Bandipur. How many naturalists here are sympathising on the same? We can see the pain of parting in Veerappan as well as in his gang in the final chapters of the book.

Actually who was Veerappan? Yes, he had committed crimes -sandalwood smuggling, elephant killing etc. But there are reports that forest officials once encouraged him to do so which later made Veerappan unstoppable. He had killed many police officials too. But those were notorious ones who harmed and killed his villagers. He was the messiah of the poor who were at the receiving end of the police officials. He was the uncrowned king of his region and he got in return complete support from them. He says that the policemen were goons in uniform who did not even spare his little sister. Veerappan longed to join civilization. Over his reign in jungle for 30 years, he was denied the chance to start a normal life. He wanted clemency, but he knew that the police would never let him live if caught. He demanded ransoms to support his gang members whose properties and families were destroyed by the police. He claims not to have smuggled ivory or sandalwood as the papers say. They give false news about him. Even if a police man gets injured during crossfires, Veerappan is held responsible. When asked for 3 crores as a ransom, Veerappan was offered just 3 lakhs and even the policeman who brought the ransom stood scratching his head asking for bribe. That was the way the outside world worked. Media always exaggerated news about him.

It is evident from the case of Veerappan that men always cheat, but never animals! He understood this fact very well. In a way he was just saving the forests. The present reports show that no animal is safe in forests. If you have enough influence, you can go and plunder the resources in the forests. There are many bloody battles raging in jungles across India. Though Veerappan was bad, he was the lesser version of it. His name was a nightmare for many, but almost 20000 people attended his funeral. He was hated by a few and loved by many. Now the question arises- Who is the evil? Like the authors say, this is neither to praise Veerappan nor to earn sympathy from people, but to prove the fact that he could interpret the language of the forests and animal calls more than any naturalists here. He was a man who shed tears! Above all a passionate nature lover who is fluent in philosophical and spiritual musings.

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**Anthropic Desecration and Woes of Supplicating Nature for Survival:
An Ecocritical Reading of the select Poems of “Marakkavikal”**

Nature has been conceived in literature as a complex area that is embedded with a wealth of conceptual and symbolic meanings. Here, the binaries between primitive and modern play a crucial role in foregrounding the ethos of contemporary society. The primitive is overlooked as something wild and uncouth while the modern, though sophisticated, but artificial is praised in glowing parlance. But the ethnic sophistication of any race is the gradual procession and progression from the traditional. Hence, sensing the impending doom of ecological destruction through the desecration of Nature, a group of writers namely “Marakkavikal” (Tree-headed poets) emerged in Kerala in the late 1980’s with their mighty lines and oracular voices mirroring the repercussions of the destruction of our immediate environment. They endeavored much to counteract the anthropic activities that play havoc in nature through a multitude of unscientific projects.

The Silent Valley Hydroelectric Project (SVHP) served to create a new mode of ecological consciousness among the people. The Silent Valley, the remote and secluded forest, is located in the Western Ghats in Palakkadu district of northern Kerala. It is the sole surviving bit of evergreen forest in the Sahya range covering about 89.52 square kilometres and is rich in both the flora and fauna. In 1970, the Kerala State Electricity Board (K.S.E.B) submitted a hydroelectric project to the Government of India demanding to construct a dam across the Kunthipuzha which flows through the valley. The then political parties, press and the Government enthusiastically engrossed the project as it was viewed as a panacea for the power shortage in Kerala, particularly in the Malabar region. They were obsessed only with the material comforts that the project may bring in and showed green flag for it. But a group of scientists identified the imminent threat to the Silent Valley brought about by the projects and it provoked the environmentalists as well as the writers to think deeply about the resultant ecological crisis. Hence they expressed their sympathy for nature in harsh terms. It invoked much controversy and after a series of protests and campaigns, the Government finally abandoned the project.

The literature of Malayalam played a crucial role in the campaign to resist the SVHP. Some of the Malayalam poets, regardless of their political and ideological differences, displayed unity and resolve in echoing the imminent death of ecology. They formed an organization called ‘Prakrithi Samrakshana Samithi’ (the organization for conservation) and later in 1983, published an anthology consisting thirty-four poems on the deepening environmental crisis of Kerala. It earned them the title, ‘Marakkavikal’ (tree-headed poets). It is a derogatory term used by the critics of the time to scorn the group of poets as if they were idiots and had ‘Marathala, (tree-headed that is pig headed) for they gave grave concern for nature than human. Among the so-called “Marakkavikal” include the renowned Malayalam poets like Sugathakumari, Kadamanitta Ramakrishnan, O.N.V Kurup, Ayyappapanicker and Vishnunarayanan Nambudiri. The poems they wrote served as a means for appealing the emotion rather than the intellect of the people, creating a new ecological consciousness, and working thus by the emotional and meta levels, they offer a

terrible foreboding to reprimand the anthropic desecration of nature by the so-called 'cultural beings'.

There was an emerging ecological concern that appeared as a development within modernism in Malayalam literature and it was reflected throughout the poetry of 'Marakkavikal'. Their attitude towards nature was expressed with considerable difference in their portrayal of nature, and their excessive concern over the 'Mother Nature' provoked the critics of the time to a great extent since they were the ardent supporters of the current scientific developments, especially, the SVHP. O.N.V. Kurup, the celebrated romantic poet in Malayalam, in 'A Requiem to Mother Earth' ('Bhoomikkoru Charamageetham') decries the callous ways in which landscape is commodified and sliced up by human beings for selfish motives. The poem, by addressing the issues of ecological preservation, states that only mutual coexistence between man and the earth would preserve the future of human race. The central image of the is that of a mother who is torn to pieces by her own children and who ironically, refuses to die for the sustenance of the same. Thus the poet laments the sad plight of the Mother Earth at the hands of her son- the human inhabitants on it. He says:

When tomorrow you lie benumbed
In the enveloping shadow
Of the dark poison-flower of death,
None will be left here,
Not me either,
To mourn, to moisten your dead lips
With our tears!

Hence the poem is at once an appeal to the ruthless humans to stop the relentless exploitation of nature, an exhortation to be mindful of the countless sacrifices the Earth does for her Children, a warning against the anthropic desecration of the sacred caretaker and finally, a dirge for the magnanimous and supplicating Mother who denies to die for the sake of her children.

The angst against anthropocentric activities and the fear of ecological annihilation is found artistic expression in the poems of Smt. Sugathakumari, the prolific Malayalam poet and environmentalist. Besides being a foremost poet in Malayalam, she has registered a formidable presence in the social and political landscape of Kerala during the last thirty years. Her poem, 'Hymn to the Tree' ('Marathinu Stuti') mirrors the fragility brought to the natural milieu and the dire need for its conservation. It describes the bleak scenario arising out of the callous felling of trees and the consequent weakening of the ecosystem. The tree becomes the source of the fresh and rejuvenating air we breathe by consuming the poison from the atmosphere (Carbon dioxide) and it props us being the stick by us at the end of our life. Though the avarice of man kills her slowly, she, as a mother, still silently bears all in silence. It says:

You save our
Mother from floods
And rejuvenate
The soil. You
Store the ambrosia

Streaming down the heavens
In her simmering heart.

Thus the poem presents a tree's ecological significance and its benevolence to man. It alludes to the tree's role in preventing soil erosion and in regulating and sustaining the distribution of rain and water supply.

The image of the earth as a forgiving mother is vehemently contested by Kadamannitta Ramakrishnan, the most revolutionary poet among the "Marakkavikal". In his 'Child, Do not Drink Breast Milk' (Kunhe, Mulappal Kudikkarutu), his delineation of earth as a patient mother is much engaging to the readers. He represents the Mother Nature as a preserver as well as a destroyer and the humans, the children of the earth, should approach her with reverence and love. He comments:

Is earth a playing ball or playful doll?
Her patience too has limits.

The poem becomes an appeal of Earth to posterity not to enjoy the fruit and comfort of her body as it is desecrated and vitiated by the greedy aspirants of the present through unsustainable development activities.

Vishnu Narayanan Nambudiri, one of the prominent members of the 'Prakrithi Samrakshana Samithi' depicts the forest dwellers as the only one who bears crude wisdom of ecology in his poem, 'A Voice in the Wilderness'. Contrastingly, the modern man only possesses 'the hypocritical false trappings of the city'. He exhorts human to keep away from giving them strange disease, absurd education and madness of religion. Later in the poem, he laments that it is a terrible misfortune to see the forest as alien to the human. He says:

We cleared cool rain forest and
Scattered gold coins for rubber latex;
This is what we conceived as "agriculture" ...!

Here again as with other 'Marakkavikal', Vishnu Narayanan Nambudiri conceives the nature as mother who provided her children with enough food, but they, ironically, sensing the opportunity, cut open her belly and sold its contents to generate more wealth. They intruded the secret corners of forest and to accomplish their task, the government also became a party to this fraud.

K. Ayyappa Paniker, with his rhythmic note and felicity of expression, asks for the lost splendor and wonder of nature in his poem, 'Naadevide Makkale'. He illustrates, with typical citations, how the wealth of nature has been looted through the monstrous anthropocentric activities. His alliterative verse runs commending on how the natural resources-landscape, trees, birds, beasts, flowers etc. being destroyed by the avarice of man. The poem touches all the developmental activities of modern man from an agrarian economy to the industrial one.

Thus the poetry of the so-called 'Marakkavikal' is abound in wisdom illuminating the imminent doom of Nature. Their poems, in an apocalyptic note, served in unsettling the consciousness of the contemporary consumerist society. It worked out in the minds of the common people to raise their voices for the sustenance of life in the planet. The imagery of the nature as a 'Supplicating Mother' for survival depicted by the 'Marakkavikal' brings much shock and dismay to the emotion as well as the intellect of the so-called 'Cultured Man'.

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An Ethnographic Analysis of Life Chances among the Kurichiya and Kuruman Women in Wayanad

Life chance is a Weberian concept, which can be explained in terms of class situation of an individual. Of course, life chances of adivasi women are immensely differed from male members in their family as well as the women of other communities or social groups. Role of women in a society should be counted not only in terms of participation in economic activities, but also their non-economic activities to be equally manifested. Kurichiya and Kuruman communities have comparatively social and economically higher position among the Adivasis of the state. They had hold ownership over forest land, made use of natural resources for decades. The situation has been changed by government enacted rules, education and by other developmental activities. How these changes reflect in the social life and health of women of Kuruchiya and Kuruman communities are being critically analysed here.

‘Life chances’ is a Weberian concept, which can be substituted by ‘status’ or ‘class’ of a person in a modern capitalist society. The term ‘life chances’ is used by Max Weber in analyzing the class and status of individual, in particular with reference to the concept of ‘class situation’(Weber, Marx, 2012) The term class situation is principally differed in Weberian analysis from the widely accepted Marxian approach to class. Commonly acknowledged notion is that in a capitalist society, it is the market that determines the life chances enjoyed by individuals. Life chances can be understood as, in Giddens's terms, the chances an individual has for sharing in the socially created economic or cultural "goods" that typically exist in any given society' (1973) or, more simply, as the chances that individuals have of gaining access to scarce and valued outcomes.

The encyclopedia of social sciences explains the usage of the term life chances consequently passed into general practice, especially in studies of social mobility, where the closed nature of a society diminishes the opportunities (chances) for advancement of social classes, women, and ethnic or racialized minorities. It includes chances for educational attainment, health, material reward, and status mobility. Here, in this paper, the term sounds as the same.

Outlining the Argument

In recent years, the researches on Adivasi communities or indigenous people treats as controversially debated topics in the academic arena. The researcher’s attitude (methodological and philosophical constraints) towards the researched is seriously assessed. Linda Tuwai Smith gives directives on developing a research agenda for ‘insider’ research within indigenous communities. The current and future role of the non-indigenous researcher is marginal to the decolonizing methodologies agenda. Her work is a valuable reminder of the need to reflect on, and be critical of, one's own culture, values, assumptions and beliefs and to recognize these are not the norm to encounter with an another culture. It also reminds researchers to consider whose stories are being privileged and whose stories are being marginalized in any

representations of the other, especially the endogenous one (Smith, 2008). Even though, the Adivasi communities have been become fascinating topic for researches in Sociology and Social Anthropology. The feminist and eco feminist approaches dealt issues of Adivasi women in depth fully.

Tribal studies in India are largely a product of colonial ethnographic research. The driven methodological force of this research is qualitative in nature. However, ethnography is the tool, which carries out the soul and sound of the particular. Ethnography is the study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally (D.Brewer, 2000) . Ethnography is not a unique method of social research but a style of research that is renowned by its objectives, and active participation of researcher in the setting.

Contestation and contextualization of Kurichiya and Kuruman Communities Wayanad district has the highest number of Adivasi population in the state of Kerala. It is 17.43 percentage of the total Adivasi population of the state, where Kurichiya and Kuruman communities enjoy the top most position at the hierarchical division of tribal communities of the region. The available literature deliberately discusses the heterogeneous nature of Adivasi communities. Each Adivasi community in the state has its own specific dialect, lifestyles, practices, norms and customs. In most of the tribal societies in Kerala, especially in Wayanad, women enjoy equal status with their men folk and are the cornerstone of the social structure of the tribal societies (Mathur, 1977). Tribal women enjoy certain economic and social equalities and are equal partners in family and conjugal rights. But they do not enjoy pre-marital freedom (Aerthyl, 2008). Even though they have an important position in tribal society, they are debarred from exercising power over land, performing poojas, sacrifices and other customary religious practices. These are generalized statements in available literature. Kjosavik, and Shanmugaratnam, (2007) imply that their resource base and livelihood systems under went radical changes and their property rights systems including ownership, power over resources and economic relationships transformed over time and space. For Adivasi, land is a habitat, territory, social organization, economic system, cultural identification and political boundary. However, the government policies in the colonial and post-colonial period have affected the Adivasi's close relation to land, forests and its resources. The imperialist ideology based on private exclusive ownership of land and capitalist development was alien to the Adivasi notions of stewardship and communal ownership of land (Isac, 2012). In mid-1980's Kunhaman wrote that there were no concrete academic notes on the economy of the Adivasis. These are commonly accepted notion of economic condition of them. Here, in this paper, more than the economic system life situation of kurichiya and Kuruman are particularly discussed.

Kurichiya is one of the major sects of Adivasi communities of Kerala State. They are the first agricultural tribe to have settled in the hilly areas of forest land (S.K., 2016). They practice untouchability with other tribal communities and a few of dalits in Malabar area. Kurichiyas mainly subsist on agriculture, but they are good hunters and archers too. The main implements for their hunting are bow and arrows, which is set

aside in the family armory. Though, the male members are only allowed to use these armaments, while women are familiar to do with.

The Mullukuruma is a Scheduled Tribe found in the Wayanad District of Kerala and adjoining areas of the Gudalur Taluk and Nilgiri district of Tamilnadu. They have been referred as, Mullukurumbar (Aiyappan, 1948) and Mullukuruman by Luiz (1962). Recently they are called as Kuruman. The Kurumar community is believed to be the descendants of the Veda kings who were preceded by the Kudumbiya dynasty mentioned in the rock engravings (Johnny 1995, 2001). The myths, stories, places of worship and names of places that still exist in Wayanad point to it. The Kuruman believe that their present name is a creation of the Nairs of Wayanad during the Nair supremacy. The thing is that the Kuruman couldn't think of a hut without bamboo tree.

Socio- cultural and economic environment of the researched

Adivasi communities find themselves at the losing end of socio-economic changes taking place in diverse contexts of development. This has been adversely affected on the Adivasis, especially those who are settled in the suburban areas of Wayanad. Where, the contact with the other communities and the socializing agencies has been trying to make them comfortable in the modern world. The marketization and expanding possibilities of tourism in the rural area of Wayanad bring many changes in the social and economic scenario of the district. But all these changes could not bring that much changes in the social position of Adivasi women apart from economic aids by selling traditional products in the tourist spots of the district.

Women's role as an active participant of agrarian labour or forest dweller along with social roles like mother, wife and as a basic initiator of other dimensions of family life is of extreme importance. In the case of Kurichiya community of Wayanad, women never legally hold possession over land. They usually keep away from making decisions on property ownership and common community affairs. Community land holding system was common among them. Lately, common property divides among the male members of the family and a share keeps with the head man of the clan as a community property for common affairs. Extended family type is becoming familiar among them in recent years. This might be replaced by nuclear families in future.

Community ownership of land existed among the Kuruman community. The lineage head man of the settlements called 'Mooppan' usually held the ownership and took decisions over the community property. Women had no power over the property, which is owned by Mooppen on behalf of the entire clan. Although the descent is through female line, daughters have no right in the clan's property, which belongs to his /her mother's family. Division of property is more frequent in recent years. The father divides his land among his sons. If he has no son, the property goes to male relative (K. Sebastian, 2013). Women are completely expelled from their father's property, whether which is land or valuable materials.

Education has played a crucial role in the transformation of the tribal family. The Kuruman are more educated than the other tribal communities in Wayanad. The educated youngsters among them get jobs in the urban centers. There are a number of

both male and female, engaged in non-government and private service sectors for their livelihood. A handful of them depend on government salaried employments for their livelihood. They had a common hearth and enjoyed community living for decades. Educational and employment opportunities, which provided by the urban employers attracts them to be settled in these areas. It seems that there is a trend of shifting residential type from extended to nuclear family system. Norms and values, which prevailed among the Kuruman, as part of their family relations and marriage can be called women friendly and that intensively express the concern over female members of the community particularly. Women are permitted to divorce their legal wed with support of clear evidences as such she is betrayed or exploited by her husband (K. Sebastian, 2013). She can remarry another male from her own community as per community rule. Widows are permitted to marry after the first death anniversary of her husband.

Kurichiya community has an enormous number of educated youngsters engaged in government services. From my field experience, there are a number of educated women in the community; very few could get away from the native to get into an employment. Others are strictly bound with community norms hence they could not move away from the hearth to find out a job. They have to satisfy with the job, which they have as ST promoters or ASHA workers at their local area. In Kurichiya clan, women in the community are restricted to do religious enactments; meanwhile they have access in religious ceremonies as a follower. Marriage takes place only after a girl attains her puberty and is decided by their headman. There is no voice for girls to put forward their position over the decision of head man on her marriage or her daughter's marriage. Divorce and widow marriage are allowed but a woman is not allowed to live with more than one husband. There are restrictions over sexual relations of their members and it is strictly governed and controlled by the elder male members of the community. The delivery of a woman and menstruation period in her life cycle gets treated as subordinate resident to other family members, while they do not allow getting her out of the room for certain days.

Puberty was considered as an unhallowed period, but the educated young female members of the nuclear family, expose their disagreement on such communal norms. Contrary to the general belief that the Adivasi enjoy great freedom in matters relating to sex, the Kuruman are very strict on the matters related with the conduct of their unmarried youth. The unmarried boys and girls are not allowed to experience sexual indulgence. It is accepted that clan exogamy is observed and in fact it is the worst crime that a Kuruman commits. It is punished with expulsion from the community and leads to disinheritance. Disinheritance is also meted out to a widow for illicit sexual relations.

Both Kurichiya and Kuruman experiences community bounded restrictions over foremost social and religious institutions. In the case of education and employment, Kuruman has had somewhat more freedom than the other Adivasi groups. Their possession over land was minimal so they could easily shift from forest area to rural villages and from village to sub urban areas. But Kurichiya's life revolves around their agrarian land and all members of the family equally enjoy onus in the field.

Determination of class situation

Meaning of the word class is entirely differed from the concept 'class situation', which is defined as a number of people have in common specific causal component of their life chances in so far as this component is represented exclusively by economic interests in the possession of goods and opportunities for income and which is represented under the conditions of the commodity or labour market. The Adivasi women do not have equal economic position with the male members of their family, where as they engaged in agrarian labour works and taking care of their children and elder members of the family. As same as other communities, these are unpaid jobs. The opportunities for women in forest area cannot be measured on the basis of economic relations within the family or market than their capacity to raise their opinion at least within the family or clan.

Adivasi community did not have a direct relationship with market economy, even if they were working as wage labours in agrarian sector. Hitherto, they were paid by food crops rather than currency as reward for their manual effort. The community might have had become familiar with the labour market only in recent years, where their manual works reckon in standardized form. Market economy resonances the nature of economy as capitalist, where the life chances of different communities are easily accountable. It is the most elemental economic fact that the way, in which the disposition over material property is distributed among a multiplicity of people, meeting relatively competitive in the market for the purpose of exchange, which creates specific life chances. The mode of distribution prevails among the Adivasi communities habitually differs in various aspects, which should have influence over life chances of members of the particular communities.

In general, contemporary approaches see classes as rooted in production, it reflects in social status too (Marion Fourcade and Kieran Healy, 2013). But in Weber's writing, the class situation of an individual is directly related with his or her life chances. Each Adivasi group has its own specific life styles, culture, customs, traditions and religious practices and all these manifest the life chances of the community members. Female members of the clan have some other norms to address their position. Whenever moving to upward position of hierarchical order of caste or clan, it is conspicuously present that the position of women will not be in the same direction. Female members of Kurichiya community consume secondary position in the common substances, while Kuruman women enjoy equal position at least in family matters. There are many indigenous communities in India which are reckoned as matrilineal or matrilocal in nature, but in the case of Kurichiya, it is patriarchal in nature and practice. Nevertheless, Kuruman is patriarchal in nature and women dominate in common community undertakings, whereas women have a space for freedom of self-expression within their community and hearth.

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A Walk into the Enchanted Forest of Shivapuram

Forest has always been the heart and soul of literature and popular culture. From the oldest folklore to the Modern works of fantasy, forest feature either as a place of enchantment, threatening danger or one of refuge. It also represents the edge of civilization and the unconscious part of human mind, a place of mists where magical or supernatural beings wander. Since the real beauty and mystery of nature lies in the forest, its relevance cannot be forbidden. Literature and Films have always tried to explore or document the mysteries of Nature by shedding light on the roots of taboos and traditions that are still practiced in our country.

Though our lives had its origin from forest, the modern man has secluded forest merely as a holiday spot whereas the people who owns forests are categorized as tribal's who are illiterate and uncivilized. We are not realizing the ultimate fact that nature is enriched with lots of hidden treasures which is necessary for one's existence. In our present scenario, most parents deny their children to enjoy the favors provided by nature just like forbidding them to play in mud, enjoying the rain, forcing them to wear sandals while stepping outside their home by not allowing them to feel the soil etc. When people started to detach themselves from nature in the name of civilization, they turn into the destroyer of nature and thus cannibalistic tendency in man is increased.

Closely tied with nature this paper focuses on the intrinsic relationship between myth, superstitions and the role of nature and man, in a village named Shivapuram as presented in the film 'Anandhabadhran' directed by Santosh Sivan and Gautam Mohan (asst.), based on the novel of same name by Sunil Parameswaran. Here the enchanted forest of Shivapuram is an area, beyond which, people normally travel, where strange thing might occur and strange people might live, an area now devoted to witchcraft and black magic. The movie draws the visuals of Shivapuram by presenting an old tharavadu (ancestral home), complete with nalukettu, ponds, dark and damp caves and groves with lush green surroundings, forest and the waterfalls. The characters in the movie give us a glimpse of beauty and horror in some of our traditional customs. Various beliefs such as worshiping the snakes, protecting nagamanikya (a precious stone which decorates the serpent's head) and taaliyolas, other superstitions like making a mortal woman the Goddess of the village, witchcraft, the concept of 'yakshi' (spirit), transmigration etc. are uncurled through this film. These elements are not scientifically proven truths; but they are the myths or beliefs practiced by many people for a while. It also depicts the superstitious beliefs where woman are considered as Devi (goddess), according to certain myths and traditions. A woman who is chosen to be a Devi is denied to marry. Now let us have a walk into the enchanted forest of Shivapuram.

The movie *Anandhabadhram* commences with the conventional mode of storytelling where Gayathri (Revathy), now an American settled citizen; narrates the mystic story of Shivapuram, her native land to her son Ananthan (Prithviraj) stays as a backdrop for the title scenes. Ananthan arrives at Shivapuram, with his deceased mother's ashes in order to fulfill her last wish of lighting a lamp in Shivakavu. He meets a host of endearing characters in the village like Bhadra (Kavya Madhavan), his maternal grandmother and also the black magician Dhigambaran (Manoj K Jayan).

Shivapuram with all its charm, mysterious caves, sacred groves and waterfalls presents the real beauty of nature and invites us into a land enriched with folk tales, superstitions, witchcraft, spirits and black magic. Since the Oldest traditions are preserved in folktales, it will always have something magical and supernatural. Here, Gayathri begins by narrating the mythical aspects of Shivakavu (a temple) through the silent whispering of flames, which gives a hint of the coming disasters. These flames are not mere flames but the representation of society itself. She there on introduces the character Sidhayogi who meditated for years to achieve supernatural powers and later on uses these powers for his evil deeds. He at first steals the Nagamothiram (a sacred ring) which was safeguarded by Kunjootan (a small serpent) for attaining supernatural powers.

Here, Kunjootan is a representation of the traditional custom of worshipping snakes and the blind faith of the villager's that by doing so they will be protected from all ills. Serpents play an extensive role in Indian mythology. In Hindu mythology, we can see Lord Shiva wearing snake as an ornament around his neck as a symbol of controlling fear and death, and we can also see Lord Vishnu resting on a five headed snake and in the case of Lord Ganesha we can see a snake swapped around his stomach.

In India, especially in the South there are many houses, that has got a shrine of their own which is often a grove reserved for snakes; located in a garden surrounded by trees, creepers etc. Generally people are not allowed to simply roam around these sacred groves. They are permitted in only for praying and providing offerings to the deities and also during the time of conducting certain rituals. 'Noorum palum' is an important offering made to the snake god in Sacred Groves. It is the offering of rice powder, turmeric powder, lime, cow's milk, tender coconut water, banana and ghee. This ritual is generally performed on 'Ayilyam' star of the local almanac every year. It is believed that the devotees will have to face misfortunes if they do not keep the sanctity of the sacred groves or causing harm to the grove.

The groves within the forest are the hidden treasure of nature that is capable of protecting and destroying the entire Universe. In the movie, the caves and the groves play a predominant role in carrying out the lives of the villagers. It's not the characters that lead the story but it's the groves that carry the mystery of the future events. The film is revolving around two groves i.e., Shivakavu and Guhakavu. In contrast to the tales told by Gayathri, Ananthan witnesses Shivakavu in all its ruined state. The ruined Shivakavu symbolizes the decaying structure of the society where the morals are vanishing day by day. As in a scene, Gayathri had narrated of Sidhayogi killing a man and puts off the flame from a stoning lamp, thus indicating

the spread of evilness. Flames are connected with light, purity and goodness, are the symbolic representations associated with the temple which in now transformed into a ruined one due to the evil practices of Dhigambaran. The flames here depict the pathetic situation of the people and society. But the arrival of Ananthan to Shivapuram makes us believe that a reformation is possible by lighting a thousand lamps in Shivakavu.

Gayathri then introduces Guhakavu situated behind a waterfall where nagamanikya is protected by Kunjootan and other snakes along with a Yakshi (female spirit). It is believed that nagamanikya is regarded as the soul of the universe that controls the entire cosmic system. Knowing that one could see the Nagamanikya only with the presence of a girl from Madambi family who has a divine power within, Sidhayogi kidnaps Gayathri and drags her into the cave, but Madhavagurukul kills him and rescues her. Before dying, Sidhayogi has already injected his evilness in his grandson Dhigambaran by passing on his Nagamothiram and advising him to seek vengeance on the Madambi family. There on it were the days of Dhigambaran trying to fulfill Sidhayogi's last wish for which he made use of the Shivakavu for his black magic rituals. He could sense the presence of anyone entering Shivakavu and would either harm them or kill them.

The movie also introduces a village girl Badhra who knows the secret recipes of some natural medicines using wild herbs with which she cures the diseases of the villagers. As today's lifestyle is getting techno-savvy, we are moving apart from nature, without realizing the fact that nature is a part of us and it is enriched with many herbs that could cure our diseases with no side effects. We have not yet fully explored what the nature has got for us; instead we are chasing for something new and harmful. While we are trying to adopt western culture; it should be noticed that foreigners from distant lands are coming to India for utilizing our natural resources both for physical and mental refreshments.

Badhra instead of becoming Devi which Madambi family wanted her to be, falls in love with Ananthan and this unravels the latter part of the story. Ananthan's innocent wish to see the nagamanikya becomes fruitful with the aid of Badhra and blessings of Kunjootan. Dhigambaran there on with his evil eyes tries trans-migrating his soul into Ananthan as this could achieve the favors of Badhra so he could win nagamanikya and make Ananthan the culprit. Transmigration is conducted by Dhigambaran inside the secret chambers of Guhakavu. He with his supernatural powers had arranged a magical tub filled with oil in which he dips himself whereby trans migrating his soul with Ananthan. During this process Ananthan feels a terrible headache and even without self realization he turns into a puppet controlled by Dhigambaran. In a scene, Badhra happens to see a snail and scattered lucky red seeds which is a bad omen indicating that something is wrong. This proves that if we are living close to nature, the nature itself is capable of making us identify the unfortunate events by providing us secret signs. Badhra after realizing about these facts from another character takes initiative to save Ananthan and to restore the lost happiness of Shivapuram in which she succeeds. At last Dhigambaran loses all his powers and Ananthan was able to light the thousand lamps as per his mother's wish thus restoring the faith. The film ends by providing a positive outlook of defeating the evil. It shows the destruction of

long established evilness of Dhigambaran. Here, Forest as a symbol of rejuvenation makes reconciliation with one's own self and environment.

Man knows that he is part of the whole of Nature, but the whole is awe inspiring, imperfectly understood and must therefore be treated with care and respect. Here Groves represent the known and unknown powers of nature. Traditionally Groves is a source of getting wild herbs and is helpful to many birds and animals for their water requirements during summer. Nowadays these sacred groves are no longer in use, as the planet is being deforested and modernized. The sacred grove is now obscure; it has merely become a metaphor for the progress of civilization. The film for its literary lap of forest love highlights our rich culture and traditions by making use of ancient myths, stories and tradition bonds the audience deeply into traditional mythology. Here the enchanted forest of Shivapuram represents not only what is lost, but a place where what is lost can be restored.

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**Exploring the Greening:
A Theological Reverberation of the Ecological System**

Hinduism projects nature as a manifestation of the divine power and He pervades all beings equally. Hindus regard everything around them as pervaded by a subtle divine presence, may it be rivers, mountains, lakes, animals, flora, the mineral world, as well as the stars and planets. The Hindu Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, the great Epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, and other earliest of extracts of the religion extensively exhibit holistic cosmic vision with strong environmental ethics and consistent emphasis on preservation of ecological balance. The religion shows deep respect for all elements on the earth. Hinduism describes everything in terms of divinity and in relation to the ultimate reality. All the living organisms in the world have a divine touch according to Hindu mythology. Atharva Veda states: Mata Bhumi Putroham Prithivyah (Prithvi Sukta, meaning: My Mother is Earth and I am Her Son). This clearly shows that the basic premise of the religion is that man co-exists with other living beings in a system where everything is interdependent and flow of energy is cyclic. It upholds the Earth as Divine Mother and all living beings as her equal offspring.

The Earth is celebrated for all her natural bounties and particularly for her gifts of herbs and vegetation. Her blessings are sought for prosperity in all endeavors and fulfillment of all righteous aspirations. A covenant is made that humankind shall secure the Earth against all environmental trespass and shall never let her be oppressed. A soul-stirring prayer is sung in one of the hymns for the preservation and conservation of hills, snow-clad mountains, and all brown, black and red earth, unhurt, unwounded, unbroken and well defended by Indra. The Rishis of the past have always had a great respect for nature. There was not a superstitious primitive theology. They perceived that all material manifestations are a shadow of the spiritual. The Bhagavad Gita advises us not to try to change the environment, improve it, or wrestle with it. If it seems hostile at times tolerate it. Ecology is an inherent part of a spiritual world view in Hinduism.

The religion hence imbibes and encourages ecological ethics among its devotees. The Earth is treated as 'Mother land' and nature's five elements- Air(Vayu), Fire(Agni), Water(Jal), Space(Vyom), and Earth(Prithvi)- are treated as the constituents of body matter of all living beings, and instills an innate sense of oneness between all things. These five elements are the foundation of an interconnected web of life. Dharma - often translated as "duty" - can be reinterpreted to include our responsibility to care for the earth. Simple living is a model for the development of sustainable economies. Our treatment of nature directly affects our karma. *Pancha Mahabhutas* (The five great elements) create a web of life that is shown forth in the structure and interconnectedness of the cosmos and the human body. Hinduism teaches that the five great elements (space, air, fire, water, and earth) that constitute the environment are all derived from *prakriti*, the primal energy. Hinduism recognizes that the human

body is composed of and related to these five elements, and connects each of the elements to one of the five senses. The human nose is related to the earth, tongue to water, eyes to fire, skin to air, and ears to space. This bond between our senses and the elements is the foundation of our human relationship with the natural world. For Hinduism, nature and the environment are not outside us, not alien or hostile to us. They are an inseparable part of our existence, and they constitute our very bodies. Millions of Hindus recite Sanskrit mantras daily to revere their rivers, mountains, trees, animals, and the earth. Hindu religion gives much importance to forest. The whole world is considered as a forest, and for balancing the equilibrium of the earth (nature), we have to keep intact the relationship between forest and human life. Almost all the religious works give emphasis to tree worship. An evergreen tree in Hinduism is considered as a symbol of eternal life. In fact, the trees and plants like Banyan, Neem, Peepal, Basil (Tulsi) and Bel are regular features in the compounds of any Hindu temple. Banyan and Peepal trees are regularly worshipped as pious trees by the devotees in Hindu temples, while Bel is an integral part of the paraphernalia for worshipping Lord Shiva. Basil (Tulsi) is one of the most revered shrubs in Hinduism. Grasses such as *kusha* and *durbha* are also hallowed, of which *kusha*, in particular, is offered to Lord Ganesha.

Hindus normally worship Lord Ganesha before starting a work in order to make it smooth and without any obstacles (which is known as ‘Ganapathihomam’). For this purpose, coconut, ixora flower (chethipoovu) *karuka* etc. That is, these plants and trees are a part of human life, which shows the importance of planting these in our garden. According to the Hindu religion, a human develops his relationship with nature, especially with trees, at the early stage of his life. An infant, according to hindus, gets acquainted with nature when it is five to six months old. It is on the occasion of the *Annaprasa* (*Choroonu*) that an infant is introduced to the outer world. In this ritualistic function, the baby is taken to the yard to round a big tree (normally coconut or jackfruit tree). This ritual itself shows the importance of humans’ relationship with trees.

Yaga, a Vedic ritual performed by Hindu priests (*Acharyas*), plays a very important role in balancing the ecological equilibrium. The myth behind *Yaga* is that it is performed to please the god Indra to shower rain on the earth. But the real intention of performing a *Yaga* is maintaining the ecological balance. The pots, bricks etc. used for a *Yaga* are made of wood and clay, which are the products of nature. The result of a *Yaga* goes directly to the earth. Thus by taking from and giving to the nature, these rituals balance ecological equilibrium.

Another interesting aspect of Hindu religion is the idea of Nakshatra vanam. Each lunar star sign (Aswathi, Bharani, Karthika etc.) has its own tree or plant. Conventional astrology dictates that planting, nurturing and worshipping respective trees by individuals according to their star signs will yield them significant growth and prosperity. In olden days, temples and parks used to plant these trees in various geometrical combinations corresponding to circles, linear and elliptical lines, representing Sree Chakra and Sudarshana Chakra etc.

Above all Hindu religion respects the existence of other living creatures like animals and also worships river and planets. Hinduism preaches respect for all forms of life

and emphasizes on preservation of bio-diversity. Hindus worships many animals and creatures like cow, snake etc. That's why the religion gives much importance to sacred groves (kaavu) and also protects it carefully. The rhythm of life is dictated by water and Hindus hold rivers in great reverence. The rivers are generally female divinities, food and life bestowing mothers. The most holy of rivers, the best known and most honored, is the Ganga or Ganges. She is personified as Goddess Ganga. The religion finds a sacred place everywhere; where ever there is a river, a mountain, a big tree, a large rock or any natural phenomenon- showers respect for nature and its multifarious features.

Thus, when we analyze the traditions and rituals of Hindu religion, we can clearly understand the role of religion in exploring the greening. It assigns certain roles to humans in forest conservation. Not only Hindu religion, but the other religions like Christianity also carry a great role in protecting the trees. Hindus believes in the doctrine "*Vasudhaiva Kudumbakam*" (The whole Universe is One Family).

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