

T.C.

İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE M.A. PROGRAMME



A (RE)DISCOVERY OF FEMINIST UTOPIAS: '*THE CLEFT*' AND '*THE WANDERGROUND*'

M.A. THESIS

Zainab Ameer JABBAR JABBAR

20131306003

İSTANBUL, JULY 2022

T.C.

İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE M.A. PROGRAMME

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE M.A. PROGRAMME



A (RE)DISCOVERY OF FEMINIST UTOPIAS: *'THE CLEFT'* AND *'THE WANDERGROUND'*

M.A THESIS

Zainab Ameer JABBAR JABBAR

Asst. Prof. Dr. Sultan KOMUT BAKINÇ

İSTANBUL, JULY 2022

T.C.
İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

TEZ ONAY BELGESİ

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı programı, 20131306003 numaralı Tezli Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Zainab Ameer Jabbar Jabbar'ın "A (re)discovery of Feminist Utopias: 'The Cleft' and 'The Wanderground'" adlı tez çalışması, Enstitü Yönetim Kurulunun 25.08.2022 tarih ve 2022/06 sayılı kararıyla oluşturulan jüri tarafından oy birliği ile Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

Tez Savunma Tarihi: 29.07.2022

Öğretim Üyesi Unvanı, Adı ve Soyadı		İmzası
1.	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Sultan Komut Bakıncı	
2.	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Olgahan Bakşı Yalçın	
3.	Doç. Dr. Saman Hashemipour	



T.C.

**İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

MA PROGRAMME

ETHICAL STATEMENT

In this project, I prepared my manuscript in accordance with the thesis writing rules of the Institute of Social Sciences at Istanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University and I hereby declare that;

- I have obtained the data, information and documents provided within the thesis within the framework of academic and ethical rules,
- I have submitted all information, documents, evaluations and results in accordance with the requirements of scientific ethics and moral rules,
- I have cited all works that I have used in the project by appropriately referring to my sources,
- I have not made any changes to the data used,
- The work I present here is original, and if found otherwise, I declare that I accept all loss of rights that may occur.

29 / 07 / 2022

PREFACE

Foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Asst. Prof. Dr Sultan KOMUT BAKINÇ for the continuous support of my M.A. study research, for her patience, motivation, enthusiasm, immense knowledge, and for providing the facilities to accomplish the research work. She has taught me the methodology to carry out the research and to present the research works as clearly as possible. It is a great honour to work under her supervision.

Besides, it is a great pleasure to acknowledge my deepest thanks to prof. Cemile Günseli SÖNMEZ İŞÇİ; the Dean Department of Translation, and Interpretation at Yeni Yuzyil University, for her encouragement, creative and comprehensive advice until this work comes into existence.

Thanks to my friends, research scholars, other teaching faculty, and non-teaching staff members of the Social Science ELL department for their help during the research work. In advance, I would like to thank Asst. Prof. Olgahan BAKSİ YALÇIN and Assoc. Prof. Saman HASHEMİPOUR for their essential guidance and inspiration, which contributed significantly to the project's success.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family, my parents; Ameer JABBAR, and Israa NAMIQ for supporting me spiritually throughout my life. I am extremely grateful to my parents for their love, prayers, care, and sacrifices in educating and preparing me for my future.

ISTANBUL 2022

Name: Zainab Ameer JABBAR JABBAR

CONTENTS

	Page number
THESIS APPROVAL PAGE.....	i
ETHICAL STATEMENT.....	ii
PREFACE.....	iii
CONTENTS.....	iv
ÖZET.....	vi
ABSTRACT.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1

FIRST CHAPTER

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.....	1
1.1 Gender Theory: Gender and Sex.....	9
1.1.2 Gender Stereotypes and Social Norms.....	18
1.1.3 From Sexual Abuse to Feminist Separatism.....	21
1.2 Ecofeminism.....	26
1.2.1 Woman and Nature Correlation.....	29
1.2.2 Various Perspectives on Ecofeminism.....	33
1.2.3 Animal Liberation: Fighting for Animal Rights.....	41

SECOND CHAPTER

2. REFLECTIONS OF GENDER IN <i>THE CLEFT</i> AND <i>THE WANDERGROUND</i>	45
2.1 Gender Roles: How Is Gender Captured in The Texts?.....	45
2.2 The Differences Between Lessing's "The Clefts" and Gearhart's "The Hill Women...."	63

2.3 The Concept of Violence: Rape.....	78
2.4 The Feminist Solution: Gender Separatism.....	86

THIRD CHAPTER

3. REFLECTIONS OF ECOFEMINISM IN <i>THE CLEFT</i> AND <i>THE WANDERGROUND</i>	98
3.1 The Romantic Nature.....	101
3.2 Women’s Ecological Responsibilities: Tasks to Save the Earth.....	112
3.3 The Importance Of [Moon, Trees, Fish, Water, Cats, Deer... etc.....	121
3.4 Hegemonic and Eco Masculinity.....	135
CONCLUSION AND RESULTS.....	145
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	155
CV.....	168

ÖZET

FEMİNİST ÜTOPYALARIN (YENİDEN) KEŞFİ: ‘*THE CLEFT*’ VE ‘*THE WANDERGROUND*’

Bu çalışma, toplumsal cinsiyet klişelerinin ve cinsiyet farklılıklarının ataerkil ve kadın düşmanı toplumlarda hem kadınları hem de erkekleri nasıl etkilediğini incelemektedir. Aynı zamanda Doris Lessing’in *The Cleft* ve Sally Miller Gearhart’ın *The Wanderground* kitaplarında kadın ve doğa arasındaki ilişkiyi toplumsal cinsiyet ve ekofeminist bir bakış açısıyla inceliyor. En önemli noktalardan biride, kadınlara uygulanan baskıdan doğanında epey bir pay alması, ikisininde toplum tarafından ezilmesi ileri sürülmektedir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma ataerkil (veya erkek egemen) bir toplumun hem doğaya hem de kadına nasıl davrandığını ve toplum standartlarının her ikisine de nasıl haksız yere hükmettiğini göstermektedir. İlk olarak, cinsiyete dayalı araştırma bölümünde teoristlerin katkısı bir hayli önem görür. Örneğin toplumsal olarak üretilen kadınlık ve erkeklik nelere mal olur? Judith Butler, toplumsal ve biyolojik cinsiyetin her zaman aynı süreçte olduğunu savunmakta. Ama Lips Kişi, doğduğu cinsiyetten farklı bir cinsiyetle özdeşleşebilir; bu nedenle, tüm erkekler ve tüm kadınlar benzer cinsiyete sahip değildir. Birinci bölümün ikinci kısmında ise ekofeminizm yer almaktadır, Greta Gaard, Karen J. Warren ve Susan Griffin gibi teorisyenler cinsiyet eşitliğinin temel feminist ideallerini, ataerkil olmayan, yeniden değerlendirilmesi gereken, doğaya değer veren bir dünya görüşünü ve bütünsel bağlantılar vurgulamaktadırlar. Kadın, doğa (hayvanlar) dahil olmak üzere ve çevrenin ekofeminizm teorisi ve pratiği için çok önemli olduğunu üç teorist bariz bir şekilde anlatmaktadır; kadınlar toplumsal cinsiyet sorunlarını ancak doğanın sunduğu kaynakları ile çözebilirler. Dolayısıyla tezdeki çalışma, her iki romanda da kadınları, yaşamlarında yaşadıkları her zorluğun nedenlerini doğa ile çözdüklerini tasvir etmiştir. Sonuç olarak, iki farklı bölgenin kadınları maço

toplumdan kaçmaya ve doğayla dolu (erkeklerden yoksun) bir ütopya yaratmaya çalışırlar. Bazı kadınlar erkeklerle birlikte yaşamaya devam etseler de her zaman feminist ayrılıkçıyı tercih ederler. Ve böylece analizin sonu şunu keşfetmeye yardımcı olur ; Gearhart'ın ütopyasının The Cleft'in distopyasının sonucu ve akibeti olduğunu belirler.

Zainab Ameer JABBAR JABBAR, 2022

Anahtar Kelimeler: cinsiyet sorunu, ecofeminism, bağımsız hayvan özgüllüğü, doğa ve kadın.

ABSTRACT

A (RE)DISCOVERY OF FEMINIST UTOPIAS: ‘*THE CLEFT*’ AND ‘*THE WANDERGROUND*’

The current study examines how gender stereotypes and sex differences affect both women and men in patriarchal and misogynist societies. Also, it examines the relationship between women and nature in Doris Lessing's *The Cleft* and Sally Miller Gearhart's *The Wanderground* using a gender and ecofeminist lens. Women's oppression is analogous to nature's oppression. Therefore, this study shows how a patriarchal (or male-dominated) society treats both nature and women and how the society standards unfairly dominate both. In the section on the gendered research, theorists' contribution plays a significant role, such as femininity and masculinity being socially produced; Judith Butler argues that gender and sex are always in the same process. Gender is performative and changeable as Lips asserts that a person can identify with a gender other than the one, they were born in; hence, not all men and females have similar sex. While in the ecofeminism portion, theorists like Greta Gaard, Karen J. Warren, and Susan Griffin emphasize the essential feminist ideals of gender equality, a revaluation of non-patriarchal, and a worldview that value natural processes and holistic connections. They argue that women and the environment, including (animals) are crucial to the ecofeminism theory and practice; women may solve gender issues only through utilizing natural materials. The present study depicts women in both novels learning the causes for every piece of sorrow they experience in life. As a result, they attempt to escape the machismo society and create a nature-filled utopia (devoid of males). Although some women continue to live with men, they always

opt for separation. Finally, this study shows how Gearhart's utopia is the outcome and redemption of The Cleft's dystopia.

Zainab Ameer JABBAR JABBAR, 2022

Keywords: Gender Trouble, Ecofeminism, Animal Liberation, Women and Nature



INTRODUCTION

Nature is a feminist issue.

Karen.J. Warren

Any intent to persuade is an act of violence.

Sally Miller Gearhart

Nature is thought to be everything found in green life; it refers to all the creatures, plants, and other natural phenomena that exist without the intervention of humans. As much as its preservation is valued by the society, the concept of nature remains enigmatic. In its history, the term “nature” appears to have accumulated a variety of different and occasionally contradictory meanings. The Current Western use of the word “nature” denotes something in opposition to humans. However, this opposition does not include women and children because women’s position is considered fundamentally closer to nature; under the gendered division of labour, women’s job has always included close interaction with nature. The idea leads some to feel that nature is not hostile to women and children; this perspective considers the relationship between women and nature as mutual exchange, symbiosis, and harmony (Vandana Shiva, 1989, 41).

Feminists ecologists are aware of the connection between women and nature. For instance, Chaia Heller, a social ecology and feminist theory professor posits similar concepts. She argues “Love of nature is a process of becoming aware of and unlearning ideologies of racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism so that we may cease to reduce our idea of nature to a dark, heterosexual, ‘beautiful’ mother” (Chaia Heller, 1993, 231). Listening to the voice of nature has been widely suggested as one means of reconnecting humans with nature, and this listening is a theme that runs throughout the poems of the Native American women we read.

Based on their perspective, it seems that nature has a language and a voice of its own (Greta Gaard, 1996, 165).

The study of nature and women's correlation is called Ecofeminism as Mellor (1997) states "Ecofeminists who draw on radical and cultural feminism see this study as a near essentialist bond between women and the environment" (Mary Mellor, 1997, 147). To comprehend the specific relationship between women and nonhumans, one must first understand women's oppression, subjugation, or controlling their bodies (Karen-Warren, 2000, 1). Natural resource management is a key responsibility for women in their families and communities, and they are the most vulnerable to environmental deterioration. When it comes to ecofeminism, women's affinity to nature stems from the fact that they are biologically and psychologically more attuned to it than males; this means that they "understand" nature in a way that men do not and cannot. Women have a special affinity with earth's "Mother". According to the previous thoughts, patriarchy is to blame for the exploitation of women and the environment by males who loot, rape, and destroy them all at the same time. In addition, equal rights, similar pay for similar jobs, and day-care centres are feminist topics because they shed light on women's cultural inferiority or lower status. Racism, classism, ableism, ageism, homosexuality, anti-Semitism, and colonialism are feminist concerns because they illuminate women's subordination.

As a basis, ecofeminism starts with analyzing gender authorities; gender and environmentalism are related. Ecofeminists have investigated the impact of gender categories to demonstrate how social conventions oppress women and the environment. In her introduction, Mellor (1997) argues that ecofeminism links the exploitation and destruction of the natural world and the subjugation and oppression of women. Ecofeminism, like greens, considers the natural

world as interrelated and autonomous, and it, like feminism, considers humanity as systematically gendered in ways that subjugate, exploit, and abuse women. According to ecofeminists, gender inequality leads to a harmful connection between humankind and the rest of the natural world (Mary Mellor, 1997, 1). As a result, ecofeminism has become generally recognized as a global warning for humanity over the last four decades. In recent years, researchers have become increasingly interested in the interaction between women and the environment and how it affects the other sex. Throughout history, humans and nonhumans have agreed that women and nature rule monuments differently. Several discourses have formed sustainability, and the role of women in developing these notions has increased through time.

Ecofeminist writers provide credible arguments why women are more suited to nature. Moreover, they illustrate that ecofeminism offers a remedy for arthritis in terms of the planet's ecological concerns. To restore environmental equilibrium and secure future generations' access to land, they increased awareness in the society. Greta Gaard summarizes the preceding explanation: ecofeminism examines ecological degradation and social inequality based on the assumption that humans treat nature and how people treat one another are intrinsically linked (Greta Gaard, 2001, 158).

Many fictional novels, articles, essays, and other works have been published to highlight the notion of interpreting nature through gender theory. Some of these works, like Doris Lessing's *The Cleft* (2007) and Sally Miller Gearhart's *The Wanderground* (1979), focus on the relationship between women and the environment and stress on ecofeminism and gender issues. In terms of these two works, both Doris Lessing and Sally Miller Gearhart have used similar aspects in their writings; the two novels are feminist separatist utopias. In both novels, women reject science as masculine and harmful; they prefer a green and more "natural" way of life,

living in loose communities outside of cities and connecting psychically with one another and with the natural environment. Despite the distinctions between these two works, both authors seek to emphasize the ecological elements of nature and women throughout the ages. There is no requirement for males or their knowledge to assist women in surviving; women do this on their own, despite males' attempt to establish their socially built power. The stories of the two texts incorporate stereotypical gender identities into nature to assert the bond between women and nature.

Doris Lessing (1919-2013) is a fictional novel writer who is the Nobel Prize laureate in literature (2007). Because she was born in Iran to British parents, Lessing was influenced by various cultures. She later relocated to South Africa and Zimbabwe. She eventually settled in London and died there. Lessing is well-known as a writer of fiction, especially for works like *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *The Golden Notebook* (1962). She has penned various works, including poems, novels, volumes, and most recently *The Cleft*, published in 2007, which constitutes the central point of this study. Doris Lessing has made tremendous contributions to the realm of feminist literature. Although she has never claimed to be a feminist, she attempts to awaken the women's community to protest patriarchy through her writings. In this respect, Rapping (1975) states "one can hardly think of Doris Lessing without thinking of feminine issues" (Elayne Antler Rapping, 1975, 29). Besides, her literary production is highlighted as:

Doris Lessing writes from the point of view of someone who is part of the tradition of Western European literature, and yet distanced from it, writing from its margins. This 'marginal' perspective is one of her greatest strengths as a writer, giving her a freedom to explore and analyse the 'centres' of our culture which she has fully and imaginatively exploited. (Jeannette King 1989, ix)

Doris Lessing's novel *The Cleft* (2007) flips creation myths by portraying women as the first humans. Transit, an elderly Roman senator and a historian, devotes himself to writing the history of humanity's origins. He unavoidably leaves a record open to interpretation (Ester Gendusa, 2014, 136). According to Lessing, the novel was inspired by a scientific report claiming that the fundamental and primal human stock is female. Because they cooperate with nature, women in *The Cleft* can rear children without the help of men. Lessing captures the reality of women as they exist in nature. The Cleft women emerge from nature to serve mother earth because women are the work of nature. Even though Lessing portrays women as the first humans, a detailed examination of the text reveals that the author emphasizes traditional gender stereotypes and gender roles. Thus, the writer describes the idea of ecofeminism and gender theory by showing how women and men coexist separately with nature.

On the other hand, Sally Miller Gearhart's *The Wanderground* (1979) deals with the subjugation of nature and women. Gearhart (1931-2021) is a political activist, a science fiction writer, and a lesbian separatist. She is ultimately the one who breaks the stereotypes imposed on her. In the novel, she successfully distances women from a male-dominated culture and builds a universe where males are non-existent. The author depicts women as hill ladies scattered across the Wanderground. She describes herself as a science fiction writer; however, she concedes that there are no hill women in science fiction. There is no feminist awareness (Sally Miller Gearhart & Susanna-Sturgis, 1980, 24). Her stories, which explore and articulate "the ritual return to nature," are visions and measures of the strength women experience when removing themselves from urban, technological society and living alone in the forest (Lou-Roberts, 1980, 74). *The Wanderground* is groundbreaking for lesbian separatists but is possibly more important and long-lasting for eco-feminists. Using nature's elements, women have discovered ways to heal their

afflictions using only natural remedies. They can reach the centre of the world, fly and make objects levitate, and bear children without men. In one of her interviews, Sally Miller Gearhart contends:

I have been a science fiction buff all my life and never found in science fiction anything like the hill women because there is no feminist consciousness in science fiction. I think it was a combination of coming into my feminism with my science fiction/ mystical mentality. (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1980, 24)

In *The Wanderground*, there is also a small minority group of males known as “gentles”; they are distinct from the men who are the cause of this separation. As a result, Gearhart’s work also opens the door for gender theory, which evolves the queer theory as well; the subject will be thoroughly covered in the following chapters. As evidence, she writes as follows on her website: “I am proud to have been a part of the movement that secured greater visibility for society’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 2021).

“Ecofeminists begin with gender as a category of analysis” (Karen J. Warren, 2000, 2). Following Warren, the first part of the first chapter focuses on the notion of gender theory; its assumptions and underpinnings will be articulated primarily in light of Marilyn Frye, Judith Butler, and Hilary M. Lips’ doctrines. Using the examples provided by the three gender spectators, the first chapter explores gender stereotypes and social conventions in the workplace. The second part of the first chapter is Environmental Feminism, whereby ecofeminist writers, such as Greta Gaard, Susan Griffin, and Karen J. Warren have devoted their entire works to prove this notion. As a philosophical stance, their results have had a significant impact on the development of ecofeminism. Besides, this section examines the relationship between women’s oppression and environmental degradation through the views of three ecofeminists.

The second chapter will feature analysis sections on both literary works, starting with the first theory, whereby the gender theory is a source of conflict throughout the novels. From psychological androgyny to Lesbian Separatism, Radical Imagination and utopian feminists seek to cover all aspects of utopian literature and feminism. Creating a land devoid of males is a significant part of the gender analysis. A close reading of the works reveals that the authors extensively use traditional gender stereotypes and gender roles. The texts contain widely held but fixed and simplistic pictures or conceptions about women and, on occasion, men. Both societies are under the perception of patriarchy and misogyny. Therefore, the inclusion of gender in this study is necessary to meet the objectives of chapter three.

In the third chapter, ecofeminism is introduced to depict women's relationship with nature and patriarchy which has an equal impact on both. The books express notions about women living as one with the broader natural environment and being able to control their fertility. The significance of ecofeminism in the novels emphasizes the importance of ecofeminism concerns in diverse manners. As a result of Western ideas that place men above women, *The Cleft* and *The Wanderground* perceive nature, women, and minority groups, and they are treated as second-class citizens. Both writers attempt to conclude similarly while using different techniques. Several issues related to the second theory will be mentioned, including how nature is captured in the texts. What are the novels' settings? How are animals shown in both writings? Is there any difference between how women and men treat nature? What are the primary distinctions between the two texts? Nature has been feminized, while women have been naturalized. Aside from the sufferings and humiliations endured by women and nature in patriarchal systems, there are experiential links between nature and women in literary works; ecofeminism and gender theory collaborate to investigate this connection in depth.

Ecofeminism is based on the essential feminist ideas of gender equality and the revaluing of non-patriarchal or nonlinear structures. The merging of ecology and feminism into a new social theory and political movement confronting gender has such lofty potential. In this regard, the gender theory contends that human gender inequalities are founded in nature, and it is best understood as men striving to maintain power and privilege at the expense of women. These studies recommend viewing masculinity and femininity as sets of mutually produced qualities that shape men's and women's lives. In addition, the associations (between women and the environment) enable women to be more sensitive to the environment's purity and destruction. They altercate that society should value this sensitivity insofar as it fosters a more direct connection to the natural world with which humans must coexist. As comparative literature, this study analyses the works of Sally Miller Gearhart and Doris Lessing to anticipate women's struggles throughout history to the present. Whereas Doris Lessing delves into the past and mythology of human beings by Roman Senator and reintroduces women to the planet as the earliest humans, Sally Miller Gearhart delves into women's current and modern life, away from cities and males. Both use imaginary characters to illustrate why women choose nature and a green lifestyle. They attempt to disentangle women from men and establish a universe populated entirely by females. They struggle to reach the desired outcome while developing their works.

CHAPTER ONE

1.THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Gender Theory: Gender and Sex

Masculine and feminine roles are not biologically fixed but socially constructed.

-Judith Butler

Gender theory examines how men, women, and queerness are defined across a variety of disciplines, communities, and societies. Though this theory was developed in the 1980s primarily in 1990 by the American philosopher and gender theorist “Judith Butler”, one of the early works of feminism, Simone de Beauvoir’s 1949 *Second Sex*, lays the basis for feminist philosophy. Her famous assertion (1974) “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (Simone de Beauvoir, 1974, 301) explains as gender is something that may be learned through time and is distinct from sexual orientation. The lack of consistency and closure associated with gender identity means that gender is a culturally changeable view of sex. Butler claims that de Beauvoir's theory is flawed because it defines "women" as an unchanging universal category with shared characteristics. Butler addresses de Beauvoir's viewpoint in *Gender Trouble* (1990); Butler suggests that feminists avoid attempting to define "women" and instead focus on describing how power operates and shapes our understandings of femininity in general society and inside the women's rights movement. Butler, in contrast to de Beauvoir, states:

Gender must be understood as a modality of taking on or realizing possibilities, a process of interpreting the body, giving it cultural form. In other words, to be a woman is to become a woman; it is not a matter of acquiescing to a fixed ontological status, in which

case one could be born a woman, but, rather, an active process of appropriating, interpreting, and reinterpreting received cultural possibilities. (Judith Butler, 1986, 36)

Over the years, feminists have relied on the dichotomy between sex and gender to refute the idea that anatomy dictates destiny. Sex is defined as the physical, unchangeable, and anatomically different components of the female body, whereas gender is defined as the body's varied modes of acculturation, social connotation, and shape (Judith Butler, 1990, 35). Beauvoir's philosophy implies that women are oppressed and refers to "female" as a group of fundamental earthy truths. Besides, Hilary M. Lips (1988) argues "The labels female and male carry powerful associations about what to expect from the person to whom they are applied" (1-2). The information contained on the labels serves as a guide for interactions with other individuals. Additionally, individuals can self-identify as different genders. Individuals may be biologically male (sex, biological), but they are identified as female (gender). Regardless of the beliefs of anybody involved, individuals may label themselves in several ways. As a result, this study aims to understand women and men in their different situations, particularly those defined by gendered structures and norms.

The most reputable sources for explaining gender and its roles are found in Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) and Marilyn Frye's *The Politics of Reality* (1983). Frye and Butler begin their writings by addressing "Women" as a subject of gender and women's adoption is fraught with difficulty. They tend to change the socially constructed gender understanding. Frye states in her acclaimed essay "Breaking Bread: African-American women & men in revolution" (1993) "Feminists/womanists/lesbians often change meanings of words to make them work for us, and, we hope, to alter reality" and continues "Some women...always through their whole lives were drawn to emotional and sexual connection with women. Think on it! It's a

real upper” (Marilyn-Frye, 1993, 20). Frye further states that announcing sex is also one of the oppression tools used against women; however, she believes in a natural distinction between women and men even though this belief contradicts “actual realities” regarding lesbians and their ways of living. Frye’s argumentation recalls Monique Wittig’s striking essay “One Is Not Born a Woman” (1981). Using a materialist and uncompromising attitude, Wittig emphasizes the significance of challenging and deconstructing the concept and origins of womanhood. She contends that the concept and designation of women as a natural group serves as the foundation for other oppressions they face (Monique Wittig, 1981, 1). According to Wittig, the idea of a natural group of women based on their bodies is a product of societal pressure. To overcome the concept of naturalizing this gender category, Judith Butler reveals that as feminism is the unity of all women, it needs unity among members:

If one “is” a woman, that is surely not all one is; the term fails to be exhaustive, not because a pregendered “person” transcends the specific paraphernalia of its gender, but because gender is not always constituted coherently or consistently in different historical contexts and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. As a result, it becomes impossible to separate “gender” from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained. (Judith Butler, 1990, 3)

Butler wonders whether the term “woman” is ever capable of standing for a uniform subject in the first place, and there should be one location for feminist unity. Butler states that women’s oppression is frequently linked to the political assumption as feminism must have a universal foundation anchored in a shared identity that exists across cultures. If one believes in patriarchy or masculine domination, then this political presumption generally ties up with women’s subjugation views (Judith Butler, 1990, 3). Hence, gender stereotypes, according to

these testimonies, are primarily summed up to suggest that women's subjects are on the surface. Wrongful gender stereotyping is a common source of discrimination against women, and to a certain degree, men are also affected. Boys learn to be macho, whereas females learn to be feminine; according to this view, people are awarded or punished based on their gender-role appropriate or inappropriate actions (Hilary M. Lips, 1988, 47).

According to Lips, sex is used to define a person's biological masculinity or femininity. At the same time, gender refers to the non-physiological components of sex, such as cultural expectations of femininity and maleness (Hilary M. Lips, 1988, 3). Butler (1990) argues that separating between sex and gender is redundant in this regard. She asserts "perhaps this construct called 'sex' is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was always already gendered with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all" (Judith Butler, 1990, 9).

Most gender theory scholars do not believe that biological processes do not arise or affect hormonal or anatomical disparities. Rather than asserting that the physical aspect exists independently from culture, they argue that sex and gender cannot be understood in simple binary terms. Gender is individual and community-specific, differing in terms of duties and expectations. A person may identify with a different gender than the one they were born into, or with no gender at all. Transgender, nonbinary, gender-neutral identities, homosexual, and bisexual persons can define their gender by various other means. "All males are not hormonally identical, and neither are all females" (Hilary M. Lips, 1988, 115).

Judith Butler has continued to investigate alternative configurations of the political subject. She begins with a discussion on performativity:

Gender is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free-floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence. Hence, within the inherited discourse of the metaphysics of substance, gender proves to be a performance that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though it is not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed. (Judith Butler, 1990, 25)

According to Sara Salih, the quotation “There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very expressions that are said to be its results” (Judith Butler, 1990, 25), has puzzled many people. What has perplexed individuals is Butler's belief that gender identity is not formed by the type of gender expressed by using the tongue to announce, but rather by performances defined by behaviours and attitudes. The question is: “how is a performance possible without a performer, an act possible without an actor? Indeed, Butler does not assert that gender is a performance, and she makes a distinction between performance and performativity,” though the two concepts occasionally overlap in *Gender Trouble* (Sara Salih, 2002, 56). One of Butler's breakthroughs claims that gender is constituted by behaviour (act) and speech. She means by “Performative Act” an act of truth and reality, such as using the pronoun “I” in promising statements. It entails a feat that not only communicates but also establishes an identity.

The concept of ‘performativity’ originated with John Austin, who is a philosopher of language. His work on performative utterances, *How to do Things with Words* (1962), serves as a springboard for the study of performativity. Austin's explanations established the broader field of speech act theory (Kira Hall, 1999, 184). According to Max Black (1963), Austin's goal is to show that speaking is doing anything rather than simply reporting on or describing reality. In

other words, he refers to the speaking acts or behaviours that produce the represented object (Max Black, 1963, 217). Austin's original example of 'I promise', delivered in a setting where speaking the words constitutes committing, is an excellent illustration. Additionally, Austin classified performative utterances as locution, illocution, and perlocution. Each utterance is a locution. The illocution is the desired result of speaking something and is constructed socially, whereas the perlocution is the effect of saying anything on listeners and society) (John Austin, 1962, 1-11). Another example is the statement "I now proclaim you man and wife" in a wedding ceremony, which highlights not only what the individual is doing (trying to pronounce something), but also creates the marital relationship between them (the thing that's being spoken or pronounced). In that sense, one quickly concludes that not all utterances are performative. The previous example shows that the bride and groom utter "I do" to fit into socially constructed roles. Even though Butler does not provide any examples of speech act theory articulated in Austen's writings, she expands on this work by analysing how gender functions similarly. Gender, in other words, is constructed via its performance. She attempts to explain her idea consistently by arguing that gender is a performance that has been rehearsed like a screenplay, but the script only works if actors are used (Judith Butler, 1990, 272).

Michel Foucault's work has a major impact on Judith Butler's thinking. While this relationship is frequently acknowledged in passing, it is rarely discussed in detail. Foucault views "sex" as a political conglomeration of anatomical characteristics and animating urges brought together by the demands of power, much like what Monique Wittig does when she defines gender as a political categorization. Butler introduces Foucauldian theory in her essay to argue that all bodies are gendered from the moment of their social existence (because there is no such thing as a social existence), which means that there is no such thing as a "natural body" that

predates its cultural inscription. Foucault and others have observed that the strange melding of cultural institutions of gender and sex to be used for reproductive goals is the artificial construction of natural sex (Judith Butler, 1988, 524). Most feminist writers have questioned Foucault's body politics; Butler is swayed by the notion to pursue it further. It is argued that Foucault's view of the body is illogical; he says that the body is a cultural construction while simultaneously denying that assertion. According to Butler, Foucault reaches this conflict due to the tension between his pleasant realization of the radical nature of cultural production and his disagreeable and unfamiliar logocentrism. Butler's premise is straightforward: one way to reproduce and hide this system of compulsory heterosexuality is to educate bodies into distinct sexes with 'natural' heterosexual looks and dispositions (524). Repeated differentiation imposes a sexual desire standard in heterosexist cultures based on erroneous biological sex and gender link. Indeed, Foucault's understanding of power is far more nuanced than Butler's arguments. Foucault employs "law" and "juridical" considerably narrower sense than Butler implies. In his work, the term judicial refers to sovereign relations, and a contrast is made between law and other types of power. Butler, on the other hand, substitutes and conflates the terms "law" "repressive law", and "juridical law" for social regulation (Kim Sang Ong-Van-Cung, 2011, 150-161).

Numerous theorists have attempted to simplify the concept of women's conditions; Marilyn Frye is one of those philosophers and feminist theorists whose writings have significantly impacted the subject. Frye observes the classification of women as a critical analytic category in gender studies but has generated a considerable controversy in the feminist theory and philosophy. She talks about the status of women in the field of philosophy. Her first book, *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory* (1983), mixes an ardent lesbian

perspective on women's oppression with the analytic science of language philosophy. According to Helen E. Longino, Frye detects the phallocratic truth that women's maintenance action is usually veiled. Furthermore, lesbians defy phallocratic standards by focusing their attention on the setting rather than the actors in the show (Helen E. Longino, 1984, 716).

In the 1970s-1980s, lesbian and gay studies have had a low profile for many years since lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender studies challenge the dominant heterosexist academic paradigm. Though lesbians and gay men may not share a shared set of interests, they share an essential trait that can be developed: the ability to critique the heterosexist society. Frye's approach and focus on homosexuality are justified because both homosexual oppression and female oppression are understood to originate from the imposition of so-called "Sex Roles". Gay men and women—lesbians or feminists—share a cultural and political bond, "A culture hostile to any but missionary sexuality is also hostile to women. The culture is a sexist, a misogynist, a male supremacist culture" (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 130).

Because there is often an expected someone to be either "Masculine" or "Feminine", Frye uses herself as an example to identify her lesbian and homosexual identities and explain that other sexes exist as well. Thus, she always uses the pronouns "We", "Ourselves", and "I". Frye's philosophy and understanding are reminiscent of the Freudian theory; his thought is founded on an unfair model, where femininity has no place unless it is closely tied to masculinity. In his approach, women are considered perpetually morally inferior to men, who are supposed to have more developed superegos than women. Yet, he is correct in asserting "The phallic power". Women have been historically oppressed by men and viewed as a source of evil. As Freud says, the concealed motive is a fear of losing the phallus's potency (Sigmund Freud, 1920, 15).

Frye essentially incorporates her thoughts on gay and lesbian rights; she considers women, gays, and lesbians as being oppressed in the same manner:

Many gay men and some lesbians and feminists assume that it is reasonable to expect lesbian and feminist support for, or participation in, gay political and cultural organizations and projects, and many people think it is reasonable to expect that gay men will understand and support feminist and lesbian causes. But both of these expectations are, in general, conspicuously not satisfied (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 128).

Another source of support for this argument comes from a gay activist who is from the United Kingdom, stating “We have been forced into playing roles upon straight society, butch and femme, nuclear “marriages” which continue within the relationship that outside the society forces onto its women” (Aubrey Walter, 1980, 59). In terms of the straight society, there are additional male supremacy norms that gay men should adhere to.

Lesbians, gays, and women are all grouped because of their lack of access to phallic organs and denial of basic human rights. While homosexual men are predominantly males of the male sex, many gay people, particularly those in leadership positions, have never craved such authority. Therefore, they fall within the category of feminism (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 145-150).

Gradually, sex and gender are identical. Gender is a term coined by the society to denote either masculinity or femininity. Frye and Butler disagree, claiming that sex is determined by conduct or attitude. Women or those who resemble women are always considered as a backup plan. This part aims to comprehend the idea of ‘Performativity’, women, and men in various settings, especially those defined by gendered structures and conventions.

1.1.2. Gender Stereotypes and Social Norms

Gender roles, as defined by Julia T. Wood (2013), are the set of social and behavioural expectations that society believes are appropriate for a man or a woman in their social lives and interpersonal relationships (20).

Because Judith Butler views gender as a socially created concept, gender roles are referred to as gender stereotypes in this section: “Gender & Social Norms”: “Acquiring a gender within the contemporary patriarchal world involves a set of identifying norms and roles which “are and are not realisable” (Judith Butler, 1993, 126). Harmful social norms cause a wide range of inequities between girls and boys. In terms of sexual orientation, according to Hilary M. Lips, “stereotypes” are socially accepted notions that certain characteristics may be assigned to individuals based on their membership in the female or male side of the human race (Hilary M. Lips, 1988, 2). The reason gender and societal rules are applied to both sexes is due to the phallic’s power. Although genitalia is traditionally hidden from public view in everyday life, West and Zimmerman (1987) assert that people continue to ‘observe’ a world of two naturally sexed individuals as they go about their social lives (Candace West & Don H. Zimmerman, 1987, 132). As stated at the outset, gender stereotypes arise during a child’s early years. Confronting restricting preconceptions in early childhood settings stands for understanding the family’s influence on children’s gender constructs. Lips argues that even preschool children are aware enough of gender norms to assume: “Boys don’t play with dolls” and “mommies can’t be pilots” (Hilary M. Lips, 1988, 17).

Similarly, Susan Griffin criticizes the society for creating gender stereotypes or so-called gender norms. Griffin discusses how phallocratic culture defines women in *Woman and Nature* (1978). Among the phrases, she states are: “It is written in the law that women should be subject

to their men” (19), “That Adam is soul and Eve is flesh” (17), and “The souls of women are so small” (18). These arguments shed light on a woman’s place in the natural world and the author’s perception of man’s view of her as a naturalist. Those statements allude to another example of societal standards, namely “Women’s Domestic Life.” Domestic violence is another significant societal problem that stems from gender role compliance. According to the social conventions, a woman should be a devoted slave to the man she has committed her heart (Susan Griffin, 1978, 32).

When gender stereotypes and social norms exist, male supremacy is responsible for oppression, abuse, and rape. For generations, women have fought for equality and against oppression. For Frye, oppression is “a strong word. It repels and attracts. It is dangerous and dangerously fashionable and endangered. It is much misused, and sometimes not innocently” (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 1).

The assertion that women are oppressed is usually countered by the claim that men are mistreated. It is widely accepted that males are socially forbidden from expressing genuine emotional feelings; some men even lament the difficulty of being masculine; they cite their much-publicized incapacity to cry as evidence of their tyranny (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 1). The concept that men are not oppressed does not imply that feminism opposes equality; instead, it seeks to achieve equality by focusing on the disadvantaged. According to Frye, the term “men are not oppressed” does not suggest that men do not suffer or are unhappy, rather, they are not oppressed by structures that are intentionally designed to restrict their movement. Her account of coercion can be modified to emphasize the elimination of an acceptable alternative (Claudia Card, 1986, 153). In conclusion, Frye’s analogical vision and her allegations of sexism have established the definition of Oppression: it is a sensation of being imprisoned with no freedom

and no way out. All oppressed people are injured somehow, but not all harmed people are oppressed.



1.1.3. From Sexual Abuse to Feminist Separatism

Sexual violence and abuse can be described as unwanted sexual behaviour without consent or understanding. According to Bragging et al., (1977), coercion forces women to do something harmful against their will. Rape threatens to erode women's privileges that males take for granted (Mary Vetterling Bragging et al., 1977, 309). In this case, this study also aims to address the issues created for women throughout history when the causes of women's oppression and rape have been prioritized over males, and this tyranny is likened to the 'Nature' of nonhuman beings.

As part of her introduction to rape, Susan Griffin states "I have never been free of the fear of rape. From a very early age, I, like most women, have thought of rape as part of my natural environment-something to be feared and prayed against like fire or lightning" (Susan Griffin, 1986, 3). Her sentence prompts the frequently asked questions, "Why do males rape?" and "Why are women raped?" Typically, members of a patriarchal culture question and blame the victim rather than the perpetrator. One of life's most socially harmful ironies is that human beings, with all their supposed intelligence, are unable to see the catastrophic impact rape has on both male and female members of the society. The victim's mental health may be harmed as a result of this incident, and that must be taken into account. Victims of violent crimes often have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), low self-esteem, and anxiety. These psychological impacts can have long-lasting impacts. Many victims report suicidal thoughts, and psychological trauma has the potential to alter the victim's identity.

Griffin outlines the cultural norm that defines women's lives until they are raped and how they are forced to describe their own lives. What awaits her after the rape? She begins with a look at life after rape, defining the lack of freedom in its horror (Susan Griffin, 1971, 26-35).

Despite the remarkable achievements of activists in the Second Wave feminist movement, the struggle and the battle against rape have not been achieved. Besides, at least two significant problems appear in the current affairs, including first traditional beliefs concerning the loss of purity, dignity, and virginity, and second, is the depreciation of a woman's worth as the property of her father, husband, or boyfriend, thus causing adverse effects on them.

Marilyn Frye and Carolyn Shafer express their more realistic perspectives on rape in an edited book titled *Feminism and Philosophy* (1977). They present a moral assessment of rape and social justifications. To regard rape with contempt is a sign of cultural piety. There is always more sympathy for the suspected rapist than for other criminals. Frye and Shafer hypothesize one reason that may be the widespread notion that a significant percentage of rapists are wrongfully accused. Hence, innocent rapists require moral protection, and actual rape occurs infrequently. This assumption, however, has been debunked by the public revelation of rape's frequency, and this discovery represents a moral victory for feminists (Marilyn Frye & Carolyn M. Shafer, 1977, 333).

Frye's and Shafer's assertion suggests two-fold for the wrongness of rape. First, it is the use of a person without her agreement to conduct an act or occurrence detrimental to her best interests. Second, it is a societal technique of reinforcing women's status as creatures who should be deprived of the full privileges of personhood. Most notably, it is the freedom to move freely across what is legitimately their domain. Pamela Foa observes Frye's and Shafer's account as: "what is good about this account is that it provides one way of understanding the sense of essential violation of one's person (and not mere sexual abuse), which seems to be the natural concomitant of rape" (Pamela Foa, 1977, 348). While Griffin's writing concludes positively by declaring, "we are here", she acknowledges that rape occurs frequently and wreaks havoc on

women's lives. Although the society may conceal women religiously, women wield control over everything because they exist, breathe, and remain present in the face of adversity (Susan Griffin, 1986, 91).

For such acts of violence in women's life, feminist writers offer separatism as a cure for 'Rape'. The idea of (Separatism) functions as a feminist process, a means of living in the world. Contemporary feminist writers have contributed to a concept that solves some problems throughout history. Marilyn Frye's 1977 essay, "Some Reflections on Separatism and Power," demonstrates that separation is the new awakening of women; it quietly fragments into several other issues such as man-hatred, so-called reversal discrimination, man-hating, and utopianism (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 95). The prevailing paradigm asserts that the most controversial argument produced by modern and traditional patriarchy is men have a legal claim to women's reproductive organs and bodies.

Although Simone de Beauvoir says: "I am not at all for a feminism which is entirely separatist, which would say, this domain is purely for women. I don't believe that at all" (Alice Jardine & Simone De Beauvoir, 1979, 231); Frye asserts that women who do not have male partners are substantially healthier and happier than those who do (1983, 99). The reason for separation is rooted in the society. Women are repressed and degraded, and most importantly, sexual abuse is committed against them. According to Jackie Anderson (1994), women's activism is motivated by being violated. The question of how to respond to violence against women may be the dividing line between separatists and non-separatists. Separation from males is the first and most fundamental step for attending to women worldwide. Anderson opposes feminism, claiming that feminist women prioritize reproductive freedom over all other concerns. A woman living in fear of domestic abuse cannot exercise her reproductive rights, and her social

class is powerless to defend her (Jackie Anderson, 1994, 437). By separation, women establish new boundaries, responsibilities, and connections. When rape becomes impossible and women seize control of sexual access to motherhood and sisterhood, they redefine the term “woman” (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 107).

Despite the fact that the word is frequently used interchangeably with lesbian separatism, various facets of the feminist movement have been inspired by feminist separatists since the second wave. Whether it is a rigid dogma or a deliberate tactic, it benefits women (Dana R. Shugar, 1995, xi–xvii), as featured in Charlotte Gilman's 1915 literary book *Herland*, an isolated civilization composed only of women who reproduce through parthenogenesis. Most significantly, Gilman analyses rape as a form of sexual violence. Susan Gubar asserts that rape is a metaphor for masculine control over the feminine, which *Herland* subverts. Moreover, Gubar states, it satisfies the feminist aim. Consequently, an ideal social order is created: free of war, conflict, and control (Susan Gubar, 1983, 141). The work presents the myth of humanity; women teach men and lead them the right way. Gilman's work portrays the mother who connects between the present and future. The separation (Utopia) turns to be mother-child private world. Women live in a socialized environment, and it is a world in which they have attained humane social ideals for the collective benefit.

Another manifestation of female separatism is when women regard ‘separatism’ as the first step in overcoming oppression and sexism. Thus, some radical feminist organizations developed conceptions of separation as a political act by which women can strengthen their collective power and deny their energy to men. Radical feminist women owe feminist rebellion to their daughters and males’ daughters to fight for a completely new civilization. Their

catchphrase is “We need power for women, not fairy tales and knights in shining armours” (Dana R. Shugar, 1995, 13-14).

In conclusion, women may prefer separation rather than inclusion. Men, on the other hand, often withdraw from women and return when they are pleased. While women's alienation from males may be prolonged, they endeavour to recreate their lives without males. There are various ways by which women may be separated from fetuses, such as abandoning their homes, partners, marriage, and separating from their children. What is more, lesbians' breakups tend to be quite emotional. As a result of the hostile environment they face, their lives are in danger. Even while this arrangement may appear weird to others, they are actively engaged in living their own lives, working independently and caring for one another.

1.2. Ecofeminism

Ecofeminist theory has been created over the last decade by philosophers, scientists, activists, and academics worldwide. Many ecofeminists think that the urgency of contemporary social and ecological situations is sufficient for academics to become activists and instil a sense of social and environmental justice in every subject they teach (Greta Gaard, 1996, 155). Greta Gaard draws attention to the subjugation of women and the environment in 1993, highlighting their parallels as ecofeminism advocates the abolition of all forms of oppression, believing that no endeavour to liberate women would succeed without an equal effort to liberate nature (Greta Gaard, 1993, 1).

Like many other modern progressive movements, ecofeminism has its origins in the 1960s and 1970s social reform movements (Greta Gaard & Lori Gruen, 1993, 1). Essentially, the word ‘ecofeminism’ was developed in 1974 by the French feminist Francoise d’Eaubonne feminism” to emphasize the need for women to bring about an ecological revolution and came up with the phrase “Feminism or death” [Le feminism ou la mort]. Ecofeminism, in general, adheres to the core feminist ideas of gender equality (Francoise d’Eaubonne, 1974, 221). To combat environmental deterioration, d’Eaubonne especially appealed to women, claiming that the “egalitarian administration of a world” would be the key to both their and nature’s freedom. Indeed, ecofeminism, like feminism, was promoted and enhanced by French feminists. To justify this claim, Glazebrook (2002) agrees “ecofeminism has conceptual beginnings in the French tradition of feminist theory” (Trish Glazebrook, 2002, 12). In addition, Karen J. Warren presents a range of facts about ecological feminism as an introduction:

Just as there is not one feminism, there is not one ecofeminism or one ecofeminist philosophy. Ecological feminism has roots in the wide variety of feminisms (e.g., liberal

feminism, Marxist feminism, radical and socialist feminisms, black and Third World feminisms). What makes ecofeminism distinct is its insistence that nonhuman nature and naturism (i.e., the unjustified domination of nature) are feminist issues. Ecofeminist philosophy extends familiar feminist critiques of socialisms of domination (e.g., sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, ageism, anti-Semitism) to nature (i.e., naturism). (Karen J. Warren, 1997, 4)

Ecofeminism has its own set of ideologies that may be summed up by its devotion to the environment and acknowledging the general public's link of women with nature. Trish Glazebrook states that although the word "ecofeminism" is commonly associated with Francoise d'Eaubonne, who introduced it in 1974, there have been earlier feminist supporters for the environment. Glazebrook also exemplifies the work of other beginnings such as Rosemary Radford Ruether. She argues that if women are to strive toward their emancipation, they must accept and work to remove nature's dominance (Trish Glazebrook, 2002, 12-13); "Women must see that there can be no liberation for them and no solution to the ecological crisis within a society whose fundamental model of relationships continues to be one of domination" (Radford Ruether 1975, 204). Because of its distinctive and creative approaches, ecofeminism is a development of the third wave of feminism. It opposes all "-isms" and celebrates variety; in other words, ecofeminism addresses all forms of social dominance, such as sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, naturism, and so on.

Throughout the 1980s, the term "ecofeminism" has been taken on a variety of meanings as women from all backgrounds use it to express their actions and ideas. Charlene Spretnak recalls that during the first ecofeminist meeting at USC in London in 1987, when Ms. Magazine has little writing about it, whereby everyone there grasped the concept and said that the term is

dedicated to them. They practice ecofeminism in their community. They are ecofeminists, comes the retort. The word carries a great deal of weight in the minds of people who have heard it first and have already considered it (Charlene Spretnak, 1990, 8).

According to Heather Eaton and Lois Ann Lorentzen (2003), ecofeminism generally involves two claims: the first is experimental, and the second is conceptual (cultural/symbolic). The experimental one depicts the tragic reality of ecologically strained women. They assert that it is environmentally detrimental and imposes other costs such as sexual division of labour. Women are accountable for their family's health, nourishment, and care. Many women lack economic means, commercial enterprises, and property owners to make matters worse. The empirical assertion delves into the sociopolitical and financial institutions that confine many women to poverty, economic helplessness, and ecological degradation (Heather Eaton & Ann Lorentzen, 2003, 2). As proof of the previous statements, the United Nations said in 1988: "It is now a universally established fact that the woman is the worst victim of environmental destruction. The poorer she is, the greater is her burden" (Pamela Philipose, 1989, 67). The second and most contentious claim that emerges from diverse cultures is women are more responsible for nature than males, claiming that nature is a feminist issue. Women are constructed socially and historically in relation to one another.

Ecofeminists always raise the debate-worthy topic of whether women view the earth differently; is it more advantageous than men? To obtain answers, one must first realize the connection between women and nature.

1.2.1. Woman and Nature Correlation

Ecofeminism contends that women's subjugation and the mistreatment of the natural environment are intrinsically linked (Mary Mellor, 1997, 1-2). Women and nature are inextricably linked; they are the creators of life. They also provide birth to organisms; women's wombs enable life to exist, as do forests, thus providing habitats for a diversity of vegetation. In her book *Ecofeminist Philosophy: A Western Perspective on What It Is and Why It Matters* (2000), Warren remarks that trees, forests, water, drought, food production, and poverty are women's concerns. Additionally, she demonstrates, though ecofeminism begins with gender as a study category, that the relationship between nature and women is not inspired by gender oppression; the term "woman" elucidates critical aspects of the linked human control system. Warren also determines the reasons behind this: first, environmental degradation disproportionately affects people of colour, colonial people, the poor, and children. Often, women face more dangers than males. Second, female gender roles frequently coexist harmoniously with specific environmental concerns in ways that male gender roles do not. Third, some western beliefs that underpin the conceptualization and dominance of nature are in ways that are unique from other forms of prejudice slanted toward men. As a result, ecofeminists focus on women to dissect the unique gender characteristics of human system dominance. In other words, they examine the role of women in the patriarchal structure of human society (Karen J. Warren, 2000, 1-2).

Warren assumes that the feminist viewpoint must reinforce the feminist theory and ecology to fully understand the relationship between the two repressive regimes of women and the environment. Many scholars doubt the existence of an ecofeminism-feminism connection; nevertheless, the link may be justified by looking at ecofeminism's critique. In addition to

considering the problem of women, ecofeminism also examines other pressing concerns. Warren (2002) adds:

According to ecological feminists (“ecofeminists”), important connections exist between the treatment of women, people of color, and the underclass on one hand and the treatment of nonhuman nature on the other. Ecological feminists claim that any feminism, environmentalism, or environmental ethic which fails to take these connections seriously is grossly inadequate. (Karen J. Warren, 2002, 1)

Penning new visions, Susan Griffin has long used a literary style to investigate the relationship between women and the environment, commonly referred to as “collage” combining biography, poetry, and research to examine ecology, politics, and feminism. Griffin also states that women do not only develop a close relationship with greens but also have close relationships with animals:

We are the bird’s eggs. Bird’s eggs, flowers, butterflies, rabbits, cows, sheep, we are caterpillars; we are leaves of ivy and springs of wildflower. We are women. We rise from the wave. We are gazelle and doe, elephant and whale, lilies and roses and peach; we are air, we are flame, we are oyster and pearl, we are girls. We are women and nature. And he says he cannot hear us speak. but we hear. (Susan Griffin, 1978, 1)

Catherine Roach makes two points on the woman-nature connection in her article “Loving Your Mother: On the Woman-Nature Relationship” (1991). To commence, the environmental slogan “Love Your Mother” is problematic because of the way “mother” or “motherhood” is defined under patriarchy; nevertheless, the second one addresses the most frequently asked issue: Are women more connected to nature than men? Mothers are commonly

left to raise their children without the support of a father. The caregiver appears all-powerful and compassionate to a newborn and capricious and malicious. As a result, the infant grows to love, desire, despise, and dread the caregiver. Because the woman is generally the primary caregiver, she is rarely a “clean” parent in the same way the father is. As a consequence, both men and women have difficulty viewing moms as independent persons. Conventional parenting arrangements, in which women are responsible for virtually all early childcare, ensure that people cling to the childhood concept that the first magical parent was a semi-human force of nature, and that nature is the semi-human mother. So, a mother is half-human. Therefore, it is similar to expecting affection from a mother and mother earth. “Love Your Mother” is an environmental phrase that maintains expectations intact. The image selected to be used alongside the tagline “Love Your Mother” is a meaningful choice. The image shows Earth from the vantage point of outer space as if the Earth appears in an isolated area with its atmosphere swirling in a complete circle (Catherine Roach, 1991, 46-50). Most male writers have argued against referring to nature as “Mother Earth,” whereas the American physicist Richard Feynman asserts that the truth must be acknowledged: nature is “She” (Feynman, 1989, as cited in Karen Warren, 1996). As an outcome, nature is seen as an embodiment of all women’s virtues. Nature is also gendered as a result of society's patriarchal nature. Because many romantic trip authors are males, travel writing is extremely gendered biased, and men are quite likely to endow nature with feminine characteristics: “The picturesque retained the assumptions of gender given to it by its founders, who imagined a male art of seeing that could correct and complete what a feminized landscape held forth” (James Buzard, 1993, 16).

There are also material issues that develop due to this risky alignment of women and nature. In the global political arena, women pay the economic costs of deforestation and other

types of international development in ways that men do not. Third world affairs, poverty, food manufacturing and distribution, reproductive rights, environmental racism, and capitalism are all addressed in analyzing women and nature interaction (Greta Gaard & Lori Gruen, 1993, 7). The French philosopher Denis Diderot made this point in 1757: “Nature is like a woman who enjoys disguising herself, and whose different disguises, revealing now one part of her ad now another, permit those who study her and assiduously to hope that one day they may know the whole of her person” (Denis Diderot, 1966, 73). Nature is viewed as the personification of all the traits associated with women; both are chased and hunted by other humans.

1.2.3. Various Perspectives on Ecofeminism

Ecofeminists are typically rather furious and anxious because they try to scream with their words via their expression of pain. Susan Griffin is a prominent ecofeminist whose poetic stylebook, *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her*, is widely known for her passionate views on nature (1978). She refuses to separate the production of women in language from the creation of nature in language and presents a practical challenge to that concept. This book is distinguished from other books that make unmediated claims. According to Rollin (1981), Griffin shows a connection between ecological destruction, misogyny, and racism. Griffin begins by criticizing the numerous Western philosophical and ethical superstitions that reinforce the powerful and pernicious link between woman and nature. Her affirmations teach people that language separates humans from animals; in other words, their language separates humans from animals (Bernard E. Rollin, 1981, 22). Ecofeminism is primarily a battle against patriarchal beliefs; Griffin punctuates judgements side by side and boldly challenges masculine assumptions: “I would feel as if I had entered a free zone and breathe a sigh of relief”. Regardless of the challenging language, she has chosen, she states “The words are genuine, and that in this matter of woman and nature, we have cause to feel deeply” (Susan Griffin, 1978, xvii).

Griffin first illustrates the parallels between women’s oppression and nature’s subjugation. She asserts that gender norms are also evident; trees should be tall and devoid of knot-prone limbs over most of their heights. They should be straight, not tapering much between the butt and the top final saw log. Moreover, trees must be beneficial; otherwise, their space would be deemed worthless. Similarly, it is the woman’s responsibility to stay free of the machine which can be only accomplished via her mental focus. In addition, she must have no

hopes or aspirations. Many rely on the beauty of trees to succeed in their endeavours, just as many rely on women to thrive (Susan Griffin, 1978, 57-62).

Each of her speeches is characterized by a powerful lyrical style. The subjective experience ends with each act of speaking, and words are rendered personal by responding to them. According to Macauley (1991), “Existence” appears as a category to Griffin’s listener that has been defined by the metaphors governing her life, which means she can no longer view her culture as a distinct entity. This culture’s concept of existence is intricately bound up with how it imagines women. It is said “woman” is connected with life, but the inverse is also true—namely, that this relationship also dissociates “man” from nature and “man” from a woman. Consequently, Griffin found that dissociations generate the dichotomy of nature and society (David Macauley, 1991, 123).

Second, the earthly topic continues to be the most heartwarming one. Griffin highlights the immense knowledge and potential of the land to heal individuals in the preface of her *Made from This Earth* book. She repeats the idea that this earth is holy for everyone, and this notion fills her with optimism because the earth is the mother of the universe (Susan Griffin, 1982, 19-20). Griffin relies on a remarkable range of materials, including timbering guides, medical texts, Scripture, and ancient literature to demonstrate how damaging the urge to disembodify the human spirit has been and how the long separation could be reunited. Nature is usually referred to as “she & her” and Griffin also alludes to “earth” like a sister. “This earth is my sister, and I love her” (Susan Griffin, 1978, 219). Simone Weil emphasizes in Winch’s book: “The Just Balance” that humans should identify themselves with the earth itself. Everything that is not the earth is destined to suffer (Winch, 1989, 134). Although Griffin begins her book by illustrating the problems that women have had throughout history, she ends on a positive note with a solution

from nature. The women still have a wild side that has to be unleashed. Griffin offers women the opportunity to shout, roar and be assertive. Women and nature are both in agony. Besides, women assist nature and vice versa in overcoming their difficulties: “We will cover her wounds with mud” (Susan Griffin, 1978, 217).

Whereas Gaard uses ecofeminist philosophy in literary criticism and writing classes, she believes that the ecofeminist theory is harmonized by tracing connections to queer theory and gathering ecofeminist views on vegetarianism and animal freedom. “Toward a Queer Ecofeminism” in 1997, is initially published in the scientific magazine *Hypatia* and is subsequently anthologised in perspectives on environmental justice, gender, sexuality, ecofeminism, activisms, and queer theory, all have been different worlds under feminism. Besides, she states that although many ecofeminists see heterosexism as an issue, there has yet to be a comprehensive examination of the possible intersections between ecofeminists and queer ideas. By looking at cultural notions of “nature” and the numerous ways in which Christianity is used to justify power, it makes a case for developing queer ecofeminism (Greta Gaard, 1997, 114).

Furthermore, she believes that the most worrying issue is the feminisation of the globe. Nature and lasting powers, various animals (felines, deer, bunnies), and, in general, anything that cannot be controlled adopts the feminine pronoun in the English language. However, “she” is more than just a value-free pronoun; when it is used to nature, “she” communicates the connotations of womanliness. One difficulty with feminising the planet is that nature has been suddenly transformed into a troubled maiden. The notion of the mother's fruitfulness becomes more challenging at that moment, as it is associated with “Mother Earth.” For the industry, the potential that old-development forests are infinite, for example, has sanctioned intemperate

logging. Human children have not been concerned with discharging raw sewage or rubbish into the waterways since there is always "more" in their mother's generous blanket. However, the world's assets are not only limited; they are rapidly being depleted, if not crushed. Therefore, it is an excellent chance for individuals to stop acting like children (Greta Gaard, 1993, 303).

What is most appealing about Gaard's ecofeminism is how she emphasizes the significance of human-nature relationships through dialogues. Her claims demonstrate how people change their decision-making techniques to change environmental conditions. Even though significant scholarly emphasis has been paid to conceptualising communication, few attempts have investigated the practical repercussions of communication ideas. With the help of an oak tree in St. Paul, Minnesota, she narrates her story:

I took up running five miles a day to compensate for the long hours spent sitting and studying during graduate school. My route took me through a grove of bur oak trees on a grassy rise above Lake Como, down and around the lake for a couple of miles, and back through the trees. I looked forward to this daily run for the way my body changed as I moved through the trees: it felt lighter, almost effervescent, as if the trees and my body exchanged greetings. I felt reconnected, visible as an earthmother, kin to these trees. Our brief conversation began and ended one day after a run, when I took a book to read with the trees. Their presence was so gracious that I wanted to sit and savor their company rather than just racing through. I entered the grove and walked rather aimlessly looking for a suitable tree trunk against which I could lean comfortably. Compliant and curious, I walked over to the tree of reference and on the other side, I discovered a long vertical hollow, well-formed for holding my body upright at rest. (Greta Gaard, 2017, xix)

Gaard admits in the following words that she does not believe that trees could communicate at that time. She exclaims “Trees don’t talk!” but then regrets, and the groves of trees transform into woods; this means that trees have sentiments and do not agree with this philosophy. Thus, she begins searching for references to mention the communication abilities of humans and nature. Significantly, she researched human-tree communication (Greta Gaard, 2017, xix). Similarly, Val Plumwood’s ideas on human-nature dualism are reminiscent of Gaard’s theory. Human/nature dualism is recognised as one of several gendered dualisms involving: male/female, human/nature, reason/emotion, and mind/body (Val Plumwood, 1993, 43). There are neither postmodern alternatives based on a respect for ‘absolute difference,’ nor profound ecological ones based on the person’s integration with the planet; she rejects both. Instead, she proposes a perspective that acknowledges and establishes an ethical duty in the differences and similarities between humans and the environment. Plumwood is also captured through her philosophical animism in Deborah Bird Rose’s (2013) discussion. Considering her ability to interact profoundly with nature, she has gained experience in her life. Rose assures that Plumwood has given them a true story about something she has encountered in her life. Once she hears the lovely song of birds, which makes her follow the sound, she later realizes they are crows. When they recognise that Plumwood is looking at them, their voices change to those of a raspy crow (Bird Rose, 2013, 107).

Gaard, on the other hand, defends the ideas and methods of other ecofeminists in her writings. Gaard connects her statement to that of Karen J. Warren in this regard. To paraphrase what Karen J. Warren says: value dualisms use binary, disjunctive words to organise the universe mentally. Each side of the duality represents a different way of thinking about the world (Greta Gaard, 1997, 115-116). Warren asserts “Seen as exclusive (rather than inclusive) and

oppositional (rather than complementary), and where higher value or superiority is attributed to one disjunct (or, side of the dualism) than the other” (Karen J. Warren, 1987, 6).

Warren draws parallels between ecological feminism and ecosystem ecology—differences that portray the two as engaged in complementary, mutually supporting efforts. She does not make these comparisons to demonstrate that environmental systems must be feminist, that feminists must be ecologists, or that these parallels indicate that ecosystem ecology is feminist. Warren and Cheney examine the distinction between ecological feminism and ecofeminist ethics. They argue that feminist ethics is already ecofeminist ethics (Karen J. Warren & Jim Cheney, 1991, 179-180). Cheney begins with ecological feminism, as it refers “to a sensibility, an intimation, that feminist concerns run parallel to, are bound up with, or, perhaps, are one with concern for a natural world which has been subjected to much the same abuse and ambivalent behaviour as have women” (Jim Cheney, 1987, 115). What distinguishes ecofeminist ethics as a feminist is a dual dedication to challenging male bias in ethics and producing non-man-biased analyses. On the other hand, ecofeminist ethics expand feminist ethical criticisms of misogyny and other socialisms of domination to include objections of “naturism” or humans’ unwarranted dominance over nonhuman creatures and the environment. Ecofeminist ethics criticizes not just hetero normative but also androcentric and humanistic prejudice in ethics. Ecofeminist ethics, like feminist ethics, is predicated on the premise that women’s and nature’s dominance is ethically wrong and should be abolished (Alison Jagger, 1990, 23-25).

Ecofeminist issues, such as deforestation, water pollution, farming, food production, toxins, and dangerous waste must be adequately analysed and resolved. Warren’s concern is to help people understand how these issues are often reflected, supported, or created (Karen J. Warren, 2000, xiv, xv). Warren’s goal is diagnostic mainly as well as forward-looking; she

advocates “transformative feminism” (Karen J. Warren, 1987, 17-20), which broadens feminism by emphasising the connections between all forms of oppression, creates theoretical room for the diversity of women’s experiences, rejects the patriarchal conceptual framework’s logic of dominance, and reconsiders what it means to be human. It also recasts traditional ethical concerns to place value at the centre and challenges patriarchal bias in technology research to favour appropriate technologies that preserve rather than destroy the environment. This feminism transforms feminism and aims to affect societal change on a far broader scale. All of the -isms of dominance may or may not be connected experimentally or historically; nonetheless, no one of the issues caused by patriarchy’s logic of authority can be addressed by itself. Using factual facts on the impact of environmental destruction on women’s lives, Warren offers this practical and constructive insight into the requirement to integrate feminism with environmentalism (Trish Glazebrook, 2002, 16).

Although Warren demonstrates the strength of ecological feminism and the ethical dimensions of environmentalism, she explains that environmental theories and feminist ethics that do not account for the linked dominance of women and nature are insufficient. On the other hand, Warren’s approach does not offer an appropriate foundation for an ethic that is capable of describing interactions between animal species, particularly between humans and non-humans. Gaard adds that because Warren devotes so much time to nature and women, she leaves little time for discussing animals and how people should relate to them (Greta Gaard, 1993, 296).

By evaluating three current definers of ecological feminism, the concept has gained new ground, pointing now to ecofeminism's universality. Gaard, Griffin, and Warren seek deeper links between women and nature, not just in the West but also throughout the world, addressing race, class, and gender issues. By patching together, a much larger, more expensively global cover,

they broaden their metaphors for ecological feminism, making it more inclusive. Their objective is to forge deep bonds between humans and nature rather than between women and nature. Although the three ecofeminists believe that nature is imposed on females, they want to blur the lines and concentrate on the factors that contribute to this tight bond. Ecofeminists believe that a woman has the same human nature as a man. She has the same human rights (to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness) and the same human responsibilities.



1.2.4. Animal Liberation: Fighting for Animal Rights

Animals have been addressed as property to assist humans in a variety of sectors. Lori Gruen confirms that there have been shamefully limited discussions of the basic factors that have driven ecofeminists to address animal rights, despite a growing awareness of the destructiveness of the human species and the vulnerable position of such devastating places for all creatures of the world. In patriarchal societies, the terms “woman” and “animal” serve the same symbolic purpose. Human male supremacy has been perpetuated thanks to the construction of women as the dominated, subservient “other” in the theoretical discourse (whether openly expressed or implied). Women and animals in the post-industrial society have just one function: to serve. Women and animals have a link in theory and practice, whether they are manufactured as ideological emblems to justify and perpetuate men’s supremacy or kidnapped as servants to serve and provide comfort. A more balanced, less harmful method to fight for the freedom of women and animals may be found by looking at this link and how it supports patriarchal society’s created reality (Lori Gruen, 1994, 537).

The relationship between women and animals may be traced through several threads of an intricately crafted story. The most prevalent origin theory states, according to Lori Gruen, that a change in evolutionary behaviour occurred when male hominids developed hunting behaviour. Those who support this theory believe that man was first separated from animals because of the hunter’s destructive, competitive, and violent conduct toward his prey. Because of post-1945 political hostilities, nuclear weapons development, and increased consumption in “advanced” Western societies, the Myth of Man the Hunter emerged in the mid-20th century. It represents a biologically determined being, with “natural” behaviour as the foundation for culture (Greta Gaard, 1993, 62). Because killing animals gives men good feelings, the myth implies that killing

animals has led men to believe that humans are superior to animals and that killing animals has become a naturalized and glorified activity.

In her article “Vegetarian Ecofeminism” (2002), Gaard discusses the importance of animal love and avoiding eating meat. Since its inception, ecofeminism has maintained a close relationship with animal liberation. Ecofeminists consider “meat” consumption as a kind of patriarchal control. This belief is widespread among many ecofeminists who seek to incorporate nonhuman animal suffering within ecofeminism. Some ecofeminists are mute when it comes to nonhuman animal oppression (speciesism). However, others have made it clear that ecofeminist analysis includes it implicitly. In their view, speciesism works the same way as racism, sexism, and other bigotries like sexism and is intimately related to them. There have been some very vocal feminists who oppose giving nonhuman animal concerns and rights the same moral weight as human ones outside of ecofeminism (Greta Gaard, 2002, 117). Gaard describes her works as follows: “Vegetarian ecofeminism puts into action the feminist insight that “the personal is political” and examines the political contexts of dietary choices as well as strategic and operational choices in science and economics” (2002, 117).

Gaard states that the connection between feminism, animal liberation, and environmentalism can be seen by looking at the effects of pollution and abuse on women and animals. Numerous authors have pointed out that hazardous pesticides, acid rain, radiation, chemical wastes, and other pollutants affect women too much. For example, these harden women’s reproductive systems and children’s growth systems. As a result of the tremendous environmental costs of industrial farming and meat consumption, these hazardous compounds are usually tested first on laboratory animals to assess their toxicity, demonstrating the link

between environmental degradation and oppression of nonhuman creatures (speciesism) (Greta Gaard, 1993, 5).

Because many animals and people share biological similarities, scientists can learn about diseases and how humans might react to medicines, cosmetics, chemicals, and other items by testing them on animals first. Stephen Watson discusses the benefits and drawbacks of animal testing and some of the alternatives that scientists are considering today. Watson's analysis identifies animal suffering, stating that the Humane Society of the United States reports that over twenty-five million animals are utilized in research, testing, and education each year. Because of the biological similarities, scientists can determine how humans respond to medications, cosmetics, chemicals, and other goods by testing them first on animals. Animal testing is used in three primary areas: biological research, education, and product safety. Alas, there is no prohibition in the United States on testing cosmetics or household items on animals, which means that firms that manufacture and sell their products here may choose to perform animal testing (Watson, 2009, 7-8). Greta and Gruen conclude their remarks by stating that to attain global justice and planetary health, feminists and ecofeminists must first turn to green and animal life. One approach to accomplishing is to emphasize commonality while recognizing difference, forming alliances with any number of individuals or groups fighting oppression, such as deep ecologists, social ecologists, ecologists' greens, and others (Greta Gaard & Lori Gruen, 1993, 251-252).

Ecofeminists investigate the effect of gender categories to assure how social standards unfairly dominate women and nature. Women, in general, stand beside nature for many reasons; they overcome numerous obstacles to get ecological life. Although feminism and environmentalism have long and distinguished histories in the annals of social movements, they

are less broadly known and understood outside of the academic world. Ecofeminism contributes significantly to the discipline, exploitation, and oppression along the axes of race, class, and gender. Women and nature have long been seen as a counterpoint to a masculine concept of culture, which sees itself as hegemonic and universal. Various people feel physical factors differently for numerous reasons; some of which are influenced by cultural norms, as is the concept of body consciousness. Female biology is evaluated because a woman's body is viewed solely in sex and reproduction; this is an example of how patriarchy exerts control over women's perceptions of their bodies. Besides, gender equality is critical for realizing human rights and is a goal that benefits society, especially girls and women. In the eyes of many women, ecofeminism can overcome its flaws, namely, the overemphasis placed on women's lived experiences and the dependence on biological processes to establish a link between women and nature.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REFLECTIONS OF GENDER IN *THE CLEFT* AND *THE WANDERGROUND*

2.1. Gender Roles: How Is Gender Captured in The Texts?

In both Lessing's and Gearhart's novels, Gender theory features are interwoven in the plots and narrations, thus providing an overview of the novels is critical. One can claim that the authors use their books to express a worldwide message. Gender theory is generally addressed in the books as a feminist theory, whereby gender is treated as a component in how humans represent reality. Men and women will build various forms of self-structures, and their cognitive processes will differ in substance and form as a result. Beginning with the first novel, *The Cleft* is a story about a primitive, all-female society inhabited by sluggish, communal, porpoise-like animals and the uproar that occurs when they start giving birth to males for no apparent reason. Furthermore, just a few characters express gender messages; some of them are even unnamed. Despite an aggravating lack of character and story, Doris Lessing writes movingly about the human urge for revolutionary and evolutionary change and for things to remain the same. Ultimately, she instils in her audience a deep belief in the impermanence of any environment in which humans find themselves and the oddly unchangeable nature of human connections (John J. Crace, 2018). Correspondingly, *The Wanderground* depicts a society where men and women are separated, with women seeking independence in the hills while males remain in the metropolis. Women have telepathic skills and unique flying and healing techniques and are assigned to help women in cities who are still seeking enlightenment. The novel is primarily set in Gearhart's historical setting the *Wanderground*. The hill women share their survival, remembering, and self-discovery stories there. This book is a gem; it is unusually forceful and yet it is kind, which deals with gender issues. In this regard, Griffin alleges (1993):

The implicit insistence on gender fixity in *The Wanderground* has, perhaps, to be seen in the context of the period when *The Wanderground* was first published (1979). The 1970s were very much a time of the assertion of gender difference along prescribed lines which within feminism were re-valued in positive terms. This is precisely what this book attempts to do. (Gabriele Griffin, 1993, 106)

The subtitle is "stories of the hill ladies" and the book is divided into interconnected chapters devoted to the individual stories of specific women rather than the creation of a storyline centred on a single person. Although this narrative style stresses the collective aspect of the women's community, it also avoids the necessity to confront the issue of gender relations by maintaining inside an essentialist model that reproduces the binary boundaries between nature and culture, male and female (Jenny Wolmark, 1994, 85). In general, gender studies examine the role of women in literary texts. Even so, feminist critics argue that patriarchy, with its masculine-focused structure, socially dictates the norms for both men and women. Fundamentally, it is believed that the cleft (Where all cleft women live) transforms into a gender school, where both men and women are considered. The Cleft intended to expose the labour of a hypothetical Roman historian striving to gather oral histories about the origins of humanity into written records. From the start of the novel, the readers may get the impression that men and women would clash. The Roman historian is inspired by the scene between a couple: Marcus and Lolla. Marcus' lousy treatment of Lolla displays his supremacy and his view of himself as superior to women: "This little scene seems to me to sum up a truth in the relations between men and women" (Lessing, 2007, 6). Wieckowska contends that: "The creation myth the novel present begins with an idyllic state disturbed by the appearance of another, in this case, men, and situates the origins of civilization in a war between sexes" (Katarzyna Wieckowska, 2013, 51). The sex

war is recognized by watching Marcus, a slave, arrive and meet Lolla, she has been waiting for his return. Lolla, is eager to spend the night with his partner, however, he leaves her and Lolla begins to cry. The man observes the couple and, upon seeing the man return to spend the night with Lolla, realizes that males value weak and pathetic women.

Similarly, *The Wanderground* begins with a discussion of gender identity. The Opening part introduces Jacqua, who appears on *The Wanderground* (geographically addressed) in the Eastern Ensconcement to see what is occurring there, she and her big mothers overhear some people lamenting. These individuals are referred to as gentle men; Gearhart defines them as males who understand that outlaw women are the planet's only hope for survival. Jacqua recalls them as they come to the *Wanderground*, stricken and dying, unwilling to return to the city (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 1-2). The author introduces *The Wanderground* in an interview titled “Discovering the *Wanderground*”. She begins by stating that independent women have been escaping metropolitan gynophobia for years, seeking a refuge in the hills of the *Wanderground*. They have created a relatively secure women space to develop their individual and collective potentials by being vigilant on the frontiers and infiltrating the city itself (Sally Miller Gearhart & Susanna Sturgis, 1980, 24).

To better understand how gender is constructed in the novel, some of the leading female and male characters in the novels are analysed through their contributions to the central theme. *The Wanderground* is a collection of short stories set in various locations around the globe. By naming each woman, the author builds a society in which all women are cherished. The followings are some of the character names: Seja, Clana, Zephyr, Voki, and Artilidea. Fora, Li, and Clana. These four Pony, Krueva, Ijeme, and Ursula live in the Dangerland between the land

of the hill women and the unnamed city. The Gentles, Evona, Chthona, and Tulu live in Earlytown, which is an abandoned town outside the city.

The Cleft is a little more complicated when it comes to the construction of gender. Marcus, Lolla, Maire, Astre, Transit, Horsa, and Maronna are identified as the main characters of The Cleft. Marcus and Lolla are introduced from the beginning, with Marcus's behaviour pointing in the direction of Lolla. His treatment lets the Roman narrator or the name he has adopted (Transit) recall the ancient days and the interaction between man and woman. Maire is the second primary narrator; the story is presented entirely via Maire's account; the novel's views add to the narrators' unreliability. What is more, Doris Lessing provides a strong balance between the sexes; she just depicts the influence of society on men and women.

"Men does, women is" (Robert Graves in Lessing, 2007). The public has diverse perspectives on what society appreciates most in males and what it values most in women. While many people believe that the society emphasizes men's honesty, morality, and professional achievement, the most attributes of women are physical attractiveness, nurturing, and empathy. Lessing utilizes Grave's book title to explain what the society appreciates most in women. The public sees increasing pressure on men in various areas, and the exact value is given in The Cleft after building a society in which men are positioned. Essentially, the narrative of humankind is reconstructed, beginning with the legendary book The Cleft. The term "The Cleft" is initially proposed to settle whether man or woman arrived first on the planet. When the Roman senator discovers the cobbled together from fragments of papers and oral histories, he tells "The Cleft—I did not choose this title—had at various times been regarded as so inflammatory, it had been put with other 'strictly secret' documents" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 7). The location of The Cleft is crucial in portraying the interaction between The Cleft ladies and their natural environment.

Female sexual bodies have been discovered here for the first time in human history. Women's sexual dominance has shaped the lives of people of all genders. When it comes to this, Tiger says that the title is an allusion to Doris Lessing's most recent work about female parthenogenesis, in which men are treated as an afterthought. The title refers to the first species' genitalia (Virginia Tiger, 2008, 33-35). Men and women must coexist on this planet because it is the nature of existence; there is no way to escape reality. The narrative of *The Cleft*, "the very first people, the very first females" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 22), and their invasion by *Squirts* is told in the novel. The genre gives women a chance to fight for their right to be treated equally and humanely. When the Cleft (the place where the cleft women live) is still their country, it is devoid of males and masculine ideals, and femininity reigns supreme—to the first occupants of the planet, being a human being meant being a woman.

To start with, Maire, the storyteller, describes herself as a girl born into a family of cleft watchers. A recorded voice informs the Roman historian that "If everyone gives birth, as soon as they are old enough, everyone is a mother," she explains, "and you don't have to say Mother" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 9). Her statement alludes to how women become accustomed to being in charge once life is produced. Indeed, the terms 'woman' or 'mother' are never uttered: "Why should we"? "We only had shes" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 10). These remarks have been spoken upon the birth of a son. In other words, a new mode of thought is established following the creation of a monster: "Males, Females, new words, new people" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 13). To explain 'Monster,' cleft mothers have begun referring to newborn boys as monsters, their perception of men: as malformed, oddities, and cripples (Doris Lessing, 2007, 8). Another term for infant males or monsters is "sea squirt." Marie explains why they call them like this; they are

exactly like them, except for the item in front. She refers to it as a pipe that resembles a sea squirt (Doris Lessing, 2007, 12-18).

After giving birth to a baby boy, the cleft women have been waiting for babies' arrival with worry and terror rather than enthusiasm and pleasure. Having a monster born makes one of them feel guilty, and the other despises her (Doris Lessing, 2007, 13). The existence of men on earth has altered women's lives. The clefts have been unable to break free from the life they previously lived in peace. The story depicts the entrance of males into women's world as the beginning of medieval civilization: men fundamentally alter women's life, eliminating their commonality and traditional way of thinking in return for language, individualism, time, and space innovations (Katarzyna Wieckowska, 2013, 53). The women's act demonstrates their antisocial attitudes toward people of the other sex; Lessing discusses 'heterosexualisms' and gender hatred in this passage. The clefts are aware of the challenges of having a boy as a child. What will happen when the infants are all grown up? There is no doubt about it; the clefts assimilate, and they will be oppressed by binary oppositions and stereotypes restricting their liberties. Over time, the newly hatched monsters are no longer just exclusively male, but they are enemies as well. Old shes resolve to kill monsters out of hatred towards them, just like they used to do with the twin girl newborn. They toss newborn boys over the cliff's edge and watch as the eagles feast on them. However, they have succeeded in reviving and are now in good health. The cleft mothers are even more enraged, saying "How they survived, those babies, we have no idea" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 19). The existence of monsters does not deter certain clefts, who like playing with monsters' front matter. When it comes to the clefts and the monsters, the distinctions always come down to the specifics of the fight. Because males cannot bear children without the assistance of women, there would be no life on earth without the clefts. Second,

males have flat breasts, which makes no sense because they cannot feed babies. The cleft ladies frequently ask this question, to which they repeatedly provide the same answer “Our breasts are useful. Not like yours” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 19).

While the clefts' breasts are beneficial, Doris Lessing conveys that men's phallic is more potent. The front matter is usually considered; for this reason, elderly ladies decide to cut it off because it is the only feature that distinguishes a newborn boy from cleft women; nevertheless, it proves ineffectiveness, and the monsters grow up with the assistance of eagles. The repeated use of the term "object in front" enables the Roman historian to recall a scenario in which his daughter and son once quarrelled in the nursery. Lydia's brother makes fun of her for not possessing what he has. He moves his penis up and down, and his gaze fixes on her with a lordly attitude. Lydia sobs and asks why he has it, but she does not have it. The answer has always been the same: she is a girl, and he is a master. Doris Lessing firmly believes in patriarchy and that the woman provides males with the opportunity for satisfying outcomes. “Don’t cry” says the nurse to the little girl. “Don’t give him that satisfaction” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 61).

Even though *The Wanderground* is different from *The Cleft* in terms of fictional characteristics, both books contain stories that may interact. Because monsters are born, and two genders develop feelings for one another, *The Wanderground's* findings indicate that the hill ladies are, in fact, cleft women. The hill women reject coexistence with males and express no empathy for them. Besides, they are hesitant to welcome the gentlemen's (gay men) visit, stating, "We are not like other men" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 179). Gentlemen arrive from the city, and some hill ladies are powerless to resist. “Why do we need the gentles?” one of the hill ladies (Zephyr) asks. “Let us prepare our battles”. “Why not withdraw from the city” (Gearhart, 1979, 129). The rationale for relocating certain ladies to the city establishes that Gearhart is aware of

life's realities. Women and men cannot be separated, although women will indefinitely struggle for a better life. Both writers aspire to attain their intended result, which is to be free of males and to live in peace, but it is challenging for the women of both places to achieve this goal since baby boys continue to be born.

Additionally, in the novel, there are no compensating transition metaphors and no linear linked narrative. There are episodes devoted to the lives of the Wanderground women that overlap so loosely that the narrative becomes secondary. *The Wanderground* is chosen for examination because it embodies several recurrent elements of the science fiction genre while including queer concepts. It is critical to emphasize that this study does not seek to make a blanket statement about all feminist science fiction. However, the writer frequently disputes it, claiming that the work accurately portrays the lives of all women. The women abandon gentles to perish without assistance from the cleft ladies. When one of the hill women (Jacqua) inquires as to why they do not help them, her mother responds, "They must help themselves" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 3). They may realize the curse of women's hardness after they die.

The Wanderground's most salient characteristic is abolishing patriarchal authority and favouring all-female social order. The hill women elect to go back in time as if everyone agrees that the first person to come to existence was a woman, and they attempt to emulate the ancient shes of The Cleft. Throughout the narrative, gender is a subject of contention; the hill women conclude "We do not coexist" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 25). It is a patriarchal term that refers to male dominance in both public and private domains. The word 'patriarchy' is frequently used by feminists to refer to the power relationship between men and women. Thus, patriarchy is more than a phrase; feminists utilize it as an idea, and like other concepts, it serves as a lens through which we may view women's reality. The hill ladies have endured much, and now they

think it is the time to abandon all established norms and revert to their origins. Gearhart's place is a non-technological but secure place. There is, nevertheless, a connection between the country and the city. Her utopia is not entirely devoid of women; Betha, Ijeme, and Evona are among the hill women who reside in the city. Even still, not everything has been accomplished completely. As with Doris Lessing, Sally Miller Gearhart is unable to dedicate the book exclusively to women. The writer clarifies the reason for not abandoning the city altogether in one of her speeches:

I believe that that's kind of a metaphor for what's already happening. I think it's merely intensified within the wanderground. The thing that I keep being so intense about is that we need both. Moreover, I think that women, all women, need to participate in both if we can. And if we can't, if it's a matter of some people being consistently into the country and some people being consistently into the city, then the least we can do is have a consciousness of the fact we depend upon each other in some very significant ways. (Sally Miller Gearhart & Susanna Sturgis, 1980, 24).

Gender and power disparities and differential results between men and women are also discussed in *The Cleft*. Women have even entered a new life that is full of a bad memory; the longevity of these disparities has prompted some to speculate that they may be intrinsic — a consequence of genetics and the distinct selection pressures encountered by men and women during history. The hill women cannot accept gender distinctions and seek refuge from males. They have labelled males as foolish and insane, claiming that "theirs is the madness of power" (Gearhart, 1979, 3). Indeed, the society has established this authority. In other words, it is

culture, not nature, that limits males and females to distinct masculine and feminine personality types “this priority was a later invention” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 29).

Lessing criticizes the patriarchal structure for gender hierarchies that elevate the male species above all other beings, while Gearhart refuses this power and calls for reuniting. *The Cleft's* gender arguments may be evaluated in terms of character display. Monsters or Squirts are accustomed to dwelling "past the Killing Rock, over the valley, past the mountain" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 35). Soon, each tribe begins to wonder about each other. One outcome of this is that some women begin to think about life on the other side and how monsters live. Doris Lessing starts the narrative by sending one of the cleft women (Maire) across the mountain to the valley, creating gender roles and stereotypes. While Maire is perplexed as to why the cleft lady wishes to climb the mountain and be there, it is apparent that Lessing is challenging her readers and the world (Doris Lessing, 2007, 52). Concerning the concept of women, Beauvoir says (1974) “[n]o biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the female human presents in society: it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine” (Simone de Beauvoir, 1974, 301). The gender designation of an individual has a profound effect on how others perceive and react to that individual. Stereotypically, people expect women and men to behave differently since they have different personal characteristics and physical features. Because the society establishes these anticipated roles for men and women inside marriages, it creates a template for children to emulate. Lessing also refers to gender roles here, stating the most memorable phrase “because I’m a boy” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 53). When the young girl pays a visit to monsters first, she is drawn to the penis of a lad, and this sentence dictates all postures.

Into the bargain, Lessing's work echoes the concept of being a man and wielding authority over other genders. Cleft women are the ones who educate first males on how to talk and utilize adult language; monsters are powerless without the assistance of cleft women. Although many argue that women can only educate men to be more emotional, Lessing demonstrates that women can teach men a great deal: "Maire and Astre had to be there, to teach them language, teach them how to keep their shelters clean, and to mate with them when their tubes grew alert and pointed at the girls" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 75). In a moment, other clefts join the monsters and have sex with them continuously. They are first amused by the sexual intrusion, but they soon realize that bearing children and becoming pregnant has become "the game". The squirts are irresponsible because they cannot take care of the children without the help of cleft women. It is not because they are incapable of caring for children; instead, they are carefree and easily forgetful (Doris Lessing, 2007, 154-156).

The conflict between men and women continues; Horsa and Maronna are the early representations of males and females. They exemplify contemporary life in terms of their features - their responsibilities and roles are the most critical to consider. When it comes to gender roles, Horsa symbolizes the father figure, whereas Maronna depicts both the mother and the leader. They join the monsters since the cleft women can no longer become pregnant without the assistance of the monsters. Women, especially Maronna, are constantly in charge of the obligations and care for children, "Children were at risk" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 146). Lessing uses real-world instances to expose how social norms are formed. Regardless of how often the cleft women advise monsters against harmful activities, they do whatever they want without considering the danger to infant boys. Women are told they are nothing but clefts and should keep their mouths shut. However, whenever boys cut their knees or arms, they immediately seek

out the women who now live in the caves to have them bound with seaweed and then return to the valley to join others (Doris Lessing, 2007, 160-221). Women are obliged to stay in the caverns or valleys to take care of the environment and the cleaning area. Monsters frequently consider going on hunts without bringing clefts (173).

Lessing is conscious of the world's inequality, but she wants to emphasize that gender inequalities are established with the assistance of women. Despite their complaints, they are afraid of their wombs. Indeed, they consider the cleft holy and are eager to return in time. However, the cleft women are unsure whether they can survive without their wombs being filled: "Who is going to fill our wombs?" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 190). Lessing uses real-world examples to explain that women, like males, have a robust libido. People born as men have traditionally been given greater leeway to speak openly about their sexual desires, whereas women have typically been instructed to conceal their sexuality. In this context, the cleft women secretly clarify why they are unable to flee from monsters, they are afraid of their wombs.

Maronna is in charge; Horsa is on the prowl. Nevertheless, just as he appears to be poised to journey into a new paradise, Clefts and Monsters acquire acceptability. Women of the cleft ruin everything by becoming pregnant by monsters rather than with the assistance of the moon. Although Maronna is irritated by Horsa for failing to safeguard small boys and allowing them to perish, she cannot help but hug and express affection to him. Horsa, as a man, wants to experience the connection and love of his woman via her arms. Maronna, as a member of the clefts of femininity, cannot refute men's negligence; she repeats it in the result: "You are so careless, you do not care..." (Doris Lessing, 2007, 257). By examining the narrative of Horsa and Maronna, women and men cannot concur, nor can they live without one another. They keep up living together despite their arguments and quarrels. They exemplify contemporary living,

and so the hill women are relevant. They are the embodiments of what occurs when men and women decide to cohabit.

Going back to *The Wanderground*, the hill women are fed up with past days' thoughts; they are in trouble because they cannot forget what they have been through "When we are this overwhelmed by memory" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 23). Even Gearhart cannot leave men out of her book; she devotes several chapters to them, such as *Meeting Gentlemen* and *A Man in the City*. Males expose more than women in employing a direct or aggressive style of confrontation, whereas more women compared to men handle conflict subtly or avoid it entirely. Although women have dealt with a great deal throughout history, Gearhart removes certain ladies from the city and relocates them. The author tries to oppose the inequity imposed on women. The fight has not been completed since *The Dangerland* encircles the hill women. When one of the hill women dies at the end of the novel, she leaves a testament to continuing fighting for women's independence, as though she knows the conflict would never end: "Yours is the task", "Mine is the passing" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 196). The task is straightforward; in other words, she advises them to continue and save the world from the other gender.

Likewise, *The Wanderground* represents one of the first significant representations of lesbians in science fiction, a typically masculine medium. Gearhart thinks that feminism, in the sense that she understands, is an ideology of possibility rather than likelihood (Sally Miller Gearhart & Susanna Sturgis, 1980, 24). So, the women of the hills are a group of lesbians who look out for one another. Gearhart provides a chance for the two characters to spend the morning together. In a chapter called *A Morning Together*, Alaka visited the Western Enscornement to see her lover Seja. Alaka admires Seja for her worry-inducing personality, and Seja's passion for collecting books astounds Alaka and others. They pamper themselves by showing affection for

one another. Regardless of how difficult and painful their lives have been, women are content to be alone. Gearhart has imagined and dreamed of such a community of women, and she achieves her dreams through the hill women's stories. Lesbians frequently state that their primary physical, emotional, and sexual feelings are directed toward women "turned back to her lover" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 23). Another evidence is seen when Alaka opens her eyes, and she is overcome with joy and attempts to kiss Seja from head to toe. When Seja inquires about her night and morning, Alaka responds sincerely, "I never had it so good, never had such a soft body beside me" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 20). Gearhart does not attempt to explain why ladies of the hills are lesbians; indeed, there is no valid reason why some women are lesbians while others are not - it is simply a part of who they are, like a man who is a gay in real life. Butler claims that sexuality is independent of gender: "we can't read sexuality off of gender" (Judith Butler, 2017, 1). However, it can be also approached as women choosing deliberately to cherish one another over the other sex.

Notwithstanding, the sourness and misery of the hill ladies capture the reader's attention in *The Wanderground*. Across the ages, women have been subjected to prejudice and injustice. Like the cleft women, the hill women are expected to follow the society's rules. Social standards significantly impact lesbians. They first believe the oppressions are temporary and that everything will be OK (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 82). Things deteriorate further, and new stereotypes are formed to test their parties and demonstrate straightness. Women in the city describe how they are destined to follow the rules to be accepted by the society:

When had she first dared to wear pants to work? Neat pants, but with pockets. Nobody had cracked. There were lots of women doing it. But now the new rule. No more pants on

the ladies. All girls got to be in skirts and hose. Like the old days. Next month that would be effective. (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 84)

We can relate this quote with Butler's theory, Butler believes that gender is not predicated on physical facts but is purely a social construct; it may be altered and disputed. Hence, Butler maintains that gender is neither necessary nor biologically defined but instead is produced via one's performance and thus is performative (Judith Butler, 1990, 273). It is a process: "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of the substance of a natural sort of being" (Judith Butler, 1990, 33). Similarly, Marilyn Frye writes in her article "Sexism," the distinction between sex and gender exert pressure on human beings; "The pressure on each of us to guess or determine the sex of everybody else both generates and is exhibited in a great pressure on each of us to inform everybody all the time of our sex" (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 23). Gender conflicts are most evident in the Rememberings Room, where the hill women attempt to remember everything and impart knowledge about women's history to the little girl Clana. The majority of researchers have observed that parents are the primary source of children's gender learning, and there are indicators that parents have different expectations for males and females. Lips asserts that gender identity typically develops under the sex of assignment and raising. The assignment occurs between the child's 18th and 24th months of life, and the parents communicate clearly about the child's sex (Hilary M. Lips, 1988, 110). Thus, Clana is invited to view vintage magazine and newspaper photos and how women are perceived or represented in the media. Gender-related content has been depicted in advertising, numerous platforms, and television shows. Most gender-related content across these media channels is examples of female and male roles oriented mainly toward youngsters. Clana investigates and

covers vintage periodicals that feature women dressed just in high-heeled boots and a thin crotch band or represented in a sexual posture with a man about to enter her “Photographs of women on their knees servicing men” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 157-158).

In addition, Clana, the little girl, plays a significant role in the novel; Gearhart purposefully chooses this character to raise questions about inequality. She embodies a fresh, innocent, and inventive society uninformed of what women have endured and believes it is new for women to seek independence from males. The little girl represents a new human, much like her mother's ancestors in *The Cleft*, and has no idea about anything, not even the presence of males. She brings up a valid point and asks her mothers in a confused tone: “how could you let someone enter your body that way and not be a victim?” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 158). In the same vein, her elderly mother's objections imply “The males-with their restless, ever-responding squirts, which were sometimes large, sometimes limp, but mostly stiff with need,” “they were wild and restless” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 41- 88).

Gender theory focuses primarily on the impact of gender roles and norms on female characters in both works. A new world is opening to women in *The Cleft*, where men and women coexist. They do not take some of the social rules that have been imposed on them very seriously. For example, women are not allowed to go into places that do not have male approval, so they are restricted to certain areas, “the men shouted that only idiot women would think of letting the little boys go to the forest clearing when there were no men to protect them” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 188). As Hilary Lips explains in her study of gender roles, these roles are not simply a collection of human characteristics, but rather a set of norms that govern the social structure in which these individuals exist. There is a hierarchy built into that system in which men have greater authority than women. It is impossible to overlook the disparity in power, and

it is even more difficult to modify one's ways. For women, the ramifications can be devastating (Hilary M. Lips, 1988, Xii).

Another ignored social norm in *The Cleft* is that men can have sex with numerous cleft women without recognizing their wives, allowing monsters to go after another woman and have children. This feature can be also found in *The Wanderground*, as the hill women recall horrific events from their past. Women are the source of violence in a culture that was once dominated by men. There are various gender stereotypes observed in cities, and women recollect one of them as: “When I left, state laws were being revised to require every woman to be married. Polygyny was even being sanctioned in some areas so men could have several wives” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 152). Polygamy—the practice of having more than one spouse—has long been a contentious issue, not only because it is thought to be harmful to women, sometimes leading to early and forced marriage, incest, and paedophilia. (Jessica Mack, 2011).

To summarize, both works complement gender roles and societal expectations. Ideas that women are randomly allocated positions and qualities are based only on their gender. The immolation of the Cleft is complete, even if it does not cause any harm to those in its vicinity. Filipczak believes that the fantasy associated with the archaic maternal will never be regained. The narrator claims that determining its location is impossible. Only the story, or myth, remains. Lessing's message remains correct and demure, punctuated by the perspective of the male narrator who provides the right framing for the narrative of the maternal semiotic brought under the control of the paternal symbolic, both as unlocated as Lessing's binary world (Dorota Filipczak, 2014, 171). Some of Lessing's opponents have been troubled by the ideological implications of her mythological story's concentration on gender.

Lessing is more skilled than some of her critics' understanding in her formulation of a gendered myth of origins. Her first female pre-humans' primacy is counterbalanced by their ties to marine creatures of the past. Their neediness and frailty counterbalance the earliest guys' vitality and curiosity. The real meaning of her beginning's myth, as we will see, is that the clefts and men are utterly interdependent for the creation and then an appraisal of humans (Alice Ridout & Susan Watkins, 2011, 53-54), whereas *The Wanderground's* problematizes gender as a criterion for text production and connects gender with narrative strategies. Gender difference is portrayed in the story as a severe or insurmountable impediment to women's independence. The separation of men and women is a necessary strategy in the struggle for liberation or as an escape from the inequalities of patriarchy in the single-sex society that they describe and advocate. Gearhart's gender understanding, which supports her conviction in pacifist anarchism, has become more radical and less conservative, contradicting the genre's overall trend (Paul Richard Marketos, 1993, 172-175). The hill women have long considered the impact of male dominance on female autonomy and well-being and how seclusion from men (to varying degrees) may benefit women's lives. Unlike Lessing, Gearhart's gender achievements are not limited; she allows different genders to participate in her utopia. She expresses a gender identity that is neither exclusively masculine nor exclusively feminine. A group of people experiences their gender in a variety of ways. The term's inability to be defined is part of what makes it appealing to people; Gearhart allows us to think about it and explain it ourselves. The identification may have components of feminine, masculine, or non-binary identities, or it may contain none of these.

2.2. The Differences Between Lessing's 'The Clefts' and Gearhart's 'The Hill Women.'

Change, change, change, change, change, change, change.

-Sally Miller Gearhart

For several years, women worldwide have pushed for change in various sectors. When these two novels are considered, we see that women are on the same page. However, there are several distinctions between the hill and cleft women. Lessing and Gearhart attempt to adapt their worlds to gender conventions in the novels, but the characters and plots are quite different. In particular, certain women are more substantial and bolder than others.

In terms of characters, setting, time, gender groups, women and men relationships, and other elements, the two distinct novels contain diverse elements. However, these considerations are made in light of how women respond to these topics. Starting with historical stories, the cleft women are accustomed to advising men about the need for security guarding and staying on the straight road, but they frequently fail, even though men realize they are correct in certain aspects "he was secretly thinking that she was right" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 191). Women of the cleft represent the ancient history; even though the characters are unable to quantify the passage of time, there is no help for them in memory since "no one can say how long" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 25) has passed.

The Cleft emphasizes the way women are seen as objects rather than subjects and portrays women as inferior to males because of their supposed superiority in the society. In describing her ladies in the book, Lessing demonstrates non-identical points of view. It is always believed that the body composition differs between men and women, and men are typically physically stronger. The binary antagonism is particularly evident in the scene where the

monsters multiply and attempt to observe the cleft ladies from the valley across the mountain at Killing Rocks. They anxiously await the clefts that will run through the steep slopes behind the sea, allowing them access. However, they are immobile and do not persist. Even the male monsters become tired of seeing them. When the writer describes the clefts, she is aware of their laziness: “the clefts, as usual lying half in, half out of the waves” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 44). Things get worse when this description is taken into account by males “They did not do much, only lazed and yawned, and swam a little and shook their long hair out over their shoulders to dry, and then swam again” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 44).

In addition, because cleft women are accustomed to being quiet and sedentary due to the absence of issues and changes in their lives, they are incapable of altering their inertia after becoming connected with men. Gender benefits differ according to activities and accomplishments; the clefts simply seek a solution by being calm. In feminist psychologies of women, the meanings of silence and voice are discussed. Similarly, some feminist writers consider "voice" crucial to women's power experience and exercise. As a result, in feminist psychology, silence is a problem (Marsha Houston & Cheris Kramarae, 1991, 387). Women's silence in the context of the world's punishment has a long and complicated history. It is less well-documented and fragmentary than that of men. Details must be wrangled out of obscurity, and what is missing might alter them. Women's silence is so familiar in many locations that many people do not even notice it. The first ladies of the cleft show the stillness and the silence as evidence. When Susan Griffin discusses how the subjective position of women in the society results in women's ruin, to some contents, women are unable to struggle for their liberation; they remain mute. As Griffin notes, it is recommended that women not to be permitted to teach or

baptize. As a result, women's language becomes unholy “we practice muteness” (Susan Griffin, 1979, 19-20).

The cleft women battle to free themselves from the monsters, but they become exhausted and give up battling for the final victory after a while. In other words, they begin with violence, even cutting off the organs of boys, but the outcome is always the same: men live, as it is a natural law (Doris Lessing, 2007, 18). Although they first fear the clefts, the squirts become used to them and reproduce the myth of humanity: “the earliest ancestors were male, and if it is asked how they reproduced themselves, then the reply is that the eagles hatched them out of their eggs” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 142). Furthermore, when the first man initiated the war chant, the clefts have been the subject of discussion. Monsters seize over and immediately begin singing unpleasant remarks against women; this shows that they are more aggressive when men engage in mate-retention behaviours toward the other party. At the same time, the clefts choose to remain mute and do not create any song lyrics for their tribe. Thus, the songs of the monsters are like:

Kill the clefts,

Kill them, kill them,

They are our enemies,

Kill them all. (Lessing, 2007, 28).

According to the song, men perceive women as enemies, and their rage is far greater than women's. They are philosophical allies as well as foes; indeed, the first creature, a woman, is the originator of the concept of an adversary. Men have contemplated murdering cleft ladies with the passage of time. Monsters choose to be worse rather than justify themselves. It can be also

analysed that if men truly demonstrate their kindness, women may believe them. It also implies that in order to truly know either male supremacy or misogyny, we must endeavour to comprehend both. The same situation occurs in *The Wanderground*. On the other hand, the lyrics are the polar opposite of what is sung in *The Cleft*. The hill women have evolved; they are now powerful, bold, and fearful. They are willing to battle for their beliefs. Women sing from the beginning till the end to inspire themselves and display their mental stability; they sing to remind themselves of all they have undergone. Women derive pleasure from the resonance of sound waves on their lips and throughout their bodies. Apart from assisting them in recovering from a life-threatening accident, singing has motivated them to begin living their lives as emancipated women with the potential to better the world. Unlike the monsters, the hill women neither propose nor avoid 'killing' the opposite sex. First, they sing using the word "Death" and "you slay the slayer", then they change the aspect and sing "We do not slay him, but aid him in his dying" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 194). This is one of the hill mothers' responsibilities, as evidenced by their decision to allow the four gentlemen to die at the beginning of the text: "Jacqua had seen them die there. Four of them" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 3).

The fascinating aspect of the hill women is Gearhart's portrayal of them. The distinctions between the clefts in Lessing's and the hill women in Gearhart's novels are highlighted in the following explanations. The *Wanderground* ladies possess the capacity to utilize their brains to communicate effectively. Women are accustomed to standing guard at the *Wanderground* defensive position, illustrating their extraordinary sensory abilities. They can sense danger or any type of human disturbance across long distances simply by "spreading" or "stretching." For instance, Alaka's magical ability is apparent in the chapter "Red Water": "Automatically she spanned other frontiers before responding to the outskirts of her southern stretchfield" (Sally

Miller Gearhart, 1979, 7). They not only “observe” and “listen” to one another in this manner but also interact with one another through “mind-stretching” or “short stretching” “No tu-ka’s mindstretch aroused Alaka” (Gearhart, 1979, 23). They communicate simply by opening their inner conversations to one another, that is, by not “shielding” their ideas from their listening abilities. They have evolved more than sight, taste, and smell to listen, infer, and be sensitive to one another—the women’s skills of communication function on two levels in Gearhart’s stories. At the narrative level, they comprise all the discourses between the ladies. Gearhart rises to the challenge: her language is precise enough to clean the diamond. The language issues inherent in such a discourse method are immense. At the second symbolic level, the intuitive skills signify that ultra-sensitivity and ability to listen are established by any strong sisterhood or compassionate community (Lou Roberts, 1980, 75).

Several centuries ago, women escaped to the Wanderground to avoid the brutality and tyranny of males in the city; nonetheless, they attempt to keep up with the evolution of urban life. Another strength and talent of hill women is their capacity to manufacture everything that is contemporary life produces. The hill women are isolated from the city and technology; their intellect and strength are all they have. When Clana asks her older sister Rhynaa how to get her hair done, Rhynaa acknowledges as they can do anything that ancient and modern machines can do with less effort. Gearhart aims to highlight the value of having women in the workforce, the unique abilities women bring to the office, and the productivity and growth advantages of adding women to the labour force (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 145). Their power is also shaped by the four gentlemen who paid a visit to the Wandergorund women; they inform them of the city’s position. They tell them that factories and the corporate world are not what they used to be and

that conditions are deteriorating daily. The gentle men are cognizant of women's power they have gained because of their separation (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 175).

By examining gentles who come to the Wanderground, one may see another distinction between the hill ladies in *The Wanderground* and the clefts in *The Cleft*. Men desire to see the hill ladies, chat with them, witness their power, and view them without intending to touch them. On the other hand, in *The Cleft*, the initial visit is made by the ladies and the cleft women are the ones who begin to think about the opposite sex. At the first glance, what captures the cleft's attention is the monsters' squirts "she was staring at their fronts" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 52). Later, women enjoy seeing the penis in situations where they anticipate or desire sex. While the clefts first have no reason for utilizing penises, they want to touch and play with them. It is the weapon or the instrument a man employs to seduce a woman. Also, his primary worry is about his penis and its size. Marilyn Frye addresses phallocratic culture, claiming that civilization creates the masculine power. The penis is annihilated, mystically transformed, and adored. Numerous works of male literature repeatedly indicate that straight men both identify with and feel profoundly estranged from their penises. Frye criticizes the phallocratic culture by saying "It is a culture in which an identification of the penis with power, presence and creativity is found plausible- not the brain, the eyes, the mouth or the hand, but the penis" (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 132-133). Women have historically been oppressed by men and viewed as a source of evil. Freud contends, the concealed motive is fear of losing the phallus's potency (Sigmund Freud, 1920, 15). In *The Cleft*, Males frequently think of the clefts with increasing eagerness and curiosity to satisfy their needs. Indeed, women of the cleft work diligently and use the same ways as men, but they cannot attain the males. The clefts are responsible for the children and valley, whilst the monsters are constantly on the lookout for new locations to reside, earning them the right to

claim to be the first creature on earth “It is evident that males are by nature and designed by nature to be first” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 143).

Furthermore, women’s solidarity is not well qualified in Lessing's work. Unlike Gearhart’s *The Wanderground*, all women are capable of producing clefts; they are capable of coming out of life without the assistance of men. Some of them detest men so that they are willing to kill and damage them; however, others feel interested in monsters and wish to live next to them. The scenario is caught after having the first newborn monster for a father; some have started to have private chats with each other, and they use language and some thoughts that they cannot communicate with other clefts. Soon, more clefts begin to give babies with the help of monsters. However, the conflict between old shes and youthful clefts never get along with one another “so many dangerous thoughts in their heads” (Lessing, 2007, 69). Griffin argues that gender equality cannot be realized unless all women are in love with one another: “the ability for a woman to be free is connected with her ability to love another woman” (Susan Griffin, 1981, 224). The clefts' inability to be free can be explained by their lack of affection and tenderness for one another.

There is also another instance of miscommunication between young and elderly clefts. Following orgies with monsters, the number of monsters' pregnant ladies has skyrocketed. The old shes instantly declare revolution against monsters; although the writer notes that the word "run" is unfamiliar to women, the two young ladies (Marie and Astre) remain unwavering in their pursuit of what they genuinely desire (Doris Lessing, 2007, 83). Lessing emphasizes a concept of assistance and collaboration that is absent from *The Cleft*. Women must dispel the myth that women do not support one another. The writer, besides, delivers that collaboration

over competitiveness benefits women; they gain from having a diverse network of well-connected peers.

By joining monsters and gaining sexual access, the clefts lose control of their bodies. Their community is cohesive except for the hierarchical relationship between the elderly and young clefts. There have been frequent divisions between I, We, and Others. There will be undoubtedly similar things and maybe more among monsters if there is a sense of otherness among the clefts. Monsters have been employed to describe the clefts as “They” and now begin to manifest themselves among the cleft community (Doris Lessing, 2007, 29).

On the other side, the Wanderground ladies are so gentle in their interactions with one another; they have profound bonds. The hill women have one goal in mind: female empowerment. They have a striking resemblance to the old Shes in *The Cleft*. Gearhart wishes to import women's strength by compelling the characters to talk and utilize abrasive terms toward the opposite sex. Seeing men die does not affect the hill women; women take pleasure in their demise and have no remorse or mercy for males. By empowering other women, they develop life skills that enable them to sustain a source of livelihood. They rely on one another for critical and life-affirming assistance. Perhaps this closure causes them to fall in love.

As a consequence, the majority of hill women become lesbians and develop feelings for one another “Both women held fast to the channel connecting them as they came eagerly toward each other”, “when sleep came it was no less sweet and deep than their loving” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 15-17). The writer, particularly at the time, encountered several challenges expressing her gender, yet she raises her voice via her characters, as these emotions are normalized. Closely, Marilyn Frye addresses lesbianism to demonstrate that being lesbian is natural. She criticizes the society's attitudes toward lesbians, considering it as not natural, but she

says that all women are heterosexual, but some women have an alternative sexual orientation. According to this view, no one is a lesbian in the same meaning. However, it is untrue because lesbianism exists (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 159).

Although hill women are acquainted with having common sense and interests, there are times when they express disagreement with other hill women's viewpoints. Gearhart risks sending her characters on missions to persuade ladies to accept men's visits. This mobilization indicates that there will be undoubtedly problems among the hill women; nonetheless, Gearhart is stable enough to send them to the Wanderground; she wishes to witness their outcome. The Gatherstretch is where women come together and plan their next steps. Most oppose and get enraged at Evona, who lives in the city. When it comes to seeing the gentles, Evona sees no problem, but some are not sure (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 128). The anger becomes intense, and women retreat from the conversation due to their inability to find approbation. Although the stories are imaginary, this scenario shows that even fascinated ladies can dispute and feel resentful against one another. What matters is the next step; if people are offended, how do they heal? Whether the Wanderground ladies spend their time in delight without engaging in serious debates has always been wondered. The Gatherstretch provides the solution; by gathering them, Gearhart illustrates that women's blood objects to what they perceive wrong. The hill ladies raise their voices in opposition to the ideas; nonetheless, they quickly reach a point of agreement and finish the conversation. Each character is significant in the book; Tulu possesses a command of language that is unafraid to introduce terminology and concepts without explaining them. Gearhart gradually allows the reader to uncover this realm's nature for themselves. Additionally, the scene depicts even in this dramatically different culture; women navigate in unique and different ways.

Another important feature shared by both groups of women is their maternal talents; this is a trait that Lessing and Gearhart attach to their females in various roles and qualities. The most prominent example of gender stereotypes is motherhood. The traits of the characters represented in the story are patriarchal gender-stereotyped tendencies. By doing so, both authors may have argued that gender-stereotyped behaviours and roles are not culturally manufactured, nor are they taught, but are intrinsic qualities of both genders. Lessing's motherhood is given far more prominence than Gearhart's. From the start of *The Cleft*, women are depicted as pregnant and with children. Despite their concern for their children, mothers first refuse to feed their infant boys. They reject the idea of nursing newborn monsters with breast milk since Maire claims no one wants to provide them (Doris Lessing, 2007, 18). Later, they opt to breastfeed them and insist on raising their infants. This shift demonstrates that they have prioritized the bottom line to begin combating the old shes. This hatred spreads far and wide, and the alienation of the clefts creates enemies among themselves (Lessing, 2007, 86). The cleft women appreciate their ability to breastfeed their baby boys, as they claim, "Our breasts are useful. Not at all like yours" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 19). According to Van Esterik, "breastfeeding confirms a woman's power to control her own body and challenges medical hegemony" (Penny Van Esterik, 1989, 70). Breastfeeding stands in opposition to the male-dominated medical model and commercial interests that favour bottle feeding. Breastfeeding successfully minimizes women's reliance on medical professionals and discourages infant feeding from becoming more medicalized. Although the cleft women are proud of their milk, they never receive recognition from their male counterparts. Males in *The Cleft* are disgusted by women's capacity to have children. Every time they see an unnatural birth, they flee and vomit since their breasts have become the source of disgusting to them (Doris Lessing, 2007, 29). Women's nature disturbs a male-dominated

society, as seen by their reaction, which forces them to hide their bodies. For that reason, history's earliest patriarchal scenario may be seen in the subjugation of women by males, who force women to cover their bodies.

Moreover, multiple occasions indicate that even infant males have varying effects on the mother-child connection. Women are familiarized to anticipate new-born girls who do not scream until they are hungry or like to be dipped into waves. In contrast, the new-borns brought to earth by monsters usually behave, cry frequently, and seek out the defenseless, and they come to earth with varying descriptions, stating “But this babe sounded desolate, lacking something” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 86). By allowing monsters to infiltrate the females, the writer transcends fiction and enters reality.

Mothers genuinely care about their children and are accountable for keeping their homes clean, whereas males handle finances, auto maintenance, and home repairs. Her position “as a mother places her in a more vulnerable position than men” (Mary Vetterling Bragging et al., 1977, 59). Women teach men everything from the beginning, including dressing up and behaving. Women are astounded by men’s filthiness, and the cleft mothers are the ones who take care of them; they are even taught to comb their hair (Doris Lessing, 2007, 126). Despite the mother’s care, baby monsters imitate their fathers and carry out the terrible actions of their forefathers. Unlike clefts, they prefer to dwell among monsters, only venturing into mothers when they get hurt or hungry. The clefts' advice does not work out; women are unappreciated due to their motionlessness and their restricted norms for a living (Doris Lessing, 2007, 141). This section presents that when there are children, it is usually the woman, not the man, whose job must be flexible enough to allow her to fulfil the children's requirements and demands, as well as make adaptations for their wellbeing (By the United States. Congress. House. Committee

on the Judiciary. Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, 1990, 504). Women spend their lives in caves without participating in rigorous labour. The cleft mother's existence in the cave is like Frye's theory, in which she sketches a bird to represent women's oppression. By envisioning persecution as a (birdcage) confined women, women's pressure may be felt and seen. Furthermore, the cage image demonstrates one aspect of oppression's systematic nature:

If you look very closely at just one wire in the cage, you cannot see the other wires. If your conception of what is before you is determined by this myopic focus, you could look at that one wire, up and down the length of it, and be unable to see why a bird would not just fly around the wire any time it wanted to go somewhere...It is only when you step back, stop looking at the wires one by one, microscopically, and take a macroscopic view of the whole cage, that you can see why the bird does not go anywhere, and then you will see it in a moment. It will require no great subtlety of mental powers. The bird is surrounded by a network of systematically related barriers, no one of which would be the least hindrance to its flight, but which, by their relations to each other, are as confining as the solid walls of a dungeon. (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 4)

Frye reveals that oppression, like the cage, should be viewed holistically, with all systems interacting to form the cage. Her idea is an excellent introduction to oppression; it provides an example that makes the concept of oppression accessible to the public. According to Dean Clark, the birdcage analogy of oppression explains why this sophisticated structure is often invisible yet immobilized. Frye compares the different forms of oppression to the wires of a birdcage in this comparison, illustrating that it is the combination of numerous systematically connected barriers (the birdcage) that makes this construction so confining (Dean Allen Clark, 2012, 1-2). Eventually, the clefts recall happier times and express sorrow for their actions. They provide

rights to old shes, who previously refused to join monsters. The clefts admit to the readers as they have not gotten any love messages from the monsters, nor have they received any information concerning emotions of jealousy. The writer allows her characters to lament the past and confess that having children is one of their flaws (Doris Lessing, 2007, 239-250).

On the other hand, the hill moms in *The Wanderground* have achieved their position by overcoming several challenges. The mother-daughter connection is apparent when the two little girls, Jacqua and Clana, appear from the beginning till the end. The hill mothers constantly treat them positively; the children must learn the truth. Even if they misbelieve, mothers must always tell them the correct tales. Gearhart employs ladies from *The Wanderground* to look after everything, including women, children, and wildlife. The *Wanderground* stories examine collaborative mothering practices and the spirituality of parenting. Gearhart's approach to parenting parallels her own experiences as a daughter. She frequently criticizes her mother's shyness and why she uses fantasy to seduce her employer to protect herself. Her mother's boss is a harsh man who has the authority to fire his employees. Women utilize fantasy for healing themselves. Gearhart believes that women are aware of their power, but they choose to conceal it (Sally Miller Gearhart & Susanna Sturgis, 1980, 24).

Besides, daughters are willing to listen to their moms since they admire their older sisters and mothers. Mothers are given magical power and stability; they understand their value after experiencing patriarchy. Gearhart aims to show her adult characters as role models for evolving and bettering oneself. When a woman is in charge, her children will quickly follow her footsteps.

In contrast to the Cleft moms, the hill women are the power lamps, and the children greatly value their experiences. As evidenced, each hill lady attempts to relate her narrative in the city when mothers are gathered to reminisce old times. Clana (one of the little girls who usually takes the

front seat in The Wanderground) takes her spot with her moms and big sisters. She is breathless as she waits to hear from her mothers and shouts. Children are not allowed to do anything they want; instead, they must abide by the natural laws established by the hill women. When they utter the incorrect word or mistake, their mothers warn them. Not only Clana or the children are eager to hear the words of other hill women, but also all The Wanderground's members are as well, "There was in the remembering now a movement toward a particular place, a particular person; each of the girl-children and women stepped behind the eyes and the ears of a long-dead hill woman and made her memory their own" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 142). Gearhart's *The Wanderground* is a school itself, where everyone learns from one another. As a result, all hill women are moms who guide one another along the right road. Because they are educators, The Wanderground characters have previously termed themselves moms before women, and they pronounce 'Mother' anytime they wish to talk about women. The cleft women are the first moms (Educators) who taught males how to speak and live. Being a mother is still a holy task that has been allocated solely to women. The hill ladies are timeless life instructors with eternal knowledge, a precious and beneficial heritage. "Why do you slay the mother?" say a lesbian, implying that women are mothers even if they do not have children, mothers of the earth, nature, and animals (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 192).

Thus, by studying two books centered on the lives and characteristics of women, one may conclude that both authors intended to present concepts with common sense. The writers succeed in their purpose of bringing together diverse kinds of women in a single frame by evaluating multiple types of scenes and acts. They may have different viewpoints, but their goal is to break the cycle of gender violence. It is not a secret that women are as diverse as they are, and as a corollary, they all come in distinct packages. Women can either be liked or resented as a function

of their individual personalities. A person's unique personality is shaped by a variety of circumstances, including upbringing, education, work experience, and the amount of energy a person receives. The cleft women's beginning is the end of the hill women's, that is a land free from the other. The strength of Utopia is in its promise; if the world was once a utopia, even if only in fiction, it is possible for it to happen again on earth and among the people.



2.3. The Concept of Violence: Rape

Human nature is neither linear nor straightforward, and conflict is more common than harmony. Human hatred may range from mere verbal wrath to homicidal violence. Individuals, sexes, genders, civilizations, and epochs have their conflict styles and levels of aggression. Because societies are inextricably linked to good and bad intentions, violence is, unfortunately, one of the defining characteristics of being human. However, due to the increasing authority of patriarchs in various areas of life around the world, the definition of human is often limited to man. Men have traditionally sought dominance over women and nature as the weaker sides of the equation. They attempt to eliminate them by actual and discursive violence, including destroying and modifying knowledge (Vandana Shiva 1989, 17). Rape and sexual assault occur in all societies and affect people of all socioeconomic backgrounds. Rape victimization prevalence estimates range from 6 to 59 per cent of women who have experienced sexual abuse from their spouses or partners in their lifetime. Women and girls are far more likely to be victims than perpetrators, and in most cases, the perpetrator is known to the victim. Children are more prone to sexual assault, with girls being more vulnerable, particularly at schools and at home (Elizabeth Dartnall & Rachel Jewkes, 2013, 3-13). Sexual and physical violence exists both in *The Cleft's* civilization and *The Wanderground's* early days. Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or acts to traffic women's bodies constitute sexual violence, including rape, which is defined as a physically coerced sexual act. Also, sexual violence has far-reaching consequences beyond physical injuries, irrespective of age or gender. Statistics show that women are disproportionately victimized mostly by sexual violence worldwide, whether in times of peace or war. In this context, the cause of rape is examined as a form of social and cultural violence. A phallic force allows women to be inferior to men and be

the reason for rape. It is a debunking of the popular myth that women are unrespected individuals. A woman is aware of her status in the society; she is often unrespected (Bragging et al., 1977, 334-343).

In *The Cleft*, males who are called the 'Monsters' or 'Squirts' commit the first sexual assault crime when a female wanders over to the valley and gets kidnapped by monsters. At first, neither the woman nor the monsters realize what they intend to do. She does not shout or panic easily, and she probably does not understand what yelling means. She realizes she will be assaulted when creatures put handfuls of seaweed into her mouth (Doris Lessing, 2007, 45-46). The cleft shouts, and at this time, it was as if she was doing it her whole life. Lessing illustrates the reality of males who do not know what to do but are pushed to commit rape and crime by their squirts. She also illustrates the fact of women are born with the terror of rape, even if they have no idea of what it is. There is fear instilled in women's lives that they might all face one day. Soon after, they all rape her one by one. Finally, they kill her "The mass rape went on, it went on, they were feeding hunger it seemed they could never sate" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 47). This is the earliest rape in human history and one of the first crimes, alongside the preceding brutality of the old Clefts.

Monsters have followed their desire and accidentally murdered her; they do not even know what to do with the dead body. Finally, they transport her rigid corpse to the riverbank, where the water washes over her, and they watch her being swirled downstream towards the sea (Doris Lessing, 2007, 48).

Because males have historically abused women sexually, sexual violence has persisted to the present day, as all women have experienced it throughout their lives "There was one rape too many. Once upon a time" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 158). Things worsen to the point that

"Cunt Hunts" become a source of enjoyment for certain males. Women remember the past, the beginning of the Wanderground, in the Remembering rooms. Men decide to rape women who flee the cities every week, no matter how long they run from the city. The "Cunt Hunts" has become a new sport for men to participate in, and they occasionally seek for women all day and night:

Eileen had described for them all an encounter with such men. She had been raped again and again, beaten, teased, tortured, and disfigured, then left alive only because the men had passed out long enough for her to crawl away. Most others who were caught weren't that lucky. (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 160)

Some characters cannot believe the ancient legends about the hill ladies; hunting women is dreadful, and nothing could be worse, "The stories are true. About how they're hunting women, Swear to god. Sue and Sandy saw them pick them one up. Put her in the wagon. And her doing nothing. Not a hooker." (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 83) Gearhart critiques the legal and social responses to rape in the United States. Rape has not been recognized as a crime for most of history, as women are viewed as a property that lacks rights. Men capture women in the same way they grasp land: as an act of violence, as a declaration of their strength and manhood. The idea that males have a stronger sexual desire, and their libido is more urgent than women's is debunked by Susan Griffins, who wonders why women do not rape men, and it is human nature to desire to live up to the expectations placed on them. Besides, the same culture that encourages male violence also expects a passive behaviour from females. The related myth about female sexuality is that all women secretly desire to be raped, which is convenient. The thought that the victim relishes rape is equally handy for the man who, while he would never conduct rape,

appreciates the idea of its existence, as if rape confirms that enormous sexual power which he secretly knows to be his own (Susan Griffin, 1986, 6-7).

Another incident depicts the terrible fact that rape occurs in women's lives even after flying to the Wanderground. Gearhart attempts to depict the concept of rape, how women are raped on the route to the Wanderground, and how this affects women's minds in the first section. The hill ladies witness a strange woman coming across the Easteren Ensconcement with unique distinguishing features, and she approaches. The madwoman named Margaret, Seja, as a Wanderground worrier, is the only one who considers this subject:

Two men. She was taken by two men. In the short hills for east of the city. Then they dressed her in that armor as a joke. Took it out of some school museum and set her loose laughing and throwing rocks at her as she scrambled away from them through the brush. She didn't tell me of this. She couldn't talk. Or mindstretch. But she opened to me and let me read her recalls. (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1978, 21)

The writer allows her character Alaka to remember and re-channel thousands of rapes, thousands of homicides, and thousands of tortures that occur in women's lives as an idea of violence. If women are victims of domestic or social abuse, Gearhart will not be able to erase their memories by building a safe sanctuary for them. Thus, ladies should remember their former lives in the Remembering room, Alaka re-channels hundreds of times, and Gearhart allows women to live with their terrible city memories in their regular lifestyle (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 23).

The concept of rape creates adversaries for women. As a result, the hill women's enemy is the one who is called "Men". They are the norms that make assumptions, and these

assumptions are men, too. Gearhart believes that the one who rapes has no right to rape and that it is not in the nature of women to be raped “it is not in his nature not to rape. It is not in my nature to be raped” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 25). Gearhart rejects society’s belief that raping women is not males’ fault, claiming that men are to blame for the instability in women’s lives. Even though the society condemned is the cleft society, the cleft’s societal conventions are formed with the assistance of cleft women. When more boy babies are born to women, the elderly Shes become angrier and grumpier. They conduct tests on the newborns by examining their bodies and surreptitiously monitoring the mature males. Despite the fact that certain characters, such as Maire and Astre, have left the clefts, the young ones still follow the elder Clefts’ advice and behave as they desire. Therefore, the elderly shes send the young to the mountain’s Killing Rock to lure them in by exploiting their bodies for an unknown reason. “The girls were shaking their breasts and performing enticing movements with their hips”, “But for what end” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 125).

According to Lessing, “Rape is not an accomplished skill, like eating” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 126). The writer uses the hunger state of men as a metaphor. Lessing’s viewpoint is on the periphery, reflecting the societal component of permitting males to satisfy their hunger through rape. Males fall into the trap set by the girls and decide to pursue them. They are convinced to climb the way to the top, where there is a large ledge at the brink of the enormous pit, or ancient volcano, with people standing there to monitor the horrifying ceremonies of sacrifice. Lessing depicts the fact of men’s nature; no matter how difficult it is for them to reach the top, their objective is deadly desired. The writer cannot specify which kind of males mostly rape, so monsters all in one wish to have girls. A sexual assaulter might be of any type, and this phrase is not intended to make everyone afraid of everyone else; rather, it simply implies that no one sort

of person commits such atrocities. The monsters are in danger, but most females get remorseful and begin to mourn for them. They quickly ask them to come down, whereby the author purposefully writes about women's crying and grief for males. Lessing employs certain cleft girls to show that women are the causes of the misery of other women. Because of some women's weakness in penises, the sexual crime rape has not ended (Doris Lessing, 2007, 127-128).

Rape has historically begun in *The Cleft*, and the shame continues to plague women. The hill ladies travel and inquire about gentles who visit them from the city and if rape is still practised in the society. Rape Culture has left with a cycle of terror. The rationale for asking this precise question: is rape among the hill women's most serious issues? However, it is not only sexual assault that has targeted the Wanderground women. Through investigating Pelagine Stretches, the tragic stories of women become more widespread, and the rationale for forming the Wanderground becomes evident. The hill women are primarily lesbian figures who have fled cities to express themselves and live in harmony. Lesbians, on the other hand, have been targeted by a male-dominated society and were placed in difficult positions, and they were even intended to be killed violently. Vivian tells her friend Kate about the things she hears in a flashback, “And this is true now, because she’s trying to sue the state: they let her go Kate but they cut out her tongue. They said that ought to be plenty punishment because they found out she was a lesbian” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 83).

The author breaks the silence by allowing her characters to speak about the abuse directed against lesbians. They are not protected for every accurate word uttered or every attempt the writer has made to convey her truths. She has touched the hill women while evaluating the expressions to suit a reality she believes is bridging the gap.

In addition to the above assumptions, we can affirm that Gearhart developed the Wanderground to avoid rape and its negative consequences. 'Tulu,' one of the hill ladies, interrupts the conversation and asks questions: "The rapes, The Shotkilling. Are they really happening ?" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 174). The answer is hoped to be negative, but it is not. Sexual violence rape continues to occur in cities; however, gentles inform women that it does not occur as frequently as before, but only at certain times. Women's retreat impacts the resolution of sexual crimes; in fact, it has preserved women's lives, at least for the hill women. In comparison, women in cities continue to face danger.

Tulu's inquiry enables Gearhart to take another step toward making the hill women's environment stronger and safer by encouraging women to fight for their property. As in the following chapters, *Voki at the Welling Place* and *The Telling of the Days of Artilidea*, by singing, women improve their self-esteem and strive to utilize harsh phrases toward the opposing gender. Although women have established a private region to live in peace, their links to cities and their fear of being raped remain unbreakable. The hill ladies are terrified of going back in time, and the strange woman 'Margaret' is an example of their worry. Witnessing a woman raped in modern life makes the hill women reflect on and remember the past: "These reports-and Margaret's story-have to mean that the effect isn't holding. As soon as they discover that the country no longer drains their drive, they 'll be back, right on us again" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 21). Rape is a concept that dates back to an earlier time; Lessing and Gearhart might unintentionally refer to very old times, that may be before patriarchy. When Susan Griffin discusses 'Chivalry', she claims that males defend women from men within the chivalric system; this is analogous to the protection agreement [organized crime] formed with small businesses in

the early twentieth century. Indeed, chivalry is a centuries-old protection racket that survives on rape (Susan Griffin, 1986, 11).

Both novels portray the difficulties of being raped and surviving in a male-dominated society. Characters in these novels either perish or are harmed by the effects; the trace always remains. Survivors of sexual assault or rape may be confronted with incredibly challenging and unpleasant feelings and experiences in the aftermath. The fear of rape has long been associated with the entrance of baby boys, and women are particularly vulnerable to the process of peaceful coexistence. Lessing and Gearhart simply ask, why do not women rape? Does it matter if their female assailants cannot be convicted for rape legally? And as a result of the preceding questions, it is clear that power originally belonged to women but has been perverted by the society. In the end, raping women has become a means of gaining more authority. In a male-dominated culture, 'fucking' is a compulsory activity. A man is defined in a phallographic culture as someone who can possess and inherit the land. Men own property, but women, for the most part, do not.

2.4. The Feminist Solution: Gender Separatism

Feminist separation is the separation of diverse forms from males and male-dominated institutions, relationships, roles, and male-defined activities. Women initiated or maintained this separation (Marilyn Frye, 1983, 96). Lesbian separatism is a critical issue in Gearhart's *The Wanderground* since the author was once a feminist separatist, and therefore firsthand experience in rural lesbian-separatist collectives is depicted. Gearhart's novel also serves as a symbol for non-separatist women to define their establishment of a female community. Starting with the title "*The Wanderground*", it refers to a subconscious part of an individual with the potential to regulate voluntary and involuntary body activities. The majority of the writers base their works on their own experiences and the stories they hear from others. Gearhart, herself tells women's experiences of 'lonth':

The best story I ever heard about the lonth is that...there was a group of women who really wanted this other woman to be a part of them, and she tried and she couldn't because she had these kids to take care of at home and a husband who wouldn't take care of them, who just would not. And she couldn't ever get away, and her guilt was so great, and she'd always have to bring the kids so that...she couldn't even come to the meeting. And one night they were all just put myself on lonth and walked out of the house! And he's still back there taking care of the kids. (Sally Miller Gearhart & Susanna Sturgis, 1980, 22)

The Wanderground symbolises separatist reluctance to acknowledge racial and class oppression and culturally defined, physiologically and socially marked disparities among women within its practice. Gearhart's separatism is sufficient and direct, with no room for males to enter or touch. Besides, Gearhart's separatism is tied to utopianism; her utopia is not for all women;

she collects her characters on the hill and rationally disrupts them. Outside of the Wanderground, there is a dystopian society in which males still attack women, but her characters' talents make it futuristic. In comparison, Lessing allows humanity to raise their voices and build their domains over the clefts in *The Cleft*. However, when the Roman senator finds the originality of human beings, he is told that the clefts lived in a paradise-like eternity, a Utopic ideal presence, and a kind of fixed life; “That was how things had always been. Nothing changed, could change, would change-but this was more a feeling than something they could or would enlarge on or even mention. They live in an eternal present” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 31). Thereby, the clefts’ brains have not been programmed for change or inquiry; “Their mind were not set for questions, even a mild interest” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 31). The concept of separation has a long history in human beings' uniqueness; cleft women are unaware of male arrivals. They have never thought about a problem before they arrive; they have led a utopian and placid existence before turning up, for serenity and even stasis are inextricably linked to utopian constructs. Lessing's separation is initially established, and somewhat even women are uninformed of the problems that would occur following the birth of a newborn boy. Thus, Lessing does not create a segregated environment; this is already accomplished by life; however, it is related to the notion of resolving women's conflict. After their encounters with monsters, the clefts wish to travel back in time and be separate from them; “The women decided to give up” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 161). The concept of separation is explored in this speech and contrasted with the first human myth of separation.

Admittedly, there are distinctions between the geographical presentation of separation in the two texts. Gearhart and Lessing attempt to establish two distinct territories for the women to live and work. We can address questions such as: Are they both envisioning the creation of a

mythical realm that acts as a substitute for reality? In choosing their utopias, what are some of the most important factors the writers rely on? To begin with, in *The Cleft*, it must be noted that the term "science" in science fiction no longer refers to mere technology; rather, the Cleft's parthenogenesis, or reproduction, is their supernatural ability that qualifies the novel as, if not science fiction in the traditional sense, at least as quasi-science fiction. Lessing's creation of an alternate Cleft-exclusive cosmos in *The Cleft* has ramifications within the literary tradition and the broader social context. These single-sex publications are not merely for entertainment purposes; they also have the potential to challenge corrupt, old-age cultural customs.

Women who live near the water have peaceful existence; they do not dispute and hardly seldom speak to one another; they enjoy freedom. They have been set in caves by the seashore, and Maire describes these caves as: "The caves are old. [...] They are old caves. They are high in the rock, well above any waves, even big ones, even the biggest" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 8). The term "old" has a significant part in the line spoken by the cleft woman; the author employs it purposefully to convey a sense of time. Women existed prior to the clefts; the clefts may have inhabited the area for an extended period. The author does not feel the need to take on all responsibility; instead, she builds a fictitious world within which realities can be located.

Although Lessing has allowed Maire to represent their grounds as a paradise, the cleft ladies are tired of being in the same environment every day; "Unless they drowned swimming or had an accident or were chosen to be thrown in *The Cleft*" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 10). According to Marie's statement, no matter how attractive it is to be secluded from males or uninformed of male existence, cleft women occasionally opt to terminate their lives. It might be considered that the characters' engagement with monsters is because the writer wants women to discover the worth of their homeland. The cleft people justify the author and begin to recall the old days and

reconsider if it is necessary to produce children with the assistance of men (Doris Lessing, 2007, 239).

Unlike Lessing, Gearhart intends to depict her paradise in the finest possible way, down to the slightest detail by providing a thorough map. She distributes the hill women evenly around The Wanderground, then names each place rationally so that the purpose behind the names is clear.

The Wanderground is shown as a state, with its sections divided amongst the characters. The hill women are said to live primarily in twin Ensconements that resemble breast-like curves and whose borders overlook the Dangerland, a disputed area over which neither men nor women have established hegemony, and The City, where male sexuality still functions. In other words, the map above directly represents a woman's body, with the male-dominated City occupying the space where the genitalia would be (Suphiye Beyza Asangöncü, 2011, 57). Moreover, Kochilias is a vital part of the Wanderground, since it is where women assemble in The Remembering Room to recollect their history. Some characters are interested in travelling to other lands to see other hill women; Gearhart does not confine them to a single location. Hence, certain characters are set in multiple locations. City women are confined to one location and lack freedom. On the other hand, the hill ladies are independent, and no regulation can take that away from them. In her utopia, Gearhart grants people the opportunity to have human rights; she is conscious that societal norms, legal discrimination, and economic inequalities continue to violate and disregard women's rights over the world disproportionately. In this regard, Simone de Beauvoir asserts:

The truth is that anyone can clearly see that humanity is split into two categories of individuals with manifestly different clothes, faces, bodies, smiles, movements, interests and occupations; these differences are perhaps superficial; perhaps they are destined to

disappear. What is certain is that for the moment they exist in a strikingly obvious way.
(Simone de Beauvoir, 2018, 4)

These remarks have been actual for nearly sixty years. Gender distinction appears to be implicative of classification so fundamental that it is either utopias or dystopias that human people conceive of a genderless society instead of the other differences between human beings (Hülya Simga, 2019, 6).

It would be preferable to include the high mountains, which are host to Ono, Seja, and Margaret. Seja and Margaret get to know one another here, and Margaret begins speaking for the first time. These locations are often safe for women since they are separated from men and the city. Although the characters live in a fictional universe, Gearhart's separatism serves as a metaphor for reality. In *The Gathershtrtech*, women end their communal ritual with the prospect of irreconcilable differences:

I embrace the possibility: I may yield.

I may not. Yet I may.

I embrace the possibility: we may not be together always.

We may not. Yet we may.

I may not. Yet I may.

We may not. Yet we may (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 130).

By imagining a place where this community or group may live differently, the feeling of difference loses its ability to undermine the notion of community. The capacity to think "outside the box" enables the revitalization and continuance of those communities. Women's liberation

might not be the goal of The Wanderground, but rather a naturalized environment where women may reassess their views on males, separatism, consensus, and community (Dana R. Shugar, 1995, 144).

There is also the Dangerland, where certain women are purposely put to draw attention to the city's problems. The Dangerland is located near a city where men reside; the writer chooses the word to convey the land's peril. *The Wanderground's* community occasionally disintegrates as a result of this location. It is close to a city where men have historically used women as tolls. The coast hills and sea may be also found in the boundary area near The Dangerland. The author considered every detail and assumed all duties for her female characters. She wishes to make everything appear flawless, as this separation is portrayed as the solution for women.

The Wanderground is meticulously arranged in such a way that many lesbians, heterosexual, separatist, and non-separatist women can interact. It is critical for their lives in its inscription of the processes by which obstacles to a female community may be normalized. Gearhart's world becomes a homogenized lesbian community via lesbian solidarity, and this homogeneity is attained only through exclusions. However, it does not appeal to every woman's or separatist's conception of the improvements that separatism should make (Shugar, 1995, 147). Gearhart's isolation is not universally attractive since, unlike other feminists, she completely abandons The Wanderground of males; no man may touch or damage them. There is no alternative for the hill ladies; they cannot return to the city life "Never touched them either with their mind or hand" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 3).

The hill women desire to be as steady in their decisions as the elderly shes do in The Cleft, but the majority of feminists seek to be temporally isolated from males. Lessing

occasionally allows her characters to consider separatism; perhaps her women reflect the early ladies of the early ages who are unable to fully separate but constantly ponder about it. In one scenario, the cleft ladies decide to abandon their new lives and return to their former state of solitude and freedom. However, it is not simple for them; they must be silent and apprehensive. Even though there is no absolute separation in some women's lives, the word 'separation' is experienced and physically desired. There are moments when women cannot bear the social processes and constraints imposed on them. They want to be apart from males.

Although Lessing does not present separatism as the novel's central theme, the concept permeates the narrative from beginning to end. Even after sexual involvement and childbirth, women and men cannot coexist peacefully. The Cleft is divided into two areas: the cave near the seashore is reserved for cleft women, while the woodland is reserved for males. Women are accustomed to paying men visits to advise and inquire about their whereabouts. Men are not amused by their visit, and eventually, they prevent them from entering their area. Separation is not exclusive to women; males occasionally desire to be alone. For instance, when Horsa and the little boys attempt to discover another land to dwell, Horsa, as a leader of mankind, believes that there is another location for human beings to exist, only a few females are chosen to be with males, yet they maintain their separation from males. The second instance is when the females become pregnant and the kids are delivered, whereby the young men urge them to keep their noise to themselves. The girls are always kept apart from the rest of the community (Doris Lessing, 2007, 221-222).

By comparing the two novels, the idea of separation does not significantly affect males; in fact, the lack of women has a dramatic and economic impact on men. They admit, however, that they have adapted to survive without the assistance of women. One example is seen in The

Wanderground, where women have abandoned men because they make no room for changes. Because men could not take the absence of women at first, they grow even more violent in their treatment of the city's women. Over time, they get used to it, or at least attempt to live separately: "But we don't seek you now" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 172). The phrase does not please the hill ladies, who have no faith in men; yet, gentlemen are steady, and they boldly state: "you don't believe we can do that?" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 172). One of the reasons for giving gentlemen a voice in the novel is because Gearhart depicts male separatism alongside women's. Separatism has shown a change in how kinship is defined. What may be added to her statement is that segregation of the sexes is regarded as illegal only when women do it, but for men, separation is a normal and even beneficial phenomenon (as proven by guys' clubs, sports teams, and the military). Admittedly, in the novel, males and females are already segregated in cities, but the concept or term terrifies them.

In comparison, Lessing's masculine isolation is not wholly fulfilled; males have achieved it as their forebears' gentles-men in *The Wanderground*. When monsters prohibit women from visiting their forest, they discover they desperately need female replenishment. They miss the simplicity of being able to see men and women visit each other. The writer questions whether they genuinely miss the verbal warnings and advice (Doris Lessing, 2007, 202), because the clefts "had gone off sex and would not give ease to the men and the boys" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 204). The novelist shows that men can live without women; however, their front matters (phallus) prevent them from being alone. Male parasitism implies that men must have access to women; this is a patriarchal necessity. Female restriction of male access to females significantly reduces the flow of advantages. Despite feminism and women's struggles, gender equality cannot

be achieved ultimately. There is phallic power, and people are conscious of it—this access with several every day and regular instances.

Although violence and negative opinions toward hill women have occurred following their separation from the city or attempting to flee the city, Gearhart depicts that women have established a new world that is far superior to living in a metropolis. The most remarkable illustration is seen in the chapter where Ijeme's narrative is told. Ijeme is a city dweller; she monitors the distinctions between hill and city women. Gearhart anticipates a process through which the effect of essentialist concepts of identity on separatist collectives is naturalized. Additionally, it acknowledges the enormous cultural disparities amongst women themselves. Ijeme, as a hill woman, marvels at the differences between herself and a city woman:

Ijeme looked at her unbelievably. She was a thing out of history to the hill woman: athikly painted face, lacquererstiffened hair, her body encased in a low-cut tight-fitting dress that terminated at mid-thigh; on her legs the thinnest of stakings, and the shoes—were they shoes? Ijeme could not believe they fit the same part of the anatomy that her own boots covered. How could she walk in these spindly things? And with the flimsy straps that fastened them to her ankles and feet? The dangles that hung from the woman's ears jangled in tune with her bracelets. She cultured a cloth-covered purse to her side. (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 63)

Her story characterizes the lady in terms of her geographic position (the city) and her attractiveness to males. Ijeme is taken aback; she is aware that she is a woman's company since she is familiar with women, but this is the city edition, the man's version; it is suitable for males. She is streamlined to man's exact requirements, with a body promised to be restricted, dependent, and always available. Ijeme's response to this woman and the continuation of their

distinct cultures create a relationship that offers new conceptual processes for separatist ideologies of women's community, although the city woman's existence and her difference from the women of the Wanderground offer no paradigms.

Besides that, both authors make an attempt in their novels to contrast two types of women. Gearhart compares city and hill women, whereas Lessing contrasts two distinct types of women from the same land: the clefts with and without men. By analysing both types of women, the authors may wish to save them both, as they are female and subject to the male chauvinist society. Despite Gearhart's willingness to save and love both types of women, the Wanderground ladies are horrified by the look of such women, and the advantages of isolation cause them to feel sorry for the city women. Ijeme does not attempt to console her; rather, she states a statement she heard from the early lesson: "what we are not, we each could be, and every woman is myself" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 63). By examining Ijeme's words, the notion of intimacy is revealed through the voice raised on behalf of every woman. Although the hill women follow in their mothers' footsteps (old shes), they are more loyal and truthful. Lessing could not have assigned duties to the cleft females to portray that women are in the same boat. There are always divisions between women who choose to be with monsters and bear children and others who wish to remain in the Cleft.

Comparing two types of women in *The Wanderground* may be accomplished by contrasting the clefts and the ladies who have followed Maire and her friend Astre. Following their encounters with males (Monsters), the cleft women revert to their natural state as moms to girls and boys. Their mission is clear: to provide care. Before this involvement, women were occupied with a variety of activities and responsibilities. Their country is described using good

terms; there are several large and deep caverns, and the clefts reach back long. Each cave is populated by the same type of individuals as a family (Doris Lessing, 2007, 10).

It is a key assumption of all traditional social stratification and social class theories that individuals of the same family are believed to possess a single stratification rank. People of the same family are expected to have comparable interests, life prospects, and income since they share the same family. This assumption is based on the fact that they are all members of the same family (Annemette Sørensen, 1994, 27). In contrast, Lessing proves that the clefts can generate a family atmosphere without the presence of dads since they have the potential to do so with the presence of solely females. After establishing a genuine family, women cannot be treated equally as monsters; there is always prejudice.

The Cleft concludes pleasantly with the closeness between men and women, but the outcome is ambiguous. Can women stand in for everything that males do? The statement “Life has to beat it into us, beat us softer and more malleable than our early pride allows” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 257) reflects that people of both sexes are on the wrong track; they understand they cannot live together in harmony, even though they are victims of society and let to live together. Lessing's *The Cleft* is equivocal; she does not wholly illustrate the end of both sexes. Even the storyteller (Roman Senator) feels that the cleft's eruption marks both the end of a narrative and the beginning of the books. Historians who have written for centuries before agree, so they let it be believed like this (Doris Lessing, 2007, 260). In comparison to *The Wanderground*, his voice allows readers to anticipate how the clefts' fortunes would end in the high hills of *The Wanderground*. Women may be unable to endure the atrocities committed by monsters and desire to be isolated from the male-dominated society.

Lessing's and Gearhart's novels illuminate separatism in various ways, but the notion remains the same: staying apart from males. Although *The Cleft* does not separate men and women entirely, a sideways path separates them. Gearhart and Lessing bring out that gender separatist fosters extremism; their literary works intend to investigate diverse types of gender separatism concerning how voluntary and involuntary forms of gender segregation are implicated in developing a new world for feminism. They have formed organizations, attempting to integrate with dominant groups and endanger their identity and capacity to achieve greater self-determination. Gearhart's separatism is primarily concerned with lesbian isolation, whereas Lessing's includes other categories of women and men. There is a significant gap between history and the present, but Gearhart warns; this chasm will never be bridged easily: "Are we at ease, Ara?", "The women did not answer at once" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 196). *The Cleft's* heroines are inextricably linked to their male counterparts; they symbolize early histories of women abandoned for living in liberty. Through the concluding statements of the hill women, the writer demonstrates that even in a contemporary society, women face danger and that complete separation has not been reached. Nonetheless, the goal is not insurmountable; females stimulate themselves via song lyrics that underline their fortitude "Deep and Soon" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 187).

CHAPTER THREE

3. REFLECTIONS OF ECOFEMINISM IN *THE CLEFT* AND *THE WANDERGROUND*

Feminists and ecofeminists are unambiguously allies in the battle for women's equality. Ecofeminism developed and established an identity as a theory throughout the 1980s. Numerous ecofeminists have attempted to define ecofeminism uniquely; nevertheless, they agree that women remain connected to nature and animals. When the subject of "Mother Earth" is brought up, images of greens, planets, water, and life immediately spring to mind. One may reasonably inquire why mother earth is not called father earth. Before responding, as a planet that sustains life, preserving the earth and its ecosystem becomes critical since it supplies food and water for life. Humanity's well-being is entirely dependent on this planet; it provides food and water to all living creatures; therefore, it is the obligation of humans to take care of it. The globe is confronted with unprecedented natural resource and environmental obstacles: climate change, freshwater scarcity, air, ocean overfishing, deforestation, water pollution, and the effort to feed a planet of millions (Judith Scherff, 1991, 101-103). Accordingly, ecofeminist arguments appear at the beginning and end of *The Cleft* and *The Wanderground* encouraging ecofeminist styles; ecofeminism, which encompasses both the feminine principle and mainstream theory in one accordant whole, is used to analyse the novels. Ecofeminist principles shed light on the narrations right away. For the sake of ecofeminism, there should be social reform among people for the well-being of nature, human beings, animals, and small pieces of nature. The cleft ladies describe what surrounds their land and caverns, using natural elements in such a way that everyone can identify they are from nature: "we are sea people, The sea made us. Our caves are warm, with sandy floors, and dry, and the fires outside each cave burn sea-brush and dry seaweed and wood from the cliffs" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 8).

After sharing sexual lives with males in *The Cleft*, cleft women are enslaved by masculine values. They may soon revert to their natural state as Wanderground women. As the ladies in both works represent, the feminine civilization innovates life through a green philosophy, procreating and conserving life on the planet. The author of *The Wanderground* devotes the work to the theme of ecofeminism. The ideas portray women living in harmony with the natural environment and controlling their fertility. When a large cat comes out their way, one of the hill ladies' statements captures the most compelling evidence: Ursula defines the hill women as, "We are the forest women, the women from the hills-we have dealt you no harm and have pledged our lives to your protection save when you turn on us. Do you know us?" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 56). Women describe themselves as a part of nature; they should not be scared of any element of nature, even if it belongs to wildlife. Nature does not let them down, and the response comes quickly as "know you well" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 56); because nature knows what the statue of a woman is, they are moms in the same way as nature is. Mother Earth is aware of their situation and takes no action to harm them.

A woman is the mode of experience; the space between mother/parent and child carries the potential power of care. That energy is potent; the ability of women to give birth and be mothers ensures the continuation of the cycle of life. That is not to imply that the ability to carry children is an unspoken law, an assumption that all women desire, can, or will bear children. It is not meant to imply that motherhood equals self-actualization or life fulfilment. Motherhood is revered as a vital thing, in line with the regard exhibited for life-giving and Mother Earth as the all-encompassing Mother by First Nations peoples for millennia. Rather than rejecting the feminine, the acknowledgement compliments women's ability as life-givers (Lori J. Swanson, 2015, 86). Similarly, nature is the giver of life; she embraces, nourishes, creates breaths, and

simplifies long days “nature is ultimately real, the supreme giver of life, the source, and destiny of all that is. Nature is that in which we live and move and have our being” (Loyal Rue, 2011, 111). Mother earth is the only planet on which life can survive in the way that life exists; human beings originate in nature and will eventually return to it. As a result, when two people meet, they produce life on Earth, and the laws of nature help them work together (Doris Lessing, 2007, 98).



3.1. The Romantic Nature

Over the last two decades, ecocriticism has revolutionized the study of Romanticism. Environmental humanities, literature, science studies, and the developing subject of Anthropocene studies have embraced ecocriticism. The first wave of ecocriticism, which emerged in the 1990s, linked the Romantics' emphasis on "nature" to the beginnings of the modern environmental movement, while the second wave, which appeared in the early 2000s, expanded the field through intersections with post-structuralism, feminism, Marxism, cultural theory, and ideology critique. Today, the third generation of ecocriticism is thriving, focusing on establishing interdisciplinary methodologies that show the radical ecology of Romantic-era literature and science, rather than the ideology and historicist critique (Reno, 2018, 79). Throughout human history, nature has been gendered, and women are generally more in tune with nature than males. Nature feeds the universe the same way mothers do when they give birth and care for their children. This is the tight relationship between a woman and nature. Ecofeminists recognize this type of connection and investigate the relationship between environmental degradation and gender discrimination mostly as a result of Western patriarchal civilization. As women and nature grow closer over time, the amorous bond between green life and women becomes stronger to the point where both begin to interpret emotionally.

First, Doris Lessing presents two storylines in *The Cleft*: the first is about the cleft ladies, and the second is about a Roman senator's life, which solidifies women's place in terms of a distinct community. The first anecdote illustrates the underlying concept of why women are more in touch with nature. Female characters think that they are made by the waves of the sea, hence, water, fish, and rocks play essential roles in the lives of clefts. They initially lived in the Cleft, which is a mountain near the sea, leading calm and lazy existence. Perhaps their laziness

stems from their sentimental and emotive feelings toward the sea or nature in general. Women strive to maintain a calm demeanour in all aspects of their lives. Laying out in the surf, shaking their hair over their shoulders, and repeatedly swimming, “ all of us swim and float and are happy in the sea” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 15). They are unconcerned about the other side of the chasm; they are content and do not wish to disturb nature by ascending to the other side, which is home to hill eagles. Because the writer stresses the splendour and beauty of nature and the force of the natural world, romance, women, and nature are considered. It is a wellspring of positive feelings and thoughts:

They lived on the shore of a warm sea on an island that was in fact very large, but they never went far from home shore. They were of the sea, sea creatures, eating fish and sea weeds and some shore growing fruits. They used tall caves with sandy floors but they might as easily sleep out on the rocks as under cave roofs. (Doris Lessing, 2007, 30)

These portrayals are used to promote ecofeminism's feminist and ecological goals. Ecofeminist activism for a democratic human-nature space that can hear all voices requires the use of rock images. Also, the writer employs specific language in certain sections to convey the theme of romantic nature. The importance of language, particularly poetic or living language, has been undeniable throughout history. As a result, it would be easier for people to communicate with one another if they could convey the maximum amount of information with the fewest possible words. Lessing's language is gentle and quiet, and it is concerned with silence and indulgence. Writers choose to display the aesthetic merits of quietness to bring out the impact of romantic nature. She addresses a phenomenon that occurs in contemporary discourse. Drama's inspiring, sublime, and dynamic language revealed to romantic-era audiences the world's unspoken and unseen realities (NiloufarAmiri, 2016, 880). However, the narrator's objective is

not to accomplish this goal through human beings. Cleft ladies prefer not to speak; instead, they try to communicate with nature by remaining quiet and empathetic. Women and Nature are the tales of naming and reacting to the problem of mother earth via language. Reconnecting with the natural world can be accomplished in part by listening to nature's voice, which appears in many of the poems written by women. From their perspective, nature appears to have a language and a voice of its own (Greta Gaard & Patrick D Murphy, 1998, 232). The reason feminist writers create romantic relationships between women and nature is that they both come from similar backgrounds. Ecofeminist perspectives emphasize the alignment of women with the environment in many ways, including symbolic and tangible ones. There are also material issues that develop due to this risky alignment of woman and nature. In the global political arena, women pay the economic costs of deforestation and other types of international development in ways that men do not. Third-world affairs, poverty, food manufacturing and distribution, reproductive rights, environmental racism, and capitalism are addressed in analysing women and nature interaction (Greta Gaard & Lori Gruen, 1993, 240). Human beings view nature as a personification of all the traits associated with women. Both are chased and hunted by other humans. The most powerful example in Gearhart's *The Wanderground* is where the hill women and the elements of nature form a close link and attempt to heal themselves by simply distributing love to one another.

The relationship between the hill ladies and wild creatures and the natural world itself exemplifies its romanticization of nature. The earth's dramatic response established this bond to protect women from men: "they Revolt of the Mothers" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 153). When Alaka visits the *Wanderground*, she chooses to stop by the river and be well refreshed by the earth sister, the demand: "Earthsister- I want to join you" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 11). The romantic notion of communicating with nature extends beyond the ability to communicate

with nonhuman animals and allows the hill women to correspond with trees and water. Before diving in, Alaka poses and asks permission; the response is simply “join” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 11). The author shows how nature provides beauty, medicines, refuge, nutrition, wealth, and spiritual refreshment. Being in harmony with nature motivates women to walk lightly on this land and live in connection with our planet's seasons, rhythms, waterways and forests, animals, and plant life. Gearhart's mindstretch technique astounds many people, including readers, because the idea of lovingly communicating with nature mirrors Disney characters who are portrayed in fiction. As a result, Gearhart's method appears to be an overcorrection. Interspecies communication is a real possibility that merits serious consideration, but this is not a useful or realistic depiction of the process because it is so concentrated on human thoughts and aspirations “depiction of the interactions between women and animals produces something of a Disney world ... [The animals] are rather excessively attentive to human wishes and surprisingly considerate of each other” (Susan Stratton, 2001, 37). Gearhart women's skills, on the other hand, are further removed from science by Gearhart's placement of their ability in a created power—called the lonth—that allows the hill women to transcend the constraints of the body. This artwork implies that women's power is not derived from outside sources. The romanticization of nature confirms Gearhart's rejection of scientific reasoning. The novel's rejection of science is made much clearer by its condemnation of technology (a product of the scientific process) and embracing of magic; the emphasis is noticed through the novel's use of parapsychology, pseudoscience, and mysticism. For example, the mindstretch between the hill women and the nonhuman world is a key means of communication between the women. They have constructed a protective psychological barrier between themselves and the men of the city (Douglas A. Vacoach, 2021, 156).

Although such fiction is unlikely to be found in Lessing's book, women's connection to nature is recognized, not just in the cleft before monsters but also after being entangled with males. In one scene, the cleft women are astounded by the beauty of the seaside near Monsters' land; unlike their rough water, it is along the white sand, and the women are smoothed and delightful by the sea. What works best is the part about having stones in the sea; women enjoy holding stones and wonder how to attach them to make necklaces and adornments (Doris Lessing, 2007, 159). The writer adds up to highlight initially women's ability to use nature constructively and how they are comforted by humility. Unlike Gearhart, Lessing's romantic nature works with feelings. Lessing does not offer her characters the power to talk with nature, but she vividly depicts the panorama of love between women and nature. Second, she illustrates why a protective symbol can make the wearer feel strong and safe. The symbols in jewelry also serve to express the wearer's thoughts toward the fundamental source. Women are designed to embody virtues found in nature, such as simplicity, purity, virginity, seclusion, courtesy, etc. As a consequence, we might deduce that nature is the pinnacle of these qualities.

Not only women but also men cultivate deep relationships with nature. Traditionally, eagles rescue monsters and fly them over the mountain to the valley. Monsters are grateful to the eagles who save them from the cleft women. An ecofeminist view of the world's human-nature interaction is projected through the use of images that associates humans with nature. Eagles are holy and mighty animals for men; nothing can hurt them except eagles. Thus, they describe their love for eagles through the song they composed, a dancing song of the very earliest man. In general, songs are used to express love, and it is a natural feeling that causes you to want to sing or write a theme for your loved one:

We are Eagles, the Eagle, the Children of the Eagle. The Eagles bore us on their wings, they bear us on their breath, they are the wings of the wind, the Great Eagle watches us, he knows us, he is our father, he hates our enemies, he fights for us against the clefts. (Doris Lessing, 2007, 27)

The eagle stands for numerous meanings in different cultures in today's globe such as power and agility. In this novel, the eagles are represented as the primary figure playing an active part in non-verbal communication and invisible connection. Lessing emphasizes force and masculine adjectives like father and wind in his definitions of eagles. Besides, she makes the eagle powerful, determining the human's fate (Ümit Aydınoğlu, 2020, 6). Nature does give men a chance, and some parts of nature, such as eagles, are closer to males than females. Lessing does not only have her feminine characters interact with nature but also with monsters. Eagles defend them, especially when they are young boys. Lessing's decision to let eagles kill the clefts and spare the monsters based on the fact that she reflects the reality of human beings. Unlike fanciful stories, she wishes to raise males. Women and men are accustomed to living together in nature, and in the end, nature will decide who is the right partner.

There should be drama and sorrowful scenes when there is genuine enthusiasm. Krueva, one of the protagonists in *The Wanderground*, sees a pony lying dying, whereby Gearhart dramatizes the circumstance and produces an emotional scene. Krueva is held responsible; she detects the approach of a bobcat. She begs the cat not to eat Pony because it is injured. Together, they build the dome against the cat by synchronizing their breaths. The pony says "I am ready. I've done all that was important for me to do. And I don't want to wear out my welcome ... I commend my body to my sister, the cat. May she feed well" (57). Wild creatures consume small or weak animals, and the author does not shut off the natural world of animals. Allowing Pony to

use such terms implies that each component respects the other. Unlike the social world, the natural world concentrates on more abstract occurrences, those displaying verifiable patterns and regularities. According to DelRosso, “The pony’s final message, ‘I commend my body,’ strikes a Christ-like chord; indeed the pony sacrifices itself to sustain others, and in dying moves back into oneness with nature” (Jeana DelRosso, 1999, 220). One of the most radical and perhaps more effective methods which Gearhart tries is to challenge the Western beliefs of human superiority over nonhumans. Although this openness to other species' thoughts and feelings is appealing, such challenges to anthropocentrism are more of a romantic vision or fantasy in this form (Jeana DelRosso, 1999, 220).

Lessing believes that nature is all about the sea and its aspects and that women are sea creatures, and they are accustomed to dwelling in caverns with sand floors. The clefts refer to themselves as nature, and they become bonded to environmental factors, mainly the rock surrounding their caves. They sleep on it and develop intimate bonds with one another. We frequently observe women expressing their affection for one another while swimming and observing the ambience of the warm water in which they reside. Something is enthralling about the sight as if women are in charge of their destiny. They are swimming in the direction of their dreams as unfolded by Maire (the cleft woman who tells the whole story): “we live in the part of the island where we watch the sun drop into the sea every night, and watch the moon grow pale as the day comes” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 14). Women are content with the romantic vision of nature before getting acquainted with males. On the other hand, some are irritated by the same regularly repeated viewpoints. Two girls see that the water has decided to be encased in jellified skins, that faints are emerging from the clefts' organs, and that tubes and lumps of working substance have appeared. The concept of cleft women having sex with nature disturbs the two

girls, so they try to flee the cleft and spend the rest of their lives with monsters. Women quickly become depressed and tired of living in an environment where men are plentiful. They summon memories and try to recall simpler times when they were more connected to nature and tranquillity: “the sun went down into the sea in a way that reminded them of the women’s shore” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 80-233). As if telling a poem, the writer utilizes delicate words to convey nature. Women live in a poetic world where everything is authentic and timeless. Lessing, like Gearhart, rejects science; accepting men entails adopting science, technology, and modern life. Women initially think it is a wonderful idea to be separated from the cleft, but they soon regret their positions with men.

Making flight conceivable is one of Gearhart's novel's most successful features. Women's abilities extend even farther, allowing them to soar with some animals and experience what nature does; it is lonth's function to allow for flying. One of the hill women utilizes a breathing method to fly, after which she transmits a portion of her awareness “to her lower abdomen and ... to her lonth there her suspension and her breathing” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 105). The flying skill is not limited to one woman; as we can see in many portions of the book, hill women are able to fly with the help of nature. Fora and a group of women meet Lady, a sparrow, in Deep Cella's chapter. While many women express a desire to fly and see the sky, the manner they treat her is worth mentioning: “Fora sent the bird a soft curl of care” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 45). Like the cleft ladies, the hill women are used to being naked and swimming in the sea. They also strip off their clothes and enjoy the hot weather where the sparrow and other women congregate. The Lady sparrow becomes chilled and wonders why women want to fly in the sky when it is freezing and will freeze their wombs. With cooperation, wombs keep other wombs warm, and women can survive. Their energies are heart-warming, and even a small animal can

sense the closeness of women's connections. Fora imagines herself marching in a cavalcade of her sowing and implements, inspired by the romantic nature, the sky, the blueness, flying, and a sparrow. Women are speeding down the path; their arms and voices are linked, carrying the oils and lovely aromas, the fire, the water, and the essential green live plants and animals. According to Gearhart, nature is a fundamental aspect of women's existence, and nature is present even in their dreams. Nature improves their well-being and freely offers the necessities of life. Nature also provides marvels for hill women, like being able to use mindstretch and fly (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 46).

The romanticization of home, rootedness, and infancy is a fundamental aspect of deep ecology work (Jason W. Moore, 2015, 108). In separatist literature, writers seek to reconcile their fantasies of how they want the world to look with their thoughts of how it could seem; in other words, Utopian thinking is the attempt to unite the desirable with the realistic. The dreams stand out much more clearly than the visions, so the separatism methods, the how-to-get-from-here-to-there, prove woefully inadequate, leaving the Utopian dream wide open to critique (Inge-Lise Paulsen, 1984, 103). Lessing and Gearhart's romantic nature depicts the desired achievements by which they tackle the dilemma of mother earth. The writer is more concerned with expressing her message than with crafting fiction. Women become closer to one other when they are in close proximity to nature; one completes the other. Inge-Lise interprets romanticism as follows in *The Wanderground*:

They live a simple life in close contact with each other and with the forces of nature--so close, in fact, that they can communicate directly with plants and animals. It is obvious that such qualities and values represent Gearhart's dream of the life-generating forces of women--the solution to the basic problems of our civilization are, says Gearhart, that

women discover their true female nature, and that men as well as women live according to these female principles (Inge-Lise Paulsen, 1984, 107)

Lessing reflects the relationship between man and nature, race and hate, and man and woman. Lessing's ecofeminist thoughts are the possibilities of her concern for the underprivileged race. She considers women's economic well-being and desires to maintain a unified ecofeminist belief system between man and nature. Nonetheless, scenes of romance in nature are seen by the cleft women more than males. Lessing has fully revealed her eco-feminist consciousness by presenting the historical background of human creation and exhibiting the progressions of the connection between women and nature from a critical perspective (Mohammad Kaosar Ahmed, 2019, 998).

Nature is cured by romanticizing it, and it finds salivation in the novels' words from both authors. Their investigation hopes to show how society's gender norms unfairly oppress women and the natural world. Women and nature provide ways to understand, eradicate, and establish alternatives to the oppression that they face. In conclusion, love, cooperation, and mutual respect are the only things that can keep nature alive. Lessing's depiction of romantic nature is characterized by a lack of movement yet a strong emotional response. Cleft women enjoy spending time in nature by lying on the rocks and swimming in the sea. There is no ultimate communication between women and nature, but they are aware of its presence in their daily lives. Love of nature is more important to Gearhart than a belief in science. When humans and non-humans communicate and take care of each other, they create a romantic atmosphere, which even the characters can experience. Eventually, the writers' primary purpose is to address and eliminate all forms of supremacy while simultaneously recognizing and embracing humanity's relationship to the land.

3.2. Women's Ecological Responsibilities: Tasks to Save the Earth

It is thought that females are more concerned with environmental issues and engage in conservation activities compared with males. Women play a critical role in natural resource management at the family and community levels. They are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation in the developing world and are primarily responsible for resource management and conservation for their families. They spend a lot of time collecting and storing water, securing fuel, food, and fodder, and managing land. They also play a dominant role in addressing some of the most pressing environmental issues. Moreover, they have a close relationship with their local environment because of their roles as farmers and collectors of water and firewood. They often suffer from environmental problems (Sandeep Kumar Aditya, 2016, 141).

In both novels, women are assigned tasks and responsibilities to save the planet. Because the authors are aware of the dangers of eco-friendly life, they want female characters to be in charge of specific tasks to protect wild and green energy. The Cleft primarily depicts reflections of tasks or jobs; we are told at the beginning of the book that the clefts do not have names. The Cleft women are referred to as the ancestors of "mankind" by the novel's female protagonist, Maire. They are an anonymous group without individual or family names and are classified solely by their tasks, thereby implying that their jobs take precedence over their personal information. The cleft women have been entrusted with the mother earth; nature falls upon women. They are divided into distinct groups according to their responsibilities, including Cleft Watchers, Fish Catchers, Net Makers, Fish Skin Curers, and Seaweed Collectors. They lead such harmless and straightforward existence that is embraced by nature (Doris Lessing, 2007, 10-11).

Cleft women do not work solely to save the earth; catching fish is their primary objective. They hunt fish and gather seafood to eat and survive. Another dualism emerges from analysing the cleft as fish catchers because food inequality is also a factor when discussing the connections between veganism and ecofeminism. One of the frequently used arguments in feminist-vegan conflicts is that the entire animal industry is built on exploiting the female reproductive system. As an outcome, feminists should champion animal rights (Carol J. Adams, 1991, 125). One of the central feminist values is that women should not be held accountable for their private and personal choices. In most scenes, men and women are captured beside the sea, eating fish and occasionally become enraged due to a lack of fish (Doris Lessing, 2007, 13).

Additionally, one could argue that Lessing does not only assign duties to the cleft ladies but also emphasizes that nature greatly benefits mankind. Nature works for humans more than cleft women. Each item in the book has a purpose. Nature does not simply provide food and water; it also regulates the air we breathe, controls water levels, and most importantly keeps us sane. The writer makes us aware of the fact that nature saves human beings at specific points: “the eagle let itself down from the sky and took the body in its claws and went off with it back in the direction of the Eagle’s Hills” – “the eagles watched us all the time, and we had to keep the body Monster out of their sight” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 16-17). Here, we get to address the tasks that animals perform for humans once more. Because the eagle saves humans, it represents rebirth, dawn, the direction of spring, and renewed life for us. For those who have been through difficult times in life, the eagle symbol represents new beginnings. It is purposefully chosen for the novel because eagles generally have a fierce demeanour and a large size. In *The Cleft*, eagles have long been revered as a symbol of power and grace by diverse societies worldwide. Humans' roles, in this case, are to respect what eagles harmoniously accomplish. Additionally, it is

possible to approach that *The Cleft* proves that nature's historical purpose is to serve human beings. In contrast, in *The Wanderground*, women become aware of the cruelty they have committed throughout collective memory. The most critical aspect is identifying women and their roles to accomplish the writers' objectives. Nature has provided numerous benefits to humans, and we also rely on them for a variety of other goods and services, but now is the time to seek out the opposite, which is human for nature. Such facets are present in *The Wanderground*, where Gearhart assigns numerous tasks to the hill women. Each chapter introduces us to new characters and jobs. The chapter in which Krueva and the pony are placed focuses heavily on women's responsibilities to nature. The delicate moments between the two create a bond between women and nature. Gearhart assigns a great deal of responsibility for protecting an animal on the verge of death. The hill woman is acutely sensitive to animal pain, and given the scope and persistence of animal pain; unsurprisingly, her story ends tragically "Krueva felt the animal's frustration, its puzzlement" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 56). Their mission is ingrained in their minds, and they make sound judgments. Women have been assigned to assist in keeping the animals alive, and they make every effort to save them "I will hold you better, Pony. I will hold you and rock you" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 55). The part makes another attempt to convey the message clearly, which is that while animals undoubtedly suffer and die during experiments, and apologists for animal experimentation argue that pain, suffering, and death are intentional, not gratuitous.

The *Wanderground* women are not limited to protecting animals or greenery; rather, Gearhart has set work activities for hill women for ecology. Each task is assigned to a distinct character. In this section, Seja brings down her duty by collecting books. The author empowers the women by allowing them to create educational activities. Books and knowledge should play

a role in the lives of hill women; there is no limitation to a single genre; they cover a wide variety of subjects and topics:

Books. Hundreds of them, stacked at different thicknesses within rectangular wood sections. “Best insulation ever,” Seja had said, “and quite an experience to be walking on all that knowledge.” To Alaka’s amazement Seja had demonstrated a remarkable recall of what books were where and could quickly lay hands on any title she had. Now She noted that Seja’s reading had rendered the floor pretty uneven in places. Two children’s books, open by the door, had left a gap that a French grammar was failing to fill and next to two texts on plant diseases right near her reach was a long hole whose bottom, Alaka could see, was the dark earth itself. She picked up a book and examined it. (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 18-19)

Besides, the settings of the books also allude to the gravity of the situation for hill women. They are not placed randomly throughout the Wanderground, as Gearhart explains. Instead, she has created a special wall for the books, which surprises other characters with its appearance. The neatness and specificity of the concept evoke memories of hill women's concern for both nature and themselves. By taking care of the Earth and all life on it, they take care of themselves by looking after some of the city's favourites. Humanity can become a conscious healing force by embracing our inherent nature as expressions of Nature. By bearing in mind the limitations of our knowledge, we can humbly contribute to the flourishing rather than immiseration of Life “the walls were secured between the four-round poles” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 19). The most significant consideration for nature is proved in *The Cleft*, where Lessing commands the cleft women to be responsible for the land's cleaning. Even after encountering monsters (men), the cleft women's liability extends to the novel's end. Lessing's

goal in allowing the cleft women to be in men's lives is fully grasped in this section; women should be with men for the sake of nature: “teach them how to keep their shelters clean” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 75). Some believe that a woman's responsibility is to clean her home, and so nature is included in her responsibilities. However, ecofeminism, in this opinion, does not approach this level of closeness. A woman's bond with nature is strong; it cannot conceal such an erroneous notion. Ecofeminists raise awareness of their essentialism in connecting women to nature and valuing women's role as nurturers in the early 1900s. Additionally, ecofeminism implied that women should be held accountable for resolving environmental problems caused by men and that men are incapable of developing a close relationship with nature (Carolyn Sachs et al., 2016, 23).

Gearhart is cognizant of the fact that ecofeminism is influencing how we approach issues of justice by emphasizing the interconnected roots of racism, sexism, poverty, and other social problems with ecological degradation. Hill ladies have a special affinity toward animals. Their responsibility to protect animals indicates that there is a theoretical connection between feminism and animal rights, which animals and women explore. An effective task in *The Wanderground* is women's dog care; the hill women have been commissioned with the responsibility of rescuing a dog named Cassandra. The dog prefers the softer tones of women's voices and is drawn to a particular set of behaviours exhibited primarily by hill women. When the dog is injured, she requires packs of blood earth: she requires her sister's blood. Ona is responsible for the dog's rescue, and Cassandra simply prefers female treatment “for the first time she felt real hope for Cassandra's recovery” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 35). Although there is no such close relationship between the cleft women and animals, there is a connection between the natural elements and the women in the Cleft. For example, the presence of rock is critical, and women

should pay more attention to it. The clefts' rock represents god and is one of the best fuel and power sources. Women regard every detail of their environment as divine and holy in the absence of monsters. This is the point at which the rock containing the Cleft becomes a symbol of the Clefts' one-dimensional identification with their sexuality “they lay around on their rocks, and they swam” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 22). They reclined on the rocks, shrinking or moaning, railing at anything and everything. Lessing's rock formations generally provide suitable resting conditions by providing cover, protection from heat or cold, and inaccessibility to humans and women.

Integrating ecological tasks with gender theory emphasizes how the patriarchal society treats both nature and women. Ecofeminists investigate the effect of gender categories to demonstrate how social norms unfairly dominate women and nature. Women exist to assist men in changing or dying alone:

Work to stay the slayer's hand,

Helping him to change

Or helping him to die,

Work as if the earth, the mother, can be saved. (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 195)

McKenna affirms that the hill women hold an essentialist view of male nature as combative and destructive. While the men self-destruct, the women work on changing and defending themselves. However, unless men change, everyone can perish. The women maintain rotations in cities to maintain stability while learning to change themselves and practice new ways (Erin McKenna, 2001, 148). Females eventually congregate under the umbrella of humanity and contribute to the natural system's flow. Thus, the authors of the novels confidently

demonstrate that the human society can correct its errors and progress forward by emphasizing ecofeminist philosophy as the primary reason for creating a better world; seemingly [humanity] is overwhelmingly composed of women.

Women are frequently more concerned than men with the basic needs and social issues - they are inextricably linked to a healthy natural environment. When the wind's noise irritates the clefts, both the clefts and the monsters believe it is a supernatural intervention. What in nature can generate such wind as engulfing that island? Such inquiries are made to ascertain the source of the noise. The wind does not reach the women's caves, but the boys in their flimsy shelters are helpless as the wind tosses them over and into the river. They cannot find a haven other than the clefts' caves, where the girls welcome them (Doris Lessing, 2007, 138-139). The wind is the source of the earth's power, women's screams, and their inner voices. In her book *Woman and Nature*, Susan Griffin mentions: "they say our fate is with the wind" (Susan Griffin, 1978, 222). Wind provides energy to women and enables the attainment of major social, economic, and environmental goals outlined in the society. A more fabulous female presence and voice in the energy sector benefits the society. However, women are frequently more vulnerable to environmental degradation and climate change. Climate change poses an increasing threat to their livelihoods, as they make up a large proportion of the world's poor and rely more heavily on natural resources. Furthermore, these people face several social, economic, and political restraints. These premises harken back to Karen J. Warren's beliefs, in which she asserts, while it may be difficult to believe, that the global impact of environmental degradation on women's lives implies that environmental degradation is a feminist issue in significant ways (Karen J. Warren, 1996, 20).

In conclusion, women's works and roles in both novels open up a whole new world of possibilities for addressing environmental and social challenges concurrently. In a book titled *Why Women Will Save the Planet* (2015), writers who are named Friends of the Earth (the well-being of people and the planet go hand in hand) state that women have been pioneers of the environmental movement. Much of this campaigning has centred on human and public health issues: clean water and air, green spaces, and pesticide controls in food. Additionally, they argue that ensuring women's sexual and reproductive health and rights is critical in empowering women to act as investigators of environmental change (Friends of the Earth, 2015, 1-5). Doris Lessing begins this study with an eco/feminist perspective on her novel *The Cleft*. Ecofeminism and green legislation are presented in the novel to start a new life following the previous examinations of feminism and its connection to environmentalism. Women are committed to using nature's resources to help save the planet. In the beginning, they comprise all the society, but later, they become half of the society. Nonetheless, they will be always the solution to problems that Mother Earth has faced. The clefts play an essential role in household and community resource management. Similarly, the hill women's tasks are pictured in such a way that the women want to overcome their sorrowful memories by simply working hard to protect nature. Women can help solve nature's degradation crisis by fighting for gender equality. They are the solution to the climate crisis – but not because they should add to their workload by fixing it for others. Instead, Gearhart tries to convey the message that gender equality comes first. To ensure that everyone can contribute to solving progressive environmental problems, we must eliminate gender bias in our culture and society. Furthermore, Gearhart instructs that big cities do not have to be synonymous with a dystopian future. They can be transformed into well-being and environmental powerhouses if women are empowered. *The Wanderground*, in general,

explores themes of women's inherent connections to the Earth and one another. Thus, by evaluating women's roles in saving the Earth, the theme reappears. Regardless of their circumstances, women in both works maintain their commitment to protecting nature from the male-dominated society in which they live. Finally, it can be said that nature works for women because women work together with nature. Both books reaffirm that environmental degradation and exploitation are feminist issues since they contribute to a better understanding of oppression.



3.3. The Importance Of [Moon, Trees, Fish, Water, Cats, Deer... etc.]

Relegating these aspects to the realm of nature and maintenance teaches humans the numerous ways in which they are interconnected with nature. Women in *The Cleft* and *The Wanderground* embody the philosophy of deep ecology and ecofeminism through their nature-friendly lifestyles. In this regard, Riley asserts (1999): “women usually characterized nature as a female-a goddess, bountiful, wild-yet controllable” (Glenda Riley, 1999, 39). Riley conveys that nature is a source of power, and is capable of controlling life, particularly the life of women.

The majority of feminist utopians envision a society that is free of gender discrimination, environmental degradation, or an alternate reality in which men and women are not trapped in conventional roles of inequity and no technology exists. In Lessing and Gearhart's novels, the feminist utopia is defined by an explicit focus on women's tales and their lives in conjunction with nature. This combination is realized by nature's assistance to women; it lends them a hand in living and rising.

To begin, *The Cleft* is divided into numerous sections that emphasize the value of nature. For instance, the lunar cycle has a pronounced effect on women. The lunar cycle moves from a full moon to a new one, impacting women's moods and even reproductive characteristics. Women's bodies, in general, have a solid connection to and resemblance to nature, and they change in response to natural changes (Rosemary Radford Ruether, 1996, 4). There is a direct link between women's periods, lunar cycles, and the red flowers that shed a kind of red liquid at apparent times of the month. At the beginning of this novel, we see these flowers grow inside the Cleft; they are both the source of life and meaning for the Clefts, and release their liquid once a month, thereby signaling the beginning of menstruation for women. The moon may be referred to as feminine after observing how the cleft women deal with each new month:

When the moon is at its biggest and brightest, we climb up to above The Cleft where the red flowers grow, and we cut them, so there is a lot of red, and we let the water flow from the spring up there, and the water flushes the flowers down through The Cleft, from top to bottom, and we all have our blood flow. (Doris Lessing, 2007, 9)

The women adore the Cleft and feel responsible for cutting the red flowers within it to signal the beginning of their period. Grace to the efforts of women, the Cleft has been kept free of saplings and bushes. It is a rock with a clean-cut deep hole that bears a striking resemblance to female genitalia. By virtue of their connection to nature, the Clefts' bodies are capable of conception and can thus establish a society of women. They are perpetually naked and close to nature (Kübra Baysal, 2013, 49). They spend their days swimming in the sea and taking in the scenery, and their nights are all spent gazing up at the moon.

Consequently, according to what Maire says, there is no accurate explanation for the origin of a woman's pregnancy. It could be the sea with a marine animal or the moon. As a direct consequence, they become the mothers of all human beings, giving them a newfound zeal for procreation (Doris Lessing, 2007, 11-16). Additionally, women may conceive children naturally via the sea, a fish, or the moonlight, thus creating new lives. They have feasts and engage in sexual activities at certain times. Their mood is elevated and active on the most prominent days of the month that are controlled by the moon, which has a significant impact on human development and the Earth. It affects both women, who evolved from the sea as semi-aquatic beings, and men, who are the descendants of the women. The narrator opens up this saying: "If the full moon regulated the women's fertility and their menses, then the full moon could wreak otherwise sane minds into lunacy" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 162). Women approach men's bad behaviour by examining the moon's significance and effect. It is not only humans who

are impressed by the moon's existence; many animals, particularly birds, rely on the moon for migration and navigation. Others will time their reproduction to correspond to specific lunar phases (Gabrial Norevik et al., 2019, 10).

Gearhart's *The Wanderground* also includes a section on the moon's value. It does not contribute to the moon's significance through fertilization, but it does so in a way that makes the hill women feel so much better. Diana's story, an example of that, begins in a chapter titled 'Diana and the Moon.' Diana is a Roman and Hellenistic goddess primarily associated with the countryside, hunters, crossroads, and the Moon (Larousse Desk Reference Encyclopedia, 1995, 215). With the assistance of the moon, Diana feels completely secure. Diana starts by telling her story to her other hill sisters about her encounter with the moon and how the moon treats her alluding to the relationship between mothers and grandmothers. Grandmother Moon is especially close to Diana, as the name is not random. During her journey to the moon, she can see and embrace the moon's whiteness. The author portrays her fictional character as a mother goddess as if the real Diana is a living, moon-worshipping deity and creates a moon-centric character:

I greet you, she said to the bright face. Her arms reached out as if to embrace the whiteness. She placed herself in the grainy light that stretched between herself and the moon. Her head vibrated. She felt joy rising from the earth beneath her, rising to meet the moon through her. (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 95)

Diana, as a mother, reflects her feelings by entrusting her soul to the whiteness and spreading love all across the cruel world, "I love, I love a lunatic!" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 95). The moon influences the subject's ability to reflect and adapt. As the moon empowers women and instils confidence in them, trees also play a significant role in empowering women and human beings. Trees contribute to a place's unique character, and people are drawn to live,

work, and invest in green spaces. However, the hill women's relationship with trees and plants is featured differently. Plants provide fresh oxygen and a bone to lay on to help the hill women breathe. As an outcome, when non-humans volunteer to assist the human women, they show a greater degree of autonomy than when they respond to human requests:

“I will warm you” she heard. Laughing, she turned to the tree. Gently she laid herself against the heavy bark, spreading her legs and arms about the big trunk. “I take what you give,” said the tree. “I know,” she said. “And I take what you give.” She inhaled. (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 13).

The conversation reminds the critical relationship between ecofeminist Greta Gaard and trees; as an environmental ethic, the dialogue is formal and should be conducted ethically. Gaard portrays trees as social creatures that communicate cooperatively and provide lessons to humans. Further, trees in a forest are frequently connected via an older tree referred to as a "mother" by ecofeminists:

Along with my interspecies affinities, I held conversations with trees. I remember a specific grove of eucalyptus trees, an unmanaged forest that stood on the hillside at the middle of my junior high school. I befriended these trees, spent my recess listening to the murmur of wind in their leaves, the calming presence of their steadfastness easing my early adolescence. Their smell soothed me. (Greta Gaard, 2010, 45)

As mentioned earlier, Gaard is one of the ecofeminists who vividly characterizes a close relationship replete with conversation and ethics, prompting readers to consider a variety of issues, such as how one communicates with nature. Gaard, like the hill women, is fond of transforming reality into fiction. Certain questions are unanswerable; they pertain to the manners

and attitudes of the individual, as well as whether the individual genuinely cares about nature or not. According to Vakoch, the scientific community is establishing plant communication as a quantifiable biochemical phenomenon. Greta Gaard expands the avenues of nature-human communication along lines suggested by other ecofeminists, going beyond the relatively constrained pathway of pheromones and chemical receptors that science has begun to investigate (Douglas A. Vakoch, 2021, 141). Another part of nature emerges from Clana's path (the little girl) in *The Wanderground*, who is fatigued and decides to relax with a fern. She wishes to replace her exhaustion with the fern's vigor and vitality. Clana is fortunate enough to trap the fern, which provides her with an aesthetically pleasing and delicate sub-canopy. Even though it may appear to readers that a fern is doing far more than simply conversing with a human, the author presents the scene as a regular thing: "Oh fern," she said, "will you pretend you live on tiredness? And I will live on being excited?" The fern immediately agreed" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 134). The Euro-Western conception that many earth others "don't talk" is avoided in this incident. The fictional character's encounter with a fern is a challenge to the widely held belief that nature does not respond to human intervention "– 'it works!'- she thought" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 134).

Our most important natural resources become clear when greens are taken into account; water is one of them. Both novels, *The Wanderground* and *The Cleft*, spot a higher premium on the water as the substance and matrix of life, a mother and a medium. The writers demonstrate that there is no life without water simply by allowing the text's characters to prove: "In stormy seas, you can stand on the cliffs and look down and think that water is everything, is everywhere" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 8).

Further, water is a symbol of cleanliness for the clefts, and they use it to clean all their body parts, especially their private areas after menstruation. Water for the cleft women advances women's health, equality, and well-being: “and we let the water flow from the spring up there, and the water flushes the flowers down through The Cleft, from top to bottom, and we all have our blood flow” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 9). By analysing this speech, the notion of water as a feminine issue is cemented in readers' minds. Is water a woman's issue? The answer is addressed by elucidating the connection between water and healthcare. All aspects of women's reproductive healthcare, including menstruation, have a strong water connection. It is also common for social systems to dictate what constitutes acceptable female behaviour, which might limit women's freedom. Women are often compelled to defecate in the early morning or late at night to retain their privacy. To minimize the need to urinate or defecate, women tend to drink less alcohol and eat less during the day, thus leading to additional health issues (Lorry A. Swatuk & Corrine Cash, 2018, 177).

Consideration of water from the start demonstrates the subject's urgency. Water is a central aspect of ecofeminism because it illustrates how gendered cultural assumptions about water, power, and human relations have created a water-power infrastructure that perpetuates environmental sexism, environmental racism, and environmental classism. As an alternative, an ecofeminist approach to water justice promotes strategies for establishing an ecological democracy, an ecological economy, and a partnership culture in which water and energy freely flow (Greta Gaard, 2001, 157). Similarly, Water, according to the writer Sally Miller Gearhart, is a major factor that causes a significant change in the *Wanderground*. Gearhart did not write fiction until 1973 when she entered a mild trance and emerged with the short story "Red Water". She explains that about a year later, “something tripped inside me, and about five.... stories out

at once, just chchchew” (Karen A. Foss et al., 1999, 260). The cleft women protect and care for water like a baby; the water enables the clefts to flow. Lessing's concern for water is heightened.

In this regard, Honor the Earth's founder and Executive Director Winona LaDuke states:

Water is life.

We are the people who live by the water.

Pray by these waters.

Travel by these waters.

Eat and drink from these waters.

We are related to those who live in the water. (Winona LaDuke, 2002, 55)

In *The Cleft*, water is critical for both males and females; after bringing baby boys to earth, water becomes urgent. The clefts spend their days swimming and lounging in the water, and similarly, baby boys develop an affinity for the sea and adopt the persona of “water babies” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 197). At the most fundamental level, every living thing requires water to maintain the biological processes necessary for life. Theories of transnational water use, such as the community of interest and equitable utilization, are based on the premise that sovereignty and the benefits of water ownership are contingent upon a certain degree of cooperation and mutual respect. Sally Miller Gearhart substantiated this theory in her book *The Wanderground* by including a 'Red Waters' chapter. Red waters are portrayed as a place that empowers women by allowing them to swim beneath the water's surface and sing loudly.

Thereby, gender disparities in the water sector are pervasive and persist, implying severe consequences. Gender defines people's roles, responsibilities, and opportunities in the society

and frequently limits their potential. As a result, women and men have disparate levels of knowledge, abilities, opportunities, and needs. Gender also shapes one's relationship with water by influencing one's needs, access, use, and benefits from this vital resource (WSP, 2010, 7-8). The hill women believe that protecting water will save the earth and women. Water will also put an end to racism and gender inequality; if the earth is happy, women will be as well:

With water and blood we can wash away the slayer

With water and blood we can wash away the race. (Gearhart, 1979, 195)

As a result of the preceding assumption, Alaka (one of the hill women) prefers to be near water rather than mountains. With water, she can take the form of a fish, a sea snail, or a sea anemone. A newfound vitality begins to flow through her body as if water is an excellent medium for meditation. Water nourishes women: “to the path of the water which feeds us all” (Susan Griffin, 1978, 160).

Besides, water introduces a new element of nature that is inextricably linked to water: rivers. Rivers are critical components of nature. They transport water and nutrients to regions all over the globe: “flowing rivers and sprawling rice fields are symbols of energy and life-giving force for people” (Novita Dewi, 2020, 1). The great river serves as a conduit for joy, festivals, and entertainment in *The Cleft*. *Cleft* women are accustomed to commemorating river events through dancing and feasts “we always do it this way” (Lessing, 2007, 153). Lessing emphasizes the significance of river festivals in women's lives, stating that women indicate their gratitude to the river by dancing in its presence. Rivers provide critical benefits such as drinking water, and more importantly, they provide habitat for fish, plants, and wildlife. Many species rely on rivers for survival, “there were very large fish in the river” (Lessing, 2007, 38). Rashleigh (2017)

asserts that freshwater fish are ecologically significant in stream ecosystems, providing significant food, recreation, and conservation value as a biological indicator of freshwater streams (Rashleigh, 2017, 376-391).

The subject piques ecologists' interest and allows for an in-depth discussion within their frameworks. *Fish and River Pollution* is concerned with laboratory and field research on the effects of pollution on fish. Erichsen Jones discusses pollution caused by oxygen-depleting effluents, such as sewage, milk washing, and other solutions that microorganisms can degrade, which depletes the water's dissolved oxygen (Erichsen Jones, 1964, 1-2). The frequent capture of fish in the novel clearly shows Lessing's desire to display the importance of fish and ecologists' lack of concern for this subject. In the text, the author presents fish as leaders and mothers. At first, when babies are born, women believe that large fish and the moon produce them (Doris Lessing, 2007, 11). Moreover, Lessing includes a scene where females discover how babies are born. The author constructs a scene that teaches about men and women's natures, and most importantly, how to engage in sexual intercourse, copulation, or vaginal sex. The players and teachers are two male and female fish, while the audience is two females who spread the idea to the rest: "they have tubes sticking out, like the monsters, and one of them stuck his tube into the other, and there were little eggs scattering through the water" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 20). Lessing exemplifies the determination of sex in fish's life by demonstrating similarities between humans and nature, particularly in the sex aspect "the Monster's tubes were for making eggs" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 20).

Not only sexual interaction resembles that of a human being, but also gender group items can also be found in the fish world. Male homosexual behaviour—while present in the majority of extant clades throughout the Animal Kingdom—remains a conundrum, as same-sex mating

should reduce male reproductive fitness. However, males who engage in same-sex sexual behaviour mate with females in the majority of species. In theory, same-sex mating may even improve male reproductive fitness by increasing males' chances of future heterosexual mating (David Bierbach et al., 2013, 1). Sex-changing fish behave normally, engaging in male- or female-typical sexual behaviour depending on their current gender assignment. Sexual behavioural plasticity can be also observed in fish that do not change sex naturally but are manipulated hormonally. Thus, sex determination and differentiation in fish are labile and can be conducted during the fertilization and hatching stages, respectively, by controlling ploidy and hormone levels (T. J. Pandian & R. Koteeswaran, 1999, 580). Gender is based on assumed sexual characteristics shaped by doubtful biological determinism, thus reminding us of Butler's assertions in gender and sex determination. Based on what has been said so far, we can posit from a discursive perspective that sex is contesting. In other words, Butler does not say that sexual organs do not exist, but rather that the meaning of sex is shaped by normative and coercive discourses (Judith Butler, 1990, 7).

Fish plays different roles throughout both novels, including guide, influencer, and warner. Another ability of the fish is its ability to recognize human faces. A tropical fish species can discriminate between human faces; this is the first-time fish have shown this ability. The researchers discovered that fish, which lack primates' sophisticated visual cortex, are capable of discriminating between up to forty-four new faces (Cait Newport et al., 2016, 1-2). Similarly, in the *Wanderground*, a fish recognizes one of the hill women who attempt to swim and ends up in a deep river. Alaka's hand comes into contact with a fish in the darkness. Soon after, she welcomes other river dwellers who are courageous enough to swim alongside and around her (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 11). Ecofeminists think that women are better conservationists and

more environmentally friendly than men. Gearhart says first that nature saves women. Then, women need to be empowered for climate action and the powerful change it can make. Therefore, in the novel, fish is a hero for the hill woman who gets into trouble: “you are in trouble”? “Yes,” she sent back. “I need air and light”. (Gearhart, 1979, 24). Generally speaking, fish serves as a warning and a guide for the hill women. Each of the elements of nature helps lead them on a journey of connecting with the earth's rhythms, healing and release, nourishing the soul, and long-lasting sisterhood. The author created a situation in which neither the Wanderground women nor the fish are dissatisfied, so they remain together “Thank you, water ones. May you go well and come again!” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 24). Fish do not make regular appearances in the novel, except when women decide to swim. However, a companion frequently appears in the Wanderground: a calico cat. Because the cat is more empathetic toward the sex, the hill women form stronger bonds with it. Not only do women have stronger bonds with their pet cats more than men do, but Gearhart portrays this type of cat as an integral part of women's lives as one of the hill women who battled against a male-dominated society. It is rational to choose this type of cat to be interfered with because calico cats are highly independent.

More specifically, Calicoes are affectionate, loving, and loyal cats. A calico cat gladly and enthusiastically provides if humans need unconditional love. Calicos come in three shades: white, black, and orange (Meredith Dash, 2014, 4-23). Additionally, this particular cat breed has another distinguishing characteristic. In the remember room, a cat closes her eyes to recall everything that has happened to her. Women are all around her, whereby this room is fully committed to her and other cats remembering their interactions with the city life in the past: “Everybody knew that remembering was in fact what a cat was, except for hunting, of course,

and grooming and eating, all of which a cat also was” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 139). The cat inspires the women to reflect on the past and enlightens them about what cats have endured. The women feel the strong reinforcement of five cat memories; each child and woman become entangled in the enfoldment, and the breathings become entangled, seeking rhythm and unity. The cat draws women deeper, encouraging them to take all the sensations they are about to share more seriously. Soon, they open channels and begin to remember their past (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 140). In this context, the interest in the role of animals in women's experiences provides an excellent explanation for why nature prefers women and vice versa. Traditionally, domestic realms have been seen as secondary to the more public world of adult men and their publicly acknowledged social accomplishments due to their association with women and children. Consequently, domestic animals, like women, are being marginalized in a patriarchal society.

Nature never stops assisting humans; nature also aids men (males in *The Cleft*) in living and growing up in this section. In *The Cleft*, a deer is a mother and a feeder for baby monsters (boys) who rejected feeding from cleft breasts. Deer milk has the highest fat, protein, and casein protein content of any animal species whose milk has been used for human nutrition, and this is a scientifically proven fact. The mineral content of deer milk is much higher than that of milk from cows, sheep, and goats, and the calcium, phosphorus, and zinc content is much higher (Ye Wang et al., 2017, 363-375). The deer embodies the first lesson in parental love; watching her interact with her fawns stimulates monsters to experience emotion and yearn for mother love. Observing a fawn being nursed by a doe inspires boys to try the same thing. Then, a strong bond develops between the deer and the first humans: “We are children of the deer” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 37). Not far enough, humans are entirely reliant on nature to survive. Ensuring that children

understand the value of nature and how to interact with it is one of Lessing's greatest messages. Opportunities for children to connect with nature are critical for Lessing's preservation. There is a reference to earlier societies forgetting their most incredible wisdom. The hunger of the baby monsters, who cannot survive without the assistance of the deer, underlines children's need for nature. The deer is kind and merciful to children and is unaware of the consequences if they grow up to be men. The mother deer does what is expected from her "the feeding babies and deer would have to lie down" (Doris Lessing, 2007, 39). Later, the roman historian explains the monster's reliance on nature differently. He adds to his account as he uncovers the creation stories produced by male history, such as the fact that men were created when the eagle's eggs hatched. It is far easier for the male society to accept that they descended from animals, such as eagles or deer, but not from females for diminishing their dignity (Doris Lessing, 2007, 142-143).

In brief, everything plays a unique role in nature, which is why a biodiverse perspective is necessary to protect life on Earth. Nature's inanimate formations, such as seas, rivers, forests, mountains, valleys, rocks, and caves provide humans with food, shelter, clothing, and heating, or in a nutshell, 'life.' In the novels, women swim and forage for food from the sea and forest trees, relocating in the mountains. The concept of ecosystem services is well-established in the scientific and environmental communities, as depicted in both novels. The natural world has provided everything that humans have required to survive and thrive. Thus, individuals should make every effort to safeguard and sustain life on Earth by preserving the natural balance and integrity of the planet. The clefts and the hill women are already aware of and concerned with the natural harmony, and they make every effort to protect it. In *The Wanderground*, women flee the violence perpetrated by men in 'the City' and establish a lesbian community in the mountains.

They coexist with nature in harmony, communicating telepathically with one another and with plants and animals. They derive their strength and abilities from the Earth Mother's breathing. Their ability to communicate with nature enables them to live in safety and security. Regardless of how difficult life has been in the city, nature in the form of trees, ferns, fish, cats, and dogs is there to rescue and motivate the hill ladies. Similarly, *The Cleft* contains numerous instances of this eco-friendly practice. The Clefts rever nature as a source of female fertility and protect it by keeping it clean and undamaged. They see a parallel between their genitalia and nature; therefore, they elevate it to the status of a deity that is responsible for the creation of life. In the end, both books define an ecosystem as a community in which producers (plants), consumers (animals), and decomposers (rocks, rivers, and water) work together to ensure their survival.

3.4. Hegemonic and Eco Masculinity

With some notable exceptions, research on ecosystem services has given scant attention to gender issues. There have been numerous studies that have examined how women and men perceive and value ecosystem services differently. Gender roles, norms, and relationships affect how men and women behave, and ecosystems are impacted. The manipulation of ecosystems to promote desired ecosystem services is made possible by gendered actions. It is common for women to cultivate crops or gather firewood, whereas men are more likely to use consumptive resources, hunting, fishing, and logging in a forest (Matt Fortnam et al., 2019, 313-314).

Lessing and Gearhart are both fiction writers, who create utopias based on ecological and gender studies. Prehistoric novels with utopian elements were isolated, simple, all-female societies in which women give birth exclusively to female children. Similarly, dystopia persists in both the *Cleft* and the *Wanderground*; this conveys the traditional utopian works and that the boundary with reality is an important element. Both novels contain passages that are entirely unsuitable for female characters. These locations are known as the Dangerland and the Killing Rock. Initially, the Killing Rock lives up to its name by becoming a hotspot for murders and assassinations. It is also a dividing line between male and female districts, where rivalries and plots against one another are common “the youths ran to the top of the mountain and watched how the girls went down the other side, past the Killing Rock- and then reached their shore” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 77). *Cleft* women understand the valid reason for males' recent survival because they have been coordinating with eagles and providing them with fish in exchange for saving unwanted babies. Then, their conscience is awakened that they should not throw the babies into the sea, rather they leave them on Killing Rock for eagles to take. Thus, this location is dangerous, as it contains some dead monsters, twins, and defeated infants. Regardless of how

some women are courageous enough to stand on the rim of the Killing Rock and observe the male community “though they were in danger” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 83), what is critical is discovering what lies beyond this land that is designated as male territory. Is nature content with the lifestyles of monsters?

As monsters mature, they begin creating a new life and enforcing new rules on the clefts. Similar to their distaste for everything settled and harmonious, but because they are extremely deep and fatally out of reach, they cause their minds to destroy by throwing rocks even unconsciously. There is no consideration for the border or the rocks that have historically served as a representation of god for women. Then, the Cleft turns out to be the place of the explosion. Indeed, it is a volcano damaged by boys and hunters who throw boulders into the pit. Rocks, trees, and the Cleft are gone “it’s our place, you have destroyed our place” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 254). Maronna's speech spells the end of women; they, along with nature, are annihilated by males. A man in general, according to Hubert Reeves, is the most insane species. He worships an unseen God and slaughters visible nature without realizing that the visible nature he kills is in direct opposition to the unseen God he worships (qtd. In Corinne Gaffner Garcia, 2019, 106).

Lessing's novel discusses several human activities that directly impact the global environment, including population growth, overexploitation, pollution, and deforestation. For instance, the great forest is an ecosystem comprised of numerous plants and animals. On the other hand, Forests become home to monsters, and many trees and plants are taken for granted.

At first, the forest is dense with trees and animals, such as pigs and porkers; however, after dividing the forest into men and the seashore into women, animals begin to be hunted, and monsters damage trees. Cooking flesh killed and fires are frequently witnessed by clefts and the forest, which have grown tired of the numerous oppressions of men hunters. There is a reference

to patriarchy and men's dominance over nature and women. In contrast to men, women are more likely to eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables, grains, and legumes in their eating habits. There are discourses in which masculinity is praised, where the concept of claiming power and killing through hunting and conquering is dominant; “feminist animal rights scholars argue that factory farming, animal experimentation, hunting, and meat-eating are tied to patriarchal concepts and practices” (Karen J. Warren, 1996, xiii). When monsters become fearful of wild animals, they flee forests temporarily, while women flock to the forest to witness the beauty of the green life. Things are not as they have previously seen; trees have grown taller and more powerful, and animals have returned to their land as if watching them. Nothing is harmful to women, as they are not hunters; they simply fetch fruits and such a task boys find ridiculous (Doris Lessing, 2007, 153-183).

In an article titled *Forests, Women, and Health: Opportunities and Challenges for Conservation* (2011), women represent a huge potential human resource as half of the global human population. Tropical forest women typically have little access to labour-saving devices and cannot limit their reproductive roles. As a result, vast amounts of female creativity, energy, and knowledge have been unavailable to those attempting to manage or protect forest areas more effectively and sustainably. Furthermore, because women are often the caregivers for sick family members, they have a particular interest in improving the health of their communities (M. Wan et al., 2011, 370).

Forest analyses present the concept of not being afraid of both domestic and wild creatures. Wild animals do not frighten the clefts, nor do they frighten the hill women. Clana (the little girl) in *The Wanderground* walks close to a snake and is surprised by the cobra's friendliness. Men in the city usually warn about the dangers of animals, but Clana sees no harm

in capitulating to them “you are different from the stories I saw of you” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 30). Clana might refer to documentary shows that have been entrenched in the modern world by men. They frequently produce programs that include the dread and violent lives of wild creatures, with gender discrimination, such as a lion is superior to a lioness, and he always takes the front seat when hunting.

Following the preceding explanation, one can also discern a reference to men's worlds, which are influenced by patriarchy and toxic masculinity rejecting eco-friendly behaviour. Men are afraid of being labelled as feminine because environmental charity and selflessness make them feel less manly. The same concept is evident in the Dangerland: a border between the Wanderground and the predominantly male-populated city. The hill women have reclaimed their rightful ownership of the land on which they live. They can accomplish what was previously impossible due to the presence of monsters. However, some Wanderground women's memories of the old days may not be distant; the passage of time is how men own everything: “the stories, the mind pictures, the pain of some not-so-ancient days when the men owned all things, even the forests and hills” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 2). Monsters manifest in The Wanderground and continue to wreak havoc on nature, particularly on animals. The hill women report from Dangerland tales of pointless killings, particularly deer, and the continued beheading of does. Men intentionally injure animals through slaughter, pest control, hunting, and toxicology testing (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 127). As a reference to veganism, both Lessing and Gearhart add to the animal advocacy movement, laboratory politics, and experimentation ethics. It is important to remember that veganism is not a substitute for other forms of animal rights activism because it is part of a more extensive socio-economic and oppressive system supported by oppressive ideologies (Esther Alloun, 2015, 150). I would like to use an ecofeminist lens to examine

veganism as a first step in developing ethical relationships with human and nonhuman Others. Environmental feminist theories can also help us think more deeply about the way we treat animals, our fight to abolish oppression, and how to put this into reality, particularly in the field of food.

In *The Cleft*, the young men constantly invent daring feats and challenges for themselves, and they come up with something that drives the clefts half insane. They discover how to create fumes by tying a rope around their waists and jumping down onto the platform, where fumes from the ossuary below quickly overcome them. The initial attempt to obtain fumes has resulted in today's chaos. Although monsters do not smoke, the way they generate fumes and enjoy them proves their fascination with tobacco. Women and children find this intolerable and frequently attempt to escape from it (Doris Lessing, 2007, 163-165). I can argue against this passage by comparing it to today, as all smoke from the combustion of nicotine products contains harmful chemicals that make a child more susceptible to future exposure to air pollution. Besides that, it affects women's reproductive systems, resulting in various health problems, such as an increased risk of infertility, preterm delivery, and stillbirth.

Although there are frequent allusions to alcoholic scenes and men's drunken attitudes, monsters and men in *The Wanderground* do share certain characteristics. To continue, Lessing affirms how men use forests and plants to create alcohol for recreational purposes “we know that they all feasted, drank and alcoholic syrup invented by the men, ate forest fruit” (Doris Lessing, 2007, 191). However, they are unaware that alcohol causes intoxication, which is associated with impaired judgment and coordination, and that women are at a significantly greater risk of sexual harassment as a result of drunk men “with spotlights and scope rifles, often drunk, often loud, always together, and always dangerous” (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 160). To the extent that

nature heals women, Gearhart's and Lessing's examples indicate what it truly means for nature and women to share certain characteristics. The novel's female characters are familiar with misogyny: hatred of women, but women gain the right to hate men in this section. When gentlemen take a trip to the Wanderground, women express their dislike for males; their distrust is immense and unfathomable even if they are female males (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 180).

The reason why women distrust men is not because of the oppression and gender abuse they subject women to; their distrust is rooted in the fact that male-dominated societies abuse the majority of animals. One of the best examples is in *Remember Rooms*, where the subject is intended to be humorous but soon turns to be tragic. The hill women remember horses' state in cities, where men are accustomed to riding horses in the most elaborate quadrille and commit animal abuse. Horses are incapable of enduring man's mistreatment and thus choose to make men fall. Gearhart is not advocating the abolition of riding; on the contrary, horses are fine with being ridden as long as they enjoy it. In fact, it is likely that most horses simply tolerate being ridden. The issue is entirely related to treatment and gender preference, "and the ladies were clean as a whistle, riding just as smooth..." (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 159).

Animals also have psychology; at times, they are unable to find their own way to work for humans. Certain individuals do exploit horses. They compel them to perform regardless of their physical capability, mental preparedness, or emotional investment in the event. Animal cruelty is believed to be a symptom of a more serious mental illness. The hill women witness men lose their temper and shoot at the horses; they vividly see animals' bellow (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 159). Psychological and criminological research demonstrates that individuals who commit acts of cruelty toward animals do not stop there; many continue to their fellow humans. Murderers frequently begin their careers by killing and torturing animals as children (Henry R.

Hermann, 2017, 1). The author Sally Miller Gearhart makes a reference not only to the lack of animal liberation in cities but also to hegemonic masculinity handguns. Men in the city use guns to murder animals, women, and occasionally even members of their gender. Cross-gender violence and its consequences are asymmetrically distributed. Men are far more likely than women to commit violence against women. The negative externalities of male violence against women are significantly more significant than those of female violence against men. Men use firearms against women who have lost their integrity or declared their true gender. The novel's remembrance of the hill women reveals additional harmful aspects of men's attitudes toward women and nature:

Machine guns, Cissy! That's a bullet wound! Melva jerked back the covers from the small sleeping woman and pointed to her thigh. "Blood in streets, real live honest-to-god blood running all over the sidewalks and cars. I'm paying my goddam taxes to have them spill women's blood!" (Sally Miller Gearhart, 1979, 147).

According to Stroud, there are six million concealed gun license owners in the United States, which means they have the legal right to bear arms. Holders are men, and men are more likely to support guns compared to women (Angela Stroud, 2012, 216). Pulling the trigger has a detrimental effect on the environment, such as air pollution. There are numerous ways in which a hail of bullets can endanger the health of a community. The people and creatures who live near are at the greatest risk of developing health problems. Shooting ranges have the potential to poison humans and contaminate nearby soil or water. However, weapons are not limited to firearms; early humans used ancient weapons in *The Cleft*. Men (monsters) employ a variety of weapons, including stones to dispatch small animals, knives made of seashell, splinters, and sharpened bones, a sort of catapult for large animals, and bows and arrows. Ecofeminists are

concerned with the broader issue of animal oppression and the connection between this form of oppression and women's oppression. Examples of animal oppression can be seen in *The Cleft*, whereby monsters (males) are constantly looking for opportunities to use their tools. They can hunt alongside hunters and track beside the truckers, specifically to kill animals (Doris Lessing, 2007, 90-247). The most heinous aspect of weapon use is hunting animals and harvesting their skins. Although the cleft women are cold, they are unwilling to wear animal furs or pelts, whereas men typically wear their familiar animal pelts, beards, or the tails of some forest beast. In a sexualized society, both women and nature are viewed as objects to be exploited and brutalized to increase men's power (Lessing, 2007, 191). For example, humans use sexist rhetoric to justify the slaughter of fur-bearing animals for their skins. At the same time, menopausal women are encouraged to take the drug Premarin, which is manufactured through the mass exploitation of pregnant horses (Marc Bekoff & Carron A. Meaney, 2013, 49). The Monsters engage in sexual relations with women, impregnate them, and then compel them to take care of the infants. Similarly, they devastate and exploit nature by raping and hunting its animals, cutting its trees, polluting its forests and rivers, and disturbing the island's natural peace with their growing numbers (Doris Lessing, 2017, 37).

Depending on the women's discourses in both novels, men will not act to prevent pollution or harm unless they value the particular aspect of nature being injured or killed. Examining men's antagonistic relationship with nature reveals that women are to develop sensitivities and empathy, whereas men's work develops cruelty and tragedy. Since female bodies are designed for specific purposes, women have a moral awareness that is not based on the fact that they are female. Because they are a part of this earth, they have to protect it:

Because we know ourselves to be made from this earth. See this grass. The patches of silver and brown. Worn by the wind. The grass reflecting all that lives in the soil. The light. The grass needing the soil. With roots deep in the earth. And patches of silver. Like the patches of silver in our hair. Worn by time. This bird flying low over the grass. Over the tules. The cattails, sedges, rushes, reeds, over the marsh. Because we know ourselves to be made from this earth. (Susan Griffin, 1978, 223)

In final remarks, one might assume that men do not desire to live on a safe and secure planet where plants and animals coexist peacefully with humans. Due to the prevalence of gender norms in domestic and household labour, the difference in responsibilities between women and men is called the Eco gender gap. Both *Dangerland* and *The Killing Rock* are at risk of being attacked by monsters and men in the city. They are today's global threat and arguably the primary source of environmental degradation. Men's carefree behaviour is exemplified by women who identify obstacles that must get overcome to advance our understanding of the human dimensions of global change, presenting findings and suggestions. Males are inherent in nature, but they act against it, thereby emancipating themselves from it. They are both a part of and distinct from nature. Analysing the distinct territories and tribes depicted in both works, women in male-dominated occupations report having a poor work environment, whereas the majority of males in female-dominated occupations report having a positive work environment. Although the clefts women in Lessing's novel do not view men as foes as they are at the start of the paradox, they do evaluate the monster's unrestrained behaviour toward them and nature. When women are in the forest, they are not at risk of being harmed by wild creatures or the wind; however, males do. On the contrary, the hill women in Gearhart's novel are certain that men are nature's and women's enemies. They have witnessed disasters in the city and

investigated how men have harmed animals as well. Their arguments suggest that men are not more connected to nature, but to culture. Finally, neither nature nor women are pleased with the male partnership.



CONCLUSION AND RESULTS

The main goal of feminism and ecofeminism is to make a big change in society because the current and past social orders make many people, especially women, live limited, unhappy lives. In this kind of society, women are not seen, therefore, ecofeminists and feminists realise that society needs to change in terms of environment, human interactions and relationships, and cultural & social institutions. *The Cleft* by Doris Lessing and *The Wanderground* by Sally Miller Gearhart are significant to the history of gender and ecofeminism because they reflect the theories' fundamental claims. Feminist concepts such as gender equality and the revaluation of non-patriarchal or non-linear structures form the basis of ecofeminist thought. Ecology and feminism can be combined to create a new social theory and a political movement that addresses gender inequality. According to the gender theory, inequalities between men and women result from men's attempts to hold on to their position of power and privilege at the expense of women. In light of these findings, it is recommended that we think of masculinity and femininity as mutually generated attributes that shape the lives of men and women. The associations (between women and the environment) encourage women to be more aware of the purity and devastation of the domain. This study compares and contrasts the works of Sally Miller Gearhart and Doris Lessing as comparative literature to foresee the difficulties of women throughout history till the current day. In contrast to Doris Lessing, who explores human history and mythology through the Roman Senator and reintroduces women to the world as the first humans, Sally Miller Gearhart focuses on women's contemporary and modern lives away from cities and males. Women's preference for nature and a green lifestyle is depicted in both stories using fictional characters. The writers find it challenging to get the desired output working on respective

projects. They are trying to separate women from men to create a world populated solely by women.

Chapters are separated based on how gender and ecofeminism are conveyed in *The Cleft* and *The Wanderground*. The first section of the study describes the theoretical backdrop of the theorist's works. To comprehend why women are closer to nature and why nature remains fresh and green among women, it is necessary to comprehend the gender effects. Through the sparking fury of Judith Butler, Marilyn Frye, and Hilary M. Lips, a variety of gender identity concepts are uncovered while discussing gender issues. Their contributions aid readers in realising the gender studies and tribulations of the characters they face throughout the works. The author of the ground-breaking book *Gender Trouble*, Judith Butler, first discusses the category of women as human beings who require rethinking, and then she describes the concept of 'performativity,' which is exemplified by the characters in the novels. Marilyn Frye extends the concept by naming these distinct gender identities because of the sexual objectification of women, in which women are viewed and treated as objects for satisfying men's demands. Frye introduces the topic by analysing society's responses to women and people who resemble women; her thoughts on sexism, racism, oppression, and sexuality serve as a landmark in the texts. Her articles address feminist issues, such as white supremacy, male privilege, and the marginalization of gay and lesbian people. Hilary Lips, on the other hand, offers a multicultural approach, exploring the gender experiences of persons of many races, cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, and gender and sexual identities. She prioritizes empirical research while remaining critical of it. Lessing's and Gearhart's works rely on the examples she presents regarding gender and societal conventions. In both novels, women are held captive by a patriarchal society that has shaped their perceptions of the world. They have to follow the norms put forth by men.

The second chapter, which employs gender theory, serves as an analytical component of both novels based on the assumptions of women and men. First and foremost, aside from the fact that both works contain fictional aspects, their real-life relationships suggest that the events in the novels can take place in reality. Sally Miller Gearhart is a feminist, a lesbian activist, and an outspoken opponent of anti-gay policies. Her novel *The Wanderground* is a classic of lesbian science fiction set in a women-only society. Her interactions with male figures in her life and the distinction between male and female roles, geared to fit in with the society's patriarchal ideals, are sensed in her writing. While Doris Lessing underwent significant changes in her vocation, transitioning from a communist social realist to a reluctant feminist, her modifications have enabled her to observe the patriarchy and women in multiple regions. What she discovers does not convey a straightforward political message, but it does tear away the masks that women are accustomed to wearing, exposing the dangers and challenges that women face while attempting to live a free life in a man's world. As in her novel, *The Cleft*, women (the clefts) seek to recapture the freedom they have enjoyed in their utopia.

In her latest novel, *The Cleft*, Lessing retells the story of human genesis, and what makes her work so compelling is that she does not openly side with females or males (the monsters), or even with nature. She does not assert her femininity verbally; instead, she watches objectively as a narrator who is unfamiliar with the novel's events and exemplifies the social and psychological changes and developments that the cleft and monster societies undergo. The alterations in *The Cleft* contribute significantly to analysing gender inequalities and stereotypes in the newly revealed dystopia. After the clefts deliver their first baby boy, natural and unnatural changes occur among the cleft tribe. Women seek to rid themselves of their babies by murdering and

torturing infant boys; however, Lessing initially does not fit into any of the theories examined in this study and produces dualities in the Cleft.

Lessing, on the other hand, is obligated to take a stance for women in other instances. When female characters begin interacting with male characters and having children, the fundamental motivation of animosity becomes apparent (sex). Lessing frequently asserts that women and men are two distinct species and that readers should brace themselves for an early war between them following the birth of baby boys. In *The Cleft*, she crafts a peripheral plot and deconstructs stereotypes. Lessing showcases how society advances by using the tale of the Clefts and *Squirts* as a metaphor for the dawn of human civilization. Whenever there is a discussion on women's issues, patriarchy, society, and gender norms inevitably come up. The account is given by a Roman Senator who pays great attention to these tribes and applies all events to his own life. The senator is poring over literature ostensibly relating to the narrative of our forefathers, an all-female tribe known as the Clefts. He is fearful of this happening if his account is published. The conflict between a man and an enslaved woman is accurate; men are clumsy, while women are enraged. Men are perpetually insatiably sexual, and they walk away and are certain to return to a woman's bed later. Such a scene encapsulates the endless conflict between the sexes. The Roman senator says “ females are worshipped as goddesses, while in ordinary life they are kept secondary and thought inferior” (Lessing, 2007, 27).

The phallic power is the primary source of connection for women since, in a patriarchal culture, the discrepancy of gender-biased socialization results in an essentialist framework of male sexuality centred on the phallus, performance, and power. As Marilyn Frye outlines the “presumption of general phallic access”(Frye, 1983, 130), men have the potential to exert control over women since they have access to women. The penis allows men to attempt to rape a

cleft who once crosses the valley searching for the monsters. They all rape her, one by one, till she becomes a victim of crime. The first attempt to rape a woman indicates that there will be other attempts as long as men and women coexist around the globe. Almost all feminist thinking about rape is predicated on a few underlying themes. The first is feminists' emphasis on "breaking the silence" surrounding rape, as demonstrated in *The Wanderground*. Women have been raped and sexually harassed throughout their lives in the city; therefore, their separation from the male chauvinist pig implies that hill women break the silence and flee to the hills.

Sally Miller Gearhart authored this novel in 1979, during a period when the women's liberation movement, a broad social movement centred mainly in the United States, sought equal rights and opportunities for women, as well as increased personal freedom. Gearhart displays her feminism in this work; as a result, she constructs a men-free utopia. *The Wanderground* is replete with feminism's insights. Gearhart indicates that a conversation between men and women is not a possibility. There is also a small minority group of guys in the novel who are referred to as "gentles". They are the only hope for the earth's survival; nevertheless, a discussion with them is typically rebuffed, and some hill women are opposed to engaging with gentles: "they cried for the ministration of the women[. . .] yet always the women stood by, friends from a distance, the midwives of death who would ease their passing" (Gearhart, 1979, 3).

The hill women recollect previous occurrences in which men utilize violence against women. Raping, torturing, and killing are characteristics of the men in the novel. They also punish and pursue lesbians, who must disguise their sexual preferences because they are all under control everywhere, and there are even testing parties to verify that they are straight. The writer can design a utopia utilizing science fiction components. *The Wanderground* women have extraordinary abilities, including interacting without speaking, flying, swimming deep in the sea,

and connecting with nature. They oppose technology because they regard it as a tool of masculine dominance. Strangely, it becomes clear that they have become capable of achieving all that technology once made possible by developing their psychic skills. It is said that they have constructed a Western civilization in which they believe technology is superfluous and harmful (Gearhart, 1979, 145). In this sense, the Wanderground women are the strongest examples of feminist separatism. Feminist anti-patriarchy activism is predicated on the idea that women can be liberated from men's worldviews by separating themselves from them. Since the Hill Women's Separation is so closely tied to lesbian feminism, the term "lesbian separatism" is sometimes used to refer to this movement. Cleft women who live in a cage with newborn girls and boys are one example of how feminist separatists have had an impact on the feminist movement as well.

Unlike the hill ladies in *The Wanderground*, the clefts like to spend their time swimming, lying down, and fishing, thereby generating a binary opposition between males and females in the community. Old and young clefts are not in the same boat, which may explain why they allow males to have authority over them. While the older clefts despise monsters, the young ones press themselves to be with men hoping one day they may change. Nature is highly valued in both utopias because both countries' female populations derive their strength from the natural world. Nevertheless, both utopias emphasize nature as women of both lands feed their power by nature. The power is not employed only for their safety but also for the world, unlike the males of the society who has practically ruined it. They have built a culture distinguished by respect for one another and other forms of life and even natural elements like rock, air, sea, trees, and fern. Women and nature have an emotional tie; females are clean and safe for nature, giving what they take.

Furthermore, animate nature plays a vital role in both novels. Animal studies, according to Gaard, begin with feminist notions about how we should interact with and think about animals—through an ethics of care, empathy, and kindness. Animal liberation rights should be accomplished because the concept is utopia. The Garden of Eden is one of the first documented and well-known utopias, and women in both regions are gentle with animals feeling like they are in The Garden of Eden. The clefts in dystopia have difficulty caring for animals because they are forbidden to touch anything built by males. Animals are damaged in men's world, and while the hill women take no credit for this, they can heal any creature that men have harmed. Since the term “ecofeminism” is first created by the French feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne in 1974, ecofeminists have advocated what they see to be a superior approach to animal ethics. According to ecofeminism, women's oppression and environmental degradation are intertwined, mutually reinforcing systems. According to some ecofeminists, nonhuman animal persecution and women's oppression are linked, and they argue that the same logic of dominance is responsible for both. It is the core assertion of ecofeminists that we cannot liberate nature (or significantly, nonhuman animals) without taking the oppression of women seriously. Also, we cannot liberate women without liberating nature (or specifically, nonhuman animals). The concept becomes evident when the Dangerland and the Killing Rock emerge in the two passages. These two distinct areas demonstrate why ecofeminists support women and the environment. The Dangerland is a border in the Wanderground and is close to city men; the name refers to men's harm to nature and women. While the Killing Rock provides a home for monsters in The Cleft, the expanding population of monsters has caused nature to wreak havoc. Because of man's actions, ecosystems, and life's fabric, are rapidly deteriorating. On the other hand, women are nature's last hope for saving Mother Earth.

Ecofeminism considers patriarchal social institutions as displaying hierarchy in gender interactions. Patriarchy is to blame for the subjugation of women, the poor, indigenous peoples, and production and consumption systems. A male, a father, a son, a spouse, or a boyfriend has power over a woman and nature; they desire to own everything related to women and nature. For example, the clefts and the hill women are unfazed by the presence of wild creatures; they are startled by the friendliness of animals like snakes and huge cats as they approach them. It is common for urban men to warn against wild creatures, but women see nothing wrong with submitting to them. Aside from the dreadful and violent lifestyles of wild animals, men in the new world commonly make documentary programs that feature gender discrimination. Untrue belief is a patriarchal societal stereotype in which nature is also an institutionalized social order over which males have dominion. The second section of the first chapter discusses the ecofeminism theory, which is defined as a fusion of feminism and ecology in which women and nature take a centre stage. Ecofeminist writers including Susan Griffin, Karen J. Warren, and Greta Gaard focus on the adverse effects of patriarchy on the environment in their work. Their academic writings on ecocriticism and deco composition are frequently referenced in composition and literary criticism. These researchers also look at other marginalized groups based on their ethnicity, colour, sexuality, and religion. Ecofeminists believe that all individuals are equal regardless of race, citizenship, socioeconomic level, gender, or sexual orientation.

In addition, natural elements and other factors are considered, such as the water cycle, environment, climate change, health system, and human and nonhuman interconnections, among others. In the analytical section of chapter three, the cleft ladies in *The Cleft* and the hill women in *The Wanderground* purportedly assess nature. The clefts do not verbally communicate with nature, but they do sense its significance and positiveness. From the outset of the novel, Lessing

establishes that cleft's paradise is maintained by nature (sea, forest, stones, rocks, fish, moon, etc.). Despite their apparent laziness, the novel's female characters are comfortable and contented until the birth of the baby boy and the destruction of nature. Ecofeminism examines not only women's but also men's relationship with nature. Monsters (males in *The Cleft*) wreak havoc on mountains, valleys, and woods with their unquenchable glee for destruction. They view nature as a source of amusement and pleasure, and their carelessness produces an explosion of valleys and mountains, causing clefts to lose their land and rocks. The story concludes with Maronna (the leader of the cleft women) crying over the loss of her people's land and origin at the hands of monsters. Even if she has forgiven Horsa (Maronna's partner), the future is tragic and dangerous. Despite Lessing's unresolved ending, the women of *Wanderground* recall memories and rebuild a country filled with vegetation and animals. According to the speeches of the characters in *The Wanderground*, urban men have destroyed nature and the environment by constructing industries and advancing technology. Based on this perspective, the author encourages science fiction to reject digitalization. For Gearhart, science incorporates ethical contexts and values. Yet, she does not envision pure or unapplied science; rather, she envisions application as an integral element of the scientific inquiry process. Consequently, this manner of considering science extends to feminist utopias. They are also capable of communicating with plants and animals, which is a skill known as "stretching," and can generate the majority of the goods produced in cities. The ladies desire to live in peace with nature, accepting the concept of the earth as a mother. Besides, a lot of women are obtaining more advanced abilities, including the ability to fly.

In terms of feminism and ecological philosophy, these novels are key examples of ecofeminist writing and theory. Evaluating these two works aims to convey how gender and environmental issues coexist in Western civilizations. Each author of the theories tackles a

different aspect of gender and eco studies, but the most significant point is that they all believe that a misogynist society oppresses women and to save the earth's future, hierarchies must be destroyed. Ecofeminism is the solution to gender issues, women, animals, and environmental living; consequently, feminists and ecofeminists feel that the salvation is to be in nature, as demonstrated by the protagonists at the conclusion of both novels.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, C. J. (1991). Ecofeminism and the Eating Of Animals. *HYPATIA: A Journal Of Feminist Philosophy*, 6(1) , 125-145. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3810037>

Aditya, S.K. (2016). Role of Women in Environmental Conservation. *International Journal of Political Science and Development*, 4(4), 140-145.

Ahmed, M. K. (2019). Ecofeminist Tendencies in Virginia Woolf, Doris Lessing and Arundhati Roy. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 4(4), 997-1002. <https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels.448>

Alloun, E. (2015), Ecofeminism and Animal Advocacy in Australia: Productive Encounters for An Integrative Ethics And Politics. *Animal Studies Journal*, 4(1), 148-173.

Amiri, N. (2016). The Aesthetic Values of Silence and its Impact on Romanticism and Contemporary Artists. *Springerplus*, 5(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40064-016-2466-0>

Asangöncü, S. B. (2011). *Rewriting Utopias: A Feminist Analysis of Ursula K. Le Guin's The Dispossessed, Joanna Russ's The Female Man, and Sally Miller Gearhart's The Wanderground*, [M. A. Dissertations, Ege University / Institute of Social Sciences / Department of American Culture and Literature]

Aydınoglu, Ü. (2020). Survey of Urbanization and Rural Settlements in Rough Cilicia during Antiquity. *Cultural Heritage and Science*, 1(1), 1-6.

Baysal, K. (2013). *Reflections of Ecofeminism in Doris Lessing's The Cleft* [Master's Thesis, Atatürk University Graduate School of Social Sciences, English Language And Literature Department].

Bekoff, M. & Meaney, C. A. (2013). *Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare*. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group.

Bierbach, D. & Jung, C.T. & Hornung, S. & Streit, B. & Plath, M. (2013). Homosexual Behavior Increases Male Attractiveness to Females. *Biology Letters*, 9(1),1-4. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rsbl.2012.1038>

Black, M.C., Basile, K.C., Breiding, M.J., Smith, S.G., Walters, M.L., Merrick, M.T., Chen, J., & Stevens, M. R. (2011). The National Intimate Partner And Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report. Atlanta, Ga: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.nsvrc.org/publications/NISVS-2010-summary-report>

Braggin, M. V. & Eliston, F. & English, J. (1977). *Feminism and philosophy*. Rowman & Little Field.

Brenstein, M. (2004). Neo-Speciesism. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 35(3), 380-390. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9833.2004.00239.x>

Butler, J. (1986). Sex and Gender in Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex*. *Yale French Studies*, 72(1), 35–49. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2930225>

Butler, J. (2017). The Difference Between Sexuality and Gender, in Big Think. <https://youtu.be/Bo7o2LYATDc>

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge.

Butler, J. (1988). Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory. *Theatre Journal*, 40(4), 519-531. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3207893>

Buzard, J. (1993). *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature and Ways to Culture, 1800-1918*. Clarendon Press.

Card, C. (1986). Oppression and Resistance: Frye's Politics of Reality. *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*, 1(1), 153.

Cheney, J. (1987). Eco-Feminism and Deep Ecology. *Environmental Ethics* 9(2), 115-145 <https://doi.org/10.5840/enviroethics19879229>

Clark, D. A. (2012). *Understanding Oppression* (Bachelor's Thesis, Oregon State University Honors College) <http://hdl.handle.net/1957/33153>

Dartnall, E., & Jewkes, R. (2013). Sexual Violence Against Women: the Scope of the Problem. *Best Practice & Research. Clinical Obstetrics & Gynaecology*, 27(1), 3–13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bpobgyn.2012.08.002>

Dash, M. (2014). *Calico Cats*. Abdo Consultin Group.

De Beauvoir, S. (1974). *The Second Sex*, Trans. And ed. H.M. Parshley.

De Beauvoir, S. (2018). *The Independent Woman: Extract from the Second Sex*. Vintage books.

De Beauvoir, S. (1979). Alice Jardine – Interview with Simone de Beauvoir. *Winter*, 5, (2) <http://www.iaphitalia.org/alice-jardine-interview-with-simone-de-beauvoir/>

D'Eaubonne, F. (1974). *Le feminisme ou la Mort*. Pierre Horay.

DelRosso, J. (1999). The Womanization of Utopias: Sally Miller Gearhart's Rhetorical Fiction. *Explanation*, 40(3), 213-223.

Dewi, N. (2020). River Resistance and Women's Resilience in Indonesian, Malaysian and Vietnamese Fictions. *LiNGUA Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa dan Sastra*, 15(1), 1-10.

Diderot, D. (1966). *Diderot's Selected Writings*. Macmillan.

Filipczak, D. (2014). Abjection and Sexuality Sacrifice Violence in Doris Lessing's *The Cleft*. *Text Matters-A Journal Of Literature , Theory And Culture* 4(4), 162-172
<https://doi.org/10.2478/texmat-2014-0011>.

Fortnam, M. & Brown, K. & Crona, B. & Daw, T. M. & Gançalves, D. & Hicks, C. & Revmatas, M. & Sandbrook, C. & Schulte- Herbruggen, B. (2019). The Gendered Nature of Ecosystem Services. *Ecological Economics*, V.159, 312-325.

Foss, K. A. & Foss, S. K. & Griffin, C.L. (1999). *Feminist Rhetorical Theories*. Sage Publication.

Friends of the Earth, C40 Cities. (2018). *Why Women Will Save the Earth*. Bloomsbury Academic.

Frued, S. (1920). *Introduction to Psychoanalysis*. Horace Liveright.

Frye, M. (1983). *The Politics of Reality*. The Crossing Press, Freedom.

Frye, M. (1993). Frye Defines. *Off Our Backs*, 23(7), 20.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20834519>

Gaard, G. (1993). *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals , Nature*. Temple University Press.

Gaard, G. & Gruen, L. (1993). Ecofeminism toward Global Justice and Planetary Health. *Society and Nature*, 2(1), 235-257.

Gaard, G. (1997). Toward a Queer Ecofeminism. *Hypatia*, 12(1), 114–137.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3810254>

Gaard, G. & Murphy, P. D. (1998). *Ecofeminist Literary Criticism: Theory, Interpretation, Pedagogy*. University of Illinois Press.

Gaard, G. (2001). Women, Water, Energy: an Ecofeminist Approach. *Organization & Environment*, 14(2), 157-172 . <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086026601142002>

Gaard, G. (2002). Vegetarian Ecofeminism: a Review Essay. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 23(3), 117–146. <https://doi.org/10.1353/fro.2003.0006>

Gaard, G. (2017). *Critical Ecofeminism*. Lexington Books.

Gaard, G. (1996). Hiking without a Map Reflection on Teaching Ecofeminist Literary Criticism. *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, 3(1), 155-182.

Norevik, G. & Akesson, S. & Andersson, A. & Beckman, J. & Hedenström , A. (2019). The Lunar Cycle Drives Migration of Nocturnal Bird. *PLOS Biology*, 17(10), 1-13.
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.3000456>

Garcia, C. G. (2019). *Trail Mix: Wit & Wisdom from the Outdoors*. Falcon Guides.

Crace, J. (2018). The Cleft by Doris Lessing. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/jan/16/fiction.dorislessing>

Gearhart, S., & Sturgis, S. (1980). Interview: Discovering The Wanderground: an Interview with Sally Gearhart. *Off Our Backs*, 10(1), 24–27.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25793272>

Gearhart, S.M. (1979). *The Wanderground: Stories of The Hill Women*. Persephone Press.

Glazebrook, T. (2002). Karen Warren's Ecofeminism. *Ethics and the Environment*, 7(2), 12–26. <https://doi.org/10.1353/een.2002.0015>

Griffin, G. (1993). *Heavenly Love? Lesbian Images in Twentieth -Century Women's Writing*. Manchester University Press.

Griffin, S. (1978). *Woman and Nature: The Roaring inside Her*. Harper & Row, Publishers.

Griffin, S. (1981). *Pornography and Silence: Culture's Revenge Against Nature*. Harper & Row Publishers.

Griffin, S. (1971). Rape: The All-American Crime. *Online Ramparts Magazine Archives Article*, 10(3), 26-35.

Griffin, S. (1986). *Rape, the Power Of Consciousness*. Harper& Row Publishers.

Hall-Gale, J. F. (2014). Pulling the Trigger on Pollution or Jumping the Gun-On-Gun Control? An Overview of the Environmental Impact of Guns and Ammunition. *Environmental Law Journal*, 25(1), 1-58.

Hermann, H. R. (2017). *Dominance and Aggression in Humans and Other Animals: the Great Game of Life*. Elsevier Inc.

Houston, M., & Kramarae, C. (1991). Speaking from Silence: Methods of Silencing and of Resistance. *Discourse & Society*, 2(4), 387–399.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926591002004001>

Jones, J. R. E. (1964). *Fish and River Pollution*. Elsevier Ltd.

King, G. (1989). *Doris Lessing*. Edward Arnold.

LaDuke, W. (2002). *The Winona LaDuke Reader: A Collective Of Essential*. Theytus Books.

Larousse Desk Reference Encyclopedia. (1995). *The Book People*. Haydock.

Lessing, D. (2007). *The Cleft*. Harper Collins Publishers.

Mack, J. (2011). One Feminist Asks, 'Is Polygamy Inherently Bad for Women?'. *Ms. Magazine*. <https://msmagazine.com/2011/01/05/one-feminist-asks-is-polygamy-inherently-bad-for-women/>

Marketos, P. R. (1993). *The Evolution of Feminist Utopias*, [M.A Thesis University of Cape Town, Faculty of Humanities , Department of English Language and Literature] <http://hdl.handle.net/11427/21614>

Mckenna, E. (2001). *The Task of Utopia: A Pragmatist and Ecofeminist Perspective*. Roman & Little field.

Monareng, M.A. (2012). *The Majesty of an Eagle: Your Attitude Determines the Attitude of Your Flight*. Xlibris.

Moore, J. W. (2015). *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*. Verso Book.

Newport, C. & Wallis, G. & Reshitnyk, Y. & Siebeck, U. E. (2016). Discrimination of Human Faces by Archerfish (*Toxotes Charateus*). *Scientific Reports*, 6(1), 1-7.

Nicholson, L. J. (ed.). (1990). *Feminism / Postmodernism*. Routledge.

NIDA. (2021). Introduction. Tobacco, Nicotine, and E-Cigarettes Research Report. <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/tobacco-nicotine-e-cigarettes/introduction>

Pandian, T. J. & Koteeswaran, R. (1999). Lability of Sex Differentitation in Fish. *Current Science*, 76 (4), 580-583.

Paulsen, I. (1984). Can women fly? Vonda McIntyre's *Dreamsnake* and Sally Miller Gearhart's *The Wanderground*. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 7(2), 103-110. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-5395\(84\)90064-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-5395(84)90064-5)

Philipose, P. (1989). Women Act, Women and Environmental Protection in India in: Judith Plant, (ed.), *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism*. Philadelphia, PA : New Society Publishers.

Plumwood, V. (1993). *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*. Routledge.

Rapping, E. A. (1975). Unfree Women: Feminism in Doris Lessing's Novels. *Women's Studies*, 3(1), 29-44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00497878.1975.9978371>

Rashleigh, B. & Monroy. E. (2017). Freshwater Fish Communities. Chapter 20, *Narragansett Bay Estuary Program: State of The Watershed*. Narragansett Bay Estuary Program, PROVIDENCE, RI, 376-391.

Reno, S. T. (2018). *Romantic Ecocriticism: Origins and Legacies / Natures in Translation: Romanticism and Colonial Natural History / Beasts of Burden: Biopolitics, Labor*,

and Animal Life in British Romanticism. *European Romantic Review*, 29(1), 79-86.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10509585.2018.1417019>

Ridout, A. & Watkins, S. (2011). *Doris Lessing: border crossings*. Bloomsbury.

Riley, G. (1999). *Women and Nature: Saving The “Wild” West*. University of Nebraska Press.

Roach, C. (1991). Loving Your Mother: on the Woman-Nature Relation. *Hypatia*, 6(1), 46–59. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.1991.tb00208.x>

Roberts, L. (1980). [Review of *The Wanderground*, by S. M. Gearhart]. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 5 (1), 74–75. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3346312>

Rose, D. (2013). Val Plumwood’s Philosophical Animism: Attentive Inter-Actions in the Sentient World. *Environmental Humanities* 3 (1), 93-109.

Rollin, B. 1981. *Animal Rights and Human Morality*. Buffalo: Prometheus Books.

Rue, L. (2012). *Nature is Enough : Religious Naturalism and the Meaning of Life*. State University of New York Press, Albany.

Ruether, R. R. (1996). *Women Healing Earth: Third World Women on Ecology, Feminism, and Religion*. Orbis Books.

Ruether, R. R. (1975). *New Woman/ New Earth : Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation*. Seabur Press.

Sachs, C. E. & Barbercheck, M. E. & Brasier, K. J. & Kiernau, N. E. & Terman, A. R. (2016). *The Rise of Women Farmers and Sustainable Agriculture*. University of Iowa Press.

Salih, S. (2002). Judith Butler. Routledge.

Sally's story. Sally Miller Gearhart. (n.d.). <https://sallymillergearhart.net/sallys-story/#bio>

Sang Ong-Van-Cung, K. (2011). Critique et subjectivation. Foucault et Butler sur le Sujet. *Actuel Marx*, 49(1), 148-161. <https://doi.org/10.3917/amx.049.0148>

Scherff, J. (1991). *The Mother Earth Handbook: What You Need to Know and Do....at Home, in Your Community, and Through Your Church...to Help Heal our Planet Now*. Continuum.

Simga, H. (2019). *A Question for Humanity: Sexism, Oppression And Women's Rights*. LIT VERLAG GmbH & Co. KG Wien.

Shiva, V. (1989). *The violence of the Green Revolution: Ecological Degradation and Political Conflict in Punjab*. Dehra Dun : Research Foundation for Science and Ecology : Exclusively distributed by Natraj Publishers.

Shugar, D. R. (1995). *Separatism and Women's Community*. University of Nebraska Press.

Gilman, C.P.S. (1915). *Herland*. Prabhat Prakashan.

Spretnak, C. (1990). Ecofeminism: Our Roots and Flowering. In I. Diamond & G. Feman (eds.) *Reweaving the world: The Emergence of Ecofeminism*. Sierra club books.

Sørensen, A. (1994). Women, Family and Class. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 20, 27-47. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.20.080194.000331>

Stratton, S. (2001). Intersubjectivity and Difference in Feminist Ecotopias. *Femspec*, 3 (1), 33-43.

Stroud, A. (2012). Good Guys with Guns: Hegemonic Masculinity and Concealed Handguns. *Gender & Society*, 26 (2), 216-238. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243211434612>

Swatuk, L. A. & Cash, C. (2018). Water, Energy, Food and People across the Global South: “The Nexus” in an Era Climate Change. Palgrave Macmillani.

Swanson, L. J. (2015). A Feminist Ethic that Binds us to Mother Earth. *Ethics and the Environment*, 20(2), 83-103. <https://doi.org/10.2979/ethicsenviro.20.2.83>

Tiger, V. (2008). *Crested, Not Cloven: The Cleft*. Doris Lessing Studies.

Vakoch, D. A. (2021). *Dystopias and Utopias on Earth and Beyond*. Taylor & Francis.

Vakoch, D. A. (2021). *Ecofeminist Science Fiction: International Perspectives on Gender, Ecology, and Literature*. Routledge.

Van Esterik, P. (1989). *Motherpower and Infant Feeding*. Zed Books.

Walter, A. (ed.). (1980). *Come Together: The Years of Gay Liberation 1970-73*. Gay Men’s Press.

Wan, M. & Colfer, C. J. P. & Powell, B. (2011). Forests, Women and Health: Opportunities and Challenges for Conservation. *International Forestry Review*, 13 (3), 369-387. <https://doi.org/10.1505/146554811798293854>

Wang, Y. & Morton, J. D. & Bekhit, A. & Mason, S. (2017). Nutritional Value of Deer Milk. In R.R. DOI: 10.1016/B978-0-12-809762-5.00028-0

Watson & R.J. Collier & V.R. Preedy (eds.) (2017). *Nutrients in Dairy and their Implications on Health and Disease*. Academic press.

- Warren, K. J. (1996). *Ecological Feminist Philosophies*. Indiana University Press.
- Warren, K.J. (1987). Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections. *Environmental Ethics*, 9 (3), 3-20. <https://doi.org/10.5840/enviroethics19879113>
- Warren, K.J. (1997). Taking Empirical Data Seriously: An Ecofeminist Philosophical Perspective. In K. J. Warren (ed), *Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Warren, K. J. (2000). *Ecofeminist philosophy: A Western Perspective on What It Is and Why It Matters*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC..
- Warren, K. J. (2002). Response to my Critics. *Ethics and the Enviroment*, 7(2), 39-59. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40339036>
- Warren, K. J. & Cheney, J. (1991). Ecological Feminism and Ecosystem Ecology. *Hypatia*, 6(1), 179–197. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.1991.tb00216.x>
- West, C. & Zimmerman, D.H. (1987). Doing Gender. *Gender And Society*, 1(2), 125-151. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/189945>
- Wieckowska, K. (2013). A Post-Battle Landscape: Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* and *The Cleft*. *Crossroads in Literature and Culture*, 6(1), 45-55. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-21994-8_5
- Wittig, M. (1981). One Is Not Born a Woman. *The Gay and Lesbian Studies Reader*. Eds. Abelow, H. and M. A. Barale, D. M. Halperin. Routledge.
- Wolmark, J. (1994). *Aliens and Others: Science Fiction, Feminism and Postmodernism*. University of Iowa Press.

Wood, J.T. (2013). Gendered Media: the Influence of Media on Views of Gender. Sociology.

Wsp. (2010). Gender in Water and Sanitation. Water and Sanitation Program: Working Paper, 1-38. <https://www.wsp.org/sites/wsp/files/publications/WSP-gender-water-sanitation.pdf>

