

**Anthroparchic Gynocide/Genocide vs. Capitalist Patriarchy: An
Ecofeminist Reading of Zadie Smith’s “Two Men Arrive in a Village”**

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Abstract

This essay examines the representations of feminine subjugation in Zadie Smith's "Two Men Arrive in a Village" through the lens of ecofeminism. It reveals how the issue of female exploitation is considered as a correlate of the deterioration of the environment. The essay argues that Smith's short story allows us to see how patriarchal, capitalist, and imperialist systems work in tandem to illustrate how the destruction of land and the abuse of women are part of the same ideological enterprise. It investigates the influence of industrialization and patriarchal capitalist invasion through the metaphor of raping. Domination of the marginal and objectification of the women/nature provide considerable ecological, social, and cultural implications. The interpretations prove how exploitation of nature and women, invasion, instrumentalism and class discrimination are characteristics of patriarchal system which have made a correlation between anthroparchic gynocide/ genocide and androcentric patriarchy.

Keywords: anthroparchy, capitalism, ecofeminism, patriarchy, short story, Zadie Smith

Introduction

Born to a black Jamaican mother and an English father, and being raised in an Indian and Pakistani neighborhood in the suburb of London, Zadie Smith encountered many immigrants and was acquainted with their lives and community. She generally dealt with the issues of immigrants, multiculturalism, racism, and clashes of cultures in her writing, and as Ged Pope explored the setting of Smith's fiction, "Smith's work opens up the suburb, to see how it has become deeply affected by global migration and the decentring effects of post-modern cultural and social forces" (Pope, 2015, p. 168). She was largely influenced by E. M. Forster, and in several interviews including her interview with Cambridge Authors, she described her 2005 novel, *On Beauty*, as a "novel inspired by the love of E. M. Forster, to whom all my fiction is indebted." E. M. Forster's influence on Smith is also reinforced by Catherine Lanone, "She chose an extract from *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, Forster's first novel, as the epigraph for the opening chapter of her own first novel, *White Teeth*, adding echoes such as Forster's statement that one should betray one's country rather than one's friend" (Lanone, 2007, p. 186). Smith's fiction presents characters who challenge the rigid standards of the society and seek to have an identity of their own. Besides, she emphasizes gender discrimination as depicted by the oppression of women in a patriarchal community. The term "hysterical realism" is coined by the critic James Wood to define Smith's fiction. Wood believes that Smith's novels "engage primarily with ideologically-driven, issue-led narratives and are less concerned with feeling and more concerned with ideology" (Allen & Simmons, 2014, p. 10).

However, multiculturalism or racist discrimination is not the subject of the discussion here, and the focus is on the connection between the natural world and women through the lens of the "Eco-Feminism." Although Smith's novels such as *On Beauty* and *White Teeth* have been read through the critical framework of Feminism, no one has ever read her short stories through a lens of ecofeminism. Smith delivers a metaphorical message through her parable-like story. As Turner believes "parable serves as a laboratory where great things are condensed in a small space. To understand parable is to understand root capacities of the every-day mind, and conversely" (Allen & Simmons, 2014, p. 5). What makes Smith's writing unique in the use of language in this story is that she utilizes a relative and "depending" text and a representative context. Smith, regardless of any setting, has fabricated a specific location, probably an African village, encompassing "a story that happens in many places at many times simultaneously," as it is described by herself in an interview with *The New Yorker*. She describes the time of the arrival of the two strangers, "the women are only just back from the desert, or the farms, or the city offices, or the icy mountains" (Smith, 2016, p. 46). Therefore, Smith's narration is not restricted to one single setting in her storytelling, and by repeating the word "depending" in many places in the story, she generalizes about what could recur in different contexts.

Zadie Smith's feminist concerns are revealed through a sense of marginality prevailing among her female characters. Silence is the only defending voice given to her female characters. "TwoMen Arrive in a Village" has considerable cultural and ecological feminist implications which are illustrated through the metaphor of village, rape, two men as the curators of culture and colonization, and the disenfranchised women.

A Theoretical Overview and A Parable of Patriarchal Colonization

Ecological Feminism or Ecofeminism is one of the offshoots of ecocriticism which was first introduced by French feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne in 1970s and its main assertion is that there is a link between the women's oppression and the ecological exploitation. Ecofeminism, generally speaking, is an umbrella term for a number of distinct theories reinforcing the

domination of nature and that of women. Ivone Gebara, a theologian from Latin America, asserts that the world today by neglecting the “marginalized persons” and “their natural environment” is directing towards “self-destruction.” She extends her argument by claiming that “women’s bodies are producers, both biologically and culturally, to the extent that women give birth to and feed their newborns” (Gebara, 2003, p. 170). But this productivity is not considered as “an agent of social production.” “Domestic work,” such as “feeding and rearing children” is not considered a work in the “social sense,” but has “physiological functions” like other mammals (Gebara, 2003, p. 170). Then, Gebara concludes that “it is therefore patriarchal society with its male division of social labor that becomes biology-based and essentialist. In this respect, as Kate Soper claims, it is “woman’s biology” which makes her closer to the side of nature. Some of these definitions sound sexist by equating women and biology, which are not what contemporary ecofeminists do. However, the connections between nature and women are not exactly similar in different contexts. In spite of the fact that Ecofeminism involves numerous woman/nature correlations, three claims, according to Eaton and Lorentzen, seem pivotal in ecofeminist studies – the empirical, the conceptual, and the epistemological.

The empirical claim keeps countless women’s lives under economic/ecological poverty. It discloses how “environmental problem disproportionately affect women in most parts of the world” (Eaton & Lorentzen, 2003, p. 2). Since they are the major caregivers in the society, they confront the most struggling conflict. The second claim emphasizes the woman/nature interconnections symbolically. By creating dualistic divisions such as reason/emotion, mind/body, and culture/nature, and giving priority to the first and associating them with men, this declaration makes male supremacy over both women and nature. The last and the third claim asserts that women are epistemologically prioritized, as they are more knowledgeable than men about Earth system, and consequently, possess a higher degree of Earth sensitivity (Eaton & Lorentzen, 2003, p. 3). While discussing all these ecofeminist assertions in “Two Men Arrive”, the current essay concludes that this short story could epistemologically prove that women would create better ecological paradigms. In this short story, the issue of female exploitation is considered as a correlate of the deterioration of the environment.

The story, “Two Men Arrive in a Village” describes what happens when two intruders arrive in a particular village, which can stand for a country, continent, or any colonized region or community. Zadie Smith universalizes a typical colonial visit in this story. The village is susceptible to the menace from the outside world. The strangers behave amicably, and it occurs when only old men, women, and children are in the village, and it is the women who join together against the invasion. However, despite their efforts, the villagers cannot resist against the invasion, and the narrator considers this as “pointless courage,” for one of the men breaks up the protective circle, and a “bloody chaos” (Smith, 2016, p. 47) pops up. Strangers’ friendly treatment very soon is replaced by their violent act and the carnage of the village. They rape the girls, abuse the villagers, and ravage the village. As Smith mentions, her story “has the perfection of parable” (Smith, 2016, p. 44). The story of their arrival is narrated the next day, but in “broken versions that change depending very much on who is asking” (Smith, 2016, p. 47). The story is a parable, and as Turner explicates, “The essence of parable is its intricate combining of two of our basic forms of knowledge- story and projection” (Turner, 1996, p. 5). Smith’s story projects to a general ecofeminist thesis, and her parable is used as an instrument of her argument.

Smith, in this parable-like story, not only dramatizes women’s vulnerability to patriarchal and capitalist force as a correlate of nature’s similarly precarious state through the image of rape, but she also treats the correlation of women and nature, itself, as a form of social violence.

Ecofeminists apply feminist interpretations of patriarchal oppression and sexual assault of female bodies to the environmental debate. These critics assert that “there are important connections between the unjustified domination of women, people of color, children, and the poor and the unjustified domination of nature” (Warren, 2000, p. 1). This reading of Zadie Smith reveals how women are depicted as earth mothers in “Two Men Arrive in a Village”. The association between women’s bodies and nature has been long established in history, and for many ecocritics, the female body is considered as mother-earth, and the earth is identified as sacred body. Being conscious of maltreatment, abuse and raping of particular bodies in a particular time and place would help the reader to preserve the referent of the metaphor; and the justice for female discussions or ecological debates would be conveyed. Zadie Smith presents this problem in two dimensions which could be looked upon one in the same; the first implication is that the story can be contextualized as patriarchal colonization. Secondly, this narration is examined through the metaphor of rape. Thus, all interpretations are supposed to prove how women and nature are oppressed by both androcentrism and anthropocentrism through the apparatus of racism, capitalism, sexism, and classism.

Discussion

Ecofeminist theorists believe women’s association with nature, the emotional, the rational, etc. are all a product of the patriarchal system of domination and an androcentric practice. The anthropocentric dualism, humanity/nature, and the androcentric dualism woman/nature are two principal resulted dichotomies, and ecofeminist theorists endeavor to subvert and reconstruct them. Nature and women have been historically conceptualized in the western culture. Consequently, whatever is associated with women, emotion, animals, nature and the body is devalued; whereas all the values associated with men, reason, humans, culture, and the mind have priority. “Ecofeminism,” according to Birkeland, “is a value system, a social movement, and a practice, but it offers a political analysis that explores the links between androcentrism and environmental destruction” (Birkeland, 1993, p. 18). The hierarchal dualisms of the masculine world give rise to the oppression of not only women, but also other natural life-forms.

Village, a georgic environment which is ideal to the ecocritics in this story, has turned into a place of domesticity and a place of patriarchal dominance and a new critical category. However, this domesticated environment becomes a place of captivity, a boundary between the natural sphere and culture. All of female characters are in a way domesticized and bound to their civic/civil duty, “Cleaning or preparing food or grinding meat” (Smith, 2016, p. 44). According to ecofeminist theorists, the hierarchal dualisms of the masculine world are the main cause of both women’s and other natural life-forms’ oppression. Therefore, such dualisms could justify the domination of women, animals, and nature. From an empirical perspective, the female characters in this story are lowered to a resource reservoir for fulfilling the material requirements of men, and are victimized as primary caregivers, and are, as Gebara argues, “colonized to stay home and allow men the grand flights of fancy required for production of culture, politics, and religion” (Gebara, 2003, p. 171). Depicted as displaced to the margins of the action in “Two Men Arrive in a Village”, the female characters meet ends that are impossible to ignore, and in fact, they are at the center even if they lack agency; especially because their fates illustrate the consequences of the patriarchal reduction of women to the two functions that Kate Soper identifies as “maternal force” and “sexual enticement and ultimate seduction” (Soper, 2000, p. 141). In “Two Men Arrive in a Village”, women demonstrates the consequences of not only the latter reduction, as the men in the story regard them as nothing more than a seductress and a subject of rape, but a reduction to maternal force and supplying

service. These women are even called “the bitches” (Smith, 2016, p. 47) by the strangers, which associates women with animal. The ecocritical reading correlates this exploitation of women with exploitation of nature, as Estok notes, “women are raped and butchered like the land” (Estok, 2011, p. 109). Village and the body (of women/earth) become associated and are one at the end of the story. When the chief’s wife asked for the girls’ account, one told her: “He said he did not want to think that he had passed through my village, through my body, without anybody caring what he was called” (Smith, 2016, p. 47). The story is a portrayal of the female obligatory docility. “Women and land are husbanded,” according to Estok, and “control of both is the assumed basis of natural order in patriarchal capitalist thinking” (Estok, 2011, p. 106). The females are considered biologically natural and, therefore, like “nature,” they are ignored by male or better to say by a male dominant society because as quoted in Mary Mellor’s “Gender and the Environment,” “Men are not inherently destructive, however: it is patriarchy, not men per se, that is the enemy of nature” (Mellor, 2003, p. 19). Plundering of the village for the sake of being “husbanded,” and appropriation of these women for the purpose of patriarchal domesticity helps alienation of these women and deprives them of their identities.

The story is also significant in that it reflects this “control” of nature especially in terms of colonialist ambitions. The new-comers of the village are similar to the invaders of nature. What matters to them is capturing a land, killing its people and looting it. They rob, rape, and murder, and leave the village to piece itself back together both in literal and spiritual terms. Eaton and Lorentzen’s claim focusing on conceptual correlation between woman and nature has been discussed in various ways by many ecological feminists. Many ecocritics generally focus primarily on the main dichotomy of nature/culture. This nature/culture opposition appears as a tool to serve the benefits of the power-holder. This power which Val Plumwood, as a significant ecofeminist critic, labels as “master identity” indicates itself as the master of animals, slaves, savages, and women who are identified as non-humans (Plumwood, 2005, p. 192). In this way, “master identity” legitimizes the exercise of exclusion and control over the other that is identified as inferior. According to Plumwood, the master identity, “which is more than complot, rather a heritage, a constructed form of culture and rationality, shapes all of the entities” (Plumwood, 2005, p. 190). The story shows the invasion of a village by men, who are apparently representative of not only power but also civilization. The strangers penetrate the village in any way possible:

Sometimes on horseback, sometimes by foot, in a car or astride motorbikes, occasionally in a tank—having strayed far from the main phalanx—and every now and then from above, in helicopters. But if we look at the largest possible picture, the longest view, we must admit that it is by foot that they have mostly come, and so in this sense, at least, our example is representative (Smith, 2016, p. 44).

Darkness is also portrayed as a colonization symbol. The narrator maintains:

But darkness also has its disadvantages, and because the two men always arrive in villages and never in towns, if they come by night they are almost always met with absolute darkness, no matter where in the world or their long history you may come across them. And in such darkness you cannot be exactly sure whose ankle it is you have hold of: a crone, a wife, or a girl in the first flush of youth (Smith, 2016, p. 44).

These women are not supposed to be as blank slates upon which patriarchal values could be displayed. The darkness acts as a metaphor for the entire story, and this patriarchal obscurity serves the excuse of civilization. The strangers use the darkness as a mask to conceal the truth

which is well expressed by the narrator, who is one of those women, “But the women! How proud we are, in retrospect, of our women, who stood in formation, arms linked the one to the next, in a ring around our girls” (Smith, 2016, p. 47). However, nature (village) and women, the girls and chief’s wife as the representative, are valuable to the extent that they serve the male master. These women should not be depicted as objects upon which men could prove their status. Designating other entities as “primitive” and the self as “civilized” is the main method of exercising power over the other, and thus colonizing it. This can be interpreted as instrumentalism of the other to fulfill the master’s needs. This means that a natural space is transformed to a cultural place. A natural place which with the interference of human, has lost its naturalness and change to a so-called civilized environment. The narrator for the story tells us “Two men arrive in a village by foot, and always a village, never a town” (Smith, 2016, p. 44). Village has implication for the nature, for the primitive life. This may remind us of Garrard’s discussion about the city and the country. To Garrard, “town” is identified as “frenetic, corrupt, impersonal” and country as “peaceful” and “abundant” (Garrard, 2008, p. 35). In Smith’s story, the master’s attitude towards nature conceived as female and woman is based on the dialectic of civilization and primitiveness. Village, darkness, women, night, sunset are images of primitiveness. In terms of Western dichotomies, women are depicted as a inferior form of humanity deprived of any rationality or culture. The story is an example of what happens when new cultures try to influence less civilized societies. The “two men,” – as curators of culture – or two cultures have government and “always-depending” methods of colonization.

Smith’s story is a depending text, and the idea of “depending” appears periodically in the story which confirms Smith’s anti-essentialist point of view. Everything from their instrument of invasion to their favorite food recipe is “depending.” The story is establishing two men’s master identity in two ways: by confirming their self-dependency and determining identity and cancelling the other’s – what is called nature – independence of them. Everything turns out to be depending. “Two Men Arrive in a Village” can be looked upon as a culture-vulture story and an anti-essentialist viewpoint towards association of the dichotomy of nature/culture and that of women/men. An ecofeminist reading explores the ways in which the patriarchal culture has been responsible for the oppression and exploitation of women and devastation of the natural environment. Ecological feminists attempt to subvert the patriarchal systems of supremacy over both women and nonhuman nature, that have been traditionally regarded as the Other or inferior. As Birkeland states “ecofeminists believe that we cannot end the exploitation of nature without ending the human oppression, and vice versa. To do both, they reason, we must expose the assumptions that support Patriarchy and disconnect our concept of masculinity from that of ‘power over’ others and the rejection and denigration of the ‘feminine’” (Birkeland, 1993, p. 19). Smith makes an association between the women and nature through the narrator’s words when she explicates, “We understand that women stood so in ancient times, beside white stone and blue seas, and more recently in the villages of the elephant god and in many other places, old and new” (Smith, 2016, p. 47). The story makes an implicit comparison between women’s resistance and nature’s sustainability in a conceptual domain.

Patriarchy, in addition, articulates with capitalism to strengthen the oppression of women, and we can see this clear-cut metaphor in “Two Men Arrive in a Village”. Zadie Smith’s critiques of the environment, patriarchal violence and the exploitation of marginalized women and communities are extended to the economic domain. New-comers, in this story, can be considered as capitalist investors. We witness women’s oppression both in patriarchal and capitalist context – which is a by-product of imperialism. According to ecosocialists, under capitalism people are bought and sold and capitalist system leads to the commodification of

human beings and the objectification of the natural environment. Both woman and nature are accepted as a kind goods and commodity to serve male power holders, and both are devalued in the industrial systems. As Mellor elaborates “ecofeminists argue that this is because women’s work is associated with the bodily process of life, from child care and hygiene to health provision and basic food production. In their common marginalization, women and nature appear to have been thrown into at least a contingent relation” (Mellor, 2003, p. 17). Meanwhile, the values in such society are shaped by the patriarchal norms and institutions through false consciousness. As noted in Pepper, “false consciousness is at the heart of alienation. It involves you in believing as objectively true, natural or inevitable, a set of premises that run counter to your own interests, which are not really true, natural or inevitable” (Pepper, 1993, p. 88). These women are believed to be responsible for family subsistence, and to be collector of water and food, which establishes their affinity to land.

In Smith’s parable, too, the strangers “are almost always met with absolute darkness” (Smith, 2016, p. 44), which can be correlated with a primitivism and fear. The capitalist system robs individuals of their real selves and turns them into automatons. Mass media aims at manipulating people, turning them into decent citizens. Mobile phone, TV, and news are things whose presence is completely felt. It seems that the characters depend strongly on them for getting information and also as a means of communication. This dependence of human on technological instruments can reduce its interaction with natural environment and the more one uses these instruments, the more he/she is separated from his/her nature as well as from physical nature. They do not contain good and desirable information to bring the people peace. They are the exact projection of what is going on outside and therefore, make the inside environment the same as the outside and consequently cause man’s identification with outside society. Thus, even in their homes the people do not feel at ease and the boundaries between the outside (society, pressures, corruption) and inside (privacy, individuality, home) fades away, or better to say, the latter is drowned into the former. In this parable, technology and urbanization has left many traces in the village. “Coca Cola hoarding” marks the entrance to the village, the two men arrive sometimes “on a Suzuki scooter,” sometimes “in a tank,” sometimes “in helicopters” (Smith, 2016, p. 44), and entertain and satisfy themselves by reclining on the sofa or watching TV. Capitalism has instrumentalized these people and the earth, and obviously, in such a society “moral and spiritual matters tend to lose the importance they had in other modes of production, except in so much as they govern the capacity to produce efficiently” (Pepper, 1993, p. 85), and everything is oriented towards the exploitation of the subjugated women. Chief’s wife, who is known to be a good example of a justified person who is estranged from her true self and is unable to establish stable relationship with other members of her community. Chief’s wife verbalizes women’s internalized inferiority when “stood up suddenly, left the room, and walked out into the yard” (Smith, 2016, p. 47), in reaction to the girl’s exclamation. Even though she knows this type of abuse, she endorses this patriarchal ideology through her (non)reaction and inattention. In this process, people are objectified and reduced to the status of things. As is described in the story, these strangers “reach out for your watch, cigarettes or wallet or phone or daughter”(Smith, 2016, p. 46).

Women are treated as a physical object which brings about human alienation and separation from their true selves. Ecofeminists believe “in western Patriarchal culture, masculine constructs and values have been internalized in our minds, embodied in our institutions, and played out in power-based social relations both in our daily lives and upon the world stage” (Birkeland, 1993, p. 17). That is why there are numerous stereotypes in the patriarchal culture and the androcentric canonical literature. Maria Mies declares that the term capitalism is the “contemporary manifestation of patriarchy which constitutes the mostly invisible underground

of the visible capitalist system” (Mies & Vandana, 1993, p. 38). In “Two Men Arrive in a Village”, women are confronted with inequality and discrimination. The patriarchal violence of these strangers is further revealed through the sacrifice the women make for the strangers’ convenience.

Any inclination to blame for environmental degradations in a patriarchal culture is accused of essentialism. The story reflects that both males and females have the potential of conceiving the self as interrelated with nature; however, a disconnected sense of self results from patriarchal environment. Nothing seems abnormal in the male terrorism. It is in actual fact internalized incarnation of patriarchal politics in a technological/industrial world, and stems from the conventional dichotomy of male/female in which the male has the charisma which turns him into a weapon, and woman, on the other hand, are masochistic victims of this male-created system. Zadie Smith’s short story necessitates hearing all voices of subjugation against all forms of power. The apparatuses of penetration as a deliberate domination over nature and woman can be examined from an ecofeminist point of view in this story through the image of rape. Portraying a patriarchal invasion, Zadie Smith employs the metaphor of raping to extremize the maltreatment against women and land. The massacres of unarmed civilians continue to wreck the village, and the huge problem is the rape epidemic. Here, female bodies are confused with the real battlegrounds. Tzaporah Berman, an anti-essentialist ecofeminist, considers that when the image of rape is utilized loosely, the brutality against women by some means turns into the “absent referent.” Consequently, for Berman, using the term “rape” to indicate the exploitation of nature displaces and buttresses the sexual violence that women undergo. Sexuality is associated with the idea of ownership, domination and submission. Berman writes: “The absent referent can be found in many metaphorical sayings which link animals and women ... [t]hrough the absent referent the subject is objectified and patriarchal values are institutionalized” (Berman, 1994, p. 176). What is absent in “Two Men Arrive in a Village” is the raped woman herself and the violence underlying these conceptions.

Smith, like many feminist writers, confirms that patriarchy together with capitalism has brought about female instrumentalization, and as a result fetishized women, which is nothing more than gynocide or killing of women as a social phenomenon. Here, patriarchal domination is identified as rapism (of women and village – as a microcosm compared with the earth as the macrocosm), and gynocide is associated with genocide (not as a term coined by Raphael Lemkin to the 1940s and the Nazi’s mass killing) which could refer to the systematic extermination of ethnicity. This creates an “anthroparchy” or a systematic natured domination. As Cudworth argues “Anthroparchy is a complex system of relationships in which the environment is dominated by human beings as a species, and it involves different degrees of the form and practice of power: oppression, exploitation and marginalization” (Cudworth, 2005, p. 64). In this story, colonialism – a context of genocide – is used in favor of anthroparchic oppression and patriarchal invasion.

Through the reaction of chief’s wife, Zadie Smith intends to highlight the universal aspect of rape instead of a personalized one. Village, the closed community, becomes a ground for different issues Smith intends to argue against. The setting Smith describes gives the impression of a place and time forgotten in history. Smith uses many words in this story to reinforce the universality and pervasiveness of such arrivals. “Depending,” “representative,” “simple common sense” are not anything more than a sense of consistent existence of it over time. A feeling of not belonging prevails at Smith’s characters. Chief’s wife historicizes the invasion: “Sunset has, historically, been a good time for the two men” (Smith, 2016, p. 44). When a sense of time and place does not exist in human’s mind any more, they will turn into

an alienated creature. The way through which Smith wants to situate her characters within her tale gives a feeling of continuance. Smith employs the metaphor of village and the people involved, including two men and the villagers, to represent something that has the power to be the mutual connection to all people, places and historical periods. The story is retold the next day in “broken versions” (Smith, 2016, p. 47) and heard by the chief’s wife who is “more of a chief” to the villagers and who “lives” by these stories and does not even care about hearing the name of the rapist. The wife “believes in the *ga haramata*” (Smith, 2016, p. 47). This quick dry dust-bearing wind covers the entire village by dunes while blowing. This natural element that stands out in the story blows in West Africa and originates from the Sahara Desert, and is popular among locals as “the doctor.” However, it does not cure anybody, and, instead, causes environmental challenges. The two strangers in this story could be associated with “*ga hamarta*” and identified with the evil force of nature which, in words of chief’s wife, “you cannot help but breathe it in” (Smith, 2016, p. 47). Smith depicts a depending universal viewpoint through the chief wife’s reaction. The wife evades the reality in order not to be overwhelmed by it. Smith wants the reader to see the problems and its severity in some places. The marginalized people are affected by it by any means, “wind which blows here hot, here cold, depending, and which everybody breathe in” (Smith, 2016, p. 47).

To Smith, although the people who resist against this invasion are often suppressed, some reactions lead to a sort of chaos, “though only some will breathe out in bloody chaos” (Smith, 2016, p. 47). These women are treated as sex objects, child-bearers, household helpers and cheap labor, and once more, sexuality is bound up with power structure. It is as if their suffering has turned into a disenfranchised grief, and anthroparchy system works to the benefit of patriarchy, and inflicts atrocities on this community. As narrator describes, “a kind of wildness descends, a bloody chaos” (Smith, 2016, p. 47), and the villagers are powerless to harness it, even if they are well-informed, “when these two men arrived in the village, we spotted them at once, at the horizon point” (Smith, 2016, p. 44). These women, in abject powerlessness, are not able to resist against the invasion of their body and land, and dispossession of the resources, since “fear is always the greater part of what they want” (Smith, 2016, p. 46), and they are denied of any bonds.

Construction of various dichotomies including man/woman, culture/nature, civilized/primitive, and human/ animal through an androcentric point of view lead to picturing wildness in terms of nature and woman, both of which should be tamed by the hands of violent male power. However, it is not male power, but patriarchy that establishes such binary oppositions. As Petra Kelly maintains a woman could “go back to her womb, her roots, her natural rhythms, her inner search for harmony and peace, while men, most of them anyway, are continually bound in their power struggle, the exploitation of nature, and military ego trips” (quoted in Mellor, 2003, p. 18). Although this difference may seem essentialist, it is a rough justification for the affinity between women and natural world in patriarchal structure.

Conclusion

Ecofeminists, in line with other environmentalist theorists, believe human beings and nature are interrelated and they both form a huge web of life. In this sense, war, poverty, class exploitation, animal experimentation, and genderization are regarded as worrying as other ecological issues including air and water pollution, and the extinction of wildlife. Accordingly, it is “imperative that we challenge both the ideological assumptions and the hierarchal structures of power and domination that together serve to hold the majority of earth’s inhabitants in thrall to the privileged minority” (Gaard, 1993, p. 10). “Two Men Arrive in a

Village” can be contextualized in light of environmental discussions and it demonstrates that patriarchal assumptions are internalized by women as well as men, and regard no intrinsic worth for women who are valued based on their utility and profitability for capitalist investors. Zadie Smith successfully reveals her ecofeminism by exposing the ideological and structural interconnectedness of the patriarchal systems which dominate the disenfranchised.

The effect of the new-comers’ arrival is always “the dread stillness” (Smith, 2016, p. 46), especially for the women who condemn themselves to a life of unhappy submission. Speaking through the lens of ecofeminism, there should be a call for an end to all the oppressive systems as they are all interrelated and interdependent, and all forms of exploitation and oppression including racism, capitalism, and imperialism are considered as extensions of male dominance and sovereignty. This story exhibits how sexual, ethnic, racial, and class differences approach body/animal sphere and signify an inferior form of humanity devoid of culture or rationality. These women are treated like animals, and considered as subhuman. They are representative of a large number of women who have been assaulted over centuries. This parable portrays how the hierarchal dualisms of the masculine world have been used to justify the domination of both women and nature. Racism, exploitation of nature and women, invasion, objectification, instrumentalism and class discrimination are characteristics of the practice of patriarchy.

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