

**ECOFEMINIST AESTHETICS IN AUSTIN BUKENYA'S *A HOLE IN THE
SKY* AND OKIYA OMTATAH'S *VOICE OF THE PEOPLE***

KIPLANGAT EDWIN

C50/25334/2018

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF LAW, ARTS AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS OF KENYATTA
UNIVERSITY**

AUGUST 2024

DECLARATION

This research thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

Signature:

Date:

Kiplangat Edwin B. ED (Arts)

C50/25334/2018

Supervisors

This thesis has been submitted for award with our approval as university supervisors:

Signature:

Date:

1. Dr. Mark Chetambe

Department of Literature, Linguistics and Foreign Languages.

Kenyatta University

Signature:

Date:

2. Dr. Mugo Muhia

Department of Literature, Linguistics and Foreign Languages

Kenyatta University

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents: Wesley Too and Hellen Too, and my siblings: Mercy Cheronno and Enock Kiprotich. Thank you for your love and support.

Posthumously dedicated to the late Dr. Wallace Mbugua, and the late Dr. Eddie Ombagi Matwere; your love and mentorship were immense and you left imprints of amazing personality and unmatched zeal for academic pursuit.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” Philippians 1:6, NIV.

Glory goes to the Almighty God for enabling me complete this work.

I am highly indebted to my supervisors: Dr. Mark Chetambe and Dr. Mugo Muhia for their immense support and guidance. Their invaluable intellectual input greatly shaped this work.

I also acknowledge my classmates: Belinda, Millicent, Emmanuel and Babu, for their encouragement, discussions and criticism. To the teaching and non-teaching staff at the Department of Literature, Linguistics and Foreign Languages, thank you for cheering me on.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	vii
ABSTRACT.....	viii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	7
1.3 Research Objectives.....	8
1.4 Research Questions	8
1.5 Research Assumptions	9
1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study.....	9
1.7 Scope and Delimitations of the Study.....	11
1.8 Literature Review	11
1.8.1 The Concept of Ecofeminism in Literature	11
1.8.2 Critical Review of the Selected Plays.....	14
1.9 Theoretical Framework.....	16
1.9.1 Ecofeminist Theory.....	16
1.9.2 Eco-Marxist Theory	22
1.10 Research Methodology	24
1.10.1 Research Design.....	24
1.10.2 Population and Sampling.....	24
1.10.3 Data Collection.....	24
1.10.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation.....	25
CHAPTER TWO	26
THE LINK BETWEEN WOMEN AND NATURE IN A HOLE IN THE SKY AND VOICE OF THE PEOPLE.....	26
2.1 Introduction	26
2.2 Nurturing Abilities.....	27
2.3 Twin-Exploitation.....	33

2.4 Inter-Liberation.....	41
2.5 Conclusion	47
CHAPTER THREE	48
CHARACTERISATION AND PRESENTATION OF CAPITALIST ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION.....	48
3.1 Introduction	48
3.2 Character Articulation of Capitalist Destruction	49
3.2.1 The Conservationists.....	49
3.2.2 The Eco-Destructors	55
3.2.3 Animist Characters.....	58
3.3 Capitalist Repression and Oppression	67
3.4 Capitalist Expansionism: Insatiable Thirst for Profit and Wealth Accumulation.....	71
3.5 Conclusion	77
CHAPTER FOUR.....	79
UNCOVERING PATRIARCHAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN AND NATURE THROUGH DRAMATIC STRUCTURE AND ACTION.....	79
4.1 Introduction	79
4.2 Understanding Structure and Dramatic Action.....	79
4.3 Examining Dramatic Structure’s Demonstration of Patriarchal Exploitation of Women and Nature	84
4.4 An Ecofeminist Perspective: The Examination of Patriarchal Exploitation through Dramatic Actions.....	97
4.5 Conclusion	103
CHAPTER FIVE	104
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	104
5.1 Summary	104
5.2 Findings	105
5.3 Conclusions	106
5.4 Recommendations.....	108
WORKS CITED.....	110

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Aesthetics of proximity – it is the literary representation of the correlation between human lives and others, including; creatures, trees and water bodies in the environment. The concept is adopted from Cajetan Iheka and is used in this thesis to explore the correlation between women and nature and advance the criticism of animist characters.

Capitalist environmental destruction – refers to acts of environmental exploitation that are orchestrated and advanced by characters who are endowed with a desire for continuous wealth and profit accumulation as guided by the principles of capitalism.

Capitalist expansionism – refers to capitalists' incessant quest for accumulation of wealth. It is used in the study to explore instances and environmental implications of capitalists' unending wealth pursuits.

Ecofeminist Aesthetics – this refers to the representation of the interconnectedness between women and nature in works of art. This study examines the link between women and nature in the selected plays.

ABSTRACT

This study engaged in an ecofeminist reading of Austin Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Okiya Omtatah's *Voice of the People*. The study examined the link between women and nature as depicted in the selected plays. It investigated how the playwrights employed characterisation to illuminate acts of capitalist destruction of the environment. Finally, it examined how the playwrights have deliberately employed dramatic structure and dramatic action to demonstrate patriarchal exploitation of women and its implications on the environment. Grounded on the argument that women and nature are interrelated, the study analysed the perceived link from a literary perspective. Moreover, the study stems from the need to address issues of environmental destruction and the exploitation of women. The study adopted ecofeminist theory, specifically, theoretical tenets on the nature-women confluence and the relationship between capitalism, patriarchy and the exploitation of nature and women. Using these theoretical arguments, the study delved into a critical analysis and interpretation of the selected literary texts in a bid to arrive at an understanding of the depiction of aspects of ecofeminist aesthetics in the texts. The study engaged qualitative research methodology and the plays were purposively sampled in line with the stated objectives. Primary data was gathered from a close reading of the plays under study. Secondary data was obtained from a thorough selection, reading and critical analysis of relevant print and audio-visual scholarly materials. The study established that there is a correlation between women and nature in terms of their nurturing abilities, exploitation and liberation. Further, under various categories, characters articulate acts of environmental destruction. It also established that the plays' structure and action reveal patriarchal exploitation which negatively impacts the environment. The study adds to the body of knowledge the scholarly representation of the interrelation between women and nature and the implication of patriarchal capitalism on the two in the drama genre, while also advocating for the emancipation of women and environmental conservation.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Since its introduction into literary criticism in the early 1960s, ecocriticism, which is a critical theory that aids in analysis of the connection between literature and the environment (Cheryl Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, xviii) has rapidly grown. In literary scholarship, ecocriticism has gained monumental traction mostly attributed to the rise in fictional and non-fictional authorship on environmental issues that are coupled with a wide array of socio-economic factors that trigger literary discourse on the relationship between literature, our societies and the environment. In this discourse, literature plays the key role of reflecting environmental realities in our societies thus creating awareness and agitating against environmental destruction.

Graham Huggan and Hellen Tiffin in *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment* give an in-depth critical analysis of the interplay between postcolonialism and ecocriticism as portrayed in various works of art. The two critics further lay foundation for the critical study of animals commonly referred to as zoocriticism. Their arguments and critical analysis are key in our interrogation of the intersection between literature, environment and animals from a gender-based perspective.

Consequently, this literary interrogation of environmental concerns from a gendered platform has given rise to the concept of ecofeminist aesthetics, a concept that philosophically arises from Cajetan Iheka's argument on aesthetics of proximity in the African literary landscape. While seeking to answer the question of how African literature portrays the relation between human and non-human worlds, Iheka in

Naturalizing Africa: Ecological Violence, Agency, and Postcolonial Resistance in African Literature argues that “alongside those African literary works that relegate the non-human world to mere backdrop or setting for human exploration, there exists another body of literature characterized by an “*aesthetics of proximity*” (22).

Iheka defines aesthetics of proximity as “the process by which African literary artifacts depict the interconnectedness of human lives with Others in the environment” (23). He defines proximity in two ways: “a spatial sense of nearness as well as a form of proximity brought about by similarities and shared characteristics” (22). This particular meaning is reflected in literary texts through an author’s creativity that situates human and non-human as being close in terms of space and distance. He further defines proximity as “the form of nearness predicated on similar or shared attributes that bring humans closer to other components of the ecosystem” (22). This meaning is depicted in literary texts through the representation of humans and non-humans as having similar characteristics.

Iheka’s concept of aesthetics of proximity and in particular the definition of proximity in terms of the relationship between humans and non-humans offers invaluable guidance to our study’s conceptualisation of ecofeminist aesthetics. His definition of proximity in terms of spatiality and commonly shared attributes further informed this study’s interrogation and interpretation of the selected texts and concepts relevant to the study. Indeed, literary critics assert that there exists a correlation between women and nature. This perceived link is brought out through the ecofeminist ideological argument of an interrelation between women and nature.

The confluence between women and nature is attributed to their “proximity” connotatively, in terms of their commonly shared traits. Therefore, this research was

premised on the women-nature nexus in terms of their nurturing abilities, vulnerability to exploitation and inter-liberation. Moreover, as Iheka further argues, “the concept of proximity allows us to focus not on their (human and non-human) peculiarities but on their common attributes, including their suffering and mortality” (23). This observation offered this study further insights in its inquiry into the interconnectedness between women and nature’s propensity to exploitation.

Indeed, ecofeminist critics postulate that both nature and women are dominated by capitalists and the patriarchal class. To interrogate this further, this study investigated how characterisation is used to articulate capitalistic environmental destruction. In literary inquiry, manifestation of capitalistic exploitation is concretised by interrogation of the interplay between the aspects of form, content and personification in a text. Form and content are two inseparable entities of unvarying importance. John Mugubi in *Stylistics and Literary Techniques* posits that “content in literature can only be expressed through utilisation of particular linguistic items in a particular way. This means that without form there is no content and on the other hand, you cannot just have a form that conveys nothingness. Style has to convey or be made of some content” (18). This observation further informs our inquiry into how characterisation is used as a tool to represent the subject matter of capitalist environmental destruction.

Furthermore, personification directed our attention to the interrogation of how non-human characters have been given human attributes so that they can metaphorically represent their ordeals as a result of capitalist exploitation. Huggan and Tiffin in *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment* discuss Barbara Gowdy’s novel *The White Bone* in which the author personifies elephants to narrate vagaries of the ivory trade. Personification inspired our investigation of how the fauna in

Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* convey the theme of capitalistic destruction of the environment. This creative crafting of literary materials further calls our attention to the aspect of aesthetics in literature as operationalised in this study.

Further, critics premise their argument of the interrelation between women and nature on their reproductive and nurturing qualities. Sherry B. Ortner in *Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?* outlines three levels that explain this belief: woman's physiology, social roles and psyche (73). Ortner maintains that these instances have situated women in positions that make them vulnerable to exploitation. Women are endowed with body processes and functions that place them in certain social settings that make them close to nature. For instance, women are confined to their households during childbirth and the upbringing of children. Further, during this period, they are close to their children and hence are tasked with the responsibility of feeding, caring and protecting them.

Susan Griffin suggests an ontological link between women and nature as the basis for her argument. She asserts; "We know ourselves to be made from this earth. We know this earth is made from our bodies. For we ourselves. And we are nature. We are nature seeing nature. We are nature with a concept of nature. Nature weeping. Nature speaking of nature to nature" (qtd. in *Feminist Thought* 248). Ortner's and Griffin's observations were pertinent in this study as they help it to solidify its arguments on the relationship between women and nature.

Additionally, discussions around the environment have taken center stage in Kenya, Africa and the world. This entails issues such as environmental activism and justice that have occurred as a result of rampant ecological destruction. Literary artists have written fictionalised and non-fictionalised accounts of these issues, showing how capitalism and the push for development has led to environmental encroachment. Ken

Saro-Wiwa, Wangari Maathai, Vandana Shiva, Arundhati Roy and Sugatha Kumari are some of the environmental activists and creative writers who have agitated against environmental destruction.

Ken Saro-Wiwa was an environmental activist and creative writer who led protests against environmental destruction in Nigeria. He penned down several novels, short stories and poems to express his dissatisfaction and to reflect on environmental destruction. His works include; *Genocide in Nigeria*, *Songs in a Time of War*, *A Forest of Flowers*, *Prisoners of Jebs*, *On a Darkling Plain*, *The Singing Anthill* among others. Saro-Wiwa protested against oil exploration activities which resulted in devastating environmental effects in the oil-rich Niger Delta region. Rob Nixon in *Slow Violence and Environmentalism of the Poor* notes that, “Ogoni air had been fouled by the flaring of natural gas, their croplands scarred by oil spills, their drinking and fishing waters poisoned” (107). Nixon points out to the amount of harm ecological destruction has on our lives and the natural environment as is the case in Ogoni region. Saro Wiwa’s activism and literary works reflect on environmental crisis that beg for urgent intervention measures.

The global crisis of ecological depletion calls for an expeditious effort to address this menace so as to stop further destruction. Hence, it calls for an agency into the study of these ecological representations in literary art and scholarly research from a literary perspective. Such study brings to light environmental issues by providing insights on wanton environmental destruction and its dire effects on human and non-human beings.

Similarly, the plays under study depict issues of environmental concern in our societies. The playwrights reflect on how the ecosystem is at the verge of extinction as

a result of the ideology of development and humans' insatiable pursuit for wealth. Austin Bukenya is a Ugandan poet, playwright and novelist. He is also an academic and is acknowledged as among the pioneering scholars of English and Literature in East Africa. His literary works include: *The People's Bachelor*, *The Bride*, and *A Hole in the Sky*. Bukenya has also co-edited *Understanding Oral Literature*, a key book into understanding oral literature, with Wanjiku wa Kabira and Okoth Okombo

Bukenya's selected play, *A Hole in the Sky*, is a reflection of wanton environmental exploitation orchestrated by the local wealthy class for their personal enrichment. The play, revolving around Kibichi's squatter family, showcases a grim picture of the damage posed by environmental destruction. The family is facing eviction threats from Tajeer and his associates to pave way for the planting of *Jatropha*, a plant said to be rich in oil production. Additionally, the play recounts the adverse effects of the oil exploration activities Tajeer carries out in Lake Riziki. Through his literary wit, Bukenya has also employed comic characters: Space, Earth, Fire and Water to show the impacts of massive environmental destruction on the wider ecosystem.

Okiya Omtatah is a Kenyan playwright. He received huge recognition in the literary arena after the publication of his first play, *Lwanda Magere* in 1991. His other books and plays include: *Chains of Junkdom*, *March to Kampala* and *An Exchange for Honour*. Omtatah's drama, *Voice of the People*, grapples with the issue of environmental destruction for development activities. Structured in sequences, the play centers on Boss, Sibuur, Nasirumbi and Indondo. Boss and his right-hand man, Sibuur, are fronting the destruction of Simbi forest to pave way for the construction of a resort - *Resort Paradiso Africana Project*.

In the play, Nasirumbi, a school teacher and leader of The Mothers' Front, is against the destruction of the forest. In the first sequence, she confronts Boss fiercely, questioning Boss's and the World Bank's intention of degrading the forest for the construction of the project. Throughout the play, Nasirumbi and other Mothers' Front members are firm on the protection of Simbi forest. Through the character of Indondo, the editor of *The Voice of People*, a daily newspaper, the play also reflects on the place and role of media in the contemporary African society.

This study focused on investigating the connection between women and nature, particularly how their portrayal in selected texts reflect the destruction of the environment driven by capitalist interests. The study delved into the interrogation of how the selected plays intricately examine environmental and feminist issues that are reflective of our societal context. Further, the study investigated the relationship between literature, the environment, and its attendant relationship with women. Premised on the ecofeminist literary theory, the study sought to unravel the women and nature homogeneity and through eco-Marxist lenses unpacked the impacts of capitalism on the environment.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

For a long period of time, literature has served as a mirror, reflecting on various societal issues. Fictional and non-fictional authors and literary researchers have delved into authorship and research respectively on these reflections, including those on the environment. Further, studies have established ecocritical representations in the literary arena, hence illuminating the relationship between literature and the environment. This nexus has been broadened through the fusion of ecology with feminism, hence the rise of ecofeminism. Although studies have delved into this intersection, much needs to be done on the link between nature and women and its relation to capitalism and patriarchy

in the drama genre especially in the selected plays. Hence, the problem of this study is to investigate how literature mirrors environmental realities in our societies and its attendant manifestation of the confluence between women and nature in Austin Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Okiya Omtatah's *Voice of the People*. This study thus investigated how characterisation, as an aspect of form, conveys the thematic concern of capitalist destruction of the environment. The study further interrogated how the two texts become extended metaphors that communicate the nexus between women exploitation and the destruction of the environment. The study is significant in comprehending the literary representation of the women-nature correlation and the implication of patriarchal capitalism on the two.

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

- i) Examine the link between nature and women as depicted in Austin Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Okiya Omtatah's *Voice of the People*.
- ii) Investigate the importance of characterisation in conveying capitalist environmental destruction in the selected plays.
- iii) Analyse how patriarchal exploitation of women and nature is revealed through dramatic structure and dramatic action in the plays under study.

1.4 Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- i) How do the playwrights present nature and women interrelations in the selected plays?
- ii) What is the significance of characterisation in conveying capitalist environmental destruction?

- iii) How does dramatic structure and dramatic action reveal patriarchal exploitation of women and nature?

1.5 Research Assumptions

The study is based on the following assumptions:

- i) Nature and women are portrayed as interrelated in regard to their nurturing abilities, exploitation and liberation in the selected plays.
- ii) The playwrights have effectively used characterisation to depict acts of capitalist environmental denigration.
- iii) Dramatic structure and dramatic action effectively demonstrate the theme of patriarchal domination of women and nature.

1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study

For a long time, literature has functioned as a mirror to give a reflection of our societal landscapes. It has fervently done so with a view to highlight vices, instill virtues and to call our attention to socio-economic excesses. In this regard, environmental and gender-based issues have been important materials for literary authorship. Literary artists aptly write about these concerns as depicted in our societies. Whether through fiction or non-fiction, this form of authorship not only highlights these issues but also recommends pathways for remedying the negative aspects they reveal.

Owing to the undeniable link between women and nature, both have fallen victim to socio-economic exploitation. Sadly, the ecosystem has been wantonly destroyed and as a result, an environmental apocalypse loom. Similarly, women have been victims of gender disparity as a result of patriarchal ideologies and cultural constructs that situate them at the bottom of societies' hierarchical systems. Due to women and nature's positions in the society, there is need to interrogate their

interrelationship and to also re-conceptualise the significance of women emancipation and environmental conservation.

This study focused on Austin Bukonya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Okiya Omtatah's *Voice of the People* to explore its variables. The study purposively chose to focus on drama to find out how the genre's literary aspects aid in its rendition of the ecocritical and feminist concerns. Besides, the choice of the dramatists is based on their devotion to the subjects of gender and environment in their scholarly and literary pursuits.

Further, the selection of the two plays from a wide array of related texts was motivated by the distinct manner in which the selected plays portray the intricate relationship between women and nature. Additionally, the choice of the plays was driven by the researcher's need to investigate how the selected characters and dramatic techniques demonstrate capitalist and patriarchal exploitation of nature and women respectively.

The choice of the ecofeminist and eco-Marxist literary theories was informed by the researcher's desire to examine the fusion of the two perspectives of ecology and feminism in the selected plays. Further, the researcher's selection of social and socialist ecofeminist strands over cultural ecofeminism was based on the need to delve deeper into the interrelation between women and nature, beyond just focusing on the qualities endowed on women that naturalises them as emphasised by cultural ecofeminists.

The study is significant because it questions the ecofeminists' assumption of women-nature relationship, implications of patriarchy and capitalism on women and nature and the role of literature in voicing environmental concerns. The findings are essential in comprehending literature's role in castigating injustices on women and the environment with a view to establishing a society that is free from all forms of

oppression and that is environmentally ethical. Further, the findings form important basis for continued scholarly research on the relation between literature, women and the environment.

1.7 Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study focused on Austin Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Okiya Omtatah's *Voice of the People*. The scope of the study is on the investigation of the portrayal of ecofeminist aesthetics that highlight the correlation between women and nature. To achieve its objectives, the study delimited itself to women and nature confluence only in terms of their nurturing and reproductive abilities, intertwined exploitation, and liberation. It investigated how aspects of form convey content, delimiting itself to the aspect of characterisation and the theme of capitalist environmental destruction. Further, the choice of texts from this genre facilitated the exploration of the dramatic techniques employed by the playwrights to convey their thematic concerns, narrowing its focus to two dramatic techniques: dramatic structure and dramatic action.

1.8 Literature Review

This part of the research is approached from two perspectives: firstly, critical review of literature that focuses on the aspect of ecofeminism as carried out by various scholars, and secondly, studies that have been carried out on the plays under study.

1.8.1 The Concept of Ecofeminism in Literature

Moh Badrus Solichin analyses the portrayal of capitalist ideologies and the idea of human centeredness over nature. He cites patrilineal systems and authoritarianism that is orchestrated by men and empowered by traditional and cultural beliefs as the main cause of women subordination. On nature exploitation, he observes, "Freeport as a subject of capitalistic anthropocentrism tried to exploit natural resources in Baliem

valley by developing a mining industry that has capitalistic ideology and scientific foundation” (21). Whereas his study delimits itself to patriarchal and capitalist concepts of ecofeminism, this study utilizes other tenets of ecofeminism. These include women-nature intersection and the concept of oppressive conceptual frameworks; domination logic, value dualism, and thinking in terms of hierarchy as postulated by Karen J. Warren.

In addition, Dianne Shobber explores the twin exploitation of women and nature in the selected works of Sandiwe Magona: *The Possession*, *Mama Africa*, *Umulungu*, and *The Beautiful Balding*. Grounded on the Ecofeminist literary theory, the study narrows down to Socialist Ecofeminism and Cultural Ecofeminism strands of the theory. From her critical analysis, Shobber avers, “Magona’s short stories formulate an effective interrogation of the double oppression suffered by African women using an ecofeminist paradigm, intimating that femininity and ecology are inexplicably linked” (8). It is this submission that affirms the representation of Ecofeminist ideologies in literary materials and leads us into analysing its depiction in the plays under study. Although Shobber’s study is succinctly done, its analysis is largely based on two strands of ecofeminism. It, therefore, calls for more in-depth research that is anchored on a wider theoretical scope and that delves into a different genre of literature, which this study interrogates through the drama genre.

The dissertation; *Rethinking Ecofeminism: Wangari Maathai and The Greenbelt Movement in Kenya* examines how ecological and feminist issues are portrayed through Wangari Maathai and Green Belt Movement’s activities in Kenya. Basing her research on an African Ecofeminism theoretical framework, Janet Muthoni interrogates how gender relates to environmentalism with a focus on women and environment and the impacts of patriarchal and capitalists’ ideologies on both. Muthoni asserts that, “an

African Ecofeminist perspective serves a major factor in destabilizing the homogenizing imperative of western scholarship in the sense that specific historical circumstances such as colonialism create ecological stress and a variety of social problems that place a heavy burden on women....” (15). She cites Wangari Maathai’s opposition of the construction of a multi-million complex in Uhuru Park as a depiction of ecofeminists’ framework that contests capitalist’s exploitation of nature for development activities (29-30).

It is worth noting that Muthoni’s research informed on the critical application of ecofeminism concepts in literary studies, however, her analysis is based on Wangari Maathai’s and the Green Belt Movement activities, hence, calling for an approach into the women and environment connection based on literary materials.

Samson Maleya’s thesis: *Representation of Ecological Consciousness in Henry Ole Kulet’s Vanishing Herds and The Hunter* aptly interrogates the role of literature in denouncing environmental destruction and reconstructing environmental ethics. It further examines the nature and culture connections in Ole Kulet’s selected fiction. Maleya puts into perspective how nature is portrayed and the repercussions of modernity and colonial invasion in Africa on the environment.

Maleya views nature as portrayed in four ways; as a self-articulating subject, a ‘malevolent’ force, a pharmacy, and an epitome of beauty. He analyses the Maasai community’s beliefs and taboos that depict nature as a conscious living entity that reacts to encroachment. The representation of nature as a ‘malevolent’ force informs and warns of nature’s ability to wreak havoc whenever it is interfered with. In his analysis, he blames these dire consequences on human being’s blatant exploitation of non-human nature. Further, Maleya’s observation of nature as a pharmacy is evident through

nature's endowment with medical and healing abilities. Nature's representation as an epitome of beauty is based on Ole Kulet's images that depict nature's beauty.

While Maleya's study puts emphasis on the concept of nature and culture and the effects of modernity, this study focused on the ecofeminist relationship between women and nature. It was concerned with finding the link between women and environment, therefore, in a similar way it helps in building on nature's abilities and the consequences it faces from various forms of modernity. Further, his conceptualisation of nature as portrayed in the selected Ole Kulets's fiction informed our interrogation of nature as a reproductive and nurturing entity in relation to women in the plays under study.

In addition, Maleya's observation that "there is a compelling relationship between environmental degradation and the erosion of indigenous ecological ethics" (45) reveals a gap on the need for an interrogation on the exploitation of nature and women. His conclusion thus undergirds this study's interrogation of the interconnectedness between women and nature.

1.8.2 Critical Review of the Selected Plays

This section focuses on the available reviews and other critical works on the selected plays. In an article in the *Daily Nation*, Bukenya described his play *A Hole in the Sky* as exploring "environmental degradation, noise pollution, the ruining of our water bodies, deforestation and the likes". Further, in an article in the same daily, John Kibet describes the play as "a castigation of enormous exploitation of land by commercial investors in their selfish pursuit of wealth and a demonstration of the catastrophic effects of environmental destruction" (Kibet).

These sentiments demonstrate the play's depiction of willful destruction of the natural environment through reckless commercialization. It is an illustration of the dire consequences of massive ecological destruction. It, hence, justifies the need for a concerted and multidisciplinary effort in gapping these destructions. The current study therefore interrogates environmental destruction from a literary standpoint and the link between women and the environment.

Eve Nabulya interrogates how Omtatah's play *Voice of the People* can be interpreted as protest drama. Her study is based on an analysis of stylistic devices and Ogaga Okuyade's concept of ecological representation. She examines literary devices that create persuasion and brings out instances of environmental activism in the play. Her study centers around irony delving into an analysis of five types of literary devices which are evident in the play: verbal, situational, dramatic, irony of character and rhetorical irony. In her findings, she opines that, "Okoti (Omtatah) employs irony to structure persuasive personality and to appeal to the emotions and reason of audience" (42).

Nabulya focuses on an ecocritic analysis of the play with a keen interest on the stylo-rhetoric strategies (32) employed by the playwright. The current study, however, uses an ecofeminist approach in analysing the relation between environmental destruction and the oppression of women in *Voice of the People* and *A Hole in the Sky*. Additionally, whereas Nabulya had given an elaborate analysis of irony as a literary device, this study focused on analysing the plays' dramatic structure and dramatic action to examine how they illuminate patriarchal domination of women and its ecological ramifications.

Jim Oboth investigates how Omtatah has appropriated his two major characters to depict how the voiceless advocate for social justice by engaging in activism. Andrew Samanya in his YouTube channel focuses on character analysis to establish each character's traits in *Voice of the People*. Oboth and Samanya's studies are anchored on the investigation of how characterisation illuminates advocacy for social justice and an examination of traits endowed on every character respectively. This study, however, sought to establish the correlation between women and nature, how characterisation presents acts of ecological destruction and the significance of dramatic structure and action in conveying instances of patriarchal exploitation.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This study was premised on the Ecofeminist theory and Eco-Marxist theoretical frameworks.

1.9.1 Ecofeminist Theory

The theory is a strand of ecocriticism and is an intersection of the critical perspectives of ecology and feminism hence the general term ecofeminism. Françoise d'Eaubonne, a French Author, is widely credited with the coining of the term *Ecofeminisme* in her book *Le Féminisme ou la mort (Feminism or Death)* in 1974. Ecofeminists argue that there is a close correlation between women and nature. They attribute the confluence between the two to various cultural constructs that situate women as close to nature. These constructs have further presented both women and nature as vulnerable to exploitation.

The proponents of the theory are Karen J. Warren, Vandana Shiva, Greta Gaard, Carolyn Merchant and Ynestra King. On his part, Gaard defines ecofeminism as; “a theory that has evolved from various fields of feminist inquiry and activism: peace

movements, women's health care and the anti-nuclear, environmental and animal liberation movements" (1). Ecofeminists view an interconnectedness in the subordination of women and the denigration of the environment; hence, it is a movement that seeks to eradicate the two forms of domination.

Ecofeminists argue that women are more closely linked to nature than men. Some of these theorists, however, term the argument as a far-fetched cultural construct that is against the principles of ecofeminism. In her argument, Susan Griffin opines:

I do not agree with the idea that women are closer to nature than are men in either its traditional or inverted form. Everything that exists on Earth, including rational thoughts is part of nature. Thus, that one element would be closer to nature than another is implausible to me. What does, however, seem very possible to me is that one gender may be more aware of being part of nature than the other. And yet this difference must also be treated with subtlety. (x)

Griffin further points out that every human being exists in nature but also, to a greater extent, explains that women are more aware of nature and its management. This is because of women's substantial dependence on nature to accomplish their nurturing responsibilities. They depend on nature as a source of food, water, firewood and other necessities to perform their traditional role of feeding their families. Therefore, ecofeminist theoretical framework was key in this study's examination of the interrelation between nature and women in terms of their mutual exploitation, nurturing role and liberation in the selected plays.

In contrast, Janis Birkeland disagrees with the women and nature essentialism that puts women on an upper biological and spiritual link to nature as compared to men. Citing Ynestra King, she dismisses the claim by asserting that:

While perhaps some women believe this, it is not a concept relevant to ecofeminism as such. In the first place “essentialism” would be inconsistent with the logic of ecofeminism, let alone mainstream ecology. (22)

Birkeland’s argument points out to the need for an all-gender concerted effort to bring to an end women’s subordination and environmental destruction. Additionally, her argument justifies ecofeminism’s spirit of bringing to an end every aspect of oppression; sexism, classism, racism, which affects both men and women.

Ecofeminists also agree that the ideology that is responsible for and that propagates all these forms of oppression is the patriarchal ideology. Victoria Davion asserts, “Whatever else their disagreements, Ecofeminists agree that the domination of nature by human beings comes from a patriarchal world view, the same world view that justifies the domination of women” (9). Similarly, Gaard in *Living Interconnections with Animals and Nature* contends:

Drawing on the insights of ecology, feminism and socialism, Ecofeminism’s basic premise is that the ideology which authorizes oppressions such as those based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities and species is the same ideology which sanctions the oppression of nature. (1)

Karen Warren also opines that the subordination of women and domination of nature emanates from ‘conceptual frameworks’. These are mental sets, values and dispositions that inform our perception(s) towards things, events and even the world. These conceptual frameworks may be friendly or oppressive. She outlines the characteristics of a conceptual framework that is oppressive as; thinking in terms of hierarchical value, value dualism and having a domination logic. Hence, when a

conceptual framework, which is oppressive, is patriarchal, it possesses such traits and affirms male domination over women and nature.

Warren's postulation on the influence of conceptual frameworks was essential as it provided valuable insights on how acts of patriarchal oppression of women emerge as part of the oppressive conceptual frameworks. Her postulations were useful in this study's exploration of the use of dramatic structure and dramatic action to depict patriarchal domination of women. Warren's arguments further augmented this study's analysis of the interplay between women and nature in terms of their twin-liberation. This is evident in her explanations of how women's emancipation leads to nature's liberation and the subsequent destruction of all other forms of oppression.

Erika Cudworth defines ecofeminism as, "a range of perspectives that consider the links between the social organization of gender and the ways in which societies are organized with respect to nature" (1). The theory focuses on the comprehension of the interrelated domination of women and nature. Cudworth conceives this act of domination as involving: "three levels or degrees of dominatory formations and practices of power which are: marginalization, exploitation and oppression" (7).

Just like other theoreticians, Cudworth suggests that patriarchy, capitalism, racism, and what he calls "anthroparchy" are forms of domination. He defines anthroparchy as "a complex system of relations in which the non-human living environment, for instance organic entities such as plants, animals, soil, sea, and contexts for life such as rocks and ice scopes are dominated by human beings as species" (8). The outlined theoretical tenets advanced by various ecofeminists enriched our investigation into the portrayal of the selected ecofeminist ideologies in the texts under

study. They laid foundation for a rigorous analysis of the aspects of patriarchy, capitalism, and the women-nature nexus in the plays.

There are various strands of the ecofeminist literary theory: cultural ecofeminism, social ecofeminism, and socialist ecofeminism. This study was hinged on the social and socialist ecofeminist strands. The choice of these strands was informed by their proponents' postulations that are relevant to this study. Cultural ecofeminism delves into an analysis of the perceived women-nature relationship, while putting more emphasis on the qualities endowed on women that 'naturalises' them. It is also referred to as spiritual ecofeminism.

The Social ecofeminist strand, as per the term 'social', interprets ecofeminism based on the way people are organised and relate in a society. Janet Biehl is acknowledged as the main proponent of the strand. The strand's theoretical arguments are largely based on social ecology that was propounded by Murray Bookchin. In her arguments, Biehl contends with social ecologists' underpinning that the problem of wanton ecological destruction and exploitation is as a result of human control over another in our societies. Citing Biehl, Carolyn Merchant avers that by ending all exploitative structures, nature and the vulnerable others are freed.

Further, social ecofeminists contest the essentialists' idea of situating women on a higher pedestal, in closer proximity to nature in comparison to men. They argue that although women possess certain physiological, social and psychological traits (as argued by Ortner in her article: *Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?*) that position them closer to nature, both genders can conserve and protect nature. They also acknowledge that the main causes of women and nature domination are capitalist and patriarchal ideologies and constructed social hierarchical frameworks. In seeking to end

these structures of domination, Merchant argues that social ecofeminism champions for women's emancipation through abolishing socially and economically constructed hierarchies that create a market driven society that captures even the womb. Social ecofeminists visualise a society that would go beyond the public and private related division that is mandatory for capitalist production.

Socialist ecofeminism closely resembles social ecofeminism, differing primarily in its emphasis on critiquing the role of patriarchy and capitalism. This category of ecofeminism was put forward by Carolyn Merchant, Ariel Salleh, and Mary Mellor. According to Elizabeth Carlassare, socialist ecofeminism maintains that capitalist and patriarchal structures are all sets of domination and have destructive ecological impacts. Socialist ecofeminists castigate patriarchy and unbridled capitalism, arguing that socialism should take their place.

In addition, socialist ecofeminists maintain that these two dominatory structures are intertwined and hence they root for a society that is socially just and ecologically sustainable. Carlassare argues that socialist ecofeminists pay attention to power structures in capitalist societies. They also conceptualize an interrelation between capitalism and patriarchy because of their oppressive nature, hence, expounding on the intertwined domination of women and nature.

The choice of the social and socialist theoretical strands of the ecofeminist literary theory was informed by their alignment with the study's objectives, as both strands are essential in achieving the stated objectives. The interpretative perspective of social ecofeminism, focusing on the societal dimension, was pivotal to our textual analysis. In addition, the argument that women and nature domination is as a result of

patriarchy and capitalism was crucial in examining its representation in the selected plays.

1.9.2 Eco-Marxist Theory

Eco-Marxism is a critique of the relation between ecology and Marxist ideologies. There are various eco-Marxist theorists: John Bellamy Foster, Herbert Marcuse and Paul Burkett amongst others (Carl Cassegard 314). Cassegard, citing John Bellamy Foster, argues, “In numerous publications, Foster in particular has pointed out that we need Marx to make sense of our current ecological predicament in Anthropocene, the age in which humankind itself affects the earth in the manner of a geological force” (314). Therefore, eco-Marxism is a framework that seeks to remedy ecological destruction that occurs as a result of human centeredness over environmental conservation.

Capitalist exploitation of the natural environment stems from anthropocentrism, where humans are valued more than nature. This anthropocentric notion results in an exploitation of both nature and human beings, which capitalist systems thrive on. Lance Newman in *Marxism and Ecocriticism* avers, “anthropocentric ideas about the subordination of nature to human progress explain as natural the oppressive patterns of resource exploitation on which capital depends. But the fact is that these patterns oppress not merely nature but also most people. Access, not only to the products of modern industry, but also to things such as clean air, water, and food, are sharply stratified by class and, within class, by race and gender” (13). Newman’s postulation explains how capitalist ideals and system of profit accumulation exploit both the environment and human beings. The stratification of acquisition of products and clean life’s basic needs is occasioned by class, race and gender frameworks.

In *Marxism and Ecology*, Reiner Grundmann tries to establish an understanding of how ecological problems can be linked to Marxist ideologies. Grundmann outlines these Marxist principles as capitalist production, alienation and man-nature metabolism (75). To give a proper understanding on the capitalist production approach, she looks at Karl Marx's example of timber growing and capitalist agriculture that leads to environmental destruction as a result of soil fertilisation. The second and third approaches center on technology as a link between man and nature and its impact on nature. Grundmann's illustration of how ecological problems can be understood through Marxist's ideologies was key to this study's examination of how characterisation illuminates capitalist environmental destruction.

Eco-Marxist critics offer a critique on the confluence between capitalism and ecological crisis. John Barry in *Marxism and Ecology* asserts, "from a Marxist perspective, the ecological crisis can be analyzed either as an economic crisis *within* capitalism or the more complex process whereby the ecological crisis becomes a crisis *of* capitalism" (262). An ecological predicament has negative impacts on capitalism when it is a crisis *within* it because it affects capitalist production and profit accumulation. As a crisis *of* capitalism, ecological crisis is viewed to have been an outcome of capitalist acts that cause environmental destruction.

Barry's theoretical argument leads to his conclusion that "it is at this point that capitalism becomes not just economically unsustainable but having so disrupted the metabolism between human societies and their environments, both ecologically and socially unsustainable" (277). This resultant unsustainability shows how capitalism leads to an ecological predicament. Further, this theoretical postulation, on the capitalism and ecological crisis nexus laid ground to our eco-Marxist analysis of the

selected texts to establish how ecological crisis of capitalism can be conveyed through characterisation.

1.10 Research Methodology

1.10.1 Research Design

This study engaged a qualitative research design due to its descriptive nature. The presentation of findings and critical analysis of the selected materials entailed a discussion of textual evidence, opinions, facts and judgments. The design allowed us to arrive at a conclusion on the portrayal of ecofeminist ideologies in the drama genre and the analysis of the dramatists' dramatic techniques to examine how they deliver content.

1.10.2 Population and Sampling.

This study focused on the drama genre, particularly the works of Austin Bukenya and Okiya Omtatah. The two playwrights have authored various plays, making them suitable subjects for the study. Using purposive sampling, Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Omtatah's *Voice of the People* were selected. The selection of the texts was driven by their genre and thematic content. Specifically, our intention was to choose plays that address both environmental and feminist concerns. Hinged on the ecofeminist theory, we examine the women-nature interrelation and the reflection of patriarchal and capitalist influence on both. The choice of the two playwrights; one Kenyan and another Ugandan, was based on the concerns they raise in their literary materials and the form and content of the two dramas.

1.10.3 Data Collection.

To arrive at a valid and reliable research, primary and secondary data were collected. The study gathered its primary data from a close reading and critical analysis of the plays under study, *A Hole in the Sky* and *Voice of the People*. Secondary data

was obtained from a thorough selection and reading of scholarly articles, books, theses, newspapers and magazines, projects and reports both in libraries and from online sources. Audio visual materials were also essential sources of secondary data. Relevant secondary data were collected and analysed in a bid to achieve the study's objectives.

1.10.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation.

The data collected in the study was qualitatively analysed. Secondary data and theoretical arguments were used to enrich textual evidence so as to achieve the study's objectives. The tenets of ecofeminism, including the intersection of women and nature, the double exploitation of women and nature by capitalists and the patriarchal class, and Warren's conceptual frameworks, played a pivotal role in the critical analysis of textual evidence. Additionally, the selected dramatic techniques were objectively analysed to ascertain their effectiveness in conveying aspects of patriarchal exploitation of women.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LINK BETWEEN WOMEN AND NATURE IN A *HOLE IN THE SKY* AND *VOICE OF THE PEOPLE*

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examined the link between women and nature in Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Omtatah's *Voice of the People*. Ecofeminists believe that there is a connection between women and nature based on the principle that the theory is instituted by the convergence of ecological and feminist philosophies. Olubunmi Ashaolu observes, "women and nature operate a symbiotic relationship. They both play the same role of procreation in different ways; the biological role of a woman as seen in child bearing just as the land also produces food that nurtures the progeny of the woman" (42). Davion adds that women have relentlessly suffered exploitation from patriarchal structures, structures that, according to ecofeminists, also sanction nature's domination (9). Ecofeminism, therefore, presents an emancipatory framework that seeks to emancipate both nature and women from patriarchal exploitation. These theoretical assumptions suggest that there is a correlation between women and nature in nurturing abilities, exploitation, and liberation. It is on this basis that this study sought to examine various instances that depict the women-nature nexus.

Consequently, this chapter attempts to answer the following questions: What is the relationship between nature and women? What explicitly shows nature and women as both endowed with nurturing abilities? How have the portrayals of nature and female characters highlighted their vulnerability to exploitation? What instances demonstrate this twin-domination? What brings out the aspect of their liberation from patriarchal exploitation? How is their liberation evident in the selected texts?

This chapter engaged Iheka's concept of *Aesthetics of Proximity*, as it foregrounds the literary representation of the human and non-human interrelation that arises from their spatial proximity, similarities, and common traits. Iheka outlines four aspects of proximity between humans and nonhumans: multispecies presence, interspecies relationship, distributed agency and indistinction between human and nonhuman entities (23). These dimensions suggest an existent relation between the two species. Most importantly, it is within the premise of these assumptions that we sought to critique the link between women and nature in the selected texts.

The chapter interrogated this link in regards to nurturing abilities, twin-exploitation and inter-liberation. The chapter explored women's and nature's ability to nurture and explored their exploitation by patriarchal and capitalist structures and examined their liberation. The chapter concluded that there is a correlation between women and nature based on the stated dimensions.

2.2 Nurturing Abilities

Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Omtatah's *Voice of the People* depict an interrelation between women and nature as both possess similar attributes. We argue that nurturing abilities entail a wide spectrum of issues that extends to the acts of caring, bringing up, and protecting. These attributes contribute to the representation of both nature and women as 'nurturers.' Traditionally, roles are assigned on the basis of gender and as John Kobia in *Gender Roles in African Oral Literature: A Case Study of Initiation Songs Among the Igembe People of Meru of Kenya*, notes, "women's roles included child bearing, rearing, and feeding of her family" (131). Essentially, these roles marked their dependence on nature for food and water, depicting the ability of nature to sustain human life. It is in the context of this interrelation that Iheka's multispecies presence and interspecies relationship fits. Women's interaction with

nature in search of food represents multispecies presence, which he refers to as the spatial sense of nearness (23). The interspecies relationship rests on their interdependence.

In *A Hole in the Sky*, nature is portrayed as a source of livelihood. This is depicted in Lake Riziki's ability to support life. Mwamburi et al. underscore this ability through their conceptualisation of the significance of rivers and lakes. They argue in *Monitoring Pollution in 4 Biodiversity Hotspots in Lake Victoria (Nyando, Awach, Nzoia and Yala) river mouths for Informed Decisions* that "rivers feed lakes and support pond aquaculture, irrigation agriculture, industrial, domestic and livestock water uses and energy generation" (1). In *A Hole in the Sky*, the lake's name *Riziki*, is a Swahili word which loosely translates to 'livelihood,' a reference that depicts the importance of the lake to the community as a source of food. Lake Riziki's sustenance is also emphasised by the playwright's employment of flashback through the characters of Kikogwe, Kibichi and Kiwiti. We are told that the trio used to fish a variety of fish species such as *Mbuta*, *Ngege*, *Ningu* and *Kasulu* (3). Similarly, Nasirumbi in *Voice of the People* protests the destruction of Simbi forest since it is the only source of water to the community (12). Nasirumbi's protest points to the significance of forests in protecting water sources.

Ortner argues that women's physiological processes and functions, traditional and social roles, and their psyche places them at a position closer to nature. This premise is particularly true in *A Hole in the Sky* where women are represented as child bearers and performers of traditionally constructed gender roles of feeding their families. Similarly, nature, on its part, plays a critical role in women's accomplishment of these roles. This dependence is instantiated in the play through Kiwiti and Kijani's utterances:

KIWITI: And we, the girls, happily trotted down to the beach, eager to fill our *viondo* with scaly bounty from the lake. (4)

KIJANI: Indeed, mother, daughter, sister, indeed. Let us not fear to act. We have children and families to nurture and feed. Father Earth will produce and provide if we embrace and caress him with tender love. (110)

Kiwiti uses of the collective pronoun ‘we’ to reveal women’s realisation and acceptance of their nurturing roles; it also accentuates women’s dependence on nature to perform their traditional roles. It is noteworthy that Kiwiti’s acknowledgement also illustrates nature as a place for women and nonhuman beings to physically interact, a space Iheka in his concept of proximity calls the “contact zone” (32). Ashcroft et al. refer to these contact zones as “social spaces where different cultures meet and interact under dominative structures such as colonialism and slavery” (48). However, they argue that the term’s ambiguity has led to its extensive utilisation in postcolonial studies, stretching beyond its initial intended context (48). Arguably, the proliferation of the term informs Iheka’s description of the contact zone as “a space that facilitates the interactivity and spatial nearness of humans with other beings in literary texts” (32). Therefore, in the play, nature transcends its ability to sustain to rise to the stature of the space for interaction.

In the play, Kiwiti instructs her children to collect basic things from their surrounding environment. Kitavi is sent to draw water, Kazizi to collect *sukuma wiki* from the garden and Kijani to gather firewood. Unfortunately, the children return empty handed because the sources have been invaded and destroyed under Tajeer’s orders. Tajeer blocks the stream to construct a field station (8), dumps rubbish on Kiwiti’s

vegetable garden (12) and instructs Msumeno and his gang to saw down trees for timber exports (13).

Kiwiti's actions reflect on the parental impact of such responsibilities in the development and upbringing of a child. Kiwiti's character represents a maternal social role of imparting skills, values and attitudes in her children that shape them into functional social beings. This view is reinforced by Ortner who observes:

In the first place, one must point out that women not only feed and clean up children in a simple caretaker operation; she in fact is the primary agent of their early socialization. It is she who transforms newborn infants from mere organisms into cultured humans, teaching them manners and proper ways to behave in order to become full-fledged members of the culture. (80)

Therefore, the play depicts assigned duties that help in nurturing them into dependable beings and nature as a space for the accomplishment of these roles. Through her actions, Kiwiti shows her dependence on nature and tries to impart a similar culture on her children. The character represents a feminine voice of reason on the importance of food provided by nature.

Moreover, in *Voice of the People*, Nasirumbi and The Mothers' Front represent forces that depict women's nurturing roles and abilities. Sibuur says "They volunteer to clean streets. They have a lunch programme for street families where they serve a mug of porridge. Through their reforestation project they organize rural women to plant trees in the country side. That has made them very popular in the neighborhoods (Omtatah 07). These initiatives fall under the ecofeminist purview as they depict women as nurturers as well as caretakers of the environment.

Furthermore, the reforestation project is a strategic solution to environmental destruction evidenced by the gradual destruction of Simbi forest for urban expansion in *Voice of the People* and clearing of indigenous forests to plant commercial plants like *jatropha* in *A Hole in the Sky*. This initiative is championed by The Mothers' Front under the leadership of Nasirumbi. This movement's leadership, membership and environmental activities are akin to those of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya that was founded by the 2004 Nobel laureate Wangari Maathai in 1977. *Voice of the People* was published during the period when Maathai had reached the pinnacle of her environmental conservation efforts and was actively protesting against environmental destruction. Therefore, reforestation is an ecofeminist approach to counter capitalists' acts of destruction. This resonates with Muthoni's observation on the Green Belt Movement's activities, "Maathai and the Green Belt Movement use of tree planting as an ecofeminist activism to advocate for social change, ecological revolution and empowerment of women" (12). Besides women empowerment, The Mothers' Front sort to replant forests, a counter effort to its destruction.

Under the ecofeminist discourse, Iheka views Maathai and the Green Belt Movement's activities as a form of 'resistance from the ground' evident through agricultural activities, tree planting and the mobilisation and empowerment of rural women. He observes that, "tree planting championed by Maathai challenges oppressive structures of post-independence Kenya where the leaders destroy forest resources and impoverish the human population in the name of development" (127). Hence, tree planting was symbolically a counter effort to government's deforestation. Therefore, The Mothers' Front activities are aimed at benefitting human and non-human aspects of life seen through the feeding of vulnerable street children and replanting depleted forests, which is home to non-human species and sources of livelihood.

Another attribute endowed to nature is its curing abilities. In *A Hole in the Sky*, nature is represented as a source of medication and a cure to ailments. In his discussion of *Nature as Pharmacy in Ole Kulet's Vanishing Herds*, Maleya observes "... Sacred groves such as Medungi are venerated spaces within the forest ecosystem. These locations act as reservoirs of rare plant species considered holy by the local community. The forest is therefore the community's pharmacy; a vast laboratory where trainees receive lessons through empirical observations" (Maleya 39). This observation undergirds nature's sacredness and healing ability.

In *A Hole in the Sky*, this sanctity is revealed through Kikongwe's reference to anything green as a shrine. By paralleling nature to a shrine, the playwright places nature at a higher status and gives it power. A shrine is usually held as holy and blessed and so is nature. Kikongwe says "I actually do have shrines, *Nyanya*. Many of them. Every green and growing thing is a shrine to me, a mark of the presence of the Creating and Sustaining Love" (Bukanya 87). On the other hand, nature's healing ability is exemplified through his herbal treatment. Referred to 'Nguvu Kikongwe', an ancestral lineage name signifying power, he is portrayed as possessing inherited expertise in herbal medicines as evidenced by his ability to treat Tajeer's ailments.

In the text, Kikongwe prescribes various herbal medicines for the treatment of Tajeer's ailments. Ironically, herbs are needed for Tajeer's treatment but he has destroyed forests which are reservoirs of herbal medicines. Kikongwe questions this irony and indirectly in his speech teaches the desperate Tajeer the importance of the forest to human life. Kikongwe tells him: "... The problem we face is finding the right herbs for your treatment, Mr Tajeer. Most of the leaves, barks and roots used in the cleansing process are found deep in the forests, or far out in the jungles. There isn't much of any of that around here these days" (89). After a long trek, though, they find

the prescribed herbs and Tajeer begins his treatment process, pointing out to nature's ability to cure.

The playwright reveals the paradox of nature and modernity through Tajeer's ailments and treatment. Natural herbs seem to be effective in healing Tajeer unlike modern medicine. Through this, the playwright places natural resources on a higher pedestal, compared to modern advancements in medicine. This is evident after a few days when Tajeer's doctor, Liwaza, admits: "my colleagues and I carried out a thorough diagnosis on him yesterday. Our findings were utterly amazing. Two of his tumors have completely disappeared and the third, one in his liver, has shrunk to practically insignificant portions" (103). Liwaza's admission denotes nature's superiority and ability to heal, and Kikongwe's prowess signifies an agency for the conservation of natural resources.

Tajeer's fate can be interpreted as nature's response to human being's destruction of the environment. The playwright satirises his situation as a warning against exploiting nature. Through Tajeer's character, Bukenya shows that diseases consequently develop and will need nature's cure. He thus warns of the extreme aftermath and consequences of environmental destruction on health and human life in general.

2.3 Twin-Exploitation

This section examines the link between women and nature through the aspect of exploitation. Ecofeminist critics view an interconnection between women and nature through their exploitation arguing that the oppression of women is akin to the exploitation of nature. They base their argument on the premise that the ideological framework responsible for the domination of women is the same framework that

sanctions the destruction of nature. The ideology that is liable for this twin domination, as argued by various ecofeminists, is a patriarchal ideology (Davion 9). Gaard contends, “Ecofeminism describes the framework that authorises these forms of oppression as patriarchy, an ideology whose fundamental self/other definition is based on a sense of self that is separate, atomistic” (2). Gaard contextualises self-perception in patriarchal discourse and justifies domination in such situations. The need for dominance emerges as a prerequisite for social separation that places the dominant subject in a position of power. As a result, socialist ecofeminists blame both patriarchal and capitalist structures for the exploitation of both nature and women.

Subsequently, Warren postulates that the destruction of nature is a feminist concern because it eases our comprehension of the logic behind the domination of women. Citing deforestation, introduction of monoculture tree planting and its impact on women in India, she explains that any action on nature should concern feminists because it affects women in performing their traditional role of feeding their families. Warren’s injunction echoes Lake Riziki’s destruction in *A Hole in the Sky* and its consequential effect on women’s performance of their gender roles. At the opening scene of the play, Bukenya narrates how Tajeer and other investors invaded and destroyed Lake Riziki after they found oil under the lake. The discourse is illustrated in the following dialogue:

KIWITI: And we, the girls, happily trotted down to the beach, eager to fill our *viondo* with the scaly bounty from the lake.

KIKONGWE: Then Tajeer’s friends flew their planes over the lake, and said there was oil beneath its waters. And before you could say ‘maji ya ziwa.....

KIBICHI: Men with heavy boots, steel hats, steel eyes and steel drills descended upon the lake. They tore through its brilliant waters, pierced its fragile floor, and clutched through its deepest secrets. They sucked out the dark slime to the surface and threw out a cheer, celebrating that they had struck oil! They even lit a fire over the slime that floated on the waters of our lake, just to prove how hot their find was.” (Bukenya 04).

The dialogue reveals relentless exploitation and eventual drying up of Lake Riziki orchestrated by Tajeer and his associates in their quest for oil. The invasion makes the water poisonous and kills fish and other creatures. It also renders the water unsafe for drinking and navigation. Tajeer and his associates’ actions transcend ecological destruction to point out to how this turns into a feminist issue. Their destructive actions are forms of women oppression in the sense that they negatively impact on the accomplishment of their traditional gender roles. In *Ecologies of Oil and Trauma of the Future in Curse of the Black Gold*, Iheka expounds on a similar eco-catastrophe at the Niger Delta in Nigeria. The scholar posits, “Mineral extraction in Africa has exacerbated ecological degradation across the continent” (69). Ultimately, oil exploration serves to benefit imperialists such as Tajeer and his friends from overseas but at the expense of far-reaching ecological imbalance and women’s traditional gender roles.

In *Voice of the People*, Nasirumbi and The Mothers’ Front lead a protest against the hiving off of Simbi forest for the construction of Resort Paradiso Africana project by Boss and Mr. Fix it, an international investor. Boss and his aide Sibuur confront Nasirumbi to end their resistance. When Sibuur informs Boss about the opposition of the project by the Mothers’ Front, he says “Mere women? What can they do?” (Omtatah 3). This sentiment reveals women exploitation depicted through the interrogation of her

place in a patriarchal society and in extension, their position in the society's hierarchical system. The phrase 'mere woman' reveals Boss's gender biasness and disregard for women's power. Boss is portrayed as a one that holds a strong patriarchal perspective and is irked by women who show resistance. Lois Tyson conceptualises patriarchy in as "*Sexist*, which means it promotes the belief that women are innately inferior to men. This belief in the inborn inferiority of women is a form of what is called *biological essentialism* because it is based on biological differences between the sexes that are considered part of our unchanging essence as men and women" (85). Therefore, Boss and Sibuur's sentiments exemplify the discriminatory nature of patriarchy, which perceives the female gender as weak, owing to their biological differences from men, particularly in terms of physical strength. Boss, therefore, feels unthreatened and continues to abuse his position of superiority.

Iheka's discussion of human and non-human beings' interspecies relationship allows us to visualise and interpret the existent twin exploitation of the two species due to their shared traits and vulnerability to exploitation. Ashaolu views nature as feminine (Ashaolu 46). This points to nature's shared characteristics with women, which signifies an interrelation and foregrounds twin exploitation. Bukenya in *A Hole in the Sky* projects women in the play as mute or silent as conditioned by a patriarchal system that often puts them in a subordinate position. This domination is analogous to nature's voicelessness – inability to resist destruction wrought by capitalists.

In *A Hole in the Sky*, when Kiwiti and Kijani contribute to the discussion on the flowing of water from streams to Great Lakes and the ramification of the blockage and pollution caused by Tajeer's oil exploration activities, Jumbe, a government official, says: "Ndugu Kibichi, your ladies are full of questions. Our womenfolk used not to be so argumentative" (Bukenya 09). This statement highlights women inferiority and the

expectation for women to maintain silence in the face of oppression, indicating that Jumbe's dominance appears to be shaped by patriarchal norms. It also suggests that Kibichi, as the male head of the family, is expected to follow a similar pattern in dealing with women. This social silencing serves as a form of women oppression and is used as a weapon to deny women the freedom to voice their views and contribute to discussions about problems in society. Their views are seen to question the patriarchal status quo.

It is, however, worthy noting that regardless of nature's inability to resist destruction, it can react to acts of domination through disasters such as floods, droughts, landslides, and earthquakes. Maleya explains that Ole Kulet in his novel *Vanishing Herds* regards "Natural disasters as a manifestation of nature's supremacy... a just punishment dispensed by Mother Nature for human's ecological transgressions" (31). Hence, nature's wrath is the prize for its wanton destruction. Tajeer's eco-catastrophic destruction of natural resources results in both his illness (cancer) and the ecological collapse of Lake Riziki, making it incapable of sustaining life and consequently forcing Kibichi's family to relocate. Similarly, the vulnerability of Simbi forest to the demands of private developers seeking urban expansion in *Voice of the People* poses an imminent threat to the preservation of the water tower.

Such destruction is attributable to what Warren refers to as the nature of conceptual frameworks. She argues that the link between women's oppression and nature's domination is conceptual. Attitudes and perceptions towards women and nature are influenced by socially constructed mental sets, values, beliefs, and dispositions. Warren opines that a conceptual framework can be oppressive, adding that when an oppressive conceptual framework is patriarchal, it explains, justifies, and maintains the subordination of women by men (126). She outlines such a framework's

characteristics as; “value hierarchical thinking, value dualisms, and logic of domination” (126). For Warren, patriarchal oppression is anchored on these features. Value hierarchical thinking represents a systematic line of thinking that gives higher value to that which is at the top of the hierarchy. Value dualism denotes patriarchy’s formulation of separate, differing pairs which values and gives status to the male and not female. Logic of domination refers to a rational design of argumentation that advances and justifies domination.

Warren further argues that the “logic of domination is not just a logical structure. It also involves a substantive value system since an ethical premise is needed to permit or sanction the “just” subordination of that which is subordinate” (126). It provides a logical way to deductively justify female subordination. Therefore, these features form ground for justifying male dominance by establishing a rationale on how men are superior to women. Warren’s tenets explain some of the acts of twin-exploitation evident in the plays. The plays portray patriarchal perspective as emanating from conceptualisation of women and nature as “mere women” and “idle land” as illustrated through the following instances. In *Voice of the People*, Boss says;

It’s not that am scared; I am bitter. I am very bitter that a small woman like Nasirumbi should cause me such trouble. A mere woman! One who should be on her knees, queuing at the end of a long line, begging me for favours! She’ll know who I am in this part of the world. (Omtatah 67)

Boss’s reaction is understandably a result of inherited cultural patriarchal norms. He is disturbed by how a woman, whom the patriarchal society has made him believe is inferior and should be at the bottom of the hierarchy and at the mercy of men, can question his undertakings and authority. As a man, Boss is culturally programmed to

be privileged in society and his socio-political position egotises this privilege. His sense of self-importance does not permit him to view others, especially women, as worthy of positive perception in the society. This form of self-power position causes him to extend a similar exploitation on nature. His self-serving drive surpasses the needs and wants of others.

Similarly, in *A Hole in the Sky*, natural resources such as forests, water bodies and catchment areas are viewed as 'idle', hence, avenues for wealth and profit accumulation. Sibour's reference of Simbi forest as an idle land (Omtatah 28) and Mlinzi's argument that Tajeer had been allocated the 'idle' land by the government (Bukenya 7) is akin to a male perception and situation of nature in an economic hierarchy. It justifies how nature's exploitation is inclined to its perception as an idle space even when it plays an important role in the ecosystem. Sibour, Tajeer and Mlinzi's reactions come from positions of ignorance towards both women and nature. Women, on the other hand, take strides to protect the environment in the play.

A Hole in the Sky exemplifies anthroparchy, which Cudworth defines in as "the domination of non-human creatures such as sea creatures, plants, and rocks by human beings" (Cudworth 08). Creatures have made natural spaces such as forests, lakes, and oceans their habitats. In the play, Bukenya illustrates human quest for enrichment that has exploited natural habitats, fatally destroying and displacing these creatures. The dialogue between Kibichi, Kiwiti and Kikongwe depicts this expectation:

KIBICHI: These ones have only devoured the forest. They must be good ogres.

KIWITI: And you think they'll stop at the forest?

KIKONGWE: That's the question. One wonders about all the poor little and big creatures that had made their home in that forest. Where will they go? The

monkeys, the birds, the impala, the squirrels, and all the poor little *dudus* that crawled and trotted and buzzed and flew and leapt around the trees . . . (Bukenya 14)

Bukenya depicts the harm inflicted upon non-human creatures as a result of the destruction executed in search of land for commercial agriculture, timber and other wood products, and for development. The subsequent stage direction also depicts the dilemma these creatures are subjected into. Bukenya writes: (*Inset opens to reveal a bare treeless clearing, into which the bewildered forest creatures keep running helter-skelter and consulting animatedly*) (14). Kijani and Kitavi's flashback about Lake Riziki further illustrate anthropic exploitation wrought on sea creatures at the lake:

KIJANI: Lake Riziki stood in your way, by laying on top of the oil-bearing rocks and so it had to be destroyed, together with all of us whose lives and livelihoods depended on it. Imagine all those innocent creatures dying on its shores and in its waters. All sacrificed at the altar of modernization and industrial development.

KITAVI: Today, Lake Riziki, or what used to be Lake Riziki, is a stagnant mass of black slime, where your oil hunters still gouge huge holes in the earth to suck out the least remaining drop of the oil (56).

The excerpt illustrates Kijani and Kitavi's lamentation of the greedy imperialists who have not only destroyed their source of livelihood but also killed and displaced innocent creatures. Bukenya uses these grim images to reveal how excessive quest for wealth is catastrophic to both human and non-human beings. As a playwright, he gives voice to women and animals since they weep for their lost homes, revealing their close relationships. The animals presented in the play metaphorically express their plight.

Through the play, Bukenya calls on the reader to relate with the pain and suffering of women and nature which demonstrates how fiction can be utilised to emphasise the importance of environmental conservation.

2.4 Inter-Liberation

Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Omtatah's *Voice of the People* portray the ecofeminist concern regarding the liberation of women and conservation of the natural environment. The previous sections discussed the correlation between the two in terms of their nurturing abilities and their subjection to exploitation that is meted out on them by the patriarchal and capitalistic order. This section aims to explicate textual evidence and theoretical arguments that depict an inter-liberation of both subjects in the plays. Botzler and Armstrong argue that ecofeminism's objective was to "emphasize the potential of women to create ecological revolution" (467). This argument points out that ecofeminism leads a revolutionary quest for a gendered ecological liberation. Therefore, as an ecological emancipatory movement, it also seeks to liberate women because of their intertwined exploitation. Further, Lynne Ford argues that "because women have been hypothesized as feminine and nature contemplated as feminine, it is hard to recognize where the exploitation of one leads up to and the beginning of the other. Therefore, the liberation of one cannot be effected apart from the liberation of the other" (26). In a similar perspective, ecofeminists envision a society that is free from all forms of domination: sexism, racism, classism, and naturalism, as Warren argues (134 -135). Warren's argument on the correlated women-nature liberation is entrenched on the theoretical premise that their exploitation is guided by the characteristics of a socio-economically oppressive society.

In *A Hole in the Sky*, Bukenya depicts the liberation of both women and nature through Tajeer's scrapping off of the *jatropha* project and the crowning of Kijani to

lead in replanting the indigenous forest. At the beginning of the play, Tajeer is depicted as the mastermind of *jatropha* project where he seeks to displace Kibichi's family to create space for the biofuel plant. As the conflict heightens, he is diagnosed with tumours, which are only cured by Kikongwe's herbal medicine after modern medicine fails. Tajeer's successful treatment awakens his realisation of the importance of indigenous plants and signifies the beginning of nature's liberation, as instantiated by calling off the *jatropha* project. Tajeer's son Hatibu says:

Bwana Tajeer has decided that, instead of planting *jatropha* here, we will replant the indigenous forests that covered most of this area initially, and we make sure we include in it all the medicinal plants that are apparently difficult to find today.... (Bukonya 105).

Tajeer's decision leads to liberation and conservation of the environment and underscores the need to move away from excessive commercial agriculture as it destabilises ecological systems. Consequently, the abolition of the project necessitates a leadership change that steers the re-greening initiative. This event marks Kijani's symbolic crowning as the leader. Tajeer and Kikongwe dress Kijani with a green robe, signifying that she has been given the power and mandate to lead them towards the realization of 'a new green world' (106). Tajeer says:

TAJEER: Ah, my healing spirit! Carrier of the miraculous cure! Here, receive this. (*Tajeer and Kikongwe dress Kijani in the green robe. Tajeer points at his chair*) Sit, *Nyanya!* Sit, please, so I can pay homage. (*Kijani sits. Tajeer startles her and the whole gathering by falling on his knees before her*) Kijani Nguvu Mwana Kibichi! You started this in me and in all our ailing surroundings. You spoke up and pointed out the sickness in me and in our land. Please lead us in

the cure. (*Takes a small green branch out of the askari's packet and offers it to Kijani*) Here, take it, please, and lead us in the healing and the renewal (107).

JUMBE: (*In chorus with Mlinzi and Bawabu*) Lead, beautiful one of Esibila, lead. Fear not, daughter of thunder and the cloud deities. Beckon with the green branch and bring the rains back to the parched land and depleted rivers (109).

Evidently, Tajeer, Jumbe, Mlinzi and Bawabu's words symbolise the need to liberate women from harmful patriarchal ideologies. While the play begins with a male patriarchal mindset that informed their discrimination of Kijani and Kiwiti (9), the liberation at the end is a metaphor that awakens the importance of nature and an understanding of why the women strive hard to defend it. Through the symbolic crowning of a woman (Kijani), Bukenya depicts a society that is ready to let women rise to the helm of leadership. This is a move towards progression of women's equity in social, economic, and political levels. In the end, women, and nature win. This emerges as a twin liberation. Ford contends that "Ecofeminists charge that patriarchy's hierarchical framework not only damages women but harms nature as well" (26).

Kijani's character represents the rebirth of Wamiti Maua, a historical heroine who led the fight against the destruction of natural resources. Bukenya also marks a liberationist and conservationist movement by non-human creatures demonstrated by Earth, Water, Air, Fire and Monkey in the play to reveal conjoined forces against exploitation. Bukenya writes;

EARTH: Wamiti Mau reborn! With a promise to mend my kanzu and cover the shame of my wretched frame in green. I will lovingly cushion her step wherever she goes and gently cradle every little seed she entrust in me.

WATER: Wamiti Maua reborn! With a promise to unclog my seas, lakes, ponds and streams, dredge the sludge and the silt from my wells and pools and rivers, protect my springs and restore the fresh crystal purity with which the Creating Love endowed in me. I will constantly slake her thirst, with dewdrop. With a soft shower, I will cleanse every stain and smudge from her, and with my gracious rain bless every seed and seedling that she places into my brother earth.

AIR: Wamiti Maua reborn, with a promise to restore breathing space to all Love's creatures and free me from venomous smokes, gases and smog that make me a conveyor of disease and death instead of sustainer of life.....

FIRE: Wamiti Maua reborn! Fierce, fearless, fiery fighter for all that is green and fresh and full of life, flaming light in frail female frame!.....

Monkey: And maybe there will be some hope for us, too, when the forest starts growing again. (*A burst of celebratory sounds from all*). (111 – 112).

Bukenya has given agency to these elements to express resistance to human exploitation and subjectivities. Most importantly, the non-living things convey the consequences of ecological destruction and hope for the restoration of ecological equilibrium through Wamiti Maua. The playwright demonstrates that nature has the capacity to reshape its own destiny even through non-human creatures. It is a creative warning against the consequences of careless and oppressive socio-economic practices in the society.

Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva in *Ecofeminism* traces ecofeminism's foundation to "protests and resistance backgrounds against environmental degradation that were occasioned by ecological catastrophes" (486). Seemingly, protests and activism were critical emancipatory strategies for contesting environmental destruction.

A similar approach is exemplified through the depiction of Omtatah's *Voice of the People* as protest literature. The play is adorned with protests which seek to champion for an end to women oppression and environmental degradation. Nabulya in her ecocritical reading of the play contends:

As such, *Voice of the People*, unlike *Different Colours*, which focuses more on the challenges of representing environmental violence, offers insights into the representation of protest, not only against environmental degradation but also against one of the major causes, political corruption. The stylistic devices Okoiti employs also configure the plays as a protest literature. (Nabulya 12)

The play's plot is replete with environmental activism which culminates at Boss's downfall. The protests are epitomised through Nasirumbi, the protagonist. Besides illustrating the end of Boss's oppressive rule, it marks Nasirumbi's success in her struggle for liberation. Boss's fall from power signifies nature's liberation because it scripts the end of the plot to destroy Simbi forest. Nasirumbi's actions and words are an embodiment of the quest for women and nature's liberation. Regardless of patriarchal hurdles, she employs various strategies to save Simbi forest from Boss and Sibuur's yoke of destruction. Nasirumbi identifies and uses the media and leads The Mothers' Front to oppose Boss's Resort Paradiso Africana Project. Evidently, her actions and those of The Mothers' Front are aimed at dismantling constructed hierarchical frameworks and dualities which set precedence for the logical domination of nature and women.

Moreover, protests in the play are led by women, which results in their identification as liberationists seeking to champion the course. This protest is proof of feminists' call for women to fight for positions of leadership in the society. This

struggle for women-nature liberation is akin to Wangari Maathai's actions and the Green Belt Movement. Nabulya observes, "it is also noteworthy that Okoiti acknowledges his indebtedness to Wangari Maathai in the writing of this drama. Nasirumbi, the lady protagonist in the drama seems to be a symbolic representation of Maathai in terms of what she stands for and her approach to environmental activism" (12). Arguably, Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement's activities are parallel to the emancipatory agenda championed by Nasirumbi and The Mothers' Front.

In discussing Maathai's *Unbowed*, Iheka highlights two forms of resistance from her and the Green Belt Movement's activities to liberate both the oppressed human and non-human species. He notes that the tree planting initiative advocated for by the Green Belt Movement symbolized 'resistance from the ground' (127) which went a long way in countering capitalists' destruction of trees and other natural resources. Further, her mobilization of grassroots women into the Green Belt Movement umbrella points to the other form of 'resistance from the ground'. This initiative signifies the possibility of women's empowerment and their liberation which is only possible if they challenge and reject oppressive patriarchal structures.

Similarly, Godwin Siundu in his book review of Grace Musila's book, *Wangari Maathai's Registers of Freedom*, narrates how Maathai and the Green Belt Movement struggled for liberation from various oppressive structures. Siundu notes that the book highlights Maathai's activism in leading Kenyans in their struggle to liberate themselves from various forms of oppression. The Mothers' Front is therefore, analogous to the Green Belt Movement, as crafted by Omtatah in his play. The movement's objective is to emancipate women and nature from patriarchal capitalists' exploitation.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter examined the link between nature and women as depicted in Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Omtatah's *Voice of the People*. Based on the Ecofeminist literary theory and the concept of Aesthetics of Proximity, we discussed the various aspects that bring out the women-nature nexus. There is an existent relationship between the two subjects as evidenced by their nurturing abilities, twin exploitation, and an eventual liberation.

Women and nature are portrayed as nurturers in the sense that women engage in child rearing and upbringing activities while nature is the source of resources required for nurturing. Both women and nature are victims of patriarchal capitalists' exploitation. Women are exploited based on their lowest position in a patriarchal society's hierarchy. It is in this position that they are rendered voiceless and prone to various forms of exploitation. Our discussion pointed out that the two plays demonstrate the possibility of women's and nature's liberation from harmful socio-economic structures and practices. Women characters engage in a struggle for liberation by opposing exploitative patriarchal and capitalistic structures. Tajeer's crowning of Kibichi, cancellation of the *jatropha* project and ordering for the replanting of indigenous plants in *A Hole in the Sky* and fall of Boss' regime that signified the end of women exploitation and hiving off of Simbi forest in *Voice of the People* are pointers to the liberation of women and nature. It is on this basis that this study, in the next chapter, will investigate how the two playwrights employ characterisation to illuminate capitalists' environmental destruction. The chapter explores how the two authors deploy characterisation, as an aspect of form, to convey the theme of capitalism as the cause of environmental destruction.

CHAPTER THREE

CHARACTERISATION AND PRESENTATION OF CAPITALIST ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter investigated how the playwrights employ characterisation to illuminate acts of capitalist environmental destruction in the selected plays. As discussed in the preceding chapter, it is evident that there is a connection between women and nature particularly in terms of their nurturing abilities, exploitation, and liberation. The twin-exploitation aspect of ecofeminism portrays acts of domination wrought by patriarchy and capitalism. Similarly, eco-Marxism provides theoretical tenets that can be used to explore how unrestrained capitalism enhances environmental destruction. This chapter discussed how characterisation conveys capitalist environmental destruction in *A Hole in the Sky* and *Voice of the People*.

The characters presented in both plays were grouped into three distinctive categories; the conservationists, eco-destructors, and animist characters. Characters were examined under these categories to establish how they articulated acts of ecological destruction. The study undertook a multi-species critical approach to explore characters' behaviours, actions, and attitudes to understand how they communicate acts of environmental degradation. Additionally, the chapter advances the capitalist discourse by delving into ways in which destruction has been presented in the plays through; capitalist repression, oppression, and capitalist expansionism.

3.2 Character Articulation of Capitalist Destruction

This section interrogates how characters, as categorised into the conservationists, eco-destructors and animist characters, communicate acts of capitalist ecological degradation.

3.2.1 The Conservationists

The conservationists are those characters who perceive environmental destruction from a preservationist standpoint. Their actions and words are informed by environmental conservation sensibilities and the repercussions of ecological destruction on their survival. In *A Hole in the Sky*, Bukenya presents Kibichi, Kiwiti, Kitavi, Kijani and Nguvu Kikongwe, members of one family, as conservationists. In *Voice of the People*, Nasirumbi and Indondo are presented as conservationists. These characters possess eco-activism abilities revealed through their engagement in activism against environmental destruction. Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* is a story of an already ruined ecosystem and one that continues to suffer capitalists' inherent expansion and an insatiable demand for profit and wealth accumulation. Omtatah's *Voice of the People* narrates the impacts of modernity and the expenses of an urge for human development and enrichment on the environment.

In the opening scene of Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky*, we are introduced to Kibichi's family. Tajeer's gang arrives at their home to displace the family to pave way for the *jatropa* project. To Kikongwe and Kibichi, the event triggers the memory of the destruction of Lake Riziki. Their flashback paints images of oil exploration conducted on the lake by Tajeer and his investor friends, ultimately resulting in an ecocide. The following dialogue illustrates the incident:

KIKONGWE: Then Tajeer’s friends flew their planes over the lake, and said there was oil beneath its waters. And before you could say ‘*maji ya ziwa*’

KIBICHI: Men with heavy boots, steel hats, steel eyes and steel drills descended upon the lake. They tore through its brilliant waters, pierced its fragile floor and clutched through its deepest secrets. They sucked out the dark slime to the surface and threw out a cheer, celebrating that they had struck oil! They even lit a fire over the slime that floated on the waters of our lake, just to prove how hot their find was.

KIKONGWE: Hot indeed, and it burnt out our lives and our livelihoods by the sacred lake. The fish were there, floating on the slime, but they were dead, and black. The water was neither drinkable nor navigable. We were finished. We just had to move, or stay there and die, like our lake. (Bukenya 04)

Lake Riziki’s tragic extinction is the result of capitalists’ quest for oil exploration that would earn them wealth and profit. Tajeer’s sanction shows that he reserves a capitalist mind. Muhia in *The Subdued Nature: Reading Henry Ole Kulet’s Vanishing Herds through Eco-Marxist lenses* posits that “In the hands of capitalists, nature suffers domination, fatally subjugating its ecological capacity to support life” (134). By echoing Muhia’s assessment, the play reveals consequences of the dislocation capitalism created between human beings, the natural environment, the non-humans, and their habitats. Capitalism destabilised an eco-balance that exists between the lake, water creatures and humans. Lake Riziki ceased to be a source of livelihood to humans, and a home to water creatures.

Bukenya crafts his conservationist characters from the family unit, pitting them against business associates led by Tajeer. The playwright then assigns them names that

denote specific traits they embody. The playwright communicates to the reader through this appropriation. Translated to English, Kibichi, means ‘green’ whose actions allude to the need for re-greening. At the opening of the play when Tajeer’s men approach his family, he stands firm clutching his panga ready to confront them. This resistance symbolises an advocacy for conservation and re-greening. As the head of the family, Kibichi’s name encompasses a plurality of nature. He steers his family towards conservation. The playwright assigns Kibichi’s children names that denote nature. Kibichi instills in his children the culture of conservation and resistance against pollution and exploitation. Bukenya’s adoption of the family units represents his personal view on the need for advocating environmental conservation from basic units of the society. This seems to be a favourable approach to environmental conservation and restoration of degraded ecosystems.

Nguvu Kikongwe represents an elderly generation. His Swahili name translated to English means ‘a strong elder.’ The character’s name signifies his sapient ecological consciousness evident through his recognition of everything green as a shrine. He says “I actually do have shrines, *Nyanya*. Many of them. Every green and growing thing is a shrine to me, a mark of the presence of the Creating and Sustaining Love” (Bukenya 87). Throughout the play, Kikongwe seems to be aware of nature’s sustaining value and he beholds knowledge on herbal medicines that he uses to cure ailments.

Consequently, his successful treatment of Tajeer led to a significant development; Tajeer decided to halt the *jatropha* project and instead focus on re-establishing the indigenous forest that once thrived, thereby granting nature its liberation (105). Kikongwe represents an older generation whose knowledge on the importance of nature to human beings transcends every other character. Bukenya presents the old man as a character who uses his knowledge to offer guidance to the

young generation, teaching them ways of living in harmony with nature. Kikongwe's culturally inculcated norms and ecological consciousness allows him to oversee the transformation of Tajeer from a villain to a hero who advocates for environmental conservation.

Similarly, Bukkenya uses the character traits of Kijani and Kitavi to present a critical commentary on capitalism. The characters inhabit conservationist attitudes by opposing Tajeer. Their dependence on the natural ecosystem as a source of livelihood is diminished due to Tajeer's interference. This ignites in them a fighting and confronting spirit. Kijani says "I'm going over to Tajeer's mansion. I'm going to tell him and his friends, plainly, that what they are doing is stupid, dangerous, murderous, and suicidal" (17). Kijani points out that whatever Tajeer is doing in his quest for wealth and profit is detrimental to the environment, creatures and human beings and hence must be opposed. Kijani strongly opposes Tajeer's actions and this vow to confront eco-destructors demonstrates his conservationist conviction. Although the character is a child, Bukkenya seems to deliberately point out that environmental destruction affects everyone. The imperative to resist and protect the environment is not constrained by age, even the youngest members of society speaking out against environmental destruction can have a significant impact. Kijani and Kitavi represent the youngest members of society who still have a long life ahead of them and advocating for nature conservations ensures their long survival.

Nasirumbi, the protagonist in *Voice of the People*, *Indondo*, and *The Mothers' Front* members are portrayed as eco-activists seeking to counter Boss's plot. They embody an eco-activist mindset exhibited through their engagement in activism to oppose the invasion of Simbi forest. Omtatah portrays Nasirumbi as a strong-willed character and an exemplary leader of The Mothers' Front. As the play begins, she

confronts Boss outrightly and opposes his environmentally destructive plans that are camouflaged in a development and economic sustainability agenda. We realize that even though The Mothers' Front membership comprises of only women, their actions, objectives, and achievements are exemplary. Seemingly, Omtatah uses these women to illustrate women's environmental conservation abilities and deconstruct patriarchal structures that view women as inferior.

Nasirumbi and The Mothers' Front are portrayed as proactive environmentalists whose conservation agenda are reflected in their reforestation projects and firm opposition of Boss's scheme. In their opposition to Boss' destruction, they use media to advance their activism and to reach out to a wider audience. Working with Indondo, the Editor of a local daily newspaper, they write a letter headlined *Ogres Invade Simbi forest* to reveal Boss' evil plans of transforming Simbi forest into a wealth generating enterprise. The letter informs the people of Boss' character and exposes him as a capitalist seeking enrichment through nature's destruction.

In the second sequence, Sibuur confronts Indondo, the newspaper editor, for publishing sensitive information about their project. His arguments are grounded on the need to hive off the forest for development purposes. Sibuur says "Mr. Indondo, that project is vital. Tourism will boom. Jobs! Hundreds of jobs will be created. The target is poverty alleviation" (Omtatah 27). Their dialogue, acquaints us with Indondo's contribution to the manifestation of resistance against environmental destruction. His editorial role gives him an opportunity to sensitize the public. His sentiments are a testament of an environmental conservationist. As Sibuur advocates for the construction of the resort, Indondo counters him with an argument about environmental protection. The playwright writes:

INDONDO: Poverty?

SIBUOR: Poverty alleviation!

INDONDO: Can you define poverty?

SIBUOR: Well, the World Bank defines poverty as a pronounced deprivation in well-being.

INDONDO: Then how can you eradicate poverty simply by increasing economic growth, trade, consumption and the exploitation of resources? Can you win against poverty?

SIBUOR: Don't be silly! Real money will pour into this country. The construction phase alone will employ hundreds.

INDONDO: Poverty is more than just material deprivation. Poverty is also about being excluded from the decision-making process. *(He pauses, then firmly as he moves closer to him)* *The Voice of the People* is the people's voice, and it must be heard. (Omtatah 27)

Indondo demonstrates strong commitment to the protection of Simbi forest by actively supporting The Mothers' Front advocacy through his newspaper. The newspaper symbolises the people's voice in the play. It is a tool Omtatah deploys to show the strength common people possess and their contribution to matters affecting their wellbeing. The people realise that Boss's regime is repressive, hence, depriving them of their freedom of speech. They therefore resort to using the newspaper as their platform.

3.2.2 The Eco-Destructors

The eco-destructors are characters who exhibit destructive traits against nature, which are geared towards the generation of wealth and power. We reason that these characters are guided by the principles of capitalism to engage in the commodification of natural resources. In *A Hole in the Sky*, these characters are Tajeer, Mwekezi, Taiku, and Jasirmali and in *Voice of the People*, they are Boss, and Sibuur. Through these characters' actions, the playwrights highlight acts of environmental destruction on the natural ecosystem.

In the opening scene of Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky*, the ensuing dialogue between Tajeer and Kibichi's family when he (Tajeer) seeks to uproot them from their land tags him as an eco-destructor. While Kibichi and his family solely depend on the natural environment as their source of livelihood, Tajeer and his gang's interests are vested on clearing forest land to plant *jatropha* which is described in the play as "a plant used to produce biofuel and oil for machines, cars and lorries" (Bukenya 2). Tajeer and his henchmen are portrayed as capitalists with interests on generation of wealth through projects that are injurious to the environment. As eco-destructors, they perpetuate acts of violence against the environment and people on their quest for power. Presented as selfish and callous, these characters abuse their positions of power and neglect the problems of common people. They are presented as selfish and callous.

Through Tajeer's character, Bukenya reveals the extent nature has suffered capitalists' degradation and the impacts of technology on the environment. Tajeer is portrayed as an orchestrator of the destruction of Lake Riziki (4), blocking of streams to find space for the construction of a field station (8), sawing down of trees for timber, charcoal, and saw dust (13) and the eviction of people and clearing of land for the

jatropha project (2). Through Hatibu's words, we understand Tajeer's perception of nature. Hatibu says:

HATIBU: No, no, no, Mzee. It wasn't like that at all. It's just that, with all this modern technology, you know, we don't need to depend on water from streams. We can pump all the water we need right from the depths of the earth, or have it piped right down here from the Great Lake. That's what we are already doing.

(8)

This excerpt illustrates a looming eco-catastrophe – the death of the Great Lakes. This demonstrates technology's inverted significance to human life. While it enhances production in a capitalist system, it also extensively devastates the ecosystem. Bukenya demonstrates Hatibu and Tajeer's capitalist positions as instigators of ecological destruction. He exposes the capitalist inclination to exploit something inherently beneficial to humanity for their selfish interests. Through this depiction of technology, Bukenya alerts the reader of its negative and positive impacts; he calls for this awareness.

Furthermore, Bukenya's naming of characters symbolises their traits and their role in the play as eco-destructive characters. We argue that names assigned to characters justify their traits, actions and reveal their identity. Blommaert, Lamidi Temitayo and Romanus Aboh posit:

Beyond the level of language that signals identity, there is the manifestation of personality either as an individual or a member of a group. This is a form of social identity where individuals use linguistic items such as naming strategies to identify with the people they consider as theirs or members of their group.

Here, names are constant of identity with which people surround themselves according to their social identities. (35 – 36)

Therefore, names reveal traits that signify a character's identity and social positions. The shared traits and attributes among characters situate them in specific identity groups. Bukenya and Omtatah have labelled selected characters names that denote their eco-destructive nature.

Loosely translated, the names Tajeer, Taiku, Jasirimali, and Mwekezi mean: Rich, Tycoon, Entrepreneur, and Investor, respectively. These meanings correlate with their identities as business associates. For these characters, Lake Riziki and other natural resources are available for exploitation as they seek to amass wealth. Bukenya presents these characters as blinded by the desire for power and as people who are ignorant of the need to conserve natural resources. As their names suggest, they are driven by the need to occupy certain positions in society, and the playwright ensures that they depict these positions and play their roles.

Similarly, in *Voice of the People*, Boss is the Head of State and a symbol power and authority. As the Head of State, he is tasked with the responsibility of protecting the State's natural resources. However, his capitalist attitude and thirst for wealth makes him advocate for an invasion of Simbi forest. Both Tajeer and Boss are responsible for creating an investment enabling environment for their foreign investors, notably, Taiku, Jasirimali, Mwekezi in *A Hole in the Sky* and Mr. Fix in *Voice of the People*.

Boss' actions in Omtatah's play mirror a capitalist's selfish desire that leads to environmental destruction. When Nasirumbi questions him about his views on the plot to hive off Simbi forest for the construction of a resort, he, as the Head of State, does not display a firm disposition for Simbi's protection. His sentiments are unfortunately

aligned with capitalistic egocentricism. He insists that the resort will create job opportunities and spur the country's economic growth. However, the truth behind their development agenda is revealed when Indondo discloses a dossier on the secret plan hatched by Boss and Sibuur. Their plan is purely driven by raw desire for personal financial gain. This is evident when Sibuur says, "whether people like it or not, we are going to build a modern tourist resort where Simbi stands. We have the power and we have decided. You parrots have no chance pitted against businessmen like me" (Omtatah 35).

Boss and Sibuur's capitalistic thinking is a clear demonstration of how natural resources are misused through privatisation and self-interest, which according to Jahan and Saber, are pillars of capitalism (Jahan and Saber). Unmistakably, their plan is to hive off Simbi and convert it into a private property from where they would generate wealth, profit, and more capital. The self-interest pillar is manifested through their determination to pursue their own enrichment with a disregard to people and the environment.

3.2.3 Animist Characters

This section explores characters who exhibit animist sensibilities and embody traits and actions that convey acts of ecological destruction. It is imperative to note that these characters only appear in Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky*. They fall under the categories of cosmic characters, mythical and legendary characters, and creatures. The cosmic characters presented are: Space, Earth, Fire, Air, and Water. In the mythical and legendary category are; Saro Wiwa and Wamiti Maua. The creatures include; Monkey, Impala, Zebra, Hornbill, Grasshopper, and Lion. We argue that the playwright incorporates these characters to explore the effects of environmental destruction on creatures and the cosmic space.

Harry Garuba in posits that “Animism is often simply seen as belief in objects such as stones or rivers for the simple reason that animist gods and spirits are *located* and *embodied* in objects: the objects are the physical and material manifestations of the gods and spirits” (267). From this stipulation, animism signifies a correlation between objects and gods and spirits with the former believed to be an embodiment of gods and spirits. Edward Tylor conceptualises animism as, “characteristically religious belief in spirits” (qtd. in Harvey 01). This interrelation is exemplified in *A Hole in the Sky* through Wamiti Maua, a spiritual allusion of Wangari Maathai and Saro Wiwa, an apparition of the Nigerian environmentalist, Ken Saro Wiwa.

The representation of Saro Wiwa in the play manifests through a sentimental succession created by the playwright that allows us to visualise Ken Saro Wiwa’s agitation against oilmen’s environmentally harmful oil activities in Nigeria. Ken Saro Wiwa was a Nigerian environmental activist and creative writer who led protests against the devastating ecological and human-life threatening impacts of oil exploration activities in Nigeria’s Niger Delta region. His persistent activism led to his execution in 1995. Bukenya’s recreation of Ken Saro Wiwa reflects his lifetime quest for environmental protection and the prize he paid for his activism. Bukenya writes:

SARO: (*Inset, with a pronounced Nigerian accent*) Now you have killed the fish. What shall we eat? You’ve blackened and poisoned the water. What shall we drink? You say you’re making money, but we don’t see even a penny of it. We can’t eat your money; we can’t drink your oil. (Bukenya 05)

The analogy to Ken Saro Wiwa’s lifetime environmental activism is echoed by Saro Wiwa’s actions in the play. The environmental consequences faced in Lake Riziki are parallel to those of the Ogoni region in Nigeria, which is the epicenter of Ken Saro

Wiwa's environmental activism. Therefore, the playwright relays the theme of capitalists' environmental destruction through Saro Wiwa's actions and the environmental impacts of oil exploration. The use of a historical character as a source of content contextualises the play in the discourse of environmental activism. Bukenya gives credence to people whose efforts changed the course of environmental conservation by giving credit to Ken Saro Wiwa through the character Saro Wiwa.

The legendary Wangari Maathai has also been represented through trees and flowers translated to the name, Wamiti Maua. This is evident in the rekindling of her memories during her consecration where Kijani is referred to as 'Wamiti Reborn' in the play's last scene. Tajeer refers to Kijani as his 'healing spirit' before dressing her in a green robe and offering her a green branch to symbolise the power and authority to lead in the re-greening of the wretched earth. Kijani's leadership mandate reflects Wangari Maathai's leadership in The Green Belt Movement, an environment conservation group that she famously led in Kenya.

Additionally, the subsequent dialogues during the consecration are ritualistic. Kijani's mother says, "hold out the green branch, Kijani, lover of all that lives and blossoms. Fear not. You are Wamiti Maua reborn, the eternal buckle of the green belt around the kanzu of Father Earth" (110). Kijani's words signify the re-enactment of Maathai's spirit in her daughter Kijani. Intertwined, these textual representations illustrate how animist spirituality plays out in the play. Kijani's crowning symbolises hope to human and non-human characters. Cosmic characters; Earth, Water, Air, and Fire express their hope in her ability to return them to their initial ecological state:

EARTH: Wamiti Maua reborn! With a promise to mend my kanzu and cover the shame of my wretched frame in green.

WATER: Wamiti Maua reborn! With a promise to unclog my seas, lakes, ponds and streams, dredge the sludge and the silt from my wells and pools and rivers to protect my springs and restore the fresh crystal purity with which the Creating Love endowed me.

AIR: Wamiti Maua reborn, with a promise to restore breathing space to all Love's creatures and free me from venomous smokes, gases and smog that make me a conveyor of disease and death instead of a sustainer of life.

FIRE: Wamiti Maua reborn! Fierce, fearless, fiery fighter for all that is green and fresh and full of life, flaming light in frail female frame! I will constantly burn with you and be a bright torch to light your path as you lead your people and planet to their glorious green destiny. (111 – 112)

Kijani's crowning and recognition as Wamiti represents the rekindling of Wangari Mathai's memories and contribution towards environmental conservation. Wamiti Maua's connection with nature is portrayed through a spiritual representation of her traits that resemble those of Maathai. The green branch is arguably a symbol of Maathai's spiritual mantle passed onto a character who embodies her spirit in the play. Through the incident, Bukonya supports Maathai's efforts and the mantle symbolises a promise of the continuation of her work, which he encourages through his play.

A play-within-a-play in *A Hole in the Sky* demonstrates the actions of the legendary character – Wamiti Maua. The subsequent dialogue with Loggers, Saw-Man, Axe-Man, and Panga-Man represents acts of capitalist destruction from two different perspectives: eco-destruction and eco-activism. While the Loggers, Saw-Man, Axe-Man, and Panga-Man are portrayed as eco-destructors clearing forests for charcoal, timber, firewood, poles, and space for building housing estates, Wamiti Maua is

represented as a conservationist pleading with them to spare the forests (36-37). The prefixes ‘saw, axe, and panga’ depict the idea of cutting and the suffix - ‘man’ denotes a responsibility for destruction by human beings. Bukenya’s naming of these characters by tools usually used for tree-cutting presents a picture of the nefarious destruction of the ecosystem to satisfy capitalistic demand for wealth and profit perpetuated by human beings. The loggers are responsible for hoarding these trees for sale. However, Wamiti Maua calls for nature’s conservation and protection against these ecological destructors in the play.

Bukenya has also personified cosmic characters referred to as ‘Elements,’ to voice capitalists’ degradation of the ecosystem. These characters reveal an animist sensibility grounded in the traditional beliefs that spirits exist in the cosmos. The voicing of these characters represents a call for a holistic environmental conservation responsibility. Hosted by Space, they hold a meeting to discuss nature and the planet’s ecological state. (24). Space speaks about the junk and the ever-deepening hole as the two main problems causing harm on him. As Space narrates, junk is a build-up of satellites, capsules, rockets, and space crafts that are fired into the space for the purpose of space research, exploration, and stations (26). Space informs the readers of the huge damage that gases emitted back from these space activities pose. They create holes in the umbrella-like shield that is situated between the space and the sun.

The characterisation of Space and his sentiments in the play epitomises the reality of the extent of harm posed by emissions and other orbital debris. Reports and research done by various space agencies reveal an exponential rise in space junk over the past years. According to a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) report released on January 27, 2021, there exists millions of orbital debris today – “at least 26,000 of which are the size of a softball or larger, over 500,000 which are the

size of a marble and over 100 million are the size of a grain of salt” (NASA, 2). The space agency cites an increase in space launched objects, space explosions and collisions as the main causes of these shards of hazardous debris. Furthermore, the European Space Agency (ESA) Annual Space Environment Report dated May 27, 2021 presents a similar picture of space pollution, reporting that; “Ever since the start of the space age on 4th October 1965, there has been more space debris in orbit than operational satellites, hence posing a problem for the near-Earth environment on a global scale” (ESA 8). These space bodies’ reports reveal a worrying orbital debris trend and a looming crisis owing to the ever-deepening amount of space junk. The reports further call for an urgency in the cessation of activities that are harmful to the space.

Air narrates his ordeal as resulting from dirty emissions into the atmosphere. Air says “.... They say they have to burn all dirty things – oil, coal, wood and what have you in order to warm their houses, cook their food, run their machines, move their cars, work their factories and fly their planes” (Bukenya 29). Water is also afflicted by similar problems as emissions from factories drift into the air, causing air pollution, water bodies form the best dumping grounds for factory wastes and dirt. Water says “.... While their factories belch smoke in Sister Air’s face, the pipes under them are draining their waste muck into my ponds, my rivers, my lakes and my seas....” (32-33). Evidently, these harmful emissions are born out of capitalists’ establishment of factories in the desire to earn profits and create wealth. In capitalist societies, factories and processing plants are established and owned by the rich and capitalists, who have access to the amount of money required to establish such industries. Hence, only the wealthy can be linked to these establishments. This brings us to a conclusion that capitalists are squarely responsible for these forms of pollution as presented in the play.

Equally, Earth laments about being stripped off through the destruction and clearance of vegetation covering it. She says “.... They have stripped me of every piece of cover that I had: tree, shrub, weed or grass. Wherever they see a bit of green on me, they rush to cut, slash, uproot and burn, never stopping to think where that which they grab came from” (35). Through this lamentation, Earth highlights the issue of destruction wrought on her by human beings to pave way for their profit generating activities such as farming, and establishment of structural projects. Earth’s lamentation also represents the helplessness, emptiness and devastation posed by environmental destruction. Capitalists’ quest for wealth generating establishments make her lack meaning, the ability to defend herself, rendering her desolate.

Environmental devastation that is heralded by incorrigible capitalistic pursuits in Bukenya’s *A Hole in the Sky* has also been depicted through creatures or animal characters: Monkey, Zebra, Impala, Hornbill, Grasshopper, and Lion. These characters are personified by the playwright as active participants in the ongoing debate about the impact of capitalist invasion on their habitat. This deliberate anthropomorphic crafting of characters illustrates the animist thought that all organisms are rightful owners of nature. The playwright achieves credibility by demonstrating first-hand narrations of the effects of environmental destruction through wildlife.

We analyse these creatures’ dialogues and actions and interpret them as ‘speaking and acting’ against existing challenges. Huggan and Tiffin contend in their analysis of Barbara Gowdy’s novel *The White Bone* that “Foremost among these challenges is the western approach to the reading of fictional animal tales featuring animal characters. Stories about animals have generally been written for children or, in cases such as George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*, the animals have been read as stand-ins for human beings” (149). We therefore interpret animal characters and their actions in

their animate nature and not as human metonyms or an allegory of human beings and traits.

The Creatures' narration, informs of the woes created by Tajeer and his foreign associates. The demand for timber and charcoal leads Tajeer into instructing Msumeno and his colleagues to cut down the forest. Kitavi says "They took it away. I heard people say Msumeno and his gang came, sawed down all the trees and took them away. They said Tajeer and his friends from overseas wanted them for timber for their furniture and buildings." (Bukonya 13-14). Msumeno's actions are akin to those of the Saw-man, Axe-man, and Panga-man. Bukonya writes:

SAW-MAN: We are not here to gaze at mountains. We need timber to make furniture, and build our homes.

AXE-MAN: We need charcoal, and firewood for our stoves.

PANGA-MAN: And poles for our huts. You just don't understand. (36)

Under Tajeer's instruction, Msumeno's actions seem to go beyond the need for timber and charcoal to the ruthless destruction of the non-human species. Tajeer's perception of natural resources as commodities opposes the animist thought that spiritualises every living thing and objects with a view to realising their traditional significance and advocating for their conservation. Garuba emphasises on nature and object's spirituality by arguing that "within the phenomenal world, nature and its objects are endowed with a spiritual life both simultaneous and coterminous with their natural properties. The objects thus acquire a social and spiritual meaning within the culture far in excess of their natural properties and their use value" (267). Tajeer's ignorance of the significance of nature's spirituality and his focus on how he could exploit it for selfish economic

gain portrays him as the ultimate capitalist. This depiction advances the playwright's portrayal of the effects of capitalist greed on non-human beings.

As the play progresses, the creatures narrate their ordeal, which reflects a depressing picture of the annihilation of the ecosystem. Their tribulations include killing, poaching of tusks and horns and displacement from their natural habitat. The portrayal evokes in the reader feelings of empathy. Through the dialogue below, readers understand the aesthetic importance of Bukenya's use of animist characters. Such portrayal focalises the painful realities of environmental exploitation, which could not have been achieved if the play depended only on human characters. The creatures allow us to visualise crude human actions on nature hence bringing meaning to Bukenya's play. They narrate:

IMPALA: I saw them kill Elephant, and hack off his tusks with a saw.

ZEBRA: I saw that too. Elephant was trumpeting loudly, angry at the deafening noise that the men's saws made as they mowed down the trees. Then a short, stocky fellow aimed a gun at him and shot him three times. Bang! Bang! Bang! Between the eyes.

MONKEY: I heard Elephant's howl, but I didn't get to see him. I was busy leaping from tree to tree. Each one I landed on seemed to be already swaying under the merciless grating of the saws. When there were no more trees, I just took to my paws and ran.

ZEBRA: The men who killed Elephants said they would make necklaces out of his tusks, for the wives of rich men to wear.

LION: Rhino is also dead. I saw a man hack off his horn. Said it would make a lovely handle for his dagger. (Bukenya 14-15)

In line with this dialogue, it is important to note that however limited the creatures' voices may appear, their dislocation and annihilation is positively impactful to the purpose Bukenya aims at achieving. He reveals the ecological repercussions posed by depletion of forests for timber production, construction, and agricultural expansion. More importantly, the playwright reveals how Tajeer and the Poachers embody unrestrained capitalism that is accountable for ecological destruction and poaching of wild animals. Through animal characters, the playwright breaks down to the reader the hidden realities of capitalist domination over nature and people.

3.3 Capitalist Repression and Oppression

This section delves into the concept of capitalist repression and oppression to further understand the significance of capitalism in environmental exploitation. We hinge our analysis on Karl Marx's conceptualisation of State Apparatus, particularly Repressive State Apparatuses. Louis Althusser in *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* postulates that, "the state is explicitly conceived as a *repressive* apparatus (70). The state in its repressive legal dimension comprises of the police, courts, prison and army and its activities are advanced by state and administration (Althusser 70). We note that there is a correlation between capitalism, the state, and the repressive state apparatuses in both plays. Althusser defines the state as "a repressive 'machine' that enables the dominant classes (in the nineteenth century the bourgeois class and the 'class' of big landowners) to ensure their domination over the working class in order to subject it to the process of extorting surplus value (that is to capitalist exploitation)" (70). Althusser envisions the correlation between capitalism with the repressive state apparatuses due to the way in which capitalists utilise state structures in their economic pursuits. By extension, nature

suffers repression and oppression because she is seen as a commodity in a capitalist system.

In the two plays, repressive structures have been used to intimidate human beings and exploit the environment. In *A Hole in the Sky*, Kiwiti's statement at the beginning of the play reveals a repressive structure in play. She says "No, no, Kibichi, please. Don't get violent. It won't help. Remember, they've got all the money and the power. And the men with guns and heavy boots are on their side" (Bukonya 1). This statement exposes Tajeer's abuse of power to arm-twist people who hold high positions in government to push for the *jatropha* project. He sends Jumbe, a local government representative, Mlinzi, a security officer and, Hatibu, his son who is a lawyer, to deliver his message and instruct Kikongwe's family to leave their land to pave way for the project. Jumbe, Mlinzi and Hatibu are Tajeer's agents of intimidation and exploitation used to forcefully evict Kibichi's family.

Kibichi's family undergoes the first displacement from their home near Lake Riziki after these capitalists destroy the lake during their oil exploration activities (7). These oppressive evictions characterise Tajeer's domination over commoners in his quest for wealth generating activities. Additionally, Mlinzi's and Hatibu's response to Kikongwe and Kibichi's conversation about Saro Wiwa illuminates capitalist's use of state power and the law to intimidate and repress those who oppose their encroachment plans. Bukonya writes:

MLINZI: That Saro Wiwa was just a trouble-maker. He was inciting the people against a law-abiding international investor.

HATIBU: Which is in direct contravention of the country’s law on incitement, as set out in Sections 94-96 of the Penal Code. Section 96, which criminalizes incitement to violence and disobedience, and states clearly (5)

First, Hatibu and Mlinzi misuse the law by trying to justify what they are doing to Saro Wiwa. Secondly, they use the law to threaten and warn Kibichi’s family against resisting eviction as they could also suffer a similar fate. Finally, under the guise of law, the duo demonstrates the consequences of not operating within the confines of the law, regardless of whether what is interpreted as law is genuinely lawful. From an eco-Marxist point of view, Hatibu and Mlinzi interpret Saro Wiwa’s actions as ironic because he leads an opposition against wanton environmental destruction that benefits a few people at the expense of the majority, nature and its inhabitants.

Althusser posits “the state is *its* state, the bourgeoisie’s state, in the sense that the bourgeoisie *holds* power and exercise it by way of Repressive State Apparatus and Ideological State Apparatuses” (80). This assumption is effective in the interpretation of Tajeer who through his state agents, wields power over Kibichi’s family by illegally evicting them. Jumbe says “Anyway, let bygones be bygones. We’re now focused on *jatropha*. You realize, Ndugu Kibichi, that you have seven days – maximum seven days – for you and your family to vacate this area so that Bwana Tajeer and his investor friends from overseas can start preparing the land for planting” (Bukenya 6).

Additionally, Mlinzi threatens that “if you fail to move, we’ll just have to uproot you, or let Tajeer’s tractors flatten you and your hut” (6). Tajeer is confident of his social and economic ability and his influential connections within the government, enabling him to wield power over both human and non-human entities. Such unlawful evictions and demolition threats engineered by capitalist structures are sufficient

pointers to their exploitation and oppression of vulnerable beings and the environment. Mlinzi's cruelty towards Kibichi's family reflects an exploitative trait. A state agent, he is Tajeer's tool for the execution of exploitative and environmentally harmful activities. Here, Kibichi's family vulnerability is akin to nature's inability to resist destructive invasions. This is evidenced by Lake Riziki's vulnerability to oil exploration and the replacement of indigenous forests with exotic trees and farmlands as narrated by Nguvu Kikongwe in his long trek in search for Tajeer's herbal medicines (90).

In Omtatah's *Voice of the People*, Boss and Sibuur demonstrate acts of repression through their heinous plan to silence Nasirumbi and Indondo for opposing their invasion of Simbi forest. Boss orders Sibuur to crush and silence them for opposing and sensitising the public about their secret plan (Omtatah 41). Sibuur exerts his power when he pulls out a gun to threaten Indondo when he realises that the latter has the blueprint of their plans. Another demonstration of repressive structures power is when Boss says "... To be on the safe side, Dalangi has to silence the busybody. As the paper's owner, he either does my bidding or Boss finishes him" (42). This sentiment reflects disregard for regulatory measures within the state to monitor and control the oppressive tendencies of a capitalist government. Boss's leadership symbolises a repressive structure bent on environmental destruction for personal gain. His abuse of power is in tandem with Althusser's claim that the bourgeoisie control structures of state power and uses state apparatus to repress and oppress people and nature.

In his concept of Aesthetics of Proximity, Iheka expounds on the connection between human and the non-human others in African Literature (23). He delves into the multi-species presence dimension of proximity where he gives agency to both human and non-human beings. Guided by this form of interconnectedness and agency,

the study engaged a multi-species approach to capitalist oppression and repression. We moved away from a sole analysis of human characters in relation to this form of repression and argue that the destruction of the ecosystem and its non-human occupants also amounts to a form of capitalist oppression and repression. Various instances in the texts represent this form of oppression and repression. The opening scene of Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* introduces us to the destruction and complete extinction of Lake Riziki and the creatures in it (Bukenya 4), Tajeer's thirst for forest land to start the *jathropa* project necessitates the dumping and blocking of streams for the construction of a field station (12), clearing of forest for timber, charcoal, twigs, and sawdust (13) and the displacement and killing of wild animals for tusks and horns (14-15). All these are forms of destruction forcefully meted out on natural resources and wild animals for generation of wealth. They portray instances of extinction, threatening of other natural spaces, displacement and killing of wild animals thereby posing as acts of repression.

3.4 Capitalist Expansionism: Insatiable Thirst for Profit and Wealth Accumulation

Joel Kovel in *The Enemy of Nature* questions the root cause of capitalists' unrestrained environmental destruction. He argues that "One way of seeing this is in terms of an economy geared to run on the basis of unceasing accumulation" (121). He explains how eco-destruction is inevitable because of economic regimes guided by the principle of "grow or die" (Kovel 121) where individual capitalists must grow their markets and profits or lose their place in capitalism. According to Kovel, the continuous accumulation for growth explains capitalist environmental destruction. Similarly, Marcuse avers, "It is inherently expansionist and therefore encroaches on natural space therefore subjecting nature to violence of exploitation" (qtd. in Muhia 130). Marcuse identifies capitalists' expansionist mindset as one poised towards endless accumulation

of wealth and profit. As a result of these unceasing capitalists' quest for profit, rampant environmental encroachment materialises.

Furthermore, Paul Burkett, acknowledges that environmental crisis is a product of capitalism. He outlines two types of environmental predicaments caused by capitalism postulated by Karl Marx as:

Crises of capital accumulation, based on imbalances between capital's material requirements and the natural conditions of raw materials production and a more general crisis in the quality of human-social development, stemming from the disturbances in the circulation of matter and life forces that are generated by capitalism's industrial division of town and country. (107)

From the foregoing, the first kind of environmental catastrophe infers that ecological crisis results from an imbalance caused by capitalists' excessive pursuit of capital. Burkett points out the correlation between ecological crises and capitalism, highlighting the ecological ramifications of capitalists' incessant demand for acquisition of wealth.

Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Omtatah's *Voice of the People* demonstrate the harmful effects of unbridled capitalism on the ecosystem. The plays grapple with the issue of capitalists' quest for capital, profit and wealth accumulation at the expense of environmental destruction. Bukenya underscores capitalists' accumulation through the antagonist in his play. Tajeer and those of his ilk greedily pursue wealth with no regard for the environment; they view any natural resources as a source of capital and profit.

Bukenya's play, *A Hole in the Sky* opens with Tajeer's bid to evict Kikongwe's family to create space for the *jatropha* project. This comes after they suffer a similar fate at the shores of Lake Riziki. The latter eviction is to pave way for oil exploration

and when Kiwiti says she thought that oil could only be explored from the ground, Kibichi responds saying, “Not anymore now. These days they go for it everywhere, and will do anything to get their hands on” (Bukonya 3). This depicts Tajeer’s greed, a trait demonstrated through his capitalist’s expansionist mentality. As Kovel points out, Tajeer’s value-term subsumes everything into the spell of capital sets going a kind of wheel of accumulation, from production to consumption and back (Kovel 153). Tajeer’s actions are in tandem with Kovel’s observation on capitalist production as a continuous, endless means of production that rotates from production to consumption and back, continuously. These continuous acts are profit driven. It further illustrates that capitalist expansionism knows no bounds as even the most delicate sources of livelihood are rendered meaningless for wealth’s sake. Additionally, Kikongwe and Saro Wiwa’s dialogue exposes Tajeer as a ruthless expansionist:

KIKONGWE: Hot indeed, and it burnt out our lives and our livelihoods by the sacred lake. The fish were there, floating on the slime, but they were dead, and black. The water was neither drinkable nor navigable.

SARO: Now you have killed the fish. What shall we eat? You’ve blackened and poisoned the water. What shall we drink? You say you’re making money, but we don’t see even a penny of it. We can’t eat your money; we can’t drink your oil. (Bukonya 4-5)

This excerpt points out that Tajeer’s oil exploration activities turn eco-cidal as they destabilise the lake, a habitat for water creatures. In essence, capitalist conquest of oil in the lake has resulted in its eventual extinction and inability to sustain lives. Lynda Wainaina in *Impacts of the Southern Bypass Road Construction Through Ngong Forest on the African Crowned Eagle, Nairobi County*, points out that, “in the more recent

decades, some of the most serious (forest) fragmentation has been caused by urban sprawl: new development that consumes land at a rate faster than that at which population is growing” (14). It is, however, worth noting that apart from urban developments, commercial agriculture, herding, and charcoal burning are also reasons for forest fragmentation. Based on Wainaina’s arguments, environmental spaces and occupants suffer loss and extinction because of infrastructural development. Omtatah’s *Voice of the People* reveals how Simbi forest has suffered loss and a looming extinction owing to capitalists’ doings. In addition to Boss’s quest to build a resort on the forest land, the forest has already been encroached upon, leading to the development of a suburb and a town within its borders as depicted in the following excerpt:

SIBUOR: Have you forgotten that this suburb, everything in it including this expansive office block owned by The Voice of the People, are on what used to be the greater Simbi Forest?

INDONDO: It’s not just this suburb, but the entire town. The town expanded as the forest receded. (Omtatah 31-32)

In this dialogue, Sibuur and Indondo express how Simbi’s previous and continuous invasion threatens its survival. The excerpt also presents a looming environmental apocalypse begot by endless development projects that, to a greater extent, are initiated by capitalist agents for economic gains. Capitalists’ expansionism in the environmental sector manifests itself through acts of corruption for profit and wealth gain. John Girling in the preface to *Corruption, Capitalism and Democracy* argues, “Corruption is the illegitimate reminder of the values of the market place (everything can be bought and sold) that in the age of capitalism increasingly, even legitimately, permeate formerly autonomous political and social spheres” (Girling vii). Girling’s statement highlights

corruption's presence in the capitalist system and accentuates the enormous extent to which the vice is rooted. It alludes to the fact that it is a malpractice geared towards self-enrichment.

Bukenya and Omtatah's plays mirror corrupt malpractices and their impacts on the ecosystem. Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* reflects how graft and political interference has marred various government institutions and have had far-reaching effects on different sectors, including the environment. A meeting between Tajeer and his colleague investors: Taiku, Mwekezi and Jasirimali reveals how this unethical conduct has led to environmental destruction. As they dialogue about the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report, we realise what crippled the National Environment Management Agency (NEMA), a government body mandated to oversee environmental protection and conservation. Tajeer reveals that political interference has curtailed the employment of professional environmentalists and hence the employment of unqualified personnel who are not knowledgeable and can be manipulated. The dialogue between Taiku and Tajeer exposes how corruption in this environmental body breeds environmental destruction:

TAIKU: How's that? I thought they always appointed experienced professional environmentalists.

TAJEER: That's the way it should be. But you can't always rule out political interference and other shenanigans. That often works to our advantage. If those guys knew and insisted on absolutely safe operations: minimal atmospheric emissions, a hundred per cent effluent treatment, zero water blockage and pollution, zero erosion potential, minimal noise pollution and the like If they

insisted on all this, very few of the factories and other businesses operating in this country would be licensed.

TAIKU: But I think some of our colleagues sometimes push the bottom line a bit too low. Like the guys who had a really toxic factory built bang in the middle of a residential area. You wonder how they got away with that.

MWEKEZI: You mean the fellows in Bhopal? I suppose they caught the NEMA out there napping or the NEMA chose to nap, or maybe NEMA was induced to nap.

TAIKU: But how can you afford to nap about the health and life of thousands of people? (Bukenya 45-47)

This dialogue illustrates the impact corruption and nepotism that manifest through the employment of unqualified staff has on the environment. These environmental ramifications are witnessed because these personnel are the sole decision makers and, hence, any decision based on ignorance and corruption leads to inevitable environmental destruction. Moreover, Omtatah in *Voice of the People* reveals how corruption rooted in the judicial system serves to benefit the political class and undermine environmental protection efforts. While Nasirumbi and The Mothers' Front go to court to seek for official orders demanding for Simbi forest's protection, they are dismissed on the basis that they lack legal obligation. Nasirumbi and Indondo's ensuing conversation reveals unethical cases in the judicial system:

INDONDO: On the contrary, that verdict was written long before you presented your case.

NASIRUMBI: What do you mean?

INDONDO: The judge, like anybody with the hunter's meat in his mouth, will not say or do anything against the hunter.

INDONDO: Boss is the law. The courts are his puppets. (Omtatah 47-48)

Therefore, when contextualising the textual evidence, it becomes evident that there are legal loopholes and malpractices that weaken Nasirumbi and The Mothers' Front efforts in environmental protection. Ironically Boss, the head of state, is granted a greenlight to continue with his 'development' on Simbi forest.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter investigated how capitalist environmental destruction, as a theme, has been conveyed in the plays under study by use of characterisation. The conservationist characters articulate degradation from a conservation point of view. Based on their dependence on nature, they engage in activism to oppose environmental destruction. The eco-destructors present acts of environmental destruction through the influence of the principles of capitalism on their actions against nature. They engage in destruction for enrichment. Animist characters emerge as those characters who are endowed with animist qualities. Bukenya has allegorised these characters to represent acts of oppression and destruction wrought on them and their habitats by capitalists. Grounding our analysis on the ecofeminist and eco-Marxist theories, we explicated the correlation between ecological crises and capitalist systems of production. Through a multi-species critical analysis, we critiqued how some characters presented undertake acts of capitalist driven environmental destruction, repression, oppression and capitalist expansionism in the plays. In the next chapter, we analyse how dramatic structure and dramatic action portray acts of patriarchal exploitation and its resultant ecological

ramifications in the selected plays. In this view, we gain a deeper understanding on the issues of ecofeminism raised by both playwrights.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNCOVERING PATRIARCHAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN AND NATURE THROUGH DRAMATIC STRUCTURE AND ACTION

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we examined Bukenya and Omtatah's deployment of characters to give a reflection of capitalistic environmental destruction. The chapter revealed how characters abuse their social, economic, and political positions to facilitate the implementation of their heinous schemes. Further, we examined how the playwrights present capitalist oppression, repression and expansionism. This chapter analyses how drama, through its structure and dramatic action, demonstrate patriarchal exploitation of women vis-à-vis its ecological implications in the selected plays of Bukenya and Omtatah. This is based on the argument that dramatic structure adopted by each playwright speaks to their own style and approach in the enactment of their intended discourse. There is a conscious employment of dramatic structure and action in bringing out the relationship between patriarchal exploitation of women and nature. The chapter also interrogates how exploitation, as occasioned by the male characters, creates an agency for resistance and protection of nature on the female characters.

4.2 Understanding Structure and Dramatic Action

To understand structure and dramatic action, there is need to revisit the definition of drama as a creative composition designed for performance that utilises action and dialogue to arouse emotions in the audience and convey messages. Furthermore, drama has been explained as a form of theatrical performance imitating action that is enacted by actors before an audience. According to Jackson Barry in *Dramatic Structure: The Shaping of Experience*, drama is meant to signify a play

performed by actors on a stage (10). It calls for a performance of actions that can be observed by an audience. Therefore, it means that written forms of drama (plays) achieve their full dramatic sense through stage enactment of textual actions by characters.

The structure of a drama and dramatic action form part of the basic elements of drama. Barry and Paul Levitt in *A Structural Approach to the Analysis of Drama* provide an insightful approach to the understanding of structure. Their definition of the term is drawn from an attempt to look at the word 'structure' in its separate form. While Barry examines it in its verb form, Levitt focuses on its verb and noun forms. On the one hand, Barry argues that "to structure" in drama means "to arrange" (Barry 12). Levitt on the other hand posits that "whether used as a noun (the structure of....) or as a verb (to structure....), the term refers to how something is organized" (Levitt 14). These stipulations on 'structure' direct us to question how and what is being arranged or organised in drama, hence, helping us comprehend structure in drama and specifically in the selected plays.

Barry further defines dramatic structure as "designating the totality of relationships in each play, which may include the gross, obvious, and basic structure of incidents as well as the structure of an individual sentence, the structure of a costume, or of a stage platform" (Barry 12). Barry emphasises on the entirety of the correlating parts of the drama; events and occurrences, sentences, costume representation of dramatic characters, and the performance stage, which combine to form the whole play. For Levitt, dramatic structure has to do with the scenes of a play and how those scenes are organised and related (Levitt 10). His sentiments focus on the relationship and significance of scenes in forming dramatic text, and further points to the structuring of

the text, which is the process of organising and arranging its various parts into a whole final form.

Moreover, Mugubi categorises structure in literature as an aspect of form and defines it as “the planned physical and internal framework of a literary work” (15). He anchors his definition on the physical appearance of a literary piece as well as its internal structure. Therefore, the outward design or pattern of a work of art and its internal structure has to do with “how the ideas at hand are developed from stanza to stanza (in a poem) or from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, chapter to chapter (in prose) or act to act, scene to scene, sequence to sequence (in drama) (Mugubi 15). These parts make up the structure of a literary piece. Mugubi’s explanation about the structure of a literary work of art helps the artist convey his/her ‘content’ as well as influence the reader’s comprehension of the message.

Mugubi also underscores the importance of examining both internal and external patterns, where the logic of the physical and internal plan gives a clear sense of meaning. He argues that “the structure would therefore have helped in exciting the reader’s mind and to try and establish the relationship between the form and content. Such a structure would therefore, in a way, have contributed to clarity” (16). This would mean the ability to logically structure elements such as acts, scenes, sequences, or episodes to give a clarity of the content or thematic concerns of a play. Moreover, Mugubi insists that “Artistic freedom may lead writers to use titles that may not directly demonstrate the text’s content. Hence, writers will mostly choose titles that are enigmatic and curious at the same time. This is a good strategy to lure readers into reading a text in order to discover how the title is related to the content or vice-versa” (24). Mugubi contends that titles are important properties in structural analysis of any literary material as they expose the material’s physical planning. It leads to

understanding content by raising our curiosity to question its relation to the intended message.

Gustav Freytag is credited for the formulation of Freytag's Pyramid that is based on his analysis of Aristotle's tragedy. The concept is usually applied in dramatic appraisal as it represents the dramatic flow of actions in a graphical manner. In support of Freytag's concept, Barry posits that "dramatic structure is not a visual shape or line, but graphic representation of non-visual phenomena, such as the graph of a rising and falling action in a play emphasised by Freytag and his followers, has long been a popular useful visual aid" (Barry 25). He emphasises on the significance of Freytag's pyramid in dramatic analysis.

Although several scholars have used Freytag's framework in their analysis of the structure of a drama, others hold different views about it. Levitt, for instance, disagrees with the interpretation of Freytag's graphical presentation of actions as the representation of the structure of a drama. In his argument, he equates rising and falling actions in a drama to increasing and decreasing emotional involvement, arguing that emotional involvement should not be confused with a play's structure. He argues that "the pattern which results from rising and falling action is not the structure of a play. Clearly, such a pattern represents only a cardio-graphic reading of a play's rhythms" (Levitt 13). For Levitt, rising and falling actions entail emotions that create a play's rhythmic pattern and not a play's structure. Therefore, Freytag's graphical components represent the flow of emotions from the beginning to the end of a dramatic text and not its structure.

As noted earlier, drama is an imitation of action. Freytag's technique, based on the study of Aristotle's tragedy, represents the flow of actions or plot in a play. Further,

the theatrical performance of drama on stage entails an enactment of certain actions by actors. These arguments underscore the existence of dramatic action in drama – that drama entails actions. Oscar Brockett and Robert Ball in *The Essential Theatre* expound on Aristotle’s conceptualisation of action, arguing that “by “action” he did not mean physical movement. Rather, he was concerned not only with *what* characters do but also with *why* they do it” (36). The emphasis is, every character’s action has either a meaning, purpose or intention. The *why* question insists on the relation of dramatic actions to a particular message or thematic concern.

In *The Theatre: An Introduction*, Brockett advances the concept of dramatic action by highlighting its characteristics. He postulates that a dramatic action should be purposeful (27). This aspect coincides with Francis Ferguson’s assumption on the steps that build up a dramatic action. For Ferguson, *purpose* means “awareness of some desire or goal” (qtd in. *The Essential Theatre* 36). Therefore, dramatic action should have an intended impact and goal on readers or audiences to arouse feelings and attitudes.

Brockett further contends that dramatic action should be varied. He emphasizes on the importance of varying of plots, characters, and themes to avoid monotony and prediction. Dramatic action should also engage and maintain interest. Here, characters should provoke, maintain audience attentiveness, and arouse interests and concerns. Brockett concludes that, “dramatic action should be probable: all elements should be logically consistent” (28). To Brockett, the logical consistence of dramatic action enables the audience or reader to comprehend the drama’s thematic concern.

4.3 Examining Dramatic Structure's Demonstration of Patriarchal Exploitation of Women and Nature

The selected plays address the issue of patriarchal exploitation of women and nature. This exploitation is inter-twinned as Davion posits, “the domination of nature by human beings comes from a patriarchal world view, the same world view that justifies the domination of women” (9). The plays depict deliberate abuses that precipitate the need for urgent resistance through female agency. The influence of patriarchy on women characters and nature in each play enriches the analysis of how the two playwrights utilise dramatic structure to expose patriarchal exploitation while maintaining an ecological discourse through their selected works.

Matandela defines patriarchy as a “system of power and inequality that gives unequal social, economic and political opportunities and access in favour of men and operates at the disadvantage of women and other marginalized groups” (13). Therefore, building on Matandela's definition, we conceptualise patriarchal exploitation as including all forms of ill-treatment meted out on women, nature and others who live on the periphery. These subjective positions render them helpless as they live in lower levels of the social, economic, and political systems. The study traces the patterns of exploitation through the organisation of components that make up the selected plays' structures.

The opening scene in Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* presents an ecofeminist patriarchal setup. In this scene, which takes place in Kibichi's homestead, we meet Kiwiti, his wife, whose nurturing depends on the surrounding environment. The mother instructs her daughters Kijani and Kazizi, to collect water from the lake and vegetables from the garden. This action can be interpreted as a call to the young girl to familiarise herself with the concept of nurturing. The scene also exposes the patriarchal nature of

the society where male dominance is evident. Dialogue between characters drives the scene's plot and unfold instances of exploitation of women and nature.

Jumbe, Mlinzi and Hatibu represent a capitalist voice while Kibichi and Kikongwe represent old male traditionalists who oppose the exploitation of nature. The former trio's exploitation is exposed through their presence at Kibichi's home to evict the family for capitalist reasons. They extend their dominance to the two women presented in the scene, Kiwiti and her daughter Kijani, when they speak up in defense of the polluted water and garden. Besides this patriarchal perspective, ecological destruction is argued from Carlassare's theoretical standpoint that, "systems of domination such as capitalism, patriarchy and imperialism are ecologically destructive" (92). Kijani and Kiwiti fearlessly question the three men, an act of resistance that is met with disapproval. Jumbe's inference validates this form of patriarchal silencing and stereotyping. He says, "Ndugu Kibichi, your ladies are full of questions. Our womenfolk used not to be so argumentative (Bukenya 9).

Jumbe's sentiment reveals a patriarchal society that expects women not to question anything. Zacharia Mokuia and Evans Nyamwaka in *Challenges Facing Women Scaling to Political Leadership in Post-colonial Kenya: A Case of Gusiiland, South Western Kenya, 1963 – 2013* posit that in a patriarchal set up, "women are expected to be the ones to nurture and take care of the home and they are not expected to be vocal in the presence of men" (110). Kijani and Kiwiti's silencing can be equated to the silencing of nature's voices, and its subjection to patriarchal dominance. The capitalistic patriarchal system that entitles Tajeer, Hatibu, Jumbe, and Mlinzi to evict people, exploit the 'idle land' and perform an oil exploration on the lake subjugate women who attempt to resist these unsanctioned socio-economic adversities.

Furthermore, this socio-economic system that has defined gender roles is the same system that entrenches environment devastation. Ashaolu argues, “women groan under the burden of ecological degradation which consumes her, her environment and incapacitates her goal to self-fulfillment” (45). The playwright structures the first scene to depict a double exploitation sanctioned by the patriarchal system. The dominance of male characters, especially the capitalists or Eco destructors advances Bukenya’s ecofeminist discourse while revealing how patriarchal exploitation is instigated by the same characters under the pretext of domination.

Bukenya advances patriarchal domination in the second scene of his play through the Loggers. This creative arrangement allows the playwright to continue the discourse of exploitation of nature. The Loggers collective, which is inclusive of Saw-man, Axe-man and Panga-man, condemn the environmental activist character, Wamiti Maua. The collective uses words that would normally be considered abusive to the female gender to subdue Maua’ voice. Collectively, they say “Mad woman! Slut! Sentimentalist! Subversive agent! (Bukenya 36). As a female activist, Maua is called names when she speaks against ecological destruction. Earth laments that “Wamiti Maua begged and pleaded, shouted and yelled, telling them not to strip me naked of my green kanzu but they called her names” (37). The ‘mad woman’ and ‘slut’ labelling from the feminism angle emerges as a male practice in the play to downgrade Maua because to them, she does not act and behave as expected of a woman in that society.

Bukenya begins the second scene with a meeting between elements; Air, Water, Earth and Fire. Air ushers in the confrontation between Wamiti Maua and the Loggers. Bukenya introduces the scene with the caption, “Meeting of the Elements: An inconvenient Truth.” This is in line with Levitt’s argument on the need to interrogate how structural parts are organised and related to offer the desired dramatic effect. In

addition, the appropriation of natural elements that support human life in the play reveals the playwright's creative thoughts in creating visual images of ecological significance. Through earth's lamentation elaborated above, Bukenya also deliberately adopts elemental characters as voices of patriarchal exploitation faced by Maua, to reinforce the text's structure and to enhance rendition of the discourse.

The elements appear to relate to Maua's pain as she strives to protest against their devastation and to agitate for their preservation. Water says, "They beat her and locked her up in order to silence her. But she wouldn't be silenced.... These creatures are so greedy and selfish that they'll never do anything that goes against their immediate desires. Some even deny that it's the trash they dump on us that has caused the problems on the planet." (37-39). In their dialogue, they expose an unending sequence of Maua's exploitation and their torture in the hands of agents of capitalistic exploitation. This structuring and language choice present a unique focalisation that enhances voicing of ecofeminist discourse. Patrice Pavis in *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts and Analysis* contends that a play's structure, "indicates that the system's constituent parts are organized in a way that gives meaning to the whole" (119). Therefore, the assembly of elements called an "*indaba*" (Bukenya 23) reveals an ecological balance destabilised by pollution and exploitation.

The elements address each other as brother and sister, symbolising a familial harmony disrupted by "the two-legged creatures" (28-29). The dialogue between elements indeed reveals to the audience an inconvenient truth behind the exploitation of nature. This revelation is reflected through the forms lamented by every element. At the end of the scene, Earth says "The more you slash and gash and gully and gore and bore into me, the closer you bring me and all Nature's wonders, including yourself, to annihilation" (42-43). Here, Earth notes that annihilation would be the ultimate

consequence of nature's destruction. According to Barry, such an arrangement of incidents builds to a climax in a play (Barry 12). We, therefore, contend that Bukenya makes up a complex whole from the dramatic elemental scene to create meaning, allowing us to understand the discourse that is imminent in the play.

In *A Hole in the Sky* and *Voice of the People*, the playwrights craft their scenes and sequences to build up their plays. As argued by Pavis, this structural crafting carries meaning. Patriarchal exploitation appears to be the basic thematic concern derived from the plays' scenes and sequences as combined whole. This is illustrated through the functions that every scene or sequence serve. The concept of *functions* as conceptualised by Levitt emphasises on the need to analyze the functions of each component that makes up the whole dramatic structure. He posits that such "relationship inheres in function. It is stated this way because to understand how scenes are related to the play and to each other, we must understand the function of each of the scenes" (Levitt 22). Therefore, analysing the function of every scene enables the appropriation of dramatic structure in understanding how patriarchal exploitation is presented through *A Hole in the Sky* and *Voice of the People* entire dramatic structures.

Levitt proceeds to guide us that to understand each scenic function, we need to understand "why and how something is said, where it is said and done and when it is said and done" (Levitt 22). Answering these questions provides a leeway to link the scene or sequence to its contribution in understanding thematic concerns derived from the whole dramatic structure. Following this postulation, Omtatah's *Voice of the People* is structured into eight sequences that illustrate women and nature exploitation. The first sequence introduces us to the conflict between Nasirumbi, the leader of the Mothers' Front, Boss, and Sibuur, his right-hand man. This confrontation is occasioned by Nasirumbi's opposition of Boss's Resort Paradiso Africana project that is set to lead

to the hiving off of Simbi forest to create space for its development. The sequence also introduces us to Boss and Sibuur's perception of women that depicts their patriarchal entitlement and domineering attitudes. Boss says that The Mothers' Front are nothing but "mere women, what can they do? (Omtatah 03). This statement outrightly signifies his perception of women which resonates with patriarchy's view on women.

The first scene functions as an introductory to what the play is about. From the dialogue with Mr. Fix It in the second scene, which is conducted via telephone, Boss betrays his obsession with material signifiers of wealth and wastage. The two are negotiating on a villa in London which Boss intends to acquire for his wife on her birthday. He mentions "Swiss accounts, a castle in Spain, a townhouse in Paris, an Oceanside villa in France and a 32-room chateau in Switzerland" (2). This wealth presents Boss as bourgeoisie and we expect to see this trait play out in the drama. This presentation sets the wheel of events as he strives to acquire Simbi Forest and conquer Nasumbiri's resistance.

In the second sequence, actions take place at Indondo's office. This sequence extends patriarchy's view of women through Sibuur's inference of Nasirumbi as a "silly woman" (Omtatah 24). Although from his dialogue with Indondo, Sibuur seems to support Nasirumbi and the Mothers' Front movement, we realise that he hides his true intentions. *Voice of the People's* subsequent sequence presents patriarchy's value dualism concept. Warren argues that in patriarchy's hierarchical system, men occupy the top and women the bottom of the pyramid. Sibuur's inference uncovers a male domineering hierarchical position. He incites Boss by telling him that "Son of thunder, a mere woman cannot prevent total men, with money and power, from crowing in their backyard!" (46).

Sibuor's references to women as 'mere' and men as 'total men' resonates with Warren's argument that in a patriarchal system, value is given to and associated with men due to their top position in the pyramid. From an ecofeminist position, the inference emerges as discriminatory to women, signifying an incomplete composition while 'total men' portentously suggests a male view of themselves as complete, in need of no one's, especially, society's approval. It also concurs with Mokuwa and Nyamwaka's position that, "patriarchy has transformed male and female into men and women (respectively) and constructs the hierarchy of gender relations where men are privileged" (Mokuwa and Nyamwaka 110). Hence, these value dualism relations create disparity and a basis for women exploitation because men are given more value and status. Moreover, it is the privilege given to men that makes Boss feel bitter over what Nasirumbi has subjected them to. Boss says:

It is not that am scared; I am bitter that a small woman like Nasirumbi should cause me so much trouble. A mere woman! One who should be on her knees, queuing at the end of a long line, begging me for favours! She'll know who I am in this part of the world! (Omtatah 67)

Boss's words reveal that in a patriarchal system, men have been programmed and endowed with an ego that situates them at the top of the pyramid. To them, women belong to the bottom of the hierarchy, are inferior and should always beg from men. This appears to be the reason why to Boss, nature occupies the same position as women. Ashaolu observes, "women and nature occupy the dual position of the subjugated under patriarchy whether local or global, systemic or individual, such that patriarchal system benefits from the oppression of both. The double subjugation occurs because they operate a symbiotic relationship such that one depends on the other" (42). The acts of exploitation of nature in both plays are informed by this perception. Sibuor refers to

Simbi forest as an “idle land” (28) and similarly in *A Hole in the Sky*, Mlinzi says that Tajeer has been allocated an “idle land” by the government (Bukonya 07). Sibuur and Mlinzi’s view about nature as mere spaces demonstrate their ignorance to its ecological significance and justifies their subjugation of these spaces. We reason that this perception stems from an enabling social structure that allows such men to dominate and subsequently aids in advancing un-abated patriarchal exploitations.

In the sixth sequence, actions ensue at Nasirumbi’s house. Nasirumbi confronts Sibuur about what happened during the resort’s ground-breaking ceremony. She laments about how Sibuur degrades her image as a woman and her marital status. In response, he derogatively refers to her and the members of The Mothers Front as “whores and whoremongers (Omtatah 76) and calls the women, “the epitome of evil” (77). This exploitation progresses to violence in the seventh sequence when Nasirumbi’s house is vandalised. This is orchestrated by Boss and Sibuur to avenge her defiance against their selfish desires. This invasion of her personal space, which signifies her purity and safety, is exploitative. This exchange symbolises an assault on Nasirumbi’s image as a woman. The two men also forcefully invade Simbi forest. Like Nasirumbi, the forest is helpless against men with power. While patriarchal tribulations culminate in the prior sequences, this scene gives those who are subjugated hope, as it signifies their triumph over these social barriers.

Both playwrights demonstrate ways in which female characters develop an agency for resistance, thus revealing a shift in patriarchal positions. This reflects an ecological consequence depicted through the correlation between patriarchal emancipation of women and nature’s liberation. These acts of emancipation arise from characters’ acts of challenging patriarchal structures and constructs that socially restrict women and destroy nature in the plays. The liberation of both women and nature can

be interpreted through Lynne Ford's argument that "because of the hypothesizing of women as feminine and nature conceptualized as feminine, the liberation of one cannot be achieved without the liberation of the other" (26). Both plays present forms of resistance in sequences through their structures.

A Hole in the Sky's opening scene expresses resistance through Kiwiti and Kijani's fearless questioning of Tajeer's actions and even daring to tell off Tajeer regardless of his status. Kijani says "I'm going to tell off Tajeer right now..... that what they're doing is stupid, dangerous, murderous, and suicidal (Bukonya 17). Bukonya describes this dramatic action as "Firmly and deliberately" to demonstrate that regardless of the patriarchal constructs that restricts women from questioning men, the women defy these set standards. Kijani embodies a feminine voice determined to confront discriminatory capitalists such as Tajeer for their hideous acts against nature. Kijani heeds to Merchant's ecofeminist advocacy for the liberation of women through overthrowing economic and social hierarchies that exploit women and nature (Merchant 194). Bukonya deliberately portrays Kijani as having a strong spirit and crafts her character from a feminist angle, enabling her to advocate for the preservation of nature.

The second sequence presents Wamiti Maua persuading the Loggers not to cut down the trees, a daring move in trying to engage men who embody a patriarchal mindset. In her continued emancipatory pursuit, the third scene shows Kijani and Kitavi fiercely engaging Tajeer, condemning him over plans to evict them from their home to create space for the *jatropha* project. Bukonya narrates;

KIJANI: We, too, need to discuss a few things with him.

KITAVI: Yes, we would like to have a few words with Mr. Tajeer.

TAJEER: Do you know who Mr. Tajeer is, you scruffy scarecrows?

KIJANI: There's no need to call anyone names, Mr. Tajeer.

TAJEER: I'll call you anything I like no one ever barges into my presence without permission, the way you did just now.

KIJANI: Is it worse that your trespassing on our ancestral land, threatening to plant your *jatropha* upon our hallowed graves?

KIJANI: The whole of our existence is being destroyed. We've got no water. The stream from which we used to draw our water has been blocked.

KITAVI: We've got no firewood, too. Your Msumeno, and his colleagues cut down and took away the forest. (50-54)

Tajeer's reference to Kitavi and Kijani as "scruffy scarecrows" in the excerpt builds the discriminatory attitude he holds against women as the play progresses. He dismisses the two girls because they are advocating for nature, revealing his disregard for the environment. The last scene marks the climax as it presents the emancipation of women and nature, through Kijani's success in breaking patriarchal structures to being crowned to lead the people in reforestation. Bukenya succeeds in illustrating the liberation of women from patriarchal constructs by appointing Tajeer to lead Kijani's crowning. This is in contrast to the onset of the play when Tajeer perpetuates the exploitation of women and partakes in acts of ecological destruction. He says:

Ah, my healing spirit! Carrier of the miraculous cure! Here, receive this.
(*Tajeer and Kikongwe dress Kijani in the green robe. Tajeer points at his chair*) Sit, Nyanya! Sit, please so I can pay you homage. (*Kijani sits. Tajeer startles her and the whole gathering by falling on his knees before her*)

(Takes a small green branch out of the askari's packet and offers it to Kijani).

Here, take it, please, and lead us in the healing and the renewal. (107)

Tajeer's act of kneeling before Kijani represents the beginning of respect for nature. The capitalist pays homage to a representative of mother nature, as exhibited through Bukenya's revelation of a positive move towards environmental conservation. Ironically, Tajeer's henchmen who held a similar view of women at the beginning of the play also besiege Kijani to lead. Jumbe, Mlinzi and Bawabu in a collective chorus tell Kijani "Lead, beautiful one of Esibila, lead. Fear not, daughter of thunder and the cloud deities. Beckon with the green branch and bring the rains back to the parched land and the depleted rivers" (109). Tajeer and his henchmen's actions and words are symbolic of women's liberation and consequently that of nature. Kijani's crowing and mandate to lead in the healing and renewal symbolises the breaking of patriarchal barriers that denies women leadership mantles. Similarly, by saying 'healing and renewal' Tajeer alludes to nature's liberation and resuscitation through reforestation and conservation. This act of nature's liberation is also exemplified through his calling off of the *jatropha* project depicted in the last scene:

KIWITI: We've got nothing against your *jatropha* project but

TAJEER: Oh, forget about *jatropha*! I'm scrapping the whole thing.

KIBICHI: But that should not be necessary, Bwana Tajeer. I've been researching about *jatropha*, and now I know it's got its good uses, too.

TAJEER: I've got a much better idea. It makes even better business sense than the *jatropha*. Hatibu, tell our friends about our new plans. (104)

Similarly, *Voice of the People's* structure shows instances that reveal shifting patriarchal trends that also create positive impact on the ecosystem. Its flow of events

from the onset to the end of the play embodies Nasirumbi's struggle for patriarchal emancipation and nature's defense, demonstrated through her fierce opposition of Boss's invasion of Simbi forest. Nasirumbi's activism reflects Gaard's conceptualization of ecofeminism as a movement that advocates for the eradication of all forms of exploitation (Gaard 01). The beginning of the play introduces the image of Nasirumbi as a fearless woman who questions the patriarchal status quo. The second sequence introduces the *Voice of the People* newspaper. As a medium of change, the paper allows Nasirumbi to work with the daily's editor, Indondo, to voice her struggle and enhance her quest for her freedom and that of Simbi forest and consequently, dismantle social structures set against women.

Indondo's plot with Nasirumbi affirms the ecofeminist rejection of the essentialist thought argued by Susan Griffin, Janis Birkeland and Ynestra King. These ecofeminists oppose the essentialist view that puts women as more aware and protective of the environment than men (Griffin X). Indondo breaks this barrier by pushing for the fall of Boss' regime that is patriarchal and eco-destructive.

While Nasirumbi and The Mothers Front's environmental activities anchor on environmental conservation through reforestation and rallying of rural women to plant trees at the beginning of the play (Omtatah 7), the subsequent sequences function to demonstrate the impact of this resistance against those who endanger nature. Boss and Sibuur's actions build this sequence. The women depict a dependence on nature for the accomplishment of their nurturing responsibilities and these innate instincts make them advocate for the protection of Simbi forest. As illustrated, their actions create tension between the leading distractors of natural harmony; Boss and Sibuur. Through the two characters, Omtatah presents the fallout as follows;

BOSS: Do you realize we are dealing with a very radical group which believes it can govern from the streets?

SIBUOR: That's why we must destroy them!

BOSS: We must fight these women with intelligence. Force is necessary, yes, but not sufficient...not currently. Boss will proceed with utmost caution. (44)

Voice of the People's fourth sequence begins with a ruling made by the court denying Nasirumbi and The Mothers' Front the authority to stop the invasion of Simbi forest. However, in an adamant and witty move, Nasirumbi seeks to publish an article with the *Voice of the People* to collect signatures that will support their activism. It is in this sequence that they sort to change their tactics to counter Boss, who issues threats to the publisher against publishing anything defamatory about their project. In the fifth sequence, Indondo orchestrates Boss' and Sibuur's downfall of by persuading of Boss to agree to a crowning ceremony conducted by a World Bank representative. Indondo and Nasumbiri's plan is to have him crowned at night with lights switched off, then on, to signify a new dawn. However, while we witnessed Boss's downfall in the last sequence this downfall, the playwright builds suspense through the events building up to this moment in the preceding sequences.

Omtatah highlights the arduous and protracted nature of freedom, as exemplified by the journey undertaken by Nasirumbi. In the sixth and seventh sequences, Nasirumbi is verbally attacked by Boss and Sibuur during Resort Paradiso Africana project ground-breaking. Boss also physically assaults Nasirumbi (90). She, however, remains unshakably focused on ending Boss's exploitation. In the last sequence, actions take place at the National stadium. It is Boss's crowning day and the ceremony begins with speeches by Indondo, Sibuur, and Boss before the crowning

moment. Actions in the sequence symbolize Boss's downfall and Nasirumbi's triumph. Although we are left in suspense, we argue that Nasirumbi's firm opposition and determination to end Boss' exploitative regime, her gender notwithstanding, is a breakthrough in challenging patriarchy.

4.4 An Ecofeminist Perspective: The Examination of Patriarchal Exploitation through Dramatic Actions

In *A Hole in the Sky* and *Voice of the People*, Bukenya and Omtatah deploy dramatic actions that accentuate patriarchal exploitation and its ramifications on nature. The characters engage in actions that demonstrate exploitative acts entrenched on gender dimensions and through the destruction of nature. This study questioned exploitative instances that are anchored on what characters do and why. Brockett and Ball emphasize that every character's actions have meaning and relates to a particular subject matter. In seeking to establish these thematic concerns, arguments are premised on the feminist perspective of ecofeminism to unravel patriarchal influence of characters' actions. These actions are interpreted in relation to the dimensions of patriarchy as an oppressive conceptual framework as put forward by Karen Warren.

Voice of the People's sixth sequence presents acts of exploitation wrought on Nasirumbi and the Mothers' Front during Resort Paradiso Africana project's groundbreaking ceremony. As Nasirumbi reads aloud, she also mimics what was published in the newspapers and broadcasted on radio and television as attributed to Sibuur. This portrayal depict Sibuur's actions enacted during the event:

NASIRUMBI: *(She pulls out a newspaper from her handbag, opens it, looks for the section and reads aloud, mimicking an agitated politician addressing a large crowd. She simultaneously taunts him.)* I salute you, dear patriots. It's

your attendance in such large numbers and your strong solidarity behind our leaders that keep the wheel of progress moving uphill.

NASIRUMBI: *(After a longish pause, she continues reading)* “whores and whoremongers won’t win against progress, order and the rule of law! Our patriotic society has no place for those ill-informed and immoral women who justify their existence by masquerading as environmentalists and champions of social justice.”

SIBUOR: *(Visibly cornered)* I didn’t say that. I swear by the heavens!

NASIRUMBI: *(Continuing to read)* “If a woman wishes to lead us, first, she must be married. She has to be brought here by her husband. That’s tradition. Nasirumbi’s unbecoming conduct is inconsistent with the nobility of African womanhood. Due to her lack of respect for men, they will always use her as a hospital bed and move on.”

SIBUOR: I swear by God, I can’t say such unprintables! Not even in private!

NASIRUMBI: *(Continuing to read)* “Nasirumbi should not be allowed to corrupt our youth. I have a dossier on her loose sexual life. Were I to release it, she would never raise her head in public again.”

SIBUOR: I don’t believe this! I didn’t mention you at all in my speech!

NASIRUMBI: *(Reading on)* Death to Nasirumbi – epitome of evil! *(Folds the paper, then confronts SIBUOR)* Now Your Holiness, what bringeth thee to the epitome of evil? *(Omtatah 76 -77)*

Nasirumbi dramatises the male narrative that is grounded on a patriarchal ideology that discredits her image and uses her orientation as a weapon. The dramatisation presents

Sibuor's actions that depict his insults on women by using their flaws against them. For instance, Sibuor dismisses Nasirumbi because she is unmarried. Nasirumbi's dramatic actions deploy sarcasm and reveals a toxic patriarchal traditional belief that belittles women and gives an example of setbacks that befall women in a traditional African set up where their leadership positions are determined by their marital status. Ironically Sibuor weaponises Nasirumbi's marital status while he engages in sexual exploitation of women.

Similarly, Boss and Nasirumbi's exchange of words result in a dramatic action after Boss feels intimidated by Nasirumbi's resilience in protecting Simbi forest.

BOSS: *(Turns to her suddenly)* Do you doubt me? Do you wish to taste my manhood? *(He disdainfully pounces and grabs her)* I am the cock. You are nothing but a mere woman. I'll put you in your place. *(They struggle. He makes frantic but unsuccessful efforts to kiss or knock her over. Though weaker she holds out and fights back with all her strength.)*. (92)

Boss's actions and words signify a violent takeover of Nasirumbi's body, constituting a personal attack rooted in her perceived physical vulnerability - a concept viewed through the feminist lens of women being unfairly regarded as weak. Boss' actions foregrounds Gaard's basic premise of patriarchy as an ideology which authorizes oppression that is based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities and species (1). While he disdainfully pounces and grabs Nasirumbi, Boss attempts to prove his manhood, physical ability and authority over her as a woman. Consequently, Boss reference to himself as a cock and to Nasirumbi as a mere woman depict a patriarchal orientation that is informed by Warren's ideology of an oppressive conceptual framework. The patriarchal archetype of a cock denotes his completeness and

superiority, whereas that of a woman as “mere” represents insignificance and nothingness. Similarly, “I will put you in your place” signifies women’s position in the hierarchical set up. Boss embodies a patriarchal mindset that is inclined on situating Nasirumbi at the bottom of the hierarchy. He uses the hierarchical value characteristic of an oppressive conceptual framework to deductively give value to himself and devalue Nasirumbi.

Additionally, in *Voice of the People*, patriarchal exploitation manifests itself through acts of sexual exploitation. Sibuur’s patriarchal attitude convinces him that one way of exercising total control over women is through sexual assault. To prove his rampant and normalized sexual exploitation behaviour, he is referred to “the whirlwind” by his friends. Sibuur’s sexual exploits are demonstrated in a dialogue between him, Boss and Indondo:

SIBUOR: (*To INDONDO*) I feel challenged. I’ll prove my mettle by going for Nasirumbi herself. I’ll put her in her place and shut her up once and for all.

BOSS: (*To SIBUOR*) You are not serious.

SIBUOR: They don’t call me “The Whirlwind” for no reason.

INDONDO: The Whirlwind – that’s a curious one. I’ve never heard before.

BOSS: His friends call him The Whirlwind because of the way he ruffles women’s skirts like a hurricane. (Omtatah 71)

The dialogue illustrates Sibuur’s sexual harassment from two perspectives: his sexual desire to prove control by sexually intimidating Nasirumbi and, secondly, his ‘successful’ exploits that earned him the name “The Whirlwind”. The fact that Sibuur is challenged to go after Nasirumbi to prove his bravery demonstrates how sex has been

weaponised as a tool for silencing women. Consequently, his “Whirlwind” nickname is a testament of his massive sexual exploits characterized by pride, violence, and rampant actions. Instructively, this exploitative trait signifies his acts of exploitation of nature, exemplified through his determination to hive off Simbi forest.

In *A Hole in the Sky*, Bukenya presents limited evidence of dramatic actions staged by characters. However, the few instances justify patriarchal exploitation among women, while continuing the discourse of ecological abuse. During the confrontation between Wamiti Maua and the Loggers in scene two, Bukenya introduces Wamiti thus:

Insert, an image of Wamiti Maua, looking at a mountain in the background. She turns slowly. She is cuddling a tree seedling to her breast. She is suddenly surrounded by rough-looking loggers, lumberjacks and wood-cutters, who wield tools of destruction. Lights dim on Elements scene as they come up on the inset. (Bukenya 35-36)

These actions are introduced by an elemental narrative as explicated in the previous chapter. The dramatic introduction of Maua’s character in the play reveals her role. She is cuddling a seedling to signify her love for nature and from this, we realise that it is a foreshadow of her activism against environmental destructors. The disparity of Maua by the Loggers revealed in the excerpt also builds the tension in the following scenes. The Loggers, lumberjacks and wood-cutters symbolise those who exploit nature in Maua’s journey of activism and resistance. This prepares us for the unpredictable events that follow. When Maua wails, “*Jameni, spare the trees. They are our life!*” (36), the collective “*Point at her jeering, guffawing and snorting with contempt*” (36). Their dramatised actions reveal the displeasure the collective, made up of men, hold against

Maua as a woman. Their loud mocking exposes their domineering contempt against Wamiti.

However, Wamiti's persistence begets her shocking name calling. She is called a "slut" and "mad woman" (36). Despite her protests, the collective continues cutting down trees. Their actions can be interpreted from the feminist angle. By ignoring Wamiti's voice, the men are enforcing patriarchal control. Furthermore, the men ignore and man-handle Wamiti which is a clear demonstration of sexist behaviour as evident in this part of the text: "*They shove Wamiti rudely out of the way, and fall viciously upon trees, attacking them with gleeful abandon, as Wamiti watches in horrified disbelief*" (37).

The collective extends the ignorance and cutting down of trees, since like Wamiti, their voices are unheard. The collective is ignorant thinking that Wamiti would be silenced by their sexist behaviour, the reason why it comes as a surprise to them when Kijani, Wamiti's representation in the play, is crowned to lead the efforts to conserve the environment. Patriarchal men like Tajeer and his gang bow to Kijani. Wamiti's dramatised introduction to the play reveals her strength as a woman and efforts to challenge patriarchy. Wamiti's actions are echoed by Kijani's throughout the play.

Bukenya and Omtatah, in unique ways, structure their plays and present dramatic actions in the texts to further advance discourse of ecofeminism. Their creative arrangement of scenes and sequences illuminate journeys taken by the heroines Nasirumbi, Wamiti and Kijani as they grow and resist environmental exploitation and patriarchal subjugation by men. The structures also build the plots of the plays while depicting a correlation between women and nature. The dramatic actions that emanate

from engagement between characters is an artistic and literary attempt to illuminate discourse on dualistic and capitalistic exploitation of women and the natural environment.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter engaged ecofeminist's theoretical tenets to explore how *A Hole in the Sky* and *Voice of the People's* structures and dramatic actions demonstrate patriarchal exploitation of women and its ecological repercussions. It utilised various scholarly conceptualisations of structure and dramatic action to determine the impacts of patriarchal exploitation on women and nature. The chapter established that this correlation is depicted through women's dependence on nature and the significance of their resistance to nature's liberation. The following chapter sums up this study by offering its summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study is structured into five chapters. Anchored on the Ecofeminist and Eco-Marxist theoretical frameworks, the study sought to examine aspects of ecofeminist aesthetics as depicted in Austin Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Okiya Omtatah's *Voice of the People*. The first chapter focused on the background to the study by detailing how the research would be advanced. It outlines the study's research path as conceptualised out of an extensive review of relevant studies. To determine the research's aim, the chapter highlights the study's statement of the problem and objectives. The chapter further justifies the study by providing its significance. The study is motivated by the need to address wanton destruction of the environment and patriarchal subordination of women. It finally outlines the theoretical frameworks and research design from which the study was hinged on.

The second chapter focused on the study's first objective which examined the link between women and nature as portrayed in the selected plays. It engaged the women-nature interconnectedness using tenets of ecofeminism to examine the portrayal of the correlation between the two in terms of their nurturing abilities, exploitation, and liberation.

The third chapter was hinged on the second objective. It investigated how the playwrights employ characterisation to illuminate capitalist environmental destruction in the plays under study. The chapter utilised the two theoretical frameworks and the concept of characterisation as an aspect of form to examine the playwright's presentation of acts of environmental destruction. It sought to find out how various

characters under the categories of; the conservationist, eco-destructors and animist characters have been used to voice acts of destruction. Finally, the chapter focused on how the capitalist discourse of repression, oppression and expansionism have been presented in the plays.

The fourth chapter examined the study's last objective. It analysed how structure and dramatic action demonstrate patriarchal exploitation and the ecological ramifications of this form of exploitation. It engages these dramatic elements to determine the implications of patriarchal exploitation and resistance to it by female characters. The last chapter sums up the study through its summary, findings, conclusion, and recommendations.

5.2 Findings

In view of its objectives, the research established the following findings:

The study's first objective was to examine the link between the subjugation of both nature and women in the selected plays. The study established that the plays depict an interrelation between women and nature in the aspects of their nurturing abilities, exploitation and liberation. It further established that their interrelatedness is based on their shared traits and speculations that equate women to nature and regards nature as feminine. Women and nature's exploitation is sanctioned by patriarchy in view of the fact that it gives more value and status to men over women. Finally, their liberation is premised on the assumption that since their exploitation is intertwined, the liberation of women should lead to nature's liberation.

The research's second objective was to investigate how the two playwrights appropriated characterisation to convey acts of patriarchal and capitalistic destruction of the environment. This was informed by the literary concept of form and content,

where aspects of form play a critical role in conveying a text's content. The study established that the playwrights have appropriately used their characters to illuminate environmental degradation. This lay evident through their depiction of characters as either conservationists or agents and orchestrators of environmental destruction. Further, in *A Hole in the Sky* Bukenya's personification of cosmic characters and creatures and use of Mythical and Legendary characters brought out animist sensibilities and animist characters' articulation of capitalist destruction. As enacted through these characters, capitalists' quest for wealth has negatively impacted on the environment, which is their habitat. Further, the playwright's presentation of capitalist oppression, repression and expansionism reveal human and ecological consequences of capitalists' wealth pursuits.

Finally, the study's third objective sought to analyze how structure and dramatic action demonstrate patriarchal exploitation of women and its ecological implications. The study ascertained that the play's structure and instances of dramatic action revealed ecological consequences of patriarchal exploitation of female characters.

5. 3 Conclusions

The critical analysis of ecofeminist aesthetics in Bukenya's *A Hole in the Sky* and Omtatah's *Voice of the People* formed the basis of this study. The discussion centered on exploring literary aesthetics through pertinent issues that reveal the correlation between women and nature. Ecofeminist postulations revealing aspects of interconnectedness and Iheka's concept of aesthetics of proximity illuminated the women-nature nexus in the plays. The research examined the link between women and nature as exemplified through their nurturing abilities, exploitation and shared liberation. According to ecofeminists, women and nature share nurturing abilities

through women's traditional responsibility of feeding their families, rearing and raising up their progeny in the desired cultural ways. Consequently, nature plays a critical role in this nurturing aspect as it is the source of every necessity for accomplishing these roles.

This research found out that women and nature are exploitable categories owing to their positions in patriarchy's hierarchy set up. In this set up, women are situated at the bottom and hence their vulnerability to exploitation. Similarly, nature's exploitation is anchored on the ecofeminist argument that the ideological framework that sanctions women's subordination is the same framework responsible for nature's exploitation. Their shared liberation is anchored on the postulation that the liberation of one should lead to the liberation of the other. The study established the manifestation of this inter-liberation in the selected plays where female characters' resistance to patriarchal domination resulted in the fall of the patriarchal class that engaged in the destruction of the environment.

Further, through its findings, the study revealed that characterisation conveyed acts of capitalist environmental destruction. Categorised under; conservationists, eco-destructors and animist characters, they aptly underscored the negative impacts of capitalists' quest for wealth on the ecosystem. They narrated how capitalist characters, labelled as eco-destructors, destroyed the environment illustrated through the extinction of Lake Riziki, dumping of wastes on streams, clearing of forests for timber and saw dust and to create space for construction projects. Iheka's aesthetics of proximity provided the path for a multi-species analysis, hence our critical analysis of animist characters' articulation of eco-destruction.

The study also established that patriarchal exploitation of women has direct implications on the environment. Likewise, resistance to this form of exploitation positively impacts on ecological destruction. These implications were revealed through a critique on the plays' structure and action. It was established that the plays' structure as discussed on the basis of scene relations and functions revealed acts of patriarchal exploitation and its consequential implications on nature. Similarly, the play's dramatic actions accentuated this correlation. The research established that the playwrights gave a new literary perspective to women and ecological issues, hence advocating for environmental justice and women's emancipation.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the scope of this study, the following recommendations are significant for further scholarly engagements:

- a) This study focused on the drama genre limiting itself to *A Hole in the Sky* and *Voice of the People* to explicate ecofeminist aesthetics. This study, hence, recommends further research on ecofeminism in oral literature and other forms of written literature such as poems. Notably, this study also majored on the East African drama. There is need to delve into drama existing beyond the East African literary landscape.
- b) The study further recommends research on other strands of ecofeminism other than the social and socialist ecofeminist strands that this study centered on. This will provide invaluable knowledge towards the full comprehension of ecofeminism as a theoretical lens to literary analysis. Further, scholarly research may also embark on an analysis of other dramatic elements, aside from structure and dramatic action focused on here, to determine their literary significance.

- c) Further, there are various other aspects of form in literature. This study recommends additional research on these aspects to determine how they are appropriated by creative writers. A comparative study of these aspects may also be engaged.
- d) This study recommends that policy makers should, guided by the findings of this study, enact policies that would enhance socio-economic equity and environmental preservation.

WORKS CITED

- Ashaolu, Olubunmi O. "The Ensnaring Oil: An Ecofeminist Critique of Kaine Agary's *Yellow Yellow*." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol. 9, no. 6, 2019, pp. 41-49.
- Ashcroft, B., et al. *Post-colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*. Routledge, 2007.
- Althusser, Louis. *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. Translated by G. M. Goshgarian, Verso, 2014.
- Barry, Jackson G. *Dramatic Structure: The Shaping of Experience*. University of California Press, 1970.
- Barry, John. "Marxism and Ecology." *Marxism and Social Science*, edited by Andrew Gamble, David Marsh and Tony Tant, University of Illinois Press, 1999, pp. 259 – 279.
- Birkeland, Janis. "Ecofeminism: Linking Theory and Practice." *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, edited by Greta Gaard, Temple UP, 1993, pp. 13 – 59.
- Botzler, Richard G., and Susan J. Armstrong. *Environmental Ethics: Divergence and Convergence*. 2nd ed., McGraw-Hill, 1998.
- Brockett, Oscar G. *The Theatre: An Introduction*. 2nd ed., Winston, 1969.
- Brockett, Oscar G., and Robert Ball. *The Essential Theatre*. 8th ed. Wadsworth, 2004.
- Bukenya, Austin. *A Hole in the Sky*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

Bukenya, Austin. "Bukenya: Secrets of my 'affair' with Wangari Maathai." *Daily Nation*, 19 September 2015,

https://www.google.com/search?client=opera&hs=Z8C&ei=uMiMXeSIO6GUlwTTI7OwBA&q=my+secret+affair+with+wangari+maathai+by+austin+bukenya&oq=my+secret+affair+with+wangari+maathai+by+austin+buk&gs_l=psy=ab.3.0.33i21j33i160l2.9767.41456..43323...3.0..0.350.12153.1j7j44j4.....0....1..gws-wiz.....0..0i273j0i10i67j0j0i131j0i131i273j0i67j0i131i67j0i3j0i22i30j33i22i29i30j0i22i10i30.czf9OEwEQKs#. Accessed 26 September 2019.

Burkett, Paul. *Marx and Nature: A Red and Green Perspective*. St. Martin Press, 1999.

Carlassare, Elizabeth. "Socialist and Cultural Ecofeminism: Allies in Resistance." *Ethics and Environment Journal*, Vol 5, no. 1, 2000, pp. 89 – 106.

Cassegard, Carl. "Eco-Marxism and the critical theory of nature: two perspectives on Ecology and dialectics." *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 18, no. 3, 2017, pp. 314 – 332.

Chae, Youngsuk. "Postcolonial Ecofeminism in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*." *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, Vol. 51, No. 5, 2015, pp.519 – 530.

Cudworth, Erika. *Developing Ecofeminist Theory: The Complexity of Difference*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

Davion, Victoria. "Is Ecofeminism Feminist?" *Ecological Feminism*, edited by Karen J. Warren, Routledge, 1994, pp. 8 – 28.

- ESA, *ESA's Annual Space Environment Report*. ESA Space Debris Office, no. 5, 27 May 2021.
- Ford, Lynne E. *Women and Politics: The Pursuit of Equality*. 3rd ed., Cengage Learning, 2011.
- Gaard, Greta, editor. *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*. Temple University, 1993.
- Gaard, Greta. "Living Interconnections with Animals and Nature." *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, edited by Greta Gaard, Temple UP, 1993, pp. 1 – 8.
- Garuba, Harry. "Explorations in Animist Materialism: Notes on Reading/Writing African Literature, Culture, and Society." *Public Culture*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2003, pp. 261 – 285.
- Girling, John. *Corruption, Capitalism and Democracy*, Routledge, 2002, e-book, doi: doi.org/10.4324/9780203203064. Accessed 12 July 2021.
- Glotfelty, Cheryll., and Harold Fromm, editors. *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. University of Georgia, 1996.
- Griffin, Susan. *Women and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her*. Sierra Club Books, 1978.
- Grundmann, Reiner. *Marxism and Ecology*. Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Harvey, Graham., editor. *The Handbook of Contemporary Animism*. Routledge, 2014.
- Huggan, Graham, and Hellen Tiffin. *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2015.
- Iheka, Cajetan. "Ecologies of Oil and Trauma of the Future in *Curse of the Black Gold*." *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, vol. 7, no.1, 2020, pp. 69 – 91.

Iheka, Cajetan. *Naturalizing Africa: Ecological Violence, Agency, and Postcolonial Resistance in African Literature*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Jahan, Sarwat and Saber, Ahmed M. "What is Capitalism?" IMF, 12 July 2021, www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2015/06/basics.htm. Accessed 12 July 2021.

Kibet, John. "The Play exemplifies high cost of ruining environment." Daily Nation, 14 August 2013, <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj4aGO1-7kAhUhyoUKHdPLDEYQFjACegQIBBAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nation.co.ke%2Flifestyle%2Flifestyle%2FPlay-exemplifies-high-cost-of-ruining-environment%2F1214-1936076-9q5pwyz%2Findex.html&usg=AOvVaw3PROfNzdbRDXsa-h9mBnMs>. Accessed 26 September 2019.

Kioko, Caroline, Rosebell Kagumire, Mbalenhle Matandela, editors. *Challenging Patriarchy: the role of patriarchy in the roll-back of Democracy*. Heinrich Boll Stiftung, 2020.

Kobia, John M. "Gender Roles in African Oral Literature: A Case Study of Initiation Songs Among the Igembe People of Meru of Kenya." *LWATI: A Journal of Contemporary Research*, vol. 14, no. 4, 2017, pp. 124 – 141.

Kovel, Joel. *The Enemy of Nature: The End of Capitalism or the End of the World?* Zed Books, 2007.

- Lamidi, Temitayo M., and Romanus Aboh. "Naming as a strategy for identity construction in selected 21st century Nigerin novels." *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, Vol. 17, no. 2, 2011, pp. 35 – 47.
- Lerner, Gerda. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. Oxford University, 1986.
- Levitt, Paul M. *A Structural Approach to the Analysis of Drama*. Mounon, 1971.
- Madsen, Deborah L. *Feminist Theory and Literary Practice*. Pluto, 2000.
- Maleya, Samson. "Representation of Ecological Consciousness in Henry Ole Kulet's *Vanishing Herds* and *The Hunter*." MA Thesis, Kenyatta University, 2016.
- Mies, Maria, and Vandana Shiva. *Ecofeminism*. Zed books, 1993.
- Mokua, Zacharia O., and Evans O. Nyamwaka. "Challenges Facing Women Scaling to Political Leadership in Post-Colonial Kenya: A Case of Gusiiland, South Western Kenya, 1963 – 2013." *Journal of Research Innovation and Implication in Education*, vol. 4, no. 4, 2020, pp. 106 – 118.
- Mugubi, John. 'Stylistics and Literary Techniques.' Ph. D Thesis, Kenyatta University, 2005.
- Muhia, Mugo. "The subdued nature: reading Henry Ole Kulet's *Vanishing Herds* through Eco-Marxist lenses." *African Identities*, vol. 18, no.1 – 2, 2020, pp.130 – 144.
- Muhia, Mugo, and Julius Gathogo. "The Use of Indigenous Resources in Environmental Conservation in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Murogi wa Kagogo*: a religio-cultural Perspective." *Jumuga Journal of Education, Oral Studies and Human Sciences*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2018, pp. 1 – 15.

- Muthoni, Janet. 'Rethinking Ecofeminism: Wangari Maathai and The Green Belt Movement in Kenya.' MA Thesis, University of Kwazulu – Natal, 2006.
- Mwamburi, J. et al. "Monitoring Pollution in 4 biodiversity hotspots in Lake Victoria (Nyando, Awach, Nzoia and Yala) river mouths for informed decisions." *Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute Fact Sheet*, KMF, RS, 2020, pp. 1 – 20.
- Nabulya, Eva. "An Eco-critical Reading of *Voice of the People and Different Colours*" *Cultural Archives of Atrocity: Essays on the Protest Tradition in Kenyan Literature, Culture and Society*, edited by Charles Kebaya, Colomba Kaburi Muriungi and J.K.S. Makokha, Routledge, 2019, pp. 32 – 48.
- NASA, *NASA's Efforts to Mitigating the Risks Posed by Orbital Debris*. Office of Inspector General, Office of Audits, Report no. IG-21-011 (A-20-002), January 27, 2021.
- Newman, Lance. "Marxism and Ecocriticism." *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, Vol. 9, no. 2, 2002, pp.1 – 25.
- Ngugi, Wa Thiong'o. *The River Between*. Heinemann, 1965.
- Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Harvard University, 2011.
- Oboth, Jim. "(Re) contextualization of the Poesy of the Voiceless Subaltern in Okiya Omtatah Okoiti's Voice of the People." *Blogger.com*, 24 May 2020, https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://jim-oboth.blogspot.com/2020/05/recontextualisation-of-poesyof.html&ved=2ahUKEwigjc7a3KWHAXxQ_EDHb6ACd4QFnoECB

[YQAQ&usg=AOvVaw1GPUcxlw ugYPOVEk8NDG3](#) . Accessed 14 July 2024.

Okoiti, Okiya Omtatah. *Voice of the People*. East African Educational Publishers, 2007.

Ortner, Sherry B. “Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?” *Woman, Culture, and Society*, edited by Michelle Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, Stanford UP, 1974, pp. 68 – 87.

Pavis, Patrice. *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts and Analysis*. University of Toronto Press, 1998.

Shober, Dianne. “Ecofeminist invitations in the Works of Sindiwe Magona.” *Literator – Journal of Literary Criticism, Comparative Linguistics and Literary Studies*, Vol 38, no. 1, 2017, pp. 1 – 10.

Solichin, Moh B. “Capitalistic Anthropocentrism to Nature and Papua Women: Study of Ecofeminism in Novel *Tanah Tabu*.” *International Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol 2, no 1, 2019, pp. 19 – 23. <https://doi.org/10.31295/ijss.v2n1.50>

Tong, Rosemarie. *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*. 3rd ed., West View, 2009.

Tyson, Lois. *Critical Theory Today*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2006.

Wainaina, Lynda W., “Impacts of the Southern Bypass Road construction through Ngong forest on the African Crowned Eagle, Nairobi County.” BSc. Project, Kenyatta University, 2014.

Warren, Karen J. "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism."

Environmental Ethics Journal, Vol 12, no 2, 1990, pp. 125 – 146.

Warren, Karen J. editor. *Ecological Feminism*. Routledge, 1994.