

BOOK REVIEWS

Shiva, Vandana and Maria Mies (1993), *Ecofeminism, Kali for Women*, New Delhi.

Shiva Vandana, (1989), *Staying Alive, Kali for women*, New Dehi.

Ecofeminism is a new term which grew out of various social movements like the feminis, peace and the ecology movements in the late 1970's and early 1980's. The term was first used by Fromcoise D' eaubonne. It gained momentum in the context of numerous protests and activities against enviromntental distruction and ecological disasters. Sonce such instances in U.S.A. prompted a large number of women to come together in the frist eco-fiminist conference ectitled as " Women and Life on Earth : a conference on ecofeminis in Enghtees" in March 1980 at Miherst. Inthe confernce the connections between feminsm, militarization and ecology were explored.

Ecofeminism is about the connectedness and wholeness of theory and practice. It emmphasis on the special strength and integrity of every living thing . The ecofeminists consider the derastation of the earth and her beings by ' corporarte warriors ' and the threat of nuclear annihilation by the 'military warriors'. The corporate and militarywarriors agression against the environment was percieved almost equally as an agression against female body.

The major claim by ecofeminists is that whenever women acted against ecological destruction or/and the threat of atomic annihilation , they immediately become aware of the connection between partiarchal violence against women, other people and nature, and that in defying this patriarchy they are loyal to future generations and to lief and this panet itself.They have a deep understanding of this both through their natures and experiences as women.

Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies discuss ecofeminism with the help of capitalist-patriarchical perspective. According to them, there is a global process creating a new world order based on the control of people and resources for the sake of capital accumulation. At this juncture the search for identity and difference became more significant on the platform for resistance against the dominant global forces of capitalist - patriarchy. Capitalist - patriarchy includes homogeniety and fragmentation of the world

- 1) That the impact of ecological disasters and deterrioration is harder on women than on men and also that every where the women is the frist to protest against environmental destruction, and ;

- 2) That Science and technology are not gender neutral in the sense that therelstionship of exploitative dominance between man and nature and the exploitatived oppressive relationship between men and women prevails in mostt patriarchical societies; even in most modern societies.

The auuthors substantiate their points by quoting a number of local struggles against ecologica destruction and derteriration. For example, Women were the driving force aganist atomic power lants in Germany. Although all of them were not committed feminists yet they were clear about the connections between technology and war against order simulteneously. It interprets difference as hierarchical and uniformity as a

per-requisite in the world structure there are some inherent inequalities in the world structure which permits the north to dominate South, men to dominate women and capital producing system to dominate nature. This system maintained itself through colonising women and of nature. When feminists seek women's liberation from male domination, the ecofeminists take up the issues that modernization and development processes are responsible for the degradation of the nature world. Their major claims are :nature, against women and future generation. This connection was also clearly spellout by the Russian women after the chernoby catastrophe in 1986. 'Man never thinks of life. They only want to conquer nature and the enemy'. Another examples is the movement against Chalk mining in Doon Vally which was carried out by the women under Chipko movement. Similarly the activities of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya; of Japanese women against food pollution by chemically-stimulated. commercial and profit oriented agriculture ; and the battle of thousands of women in south India for better water managment, soil conservation, land use and maintenance of their survival base i.e. forest, fuel and fodder against industrial world wide felt the same anger and anxiety and the same sense of responsibility to preserve the basis of life.

Thus, the concern for the preservation of environment and to stop its destruction brought the women all over the world together irrespective of their race, ethnicity, cultural and class background.

Although the fact that women are sensitive to nature and feel responsible for the welfare of the future generations yet the stand taken by vandana Shive & Maria Mies has serious flaws :

1. The eco feminism is anti-naturastic. While explanation the relationship of man and nature it places man outside nature who is essentially hostile, antagonistic and exploitative.
2. The categories are created without providing much substantial and precise referent.
3. Trying to adopt Marxian line in formulating their model, capitalism was wequated with patriarchy in which man is always profit oriented and uses technology at the name of development and exploits nature and therefore women (as in the case of proletariat) organise and protest to preserve environment. But women movement cannot be equated to proletariat movements because a) They are not organise in the same way in which they can be considered a class-in-itself. b) Women herself is a part of ecological disaster by consuming what is produced by the so-called exploitative capitalist order.
4. The activists in environment movements are not only women. Men's participation is kept in shade for example the contributions by Sunder Lal Behuguna in CHIPKO and Baba Amte in NBA movements are equally important. Thus, any theoretical construct cannot gain acceptance if it is partial in approach and does not contribute to the task of social engineering.

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