

Ecological Crisis and Female Resistance: An Ecofeminist Study of Uzma Aslam Khan's Thinner Than Skin

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Abstract: *In recent years, scholars have grown interested in the interrelated issues of environmental degradation and gender inequality in the 21st century. Ecofeminism is an interdisciplinary theoretical approach that proposes that the oppression of women and nature are linked in a single political system of domination, which privileges the idea of control, hierarchy and capitalist expansion. In Uzma Aslam Khan's Thinner Than Skin (2012), the devastation of the ecology, climate change, and the marginalisation of local communities are all interwoven in the Rocky Mountains of Northern Pakistan. The present study is based on ecofeminist theory, mainly the theory of Vandana Shiva and Karen J. Warren who deals with the concept of ecological crisis and women's resistance to patriarchy and environmental oppression in the novel. The article uses a qualitative textual analysis approach to study the symbolic relationship between women and nature, the effects of exploiting nature, and the agency that women characters have as they confront nature's injustice. The book contends that Khan has overcome the traditional narratives of the environment by portraying women as active participants in the process of preserving the environment and social change. The article also defies anthropocentric and patriarchal beliefs as it promotes the idea of cohabiting with nature in harmony. This research ultimately is an addition to the ecofeminist literary criticism by marking the undeniable linkage between environmental sustainability and gender justice in the current South Asian literature.*

Keywords: Ecofeminism, ecological crisis, women resistance, environmental justice, Thinner Than Skin, patriarchy and climate change

Introduction

Today environmental degradation has become one of the most prominent problem of the century in our world. Ecological aspects have turned into social, political and ethical concerns as a result of climate change, glacier melting, loss of biodiversity, deforestation and unsustainable use of natural resources. These crises impact upon all communities, but can have disproportionate impacts upon marginalized groups, such as women and indigenous

communities. The domination of women and nature is linked to each other because they are rooted in the same ideology, which provides the justification for control and exploitation of nature and women (Shiva, 1988).

The connection between women and the environment is a key theme in literary studies, particularly in the postcolonial field where environmental degradation is related to colonial narratives, capitalism and gender disparity. Rather, increasingly, South Asian literature delves into these intersections with the landscape being not only a physical space but a living being intimately intertwined with human identities and cultural survival (Huggan & Tiffin, 2010). Uzma Aslam Khan is a unique figure in this literary continuum as she has been active in her writings with environmental concerns and ecological ethics throughout.

Thinner Than Skin was published in 2012 in the amazing yet eco-sensitive terrain of the Karakoram mountain region of Northern Pakistan. Local shepherds, foreign visitors and indigenous people live in a way that is significantly impacted by the ecological changes. Instead of nature as a backdrop, Khan shows the environment as a dynamic actor in the human sphere, affecting human relationships, cultural practices and political conflicts (Khan, 2012). The novel vividly draws an image of melting glaciers, loss of land, loss of biodiversity and a disruption of the traditional pastoral lifestyle due to modernization and changing climate.

But the novel is more than about environmental issues; it foregrounds the women's experience in these ecological changes. Women characters deal with several forms of oppression stemming from patriarchy, unequal economy and environmental exploitation. Their struggles constitute a proof that ecological destruction and gender discrimination are not separate issues but are interwoven. These depictions are similar to ecofeminist claims that patriarchal societies have been and continue to control women and the natural world (Warren, 2000).

Ecofeminism is an intellectual and political movement that began in the 1970s, when feminists began to connect their concerns with the environment with feminist movements. The word 'ecofeminism' was coined in 1974 by Françoise d'Eaubonne who pointed out the impact of patriarchal domination on women and the environment. Later scholars, like Vandana Shiva, Karen J. Warren, Greta Gaard, Maria Mies, and Val Plumwood, built on it by providing more in-depth consideration of the philosophical, political and economic arrangements that underpin ecological injustice (Gaard, 1993). Their scholarship is clear, environmental crises can only be addressed with an engagement to systems of gender inequality and social domination.

In capitalist development, nature is turned into a commodity and women's traditional knowledge about nature is devalued, especially in developing societies, says Vandana Shiva (1988). Karen Warren also argues that the logic of patriarchy has created hierarchical dualisms such as man/woman, culture/nature and reason/emotion, which legitimate the exploitation of the environment and gender discrimination (2000). These theoretical lenses can help to analyse the themes of environmental destruction and social inequality that are consistently presented throughout *Thinner Than Skin* and are also inextricably linked to the patriarchy.

Although the literature has been growing in the interest of Khan's fiction, most studies either explore the issue of environmental degradation or ecofeminist symbolism in his works. There are relatively few studies that examine the involvement of female resistance as a means of ecological justice. The aim of this article is to fill that gap, by looking at how women resist the power of the patriarchy and at the same time manage to safeguard ecological balance. Unlike other depictions of women as victims, Khan's images of women are as agents of resilience, environmental care, and moral responsibility.

The aim of this article is, therefore, to address the following research questions:

In what way(s) is ecological crisis explored in the mountainous areas of the Northern part of Pakistan in the context of "Thinner Than Skin"?

In what ways is nature and women dominated by the patriarchy?

How do the female characters oppose the oppression and degradation of the environment and gender?

How does the novel promote ecological justice from the ecofeminist point of view?

The study identifies the interconnection of environmental sustainability and gender justice using a qualitative textual analysis with the help of ecofeminist theory and shows that *Thinner Than Skin* supports this. The novel ultimately implies that ecological restoration does not just entail environmental conservation but also an undoing of the patriarchy, which legitimizes the domination of women and nature.

Literature Review

The concept of Ecofeminism has gained one of the most prominent theoretical frameworks in the contemporary environmental humanities as it is able to unite environmental issues with feminist analysis of the role of patriarchy in the oppression of women. Environmental degradation and women's oppression have been linked since the birth of the concept in the 1970s and the two have become more strongly connected over the years as scholars have increasingly defined them as two sides of the same hierarchical systems that favor women's oppression through their neglect of care, the degradation of nature through their exploitation, and, most obviously, the pursuit of profit over coexistence (Gaard, 1993).

The concept of 'ecofeminism' was coined by Françoise d'Eaubonne in her pioneering book *Le Féminisme ou la Mort* (1974) who stated that in patriarchal societies women and the environment are exploited side by side in the quest for infinite economic growth. Her work gave inspiration to other researchers to study the links between environmental harm and gender inequality in the philosophical, political and cultural realms. Ecofeminism thus emerged as an academic language and also an activist campaign for the ecological sustainability and gender justice (Merchant, 1980).

Vandana Shiva is one of the most influential ecofeminist thinkers, who points out that modern development projects tend to be destructive of local ecosystems and that women often are excluded from such projects because they have valuable ecological knowledge but are not

needed for development projects (Shiva, 1988). Extensively drawing on South Asian contexts, Shiva shows that rural women often play the role of custodians of a flourishing biodiversity, sustainable agriculture and community-based environmental conservation. She believes that capitalist development is undermining these ecological relationships, as it is making nature a commodity, and leaving women out of environmental decision making.

Ecofeminist theory has been elaborated upon by Karen J. Warren, who has coined the term the "logic of domination. Warren (2000) claims that in patriarchal societies they create hierarchical dualisms like man versus woman, culture versus nature, reason versus emotion, which are used to give them a right to dominate both women and nature. These conceptual hierarchies are put in place in political institutions, legal systems, and cultural narratives, and thus become naturalized and normal, burying the exploitation of the environment and gender discrimination.

Likewise, Val Plumwood (1993) questions the philosophies that have developed in the West that separate people from nature in strict dualistic terms. She believes that the anthropocentrism and androcentrism go together and involve the portrayal of women and nature as passive resources for exploitation. These conversations are extended to discuss ecofeminism as a gendered issue by Greta Gaard (1993), who emphasizes the intersections between environmental justice, feminism, animal ethics and social equality.

Ecofeminism has attracted specific interest in postcolonial literary studies since issues of environmental degradation often relate to themes of colonialism, displacement, and capitalist expansion (Huggan & Tiffin, 2010). In some cases, the landscapes of writers from South Asia are not only geographical but also bear witness to them as a cultural archive where the destruction of the environment poses a danger to the indigenous identity, traditional livelihood and collective memory.

Over the years, ecofeminism has become a multifaceted field of research, studying the interrelated oppression of women and nature from a variety of philosophical, political, ecological and literary viewpoints. Although the initial ecofeminists were mainly concerned with revealing the domination of men, subsequent scholars have added other approaches, such as postcolonialism, environmental justice, indigenous knowledge, sustainability, and others. This theory is especially helpful in understanding the current South Asian literature, which has a strong connection with the ecological devastation and colonial history, capitalist expansion and gender inequality (Warren, 2000).

The Death of Nature is one of the key works of ecofeminism by Carolyn Merchant. According to Merchant (1980) the Scientific Revolution changed the way nature was perceived from a living being to a machine which was intended for human use. The mechanistic concept was used to justify the oppression of women and nature, by creating the illusion that nature is nothing more than a tool to support economic development. Merchant shows how patriarchy has been enacted as a capitalistic system that has exploited the environment and put women in a subordinate position to the environment.

Likewise, Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva (1993) argue that the globalisation and capitalist development processes threaten biodiversity, traditional knowledge and community-based

ecological practices. Women in developing countries are also likely to have first-hand experience of local ecosystems, through their active participation in agriculture, water collection, food production and resource management, according to these scholars. As a result, women are key actors in environmental resistance movements, as they are affected more than men when there is degradation to the environment.

Karen Warren (2000) says that the “logic of domination” is the underlying philosophy that links sexism, racism, colonialism and ecological destruction. She says that in a male-dominated society, man/woman, reason/emotion and culture/nature are dualisms that are created. Such dichotomies serve in the interests of power imbalance, and imply that women and nature are weak and should be tamed and exploited. Therefore, the idea of ecofeminism questions these hierarchical ideas and suggests a mutual respect, ecological responsibility and social justice.

In the field of literature studies, the concept of ecofeminism has gained significance as an analytical tool to analyze the connection between literary stories that portray environmental degradation and gendered experiences. Literary ecofeminists stress that landscapes are frequently more than a backdrop, or passive environment, they are an active participant in the narrative. Rivers, forests, glaciers, mountains and wildlife are metaphorical expressions of culture, ecology, and ethics (Gaard, 1993).

These ecological issues have permeated the Pakistani English literature too, to an ever greater extent. The narratives written by Uzma Aslam Khan et al highlight the themes of climate change, loss of biodiversity and environmental injustice, while bringing a focus on the marginalised communities. Unlike traditional environmental writing, Khan also weaves issues of gender, identity, displacement and social inequality into the narratives, creating one that is very evocative of ecofeminist thinking.

Research concerning the novel in recent years has shown an increasing focus on the book's environmental themes, as seen in recent articles such as "Thinner Than Skin" by D.J. Taylor and "The New Age of Nature in 'Thinner Than Skin'?" by Aaron Frego. This is what Shafique et al. (2024) discusses on women and environmental degradation using ecofeminist approach of Françoise d'Eaubonne. According to their research, the patriarchal system uses women and nature as resources and objects for exploitation, as opposed to them being autonomous beings. Nevertheless, they focus mainly on representations and symbolization of oppression, and do not elaborate much on the process of female resistance as a process of ecological change.

The study by Ahmad and colleagues (2024) is another important contribution that explores the issue of climate change and ecological crisis in *Thinner Than Skin*. They say Khan portrays the melting glaciers, weather changes, loss of biodiversity and degradation of environment as a result of irresponsible human activities. The focus of the study is the importance of ecological conservation and comparatively few pages are dedicated to gender relations and women's agency.

Khalid (2022) also offers an eco-spatial analysis, which will further enrich the discussion, by analysing geographical marginalisation and environmental injustice in the novel. The study

demonstrates the multiple marginalities of remote mountain communities – political, ecological and social – at the same time. This view reinforces the view that the issue of environmental degradation should not be divorced from the social justice and politics of power.

These studies greatly aid the ecofeminist scholarship, but they do not fill an important research gap related to the links between ecological crisis and female resistance. Most of the existing literature is about destruction of the environment and symbolisation of women or post colonial, ecological issues. However, little effort has been made to explore how female characters both challenge the patriarchy, but also maintain ecological balance. This article fills this gap by exploring the role of the agency of women in the context of ecological justice.

Discussion and Analysis

The ecological crisis and environmental degradation

Thinner Than Skin by Uzma Aslam Khan is an account of environmental degradation in both its physical and psychological manifestation, but its portrayal is not limited to simply the destruction of landscape rather than environmental degradation as a moral, cultural and political crisis. It is a novel set in the fragile ecosystem of the Karakoram Mountains in Northern Pakistan which represents the various glaciers, rivers, forests, wild animals and mountain communities as individual parts of one living ecosystem. Khan vividly portrays disrupted livelihoods and changing landscape, showing that environmental degradation goes beyond biodiversity, to threaten human identity, cultural continuity and social justice. These changes in the environment reveal from an ecofeminist point of view the harmful impacts of patriarchy and capitalism, which attempts to control nature and marginalized communities (Shiva, 1988).

The novel is one of the most salient environmental issues that are shown is the melting of glaciers. The area of the Karakorams, where one of the highest densities of glaciers outside the polar regions are found, becomes a symbol of the fragility of the environment and the geographical fact throughout the novel. For a glacier, Khan says over and over again, “it’s alive. It’s a living thing in and of itself; it controls the lives of the rivers, the wildlife, the mountain communities.” They are not in decay, but in disintegration due to human interference instead of it being natural (Khan, 2012).

Khan's approach to environmental crisis differs from the usual rendition of climate change, which uses scientific facts and figures to represent the crisis, as he humanizes the environmental crisis by linking environmental changes with people's daily lives. Nomadic shepherds see the changes in the routes they are taking, and the erratic weather, as well as the reduction of water sources. Seasonal migrants' families have a hard time maintaining established traditions which have been passed down for generations. These experiences help to show that environmental degradation is not a distant reality of the world, but a reality of life for vulnerable communities, facing it head on (Mies & Shiva, 1993).

Ecofeminism is a perspective that attempts to challenge the patriarchal societies' attitude towards nature as an object of unlimited exploitation. This worldview can be seen as a result of development models that emphasize an economic growth which is more important than

ecological sustainability (Vandana Shiva, 1988). This attitude is apparent throughout the book of *Thinner Than Skin* as commercial forces, tourism and political inaction and modernization are the elements that threaten the balance between humans and nature. Mountains are tourist sites instead of a blessed ecosystem and wildlife is seen as a commodity instead of being an integral part of biodiversity.

Loss of biodiversity is also an important consideration in the novel, as an ecological crisis. The mountain habitats seems to be more and more under threat from habitat loss and human encroachment, threatening the wildlife that inhabit the area. The loss of animal life is a sign of the decline of ecological balance as a whole. Extinction of species is not just biological loss, but the loss of cultural traditions and indigenous knowledge, along with the loss of spiritual bonds with the natural world, as Khan shows.

Thinner Than Skin also deals with political injustices as a whole. Mountain communities in remote areas remain largely hidden from the national development policies as they are the keepers of environmentally critical areas. Economical aspects are often given prominence in infrastructure projects and commercial activities, at the expense of environmental considerations. As such, it is the indigenous people who are primarily responsible for protecting the environment, but receiving little or no institutional assistance. Such an imbalance strengthens the ecofeminist arguments that the effects of marginalization of social and political groups are often linked to environmental injustice (Warren, 2000).

The critique from an ecofeminist perspective is similar to Shiva's notion of 'maldevelopment' (Shiva, 1988), that many development-related projects result in ecological devastation, and that they also exacerbate social inequalities. Modernisation in the novel is often at the expense of the populations that it affects rather than for their betterment, and shows how the exploitation of the environment is linked to unequal political and economic power.

Water is a powerful symbol in the story, as well. Water is essential for agriculture, livestock and human settlements and is a metaphor for life—glacial melt water sustains them. Loss of any part of this hydrological system puts in jeopardy entire communities. This is an interdependent system; harmful consequences to the ecology of glaciers will eventually impact the ecology of the river, vegetation, wildlife, and human societies.

The inter-relationality is a reflection of one of the main tenets of ecofeminism – that of rejecting the dualistic approach separating human from nature. Karen Warren (2000) believes that dualism (hierarchy) invites societies to view nature as separate from and subordinate to humans. *Thinner Than Skin* calls into question the worldview of such environmental destruction, in which the environment becomes a self-destructive force. Humanity can't beat nature all the time as humans are dependent on ecological health for their survival.

Memory and place is another aspect of ecological crisis. The mountains hold narratives, traditions and cultural identities which are beyond the scope of the individual. Ecological destruction is thus not just a loss of the environment, it's a loss of history. As glaciers melt and landscapes change, communities become deprived of physical sites that they can use to pass

on their collective memory from one generation to the next. The conservation of the environment is also a culture preservation, Khan implies.

An ecological crisis is thus not the only one that is being depicted in the novel. It includes a loss of biodiversity, cultural displacement, political neglect, capitalist exploitation and a loss of traditional ecological knowledge. Through the amalgamation of these various points, Khan shows that environmental degradation needs to be analyzed only from a scientific or economic point of view. Rather, ecological crisis is seen as a multi-layered phenomenon, which should be addressed from all ethical, cultural, political and ecological perspectives.

In an Ecofeminist perspective, the book finally suggests that the degradation of nature is a symptom of the domination of nature that lies at the heart of the patriarchy. The failure of a system of thinking that sees hierarchy as a basis for exploitation instead of coexistence, profit instead of sustainability, and domination instead of mutual dependence is what leads to environmental degradation. In this critique, *Thinner Than Skin* invites the reader to reflect on how human beings treat the environment, and argues for an ethics of the environment based on reciprocity, respect, and ecological justice.

A key issue of ecofeminism is the link between the oppression of women and that of nature under a patriarchal system. *Thinner Than Skin* vividly shows this relationship by having women and natural resources that are both exposed to exploitation, control and marginalization. In an elaborate fictional story, Uzma Aslam Khan weaves a story of how ecology and gender are interlinked realities and not social problems apart from one another. The author's use of the characters of women and the mountains' image shows how the domination of men is not limited by the human realm but is also applied to the natural environment (Warren, 2000).

The mountain is a metaphor of women's lives. Climate change and human intervention pose a threat to glaciers, and, similarly, in a patriarchal society, women's ability to participate is limited by their traditions, social roles and unequal power positions. Both should last for a long time, quietly exploited and supporting a group of people that rely on them. Khan's juxtaposition of environmental vulnerability and female marginalization is a reflection of the ecofeminist notion that patriarchy regulates the domination of anything that is perceived as "other," such as women, indigenous people, animals and nature (Gaard, 1993).

The novel also challenges the patriarchal notion of ownership and control both in relation to women's bodies and to the natural environment. Women often face social constraints that restrict their autonomy and decision making power, while the land is also being commercialized. As the land is commercialized, women are likely to face social constraints that limit their autonomy and decision making power. This parallel ordering of domination is interpreted as having the same underlying ideology of valuing possession rather than partnership and control over collaboration (Merchant, 1980) used.

Khan challenges dominant development discourses that focus on technological development over environmental sustainability by highlighting women's ecological knowledge. The novel implies that indigenous knowledge systems must be appreciated along with scientific knowledge in order to have a sustainable coexistence. This view is similar to Shiva's (1988)

call for local communities and traditional ecological processes to be the bases of the conservation.

Importantly, the novel does not demean women to be symbols of nature. Rather, Khan portrays female characters as multi-layered individuals with a range of motivations, feelings and aspirations. They are not biologically determined by their relationship with nature, but rather one of ethics. This nuanced portrayals sets the novel apart from the other ecofeminist novels that sometimes essentialised the feminine as closer to nature. Rather, Khan shows how women's environmental awareness is produced in the social context, with dependence on the environment, and through cultural memory.

Hence, in *Thinner Than Skin* women's oppression to nature is seen as a result of hierarchical social system, and women's power to challenge the system is highlighted. This double representation sets the groundwork to comprehend female resistance as an integral part of ecological justice.

Female Resistance as an ecological agency

Thinner Than Skin tells of several types of oppression against the natural world and against patriarchy, but the novel is about resisting it, not being a victim of it. Feminine characters come across as both agents and agents of ecological sustainability, cultural continuity and critique of the systems of domination. This resistance is not always political opposition, but often occurs as everyday choices and actions of caring for the environment, cultural heritage, ethics and resilience. Representations like these are close to the ecofeminist concepts of resistance as the establishment of alternative relations, that is, ones of cooperation instead of domination (Warren, 2000).

Ecofeminism challenges the notion of environmentalism being just one of the organized political movements. Rather, ordinary practices like seed saving, conservation of biodiversity, sustainable food production and community management of resources are forms of ecological resistance (Vandana Shiva, 1988). From this standpoint Khan portrays women's daily relationship to nature as an act of protection of the environment, which is vital to both ecology and local communities.

The attitude of the female characters towards the mountains is very different from the ones of those coming to the mountains for commercial or recreational interests. For external actors, the landscape is often seen as a good or a place of tourism, while for women it is a place of life that is important for cultural survival. They know more than just the economic value of the land, they also know about the emotional, historical and spiritual connections they hold to the land.

This ecological thinking allows the female characters to contest the patriarchal values and ideas of power and expertise. Patriarchal societies tend to value the knowledge of men, and their institutional power, Khan shows that often women's knowledge of the environment is more

sensitive to local ecological realities. They have a sense of what was happening in the weather, animals, and the environment, instead of simply conducting scientific observations.

Preservation of memory is a way of resistance as well. Women are the storykeepers, traditional keepers and the keepers of the ecology throughout the novel. These cultural memories help the community's members to withstand the process of environmental and cultural erasure related to modernization. Ecofeminist scholars believe that memory is an important form of resistance – it holds on to alternative modes of relating to nature that contest mainstream development paradigms (Mies & Shiva, 1993).

Another very important aspect of the female resistance is that of moral responsibility. Women never seek to master nature, and always pay attention to the limits and interdependence of nature. They act in an environmentally responsible manner not in an exploitative manner. Ethical relationships such as these raise questions about anthropocentrism and humans having unlimited rights to the use of natural resources. Rather, Khan explains that it is a moral responsibility for people to be humble, cooperative and sustainable in their approach to the environment.

Importantly, if there is resistance in the novel, there will be no suffering or ecological loss. Uncertainty in the environment, social inequalities and personal hardships for women do not stop. However, they are resilient, showing that resistance can take place even in the face of vulnerability. Ecofeminism understands that change may be first made locally by doing things differently, but that this is more likely to be a process of challenging dominant systems of power than an actual political revolution (Gaard, 1993).

Khan also challenges the conceptual frameworks of "heroism" based on conquest, mastery and control that are traditionally masculinist. She teaches resistance without resorting to violent confrontations, preferring instead to speak, care, empathize and be an ecologically responsible citizen. The values are not a sign of weakness, but alternatives to them that are also forms of strength to hold up human communities and nature's ecosystems. These portrayals mirror the modern concept of ecofeminist ways of transcending power in favour of the art of nurturing relationships.

The novel also shows that social justice has to be applied in order to take care of the environment. Marginalisation of communities, lack of utilisation of indigenous knowledge and gender inequalities will not lead to ecological sustainability. Environmental resistance is just one of the forms of resistance that women experience, and one that is often linked to other forms of resistance for equality, dignity and cultural recognition. Khan relates these issues and shows how ecological justice and gender justice are inextricably intertwined.

In the end, female resistance in *Thinner Than Skin* is an other worldly vision of human life that is based on coexistence not domination. Women turn into agents of ecological responsibility whose actions are a challenge to patriarchal ideas and propose more sustainable relationships between humankind and nature. The resistance of the students echoes the main tenet of

ecofeminism which states that environmental protection can only be achieved by changing social values as well as ecological practices.

Conclusion

In *Thinner than Skin*, Uzma Aslam Khan is a literary journeyer on a quest for a deeper understanding of the interrelated crisis of gender oppression and environmental degradation. Particularly in an ecofeminist reading of the novel, it is clear that the exploitation of nature and the marginalisation of women are not separate events but can be connected to the same networks of power and domination, namely those based on a patriarchal and anthropocentric logic. The setting of the story in the ecologically sensitive Karakoram Mountains, helps the reader to understand how climate change, biodiversity loss, glacier retreat and environmental exploitation have significant implications for the environment and the people who live within it. The novel hence turns the concern with environmental crisis from a scientific to a very human and ethical one and highlights its cultural, political and social aspects.

The study also shows that the novel's vision of the ecology includes a central role for women. Unlike typical portrayals of female victims of patriarchy, Khan portrays female characters as resilient people, who continue to pass on knowledge of the natural world, safeguard cultural traditions, and foster ethical relationships with the natural world. They show ways of environmental stewardship through their daily interactions with the environment; caring, co-operating and sustainable. Such depictions break the gender binary of masculinity and femininity, and the nature binary of passivity and activity. Rather, women come to life as actors in ecological conservation, and their know-how and experiences provide alternative strategies for living in harmony.

One of the important results of the present research is that the resistance of the women is one of the new interventions of the novel, which is an ecofeminist one. The resistance in *Thinner Than Skin* doesn't take place on the political level, as much as in the mundane tasks of protecting the environment, conserving culture, and being ethically conscious. This is an example of resistance, as Vandana Shiva understands ecological activism to be the safeguarding of biodiversity, indigenous knowledge and community-based environmental practices (Shiva, 1988). Similarly, Karen Warren's notion of the 'logic of domination' serves as an effective tool for developing an understanding of the nature of feminine characters in terms of their conflicts with hierarchical structures which oppress women whilst exploiting nature (Warren, 2000). This acts of resistance indicate that the ecological sustainability can be achieved not only by providing the technological solutions but changing the social values.

Thinner Than Skin's other key legacy is that it challenges development paradigms which promote modernization as progress in the absence of any environmental aspects. Tourism, commercialization, infrastructure development and resource exploitation are shown as activities which have the potential to affect the delicate ecological systems if not performed with ecological responsibility. Not all development is bad, Khan asks, but how some types of development are damaging to ecology and social justice for short economic gains. From this

point of view, ecofeminist critiques of capitalist models which "commodify both nature and humanity" are reinforced.

This study also has implications for previous research in these areas. Although there has been work that has investigated environmental themes and ecofeminist symbolism in *Thinner Than Skin*, there has been less work that looked at the ecologies of the female resistance as an active agent of ecological change. It's now clear that women's roles are not just victims of environmental dangers but also agents of justice, who resist oppression and injustice in their society by knowing, living and acting in an ethical way with nature. Overall, the novel provides a positive and optimistic outlook on sustainable futures, emphasizing the importance of interdependence, environmental stewardship, and collaboration among people and the environment.

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