

# Nature-Woman Relationship in Albert Otto *Letters from the Earth*

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## **Abstract**

*The domination of woman and the degradation of the environment could be evaluated as part of the fallouts of a society that is socio-culturally governed by patriarchy and capitalism. Thus, nature and woman share a similar history of commodification, oppression, and marginalisation in a male-centred society. With the use of ecofeminism as analytical theory, the study examines how the age long exploitation of nature in connection with the oppression of women serves to intensify male-dominant system deep into the age of globalisation. Ecofeminism thus emphasises gender liberation and environmental safety. Therefore, this paper seeks to examine nature-woman relationship in Albert Otto's Letters from the earth, as it supports a restructuring and overhauling of the system that places man at the centre of all things and objectifies nature-woman. This study employs ecofeminism as offshoot of feminism towards a clearer explication of the subjugation of women in a society already plagued by degradation. Also, it attempts a close critical reading of Albert Otto's Letters from the Earth as it strives to ensure a non-hegemonic patriarchal society and a safe environment.*

*Key words: Ecology, Ecofeminism, Patriarchy, Environmental Degradation, Albert Otto*

## **Introduction**

Since time, nature and woman have always shared a symbiotic relationship, owing to the common history of marginalisation, devaluation, subjugation and commodification that have come to characterise patriarchal system and global capitalism. The triangular and hierarchal relationship between nature, woman and man, which places the latter at the upper echelon of the triangle with the formers at the bottom, leaves women and nature disenfranchised and treated as passive resources. This structure of domination and oppositional ideological standpoints are deployed to exploit and denigrate nature and woman as mere reproduction machines or tools. Besides, the phenomenon of binary oppositions or dualisms of man/woman, rich/poor, emotion/reason, culture/nature and self/other have reinforced the practice of social stratification, and engendered dominance and oppression. It is against this background that ecofeminism is considered as “a philosophical movement [which]...

aim[s] at deconstructing the oppression of hierarchal system governed by dualistic hierarchies of light/Darkness, Male/Female, Independence/ Interdependence, culture/nature, Head/Heart, Reason/Emotion, White/Black etc.” (Mir 44). Similarly, Greta Gaard states that “the way in which women and nature have been conceptualised historically in the Western intellectual tradition has resulted in devaluing whatever is associated with women, emotion, animals, nature, and the body, while simultaneously elevating in value those things associated with men, reason, humans, culture, and the mind. One task of ecofeminist [school of thought] has been to expose these dualisms ...” (5) In essence, it is this conceptualisation of dichotomies that ecofeminism seeks to dismantle and provide a wide-ranging framework for liberation and propagation of positive change.

Therefore, this study gives insights into the ways nature and women are disdainfully conceptualised in the patriarchal systems, where the devaluation and maltreatment of nature and women, respectively, are propagated by the same social institutions. Foregrounding the aforementioned view, Yawer Mir asserts that “[e]cofeminists foresee that the domination of women and subjugation of nature are [engendered] from the same dogma of capitalist patriarchy as under the capitalist thinking men own control over land, property and women” (44). This patriarchal world outlook “... sees man as the measure of all value, with no space for diversity, [but in favour of] hierarchy. Woman, being different, is treated as unequal and inferior. Nature's diversity is seen as not intrinsically valuable in itself; its value is conferred only through economic exploitation for commercial gain” (Shiva 229). This exploitation of nature impacts humanity, and this is seen as similar to the way woman is commonised in many social and cultural systems, which can lead to the altering of the cycle of reproduction and continuity of life. It is important to state that man is not an autonomous entity and cannot exist outside nature, but an integral part of nature. In other words, man's existence is hinged on the survival of the earth, and the maltreatment of nature would only leave in its wake disastrous repercussions for man. As a matter of fact, the abuse of nature by man has resulted in the present environmental crisis that humanity is facing. This present environmental dilemma is seen as being connected to the fragmentations of patriarchal capitalism in its diverse outlooks, and this is represented in Albert Otto's *Letters from the Earth*.

Even though there is a seeming paucity of studies on Otto's *Letters from the Earth*, previous studies have been preoccupied with themes of resistance and remonstrance against environmental deterioration and ecological difficulties that characterise the exploration and exploitation of oil in the Niger Delta region (Ohwavworhua and Orhero, 2019), while leaving the ecofeminism contexts out of the focus. Moreover, over the years, studies have interrogated prose fictional works like Agari's *Yellow Yellow* (Ashaolu, 2019; Adeyemo and Shittu, 2021; Ufuoma, 2023), Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche's *Purple Hibiscus and Half of a Yellow Sun* (Methuselah and Israel, 2022), *Efuru* (Sanjo, 2018), and in the genres of poetry, such as Tanure Ojaide's *Songs of Myself* and Ebi Yeibo's *A Song for Tomorrow* (Abonyi, 2022) from the ecofeminist perspective. However, the ecofeminist aspect of Otto's *Letters from the Earth* has not been interrogated. Therefore, this paper examines the interrelatedness between nature

and woman in *Letters from the Earth*, using ecofeminism, an offshoot of feminism and a related concept of ecocriticism, as the theoretical model for a close reading and literary analysis.

The 1990s saw the emergence of ecocriticism as a method of literary inquiry. Ecocriticism is a departure from the pastoralism and romanticism of earlier writers on environmental issues. Ecocriticism is a theory that deals with how the environment is represented through literature. It studies the relationship between literature and the environment. Williams Rueckert's essay, "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism" was first to introduce the term, ecocriticism. He states that ecocriticism entails "application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature" (107). The fundamental premise grounding Rueckert's argument is that the environment is in a state of crisis because of the deleterious anthropocentric activities that keep bedeviling the environment in earnest, and stresses the need to remedy the situation if future extermination of humans and other species will be forestalled.

Ecofeminism is a related concept to ecocriticism as it combines and applies ecocritical ideas with feminist thoughts. In other words, ecofeminism and ecocriticism are not antagonistic suppositions but complementary theories, which seek to reinforce and promote the sustainability of the environment. The term, ecofeminism, was coined by French Feminist writer, Francoise d'Eaubonne in her book *Le Féminisme ou la Mort* (1974). Ecofeminism is a branch of feminism that examines the connections between women and nature. Supporting this view, F. Laila Zein and R. Adib Setiawan enunciate that "[e]cofeminism is a branch of feminism that sees environmentalism, and the relationship between women and the earth, as foundational to its analysis and practice" (1). They state further that ecofeminism relates the oppression and domination of all marginalised groups (women, people of color, children, the poor) to the oppression and domination of nature (animals, land, water, air, etc.). This oppression, domination, exploitation, and colonisation from the Western patriarchal society, they argue, have directly caused irreversible environmental damage. Therefore, ecofeminism examines the consequences of gender categorisation and repercussions of marginality on women and nature, and "aims at repudiation and debarment of all kinds of subjugation while endorsing and acknowledging the reciprocity and affinity that human beings share with nature" (Mir 45).

Ecofeminism deploys the tenets of feminism, which stresses equality of the two genders in society and mutual co-existence as opposed to gender domination. It also acknowledges equality and interdependency of humans and nature by re-creating eco-awareness of human and non-human nature in general. The theory asserts that a feminist perspective of ecology does not place women in the dominant position of power, but rather signifies an egalitarian, collaborative society in which there is no one dominant group (Zein and Setiawan 1). It is a philosophy, an ethic and a movement that come out the union of feminist and ecological currents of thought (7). Thus, the parallels between the suppression of women and repression of nature are addressed. Simply put, "ecofeminist criticism draws a parallel between man's millennial attempts to subdue nature and women" (Shober 2). However, Gourish Mondal and Palash

Majumder claim that “[t]he central tenet of ecofeminism is that social and environmental issues are not separate, that the causes for the mistreatment of women, people of color and the environment stem from the same place” (482).

Some theorists have argued that ecofeminism has expanded into two types, which are socialist ecofeminism and cultural ecofeminism. Dianne Shoher states it aptly: “[e]cofeminism has developed into two distinct forms, socialist and cultural ecofeminism, which still share the same goal of protecting and promoting women and nature, but choose separate models to appropriate these realities to create vital global change” (2). While socialist ecofeminism advocates transformation through empowering programmes and strategies, cultural ecofeminism believes in the possibility of change through the elevation of “the status of women through their defined spiritual connection with nature and absorb spiritual and thus social significance through their association with ancient cultures that placed women in Godlike roles” (3). Fundamentally, ecofeminist literary criticism explores the interrelationship between the subjugation of women, nature and indigenous peoples as evidenced in literary texts, and also provides a specialised theoretical lens for the interrogation of texts, providing fresh perspective on how literary works express women's place in society and their relationship to nature. It reconceptualises “... insights of ecology, feminism, and socialism; ecofeminism's basic premise is that the ideology which authorises oppressions such as those based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities, and species is the same ideology which sanctions the oppression of nature” (Gaard 1).

Moreover, the descriptive characteristics of nature and women as reproductive agents and creative mediums inform the significance of ecofeminism as the theoretical parameter. In the light of the above propositions, this study seeks to explicate through the representations in the primary text under discussion “by shedding light on the exclusion of women and the exploitation of nature” with the aim “to annihilate hierarchies and dualities and restore the harmony in the societies” (Ozturk 713). Substantiating this further, Gaard avers that “[e]cofeminism calls for an end to all oppressions, arguing that no attempt to liberate women (or any other oppressed group) will be successful without an equal attempt to liberate nature (1).

### **A Nexus between Nature and Woman in Otto's *Letters from the Earth***

The modern capitalist society governed by a patriarchal order propels undue competitiveness, mindless consumerism, blithe avarice and needless hegemony. This has given rise to domination and commodification of the earth, leaving the woman doubly affected and vulnerable to negative impacts of environmental degradation. This is “[o]ne of the reasons why ecology has become a feminist issue ... [because] pollution has a particular effect on the health of women and on reproductive health” (Puleo 31), besides presaging perilous rising risk of climate change and other potential environmental crises. Representations of these mayhems are articulated in Otto's *Letters of the Earth*. The titling of the collection, *Letters from the Earth (Letters)*, is eco-personified. It presents the travails of the earth in the face of massive destruction and the subjugation of the women simultaneously by the same authority (gendered

male), despite their nurturing and life-giving status. The portrayal of the destruction of the environment in *Letters from the Earth* is achieved using the image of the woman, a source of regeneration. Apparently, the intertwining role nature and woman play in the regenerative process of life and provision of sustenance has ironically negatively impacted the women and the environment as they are considered as resources of recreation, but unkindly reconstituted as objects of appropriation and exploitation. Hence, this study seeks to offset the destructive patriarchal pattern, which has brought about the suppression of nature and women by the same token, with a mind geared towards effecting universal change and engendering liberation.

The collection begins with a sense of optimism proclaimed by the poet persona in the second poem, “This earth shall arise” (*Letters*, 18). Despite the destruction and degradation of the earth by man, the poet persona is positive that the earth will arise. However, he does not fail to caution man that “this Earth is not for a hellish hydrosphere” where “toxic trash and radioactive ruins” are “Sunk at seas that corrode man” (18). The poet persona is not oblivious of the use to which man has converted the earth into and the precarious interaction between man and the environment, which has led to the present state of nature, leaving behind devastating ecological footprints on the ecological space. Therefore, for the earth to arise, just as he has proclaimed, inappropriate use of it has to be abjured. While the poet persona condemns this unsuitable utilisation of the earth, he states the significance of the earth as

... our Potter's pot, where old Niger  
Spread-eagles her legs and empties her womb  
Into the Atlantic, through the Delta... (*Letters*, 18).

The imagery of a woman during parturition is deployed to foreground the reproductive status of the earth similar to the woman. As the woman ensures the continuity of life through her procreating abilities and active participation in the creation of life, so also does the earth on whom hangs the nurturance and cultivation of present and future generations. Consequently, for reproduction and sustenance of humans to be guaranteed, the cycle of the Delta emptying her content into the Atlantic Ocean must not be interrupted by the pollution of the rivers and seas. The poet persona states further that the earth is not “Lifeless like the moon, where man/Tucks away his grief in yells of bombs” (18). “Man” is not deployed here as a generic term but it underscores the fact that the destruction of the earth, which is the basis of life, is facilitated and carried out mostly by man. In other words, the framework that approves of the destruction and oppression of nature is the patriarchal capitalist world. Distressingly, man has rendered “her atmospheric garment a furnace” (18). However, the poet persona commands thus: “... let this Earth arise a healer.../Medicine that bestows healing on my head” (18) through her munificent trees from which medicinal herbs are derived for curative purpose. This demonstrates that the poet persona believes in the self-regenerative power of nature. The deployment of feminine pronoun, “her”, in addressing the earth and the feminisation of the earth further foreground the proximate relationship the woman shares with nature.



In another poem entitled “The embattled coast” (*Letters*, 24), the poem echoes the battle for survival similar to the woman's struggle for her continued existence and identity in a patriarchal society. Conceptions of nature and women have been connected as the earth is feminised. There is the repetitive reference to the embattled coast using a feminine identity, which is signified by the deployment of the third person (singular) pronoun (“she” and “her”). The poet persona describes how the coast that “splashes/Black oil out-glittering pure gold” now possesses an “emotion-mocking sobriquet” which “mocks her sadness”. The poem here makes reference to the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. In spite of the Niger Delta's endowments (a region that houses an abundance of oil and gas), the poet persona watches as the “pearls and Pisces” rot and froth to nothing. The hegemonic structures, which place man at the foremost wrung of the ladder, make him treat the earth as worthless, in spite of 'her' life-giving status with:

Fringes of derricks, like crab pincers  
 Spill her oily milk, wild insolence?...  
 They crush her creeks: (*Letters*, 24)

Using simile, the towers/structures built over the oil wells that support the drilling equipment, are compared to the claws of a crab, and these are deployed by the despoilers in wasting their host communities' fortunes. The linguistic choice (crushing) speaks volume of the magnitude of destruction. It presents an image of humiliation and suppression under the male-centred society. In addition, the oppression of the female shares some form of similarities with the abuse of the environment, as both have been silenced and denied the option of vocalising their hurt while the maltreatment continues.

More so, the symbol of milk in the above poem further foregrounds the connexion between nature and woman in their sustaining capacities. As breast milk is fed newborns for nourishment and sustenance, so also does the oil produced from earth provide man his livelihood. Despite the indispensable role of nature and woman, respectively, in the cycle of production and life as a whole, their status places them at a disadvantaged position as they are reduced to mere resources. Unfortunately, this is sustained by the patriarchal institution and beliefs guiding the society. Substantiating this, Vandana Shiva states that “... a tradition of knowledge that has viewed nature and women only as a resource, and nature's limits as constraints, has created unprecedented man-made ignorance — an ignorance which is becoming a new source of threat to life on this planet” (65). The reduction of nature and woman to mere resources of exploitation has imperilled the environment, engendering compound wreckages and portending futuristic shocks. Consequently, ecofeminism seeks to create “... the possibility of viewing the world as an active subject, not merely as a resource to be manipulated and appropriated. It problematizes 'production' by exposing the destruction inherent in much of what capitalistic patriarchy has defined as productive and creates new spaces for the perception and experience of the creative act” (Shiva 70).

Despite the progress ecofeminist criticisms may have made over the years, the earth

and woman are still not fully regarded as active participants in the process of regeneration but treated as dispensable and disposable. Unfortunately, the ennobling of man has bolstered up this ideology. Besides, man's exclusive focus on opulence and the drive accompanying his insatiable quest for wealth has led to oil spillage, leaving the earth in a state that it has become a distressing image of its former self:

She the sun scintillates a shadowy land  
 Now her mangrove woods wither  
 Like the wrinkled and ripped wrapper  
 Of a wizened widow.  
 Her wretch hiss of wrathful dwellers beneath... (*Letters*, 24)

Even as the mangroves are foundations of inimitable ecosystems, so is the woman's body and womb the base for unmatched procreation and production that has been wilted. The image of wretchedness is depicted and the agonising condition of women is reflected, which is painfully obvious to many. The earth is divested of its resources with the same exactness the woman is robbed of her fineness and elegance, relegating her to a production machine. The linguistic choices in the poem emphasises this relegation. Corroborating this, F. Laila Zein and R. Adib Setiawan (2017) aver that "the marginalisation is evident in the gendered language used to describe nature and the animalised language used to describe women" (2). Sadly, the earth, as well as woman, is deprived of her birthright to the land and left in "regret in superfluous store" (*Letters*, 24) while being displaced by an administration that is equally established on inequality.

This theme of degradation of the earth is carried over into another poem titled "Millennium rain" (*Letters*, 28). The title of the poem is suggestive of happiness, a dawn of a new era. However, this is only ironical as seen through the narrations of negative transformations in the poem. The poet persona recounts how "Like an exotic harmattan wind", the earth "brought with her her spouse of rain/Which feeds the forests with black showers" (28). Owing to gas flaring from the extraction and production of oil, excess amounts of carbon dioxide and methane are released into the atmosphere, resulting in "black showers" and portending environmental doom such as acid rain and global warming. Therefore, contrary to the expectation of the poet persona of a new epoch is an environment dying slowly. The lines following confirms this thus:

And legumes with oily translucency, and  
 The vulgarized vegetables smiled sullenly.  
 When the grazing gazelles swarmed,  
 It was as if a curtain of the forest was  
 Drawn aside, with black egrets taking to flight (*Letters*, 28)

The description of the flora does not fit into the narration of a millennium like the title of the poem proposes. Rather, the above lines confirm the presence of an environment in retrogression. The poet persona is astonished by the spectacle and beckons to his

“agrarian mother” saying, “Mother! Did you ever see such wonder?” (28) The deliberate use of “agrarian” as an adjective in qualifying “mother” foregrounds the woman as a caretaker of the earth, who promotes the agricultural interests of the earth, with a mind “to plough, not to plunder”, in Niyi Osundare's *The Eye of the Earth* (48). It appears that the poet persona is sarcastic when he refers to the sight as a wonder because what wonder is there in a “fine millennium and a black rain/Striding with unimaginable might”? The deployment of oxymoron in “black rain” is aptly thought-out because it emphasises the incongruity at work. The poem concludes with the mother recounting how “Sometime—no, many a century past/There was a like deed of wonder” where “homes” were “painted with blood/And women walked with their heads down/In servile servitude for men” (28). Thus, a similarity is established between the condition and treatment of the earth to that of the woman. Incidentally, the destruction of the earth by man does not only affect the agrarian woman, but is also similar to the denigration of the woman by the same authority, which is the patriarchal institution.

The patriarchal system of government privileges the ultimate position of man and promotes the dominance of man over women as well as the environment. It devalues women and nature as possessions and acquisitions, thus foregrounding their exploitative status. The way in which nature and women are treated by male-centred society is emphasised succinctly in Otto's *Letters from the Earth*. Man exerts unjust dominance over women and nature in a similar fashion, in spite of the fact that their existence is dependent on the natural world as it is on the woman's world. It cannot be overemphasised that nature and woman are integral to man's existence, yet man's obsession for dominance and his prejudices beclouds his judgment and guides his philosophy of life. This conception of life does the poet persona disapprove of and recommends the befitting relationship that should exist between man, woman and nature in the poem titled “Man and woman” (*Letters*, 41). The poet persona, deploying apostrophe, calls out: “Man, O gendered man/Man is only made to man woman”. In other words, man is supposed to complement woman. However, this is lacking in reality as the position of man is described as domineering, rarely complementary owing to his distorted mindset. This patriarchal valued mindset, which gives rise to their logic and ways of reasoning, makes man choose oppressive status against nature and woman. The poet persona ends by saying that “Man/is/no/Misogynist/Against/Nature” (41). Again, these concluding lines of the poem could be poet persona expressing what is supposed to characterise man's disposition towards nature and by extension, woman. Unfortunately, man fails to acknowledge this but keeps pushing the cart of oppression and domination against nature and women alike.

The interconnection between the domination and destruction of women and nature is further underscored in the poem “Merciful sister” (*Letters*, 42). The poet persona recounts how “This tractor track that savours Earthworm/Being sliced by man like Okra” with “men, in their walloping war on Earth”. Emphasis is placed on the annihilation of both the fauna and flora of the ecosystem. With the deployment of simile, the poet persona portrays how man ruthlessly treats the fauna. The assertion



below is pointing:

And men, in their walloping war on Earth  
 Are guilty in the court of Nature of  
 Ecocide and gynocide  
 degradation and deforestation (*Letters*, 42)

The woman suffers in double measure as she does not only contend with the massive destruction of the ecology by man, but also deals with gynocide – the killing of fetus, woman etc. owing to the intake of polluted water and contaminated greens. Therefore, the poet persona decides on lending his voice in the fight against the destruction of nature and the denigration of woman by hurling his “story and song among/The congregating songs of Earth” (42), adding to the existing voices opposing the exploitation of the environment as expressed in their literary works. This partly confirms William Slaymaker's view that “[b]lack African critics and writers have traditionally embraced nature writing, land issues and landscape themes that are pertinent to national and local cultural claims ... A review of any number of bibliographies, literary histories, and anthologies of black African literature and criticism in the past several decades will bear out this intense interest in the local recapture of a violated nature (683). This profound interest in environmental issues, for the ecofeminists, could be owing to the twice over trauma the woman experiences.

The trauma experienced by the female folks is twofold, as earlier stated. They do not only contend with loss of livelihoods, displacement but are also compellingly made to struggle with infertility, as demonstrated in the poem titled “Sterility” (*Letters*, 43). The poem begins by reflecting on the attributes of woman: “You of fair feminine grace that shines against/The ageless darkness of womanhood!...?/Gem, erudite gem, jewel whose fortune/And renown kiss the sun like Iroko” (43). Through an extended simile, comparison is drawn between the woman and nature, thereby, over again, establishing its interconnectedness. Despite the characteristics which makes her stand tall as the Iroko, the poet persona asks, with the deployment of apostrophe and rhetorical questions, “Why keep frozen with burning despair?” This reveals the miasma of despair that clouds the Niger Delta people's existence, particularly the woman's world, as they struggle for survival in a degraded environment. The life of the woman is preoccupied with the rhythm of pains as she is doubly affected by the immoderate use of the environment by man. This is accentuated in the successive lines:

Alas! O woeful woman that am I!  
 What is verdure or bliss to a grape tree?  
 If though her boughs cloy with green foliage  
 She hoards her ovary in vain, in pain?  
 Quarantined by this barren lake ... (*Letters*, 43)

Through juxtaposing images of woman and barren lake, the physiological and psychological impacts of destruction of the environment on humans, particularly women, is underscored. The poet persona grieves over the distasteful ingestion of

contaminated greens into the woman's body, when he states that the “boughs” of the woman “cloy with green foliage”, leading to grave consequences, such as the woman hoarding “her ovary in vain, in pain/Quarantined by this barren lake”. Apparently, the destruction of the environment has more negative effects on the woman than the man, as contaminated water, plants, amongst others, affect women's reproductive systems upon consumption. These contaminations possess the potential for future damage of fetuses. Hence, the life of woman is a picture of pain and a seat of subordination similar to the environment. In essence, beyond the economic effects of environmental degradation on women, which is the destitution that accompanies the destruction of their means of livelihood, they also writhe in pain from the physiological impact of environmental degradation.

What is more, the fear of reproducing deformed children, leaving the parents, particularly, the woman who is the homemaker, with a burdened future is suggested. Thus, the woman all the more suffers from the aftereffects of environmental degradation and as a result, strives for survival and environmental sustainability while hoping that this “stubborn flaw, this worthless flaw” of man does not ruin her “flawless worth?” The play on words (pun) in these lines in the poem is deliberate, as it strives to mitigate the effects of the pain engendered by misogynistic attitudes. The poem ends on a consolatory note:

Dear lady, make merry in misery  
 For life is even a desert plain where  
 Dry dews give impression of torrential rain  
 And manifold are the woes of the earthly being.  
 But you ever can be sure some hour  
 They would cease, with God, the Mighty Maker. (*Letters*, 43)

The call to merriment in the midst of distress supports the general philosophy of life that nothing lasts forever, as well as recalls Karl Marx's philosophical statement on religion being “the opium of the people”. The poem ends with the poet persona suggesting that the same way the rain still pours down upon the earth, heralding hope and rejuvenation, so also will the expectation of the woman of a utopian life free from oppression of man and destruction and subordination of nature be achieved.

### **Conclusion**

This study relies on ecofeminist conceptions in emphasising that the very structures that disparage women also mistreat nature. Thus, the discourse of ecofeminism cannot be relegated to the peripheral owing to its relevance to the present patriarchal social order, gender-stereotyped society, environmentally devastated world and the technological-driven 21st century. Also, ecofeminism has the inherent potential to engender environmental sustainability through its ideological standpoints and protest against all forms of domination and exploitation. Rather than view ourselves as superior to and separate from nature, ecofeminism advocates that we acknowledge the interconnection between humanity and nature. Besides, it is important that humanity begins to see the environment as a nurturer and nourisher like the woman, else

environmental degradation will continue to dangle us on a scale of extinction. Put simply, if the cycle of reproduction and regeneration is halted or altered due to man's unrestrained quest for riches, the existence of man would be threatened because humans are not self-sufficient entities but interdependent beings whose survival is dependent on the sustainability of the earth. Therefore, Otto's *Letters from the Earth*, like the ecofeminists, advocates the sacredness of the earth, the interconnectedness of humans and non-human nature, de-emphasis on stereotypical ideologies, and ultimately, the emancipation of women and every marginalised group.

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