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Manuscript Title: Unleashing the Power of the Bond between Nature and Nurturer

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Abstract

Power and knowledge are the basic elements for which both men and women struggle. However, the repository of power and knowledge lies within the domain of Nature and Woman, which makes the menfolk desperate to assume the position of a wizard of the cosmic laws. This comes at the cost of the constant relegation of Nature and Women, which led scholars to form, in unison, the concept of ecofeminism in contrast to phallocentrism. This paper focuses on the dichotomy of male domination and female nurturance towards Nature, drawing on Girish Karnad's play *The Fire and the Rain*. The paper argues that knowledge and power can be gained through love and devotion, by showing the symbiotic relationship between Nittilai, the "Angel in the Ecosystem," who dared to interrogate blind rituals, and Mother Nature. Through Nittilai in *The Fire and the Rain*, Girish Karnad shows how the sacrifice of a nurturer brings redemption, in contrast to heartless sacrificial practices.

The dichotomy of the fire and the rain is evident in this play, where the fire symbolises the fight for power and knowledge that blinded the sages, while the rain symbolises the purity of eternal love. Moreover, the extension of ecofeminism can be illustrated by invoking the feminist utopia, which Val Plumwood describes as a state in which there is no hierarchy or aggression. The paper expands its scope by presenting several contemporary examples, such as the way tribal women preserve the forest in Orissa using the technique of 'thengapalli' and protect native animals such as the Himalayan squirrels in Arunachal Pradesh using mechanisms like 'Dapo'.

Keywords: *Ecofeminism; Environmental destruction; Nurturer; Knowledge; Feminist utopia.*

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Introduction

The binary of power struggle between Man and Woman exists to control the mechanisms of the world and, by extension, even the cosmic universe. This binary has its root in the subordinate position of Eve, who owes her existence to her husband's rib and is perpetually blamed for tasting the forbidden fruit (Martin 61). Women's curiosity has always been associated with causing distress and doom, whereas Adam's act of knowingly eating the apple is dismissed as a small mistake (Davenport). Thus, the control of knowledge has always been categorised, with men as the controllers and women at the receiving end. And women who try to transgress and seek knowledge are always punished, as happened in the case of Nittilai, the hunter girl in Girish Karnad's play *The Fire and the Rain*.

Controlling the Repository of Knowledge

Selfish intention and the desire for power make the path to knowledge more clouded and nebulous. It is believed that the Supreme Being endowed mankind with the utmost power and so man is meant to sacrifice. According to environmental philosophy, human beings were

imbued with moral principles to protect the environment in place of their own personal desires (Zhang 76). However, men interpreted sacrifice as making inferior, meek human beings scapegoats. They even created fire yajnas, which disrupt the entire environment through air and soil pollution. This is evident in the play *The Fire and the Rain where all the main characters—Paravasu, the Chief Priest; his father Raibhya, the great sage; and his cousin Yavakri, who did ten years of penance in the forest—were engaged in an endless war to gain power.* To showcase their individual power, Paravasu arranged a great fire sacrifice to please Indra in the garb of showing great concern for his people, and Yavakri did ten years of penance in the forest to become knowledgeable enough to solve the people's miseries. However, in reality, the play shows that selfish desires cannot appease or invoke God, despite the formal dedication of ritual or self-punishment.

The difference in the paths of seeking and understanding knowledge has long roots. According to Hindu mythology, a binary is created between male and female, where the male is equated with consciousness and the female with the generative, creative force. Here, Brahma, the creator of the world, created Culture in order to tame wild Nature (Pattanaik). Likewise, Brahma is said to be the child of Goddess Kali (symbolising the wildness of Nature) and also the father of Gauri (the domesticated version of the very same Nature) (Pattanaik). From this anecdote, it can easily be seen that menfolk, who are the representatives of Brahma, always try to relegate both Nature and women.

The superior position assumed by men has mostly proved detrimental to Nature, because they have always believed in the illusion that technology is the saviour and the staircase to progress. Therefore, from the Enlightenment period onwards, men started taming Nature according to their own whims and fancies in the name of culture and progress (Pinker). After assuming power, they became blindfolded by science and grew ungrateful towards Nature's bounty. In the midst of life-enhancing processes, men forgot the real means of living and conserving life (Shiva xii). Thus, by restraining knowledge and using it according to their own understanding, men forgot to respect and care for Nature and women, both of which are intricately intertwined. By contrast, the worldviews of hunter-gatherers tend to respect Nature, which contrasts with the practice of the Western tradition (Milton 92). However, anthropologists agree that human attitudes towards Nature arise from the relationship that people share with it, the way they live, and how they use environmental resources.

Restraining Knowledge

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Human beings live upon curiosity and its fulfilment; however, they hardly realise the cost of quenching this thirst for knowledge. In the play *The Fire and the Rain*, Karnad projects the character of Nittilai as an innocent tribal girl who dares to ask simple but vital questions about the rituals of the Brahmans. For instance, she defiantly asked why secrecy was maintained in order to please and meet the Gods. In the same spirit of defiance, Nittilai retorts:

> Look at my people. Everything is done in public view there. The priest announces that he'll invoke the deity at such and such a time on such and such a day. And then there, right in front of the whole tribe, he gets possessed. And the spirit answers your questions…. (Karnad 10)

This speaks volumes about Nittilai, who does not hesitate to speak bluntly; she is knowledgeable enough to bring out the stark contrast between the two rituals. This underlines the creation of a deconstructive stance towards phallocentrism, which creates the dichotomies of Nature and culture based on the principle of power (Kokane 92). However, her curiosity was immediately shunned by a patriarch, who explained that there lies a chasm between the rituals performed by the Brahman priests and those of the lowly tribal caste because of the difference in the status of their Gods. This reflects the convention that women in the ancient world were not expected to raise their voices in the political sphere, because public speaking was considered a masculine activity (Beard). Therefore, Nittilai's act of questioning, and being scoffed at immediately, dams the river of the quest for knowledge by looking down upon her caste and gender.

It is the natural tendency of menfolk to remain oblivious of the creative force that lies behind their genesis. Instead, he is determined to shape both women and Nature in his own mould, as his own property. This can be compared to the horse in Tolstoy's story, which felt strange at being treated as the man's property, as if everything were "my land" or "my air" under the "institution of private property" (Anshen 53). In the play, Karnad shows that both women, Nittilai and Vishakha, were reduced to the status of the men's private property, but he gives them an indirect agency. Vishakha, who played the roles of Yavakri's lover, Paravasu's wife, and the oppressed daughter-in-law at the hands of Raibhya, became the instrument that changed the fate of the three men. On the other hand, Nittilai showed her thirst for knowledge and her desire to live of her own free will, displaying the spirit of a true nurturer and a person capable of containing true knowledge.

Vishakha: The Woman Who Held the Mirror

The two women in the play exercised agency in whatever little way they could, and this shows the truth of their intentions, not pretence, unlike the men. In *The Fire and the* Rain, Vishakha is not given much space and remains subdued, withering because of the male members who surround her (Karnad 16). However, it is important to note that Vishakha's interactions with both Yavakri and Paravasu unveil their true selves and their conception of knowledge.

When Vishakha congratulated Yavakri on receiving the boon of Universal Knowledge, he replied in an almost mocking tone and went on to describe elaborately the pain of enduring the attacks of insects and the heat. He yelled, "Universal Knowledge! What a phrase! It makes me laugh now… You go into the jungle. You perform austerities in the name of some god. You stand in a circle of fire. The pressure of your austerities forces the god to grant you your wish. And you get 'Universal Knowledge.' Victory!" (Karnad 13). Vishakha then justifiably tells him that it is this endurance that serves as God's test for those who seek true knowledge. But he retorts that Lord Indra did appear to him and told him that true knowledge would "come with experience," not by "austerities" (Karnad 13). When she directly asked Yavakri whether he had been victorious in his quest for knowledge, he diverted the topic down memory lane to ten years earlier, when he came to Vishakha's marital home to bid her goodbye before going for penance. He reiterated "the smell of your body. Ten years later I opened my eyes and I knew I was hungry for that moment" (Karnad 14). It shows how much men crave superficial knowledge, only for the sake of controlling power, and how they lack the patience to secure true knowledge.

Besides this, Karnad underlines how oblivious the common village folk are to Yavakri's true intention. They believed that he had adhered strictly to the sacrificial ritual to appease Indra, as "he stood in the middle of a circle of fire and started offering his limbs to the fire — first his fingers, then his eyes, then his entrails, his tongue, and at last, his heart" (Karnad 9). However, in reality, Yavakri confessed to Vishakha that he had learnt only a few mystical powers and mastered some secret arts and mantras, which he now had at his fingertips. In the same breath, he said that when Lord Indra advised him that true knowledge involved control of one's desires, he flatly refused. Moreover, he said outright that he sought the all-encompassing knowledge that could make him more vicious and destructive. Thus, it can be said that Yavakri's ten years of penance went in vain because he could not gain true

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knowledge of Nature and sacrifice in the true sense of the terms. Instead, he became more malicious, as he learnt how to manipulate a woman's love to secure his position of power.

Karnad introduced the father-son duo in a manner in which their hollow, supposedly knowledgeable selves are again exposed by a single woman, Vishakha. Instead of thinking about the collective good, both Raibhya and Paravasu were thinking about the dignity and power that come with the post of Chief Priest, very much like the power-hungry Yavakri. When Vishakha complained and demanded answers from her husband for going away for the seven-year-long ritual that was meant to bring rain, Paravasu's real intention was laid bare. He said, "I went because the fire sacrifice is a formal rite. Structured. …The process itself will bring Indra to me…I shall confront Indra in silence" (Karnad 31–32). By calling the austerities foolish and claiming to be powerful enough to confront Lord Indra, Paravasu displayed a lack of awareness and knowledge about himself and his surroundings.

To Paravasu, the environmental condition, that is, the welfare of his people, was irrelevant because he concentrated solely on consolidating his position as Chief Priest, in opposition to everyone, especially his capable father, Raibhya. Even after killing his father, he did not show repentance for his act, as he blatantly confesses to Vishakha, "… He deserved to die. He killed Yavakri to disturb me in the last stages of the sacrifice. Not to punish Yavakri, but to be even with me." (Karnad 33). He was so blinded in climbing the staircase of power that he did not hesitate to pass on the blame for the patricide to Arvasu and even held him guilty in public. True knowledge helps human beings to understand problems and influence the surrounding world, because it comprises compassion, which helps one to understand people's suffering, inequality, and injustice ("When Knowledge Isn't Enough"). However, Paravasu remained oblivious to the needs of his wife. Nor did he try to understand the pulse of the public or become knowledgeable enough to resolve their problems.

Thus, both Yavakri and Paravasu remained unsuccessful in becoming the messiah who would bring rainfall to the parched villagers. Despite showcasing their phallocentric powers, both Yavakri and Paravasu died unheroically, and their seeming knowledge could not shield them. The former died overconfident about the consecrated water that could destroy the Brahma Rakshasa, the demon created by Raibhya to kill him. At the moment when Yavakri confessed how he had used Vishakha as a tool for distracting Paravasu, she poured the water out in anger, leaving him unguarded at the hands of the demon.

The fate of Paravasu was no better, as he died out of guilt and retribution while watching the drama of Vritra and Vishwarupa being played out. So, in a way, Vishakha acted as a catalyst to the fire that was burning within Paravasu, which had driven him to remove his father from the path of his competition. Then the play-within-the-play enacted by his own brother acted as an echo of the main play, reflecting the theme of similar brotherly wrongdoing and deception that Paravasu had meted out to Arvasu. Out of immense remorse, he simply walked into the enclosure of flames in a calm state of mind. Thus, Vishakha, who was hardly given any independent agency by Karnad, became an important character. She became the means of reflecting the hollowness in the characters of both men, who considered themselves the wisest.

Nittilai: The True Angel

In contrast to Vishakha, Nittilai was always outspoken and went the extra mile to help others. But the main difference lies in the fact that she herself became the scapegoat, unlike Vishakha, who acted as a nemesis in the lives of her lover and husband. Karnad has carefully presented her in the play as rising from a peripheral figure to become the saviour whose sacrifice brought the rain for which the villagers had been waiting for ten long years.

Nittilai, a simple woman who craved neither power nor Universal Knowledge, became the sole medium who could impress Lord Indra. She neither performed grand rituals to please the God like Paravasu, nor did she do austere penance for ten years like Yavakri. She dedicated herself to worshipping Nature by serving humanity.

The true character of Nittilai is reflected in the fact that she helped the Actor Manager, a stranger, and even Arvasu, without thinking twice that by helping the latter her marital life would be jeopardised. The Actor Manager informed Arvasu how he remains obliged to Nittilai, who, in the form of Mother Nature, saved his children from starvation. Even in troubled times, when the land had been parched for ten long years, she nursed him like her own child. The lines that he told Arvasu are telling: "… we've become dependent on her. For food. For nursing. For laughter… She's a good girl. Don't hurt her" (Karnad 45). This shows that she has earned a pivotal place in the lives of unknown people. Not only did she become a scapegoat in her life, but even after her death, when she got the chance of rebirth, she was denied the privilege on the pretext of her kindness. For instance, the Brahma Rakshasa, who was stuck in the limbo between life and death, asked Arvasu to request his release from Indra as a boon:

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> Nittilai came to help you because she cared for you. She would have cared for me. Wept at the thought of my endless life in death. If you bring her back, you'll have destroyed what made her such a beautiful person. (Karnad 61)

This is the true picture of Nittilai as portrayed by Karnad through the mouthpiece of an almost devilish character. Moreover, Nittilai's act of interrogating the rituals that Yavakri performs shows that she not only seeks true knowledge but also, unknowingly, shows concern for the environment. The knowledge that she gathers, that is, how to collect food in times of scarcity in order to provide it for others, is the essence of true knowledge. Gaining this knowledge serves as an example of a truly selfless character.

Unlike Paravasu or Yavakri, Nittilai did not intend to visit the Gods privately, because she thought neither of personal goodness nor of gaining personal power. She stands as the true epitome of the 'Angel in the Ecosystem' through her actions of serving humanity, not merely by the simple analogy that a woman has procreative capacities for nurture (Rangarajan 117). This selfless thought of putting others' concerns before one's own happiness makes Nittilai stand apart from the self-centred characters in the play. Even Vishakha always thought about her own happiness and desires before anything else. Besides this, the purity of love between Nittilai and Arvasu redeemed the land, which had been stained with the blood of patricide and fratricide, and finally brought rain.

Struggle for Control versus Struggle for Conservation

Nature has fallen prey to the selfish desires of patriarchy, but it has never shown its fangs; instead, it has always remained a nurturer. Women, in turn, depend on Nature to maintain the sustenance of the entire family and, ironically, are themselves prey to violence at the hands of men (Shiva xiv). As the violence endured by Nature becomes intertwined with the violence meted out to women, women are more sensitive to environmental causes. Therefore, according to Karen Warren, there are at least eight links between women and the environment. It starts with the historical link, where invading Eurasian tribes displaced the matrifocal culture; continues through the conceptual, epistemological, symbolic, ethical, theoretical, empirical, and experiential links, underlining the fact that women's health is mainly affected by pollution; and ends with the political link, where women are part of grassroots activism to bring about an ecological revolution. All these show that both women and Nature have been

the scapegoats of twin domination (Rangarajan 112–13). Therefore, the struggle for conservation and preservation continues alongside the struggle against control.

Literature bears witness to a woman who wrote a science fiction novel showing concern for Nature by bringing into view the destructive side of Science. She warned against tampering with the laws of Nature, that is, creation, and how it rebounds. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) shows how the scientist Victor Frankenstein lost his happiness, his family, and then his entire life owing to his megalomaniac act of challenging the laws of creation, that is, bringing science to work on a dead body and transforming it into a living creature (Northam). The backdrop of this novel shows how important this voice from a woman was in challenging the mastery of man over Nature (Poorghorban and Taghizadeh 2). However, women did not restrict themselves to being the voice of fiction; they protested en masse and mustered their strength to fight against men.

History bears witness to mass protests against capitalism in which women paid with their lives to prevent environmental destruction. For instance, in a small Indian village near Jodhpur back in 1730, "363 Bishnoi people led by a brave woman resisted the cutting down of trees by the king's men, preferring instead to lay down their own lives rather than allow the desecration of their environment" (Natesh). Unlike men, women share a unique bond with Nature, which makes their hearts bleed for Nature. An article in The Anthropological Review states that history holds evidence that life in Nature is fraught with contest and rivalry and that man, being the superior species, "rages against his own species as no other animal does …. he has rendered the mighty forces of Nature subservient to his objects" ("The Struggle of Man with Nature" 277). This holds valid in the case of the concern shown by Nittilai for the villagers in the text, as their land has remained parched owing to inadequate rainfall for nearly ten years, whereas all the men, even Arvasu, were self-centred enough to think only about their own lives.

Sacred Thread of Knowledge

By bringing in the element of rain, which Lord Indra blessed upon the scorched land after ten years, Karnad wanted to show that the purity of the soul can redeem the bloodstained land. This purity was reflected in the eternal love shown by Nittilai and Arvasu, which is much more powerful than seemingly corporeal love. It is even powerful enough to give the boon of death to a spirit caught in the limbo between life and death. In this light, it is interesting to

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note the conversation that Arvasu had with the Brahma Rakshasa regarding the boon that the Gods were pleased to grant him:

> *Brahma Rakshasa:* …. If Nittilai lives again, she'll live a life as tormented as mine — tormented by the knowledge that her resurrection condemned me beyond salvation. …Think, Arvasu, you're wiser now —
>
> ……
>
> *Arvasu:* Grant this Brahma Rakshasa his release. Let him go.
>
> *Indra:* You're sure you want that?
>
> *Arvasu:* Nittilai would have wanted it so. (Karnad 61)

This instance shows that even a simple woman's knowledge and life can be so impactful that they change a man's heart to do a selfless act, though his heart aches for it. This pure knowledge is the blessing of a nurturer, which Nittilai was able to attain. Karnad's climax also indicates that the difficult decision was taken by Arvasu, who showed the real courage to choose the greater good.

The above reference from the text reinforces the fact that, to reach the goal of universal knowledge, there needs to be a synchronisation of mind and matter. Therefore, despite the binary between male and female, cosmic energy is made up of the integration of Purusha (the male energy) and Prakriti (the female energy), according to Samkhya philosophy (Raveesh). This is the philosophy of Ardhanareeshwara, where Shiva, the manifestation of destruction and death, leads the way to Shakti, who gives rise to regeneration. Thus, the act of destruction in which Paravasu embraced death out of guilt, and the release of the Brahma Rakshasa from his earthly bonds, led to the restoration of peace, as symbolised by the rainfall. Most importantly, in both these instances, Arvasu played a vital role both directly and indirectly.

The rejuvenation or creation of something new is manifested by the power of Shakti, which serves as the ruling sceptre of the world. This power of Shakti is manifested through metaphysical concepts such as power, wisdom, and the generative force (Pattanaik). It can be inferred from this that women share a sacred bond with Nature and that both share a motherly instinct as nurturers. Besides being a woman, Nittilai, as a hunter girl, knew the secrets of the forests, and therefore the Actor Manager said, "Where she gets the food from, I don't know — but she knows the woods" (Karnad 45). Indigenous peoples across the globe share

an intrinsic traditional knowledge with the natural environment, which is carried down from one generation to another. Indigenous Climate Knowledge Systems (ICKS) are an invaluable knowledge system, as they not only help communities adapt and adjust but also create a deeper understanding of the behaviour of the ecosystem's community (Arif). In the long term, this knowledge helps them adapt to environmental changes, use land and natural resources sustainably, and create a harmonious bond with the ecosystem.

So, tribal communities possess the knowledge to sustain themselves within the forests while causing little or no damage to the forest ecosystem. They constitute around 9% of the Indian population. The Apatani tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, for instance, practise sustainable agriculture through wet rice cultivation, and native animals such as the Himalayan squirrels are protected using mechanisms like 'Dapo', under which the community has imposed stricter rules on hunting (Lakshmi). Even in the play, Nittilai did not believe in the ritualistic practices and sacrifices that destroy the ecosystem through fire. Apparently, she was correct, because Karnad showed his audience how these rituals served as a façade for the public while the men pursued their personal rivalries.

With regard to the spiritual connection that women share with Mother Earth, ecofeminists say that patriarchy is bent on destroying both. Therefore, they regard climate change as a 'man-made problem' that needs a feminist solution, that is, women being more vocal about these issues (Spear). Moreover, it is important to highlight that when women speak about environmental destruction, they naturally come to a consensus and become more aware of the problems that they themselves face, not only as human beings but as women who are always relegated by men. Modern ecofeminists are of the opinion that ecofeminism examines both the patriarchal and the hierarchical system through a closer lens (Kokane 91). Therefore, protest on behalf of both women and Nature is relevant not only because of its historical connection but also because it has a contemporary basis.

The Voice of Protest Gives Power

An ideal world would be one in which the earth is democratic and is not divided into binaries of man and woman, Nature and culture. This can be aligned with the concept of the feminist utopia, where women live peacefully within the natural world and there is no question of conflict with each other (Plumwood 7). This feminist utopia envisions a world where the wilderness retains its wholeness and the viciousness of technology has not invaded its territory. However, the reality that women are able to see through their foresight is that the

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entire world harps on dualisms and power struggle. And, in order to protect themselves and Nature, women need to come forward.

As the matter of justice became a matter of survival, women started to take small steps against environmental destruction. In the ecology movements where women raise their voices in protest against violence, they make non-violence their weapon. Though these are small movements, their growth throughout the world leaves a worldwide impact (Shiva 35). For instance, the movement referred to earlier dates back to the early eighteenth century, when the Bishnoi people were led by a brave woman to protect Mother Nature. But this was not a singular incident: there was the Chipko Movement in India and, outside India, the Green Belt Movement in Kenya and the movement in the US against the dumping of hazardous wastes, all of which do not merely point at how the environment is getting polluted (Manisha Rao 125). All these movements show how women feel it is their duty to preserve Nature, similar to Karnad's representation of Nittilai, who never considered herself separate from Nature.

Women do not merely share the sacred thread of knowledge about the environment but have been historically, biologically, and ideologically attached to its core essence from the very inception. Indian literature emphasises this relationship between women and Nature, as it highlights the binary structures, the dual oppression that human activities inflict on Nature, and the power hegemony that stifles women (Priyanka 3–4). Thus, ecofeminism is like an umbrella that combines the essence of both the green and feminist movements and makes the movement stronger and more meaningful.

The conception of ecofeminism is not merely a perspective but an essential understanding. According to the reports made by NGOs and UN world conferences, women are both the victims and saviours of environmental deterioration (Puleo 28). So, ecofeminism addresses this double-sided nature of the relationship between women and the environment. The interconnectedness between them can be better analysed through the autobiography penned by C.K. Janu, a tribal activist of the Wayanad belt in Kerala, titled *Mother Forest: The Unfinished Story of C.K. Janu*, published in 2004 (Rangarajan 123). Janu fights for the Indigenous community to reclaim the land, and for the rights of the land. Her autobiography holds the very essence of her life: that women play the role of preservers of the interwoven relationship between Nature and the Indigenous people (Sumathi 57). Janu's lines are telling as she goes on to say, "The forest is mother to us. More than a mother because she never abandons us … We didn't own the land, but the land owned us" (Sumathi 58). She said that people used natural resources only for their necessities, keeping the rest preserved for future

generations, which should be the ideal situation globally. This can be compared to *The Fire and the Rain, where Nittilai pleaded with Arvasu to refrain from killing his brother and to create a new world* of their own.

Besides this, another contemporary instance can be cited in the case of the Kodarapalli tribal village in Orissa. This is a five-decade-old practice in which women protect the forest from smugglers and timber thieves using the technique called 'thengapalli': they gather in groups of four to six and patrol the forests in rotating shifts (Bindu Gopal Rao). This not only bears evidence of Indigenous knowledge but also of the love and dedication that make women powerful enough to stand against any sort of unlawful and unauthorised access to their homeland.

The sole reason behind the success of these grassroots movements is that their message is to reinstate the right to live a peaceful life. The preservation of Nature coincides with the very basic principle that women should also be free from restrictive patriarchal dominance. Karnad also conveyed a similar message through his play: it is only through pure dedication and love that land can regain its fertility. However, he also shows that the land was purged of its vile elements through violence. So, even in reality, it is only through the voice of protest against menfolk and capitalism that women can regain their position of power as nurturers in this world. And only then can they reinstate the pedestal of Nature as the life-generating force.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the paper tries to highlight how power holds central authority in the world and how it can be both used and misused. The play *The Fire and the Rain shows how the two women displayed greater power than the men of the play.* While Vishakha became their nemesis, Nittilai became the true saviour of the common people. Karnad tried to reflect that women, being nurturers, are the repository of Shakti, the power to conserve Nature and preserve the entire world. Ecofeminist theories reflect the symbiotic relationship between women and Mother Nature, citing the ontological, biological, and political conditions that account for different contemporary examples of environmental movements scattered worldwide. Though the paper acknowledges this theoretical backdrop, the essence caught in Karnad's play is not merely a reflection of ecofeminism. He takes the symbiotic relationship to the level of divinity, as a pure selfless soul like Nittilai sacrificed herself for Nature and for the greater good.

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