

## **IS FEMALE REALLY THE SECOND SEX? ECOFEMINISM AS VOICE OF THE VOICELESS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

There is an increasing trend of looking down upon women as the 'second sex'. In fact, this reveals the inability of the contemporary society to cope with difference. Some people view this inability as similar to the development paradigm that leads to the displacement and extinction of diversity in the biological world. The patriarchal model of progress achieves at the cost of diversity, thereby pushing society towards monocultures, uniformity and lack of heterogeneity. In this perverted logic of progress, even conservation suffers. Agricultural 'development' continues to work towards erasing diversity. Ecofeminism holds the view that an attractive calculus of 'productivity' and 'skill' can be built that respects, not destroy diversity. In many Third World societies, biodiversity is simultaneously a means of production and an object of consumption. Ecofeminists argue that patriarchal society's values and beliefs have resulted in the oppression of both women and nature. It blames the *androcentric* dualism man/woman. This dualism distinguishes men from women on the grounds of some alleged quality such as larger brain size, and then assumes that this distinction confers superiority upon men. Similarly the anthropocentric dualism humanity/nature is the ultimate source of anti-ecological beliefs and practices. It distinguishes humans from nature on the grounds of some alleged quality such as possession of an immortal soul or rationality, and then assumes that this distinction confers superiority upon men. Ecofeminists identify logic of *domination* in these arguments. They argue that the patriarchal society asserts this domination by presenting their 'master model' that women have been associated with nature, the material, the emotional, and the particular, while men have been associated with culture, the nonmaterial, the rational, and the abstract'. Here, we see a convergence between the feminists and ecologists, preparing a common ground of struggle for equity-social, economic, cultural and political.

**KEY WORDS:** Ecofeminism, patriarchal society, diversity, environment, Eurocentric