

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol. 4. Issue.3., 2017 (July-Sept.)

ISSN
INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA
2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

ECO-SUSTAINABILITY AND POSTCOLONIAL IMMANENCE: AN ECOFEMINIST
STANCE IN CAMEROON LITERATURE

Taku Catherine Arrey-Ngang

PhD Research Fellow, Faculty of Arts, University of Buea, Cameroon.

Email: kateogork@yahoo.com



Taku Catherine Arrey-
Ngang

ABSTRACT

The African forest has always been rich in flora and fauna from time immemorial. Today, however, environmental degradation is on the rise and the African forest is systematically disappearing. It is the contention of this paper that some Cameroonian writers use their art not only to draw attention to the devastating effects of such obliteration, they equally reveal how women use various approaches to ensure sustainability. The aim, of course, is to uphold the ecosystem and indemnify its people. This paper thus critically examines the centrality of the relationship between humans and the ecology, and how ecological consciousness is divulged in postcolonial African novels. Using Cameroon Literature as the main focus, the work looks at women's role in the reinforcement of conservation and women's unique techniques in the promotion of healthier sustenance strategies. The importance of planting trees, sustaining the forest, beautifying the environment and purging the body with the beauty of nature becomes the women's main preoccupation. It is such a picture of the inseparable nature of women, ecology, sustainability and immanence that this article addresses, interpreted through the reading of *Venus of Khala-Kanti*, a novel which expounds on female oppression and exploitation, ecological sustainability, women's emancipation, love and the presence of extra-terrestrial deities in the human world. The emphasis therefore is on how the author, Angele Kingue, depicts show female characters cope with the changing interconnectedness between human society and the natural environment. The work discusses ecofeminism and the role that the postcolonial woman plays in ecological sustenance.

Keywords: Eco-sustainability, Ecology, Postcolonial, Immanence, Ecofeminism, *Venus of Khala-Kanti*.

Introduction

The African woman is perennially in touch with the earth; she talks to it, she moulds it, she relies on it and she believes in its sustaining powers. Her life depends on the ecosystem. The untainted rural woman depends on the soil to feed her family; she relies on the rain for her crops to grow and her life to blossom; she is dependent on the trees and the forest for herbs and protein; she is confident that the birds will tell her the

time for her day's activities; she reads the clouds to know the weather conditions and uses moon-lit nights for entertainment and romance. Her life, her joy and her survival are all highly entwined in nature, thus the two (women and the environment) cannot be divorced from each other. This is captured in Adrienne Rich's *Of Woman Born* when she says:

We have been perceived for too many centuries as pure nature, exploited and draped like the earth and the solar system; small wonder if we now long to become culture: pure spirit, mind. Yet it is precisely this culture and its political institutions which have split itself. In so doing it has also split itself off from life, becoming the death culture of qualifications abstraction, and the will to power which has reached its most refined destructiveness in this century. It is this culture and political abstraction which women are talking of changing, of bringing into accountability in human terms. (285)

The concept of the African woman being inseparable with nature is a truism. The woman cares for the environment and dawns it, with the hope that nature will always be friendly and rewarding to her; no doubt she upholds the culture.

The above assertion by Rich has long become a global concern for ecofeminists, especially because the African woman is undoubtedly connected to nature as Mother Earth. The woman is perceived as the custodian of culture who moulds the earth to bring out the best from it. Yet, the African Woman is exploited and ravished in the same manner as the earth which she so much strains to protect. Such despoliation is encountered at all facets of her life; she is manipulated by men, discriminated against by patriarchy and severed from the same ecological footprints which she strives to shield.

Cameroon Literature is very much concerned with the contemporary issues of postcolonial Africa, and one of such issues is eco-sustainability and immanence. Many Cameroonian authors have dwelled extensively on the ecosystem, ecoculture and women's role in fostering growth at all levels. Amongst these authors are Nol Alembong, Emmanuel Fru Doh, Linus T. Asong and Angele Kingue. According to Chinua Achebe, an artist is the spokesman of his community. He is supposed to be the mouthpiece of his people and expose the ills of the society. To Achebe, "as long as the artist is not in conflict with the authority on account of his social responsibility, the artist, despite his talent and excellence, is bound to be a failure" (74). It is this strong sense of social awareness and commitment that marks the writings of Angele Kingue in *Venus of Khala-Kanti*, the novel that will be examined in this article.

This paper sets out to investigate how environmental or ecological consciousness is divulged in postcolonial African novels. Kingue is construed as an ecoculturally conscious author who recognises the prominence of eco-sustainability in this postcolonial era when environmental degradation is on the rise and the African forest is systematically disappearing. The focus therefore will be on how the author, Angele Kingue, portrays human ways of interacting with the environment; and how her female characters cope with the changing interconnectedness between human society and the natural environment. The article explicates how through narrative and lexical bijections, Kingue's standpoint is seen as having a bearing on the fact that environmental education must be imparted somehow into communities that have construed themselves to be more superior to nature and thus destroy the ecosystem.

In March 1980, at Amherst, a large number of women in the USA came together in the first ecofeminist conference titled 'Women and Life on Earth: A Conference on Eco-Feminism in the Eighties'. At this conference the connections between feminism and militarization, healing and ecology were explored. Ynestra King, one of the Conference organizers opines:

Ecofeminism is about connectedness and wholeness of theory and practice. It asserts the special strength and integrity of every living thing. For us the snail darter is to be considered side by side with a community's need for water, the porpoise side by side with appetite for tuna, and the creatures it may fall on with Skylab. We are a woman-identified movement and we believe we have a special work to do in these imperilled times. We see the devastation of the earth and her beings by the corporate warriors, and the threat of nuclear annihilation by the military warriors, as feminist concerns. It is the masculinist mentality which would deny us our right to our own bodies and our own sexuality, and which depends on multiple systems of dominance and state power to have its way. (online)

The ecofeminist standpoint is very clear from the above except. It shows that ecofeminism is a movement that has been identified by women to bridge the gap between the theory and practice in every living thing, not just humans. The ecofeminists perceive with dismay the destruction of the earth by humans and their weapons as the primary concern of the feminists. Such women condemn patriarchy and its perpetrators who deny women the right even to their own bodies. And so just as feminists strive to restore the pride of the woman and bring her out from subservience to assertiveness, so do eco-feminists go all-out to safeguard the ecosystem because of the connection that exist between women and nature.

So what then is ecofeminism? Mary Mellors opines:

Ecofeminism is a movement that sees a connection between the exploitation and degradation of the natural world and the subordination and oppression of women. It emerged in the mid-1970s alongside second-wave feminism and the green movement. Ecofeminism brings together elements of the feminist and green movements, while at the same time offering a challenge to both. It takes from the green movement a concern about the impact of human activities on the non-human world and from feminism the view of humanity as gendered in ways that subordinate, exploit and oppress women. (1)

In the Introduction to *Ecofeminism*, Mies and Shiva write:

...everywhere, women were the first to protest against environmental destruction. As activists in the ecology movements, it became clear to us that science and technology were not gender neutral; and in common with many other women, we began to see that the relationship of exploitative dominance between man and nature, (shaped by reductionist modern science since the 16th century) and the exploitative and oppressive relationship between men and women and prevails in most patriarchal societies, even modern industrial ones, were closely connected...(online)

These are women who oppose the patriarchal placement of women in Africa; those who have realized that there is need for women to carve out a more meaningful space at the centre of socio-cultural and political affairs. Such women are bitter about the subjugation of the womenfolk and can no longer succumb to patriarchal dogma. Such women may not be overtly rebellious per se, but demonstrate individual acts of courage that leaves them satisfied subsequently, and whose actions are meant to eventually liberate other women from such oppression.

Women and Ecological Subjectivity

This article ruminates on the fact that ecological subjectivity has to do with environmental discourses whose focus is on the interrelationship between humans and nature. This is because the haphazard era that the world faces today is such that ecological subjects are inescapable. As a result, the term ecological is considered synonymous to being environmentally friendly, and denotes the interrelationships of organisms and their environs. Ecological subjectivity will thus be used in synergy with Barry Commoner's law of ecology which postulates that everything is connected to everything else; what affects one, affects all. In this light, this section will look at the interconnectedness and interdependence of women and the environment.

The totality of the African traditional belief and conceptions about nature are often reflected in the fictional works of some African writers. According to Emmanuel Obiechina,

The traditional world view has an important bearing on attitudes to nature and this in turn is reflected in the novel. It implies a mystical yet utilitarian outlook on nature instead of an externalized appreciation of it in forms like fine landscapes, beautiful flowers, cascading waters or the colours of the rainbow. In this tradition the beauty of the particular tree comes to be inseparable from its "vital" property, demonstrable in pharmaceutical or magical efficacy or the shade it provides from the heat of the sun. The uniqueness of a particular stream or wooded landscape resides in some supernatural manifestation ... (42)

Obiechina, like many Africans, understands that nature is not perceived as an insignia of splendour or somescenery to be admired and revelled. The African always attributes extraordinary values to every aspect of nature. To the woman who sees a tree, for instance, what comes to her mind is the medicinal value of its bark, or the fact that its leaves could bring down high temperature in a child. When a man goes to the forest, it is

not to study the types of birds and animals in the forest but to exploit the supernatural powers of the flora and fauna therein. All these views are reflected in some African novels. In Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo is one such person whose family depends on the forest for food and health. When his daughter falls sick suddenly, this is what happens:

Okonkwo turned on his side and went back to sleep. He was roused in the morning by someone banging on his door. 'Who is that?' He growled...

'Ezinma is dying,' came her voice, and all the tragedy and sorrow of her life were packed in those words. Okonkwo sprang from his bed, pushed back the bolt on his door and ran into Ekwefi's hut. Ezinma lay shivering on a mat beside a huge fire that her mother had kept burning all night.

'It is *iba*,' said Okonkwo as he took his machete and went into the bush to collect the leaves and grasses and barks of trees that went into making the medicine for *iba*. Ekwefi knelt beside the sick child, occasionally feeling with her palm the wet, burning forehead. (60)

Okonkwo, like many Africans, rely on the forest for their daily living and for the welfare of their family. The animals in such forest are used for meat and equally for sacrifices, but the people know which animals and birds to hunt for meat and which ones are sacred. They know the trees that are used for medicine and those that are meant for fuel wood. Thus extinction was out of the question. With the advent of neo-colonialism however, and the exploitation of the African forest, such issues as forest disappearance have become very bothersome and so the need for ecosustainability.

The African in general and Cameroonian women in particular, perceive nature as being part and parcel of them. They cannot be separated from their natural environment because nature is inescapably interwoven into the economic, social and metaphysical world of the African woman.

Since Literature is a reflection of societal happenings, Cameroonian writers sometimes actually educate their readers/audience through their works. Such works of art portray the African writers as being committed to their art, in accord with Wole Soyinka who states:

The African writer needs an urgent release from the fascination of the past. Of course, the past exists... it is co-existent in present awareness. It clarifies the present and explains the future, but it is not a fleshpot for escapist indulgence (19).

Soyinka therefore warns against arts for art's sake. To him, and many other committed African artists, one's artistic work should reflect the ills of his/her society and even suggest proposals for redress. One of such ills is the wanton destruction of the environment and the continuous untold suffering inflicted by the consequences of such destruction. Angele Kingue therefore is an artist who through her novel is highlighting the oneness between women and the environment.

Angele Kingue's *Venus of Khala-Kanti*

Venus of Khala-Kanti by Angele Kingue is set in an imaginary West African village that becomes a popular relaxation rural community for truck drivers and later highly placed government officials. The author, a Francophone Cameroonian female writer, makes use of humour, empathy, irony and supernatural powers to give her narrative more vigour. The novel recounts the story of three women, Assumta, Bella and Clarisse, who have all suffered the pangs of rejection, stigmatisation and deception. Assumta knows what it means to be discarded by numerous men who have left her infected with the dreaded HIV/AIDS disease. Bella on the other hand is gruesomely maimed by her husband who cuts off her both arms and leaves her handicapped for life; while Clarisse returns home to face the disgrace of deportation from Europe and the embezzlement of all the money that she sent home while abroad. These women, having faced such incredible adversity, decide to return to their village and turn to nature for solace.

The three women form a strong alliance and embrace the environment as a means of creating employment and attending to the needs of others. They open the Good Hope Center, an initiative of Assumta which is improved upon after her death. The importance of planting trees, sustaining the forest, beautifying the environment and purging the body with the beauty of nature becomes the women's main preoccupation. *Venus of Khala-Kanti* is a novel that expounds on female oppression and exploitation, ecological sustainability, women's emancipation, love and the presence of extra-terrestrial deities in the human world.

Unlike many other societies that deny women the right of owning property and exercising their capabilities, Khala-Kanti is welcoming to anyone who is intelligent enough to establish her own business, even women.

In *Venus of Khala-Kanti*, Anglele Kingue delineates the lives of three women, Asumta, Bella and Clarisse, who uphold the assertiveness of women in Africa through their industriousness. These three women have all experienced what it means to be a prostitute, a battered wife and a charlatan respectively. They have all suffered the paroxysm of extreme physical and psychological pain and the frustration of depending on others, especially on men. And so each of these women returns to the village of Khala-Kanti to seek asylum in nature. They pick-up the pieces left of their lives and return to Mother Earth, who receives them with friendly smiles.

Thus upon her return to the village, Assumta's father, the chief of the village, offers Assumta a piece of land where he helps her build and operate the "Good Hope Center", a little establishment that blossoms to become a one-stop shop in that small village. Together with the other women, they find solace in the natural environment, and because they are constantly in touch with nature, peace returns to their lives.

Eco-sustainability in African Fiction

Literature written by Africans has shown that sustaining the ecological system has become one of the major themes in contemporary writings, be it poetry, drama, prose, or even artistic drawings. Writers are putting up a strong defence against the felling down of trees without replanting, the killing of endangered species of both animals and birds, the littering of the environment with plastic waste that is not biodegradable, and even the general nonchalant defiance of foreign bodies towards the African forest.

The emphasis today is on the judicious use of the natural resources and the propagandising of sustainable development. Some examples are worth mentioning here:

In Ekpe Inyang's play *Beware*, the drama unfolds about how a once reverberating forest, bursting with sounds of chimpanzees and monkeys, is destroyed to the extent that there are no animals or trees left. The situation becomes so bad that the Chief of the village is sick and the herbalist spends two days in the forest and cannot find the required herbs to treat him. He ends up dying. But before dying, the Chief warns his people, he says:

I must warn you in the following words. Beware of how you use the remaining resources that God has blessed us with. Who knows, something terrible might happen in the future. Use the resources wisely in order to save your lives and the lives of those coming behind you (55).

In all these extinction squabbles, Akwai, the only woman in the play, has been struggling to discourage the men against the killing of endangered species and the felling of trees, but like she says, "the voice of a woman is too small to be heard." (49) Thus this play advocates ecosustainability.

In *Tears of the Innocent*, Ogork Catherine dwells on various contemporary issues in her anthology. The poems explore numerous themes amongst which are poems that glorify the African as being proud of their culture, political upheavals and environmental degradation. One of such nature poems which condemns the destruction of nature and emphasizes on the need for sustenance is "Perturbation". It reads:

The soil is in pain
Pain from animal overgrazing
Pain from mineral fertilizers
Pain from soil erosion
Pain from land overuse
Pain from deforestation
Pain from plastic littering
The pain is intense
And the soil now complains...

The soil is in pain!
Yet there is hope

Hope for regeneration
Hope for rebirth...
Plant trees, plant trees
And plant more trees.

This except of the poem is an appeal for Africans to stop destroying their soil and to instead plant trees that will prevent soil erosion, wind corrosion and the physical dereliction of the environment. The appeal equally goes to foreign logging companies that fell trees with little or no consideration to the cultural affiliation of the people to nature. Thus whether drama, prose or poetry, African artists are often committed to resolving the burning issues of their community.

According to Ynestra King, there is a very close connection between ecology and feminism. She posits that social ecology without feminism is incomplete. To King,

The ecology movement, in theory and practice, attempt to speak for nature-the "other" that has no voice and is not conceived of subjectivity in our civilization. Feminism represents the refusal of the original "other" in patriarchal human society to remain silent or to be the "other" any longer... women are the "others" in human society, who have been silent in public and who now speak through the feminist movement" (20).

The above except acknowledges that women are the 'other' in human society. This is seen when Akwai tells the people that the woman's voice is too small to be heard. In most African societies, patriarchal dogma has relegated the woman to the background and she is supposed to be seen, not heard. The voiceless woman is made to believe that she has no intellectual capacity to make any reasonable contribution to important decisions. However, some African writers are giving the African woman a voice and projecting the woman as someone with smart ideas who can change her society and bring development to her community. This is the role that Kingue's female characters play.

Feminism's challenge of social domination extends beyond sex to social domination of all kinds, because the domination of sex, race, class, and the domination of nature are mutually underpinning. Not only are women dominated and tortured, even nature is undergoing torments. King thus brings out the interconnection between nature and woman in that both are treated as the "other". While patriarchal societies oppress and dominate women, nature is equally dominated and objectified. Brian Swimme posits in his article "How to Heal A Lobotomy" that:

Paul Ehrlich predicted that in its folly, "humanity will bring upon itself consequences depressingly similar to those expected from a nuclear winter." And in biologist Norman Myer's estimate, our assault on the Earth constitutes the worst trauma life has suffered in all its 4 billion years of existence." (15)

Humans have so raised themselves to the disheartening position of super creatures, leading to the wanton destruction of the environment and nature in general. And thus if no action is taken, there will be the extinction of some animals and trees, as well as the disappearance of the forest.

According to the *Good News Bible*, human beings are made from the soil and God commands them to live close to the soil. In Genesis it is written: "Then the Lord took some soil from the ground and formed a man out of it; he breathed life-giving breath into his nostrils and the man began to live (Gen. 2:7). Man was thus created from the earth, and was instructed to remain close to the fount of his creation. Living from the earth and preserving that earth for the future generation is therefore not just an obligation; it is a command. This literature, like many others, instructs man to stop destroying nature and instead rely on it for sustenance and generational permanence.

Genesis again posits: "Then the Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it." (5) It is such guarding that the African woman has engaged in.

In *Venus of Khala-Kanti*, the woman, like nature, is enslaved, oppressed and surrounded by injustice. When Baoula uses a machete to chop-off his wife's arms, she is left unconscious in a pool of her own blood. This gruesome act is reported to the police who then keep Boualo under detention. But he is released a few

days later, while his wife Bella remains unconscious in the hospital for one whole year. Bella's mother, Dama, laments;

My daughter was pillorised, she is the sacrificial lamb. Justice did not uphold us because we have nothing, because we are women. I fear nothing. When you remove the intestine from an animal's carcass, there's nothing left. So what should I fear? (79)

Because the woman is voiceless, she is treated without reverence. She, just like nature, is debased. The women in Kingue's novel have refused to remain subordinated. They have risen above the disenfranchised African woman to make their voices heard. They are calling back the men to order, and reminding men in their society and the world at large that women can also impact their world. This is immanence as against transcendence. The women have made themselves a part of the nation-building, dwelling within and throughout the entire environment. They have gained knowledge of their society and thus take on the life struggles of all women and nature. The women protect themselves and protect nature too because when the forest is destroyed and the earth raped, Africans, especially the women, are always indysphoria.

Asumta, Bella, and Clarisse all find happiness in nature as they rediscover their lives. In this novel, the forest is regarded as a sacred place; no one is allowed to defile it. To show her love for nature, Clarisse "only dressed in green and goldenbrown, the color of the earth and plant life. She felt she was coming alive again" (117). Clarisse says;

Most of these people have no connection to the nature that's around them, and I was asking them to lovingly embrace trees and make peace with their consciences....I asked him to remember the number of trees he'd allowed his business friends to decimate. Then I asked him to compose an extended ode to the souls of the fallen trees, and ask each of them for their forgiveness. I told him this was the price he'd have to pay to find inner peace. I even added that if he didn't, he was risking death by a falling tree. (135)

Clarisse does not only show her love for nature and immanence by her dressing, she pushes those who have been destroying the forest to repent of their pernicious acts and make promises to replant trees:

And now these men, these big shots, who had taken part in the clearing of the forests and the abortion of cities, now these men were composing odes to nature, presenting their mea culpas to the trees, confiding their concerns to them, and entreating from their equanimity. (122)

When such bourgeoisies become apprehensive of the role that the forest plays in their lives, they become more sentient about the unpleasant effects of destroying the ecosystem. The main idea is not to entirely sojourn from felling trees or hunting, but it is to use the natural resources in a sustainable manner.

Environmental Sustainability and Immanence

The term Immanence has been used by many theorists to refer generally to those philosophical and metaphysical phenomenon of divine presence which are manifested in the physical/material world; and it often suggest that the spiritual world permeates the earth. Immanence is often contrasted with the theory of transcendence, in which the divine is seen to be outside the material world. Carl Schmitt, a political theorist, used the term Immanence to mean a power within some thought which makes it obvious for the people to accept divine presence without it being justified. In Christian theology, God cannot be approached, seen or touched. He is a transcendent God who is outside the human world. This God is however made immanent through his son Jesus Christ who became flesh and lived amongst the people. The Gospel of Matthew puts it this way:

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (Mt 3:16-17)

The divine power of God has been transformed to the immanent power of Jesus Christ, who is now given the status of a deity living amongst people. He has supernatural powers which no one can comprehend.

The issue of environmental sustainability and immanence in this work is thus seen in the fact that women use the supernatural forces that are implanted in them from birth as a means of revitalising the lost confidence in nature and also as a vehicle to sway people back to them trusting and depending on nature. When people depend on nature, they will have reason to nurture and preserve it from obliteration.

Nature in *Venus of Khala-Kanti* is all-encompassing. Trees alone are used for romance, while their canopy serves as a venue for schooling. The trees are both medicinal and supportive:

In front of each tree was an inscription: *Kapokier*, support, buttress, pillow of the world; *Azobe*, tough, for its spirit of resistance; its indestructible frame; *Acajou*, subtle, for its finesse, its harmony with the colors of the earth; *Froufrou*, regenerative, tree of a thousand virtues, the gods' gift to women; *Royal Ebony*, Prince among princes, heart of the earth, color of the beginning; *Okoumementhole*, incense of the forest;...with theses reflections, she sought to remind her clients about the cult their ancestors devoted to nature, a cult they had forgotten. She reminded them of the blasphemous acts they had committed against the forest, but most of all, of the place this forest deserved in the hearts of men." (122).

Thus the women bring out the importance of the trees in particular and nature in general. They have naturally become part of nature and this indwelling is in their minds, yet they tutor the patriarchs into submitting to the ecology/environment.

In accord with the immanence that relates women to deities, Kingue emphasizes this when she portrays her female characters as having supernatural powers. These women are ordinary rural women who effect extraordinary activities with the local material around them in a bid to assert themselves and protect the environment that gives them strength. However, the people around them see them differently, Khasia says to Bella;

I would most likely describe you as Zema, the goddess of harmony, the ancestor to the people of this region. She's the one who dried the disease-bearing swamps and turned this corner of the forest into a livable place. She could only be seen at the mysterious and serene hour of dusk, in the light infused with color that filtered through the leaves. Her body, whose contours were barely visible, drifted from house to house, leaving showers of shimmering music in her wake.(114)

This is the image that Bella was given. She did her best to refute such supernatural powers, but no one would believe her.

Immanence in *Venus of Khala-Kanti* is evident in the actions and revelations of Bella who is seen by the people who visit the Good Hope Center as having supernatural powers. She is so involved in counselling in which those who visit her Center and seek help always come out 'healed', and this makes people think that she is either a magician or a deity. However, we see how spiritual forces penetrate and rule the universe in many instances in this book. One such instance is when Bella reveals that she is a child of the water Mermaid in her encounter with Khasia:

"What is it? What's wrong with you? Should I take you to the hospital? He said.

"No, to the water, to the water," she gasped.

"You want some water?"

"No, I want to go to the water."

Khala didn't understand....

"Take me to Maeba, I need to wash myself," she insisted. (153)

Bella finds healing in nature than in the hospital. She plunges herself in water and her spirit is revived:

After a long while, Bella got up, and without saying a word, walked toward the sea. Khasia was stunned... I know what you thought, but the sea decided otherwise. I am her daughter, whatever I do, she watches over me. It is time I tell you the details of my birth. I was born in the water. My mother, who was more than eight months pregnant, fainted at this very spot and the sea's waves pulled me from her womb and carried me, rocked me, until people came! No one has ever known how long the two of us floated," (157) and Khasia replied, "You are my mermaid of the waters." (157)

From the above, we realise that some African writers believe in the existence of supernatural powers within individuals. Not only are such people born under mysterious circumstances, but some actually manifest such powers in their day-to-day living.

This study, the first comprehensive work of this nature, renders an innovative contribution to the ecological study of African novels. Taking into consideration the threats which deforestation, landslide, erosion, global warming and land destruction pose to our 21st century ecosystem, this work should be an eye-opener for those who consider themselves superior to nature.

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PRESENTATION OF THE AUTHOR

Taku Catherine Arrey-Ngang is an AUTHOR and GENDER PRACTITIONER. In addition to my teaching profession, I am particularly interested in women activities, especially the empowerment of the underprivileged woman. I am a member of several women's associations, some of which I am the initiator, and others which I hold executive positions. To match-up my desire in the support of women's emancipation, I went back to school and in June 2005 graduated with a Post Graduate Diploma in Women and Gender Studies. I equally hold a Master's Degree and I'm now a PhD Fellow carrying out my research titled WOMEN AND ECO-SUSTAINABILITY. Professionally, I am appointed Regional Pedagogic Inspector for Literature in English and I work cumulatively with my post as Director of the Teachers' Resource Centre, South West Region, Cameroon, a post I have managed since 2010. In social life, I am blessed with extensive leadership skills; I am the President of the Delegation of Secondary Education Women, President of the South West Solidarity Ladies Association. President of the Think Tank Group of MOHWA Buea Branch. President of the Dorcas Sub-group of CWF Likoko Membea, amongst others. I have also been a large Poultry farmer for several years.