

# Slow Violence and Environmental Resistance: A Postcolonial Eco-critical Study of Ronald Fraser's *Drought: A Novel*

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## ABSTRACT

**Aim of the Study:** This paper explores layers of slow violence inflicted upon working classes of the Global South. Transnational enterprises of the Global North inflict folds of slow violence upon the communities in which they operate. Such multinational syndicates indulge in maneuvering natural resources of Global South regions. Moreover, they create cultural and ecological hazards for communities in which they operate. Consequently, natives of such places raise voice against exploitation of their resources and ecological vandalism. However, this study, essentially, focuses on investigating slabs of slow violence inflicted upon working communities and their strategies of environmental politics to conserve environment and culture from further deformation. In this regard, it brings to the fore the gendered resistance strategies of affected communities.

**Methodology:** Theoretically, this study is premised on investigating existing relationship between imperial powers and recently decolonized world. In this context, theoretical underpinnings of postcolonial Eco-criticism seem plausible for this investigative study. The study consists of textual analysis of Ronald Fraser's *Drought: A Novel* (2015) to explore layers of slow violence and strategies of environmental politics of impacted communities.

**Findings & Conclusion:** The study finds that transnational actors establish their syndicates in the Global South geographies to enhance their revenues. They exploit natural resources and inflict cultural and ecological degeneration upon these geographies. In addition, it unpacks that local authorities accomplice in exploitation, infliction of slow violence and de-escalation of environmental strategies.

**Keywords:** Slow Violence, Environmental Resistance, Global South, Cultural Hazards, Ecological Degradation.

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## Introduction

This research study aims to investigate the roots and layers of slow violence inflicted upon Global South communities by transnational corporations of the Global North. A significant segment of this paper is dedicated for the resistance of affected communities to safeguard their ecologies and cultures. In addition, it examines cultural and ecological hazards inflicted upon the Global South geographies by transnational syndicates of the Global North. Before advancing forward, phraseologies of Global South and Global North, as its binary opposition, need to be explained. For Marlea Clarke, Global South represents a cluster of countries from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Oceania and Caribbean that are declared by the World Bank as low or middle income in a comparison with North American or European countries (Clarke 2018). Conversely, the Global North includes advanced nations, in all respects, of the world. A distinct feature of Global North is that it exercises economic, cultural and political dominance over the Global South. Nevertheless, Mahler presents another significant aspect of this taxonomy of nations based on processes of economic development in nation-states and widening monetary and power gaps within countries. He puts it as “There are Souths in the geographic North and Norths in the geographic South” (2018, 32). Countries of Global North prefer to establish their enterprises and industrial units in regions of the Global South. At times, certain national corporations or dominant syndicates initiate their projects in less developed areas or communities within their countries. Establishment of mines, oil extraction plants and refineries, deforestation for diversified purposes and construction of mega dams might be regarded as paragons of national syndicates that operate within a nation. Ultimate end of such national corporations seems to exploit natural resources of that region. Moreover, they attempt to maneuver work force for depreciated rates. Nixon (2011) states this phenomenon as “Western multinational exploit an environmental, health and labour climate [of the Global South]” (71). Another essential point is that Global North nations envisage strategies to dump their industrial, toxic and daily waste on the lands and oceans of the poor countries of the Global South. By doing so, they endeavour to protect their environment and landscapes from degradation. In this connection, Nixon refers to the World Bank’s President’s memo, 1991. Lawrence Summers proposes to transport poisonous and industrial remains to Africa in an attempt to protect people and environment of advanced countries. He puts Summers’s scheme as “offloading rich nations toxins onto the world’s poorest continent [Africa] would help ease the growing pressure from rich nations environmentalists” (2011, 02). As a consequence, shifting of such pollutants and toxic waste, to the Global South geographies results in environmental degradation and generates life risks in the dumped places. According to Nixon, this shifting of nuclear and poisonous effluent benefits the Global North in a double way. He counts this gain as “it would benefit the United States and Europe economically while helping appease the rising discontent of rich-nations environmentalists” (2011, 02).

An essential point of this research study is to encompass the ramifications of national and transnational enterprises upon ecologies and cultures of the Global South geographies. As they exploit natural resources of less developed geographies “under cover of a free market ideology” (Nixon, 2011), environmental degradation seems to be inevitable. Similarly, such powers gravely impact lives of their labour force and cultures of the respective regions. In this sense, this trait equates it with colonialism that is characterized by exploitation of natural resources and impacting the cultures of colonized places. Additionally, another significant repercussion of such phenomenon is the creation of slow violence. For Nixon (2011), slow violence is long lasting and gradual impacts of industrialization, mining, deforestation and the construction of dams and nuclear stations. Such impacts are unidentifiable, unquantifiable and unspectacular in nature. Above all, such ramifications are dispersed temporally and spatially. He conceptualizes slow violence as “violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all” (02). He, again, presents another definition of slow violence with certain more traits. Nixon puts it as “a violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive, its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scales” (02). A glaring trait of slow violence is that it keeps multiplying as the time passes by rather than subsiding towards the non-

existence. Additionally, it remains out of sight as main stream media as they project the instant incidents only. Nixon reveals the same as “slow violence is deficient in the recognizable special effects that fill movie theatres and boost ratings on TV” (2011, 06). Likewise, Thom Davies (2019) accounts harms and damages of slow violence, beyond spatialities, in his work as “gradual deaths, destruction and layered deposits of uneven social brutalities within the geographies” (02)

More importantly, exploitation of natural resources of Global South geographies, degradation of their environmental landscapes and cultures provokes affected communities to raise voice against such phenomenon. They seem to challenge exploitation of their resources and demand conservation of their ecologies. Besides, impacted working classes devise strategies to get such projects eliminated and stop their operations. In this connection, certain strategies are envisaged to communicate apprehensions to the concerned quarters. Such schemes range from organizing dialogues with the concerned authorities to the armed struggles. This phenomenon is recognized as Environmental Politics by the scholarship of Eco-critical studies. Asli Tasbasi et al define the same in their joint effort (2014) as “examination of the way environmental issues are dealt with given the prevailing political systems which looks at how governments are supposed to balance environmental issues with their other priorities such as education, economy etc”(2014). In the same way, Nixon (2011) states environmental politics as “the resistance mounted by impoverished communities who have been involuntarily moved out of their knowledge” (19). Environmental politics draws its inspiration from environmental justice movements of the United States. Environmental activists of the Third World adapt certain traits of Environmental Justice movement to disseminate their ecological concerns to International organizations. Moreover, former movement is confined to geographical boundaries of the United States whereas the latter one communicates concerns of impacted communities of the Global South. Accordingly, this research project will be premised on the study of slow violence faced by working classes, their environmental politics and, particularly, gendered environmental activism in the selected text from the Global South fiction. Furthermore, it will examine cultural and ecological hazards originated from such corporations. Slow violence and environmental politics have found a compelling place in imaginative world. Besides, this paper intends to explore the world of fiction to identify how the issues of slow violence and environmental politics are represented by literary writers. In this connection, this paper is set to analyse Ronald Fraser’s *Drought: A Novel* (2015), a fictional work from Global South backdrop.

### ***Research Objectives***

- 1) To showcase the hazards of slow violence on culture and its impacts on the ecologies of the Global South as represented in the selected text.
- 2) To investigate the nature and strategies of environmental politics of the Global South communities as delineated in the selected text.

### ***Research Questions***

- 1) What are the implications of slow violence on the working classes of affected quarters of the Global South?
- 2) What are life experiences of the women of affected communities of the Global South in connection with environmental politics?

### ***Literature Review***

This segment of the article examines the literature produced on slow violence and environmental politics during the recent times. In this connection, first to be mentioned is Dayna Nadine Scott who distinguishes between the Slow Violence and the conventional mode of violence in his work (2012). Scott precisely defines the conventional violence as “explosive and sensationally invisible” (Scott 2012) that stands in contrast with the invisibility of Slow Violence as it constitutes a glaring characteristic of the latter one along with the other features. In the same study, he brings to limelight another significant part of this

study: the resistance of the populations of the Global South against the schemes of the Global North and the consciousness regarding their environments. Scott discusses Nixon's focus on the storyteller, essentially the writer-activists, whose imaginative efforts have kindled the environmentalism of the poor particularly in the Global South settings. Similarly, the conception of Slow Violence has been brought into notice by Thom Davies (2018). This study is based on the interviews of the residents of a town in Louisiana, a polluted industrial area. The article unfolds that the slow violence, caused by the petro-industry, has changed the locality into "death-world" as the number of causalities caused by the slow violence is huge. Davies, here, familiarizes the reader with another idea of "Slow Observation" that seeks the victims of the slow violence to live within "sustained environmental brutality" (Davies 2018) and encourages them for political resistance. Another scholarly attempt by Davies (2019), examines the long-lasting impact of Louisiana disaster on the lives of the people. Additionally, Davies accounts various forms of slow violence and particularly differentiates between it and the structural violence. Davies sees structural violence as the social disparities that ultimately leads to the damage of an individual and that these structural inequalities pave the ground for the slow violence in the society.

Similar to slow violence, a wide array of scholarship seems to have explored diversified perspectives of environmental politics. In this regard Alok Amatya analyzes resistance and struggles of indigenous communities narrated by Arundhati Roy in her essay *Walking With the Comrades* (2011). Amatya (2019) conflates his critical insights, regarding Roy's essay, in this work. He attempts to contextualize Roy's essay in Pratt's notion of "Travelee" that she disseminates in *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992). Amatya places Roy's essay (2010) in postcolonial travel literature as it accounts the resistance and struggles of indigenous people against exploitation of their mineral resources. Similarly, he maintains that even after decolonization has taken place formerly, grabs of natural resources of the poor nations still perpetuates. For him, "structural adjustment programs" of past three decades enable "metropolitan power centres" to grab mineral resources of Third World states. (53). To add more, Amatya initiates another subgenre of postcolonial literature that narrates conflicts originating from extraction and exploitation of natural resources of a place. He introduces such writings as "Resource conflict literature" (54). He puts as, "growing body of texts about indigenous struggles against the grab of natural resources by large corporations or state-run development agencies" (54). Moreover, this article puts in place certain forms of resource conflict that have developed in diversified socio-economic conditions. He notes as "Conflict over natural resources may manifest in multiple forms including civil litigation, protest marches, public demonstrations or armed rebellions" (56). Likewise, Al Gedicks proposes an identical notion of "Resource Rebels" in his work (2001). By this phrase, Al Gedicks refers to the groups of people that envisage certain schemes to protect their resources from exploitation by transnational powers. As Amatya's work (2019) is premised on Roy's essay (2010), the researcher draws a comparison between the struggle of Naxalite rebels and legendry Gundadhur. The former ones celebrate latter's struggle against exploiting forces of colonial periods. They are seen in "traditional garb" and pose as Gundadhur that symbolizes their determination to confront exploitative transnational enterprises that carry on the legacy of colonialism (63). Thus, Amatya seems to delineate environmental politics, though with a different nomenclature, with all its perspectives that render it plausible to be applied on texts to investigate resistance and struggles against resource exploitation in the Global South backdrops. Keeping in view aforesaid research projects, the present study will examine cultural and ecological hazards caused by corporations of the Global North. As well, it will foreground the strategies adopted by affected communities to prevent the exploitation of their resources and preserve their ecologies. Its premium focus will remain on contributions made by women in this connection. Moreover, this study will foreground slow violence of poor sections of affected places and environmentalism of affected women from variant socio-political, economic and historical backgrounds. The text selected for this study reveals a specific Global South setting, Global South within Global North, that render this study an altogether a different one.

## Theoretical Framework

As this study is based on environmental degeneration, strategies to protect environment and the nature of relationship between neocolonial forces and the states of the Global South, previously colonized, critical formulations of Postcolonial Ecocriticism seem plausible for this study. Essentially, eco-critical theory places its foundations on the assumption that human culture shares its connections with the physical world. It is affected, and in turn, affects the human culture. Glotfelty and Fromm (1996) affirm the same as “human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it” (10). Moreover, it encompasses the relatedness between humans and natural world the way it is represented in literature. Glotfelty and Fromm (1996) spotlight this trait of ecocriticism as “the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (09). Similarly, Mishra (2016) maintains same functionality of Ecocriticism as “criticism of the house, the environment as represented in literature” (168). Its central focus is to analyze attitudes of humans towards environment and certain transformations in such relations, occurring at various moments of history. Likewise, it emphasizes global ecological crisis caused by developmental projects of humans throughout history and investigates the constituent elements of this crisis. In this connection, Marland (2013) notes in his work as “[eco-criticism] explores from the perspective of anxieties around humanity’s destructive impact on the biosphere” (847). To add more, this field establishes itself on two primary formulations that are debated as anthropocentrism and biocentrism. The former believes human beings to be masters of natural resources with the privilege to utilize them for their benefits and that the purpose of environment is to serve the humans. Known as shallow ecology, it places humans on superior edge of the binary of humans versus nature. Mishra (2016) encapsulates it as “man [humans] thinks himself to be superior to others [non-humans]” (168). The latter formulation seems deconstructive in nature since it challenges the construction of superiority of humans as Mishra (2016) again, notes that “Ecocriticism decentres humanity’s importance to every object of environment” (169). Deep ecology, on the contrary, discourages interference of humans in nature for the sake of preserving it in pristine form. Moreover, it advocates inherent value of all organisms on earth while it opposes superiority of none over the other. It, further, guarantees a balance in the eco-system and solution of ecological crisis in case of limited intercession of humans in the natural environment as “nature has its own right to survive” (Mishra, 2016). To safeguard the privileges of non-human forms of life, animals and the plants in particular, and establish an affinity between the anthropocentric and the biocentric spheres are considered the significant objectives of Eco-criticism.

Postcolonial Eco-criticism seems to have developed from already well-established critical fields of eco-criticism and postcolonial studies. It emerged, as a critical field, in 1990s to investigate ecological impacts originated from neocolonial enterprises in postcolonial conditions. As a critical study, it emphasizes to unearth the effects of neocolonial corporations on the ecologies of the formerly colonized places. The analysis of continuation of the impacts of environmental deformation and vandalism imposed on the indigenous ecologies during the colonial periods constitutes a specific characteristic of this field. Mason et al (2014) present the same as “effects of colonialism reverberate well into the twenty first century, particularly for indigenous people” (02). Like postcolonial studies, it tries to locate the links between the ecological destruction of former colonies and developmental strategies of colonial periods. Vital (2008) identifies the same characteristic of postcolonial Ecocriticism as “a new kind of concern for the environment emerging in the post-colonial era, one attuned to histories of unequal development and verities of discrimination” (2008). Furthermore, it considers colonization not as history of the humans rather its impacts are observed on the physical environment of colonized territories that include the movement of natural resources, animals and plants. Similarly, it seems to offer relatedness between current issue of climatic change and the material practices during the colonial periods. Huggan and Tiffin (2010) consider the environmental issues “central to the European domination and inherent in the ideologies of imperialism”. Besides, Postcolonial eco-criticism characterizes the protest of former colonies against the environmental strategies envisaged during the colonial histories. Ramachandra Guha (1990) accounts the protest of lower class Indians of Himalayas. He encompasses the plantation and management of forests in Indian Himalayas from the colonial period to the independence.

Rob Nixon's work *Slow Violence and Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011) broaches the concept of slow violence. For Nixon, slow violence is the long lasting and gradual impacts of industrialization, mining, deforestation and construction of dams and nuclear stations. Such effects are unidentifiable, unquantifiable and out of sight in nature. According to him, this form of violence is 'neither spectacular nor instantaneous' (02). Above all, they are dispersed temporally and spatially. The same is put by Nixon as 'its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scales' (19). Nixon theorizes slow violence on the foundations of biopolitics and necropolises. Michael Foucault conceptualizes biopolitics in his work *History of Sexuality* (1978). For Foucault, biopolitics suggests a historical advancement towards the use of power to protect lives of the elite. It, further, refers to certain legal and bureaucratic apparatuses to regulate life that excludes the underprivileged populations from health facilitations. Such form of governance, suggested by bio-politics, echoes the gradual and unquantifiable nature of slow violence. Likewise, Achille Mbembe develops the idea of necropolitics in his work *on the postcolony* (2001). He theorizes necropolises as a form of violence practiced by the colonial agencies upon the colonized populations. For Mbembe, colonial forces are not involved in outright killing of the individuals rather they prefer the slow biological degradation or "the colonized bodies were kept alive but in a state of injury" (Mbembe 2001). Necropolitics, like bio-politics, characterizes the gradual and invisible degradation of life that constitutes salient trait of slow violence. The idea of slow violence carries connections and differences with its predecessors, bio-politics and necropolitics. Like its precursors, it involves element of intentional death-in-life. In bio-politics, a state inflicts death on unwanted populations by excluding them from the health provisions. The colonial agencies imposed slow biological deformation on the resisting individuals by practicing necropolitics. Likewise, slow violence characterizes the imposition of slow advancement towards degradation of life along with ecological deformation. The difference between slow violence and its forerunners lies in the fact that neocolonial agencies replace state authority and colonial administration to inflict life of injury on the populations of Global South. Secondly, the death sufferers vary in bio-politics, necropolitics and slow violence. Accordingly, Thom Davies draws connections between slow violence and necropolitics and recognizes it a "form of late- modern necropolitics" (Davies 2018).

Roots of environmental politics could be traced to environmental Justice Movement of the United States. Martinz-Alier considers environmental justice as a lens that encompasses many struggles over the negative impacts of corporations on human livelihood and nature conservation (Alier 2002). However, the scope of Environmental Justice Movement remains confined to its original place, America. Simultaneously, Environmentalism of the Poor or Popular Environmentalism expands the realm of Environmental Justice worldwide. Guha and Alier propagate this phenomenon in their joint effort *Verities of Environmentalism: Essays North and South* (1997). It accounts the challenges and struggles of the impoverished communities, ethnicities and groups of people from the diverse Global South backdrops against the distributional inequalities of their resources. Sunita Narian uses the term "*Environmentalism of the Poor*" in Indian perspectives to refer to the ecological conflicts arising from mining, deforestation, construction of dams and nuclear stations (Narian 2008). Additionally, Nixon (2011) highlights the variations of environmental movements of the indigenous people based on their geographical differences to achieve their own material livelihood.

## Research Methodology

This study uses non-empirical research approach in which findings are drawn by interpreting a literary text. Generically, non-empirical research is premised on a text that is interpreted and findings are presented accordingly. Mouton (2001) contends that non-empirical research is grounded on a specific theory, its application on a selected text and results are drawn according to the assumptions of the theory. The current study comprises application of post-colonial eco-critical understandings on a literary text *Drought: A Novel* (2015). It uses framework of Rob Nixon (2011) to examine the impact of neoliberal corporations on the ecologies and cultures of the Global South geographies. It relies on assumptions of Guha and Alier (1997) and Rob Nixon (2011) to investigate environmental politics of affected

geographies of the Global South. In addition, this study adopts the technique of textual analysis as a tool for data analysis. As a tool for analysis, it enables the reader to analyse a literary text critically in accordance with a particular critical understanding. Cuddon (1999) showcases similar characteristic of textual analysis as views it as a technique to extract critical meaning from a literary text. Such traits of textual analysis, as a tool, render it suitable to be applied on this research study.

### **Analysis of the Text**

*Drought: A Novel* (2015) by Ronald Fraser is, essentially set in Spain which is not Global South geography in its strictest sense. However, Benalmar, setting of major events of the novel, seems to effectuate the preconditions of the Global South. At this point, Mahler's (2018) notion of the Global South seems applicable. His concept is premised on subjugation of poorer regions and peoples that takes place within wealthier countries of the Global North. Mahler puts the phenomenon as "There are Souths in the geographic North and Norths in the geographic South" (2018, 32). Besides, Bob's hailing from Britain and his exploitation of Benalmar's natural resources places this novel in Global South fiction taxonomy. Additionally, resistance of indigenous people against grab of their resources is a trait that renders it a text of Global South fiction. Moreover, John's comment on worst conditions of the villagers solidifies Benalmar as "South in the geographic North" (Mahler, 2018). John puts the situation as, "I knew such poverty existed, had even written about aid to the Third World, but I had never seen it until coming here" (Fraser, 35). Another significant element of the novel is it carries images of indigenous people that were particular traits of colonial cultures regarding the East and its people. A significant entrenchment of Said's *Orientalism* (1978) is that Western colonial actors delineate the colonized populations as simple in their own opposition. Following footprints of European colonizers, Bob develops identical images of the people of Benalmar. In this connection, Fraser demonstrates, "Bob thought Benalmar and its people had an indefinable natural simplicity that had touched his heart" (64). Such opaque linkages with colonialism sufficiently indicates that Bob, of *Drought: A Novel*, impersonates the colonizers and continues their legacy in exploiting natural resources of colonized places. In the same fashion, people of Benalmar embody the resisting communities of colonized territories who initiate resistance and struggle to safeguard their cultures and resources as well.

Along with documenting Spanish civil war atrocities, the novel contains a plethora of cultural and ecological damages originated by the construction of dam in the village. Bob, being an estate agent, comes to Benalmar and purchases patches of land on depreciated rates with the intention to gain profits by selling them afterwards. Very soon, natural resources of the village are exposed to him. The author counts natural resources of the village in such words as, "The water so arduously mined from the mountain.....valleys green with alfalfa, covered by fruit trees, rich with cattles" (36). He plans to exploit water of the village to gain profits out of it. To achieve this end, he is willing to invest his money in dam construction that would pay him back by selling water to villagers for irrigation. Fraser unfolds his scheme in the following words, "In a couple of years he would get back from the sharecroppers the money he was paying" (64). Bob's plan of action to exploit resources of Benalmar lies in accordance with schemes of transnational enterprises that maneuver natural resources of the Global South geographies. The same aspect is showcased in Nixon's work (2011) as "Western multinational exploit an environmental, health and labour climate [of the Global South]" (71). Besides extracting profits from Global South places, such "metropolitan power centres" (Amatya, 2019) cause serious environmental and cultural damages for the communities in which they operate. Industrial units, nuclear dumps, oil extraction plants, refineries and mega dams originate serious ramification for their workers and people residing around. Nixon conceptualizes such Repercussions as slow violence (2011) that continues for decades, generations and, in some cases, for centuries. Moreover, they are imperceptible by the media as the most immediate effects of an event gain projection by the media. Similarly, Bob's construction of dam originates cultural and ecological hazards for the villagers. Bob, as a foreigner in the village, is less familiar with traditions and values of the community and emphasizes much on materiality than culture. In the wake of Miguel Alarcon, the protagonist's burial, he expects workers to be present on dam site that

reveals his callous attitude towards the village culture. Nevertheless, the workers are absent from the site as per the traditions that suggest no labour work soon after the burial of someone. Fraser delineates the situation as, “It is the custom for a funeral. Miguel Alarcon was buried this afternoon” (15). Complementary to this, dam’s burst, at the end of the novel, brings about ecological destruction in the village. Speedy waves of flood, caused by dam, flush away fertile layer of land with them. John depicts the scene in the words, “The land was riven with fissures cut by the rushing water, which carried with it great quantities of topsoil, leaving behind it a litter of stones” (197).

On the pattern of Petro-fiction (Ghosh, 1994) and Resource Conflict Literature (Amatya, 2019), *Drought: A Novel* is replete with instances of slow violence and policies of environmental politics. Construction of dam in Benalamar causes repercussions that, ultimately, result in deaths of Miguel Alarcon and his mother. In the first stage, construction of dam provides a spike in the prices of lands of the village. Fraser writes, “And with the coming of foreigners, the land costs more” (57). Bob purchases many patches of land with the intention to sell them at double rates later on. He urges John, another foreigner in the village, to purchase plots with the same intent. Consequently, elevation of prices deprives poor villagers of the opportunity of purchasing land. Miguel wishes to purchase a farmland named, Casa Colorado, and plans to achieve this end. Meanwhile, he is apprised that Casa Colorado has been acquired by a foreigner. John goes on as, “Dreams that the foreigner had smashed” (174). Miguel assumes this foreigner to be John and this assumption shakes him inwardly as he has befriended John since latter’s arrival in the village. Miguel develops a sense to have been deceived by John and this obsession directs him towards committing suicide. Weeks after Miguel’s death, John unfolds the fact that Casa Colorado has been owned by Bob. Akinly, slow violence manifests itself in *Drought: A Novel* in the form of Miguel’s mother’s death. During construction of dam, one wall lacks proper concrete support and this risk is intimated by many villagers including her. Her apprehensions are revealed as. “That wall he is building, it isn’t strong. If it breaks, the water will sweep everything away”(170). Soon afterwards the competition of dam, a torrential rain breaks down the wall and dam bursts in the village. Miguel’s mother is one among others who drown in flood. John describes search for her dead body in these words. “He waded across, believing that she was still alive, but when he got close, he saw by her contorted face that she was dead” (198).

Another phenomenon associated with exploitation of natural resources of the Global South geographies is environmental politics of Global South communities. Such exploitation creates a sense, among affected people, of conservation of natural environment and resources. They raise voice against grab of their resources and demand control over them. Certain resistance strategies are envisaged to put a check on exploitation of transnational enterprises. Amatya disseminates certain forms of “resource conflicts” in his work (2019) that have been in practice in multifarious Global South backdrops. *Drought: A Novel* represents strategies of environmentalism against Bob’s exploitation of Benalamar’s resources. As the objectives of this study are to examine gendered environmental politics of affected communities, resistance of women of Benalamar is to be spotlighted here. In this connection, Miguel’s mother stands distinct as she is the only female character who resists Bob’s dam. It is she who files a petition in the local Magistrate’s office that contains charges against construction of dam. One of such charges is regarding threat to the safety of farms whereas another one concerns dam’s contribution in Miguel’s death. Author notes this as, “Miguel’s mother is bringing charges against the building of the dam. She says the dam is unsafe, that it is responsible for Miguel’s death” (22). Her protest works and Magistrate orders to stop work on dam for some days. Because of her civil litigation, Bob is summoned in the court that compels him to seek legal assistance from his lawyers. As court proceeds on, Bob is forced to appear in the court along with his lawyers whereas Miguel’s mother attends the proceedings as well. However, her struggle proves to be futile exercise ultimately as Bob’s lawyers become successful in settling the case outside the court. They bribe the new mayor of Benalamar and install street lights in the village under the garb of development. This situation has been described in the novel in these words, “My lawyers have been here and sorted things out, the mayor has been very cooperative. We were able to do him a little favour” (185). Thus, the mayor permits Bob to continue construction of dam that was stopped by former mayor.



## Conclusion

This research study concludes that Global North nations initiate developmental projects in the geographies of the Global South with the intention to exploit their natural resources. These schemes include dumping of nuclear wastes, industrial units, oil extraction plants, oil refineries, mega dams and mines. It unpacks that such projects originate ecological hazards and cultural degradation for the communities in which they are established and operate. Moreover, the study unfolds that, occasionally, certain powers of the Global North are involved in maneuvering resources of the geographies that lie within Global North. As well, this study enlightens about certain Global South forces operating, within its own enclaves, on the structures provided by the Global North. Furthermore, it reveals that developmental projects originate layers of slow violence that continue for decades and for next generations. Similarly, it showcases that women of impacted communities play a consequential role in resisting the exploitation of their regions. They equate the men in devising strategies to conserve their resources and protect their environment. In addition, it unearths that local governments of the Global South countries, government organizations and agencies, media and certain sections of society accomplice with transnational forces exploitation of resources and environmental degradation. They lend their cooperation, in destroying resisting movements of indigenous people, to secure their financial mileages and political influence.

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## Conflict of Interest


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