

**Women in Consensus with Emotions and Environment in *A Scent of
Lavender- an Eco feministic Approach***

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Abstract

This paper “Women in Consensus with Emotions and Environment in *A Scent of Lavender An Eco feministic Approach*” focuses on how women are connected naturally with the environment and are emotionally balanced. The reading of the novel *A Scent of Lavender* is a reading of women and their profound knowledge in understanding the social roles that women have to undertake. The support of women extended to the society and the ideologies in discovering ‘the self’ are the real strength of the era. The writer’s depiction and views of women gear up the pride of women community over the years. This article also assesses the experiences of women during the war. The griefs, the fight against the war situations force them to get a new identity by which they explore a path to lead a stable and a peaceful life.

Key Words: Nature, Women, Emotions, harmony, self-realization

Elizabeth Elgin, one of the most exciting writers of the new decade, served in the Women’s Royal Naval Service (WRNS), the former women’s branch of the British Royal Navy during the Second World War. She was a keen gardener who lived in a village Vale of York. She has written novels with unforgettable characters. She has authored many novels

like *All the Sweet promises, I'll Bring you Buttercups, Daisy Chain Summer, Where Bluebells Chime, Windflower Wedding, One Summer at Deer's Leap* and *The Willow pool*.

Her experience and personal knowledge gained during the war time fill the novel *A Scent of Lavender* with the vivid kind of details which keep the readers visualize the field of the era. She sets the novel in the village Nun Ainsty. The story begins in 1940 when the hamlet Nun Ainsty has the threat of invasion which hangs over Britain. The protagonist, a young woman Lorna Hatherwood who survives in the isolated house of the hamlet is a woman with generosity.

Her prolonged separation from her husband Williams makes her feel alone and desperate. This separation brings Ness Nightingale, the land girl working in Glebe's farm closer to her and the relationship really bears a hand for both the woman to establish their identity. Nance Ellery whose job is to help the Billeting Officers is in search of homes for the children who are evacuated from towns which would be certainly dangerous and be bombed. William and Lorna's house 'The Lady Bower' is closed for helps as William hates children. The couple has no children of their own and also William has no plan to have in future. This creates psychological trauma in Lorna. When Nance Ellery approaches Lorna for sheltering Ness in the Lady Bower's house, her benevolence makes her accept to spare a room for Ness not exposing the truth to Williams who has been away from home to work in British Army.

War, separation from husband, friendship with Ness persuade Lorna to come out of her shackles. The situations change her life upside down and also teach what life really means. She decides to shed off her unexciting life-less life. Her conscience does not allow her to escape from reality and the society which demands support even from common man to overcome the war effect. The struggles and sufferings that she face all alone at home lead her

towards self-realization. The war creates the situation worsen everyday and basic needs of the people are rationed by the Government and their life is emptied leaving out bombs and bombers. In spite of all these troubles Lorna defends her and gets a job. She works in a local post office as a post lady and paper girl of the village where she collects and distributes newspaper and letters. The job gives her satisfaction and fills her heart and thirst for participating in the war. Her quiet and humble nature brings her appreciation though is ignored by her husband. She volunteers to read to the blinded soldiers at the nearby manor and she shows her experience and emotions that she had in the manor with Ness, her dearest. The sympathy Lorna shows towards the new entrants in her life always makes her cherish her instants and takes her to another level. Her longing for love and her spirit to participate in war prove how a woman can act wisely in need. Her decision making capacity helps making life a meaningful one. The support she extends to Ness in time of physical and mental sufferings is really deserving the highest esteem. Her way of thinking alters male, social, economic forces embedded in her life. Her ideologies discover her 'self' goal which is ignored by her male counterpart. The perceptions of Elizabeth Elgin on women before the third wave writers are explicit in the novel through Lorna, Ness and other women characters. The writer's depiction and views of women gear up the pride of women community over the years.

Lorna defies William and has a rush of blood to volunteer for the Army like working on gun site. Her patriotism shows no boundary. Thus she says "It is n't sudden patriotism. And I don't know what on earth has got into me, truth known" (110).

Ness a career minded, is busy getting in job. She is ready to do any kind of job like potato picking, hosing down the cow shed, barrowing manure, filling the buckets and emptying the sacks in Glebe's farm. Though Ness is not an avid reader, reads people well. She loves her family and always thinks about the well-being of her family members and her city. She says, "so it's a port and, it's got slums and it's been bombed to smithereens. It was

never the prettiest of places at the best of times, but it's my city and I care about it like you care about Ainsty!...' (168)

Experiencing the war at native strengthens her emotions. She tries hard to forget a disastrous love affair and never gives up her spirit. Until she meets Mick Hardie a conchie, a conscientious objector, Ness reminds herself that she has a vow that never to trust a man again in her life time. She withstands in her misfortunes, liberates her troubles and stabilizes her identification as a woman in sensitive issues. She learns things quickly, and transforms herself from a Liverpool hairdresser into woman who can milk a cow efficiently.

Kate a strong woman, owner of the Glebe farm protects Ness wherever necessary, her practicality helps others in handling the incidents. Kate does not hesitate to punish her son when he crosses his morality. Martha neighbor to Lorna, is inquisitive and always keeps an eye open. She becomes well-wisher and feels happy when Lorna gets married Ewan the medical officer and gives birth a child.

All these women characters in the novel are intertwined with one another and support each other eventually. Their interest in the welfare of others and sympathetic inclination make them learn to adjust in war time, to accept rationing of food and clothing. The unconditional enthusiasm towards accepting life clears their suffering temporarily. This temporary relief helps them to survive in obstacles.

Reading of the novel *A Scent of Lavender* is reading of women, their efficacy in achieving independence and status in spite of the prevailing common stereotypes is incredible. The author's depiction of women as mother, wife, daughter etc., is to explore their social roles with increasing depth.

The interconnections of women with nature and animals is inevitable in the ecological system, thus can be stated that feminism and environmentalism are strongly and

powerfully correlated and also carry justifiable association. The women in the novel have a comprehensive performance and focalized thoughts with nature. Their bond with nature: For Lorna her native Nun Ainsty, and the Urusula wood, for Ness her native town Liverpool, For Martha and Kate their Farm land provides alternatives to their oppression. Their commitment towards their environment and sincerity in preserving biotic community provide insights to the readers of the responsibility of human on the non-humans. The author's intention of achieving the motif of blending women and ecology is explicitly portrayed through the characters.

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2016.