



SCIREA Journal of Sociology

<http://www.scirea.org/journal/Sociology>

September 2, 2022

Volume 6, Issue 4, August 2022

<https://doi.org/10.54647/sociology84876>

Self-in-relation with the Other and the Earth in *The Broken Earth*

by Nora K. Jemisin

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Abstract

The trilogy of *The Broken Earth*, written by Nora K. Jemisin, demonstrates layers of themes among which self-in-relation with the other and the earth is a considerable subject for the rescue of the real world. Relational self was first theorized by the forerunners of socio-ecological feminists such as Val Plumwood and Greta Gaard. It gives an explanation of non-instrumental manner and continuous relationship between self (human) and the other (other humans, other genders, other races, other species, the natural world, and the earth). Sense of altruism, empathy for the other and responsibility for ecosystem, relational identity, protection of the other for the protection of self, heroism, self-sacrifice, and care for the other are significant characteristics of self-in-relational protagonists who are humans, super-humans, and non-humans in the trilogy. Eco-crises of the fantasy planet are the outcome of anthropocentric and speciesist humans' abuse of natural resources and other species of humans called Orogene. In spite of volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, long winters and, unbalanced Father Earth caused by the cruel humans in two similar periods of time, American

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science fantasy author projects idealistic self-in-relational people whose devotions result in a justice-based community and the revival of the planet. Central characters' relations to Father Earth are appropriate embodiment of the ideal relation of species to the earth and self-geology by which they find Father Earth an animated and active being similar to the humans. They come to the point that social environmental justice and interspecies justice are the matter of survival in the end of the world. Integration and solidarity among various races and species overcome domineering humans and renovate the damaged earth. Self-in-relational characters and some other individuals create a moral space among all species and a connection between species and Father Earth, identifying other species and the earth as their own relative.

Keywords: Altruism, Anthropocentrist and Speciesist Humans, Justice-based Community, Non-instrumental Manner, Self-in-relation with the Other and the Earth, Social Ecological Feminists

Introduction

One of the topmost American authors, Nora K. Jemisin, has written a multi genre trilogy including layers of themes in the forms of fantasy and reality. *The Broken Earth* converges with social justice novels and centers on the themes of oppressive statemen, abuse of natural resources, social political injustice, slavery, and family dysfunction. Wounded Father Earth is conquered and abused for natural resources and political authority by high-tech humans of Syl Anagists and Sanze Empire in two different periods of time. The trilogy, displaying a tragic setting, reveals the crimes of anthropocentric speciesist humans who enslave family earth and other species to develop their economic situations and hegemonies. *The Broken Earth* is an epic mythology exposing heroic actions of the oppressed and the marginalized for the revitalization of the world. It narrates the story of torture, slavery, and dehumanization of marginalized Father Earth and downgraded races and superhumans who finally take action for subversion of racism, speciesism, and colonialism. It is a climate change and speculative science fantasy drawing unbalanced Father Earth, lethal winters, polluted air of volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes which are the result of self-centered humans' instrumentalism of the earth and other species. It designs other species of humans in the shapes of superhumans and statue-like humans with stunning capabilities. Marginalized humans, dehumanized super humans, non-humans, and demoted family earth (Father Earth, Mother Earth, and their nomad

child, or the Moon) are all oppressed in two different periods of oppressive humans. Summoning the realistic themes such as racial dilemma, colonialism, anthropocentric speciesism (oppressive treatment of humans to other species), dehumanization, and marginalization, *The Broken Earth* also exhibits the subject of self-in-relation with the other and the earth. It is an ethical, non-instrumental, extendable, friendly, non-egotistical, and unceasing relationship between self (humans) and the other (the natural world, the other humans, the other species, the other races, the other genders). This article surveys self-in-relation with the other and the earth, hypothesized by social ecological feministic views of Val Plumwood and Greta Gaard, in *The Broken Earth*. It purposes to show the significance of self-in-relation with other humans, other species, other races, non-humans, and the earth for achieving eco-social justice and revival of the world. It concentrates on the third stage of central female character's life, her shift of identity, her excessive self, her interconnection with other self-in-relational characters, their influence on each other and the world, and their self-sacrifice and solidarity for the survival of the world. Traits of self-in-relation with the other and the earth including responsibility for ecosystem, sense of altruism, protection of the world for the protection of self, mutual recognition among species, relational identity, shift of identity, love and respect for the other, non-instrumental relation with other species and the earth, environmental justice, and heroism are to be detected in the characteristics of main characters (Essun, Nassun, Alabaster, Lerna, Dannel, Hoa, Tonkee, and Father Earth).

Plot Summary

The trilogy is divided into three periods of time rotating around central female character's life and her relationship with other characters. It depicts Essun's childhood and her enslaved years in the oppressive structure of Sanze Empire, her young age life and escape from anthropocentric humans to the free island of Meov, and her middle age life during which she joins up with community of Castrimans and devotes her life for the survival of the world. Meantime, complicated plot exhibits two distanced eras of ruling humans who dominate both family earth (Mother Earth, Father Earth, and their child or the Moon) and the other (superhumans, marginalized humans, and non-humans). To absorb natural resources of family earth, high technological humans of Syl Anagistine era create Orogenes (engineered and evolved humans or the superhumans) and abuse them to tune their plutonic engine and charge the sinks of their obelisk for absorption of natural resources from the core of the earth for humans' welfare. Detecting humans' intentions, mythological personified Father Earth stops

their long-term programs. In the war between Father Earth and the humans, one of the tuners (Orogene) makes mistake unconsciously and distracts the Moon. Mother Earth, indicating fruitfulness, dies without her moon and Father Earth loses his balance. Revenging on the humans, Father Earth crushes humans' civilization during lethal winters called Fifth Season. About forty thousand years later, Sanze Empire enslaves the descendants of the Orogenes and enforces them to repel all activities of Father Earth. In the third stage of central female character's life, Alabaster (powerful male Orogene) makes a huge rift in the center of Sanze Empire and turns its tyranny upside down. He attempts to absorb the Moon toward the orbit of Father Earth by a rift and the remaining obelisks and rescue the world, but he is not successful to end Fifth Seasons. As a result of rift, another huge Fifth Season hits the world. A group of people shelter in the excessive geode of Castrima underground under the leadership of a potent female Orogene (Ykka). Classless people of various races and species set justice-based rules in Castrima to be rescued in the last days of the planet. Self-in-relational species conquer remaining oppressive humans (Renannis fighters who were allies of Sanze empire) attacking them to colonize their safe geode and food source. Although Renannis raiders are killed, Castrima is demolished and Castrimans have to set off for the North and remaining city beside rift. Killing oppressive humans, Castrimans have to face and fix their broken earth and stop Fifth Seasons. Finally, self-sacrificed self-in-relational characters connect Father Earth to his Moon, end Fifth Season, and revive Mother Earth signifying spring and fertility.

Self-in-relation with the Other and Nature

Defining morality, Val Plumwood declares: "With nature, as with the human sphere, the capacity to care, to experience sympathy, understanding and sensitivity to the situation and fate of particular others is an index of our moral being" (*Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* 185). Self-in-relation with the other and the natural world is known in relationship with nature and other species and sustainment of their power. It is identified with the realization of human's need, connection, and "interconnection" with nature (185). Although self-in-relational species recognize their difference from nature and other species, they continue their relationship with them and respect for the autonomy and infinity of nature and other species (the other) (186). Such a moral involvement is a structure in contrast with "the instrumentalism of nature" (186).

In the essay of “A Dialogue on the Rule and Place of Literary Criticism within Ecofeminism”, Greta Gaard and Patrick D. Murphy refer to Val Plumwood’s elaboration of an indigenous Gagadju’s poetry that uncovers a perfect connection between humans and nature. This poetry represents speaking of humans with nature and meanwhile listening to nature. To Gaard, it is a “physical, psychological, and spiritual” relation between humans and nature, but it still maintains the autonomous identities of humans and nature (3). Plumwood argues that ecological narratives may follow ethical frameworks to improve interspecies justice, considering other species independent entity and not humans’ food, tool, and property (“Integrating Ethical Frameworks for Animals, Humans, and Nature” 317). Chaone Mallory believes that it is necessary for us to know the notion of others as interlinked entities with independent self and also autonomous beings in their own possession and right. Accordingly, it is crucial to accept the unlimited and unconquerable otherness of the world as an independent space and also the realization of the other and self (“Val Plumwood and Eco-feminist Political Solidarity” 10).

Gaard argues that social ecological feminists have perceived “an ecological self-in-representation” that sustains both self-realization (individual identities) and zooms on the policy by which human and nature (non-human) relationships form “the identities of all those (humans and the more-than-human world) involved” (*Ecological Politics* 258). One way to develop this interrelationship is to redefine humans’ self and identity. The self of people is their characters and their identities include their motivations and values. Self and identity improve through connections with other humans, cultures, species, animals, non-humans, and the more-than-human world. This interconnection provides a new notion of citizenship coordinated with eco-social chain of equalities (253). Social ecological feminists advise people on moral decision in justice-based contexts in which both individuals and their identities have more value than they have in isolation. They recommend that the individuals should have relationship with one another and with the environment in which they function. Both context and connection transform and build new identity for the individuals. Since social and ecological structures are not stable but ever-changing, the identities will change in response to the environment and significant moments. Such a change provides more self-in-representation with the other and nature and self-in-representation makes development of character (258). Self-in-representational people of socio-ecological feminism respect for the right and autonomy of the other and nature, accept the differences between self and the other, provide room for the other, sustain the power of the other, reply to the other’s requirements, and continue

relationship with the other and nature. Plumwood announces: "The relational self includes respect, benevolence, care, friendship and solidarity, where we not only do not place the other among our secondary or instrumental goals but treat at least the general goals of the other's well-being and ends as among our own primary ends" (*Feminism and Mastery of the Nature* 155).

Plumwood defines "identification" as "empathy" with nature and other species ("Nature, Self, and Gender" 14). Such identification extends self and extensive self does not reject the difference of others. It does not enforce the other to incorporate into self (15). For Plumwood, the identity of human in relation to the natural world is generated by "the general virtues of friendship such as openness to the other (nature), generosity, and the ability to put oneself in the place of the other" (*Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* 185).

Lerna's Self-in-relation with the Other

In the essay of "Gandhi as an Environmentalist", Rajnaraya R. Tiwari refers to Gandhian opinion of "Satya and Ahimsa" by which humans consider nature as a living being and respect for various life structures and species (142). Gandhi's notion of Sarvodaya improves ethical and non-violent relationship of humans with nature and "harmonious" connection with all species (142). Jemisin's novels pass the borders of genres, periods of time, the past history, and the predictable future, demonstrating the present realities in the fantasy worlds. Her narratives, tones, point of views, non-linear plots, multigenre, characterized settings, and real-fantasy characters are supportive to her themes reminding readers social environmental crises, injustice, and current dilemmas. Mostly, settings, cities, the earth, the sun, the moon, and the natural world are personified and their humanities surpass the humanity of the humans. The natural disasters are response to the oppression and exploitation of the humans. Her works censure colonialism, anthropocentrism, and racism of Western heroic-centered fantasies. Heroes and heroines are from various genders, species, races, and the marginalized. In addition to climate change epic, *The Broken Earth* is a speculative science fantasy sketching a fictional melancholy future, climatical catastrophes, high-tech genetic engineering, and an alive Father Earth whose enemies are self-interested humans. Climatical disasters, dejected tone, foggy setting, elongated windy winters, race-phobia, oppressive hegemony, violence, and discrimination among species describe the degree of spoiled anthropocentrist humans. Gerolf Steiner's *The Form and Life of the Rhinogradens* exhibits speculative evolved mammals. Dougal Dixon's *After Man* represents a speculative future earth with imaginary animals. *Last and First Men: A Story of Near and Far Future* by Olaf Stapledon shows the history of

eighteen human kinds and predicts genetic engineering. *The Broken Earth* introduces Earth-Beings including humans, superhumans or Orogenes, mechanistic guardians, and Stone eaters. The Orogenes are created by combination of geology, geometry, gemology, and genetic engineering in the period of Syl Anagist. When the Orogenes die they can be turned into Stone eaters and continue their lives through an unknown scientific process. groups of Stone eaters are non-humans with weird skills and mental emotional abilities. Like *The Patternist Series* by Octavia Butler, the themes of racism and power are repeated in *The Broken Earth*. Creation of a race through the best breeding in *The Patternist* is not dissimilar to the laboratorial Orogenes in *The Broken Earth*. In two periods of Syl Angist and Sanze, anthropocentrist and speciesist humans control the Orogenes and the Orogenes control the activities of family earth till some revolutionaries stand against tyranny. Central female character (Essun) is one of the descendants of the Orogenes who have mental and physical talents far beyond the capacity of humans. Being able to control and repel earthquakes and volcanic eruption, heroin and her daughter can be connected to the obelisks (enormous powerful constructions swimming in the sky) and return the Moon to the orbit of the earth. They have a powerful sessapine system in their brain by which they can move mountains and save the world, but they are marginalized not to do so because ruling humans lose their authority. Racism is changed into speciesism by oppressive race of humans in the trilogy to belittle a powerful race and label them less than race and less than human. The Orogenes are dehumanized and known evil creatures by ordinary humans who assume they make environmental disasters for the humans while they are rescuer. Racial injustice, violence, and unbelievable capabilities are analogous subjects observed both in *The Binti Trilogy* by Nnedi Okora and *The Broken Earth*. Moreover, fantasy characters of *The Broken Earth* have also realistic emotional features and attract reader tangibly. There are few exceptional humans whose views are in opposition to anthropocentrist humans and their instrumentalism in *The Broken Earth*. Essun's neighbor, Lerna, is a human physician recognizing Essun's kind and her difference from the humans. He knows that Essun's children are particular Orogenes with specific aptitudes. However, unlike egocentric humans, he respects and continues his connection with the Orogenes specially with Essun who plays a significant role for the repair of the world.

Lerna is an orphan human adopted and trained to be a physician by the community of Tirimo in the realm of Sanze. He soothes Essun for the death of her son murdered by her anthropocentrist husband, aids her to escape from the town, and hides her real identity.

Lerna's ethical and harmonious relationship with Essun makes his full support of a downgraded female superhumans who saves the world lastly. Lerna lifts Essun from deep swamp of depression, shock, and lethargy after the death of her son. When lethal Fifth Season begins, Lerna eases people's pains on their ways toward the south. He is a humble surgeon who joins up with unrestricted community of Castrima and takes care of all injured species. Harmonious connection of characters, who have relational self with other kinds and Father Earth, turns dystopia into a balanced world eventually. Lerna persists on his continuity with other species (superhumans and Stone-eaters) and makes a situation for others to connect with one another. He plays the role of a mediator between Essun, who is a trained Orogene, and a feral leader Orogene in Castrima. He integrates with the humans of other races, other species, and also non-humans without the removal of their differences or the abuse of the other for self-interest. Lerna is chosen to be leader's advisor in Castrima because of his ethical, empathetic, and sensible treatment.

Empathy with the Other and Responsibility for Ecosystem

Describing empathy with the other, Val Plumwood states:

Special relationships with, care for or empathy with particular aspects of nature as experienced, rather than with nature as abstraction, are essential to provide a depth of concern. Under appropriate conditions, the experience of and care and responsibility for particular animals, trees, rivers, places, and ecosystems which are known well, are loved and are appropriately connected to the self, enhance rather than hinder a wider, more generalized concern for the global environment (*Feminism and Mastery of the Nature* 187).

Essun's human husband (Jija) kills her son for his Orogeny and takes her daughter to the south to treat her Orogeny. Essun chases her husband to rescue her daughter. She arrives in Castrima on her way and visits injured Alabaster (male superhuman). The community of Castrima embraces all species in Fifth Seasons. Therefore, some anthropocentrist speciesist humans are also living among Castrimans. Alabaster encourages Essun to be connected with the obelisks of the sky and return the Moon for the revival of the planet. Losing her control, Essun kills a speciesist woman who determines to murder an Orogene child. The massive rage of Essun makes an earthquake, but Alabaster, using his last vital energy, repels the shake and dies. He desires to put an end to the destructive power of anthropocentric ideology which must be expunged from books and erased from minds. Observing Alabaster's responsibility for all species and ecosystem and sacrificial endeavor for people of Castrima, Essun despairs of his death because she thinks she has killed a kinship indirectly. Lerna remarks: "Your

overreaction was understandable” (II, XVIII, 236). Lerna is a source of empathy with Essun and what she has done. Essun needs Lerna’s warm and soft shoulder to feel human even for a little while after the death of Alabaster. Lerna murmurs: “I’m sorry. I’m sorry, Essun” (II, XVIII, 237). He is sorry not for what Essun has done, but for what racism and speciesism have done in environmental crisis and what anthropocentrist humans have constructed during millennia.

Relational Identity

Reminding of Josephine Donovan’s elaboration of eco-relational identity, Greta Gaard declares: “Relational identity is developed in conjunction with connections not just to humans but also to place, plants, and species alike. Already, ecological feminists have developed interspecies eco-psychology through the practice of attentive listening to the other and resisting gender as well as species stereotype” (“New Directions for Ecofeminism” 653). Thoughtful physician, Lerna is a tender-hearted man to a despondent female Orogene whose kind, capability, self-sacrifice, and humanity display the importance of females, the marginalized, and other species for the revival of the planet. He connects the essential heroine with Father Earth and the whole universe for the survival of cosmos and all beings whereas he knows the danger of her task and wishes she would survive and bear her child. Narrator says: “The world is broken and you can fix it; that’s what Alabaster and Lerna both charged you to do” (III, XI, 209). Powerful heroin is provoked to fix the world.

Essun bursts into tears when Lerna informs her that he has not seen her daughter on the way and Castrima. Narrator says: “Lerna leans forward abruptly and takes your hands. Belatedly you realize your hands have begun shaking; his fingers still yours” (I, XXII, 294). Lerna’s relational identity connects Essun to the self of him, Father Earth, and community of Castrima. In spite of all calamities that occur in Essun’s life, Lerna’s loyalty and sympathy with Essun keep her safe. In the first book, *The Fifth Season*, narrator says: “He shifts over to your bench and you lean on him. You know you shouldn’t. But you do. And when he puts an arm around you, you take comfort in it. He is a friend at least. He will always be that” (I, XXII, 294). The trilogy demonstrates a considerate human in contrast with the most humans.

Lerna has been brought up in Tirimo and in the realm of Sanze Empire, but he is too different to treat others like his fellow-citizens. Although Lerna does not have physical power like the Orogene or the Stone eaters, he is a modern hero struggling to save the cosmos by knowledge, sympathy, humanity, interspecies justice, and self-in-relation with unlimited

others (the humans, the captives, the superhumans, and the non-humans). He is a vital factor of survival in the world.

Self/ the other and Self-in-relation

Val Plumwood denounces the centric structure of self/the other, that identifies nature (the other) as lifeless instrument and human (self) as rational living being. She elaborates the “relational egoism” of self and “instrumentalism” to theorize a solution for the survival of both self and the other (*Feminism and the Master of the Nature* 143). She declares:

Liberal thought presents egoism as an unfortunate fact of human nature, and egoism and self-denying altruism are presented as an exhaustive set of alternatives. Where possible, egoism is to be overcome by universal reason, representing society, or by altruism, interpreted as the pursuit of the interests of others and the setting of one’s own interests aside in favor of theirs. However, egoism is taken to be the dominant rational mode and altruism a subsidiary one, a praiseworthy but irrational exception (143).

Essun notices that some people are taking an afflicted hunter, hurt by bugs, to the infirmary of Castrima. Focusing on her daughter, Essun prefers to ignore the humans. While talking to herself, Essun murmurs: “It’s a Season. People die; there’s nothing you can do about it. These aren’t even your people; there is no reason for you to care” (II, IV, 45). Injured human is not relevant to Essun’s kind, self, and family members and the humans are alien and the other for her because she has been considered a stranger woman and evil species by the humans since her childhood. When the Guardians attack the free island of Meov to arrest Essun and Alabaster, she loses Coru (her first son) and her second son (Uche) is killed for his Orogeny by his human father (Jija) in Tirimo. Essun is known as a social outcast in the community of Tirimo. Essun’s sense of apathy toward the humans is rational. Whenever she has trusted the humans, she has been crushed and her family members have been damaged. Therefore, she relies on the Stone eaters more than a fellow human being.

While lying on the corner of infirmary, Alabaster freezes one bug before his death and Essun learns to freeze the rest. In spite of her effort, the hunter will die because his legs have been burnt and his muscles and bones have been injured. They have lost their hunters and it means they have lost the sources of food. Lerna is nervous, but he persuades Essun rationally into helping people. Before joining up with Castrimans, Lerna knows Essun well. He recognizes Essun’s humanity and her strange power in Tirimo. Essun has potential of putting an end to the world or rescuing the world. What she does is not irrational because she wants to leave the

community and find her daughter. Essun has to set aside her daughter and her own life in favor of others. Making sense of altruism in the mind of an oppressed female Orogene seems to be an irrational encouragement because she will probably die. Ykka (the leader of Castrima) also cannot provoke her to be sacrificed for racist and speciesist people who are her enemies.

Sense of Altruism

Defining universal altruism, Val Plumwood remarks:

The ideal of a life based on self-sacrifice creates severe problems of a logical as well as personal kind, for the supposition of universal altruism that everyone behaves so as to ignore their own interests and serve the interests of others, leads to an infinite regress, the same absurd results as the supposition that all values can be instrumental. Just as instrumental value requires a non-instrumental goal, an end in itself, so self-sacrifice requires a set of primaries, non-altruistic interests to sacrifice itself for (*Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* 143).

Lerna is aware that he should increase sense of altruism in Essun's mind by rational methods. First, he flies into a rage and mentions: "You could have gotten boil bugs off the hunter the instant you walked in the door" (II, IV, 52). Lerna is always a mild man and his rage is a bit unusual for Essun because she does not know how to help the hunter the moment she walks in the door. Lerna asks her for the reason of her attendance in Castrima when she wants to leave or to be indifferent toward the fellow community. She replies that she has come to find Nassun (her daughter). Nassun's survival is Essun's individual purpose which is turned into cosmic altruism when Lerna conveys her to rescue others for the survival of Nassun. If Fifth Season continues for thousand years, winter and starvation will exterminate all beings. Nassun will also die sooner or later. Lerna says: "Nassun is strong like you ... She'll starve with the rest when the store catches empty, but with her Orogeny, she could probably force others to give her their food ... Eventually the stores will run out ... She will be one of the last to die: alone, hungry, cold, hating herself, hating you" (II, IV, 55).

Lerna knows that Essun should imagine a horrible pain to be encouraged for personal targets as well as universal healthcare. Lerna challenges to reintroduce to Essun the humans, Father Earth, and all living beings as needed relatives and not the pictures of aliens. He reveals the reality of interminable Fifth Season to expand her self-in-relation with the other and Father Earth. In the second book, *The Obelisk Gate*, He says: "When this Season doesn't end. We'll run out of food. Cannibalism will help, but it's not sustainable" (II, IV, 55). Lack of food will create a cruel world in which people turn into cannibals.

Protection of the Other for the Protection of Self

Lissy Goralnik and Michael P. Nelson in their article, “Anthropocentrism”, appoint responsibilities for humans. They argue that people must respect for all species and be loyal stewards of all beings without discrimination. People should protect even the “inorganic element of their habitats”, food, and reproduction (155). Lerna clarifies that rescuing Nassun’s life without noticing the life of others will be in vain. Considering the survival of Nassun without her food, settlement, security, and community like Castrima will be futile attempt. To rescue Nassun, Essun should feel certain that the world is rescued as well. A rejuvenated world without community, family, and food will be fruitless to Nassun. Nassun’s life is dependent on the rescue of Father Earth and communities. Lerna’s logical persuasion builds a recharged engine for a discharged Orogene.

As the obelisk links Essun to the Moon and Father Earth, Lerna connects an oppressed superhuman to the humans and the world. Alabaster’s instructions and devotion for Castrimans and the world and Lerna’s friendship, care, and wisdom reshape Essun’s inclination to rescue Father Earth. While making decision to fight for her daughter and the community of Castrima, Essun comes to the conclusion that she should terminate Fifth Season as well. Lerna is as vital as important characters such as Alabaster and Hoa in *The Broken Earth*. Eventually, he sacrifices his life for the survival of the world.

Non-instrumental Relation with the Other

Val Plumwood claims: “A view of self as self-in-relationship can not only explain how instrumentalism can be avoided but also provide an appropriate foundation for an account of the ecological self, the self in non-instrumental relationship to nature” (*Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* 154). She adds: “Relationships of care for particular places and earth others form part of one’s identity, and these relationships will then be treated as the ground of action and choice, rather than treating these others as interchangeable commodities which can be chosen or abandoned at will” (155).

In *The Iron Council* by China Mieville, some revolutionaries attempt to subvert the powers suppressing people of the demolished city of New Crobuzon. Self-in-relational characters and their non-instrumental relationship with Essun unveil their difference from the leader of Castrimans in *The Broken Earth*. After the collapse of Sanze Empire, remaining oppressive humans of Rennanis (one group of Sanze’s allies) attack Castrima to colonize their place and kill strong Orogene. Essun utilizes the obelisks to stick hostile Stone eaters to the crystals

and the site of Castrima falls during the war. Ykka is furious because they have lost their settlement in lethal winter. Opening her eyes, Essun realizes Hjarka (human), Lerna, and Tonkee (androgynous human) around her and notices that she is on a stretcher carried by them. As long as Castrimans carry Essun and take care of her medically, Hoa, which is Stone eater and loyal guard of Essun, directs the community toward Rennanis (the only residual city with cash stores) because he knows the path. Ykka has an instrumental view on the members of her community. She considers the benefit of community more than the values of the individuals. She has tendency toward healthy people and useful potential of members rather than the injured.

Ykka is too dependent on Castrima to abandon its ruin as if she loses her identity, self-esteem, root, and ideals. However, her relation to Castrima is not her self-in-relation with geode or self-ecology. Castrima is a region in which she can promote her downgraded position. Now, she needs another site and community to reign her position. Ykka makes mistake occasionally in spite of her egalitarian targets. Ykka's inclination to naturalize various kinds in her community is her need to be validated and acknowledged among ordinary humans and the Stone eaters. Furthermore, she knows how useful diverse kinds are during Fifth Season. She does not want to be superior to the rest, but she needs to be approved as an Orogene among other species. Self-in-relational characters such as Lerna and Essun care for the individuals from all kinds and all communities which ask for help. Ykka has struggled to make a community out of the Orogens, the marginalized, and wanderers and get other races to think of the Orogens as people. Her endeavor is a response to racism and speciesism. Now, she has to leave demolished Castrima and it makes her mad.

Octavia Butler's *Kindred* and *Parable of the Sower* demonstrate that how downgraded groups can improve their lowered situation. The most marginalized beings own the world in *The Broken Earth* as well. Uncensored community of Castrima, generating collective ownership, has rejected all forms of hierarchies, oppressions, and dichotomies of superior and inferior species and races among people in *The Broken Earth*. However, ignoring the rift of Father Earth and other sites and communities does not protect Castrimans for a long run. Ykka's agony for the demolition of Castrima is understandable, but authentic self-in-relation with the other and the environment is detected in the treatments of Hoa (male Stone eater), Essun, Tonkee, Alabaster, Antimony (Female Stone-eater), and Lerna. They watch out for their community including various kinds and species and also respect and care for Father Earth, other locations, individuals, and species. They make effort for universal health care and global

environmental justice. They respect for the other's sake and hold all communities in high esteem. Hoa is one of the remaining stereotypes of the Orogenes changed into Stone eater. He returns to the world to return the Moon. He protects Essun both for her own sake and the revival of family earth. Tonkee is an androgynous friend who has been thrown away by Sanze empire because she is not able to have baby. Tonkee is always on Essun's side; she alarms Essun to be quiet in front of Ykka who does not let her have more recovery time. Hoa's loyalty and thoughtfulness, Lerna's cordiality, and Tonkee's help and collaboration with Essun are special treatments helping Essun to cope with dilemmas. Ykka's family is her community whereas the family of self-in-relational people includes Father Earth, Mother Earth, the Moon, and all species. Although the trilogy is an American heroic-driven fantasy, it does not underline individual survival over community and collective survival over individuals. Furthermore, cosmic survival is shown a substantial issue without which the survival of communities and individuals would be impossible.

Care for the Other

According to Val Plumwood, friendship, sympathy, consideration, help, "solidarity with the other", care for the other, and realization of "the other's intrinsic" values are the key concepts of self-in-relation with nature and society (*Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* 155). Self-in-relational heroes and heroines are means of connection among people of all kinds and subaltern species and relation between species and Father Earth. *The Only Harmless Great Thing* by Brooke Bolander is a story of subjugated species which stand against injustice in a capitalist space that depreciates them. *The Broken Earth* shows Tonkee's empathy, Hjarka's friendship, Hoa's help, and Lerna's consideration for Essun when they lag behind the rest of members to look after her. Narrator remarks: "Lerna lingers to walk with you, too, angry at what he perceives as the mistreatment of one of his patients" (III, III, 43). It is difficult for Lerna to endure Ykka's stubbornness. Tonkee tries to change Essun's decision and persuade her not to distance from the community for her daughter because the place, in which Nassun (Essun's daughter) lives, is safer than hard condition of the desert. She whispers: "If you want to make it that far, you're going to have to patch things up with Ykka" (III, III, 44). Tonkee attempts to make peace between Essun and Ykka and between Essun and the community which owes her for its survival.

The trilogy displays the significance of the marginalized of all species having potential of self-in-relation with other people, kinds, and nature. Self-in-relational people are some humans, superhumans, and non-humans struggling to return the balance of community and

Father Earth through justice, friendship, and solidarity. They know Essun's intrinsic potential and her particular power which can connect her with the Moon and Father Earth. They know the worth of Tonkee's intellect, Hoa's protection and transportation, and every body's companion in the lethal desert.

Self-in-relation with the Other through Mutual Recognition, Interaction, Plurality, and Shift of Identity

Val Plumwood uses Jessica Benjamin's view on self and the other and says: "The process of mutual transformation or recognition, the dance of interaction, is the basis of the formation of self through mutuality, a process in which external other sets a boundary or limit to the self and its desires. This formation involves the recognition of the other as alike (non-alien) but as different, as other" (*Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* 156). Greta Gaard declares that inhabitants are not "homogenous" in a justice-based community but diverse. Their identities are unstable in their ever-changing context and their plurality is a hindrance to any privileged groups that may control over others (*Ecological Politics* 248).

Belonging to different races and kinds, Castrimans can only pass through the wide desert of Mertz with mutual recognition and interaction of one another. Although they go through the desert in an intolerable situation, they can attack the only city, including racists and speciesists in the world. Castrimans kill remaining tyrannical Rennanease folks to settle in their site safely. Several self-in-relational agents determine to travel to Core Point and return the Moon because Fifth Season will kill all rescued people even after the collapse and seizure of Renannis. After being captured in the war, Danel the warrior joins up with Castrimans. She is a volunteer to go with Essun to Core Point, watch her heroism, and write history for post generations. Danel says: "But we don't have to like each other to work together" (III, IV, 165). Despite the fact that they recognize their own differences, they are not alien to one another.

Self-in-relational agents of Castrimans bear striking resemblance to the residents of an classless community theorized by social ecological feminists. Lerna believes that Danel should go with them because she is a good guide knowing the road to Core Point. Furthermore, her identity has shifted in a way that she is a contributor and not an opponent any more. They are not forced to like each other, but they work together for the matter of survival. Essun does not feel hostile to Danel because she is a new member of community at the present time. Both contexts and identities of species are changed during the time of war and starvation. After the collapse of Castrima, a justice-based community is reshaped more profoundly than that of Castrima. Anthropocentrist humans recognize the necessity of the

other species for the survival. Their identities are changed when they understand how savage the Rennanease soldiers are and how valiant and devoted the Orogenes are in war time. Moreover, Essun's identity is also shifted by Lerna who welcomes and protects her.

Diversity and plurality of members prevent any advantaged races and species from dominating other races and species in multi-cultural community. They are the humans, the Orogenes, and the Stone eaters. Essun does not know most of them and does not have any similarity to them. Observing their differences, Essun accepts their right and keeps on her interaction with them. Alabaster's excursion underground presents an epic mythological structure in which hero trips to the realm of darkness under the earth. As Joseph Campbell has noted:

The Zulus have a story of two children and their mother swallowed by an elephant. The Irish hero, Finn Mac Cool, was swallowed by a monster of indefinite form, of the type known to the Celtic world as a peist. The little German girl, Red Riding hood, was swallowed by a wolf. The Polynesian favorite, Maui, was swallowed by his great- great-grandmother, Hine-nui-te-po. And the whole Greek Pantheon, with the sole exception of Zeus, was swallowed by its father, Kronos... In these motives, beyond the confines of the visible world, the hero goes inward, to be born again... Once inside he may be said to have died to time and returned to the World Womb, the World Navel, the Earthly paradise (90-91).

Alabaster spends ten years in the other side of the earth. First, he is taken the Word Womb underground by a Stone eater to visit the only source of life. Mother Earth has died, but Father Earth is over there. He dies on the peak of egoism and sense of superiority symbolically to be born again spiritually. Nonetheless, he faces the vital pulse of life rather than death underground. Visiting Father Earth, Alabaster encounters an epiphany and changes into a self-ecological and self-geological species interconnected with other species and Father Earth. Recognizing Father Earth and self-in-relational Stone eaters' needs, community, and identity, Alabaster admits his own negligence to the environment and other species, accepts their autonomy and right, and collaborates with Father Earth and some Stone eaters to rescue the world. The identities of self-in-relational people are shifted to improve an open-ended relation with the other in an unlimited universe. After relating to Father Earth, it is necessary for self-in-relational Orogenes to connect with the Moon. Furthermore, the identity of Father Earth also shifts from a revengeful earth to a peacemaker planet when the Moon returns. His sense of revenge is shifted to a peaceful relationship with Earth-Beings.

Environmental Justice and Heroism of Self-in-relational Characters

Local environmental justice and global environmental justice need the cooperation of self-in-relational people for a sustainable future. To tackle environmental crisis, people should be brought together across cultural and racial lines. In Gwyn Kirk's idea, to construct environmental justice, people should know one another on the basis of mutual trust, "mutual respect, and honesty" in spite of their differences "in culture, ethnicity, and class" (12). Erin Daly elaborates environmental right as a purpose of international constitutions for obtaining a healthful, clean, balanced, and desirable environment. For him, people of the world should live peacefully alongside each other under the influence of constitutions that preserve and protect the environment (1). In Val Plumwood's perspective, human achieves a new humanity and a "new social identity in relation to nature" (*Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* 186). Such identity erases any dominant conceptions of instrumentalization of nature from a wide range of personal and social relationship (186). To stop the abuse of nature as a tool for human's welfare, interest, and business, self-in-relational people and self-ecologists need "ethical commitment and resistance against personal immorality and unethical public constructions" (186).

Immoral scientists create high evolved species equipped with humanity in the period time of Syl Anagist. However, their humanity is not realized by their creators (ordinary humans) completely. Forty thousand years after the downfall of Syl Anagist, some of the descendants of the first model are accompanied with self-in-relational humans and Stone eaters to stop abusing of the Orogenes, the Guardians, and Father Earth as instrument. Alabaster begins the task and Essun completes the job. In the third book of the trilogy, *The Stone Sky*, Essun's friends including Hoa, Lerna, Danel, Tonkee, and Hjarka follow her to Core Point, where the Moon rises, to drag the Moon and put it on the border of Father Earth. Essun feels the presence of her daughter and Schaffa who is a mechanistic Guardian and protector of Nassun (Essun's daughter). Nassun intends to end the world by hitting the earth with the Moon for eliminating racism and speciesism. To stop her, Father Earth controls the brain of Schaffa and orders Nassun to turn species into Stone eater which do not hurt the earth. Nassun connects with twenty-seven obelisks to change everybody on the planet into stone and rescue Schaffa. Essun has trained her daughter to be as strong and resilient girl as herself, but she has not instructed her to have an upright sense of love, responsibility, and deep humanity.

It is no wonder that Nassun is indifferent to her mother's presence and request. She prefers Schaffa who loved her and kept her safe. Narrator says: "She has seen him fight his own

brutal nature, and the Earth itself, in order to be the parent, she needs. He has helped her learn to love herself for what she is” (III, XIV, 274). Essun tries to make up with Nassun and at least save her life because she knows that the way her daughter connects to the obelisks is fatal. Essun calls her daughter, but Nassun says: “I have to help him” (III, XIV, 274).

Nassun does not look at her mother when she is talking to her. As an alternative, Nassun replies: “I don’t need your permission” (III, XIV, 276). Nassun makes a wall between herself and her mother and mixes magic and Orogency. Essun has to break the wall signifying long distance, misunderstanding, and dysfunctional family. Essun has to break the wall to fix the broken relationship. To help her daughter, Essun should destroy the world, but she resists personal feeling and unethical decision of her daughter. She protects everyone, rescues the world and all kinds in the world, and also rescues her daughter. Using the power of Onyx (obelisk), Essun breaks the wall and loses her fingers and left forearm. The obelisk of Onyx takes the control of twenty-seven obelisks and Essun grabs the Moon.

Finally, Essun absorbs all the hazardous curls of power from the gate and the obelisk of Onyx into her own body and ends the war. Essun bursts into tears and smiles at her daughter while turning into stone. Narrator remarks: “Trying to crawl on stone limbs. Face wet with tears. Smiling, you have never, ever smiled at her before” (III, XIV, 284). Essun obtains the Moon and her daughter through self- sacrifice. The obelisk of Onyx touches Nassun and sends her mother’s message to her. It says: “Open the gate, pour the Rifting’s power through it, and catch the Moon. End the Seasons, fix the world” (III, XIV, 284). Observing her mother’s sacrificial effort, Nassun changes her mind and follows her mother’s desire. She does what her mother requires and pulls apart the obelisk gate.

Nassun loses her hand and Orogency power, yet she is invited to the occupied Renannis or the same egalitarian community her mother has prepared for her. The rift quells and Father Earth gets quiet. The last Fifth Season ceases when gravitation of the Moon makes signs of the rebirth of Mother Earth, the balance of Father Earth, and the magic of life. Central heroine selects self-sacrifice for global environmental justice. To have self-in-relation with the Moon and Father Earth, she utilizes the power of the obelisks that are uncontrollable gadgets. Alabaster does not know the hazard of the obelisks, but Essun knows the danger of them. She puts an end to her life to bring the lost spring and the pulse of life on the earth.

The Broken Earth makes a new heroism not similar to human-centered heroism or male-centered heroism designed in prior century. In addition to male heroes, called Alabaster, Maxxie, Hoa, and Lerna, Jemisin’s trilogy displays female heroines such as Tonkee,

Antimony, Nassun, Ykka, and Essun among whom Essun devotes her life for the revival of the world. She spends the best part of her life on caring for others and rescuing the world. Demonstrating both heroes and heroines, *The Broken Earth* highlights the significance of heroines who come from the marginalized. The trilogy exhibits the humanity of the superhumans and the non-humans along with some humans as the factor of constructing social environmental justice. Self-ecologists lose Lerna and Essun and return to Renannis. After a while, Essun and Alabaster return to the world in the shape of Stone eaters. The cycle of death-rebirth of Essun signifies her eternity and permanent endeavor for the betterment of the world. Alabaster dies twice and return to the world to fix its devastation. He dies symbolically under the earth and comes to himself and sacrifices his power and body to return life and boon to the world. The rebirth of Essun and Alabaster in the shape of Stone eaters represent their unbroken and everlasting self-in-relation with the other, nature, family earth, and family universe.

Conclusion

Social ecological feminists achieve a new social identity in relation to nature and other species. In *The Broken Earth*, ethical and harmonious interrelationships of various species, and respond to others' need develop a family identity among them and improve interspecies justice and non-instrumental view of the earth and other species. *The Broken Earth* crosses the borders of race, class, nature, gender, and species discrimination to present utopia out of the humans' dystopia. Central characters are both self-geologist and self-in-relational people. They take care of Father Earth and their own community including various species (humans, super humans, and non-humans). The trilogy emphasizes the importance of all species for the rescue of the world. Although the root of eco-social calamities is found in the humans' anthropocentrism, the trilogy does not generalize the cruelty of the tyrannical humans to all humans. Lerna's self-extendedness and self-in-relation with others and also the empathy of some self-ecologists Stone eaters with other species indicate that the author is neither eco-centric nor anthropocentrist human. She is on the side of justice.

Central female character's identity is changed in the various oppressive contexts of the world, but her self-in-relation is formed and enlarged by Lerna's care for others. Lerna's heroism makes balance in the trilogy in opposition to the humans' cruelty somehow. Tonkee and Lerna have the capacity to care and sympathize with the other, connect people to people and

then connect Essun to Father Earth for the revival of the world. Self-in-relational characters make link to various species, genders, cultures, races, classes, and the earth. They consider various species as their citizens. Non-instrumental view and connection with other social humans and other species beget prerequisite code of social environmental justice, and eventually the rescue of the world in *The Broken Earth*.

The identity of people who have self-in-relation with the other and ecosystem shifts and improves in ever-shifting contexts. It is deduced that the shift and development of identity are key elements for self-in-relational characters and self-geologists to extend their selves. Accepting their differences from the other, they continue their ethical relationship with the other. The devotional deeds of self-in-relational characters come from their vast realization by which they come to know that their friends and families need harmless justice-based community. The safety and sustainability of their community depend on the fate of Father Earth, the rebirth of Mother Earth, and the survival of the world. Therefore, they identify the other and the natural world as their kinship and devote their lives for both their microcosm and macrocosm families. Non-catastrophic ending of climate change epic and movement from dystopia to utopia represent the author's balanced mind and sense of hope for the survival of the world.

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