

Introduction: Defining Ecocriticism and Intersemiotic Translation

Ecocritical approaches to analyzing cultural productions have been submerged under the onslaught of other critical paradigms for quite a long time. Hence it is no wonder that ecocriticism, as a theoretical approach to literary texts and also, films, has not been accorded much significance till very recently. Cheryll Glotfelty, in her landmark essay titled “What Is Ecocriticism?” says that “Simply defined, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. . . . Ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies” (25). It focuses on the relationship between nature and human beings, or rather, nature and culture.

Ecology has featured as a major motif in literatures all across the world, especially in the Indian subcontinent, where nature was not an entity which was ‘out there’, but an essential part of the psyche of the people in the South Asian religions including Hinduism, Buddhism and several tribal religions which have their roots in nature worship. Once again, being postcolonial subjects in a globalized world, South Asian subjectivities are often subsumed under the onslaught of Western models and values. Hence, ecology and the erstwhile colonies of the Indian subcontinent do share a common location of marginality. This explains why Bapsi Sidhwa’s novels, which often present a microcosm of the subcontinent, reflect ecological concerns. All her works have the ecology as a major character. This becomes most evident in *Ice-Candy-Man* (1988) and *Water: A Novel* (2006).

These works are significant, not just in the field of literature, but also in the arena of Film Studies and Translation Studies. *Ice-Candy Man* was made into a film titled *Earth* in 1998 and *Water: A Novel*, is adapted from Mehta’s 2005 film *Water*.

Intersemiotic translation, in the form of adaptation thus becomes an important element in the oeuvres of both Mehta and Sidhwa. Adaptation of literary works is a phenomenon which has been in existence for quite a long time. Considered as a form of translation, adaptations involve inter-semiotic transfers, i.e., translations from one sign system to another, adaptations of stories, novels and even poems into the symbolic system of cinema and vice-versa. It is an attempt on the part of the 'translators' to "consume and erase the memory of the adapted text or to call it into question" as also "pay tribute by copying" (Hutcheon 7). Linda Hutcheon, in *A Theory of Adaptation* asserts that "adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication" (7). In adapting a work, it is inevitable that there will be change - both additions and omissions. There will be loss and gain of meanings, as well as motifs. The dissertation is an attempt to explore how ecology as a motif gets translated in the works of Bapsi Sidhwa and Deepa Mehta.

In the age of globalization, industrialization, and incessant exploitation of the natural resources, the natural environment is under threat. The rat race for material development and the insatiable thirst for accumulation of material benefits at any cost have put the environment in the centre stage of destruction. A sustainable ecosystem is the prime concern of human being that is doing round in the international as well as in the national policy making machinery. Evolving a global level policy towards combating the environmental hazards by successfully framing an agreement to introduce environmental friendly technologies is the need of the hour. To achieve this, a strongly built revolution should be staged which can bring a drastic and positive change in the social set up. A scholarly academic discourse will provide rich inputs to the debate on eco-criticism - the concept which is an emerging global concern focusing on the impending danger resulting from ignorance of nature.

Though the term eco-criticism existed in 1990, its roots can be found in history. Various literary personalities of different ages have fused literature and environment together in different ways and have tried to define ecocriticism in their own ways. But previously, literature played the part of the background to enhance the effect of the situation. As a result, today concern to environment has changed. With the growing materialism, the man is seen detached from the nature and is reluctant to keep the pure nature as it was. The result can be seen in the disturbance in the cycle of nature. This concern to nature is depicted through the modern term 'eco-criticism' in literature. To expand the spectrum of the term eco-criticism from literary point of view, Michael P. Branch explains:

Eco-criticism is not just a means of analyzing nature in literature: it implies a move towards a more Bio-centric world-view, an extension of ethics, a broadening of human's conception of global community to include non-human life forms and the physical environment. Just as feminists and African American literary criticism call for a change in culture. . . that is they attempt to move the culture toward a broader world view by exposing an earlier narrowness of view. . . so too does ecological literary criticism advocate for cultural change by examining how the narrowness of our culture's assumptions about the nature world has limited our ability to envision an ecologically sustainable human society. (xiii)

The word 'ecocriticism' was first used by William Rueckert, in his essay titled "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism", published in 1978. It went into oblivion in later years and was brought to the forefront again in 1989 by Cheryl

Glotfelty at the Western Literature Association Meeting, held at Coeur A'dlene in United States. He advised the academia to adopt the word to refer to the area dealing with nature writing. At the meeting, Glen Love also gave a speech titled "Revaluing Nature: Toward an Ecological Literary Criticism", where he too adopted the word 'ecocriticism'. The ecocriticism of this period was concerned with the negligence of the ecology by literature and how it had adverse impacts on the environment. The theorists of this period were influenced by the environmental studies movement, which was very powerful during the 70s. The term 'ecocriticism' got firmly rooted in the academia with the WLA Meeting of 1989. With the establishment of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment in 1992, ecocriticism began gaining academic prominence. Yet the exact meaning of the term remained unclear. It was in order to provide answers, albeit partial ones to the question of what exactly ecocriticism is, that the WLA meeting was held in 1994, at Salt Lake City. Various definitions of ecocriticism were put forth by the scholars in the debates and discussion over the issue. Cheryll Glotfelty, in his essay "What is Ecocriticism?" says that ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment... Ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies." (25)

Likewise Christopher Cokinos, in his essay on ecocriticism defines it as:

The critical and pedagogical broadening of literary studies to include texts that deal with the non-human world and our relationship to it. Ecocriticism necessarily entails a shift away from approaches that strictly privilege language. . . . Ecocriticism is fundamentally an ethical criticism and pedagogy, one that investigates and helps make possible the connections among self, society, nature and text. (1)

Further in the same fashion Allison Wallace also argues that ecocriticism is an area of study that makes possible, the (re)establishment of the connection between academic discourses and the planet on which these studies take place.

The concept of eco-criticism has formed a new perspective with the term eco-feminism. It describes movements and philosophies that link feminism with ecology. The term is believed to have been coined by the French writer, Françoise D' Eaubonne in her book, *Le Feminism Oula Mort*. In India, Vandana Shiva is considered to be the modern eco- feminist. In literature, nature plays an important role. Sometimes it is directly woven into the plot of the literary piece and sometimes it is symbolically used to enhance the effect of the poem, novel or the drama. Bapsi Sidhwa's famous novel *Water* is the best example of an ecocritical text where Ganga, the sacred river in India is metaphorically used.

In India, the movement of eco-feminism started in the late 1970s and early 1980s when Chipko became a major environmental and social movement in the northern India, which is commonly, cited worldwide as a primary example of successful grassroots activism. Centring this movement developed a trend of ecofeminism in India. According to Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, ecofeminism is about connectedness and wholeness of theory and practice. It asserts the special strength and integrity of every living thing. To them:

It is a woman- identified movement and we believe we have a special work to do in these imperilled times. It believes that the devastation of earth and her beings by the corporate warriors, and the threat of nuclear annihilation by the military warriors, as feminist concerns. It is the masculinist mentality depending upon the multiple systems of dominance and state power which

denies women's right to their own bodies and own sexuality. (Mies & Shiva; 1993: Introduction)

Therefore, ecofeminism is essentially based on the women-nature connection. However, ecofeminist school of thought is not ready to consider women as a passive victim of male violence alone. It considers women, particularly rural women as embedded in nature and active participants of development. They are regarded as the custodians of divine feminine creative energy of the cosmos. Women or 'prakriti' seeks to nurture and maintain the harmony and diversity of the natural entities as a life source. It is the duty of the women to recover the nature from the grips of men and alien industrial culture.

Following the arguments of Shiva, beginning of commercialization signals the death of nature, which is for the women, "simultaneously a beginning of their marginalization, devaluation, displacement and ultimate dispensability" (41-42). She makes it clear that this death is triggered by the arrival of the masculinist, reductionist, industrial, colonizing forces of western culture. She categorically emphasizes on the fact that masculinization of female is clearly undesirable. The twin ends of ecofeminism are liberation of nature from ceaseless exploitation and women from limitless marginalization. The spread of ecofeminism in India is receiving prominence with the spread of liberalization and globalization at a rapid scale.

More and more different feminist groups and organizations are subscribing to these ideals as women everywhere are the greatest victims of industrial modernization and liberalization. The forces of globalization are affecting the social, economic, psychological and physical conditions of the women in an extremely negative way. Thus, resistance to the process should also emanate from the wombs of feminism

itself. Ecofeminism is a method, which combines ecological and feminist movement with social justice, political democracy and reformation of agriculture.

The popularization of environmental and women's movements and organizations as a part of the cultural universalism brought about by globalization have seen the emergence of a large volume of literature on these topics. Indian environmental and women's movements and organizations became a global topic of study even before these movements assumed a global popularity. The event that globalized the environmental movement in India was the Chipko (hug the tree) movement that was born in 1973. The movement arose from a dissent about the commercial use of forest products and subsequent deprivation of the subsistence needs of the peasantry. The peasants of a village in Central Himalayas thwarted the commercial felling of trees in a nearby forest by threatening to hug the trees. In the following decade, a wave of protests swept across the Himalayan foothills led by Gandhian and left-oriented NGOs and activists (Gadgil and Guha 1994). To a certain extent the Chipko movement also contributed to the global popularity of the Indian women's movement and organizations because it was led primarily by women. Such a movement is need of the hour because as Plumwood rightly threatens the consequences of exploitation of nature and women, "Some eco-feminists also see the nature/culture dualism as the dominant male model of humanity as leading not only to oppression of women, but also to the destruction of nature and to racism and social inequality." (12)

The present dissertation is an attempt to uncover some of these hidden dichotomies and contradictions which are often ignored by humans resulting into hazardous impacts demanding immediate concern of the humanity towards nature. The

present dissertation would try to understand the problematic of the contradictions involved within the discipline of eco-criticism. The questions which the present dissertation would try to address are –

- What is the culture/nature dichotomy in Indian context?
- How does ecology plays a significant role in the lives of women and how it is portrayed by contemporary writers like Bapsi Sidhwa?
- How the physical environment gets translated from one semiotic system to another, with reference to the exchange-translation of Bapsi Sidhwa's novels, *Ice-Candy Man* and *Water: A Novel* and Deepa Mehta's films *Earth* and *Water*?
- What are the losses and gains in adapting a novel or film into a different medium?
- What are the dimensions of ecocritical aspects of the works in translation in the context of the changing landscape of the settings, considering the time-frames within which the works are adapted?
- What role can ecology play in bridging the gap between different semiotic systems as adaptations from novel to film or vice versa?

The major objectives of the present dissertation are as under:

- To explore how ecology is depicted in literature and films.
- To examine the significance ecology has in postcolonial societies.
- To analyze the loss and gain of meanings ecology acquires through translation.
- To locate the role ecology can play in bridging the gaps between semiotic systems.

- To identify 'eco-friendly' methods of translation.

Review of the Critical Literature: Understanding Eco-centric texts and the discourse of nature-oriented writings

Ecocriticism focuses on the relationship between nature and culture, and between materialism and simplicity. The study of Eco-criticism provides an opportunity to look into the discursively constructed role of nature into human civilization which often differs from one social community to other. The previous point could be understood through the different narratives of the multiple cultures that describes the role of nature in a particular community, and has produced various forms of nature. For example, to illustrate western civilization nature is considered to be subordinate from human being as nature, according to Bible, is present on the earth to serve the human beings to satisfy their need but at the same time Hindu mythology has given nature a role of Goddess considering her as Mother Nature. Similarly, Africans also worship tree and consider it sacred and holy which leads towards spiritual salvation. We can also observe these different portrayals of nature depicted by human beings by assorted artifacts like painting, writings, music, dance and also in form of folk tales. Jonathan Bate's *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* (1991) efforts to ground ecocriticism and ecology in political history and in this way; it serves as a turning point in the field of ecological studies. The role ecology plays in political history and vice-versa is elaborated upon in a very coherent fashion. Yet, since the focus has been exclusively on William Wordsworth, the work is very limited in its scope.

The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing and the Formation of American Culture (1995) by Lawrence Buell is significant in that it has succeeded in giving a specific direction to green studies. He defines ecocriticism as "the study of

the relation between Literature and environment conducted in the spirit of commitment to environmental praxis.” (qtd in Dana 583). Buell argues for a readjustment of the way our students are taught to read. Once again, it succeeds in putting ecology within the arena of culture and society, but ignores the role played by cultural artefacts such as cinema, arts etc. Besides, there is an exclusive focus on America and ‘other’ knowledges, especially postcolonial stances on ecology, go ignored. He also highlighted the four characteristics of an ecocritical work:

- a. The nonhuman environment is present not merely as a framing device but as a presence that begins to suggest that human history is implicated in natural history.
- b. The human interest is not understood to be the only legitimate interest.
- c. Human accountability to the environment is part of the text’s ethical framework.
- d. Some sense of the environment as a process rather than as a constant or a given is at least implicit in the text.

Further, Louise Westling’s *The Green Beast of the New World: Landscape, Gender and American Fiction* (1996) focuses on ecofeminism and analyses constructions of land that are often gendered. The work has contributed greatly to ecofeminism as an area of research, especially in establishing the link between gender and cultural constructions of nature. Although she explores the ecology as reflected in American fiction, it is not a mere analysis of literary works in isolation, but rather, a contextualization of general facts regarding ecology and gender. In this work as well, alternate ecologies go ignored. Besides, there is an exclusive focus on gender as a trope for ecological studies.

Cheryll Glotfelty, also argues in her essay “What is Ecocriticism?”, that ecocriticism basically explores questions like that of the role of nature in a novel or poem, the ecological ethics evident in works of literature, the representation of land and nature in literature and how representation shapes our treatment of the ecology and vice versa, the intersections of ecology with race, caste and gender, ways of addressing ecology, the infiltration of literature by environmental crisis etc. Ecocriticism forms the link between environmental discourse and literature. It deals with the interconnections between nature and culture. Ecocriticism takes the entire universe as an ecological system and explores how literature, as a part of this system can be located within the ideological structures evident in ecological discourses. For Glotfelty, ecocriticism becomes a way of addressing the environmental crisis that is looming large in the horizon. She argues that “ecocritics encourage others to think seriously about the relationship of humans to nature, about the ethical and aesthetic dilemmas posed by the environmental crisis, and about how language and literature transmit values with profound ecological implications.” (Glotfelty, 25)

Glotfelty did extensive research on ecocriticism and the collection of essays titled *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (1996), which she co-edited with Harold Fromm, is a seminal text in ecocriticism. The essays deal with almost all aspects of ecocriticism, ranging from the origins of ecocriticism as a definitive field of inquiry to the future of this area as a research practice. Ecological literary discourse is tackled in the best possible manner in this work. Yet, it treats ecology as a given, which cannot be modified, immune to the socio-political upheavals or the context in which it is situated. Besides, although it explores the relationship between literature and the physical environment, it does not take into consideration, the film as a readable text which can be analyzed using the tools of ecocriticism.

Jonathan Levin argues that ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary approach integrating the environment with culture. It aims at a subtle re-establishment of the pastoral culture, away from the chaos of urban life, and challenges “the conventional boundaries between nature and culture, country and city, wilderness and domesticated environment” (Levin 171-172). His central argument is that ecocriticism aims at spreading globalism by identifying the unified essences in nature and nature writing and culture. Levin also talked about the two groups of ecocritics- the realists and the social constructionists. The realists see the return to nature as a way of escaping the alienation induced by modernity and post-modernity, while the social constructionists argue that nature is “a discursive strategy” (Levin 175), formed by language and imbued with ideology. Levin identifies sub-groups within this division. Those among the realists whom he terms “naïve epistemologists” believe that language devoid of ideology resides in the natural world, while the “complex epistemologists” believe in the interconnectedness of not only nature and culture, but also nature and language. Among the social constructionists, some argue that nature is a construct and not a given, while others adopt dialectical methods to understand the relationship between nature and discursive practices. (Levin 175)

Robert Kern, in *Ecocriticism: What is it good for?* (2003) asserts that ecocriticism is a way of reading that emphasizes on a shift in focus from the human-centered way of reading to the ecology-centered way. He says:

What ecocriticism calls for, then, is a fundamental shift from one context of reading to another- more specifically, a movement from the human to the environmental, or at least from the exclusively human to the biocentric or ecocentric, which is to say a humanism (since we

cannot evade our human status or identity) informed by an awareness of the more-than-human. (Kern 18)

Lawrence Coupe's *The Green Studies Reader: From Romanticism to Ecocriticism* (2000) is another landmark in the field of green studies. It traces a history of ecocriticism from the Romantic Age to the contemporary times. Philosophical insights are also used to establish the link between ecology and culture. The major factor that made this book significant in ecocritical research is its exploration of practical ecocriticism. The book has been more or less Eurocentric in its formulations and fails to take into consideration, the alternate histories of ecocriticism in postcolonial and marginal cultures.

One among the very few works that have tackled the question of alternate ecocriticisms is Graham Huggan's and Helen Tiffin's *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*, published in 2010. It explores questions of how colonialism has left its mark both in ecology and its relation to postcolonial societies. Huggan and Tiffin argue that ecology is of special import in postcolonial societies since, the very basis of colonialism is the coloniser's attempts to depict the colonized subjects as 'animalized' and uncultured- i.e., closer to nature than to culture. Western ideologies of development are critiqued and practical postcolonial ecocritical readings of writers from the erstwhile colonies are undertaken. Questions of identity and belonging with reference to nature are also dealt with in this work. Although alternate ecocriticisms are established as legitimate fields of enquiry, there is an underlying notion of them being deviations from the master-narrative- i.e., the Western conceptions of the environment. The work has not been able to break free of the Western academia. Also, fiction is the chosen medium for ecocritical analysis. Other cultural artefacts go ignored.

Other landmark works in the field of ecocriticism include Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*, Robert Pogue Harrison's *Forests: The Shadow of Civilization*, Annette Kolodny's *The Lay of the Land*, Roderick Frazier Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Scott Slovic's *Seeking Awareness in America Nature Writing*, Thomas Lyon's *This Incomparable Land*, *The Norton Book of Nature Writing* edited by Robert Finch and John Elder, Vera Norwood's *Made From This Earth* etc.

Ecocritical Studies and Literature

As an emerging field, ecocriticism has made a definitive mark in literature. Ecocritical elements in literatures from the early days have been studied by scholars across the world, although not as rigorously as other literary theories have found application in texts. Robert Watson's *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance* is a case in point. He made a study of Shakespeare's comedies, Marvel's lyrics and various other Renaissance texts, and argued that ecological concerns were reflected in these works and the concern about the deteriorating environment is evident in them. Such is the case with Gabriel Egan's *Green Shakespeare: From Ecopolitics to Ecocriticism* and Diane McColley's *Poetry and Ecology in the Age of Milton and Marvell* as well. *Early Modern Ecostudies: From the Florentine Codex to Shakespeare*, edited by Thomas Hallock, Ivo Kamps, and Karen challenges existing notions about the subject matter of ecocriticism and also the idea that human perceptions of nature have been the same throughout. David Gilcrest's *Greening the Lyre* asserts that non-human language does not belong totally to the sphere of conventional poetry but lies somewhere beyond. Deborah Carmichael's *The Landscape of Hollywood Westerns: Ecocriticism in an American Film Genre* is also a

landmark work in that it links ecocriticism with film studies and looks at the portrayal of landscape by Hollywood movies.

The Future of Ecocriticism

With the increasing concern about the environment and ecology as crucial for policy makers and governments, ecology as depicted in literature is becoming as significant as feminism came to be in its heyday. As Glen Love says in *Practical Ecocriticism*,

Environmental and population pressures inevitably and increasingly support the position that any literary criticism which purports to deal with social and physical reality will encompass ecological consideration. (1)

Ecocriticism not only studies the ecological elements in a literary text, but also analyses it in ethical terms in order to arrive at an environment friendly, just resolution, with the potential to reform and reevaluate the perception of the environment and also the way we deal with it. In the academia, ecocriticism has come to occupy a prime position because of what can be termed its constructive interdisciplinarity. Also, as mentioned before, in the so-called Third World, ecocriticism is of utmost significance, given the fact that subordination has been a feature of the nations as well as the theory. It is interesting to note that the sustainability of modes of development in these countries and their impact on the environment, the contribution of ecology to daily life and vice versa are themes common to works produced in South Asia. Examples include Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, Michael Ondaatje's *The Skeleton*, Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy Man* etc. A study of these factors in literature has vast potential not only in the academia, but also in the realm of policy-making and law. Ecocriticism thus remains a

field of study that is capable of bringing about a radical transformation in the way ecology is perceived and theorized in the era of globalization.

Intersemiotic translation

Put in simple terms, intersemiotic translation is the transfer of one set of signs from a particular sign system to another sign system. Unlike other translations, it is not just the language that changes, but the codes also. One of the first people to talk about intersemiotic translation was Roman Jakobson. Itamar Even-Zohar's 'Theory of Transfer' is another theory that can explain intersemiotic translation.

Major Theorists

Roman Jakobson:

Roman, Jakobson, in his essay "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" identifies intersemiotic translation as a kind of translation for the first time. He says:

For us, both as linguists and as ordinary word-users, the meaning of any linguistic sign is its translation into some further, alternative sign, especially a sign "in which it is more fully developed," as Peirce, the deepest inquirer into the essence of signs, insistently stated. . . . We distinguish three ways of interpreting a verbal sign: it may be translated into other signs of the same language, into another language, or into another, nonverbal system of symbols. These three kinds of translation are to be differently labelled: (Jakobson 235)

- 1- Intralingual translation or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.
- 2- Interlingual translation or translation proper is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.

- 3- Intersemiotic translation or transmutation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems.(qtd. in Venuti, 114)

He argued that in intersemiotic translation, the stress is on the content rather than the form. The message becomes more prominent than the independent words.

Itamar Even-Zohar's 'Theory of Transfer' rooted in his Polysystem theory argues that the literary productions in any linguistic system are based on the cultural background in which it is produced. There are established rules governing which elements can be combined in the production of a text. Sometimes, there are models created using these rules and these models make transfer to another linguistic background or even system easier.

Adaptation: A Form of Intersemiotic Translation

Adaptations of written texts into films and vice-versa have been in existence for quite a few decades. Since it involves a change in the sign system, adaptation has always been considered an integral part of intersemiotic translation and hence of translation studies. The history of adaptation as a form of translation spans centuries. It begins from the Middle Ages when the term adaptation was used to refer to a particular form of translation and later became a sub-genre of translation.

Adaptation has been defined as "the act or process of adapting, fitting or modifying" or "the state or condition of being adapted or adjusted" (Webster 23). Thus, adaptation is at the same time, a condition and a process. It signifies a move from one sign system to another, in a way that makes it different from the original. Linda Hutcheon, in *A Theory of Adaptation* asserts that "adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication" (7). Adaptation always stresses on difference from the original without being totally different. Thus, it stands somewhere in between the

original and the totally new. In her essay “A Jakobsonian Approach to Film Adaptations of Hugo’s *Les Misérables*”, Lhermitte argues:

By taking literary works to the screen, film adaptations widen the scope of their readership, offering them greater visibility. Metaphors are changed into more comprehensible images, idiomatic expressions are replaced by explicit phrases and cultural rites are explained or transposed in an effort to make them more accessible to the reader. In the process, adaptors cannot ignore the cultural background of the target culture and must “negotiate” the interaction of the audience with the source text. The trade-off between two elements –two historical periods, two cultures, two media and/or two languages—is at the core of film adaptation. Whether the transfer takes place within the same culture or between different cultures- displacement in time and/or space occurs. Cultural references and metaphors are sometimes difficult to transfer to the screen, and they undergo significant changes during the conversion of a novel into a screenplay—first transformational step leading to the production of a film. (101-102)

Film adaptations and adaptations of films into written texts involve a rigorous process involving additions and deletions. It is defined as “the process of changing or transforming material from one medium into another” (Frensham 23). The link between the text and the film is evident at some parts and hidden in other parts. Adaptation is a process which has much scope for analysis in that from the vantage point of the adapted text, the original can be analyzed and vice-versa. Dudley Andrew argues that the relationship between the text and the film can be at three levels-

borrowing, intersection and fidelity of transformation. These, he term as “modes of adaptation.” He observes:

If we confine ourselves to those cases where the adaptation process is foregrounded, that is, where the original is held up as a worthy source or goal, there are still several possible modes of relation between the film and the text. These modes can, for convenience, be reduced to three: Borrowing, intersecting and fidelity of transformation. (Andrew 98)

Borrowal of elements and themes from the original text is a key feature in adaptations. The term ‘borrowing’ can itself be problematic because the adaptation itself is ‘borrowed’ in that sense of the word. Intersection between the original and the adaptation takes place at several levels- semantic, representational and also cultural. The question of fidelity of transformation is perhaps the most contested of the three modes. In *Adaptations*, Whelehan says that:

For many people, the comparison of a novel and its film version results in . . . a prioritization of the fictional origin over the resulting film, and so the main purpose of comparison becomes the measurement of the success of the film in its capacity to realize what are held to be the core meanings and values of the originary texts. (3)

The notion of fidelity to the original has already been deconstructed by poststructural translation theorists. Since, as Derrida says, each thought or utterance itself is translated and every reading is a misreading, the question of fidelity in translation is a null one. Given such a situation, adaptations can take freedom with the text and bend it to suit the contexts and target cultures. But here, the artist has to be careful in order to avoid an anarchic situation where the source text is completely

ignored. The question of the autonomy of the adapted text becomes relevant here. Critics like Bluestone argue that it is not just the medium but the supporting factors including the audience and censorship that determines the autonomy of the adapted work and marks the difference between the novel and film. He says:

The reputable novel, generally speaking, has been supported by a small, literate audience, has been produced by an individual writer, and has remained relatively free of rigid censorship. The film, on the other hand, has been supported by a mass audience, produced co-operatively under industrial conditions, and restricted by a self-imposed Production Code. These developments have reinforced rather than vitiated the autonomy of each medium. (Bluestone viii)

He further argues that what an adapter takes into consideration while adapting a novel into a film is not the written text in its entirety, but a paraphrase of the novel, which functions as the raw material for the adaptation. "He looks not to the organic novel, whose language is inseparable from its theme, but to characters and incidents which have somehow detached themselves from language and . . . achieved a mythic life of their own" (Bluestone 62). Although such arguments exist, there is always an underlying consciousness of the secondariness of the adapted work. The adapted text, whether film or novel, is expected to conform to the original and be truthful to it. This becomes problematic, considering the cultural codes within which films and novels work. The reception of a text by the audience depends upon the cultural situation within which it is produced as also the time period. Thus, adaptations have to take these factors into consideration and hence fidelity to the original is an enterprise fraught with complications.

Another major theorist who worked extensively on adaptation was G. Wagner.

He identified three types of adaptation:

- 1- Transposition- a novel which is “directly given on screen”(222)
- 2- Commentary- a work in which “an original is taken and either purposely or inadvertently altered in some respect” (223)
- 3- Analogy- A work involving so much of change in the spatio-temporal aspect that the original is mostly unidentifiable.

Robert Giddings, Keith Selby and Chris Wensley are other major theorists. In *Screening the Novel*, they argue that film and literature have always been interdependent. “Film may have been a non-verbal experience, but it based its narrative on the Western European cultural experience of literature” (Giddings, x). The fact that films emerged during the period of realism in literature adds credibility to this argument.

The success of adaptations lies to a great extent with the reception of the audience. Adaptations enrich the literary and visual cultures of the target social order; but it entails responsibilities for the audience. About this, Imelda Whelehan says:

Readers of adaptations, in common with mass-media fans, can become more conscious of their active role as critics by evaluating both literary text and its adaptation, looking beyond issues of success or failure and considering, among other things, the choices made by the adapter, the conditions of those choices, other possible options and their possible effects. As well as considering their own historical vantage point, the adaptation’s audiences need to consider the historical context and technological constraints within which the adaptation is produced. It

also may be fruitful to investigate how the historical ‘authenticity’ of the period represented by the literary text’s setting is approached, and whether the ideological perspectives offered seem to echo those of the literary narratological perspective. . . . (17)

‘Adapting’ the Ecology: Reading Bapsi Sidhwa and Deepa Mehta

The adaptation of novels into films or vice-versa involves an adaptation of the various elements-minor or major- in the original. The ecology, which often becomes the background to the playing out of life in both novels and films is one such element. The environment as a motif has always been an area of study relegated to the margins by literary theorist, scholars and researchers alike. Where ecological elements have featured in novels or films, they serve mostly as mere backgrounds to ‘more significant’ events, themes and motifs. As such, studies and researches have mostly ignored the ecocritical elements in films as well as novels. In such a scenario, it is but natural that the translation of ecological elements from one semiotic system to another has been considered as a substantial topic for research.

A major problem underlying most works on ecocriticism is their inability to take into consideration, mediums other than fiction into their purview. Films and performative traditions, as well as oral traditions are not considered as worthy of being analyzed. Hence it is but natural that ecology as a theme in films is considered marginal and insignificant. Given these state of affairs, the translation of ecology from fiction into film and vice versa, is an area that has been left unexplored till date. The task has been attempted neither with reference to Western works, nor non-Western works. Through the present research titled, “Translating Nature in Deepa Mehta and Bapsi Sidhwa: An Ecocritical Approach to Adapting *Ice-Candy-Man* and *Water*”, I intend to bring to light, how the physical environment gets translated from one

semiotic system to another, with reference to the exchange-translation of Bapsi Sidhwa's novels, *Ice-Candy Man* and *Water: A Novel* and Deepa Mehta's films *Earth and Water*. What makes this dissertation unique is that it explores not just the depiction of ecology and its relationship to humankind in the works under consideration, but it also analyses as to how ecocritical elements are gained or lost in translation/adaptation.

The postcolonial aspect of ecology will be located with reference to the socio-political turmoil that accompanied colonization as well as decolonization. The loss and gain of ecocritical aspects of the works in translation will be explored in the context of the changing landscape of the settings, considering the time-frames within which the works were adapted. 'Eco-friendly' methods of translation-i.e., methods that would ensure, at least in part, a retaining of ecological elements present in the original text-would also be proposed. The dissertation will also explore the potential of adaptations and translations to bring to light; the definitive role ecology can play in bridging the gap between different semiotic systems, especially in the context of postcolonial social orders.

My hypothesis of the present research is that when novels are adapted into films and vice-versa, there is both loss and gain of ecological elements, which vary with the cultural context in which these texts are produced, especially if they are rooted in postcolonial social orders.

In attempting this task, methodology for my research would be analytical and descriptive. The work would be partly sociological in scope, since I intend to take into consideration, the socio-political and cultural scenario which aided the production of these films and novels. The postcolonial ecology will be located with reference to the specific spatio-temporal frameworks which shaped the works under consideration.

Besides the novels and films which are directly relevant to the study- i.e., *Ice-Candy-Man*, *Water: A Novel* and *Earth and Water*, other works by the same authors would be studied and analyzed in order to arrive at a general view of the depiction of ecology in their oeuvre. The secondary materials would include the works mentioned above, as well as articles published in journals like *Ecozon*, *Journal of Ecocriticism*, *Indian Journal of Ecocriticism* and *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism*. The proceedings of recent conferences and meets on ecology held by the Ecological Society of America, the British Ecological Society and the Indian Ecological Society and other such organizations will also be taken into consideration.

The present dissertation is divided in four chapters:

Chapter I introduces the concepts of Ecocriticism, Ecofeminism and intersemiotic translation and various issues involved in these theories. It also deals with the concept of ‘adaptation’ from film to novel or vice versa and discusses the differences likely to occur during such adaptations.

Chapter II and Chapter III are based on the texts chosen for the study – *Water: A Novel* and *Ice- Candy Man* by Bapsi Sidhwa and their audio-visual adaptation by Deepa Mehta into films, - *Water* and *Earth 1947*. These two chapters involve an analysis of the source texts in terms of eco-criticism and their film adaptation. In these chapters an attempt is made to draw conclusions regarding the differences and similarities between the texts and their intersemiotic adaptations.

Chapter IV - the last, and the concluding chapter, gives the findings of the whole study and discusses the scope for further study.

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