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ECO FEMINISTIC PERSPECTIVE IN LOUISE ERDRICH'S *LOVE MEDICINE*

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ABSTRACT

This paper will make an interpretation of the novel "Love Medicine" to expose its Eco feministic connotation through Eco critical perspective. Ecofeminism is articulating a complex ideology based on the connection between feminism and ecology, drawing parallels between the domination of nature and the domination of women and between degradation of the environment and injustice based on gender. It also promotes the establishment of a spiritual network founded on nature based religious (such as native religious, paganism and witchcraft) that focus on female power. As a Native American, Louise Erdrich, faced many reservation problem. They lived with nature and beyond nature. Women also combined together nature and themselves with effective way. In the novel love medicine, Louise Erdrich dealt nature with women in extraordinary manner. Her perspective method through mingled with the reader and writer in a friendly way. Then she discussed the cultural conflict, trace, religious and environment.

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She expresses the relationship between women and nature in her work, on the other hand, as a bicultural writer, she deeply exposes the relationship and conflicts between American Indians culture and white culture. Louise Erdrich is also one of the most productive writers and her works have pinched widespread critical attention. Love Medicine is one of the most attractive master pieces. Firstly, the another exposes the idea the substance of the harmony between human beings and the nature is the environmental justice between different laces through the analysis of the while governments cultural colonization to the American Indians. To be more specific, the lines to present the rich ecological wisdom and the relationship between the environment and the women experience by the

interpretation of love medicine from the approaches of ecofeminism and Environmental justice.

First chapter after the opening takes place after June's death. Erdrich has already introduced Gordie to the reader, but this is the first chapter that emphasizes primarily on him. Emphasis is placed on his alcoholism, which he has curved to in an effort to deal with June's death. While several characters have been shown to have drinking problems (especially Henry Junior), this chapter deals obviously with alcoholism and its overall destructive effects. Yet there is also cultural context to this story. Drunkenness is a prevalent issue on real-life Native American reservations, and Erdrich here an attempts to explain how a person might be driven into its grip.

As a vehement drunk, Gordie sees and hears with heightened intensity. This writing style allows the reader to briefly inhabit the mind of a man addicted to drinking. When Gordie is alone in his house, frightened that the flicker of June will appear to him, he turns on all the electronics in his house: TV, vacuum cleaner, radio, and more. He does this to attempt to drown out the silent sounds of nature: lakes and trees rustling in the breeze dropping onto the roof. Erdrich's language conveys how attuned Gordie is to all stimuli. The shocking climax of the story derives when Gordie realizes that the deer he has hit is in fact alive in his back seat. It is a disturbing moment: "He sensed someone behind him and glanced in the rearview mirror. What he saw made him stamp the brake in panic and shock. The deer was up. She'd only been stunned." From there, the chapter descends into nightmare, at least from Gordie's perspective: everything that then happens can be understood as fallout from the deer rising up.

The deer's reappearance is another example of the Catholic imagery that appears in the novel. Gordie feels as though the deer can see into his soul, and uses an explicitly Catholic representation to explain his situation: "She saw how he'd woven his own crown of thorns." The animal's outrageous gaze compels Gordie to kill her: he does not want anyone to see into his soul, least of all this Christ-like deer.

The long final chapter of the novel, Erdrich focuses on the youngest generation of her central characters, little King Junior (now Howard), who is struggling to understand the world around him while surviving in a dysfunctional home-based, and Lipsha Morrissey, who at only nineteen years-old still has a lot to learn about the world, including the truth about his family birthright. Howard could be a young Lipsha, with his oddity and innate cleverness. Yet Erdrich's description of the broken home Howard lives in paints a bleak picture of his future prospects. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Howard's reply to police at the door: he runs to them, yelling that his father is inside.

Though Howard, unlike Lipsha, produced with his biological parents, Erdrich demonstrates that it is not only kinship that makes good parents. Lipsha spends the chapter in search of the truth about his birth mother June and his father Gerry, people who

had no hand in floating him but to whom he feels a connection. The reader can feel sympathy for Lipsha in his quest, but Erdrich's adroit relationship of his parentage to Howard's demonstrates that a loving home, far more than birth parents, positively forms a child into who he will be. Lipsha's devotion to Marie makes this clear. Erdrich reflects the women's problem to face the novel through the characters June, Marie and Lulu.

Erdrich situates the reader in the story during the last measure of the chapter, when Gerry and Lipsha talk in the car. Lipsha asks Gerry to tell him whether or not he slayed the trooper; though Gerry reveals the truth, Lipsha says that he cannot tell the reader. This constituent of hyperrealism at the end of the novel shows how the reader, in purposefully interpreting and reacting to the events of the description, has also been a player in the story. Lipsha's genuine concern that the reader might reveal the truth makes the entire novel look even more realistic than it already has. Such wraps and ambiguities, after all, are necessary to everyday interactions.

The chapter ends with a final scene of ocean imagery. After Lipsha has helped his father escape, he drives back to the reservation and stops on the bridge that extends the river that marks the edge of the reservation. Water has meant many things throughout the novel, mainly used as an icon of death and religion, but in this final quote Lipsha grasps that he needs to live in the present. As the most mystical and esoterically-inclined of the book's characters, he offers an important parting thought. He has the power of medicine but will not live in the world of fancy. While Howard's broken life could point to a bleak future for the next generation, Lipsha's sharp-headed realism and brainy observations herald a livelier future.

I don't pray, but sometimes I do touch the beads. It has become a secret. I never look at them, just let my fingers roam to them when no one is in the house. It's a rare time when I do this. I touch them, and every time I do I think of small stones. At the bottom of the lake, rolled aimless by the waves, I think of them polished. To many people it would be a kindness. But I see no kindness in how

the waves are grinding them smaller and smaller until they finally disappear.(Marie Kashpaw: 95)

At the end of the first section of the division "The Beads," Erdrich's language makes it clear that Marie's beads are meant to embody June. Earlier, June conquers at Marie's house already broken down by her mother's death. As the reader knows from the first section, by the end of her life June has been through countless poverties. Erdrich's language at the end of the chapter, which aligns the beads with small stones smoothed and broken by waves, is a allegory for June's past and future penuries. Moreover, on account of their current usage, the beads are a potent prompt of the power of religion in Marie's life.

As independent stories told from the viewpoint of various members of the Kashpaw, Lamartine, and Nanapush families, the tales have much strength. One is the use of language that subtly reflects each narrator. The images, phrasing, and vocabulary of the residential characters, such as Beverly Lamartine, differ from the language of those whose lives still midpoint on the reservation; the expressions used by some people in the older group (particularly Marie Lazarre) suggest paraphrase from thoughts that come in another language. Even in the youngest generation, Albertine Johnson, who leaves the arrangement to go to college, uses words quite differently from her cousin Lipsha, who stays behind. Each story has a sharp focus, fascinating narrative line, and images that depiction the event without prevailing explanation. Furthermore, the novel created by weaving these tales together is solidier than any of its parts. As one tale follows another in a structure that skips back and forth through the years, one pleasure for readers is simply fitting together the jigsaw puzzle, teasing out the identities hidden in the several names that result from marriages, unwed parenthood, and children adopted by neighbors or relatives, and realizing, with rapid delight, that one is getting a second viewpoint on an incident already known from an earlier story.

The individual stories are scrappy; the book does not attempt a complete history of the families. Most stories focus on a significant crisis, though some include secondary narration. In the first, June

Kashpaw is select up by an oil worker in a boomtown and then dies in the snow walking back toward the reservation; the succeeding sections of that story reveal (indirectly) the complicated reactions of her countless kin. Several stories show, in bits, the triangular connection between Marie Lazarre, Lulu Lamartine, and Nector Kashpaw, which began in 1934 and is not resolved until forty-eight years later, after Nector's death. Other stories focus on Lulu's sons, suggesting the damages wrought by contracts of manliness in both Indian and white society. The essence of the book, however, grows from the liaison between stories and from the reader's ability to derive meaning from the revival of central thematic material

I nevr let the United States Census in my door, even though they say it's good for Indians. Well, quote me. I say that every time they counted us they knew the precise number to get rid of. Lulu Lamartine, (*LM*: 280)

In this quote, Erdrich reveals Lulu as a champion of indigenous rights, unwilling to assimilate as the government wants her to. As one movement of protest, she refuses to comply with the census. Lulu also refuses to move off her land for months after her municipal burns down. This quote reveals Lulu's deep-seated antipathy and strong sovereign will. Earlier in the book, the reader learned that she was sent to government boarding school, where she was miserable and habitually tried to run away. Later in life, Lulu's psyche still bears the scars of such mistreatment.

The theoretical angle that will be used in this study is a socioreligious outlook. According to this perspective society shapes and molds a person and creates an identity to which he or she feels at home. Every society has norms, for example, in ways of talking correctly, dressing right and having similar cultural beliefs. These issues are often based on the ideas of a confident religion. The religious dogmas one grows up with affects a person's world view the most and is not easily erased or changed. The detached itself also has a strong influence on religion and society since people shape societies and reform religions to fit their current needs. The character Marie Lazarre is caught between two paradigms

where she does not entirely belong to either of them. She is born a mixed blood and her family's tribal personality is that of being dirty and lowlife. Although she is raised on the reservation as a Native American she is also looked down upon because her father is white. However, she does not fit into the white municipal either where she is considered Native American. In her search for gratitude and respect she tries to redefine her identity to be empowered. She wants to prove that she is not a "white lowlife nobody" but is as good as anybody else. Hence, Marie does not only try to handle a cultural and religious struggle but also a psychological one. The question is in what ways Marie searches for love, power and respect through cultural and religious acts. The word power is not used here in the sense of guiding others but rather to be empowered. By using the ideas within sociology of religion to support the analysis, this essay will positively offer a new perspective to the character Marie different from previous critical views. Marie tries out different schemes for an enablement as we follow her in the convent, in her marriage to Nector Kashpaw and in her life as a mother.

It is my intention to show that through cultural and religious identities she accomplishes her goals and becomes empowered. In the beginning of *Love Medicine* she wants to be accepted as a white girl who is a good Catholic. However, as the story evolves in the novel she turns away from her Catholic belief and becomes an active member of the tribe. Again, these issues concerning Marie will also be analyzed in relation to the ideas within sociology of religion. No reservation girl had ever prayed so hard. There was no use in trying to snub me any longer. I was going up there on the hill with the black robe women. They were not any lighter than me. I was going up there to pray as good as they could. Because "I don't have that much Indian blood". And they never thought they'd have a girl from the reservation as a saint they'd have to kneel to. But they'd have me. (LM:43)

In her attempts at being a good Catholic, Marie devotes herself to litanies that seem to go overboard. Words of pronouncement make her strongly believe that she will become a saint as she envisions herself as a golden statue. Clearly, Marie knows that the furthest respect would be gained through sainthood. In the Extensive white society it is the peak achievement with a status that is looked upon with not only acceptance but also with an appreciation. Her goal to become a saint could be described as purposeful, but no clear plan is presented. Her malevolence and insolvability also appear to be stronger than her actual belief in God. In the chapter "Saint Marie," which is told by her later in life, she describes her young self as oblivious. Since Marie is not born into the white and Catholic society it could mean struggle for her to identify with it. Not only does her ethnicity make her different but her way of acting, talking and over-all apprehension of the world, possibly also signal that she has a Native American identity. Marie cannot change the color of her skin but she can take on the role of being a good Christian. However, as she does her best to reject her native tradition, her world view is still shamanic. Marie does not realize that her world view is actually as much Native American as her physical appearance and actions.

Therefore she does not reflect on it being something to an adjustment but instead she incorporates it with her new knowledge of religion. For example, as critic Louis Owens points out, while on her way to the convent she thinks in terms of her tribal language Ojibwa, when envisaging Jesus. The easiest way of entering the white communal is to take part in its institutional structure, like churches and convents. These connotations give people a stronger group identity and a sense of belonging. However, to go to church or join the nunnery is an easy way to belong without truly believing. As it seems, Marie is not very religious, nor has she a strong faith that she is ambitious by.

I had the mail-order Catholic soul you get in a girl raised out in the bush, whose only thought is getting into town (LM: 44).

Obviously, the primary wish is not to go to church but to come in to town where the shops and people are. In telling us about her attraction with Sunday events

in town, Marie parenthetically concludes this account: "And of course we went to church" (LM: 44). It is more of a requirement to get what she really wants, a means to an end. Marie longs for a respected identity and a sense of fitting, and if that means being a good Catholic through the use of sacraments, it is easy to take on that role. She says herself that her "soul went cheap" (LM: 44). Conveniently in her search for power and reverence within the white society, the convent was at the time the most prevailing place a woman could be at. It was a place with only women who also had some authority and honour in the outer world.

Love medicine creates an intense vision of a world that is at once vicious and tender. The novel begins at a family congregation following the death of June Kashpaw, frozen to death in a snowstorm on Easter Sunday 1981. Relatives connections stories about June, piecing together the rubbishes of memories that are the stuff of family histories. Erdrich resurrects lives throughout the novel: the sensory lube Lamartine, whose children have different fathers, but whose passionate he to her first love, Nector Kashpaw, increases over the years: Nector Kashpaw who recalls his first happenstance with his future life, Marie Lazarre and then unfolds the history of his obsession with Lulu. We also hear the younger cohort the philosophical Lipsha Morrissey, June's abandoned son, who makes a Chippewa love medicine to keep his grandparents collected, the Lamartine boys, the "lucky one", Lyman. The novel deals generously with the love hate contacts between family members. Lulu's first love was letdown but later she married her lover Nector. In the meanwhile time she mourned and lost many things, only medicine of peace was nature. Most of the time she nostalgic nature and silent character. Next Albertine Johnson, meets Henry Lamartine Jr., and loses her. Albertine also faced more difficulties in her concrete life as a woman. Then Marie, first she married Nector, but she not happy with her partner. She also grieved through her peculiar and social life. So the author fantastically describes the women's sufferings and how they faced and solve the glitches in brilliantly. All the main female characters and the nature depends each and

every time intermingled. So the ecology and an environmental integrity are thoroughly well.

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