CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Women down the ages and throughout history have been considered as inferior and called as second sex. From her birth till death a woman faces acute discrimination. Though this discrimination has been questioned by both male and female thinkers across the centuries, women oppression and their second-class citizenry have not yet been wiped out altogether. Their rights at par with men have been denied and in spite of all kinds of empowerment policies and international conventions and declarations and recognition of women’s rights as human rights, the struggle for gender equity continues. Debates and discussions are taking place in innumerable forums in innumerable ways. Hence to repeat the old stories claiming justice and equality have been modes of solace for the researchers and activists to explicate possibilities and analyze the design, aesthetics and dynamism of the feminist writers and activists to continue the debate awaiting till the goal is reached.

The undertaken work analyzes the works of the great African-American activist-writer Alice Walker along with selected Naga women writers to compare and contrast their views, voices and efforts to justify the
cause of women and to support them whole-heartedly to make them able at least to voice their protest against the discrimination of women at large and their individual conditions. Naga writers like Kekhrievou Yhome, Easterine Iralu, Monalisa Changkija, Temsula Ao and others including some Tenyimia women poets of early 20th century have been analyzed and compared and contrasted with Alice Walker. Alice is a stern activist and visionary for a new age who has portrayed the angst of African American women while the selected Naga women writers are also writers with some feminist inclinations and aspirations. All these writers have strong ecofeminist sentiments.

Alice Walker (1944-), the recipient of the Pulitzer Prize in 1983 for her novel *The Color Purple* (1982) is a poet, fictionist and non-fiction writer with strong feminist ideology and sentiments. Married and divorced, she herself has suffered the demonic patriarchal oppression and has experienced and witnessed the traumas of these age-old maladies. Throughout her works there is a strong protest against the myriad mutilations of women’s body, mind, honour and ego. This is echoed to a certain extent in the works of the proposed selected Naga women writers which have been exposed and explicated in course of the discussion in the study.
Observing some feminist similarities between the thematic treatment in the works of Alice Walker and Naga Women writers, the researcher has analyzed them objectively and dissecting the contours of feminist pragmatism. All writers may not be activists, but in their thoughts they pragmatize the activism. Major works of Alice Walker and Naga women writers have been taken into consideration while analyzing and carving out the themes/designs of feminist ideologies of the selected writers.

Close textual reading and comparative explication have been the basic tools for analysis. Besides textual reading, the opinions of the Naga women writers about their works and experience have been examined by the researcher to analyze their art and craft, and the world in general and their views on women in particular. Besides that field study on the status and predicament of Naga women in general have been made to expose their subalternity comparing that with Alice Walker’s vision of feminism/womanism and her opinions on the status of the women class at large.

Though the selected Naga women writers do not share the same socio-cultural environment that Alice Walker lives and experiences, they uphold similar aesthetic sensibilities that exist in the Naga society, which has similarly been conditioned by patriarchy, custom and culture as the African American woman. They ventilate similar agonies and sufferings,
discrimination, gender based violence that pervades the home and the society through their poems and narratives. The struggles of women are the same that go beyond boundaries of colour, race and territories and the images that emerge of women can be identified as a projection of one's own self as seen through the works of these writers. Like Alice Walker they share their dreams and perspectives of what the ideal life would be for the happiness of a woman, freedom to think and live as one desires, free from the shackles of conventions and strictures imposed upon them since childhood as small girls.

They indicate a shared vision for the future world and the new age for women, a life of change, peace, respect and the freedom of choice and liberty. Both in the writings of Alice as well as these contemporary Naga women writers, there is a strong sense of the need to empower and change the lives of women and girls and in the process change the world and society. In both the works of these writers, there is a strong ecofeminist vision that is celebrated in their poetry and fictional narratives. There are constant echoes for the rights and dignity of women and ecology reflected in their works. The bond of women, Nature and the environment are reflected and articulated very strongly.
In the first Introductory Chapter the concept and history of feminism and womanism has been defined. Feminism or womanism means fighting or standing up for the rights of women to protect and promote them. The consciousness of women about their rights—be it political, social or economic, the enjoyment of their freedom and liberty, empowerment and the various activities, policies and laws to enable the upliftment of the status of women in the society comes under the purview of feminism or feminist pragmatism. The researcher has traced the history and theoretical background of feminism in general and womanism in particular and introduced the feminist concerns of Alice Walker and selected Naga women writers of English and Tenyidie in this chapter.

In the second chapter, the fictional works of Alice Walker and their feminist and ecofeminist concerns have been analysed and justified. Whether it is about her role as a spokeswoman for women subjected to genital mutilation, or the earth destroyed by waste and degradation, she has championed the rights of women to live freely and fearlessly as equal human beings.

In the Third Chapter the characteristics of Alice walker’s interests have been identified in her volumes of poetic works and non fictional prose and essays and their activist dynamism have been appropriated.
In the Fourth Chapter the strong similarities between the African American woman and the Naga women’s predicament and the matrices of these coincidences have been contrasted. There is also a reinterpreted and rejuvenated perspective of feminist criticism as is evident in the works of these writers.

In the Fifth Chapter, aesthetic similarities have been compared and dissimilarities have been identified. The importance of their contribution to contemporary feminist thought and aesthetic congruity has been highlighted through this chapter.

In the Conclusive Chapter the findings of the research have been ruminated and its contribution to new knowledge and possibilities of further research and its hinterland have been indicated.

The comparative study can be summarized with the following findings:

Though the selected Naga women writers of English and Tenyidie do not share the same socio cultural environment that Alice Walker lives and experiences as reflected in her literary works, they share similar aesthetic sensibilities that exist in the Naga society, which are also conditioned by patriarchy, matriarchy, rigid custom, tradition and culture.
These writers very much like Alice Walker share and ventilate their agonies and sufferings as women, their dreams and ambitions and their perspectives on life through their artistic articulations and narrations.

Both Alice Walker and these Naga women writers share a similar vision for the future of women, a new world of changes and equality. They dream of women liberation, empowerment in all spheres of life, an end to discrimination, gender based violence and a life of freedom and happiness.

Both Alice Walker and these writers have a strong ecofeminist vision and belief as reflected in their works and they stand for the rights and dignity of women and ecology and share deep concerns on the environment.

Though they live in a traditional patriarchal and matriarchal society, deeply rooted in customs and conditioned culture, they articulate very strongly the need for a liberated world of freedom and justice and equality to live in dignity and respect, with their men as equal partners.

The Naga women’s yearning and struggle for equality in all spheres of life, be it political participation, social recognition for equality or economic empowerment and freedom from poverty, is as similar to the aspirations of the African American women and of Alice Walker herself.
It has also been observed that compared to the strident and strong voices of feminism among the African American women, the Naga women writers identified in this work can be defined as milder feminists, who articulate their agonies and struggles, but have not been very visible in the women’s movement and struggle, unlike Alice Walker who took the civil liberties movement into her stride.

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