

A Conscious Ecotherapy on Self- Reliance

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ABSTRACT

Shabars are tribal people who reside in forested areas. The forest land defines cultural values and their independence. This creates an integrated intimacy with nature. In the novel, *The Book of the Hunter* by Mahasweta Devi, Shabars encounter urban extension. The urbanised regions are termed as civilised. Such civilised region becomes a place which deteriorate ecotherapy. The civilised region in turn becomes the mainstream. Forest lands with its extremity becomes a distinct ecotherapy for Shabars. Inevitably, urbanised mainstream violates the lives of the tribes through bonded labour system under contract. As

tribes in forest lands, they are not only the protectors of forest lands, but also the veiled comrades of forests. It is justified through characters like Kalya, a Shabar tribesman, and Mukunda, a migrant farmer from a traditional Brahmin hierarchy. The paper justifies that the ways of livelihood sustained by self-reliance of Shabars in the aforementioned novel, is a form of ecotherapy.

Keywords: Forest land, Self-reliance, Modernism, Ecotherapy.
