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## **Examining Colonial Expansionism, Patriarchal Violence and Eco-Spiritual Subversion in Ursula K. Le Guin's Science Fiction**

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### **Abstract**

Ursula K. Le Guin's dystopian science fiction describes a shockingly recurring pattern of patriarchal, colonial quests in post-apocalyptic worlds, seeking domination over nature and women. This paper analyses her texts *The Word for World is Forest* (1972) and *Always Coming Home* (1985), delineating the crisis of industrial modernity and the spectre of aggressive masculinity constructed on the system of hierarchical privilege and an oppressive nature/culture dualism. At the same time, they are informed by an eco-feminist subversive consciousness in multiple manifestations which resists the destructiveness of the archetypal "heroic" quest and suggests alternative healing possibilities in their collective narratives. For example, in her influential novella, *The Word for World is Forest*, the native, colonized inhabitants of an alien world practice sleep-dreaming as a ritualized eco-spiritual belief to harmonically connect with other natives and with their forest eco-system. Their mostly endemic non-violent culture has replaced physical aggression with ritualized singing. The eco-feminist characteristic of Kesh culture in *Always Coming Home* is situated in its all-pervasive religious/ and spiritual symbol, the "heyiya-if" i.e. two spirals moving and growing inward, suggesting ecological connection as well as the possibility of change. This communally practiced nature based spirituality of the native inhabitants in these novels, will be read in conjunction with the evolution of what is known as "dark, green religion" by the conservationist Bron Taylor, and which offers a much needed worldview of ecological interdependence, diverging with our anthropocentric planetary approach.

**Keywords:** Ecology, Colonial, Eco-feminist, Spirituality, Patriarchy, Anthropocentric, Subversion.