



**WAR FOR THE ENVIRONMENT IN HELON HABILO'S
OIL ON WATER**



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ABSTRACT

This paper explores war for the environment in Helon Habila's Oil on Water. The focus is to show how the advent of oil production has negatively impacted the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria due to unprecedented oil spillage, gas flaring, that pollutes the environment. It expostulates the consequences of human activities that have caused a climatic and environmental crisis that affects the biosphere with its adverse effects on the flora, fauna and landscape. Environmental crisis has resulted to an oil war where the inhabitants of the affected area seek to protect their environment from environmental predators - the government and multinational oil corporations. Oil spillage, gas flaring, sewage, oil theft, and war are identified in the novel as some of the human activities that degrade the environment resulting in mass death, sicknesses, dislocation and violence. Water, which is the people's source of livelihood, has greatly been contaminated by oil and is no longer useful to the community. The resulting consequence is

death, sickness, violence and displacement. However, in order to fight this war for the environment, Helon Habila's text explores the factors that cause this war in order that we become part of the solution.

The ecocentric discourses of Cheryll Glotfelty, Christopher Manes and Graham Huggan, will be used to show how Helon Habila's Oil on Water raises awareness on a global environmental crisis- water, air, and land pollutions, that have rendered the environment in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, harmful to its populace. The text shows how the quest for petrodollars leads to environmental degradation, putting man in conflict with nature and society, thereby, giving rise to a war that is ravaging the Niger Delta of Nigeria and increasing the people's predicament whose, land, water and air are in ruins due to the release of toxins from the oil companies.

KEYWORDS

war, environment, biosphere, pollution, oil spill