

Legitimizing Literature as a Green Movement-A comparative study of writers through Ethnic Pluralism

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Abstract

Ecocriticism or green movement can be rightly termed as a literary movement that aims to study relationship between literature and the physical environment. Ecocriticism is the concept of studying the relationship between human and non-human, thus providing a space to both literary and cultural analysis. Literature is a powerful weapon for augmenting environmental crisis through their works. Writers endeavour to promote the protection of environment by worshipping and adoring nature and simultaneously endows a strong criticism like radical environmentalist advocating de-urbanisation, use of non-synthetic products and less use of technology. Several literary figures like William Wordsworth and Shelley and Robert frost describes the beauty of nature in forms like river, forest, mountains and natural landscapes. A number of authors like Arundhati Roy, Rachel Carson, Wangari Mathaai utilise their writing to draw attention to the awaiting potential risks about that environmental destruction. A few writers like Thoreau conveys profound observations in Walden describing nature and the environment by highlighting the intrinsic connection between literature and ecological awareness. Through their literary works they promote sustainable living and environmental protection. Through themes like caring for mother Earth, ecological balance, human responsibility in building a greener future, writers express their admiration for nature and also human's dependence on nature. Through Literature, they make readers to think and rethink and warn people about ecological crises and make them to realise their own conscientiousness towards the planet in protecting natural resource for themselves and for their future generations.

Key words: Consciousness, Nature, Ecological System, Enduring Future.

Legitimizing Literature as a Green Movement-A comparative study of writers through Ethnic Pluralism.

Literature is basically the collation of written works containing prose, poetry, drama fiction in the form of written, printing and digital writings. Literature records preserve and transmit knowledge and entertainment taking into consideration of various fields as socio, political, psychological and spiritual life of the readers. Through various genres, writers contribute in creating cultural awareness, focusing on ecological issues for reshaping human life towards nature.

Writers promote an important idea that humans are part of ecosystem that is interconnected in multiple ways. They even raise questions about the belief that humans are superior to nature. They made nature to address humans through forests, landscapes and animals to speak for themselves symbolically. authors and writers through their work try to capture the emotions. Literature without any

doubt creates empathy in the minds of human beings and made them to realize their important duty to protect environment.

Approaches implemented by the literary figures in literature varies. They tried storytelling, presented philosophical facts and even through activism, writers made readers to rethink about their consumption and how they contribute for the exploitation of human resources. at some provisional definitions of the subject. The first is from the 'Introduction' to *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996), an important anthology of American ecocriticism:

What then is ecocriticism? Simply put, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender-conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts, ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies. (Glotfelty 1996: xix)

Glotfelty goes on to specify some of the questions Eco critics ask, ranging from 'How is nature represented in this sonnet?' through 'How has the concept of wilderness changed over time?' to 'How is science itself open to literary analysis?' Literature thus fosters ecological consciousness by inspiring ethical responsibility of the readers to protect and nurture environment. Thus the paper focuses on the writers Henry Dvauid Thoreau, and Indian poet Arundhati Roy , John Clare Rcahel Crason Wangai Marthai who effortlessly tried to protect environment and to improve a sustainable living.

Literature Review

The importance of environmental consciousness in digital era made different thinkers in their writing brought ecological realizations with ethical perception. Major contributors were Wangari Mathaai, Rachel Carson and many more. Through their activism on environmental justice, nature's writing and also categories contemporary environmental movement. This literature review focuses on individual writer in comparing their thematic contexts.

Mathaai Green Belt Movement demonstrated ecological sustainability and empowerment. Scholars such as, Adam and Moore (2013) insists that Mathaai's movement promoted ecological restoration through planting trees. Murithi (2011) presents Mathaai's movement in bridging global and local priorities.

Thoreau's reflection on nature and simplicity made Buell (1995) states Thoreau presented individual ethical responsibility by arresting moral and attentiveness to non-human world.

Research Gap-My Research focus on Wangarai Mathaai and Crason works, there remains several gaps. The research can explore with the help of digital media and contemporary environmental movements and how these writers' legacies can be interpreted as global sustainability discourses. Empirical studies are required to analyses textual and philosophical frameworks across cultures contexts.

Henry Dvauid Thoreau one of the finest expressions of American Transcendentalism emphasizes the spiritual power of nature, inner truth and resistance to materialism. Thoreau adapted to live in Walden by constructing his own pond. He cultivated his own food and he led a simple life away from materialistic needs. He observed in Walden the beauty of nature and lived in harmony with the animals and stayed in pond with his deep admiration. He learnt nature taught him more intrusive values. Two years of his stay in Walden improved his mental being and also provided him moral wellness. Thoreau says," I Went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately" and also he describes its beauty as ," Alake in the landscapes most beautiful and expressive feature".

Thoreau supports ecosystem by insisting on building and supporting conservation and to support biodiversity protection by minimalizing carbon usage and he became extremely a model for modern environmental ethics, which inspired many environmental awareness and laid stone for

conservation movements. Thoreau made people to realize that simple living with self-sufficiency will connect human very close to nature. He also made people to recognize that humans are only a part of nature and they are not powerful than nature. Though Walden Thoreau created ecological awareness and the importance of leading a sustainable life style.

The second writer for discussion is Wangari Mathaai a Kenyan environmentalist and the first African woman to receive Nobel Peace Prize for 2004. She is well acknowledged for promoting conservation and encouraged women's life by involving them in Green Belt Movement and by promoting women's empowerment for a sustainable living. The Green Belt Movement which she started in 1977, laid a key focus in planting tree by reducing soil erosion, deforestation and also desertification in Kenya. Through this movement Wangari had planted over 50 million trees in and across Kenya, that helped in preventing water scarcity balancing and restoring biodiversity. She firmly believes that environmental care will improve the quality of people living in their communities.

Her activism raised her voice for land grabbing for unsustainable projects, and she remained a committed citizen to protect people and the planet. The Green Belt Movement taught primarily rural women in planting trees, promoting and managing natural resources and also making them to lead economically independent life. It also strengthens women in taking decisions in community and national levels.

Wangari Mathaai firmly believed that destruction that people cause to environment would bring poverty and conflict to the place. She urged people to practice planting trees and to prevent destructing nature and to avoid misuse of natural resources. She laid stone for indigenous ecological wisdom and sustainable ways of living.

Rachel Carson a marine biologist and environmentalist was the author of the book *Silent Spring*, where she warned people about the awaiting dangers of pollution and the cause of pesticides. Her works became popular by writing about the cause of pesticides, and predicting the ways to protect environment and to respect nature. Rachel Carson's book "Silent Spring" begins with a Fable for Tomorrow. She opens like a fairy tale and starts describing a beautiful description of town in the heart of America, where everything resided in harmony.

Carson's fairy tale opens with the words,

'There was once a town in the heart of America where all life seemed to live in harmony with its surroundings' and, invoking the ancient tradition of the pastoral, goes on to paint a picture of 'prosperous farms', 'green fields', foxes barking in the hills, silent deer, ferns and wildflowers, 'countless birds' and trout lying in clear, cold streams, all delighted in by those who pass through the town (1999:21)

Carson presents the ideal beauty of balanced life in ecosystem. Carson immediately describes the strange sickness spreading among plants, animals, humans and farms animals meeting with death mysteriously. The fable at first presents us with a picture of essential changelessness, which human activity scarcely disturbs, and which the annual round of seasons only reinforces. However, pastoral peace rapidly gives way to catastrophic destruction,

"Then a strange blight crept over the area and everything began to change. Some evil spell had settled on the community: mysterious maladies swept the flocks of chickens; the cattle and sheep sickened and died. Everywhere was a shadow of death." (1999:21)

In the succeeding paragraphs, every element of the rural idyll is torn apart by some agent of change, the mystery of which is emphasized by the use of both natural and supernatural terminology of 'malady' and 'spell'. The most impassioned passage concerns the collapse in bird populations:

'On the mornings that had once throbbed with the dawn chorus of

robins, catbirds, doves, jays, wrens, and scores of other bird voices there was now no sound; only silence lay over the fields and woods and marsh' (1999: 22).

The 'silent spring' of the title alludes, on one level, to this loss of birdsong, although it also comes to function as a synecdoche for a more general environmental apocalypse. So the founding text of modern environmentalism not only begins with a decidedly poetic parable, but also relies on the literary genres of pastoral and apocalypse, pre-existing ways of imagining the place of humans in nature that may be traced back to such sources as Genesis and Revelation, the first and last books of the Bible. *Silent Spring* initially suggests that the mythical eco-catastrophe of the fable might be supernatural, and the rest of the book sets out to prove that such an apocalypse was already going on in a fragmentary way all over America, so that the doom befalling this mythical town of the future could be seen as a composite of lesser tragedies already known, and scientifically validated, in 1962.

Arundhati Roy in her novel "The God of Small Things" and "The Ministry of Utmost Happiness", reflects her environmental ethics of the mindless people harming environment. She highlighted the problem like river degradation, effects of dam, loss of bio-diversity and in all highlighted the importance of protecting environment. In her literary contribution she presented nature as a living being in her literary expression as the personification of rivers, forests, and protest against Anti-Industrialism through criticism of dams, mining and urbanization and stood for environmental justice through focusing tribal and rural communities through the poem, In 'Forest voices', she says,": The Forest is not empty land, It breathes in leaf and tribal land,". Thus, Roy says that nature is interconnected and it rejects the idea of capitalism considering land as a resource.

Conclusion

Thus this study focuses on the works of Thoreau, Rachel, Roy it articulates ethical and the knowledge based on social-political dimensions of environmental sciences. Thoreau accentuates the intrinsic value of non-human nature and also emphasizes the concept of ecocritical ethical involvement in natural world. Rachel merges, scientific doctrinal with ecological ethics revealing anthropocentric destruction and portraying environmental awareness. Roy in her writing features ecological discourse with the conceptual and hierarchical system with social cultural aspects. Thus the works proves environmental awareness by constituting perception and inspires activism and reconfigures the cultural imagination towards stewardship.

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