Interdependence of Man and Nature: Nurture the Nature for future

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(Received 7 March, 2024; Accepted 4 May, 2024)

ABSTRACT

Moral considerations for animals are in abundance, but for plants these considerations are rare. The existence of humans and animals would have been unimaginable without vegetation. Most of the civilizations have given great importance to vegetation. Many societies living close by nature have given divine attribution to the trees and plants. The great writers have always been aware of the green environment. The vegetation always finds a place in narratives and poems of the romantics and transcendental writers. In Ruskin Bond’s writings, plants are given immense importance. The present paper deals with the representation of plants in his short stories. Issues such as human-plant relationship, the impact of plants on culture and lifestyle, place of plants in human discourse, plant intelligence and deforestation are given due attention in this chapter. Different writers have written about the biodiversity of the Himalayas but Bond’s writings are unique in its treatment and revolve around the issues and challenges of nature, ecology, environment and natural diversity of the region. Bond’s love for the plants emerged out of his attachment to the natural surroundings of the Himalayas.

Key words: Man, Nature, Nurture preservation

Introduction

Ruskin Bond (born 19 May 1934) is an Indian author of British descent. He has adopted an entire family in Landour, Mussorie (India). He got the Sahitya Academy Award in 1992 for “Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra, for his published work in English. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1999 and the Padma Bhushan in 2014. Most of his works are influenced by life in the hill stations at the foothills of the Himalayas, where he spent his childhood. His first novel, The Room On the Roof, was written when he was 17 and published when he was 21. The significance of nature in people’s lives will be covered in this paper. The paper will demonstrate how nature enthusiast Ruskin Bond expresses the theme of nature in his short stories in a straightforward manner.

The role that nature plays in the ecocriticism stories

Ecocriticism is one of the more recent revisionist movements to sweep the humanities in recent decades. Today’s globe is experiencing ecological catastrophes, putting our environment in jeopardy. To address the global ecological crisis, science and technology alone are insufficient. We ought to adopt a more positive outlook on nature. Literature has a
role to play because it is not a life unto itself (Mishra, 2016). Nature always seems to be friendly to us leaving a feeling of warmth and security in the heart of the readers. The humans’ dependent on nature for their survival and the healing powers of nature on humans show the need for serious ecological concerns in today’s literature since nature is in destruction. This questions our responsibility towards the planet when we read literature and also gives rise to the answer that literature has to be seen within an ecological vision. Ruskin Bond, a true son of the Indian soil, exploring the relationship between man and denizens of nature in his stories, comes under the influence of various ecological concerns. Ruskin Bond’s proclamation of robbing nature’s wealth by humans is the need of the hour.

Interdependence of Man and Nature

Interesting connections between humans and the natural world are revealed by recent theory and research. In fact, there is some evidence that suggests humans have developed a unique sense of connection to the natural world. Biophilia is an inclination toward life and an evolved need to be in the natural world. It is evident that the relationship between humans and their surroundings is unique and rooted in evolution (Davis et al., 2009). To Bond, Nature is the only life-giving force. He believes that one who is filled with love for nature can live in total harmony since nature always shows her bounty of love and care alike for all weak and strong, rich and poor. Trees, which are the symbol of the perennial source of life hold major concern of Ruskin Bond: If people keep cutting trees there’ll soon be no forests left at all, and, the world will be just one vast desert (Bond, 1992).

The importance of ecological awareness in Bond’s stories

Being the author of more than 50 books and more than 500 expositions, stories, and poems, Ruskin Bond is a fascinating writer. Many of his literary works feature nature as the background. Actually, Ruskin Bond portrays nature in his works not only as the stage on which everything is done but also as a character in the drama (Govindappa, 2020). Bond feels that nature has especially blessed the hills and so all those who live in the cities miss out the charisma and freedom that nature offers in the hills. Being a resident of hills, Bond is the privileged one and therefore, returns to enrich his eyes with a look at the rich foliage that springs up in tropical profusion, soft spongy moss, and great stag fern on the trunks of trees, mysterious looking lilies and orchids. He is grateful to mother nature and prays to the benevolent God for providing him the opportunity to live with the mountains. He prays: “And I would thank my God for leaves and grass and the smell of things and the smell of mint and myrtle and bruised cloves and the touch of thing, the touch of grass and air and sky, the touch of the sky’s blueness.” (Rain in the Mountain, 96-97).

Bond frequently notes in his writings that a person feels change in air as he reaches higher altitude in the mountains that inspires him to act and think differently. The mountains pour serenity and spiritual ecstasy into innocent hearts, apart from being the favourite resorts for heat oppressed urbanites. They serve as a powerful background in many of Bond’s stories and plots. They perform as mother symbols too. Many of Bond’s characters have a peculiar feature of primeval innocence, mountains also have the same. Manish D. Bhatt aptly remarks: “His writings largely revolves around the Himalayas, the Doon Valley and the other places in today’s Uttarakhand. He portrays this nature in terms of its relationship with humans (Manish D. Bhatt, Ruskin Bond as a Short Story Writer: A Critical Study, XII).

Bond is displeased with the chaotic atmosphere of the towns and cities. The crowded streets and congested lanes annoy him which is contrary to the atmosphere of his place where he discovers peace and tranquillity in the hills. He is rejoiced to hear the chirping of birds, the fragrance of flowers enthrals him, the sight of dancing plants in breezy air amuses him and he finds solace in the clattering of rain drops. Ruskin Bond is very naturalistic in his approach towards nature. He wants to view nature in its purest form. He wanted everything in his garden to grow naturally. He feels that nature has its way and plan of growing itself. Thus, it will have its own raw beauty and no amount of artificiality is acceptable to him. This is quite apparent when we look at this statement from The Book of Nature;

But I have always had this dream of possessing a garden of my own. Not a very formal garden. Certainly not the ‘Stately home’ type, with its pools and fountains and neat hedges as such described in such detail by Bacon in his essay of Gardens. Bacon had a methodical mind, and he wanted a methodical garden. I like a garden to be a little untidy, unplanned, full of surprises rather like my own moul-
ded mind, which gives even me a few surprises at time.

Nature’s harmony encompasses all creatures, great and small, beautiful and ugly, strong and weak and Bond accepts the ultimate truth with humility. He feels the power of sky, the earth and of a small cherry seed alike. His stories breathe a deep love for plants and animals. Bond’s call to turn towards the essence of life and recognize man-nature interdependence is aimed at preserving life, which is beautiful and powerful. He preaches trough his works the significance of landscapes and peculiar ethos through carefully mastered words. Ruskin Bond is a true environmentalist who propagated conservation and protection of wild life. In almost all his works nature forms a background. Bond is an ecologist. The concern was genuine, but the world was blind to it. Today we can witness how right Bond was.

Conclusion

Being a lover of nature, Bond’s writings reflect the deep kinship and serenity that he experiences amongst the mountains. His joy knows no bounds as he comes across the natural beauty in the form of their individual manifestations such as the source of Ganges river as it ruptures from its icy womb, sounds of birds and mountain rivers, the towering deodar trees and flower strewn valleys. He loves Himalayas for their permanence, their ability to: “... keep their secrecy and reserve, remaining remote, mysterious and spirit-haunted.” (Ganga Descends, 13).

Ruskin Bond who in his exotic short stories and novels exposes the blunder of modern man in the annihilation of the nature There is more often than not an environmental implication inherent in the texture of the stories of Ruskin Bond. If M.R. Anand is the champion for the socially marginalized, Raja Roy registers the philosophical insight in his work, Anita Desai unfolds the psychological dimensions of humans, it is undoubtedly Ruskin Bond who in his exotic short stories and novels exposes the blunder of modern man in the annihilation of the nature.

Conflict of Interest: None

References