

Eco criticism on gender and sexuality

[Experience](#), [Human Nature](#)



Eco criticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. If the term 'eco criticism' is divided into two. As "Eco" and "criticism". 'Eco' means ecology which is the physical environment; and incorporation of animate and inanimate, biotic and abiotic, living and non-living things. Ecology is thus a vast entity where writers from Chaucer, Shakespeare, Wordsworth to the present writers, who felt the need to bring in an environmental perspective to their writings. Writers expressed through various entities of nature like, Chaucer in his work "The Canterbury Tales" "April is the best month when the pilgrims decided to go on a pilgrimage" because it is spring season, neither too hot nor cold, convenient month for men and women. While T. S. Eliot, in his "The Waste Land" mentions of April as the cruelest month, "April is the cruelest month breeding Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing memory and desire, stirring dull roots in the spring rain. Winter kept us warm, covering earth in forgetful snow feeding a little life with dried tubers. T. S. Eliot cursed April because spring season brings life back in man, illuminating his evil acts and pricks his guilty consciousness.

In Shakespeare's plays, such as "King Lear" in Act 3 scene 1-2, the mention of storm which has a symbolic connection to the state of mind of the characters in the play. The night's mind is symbolized with the storm in the lines "One minded like the weather, most unquietly". (Act 3 scene 1). These lines convey the turbulent state of his mind like the winds and clouds. In Act 3, scene 2 of the same play, in King Lear commands the storm "flow winds and crack your cheeks! Rage! Blow!" "You cataracts and hurricanes, spout/Till you have drenched our steeples, drowned the cocks." These lines also posed the confused mind of King Lear which poses the fundamental question

of whether nature is favourable or hostile to mankind. In the play “ Tempest” by Shakespeare has its title itself taken from a violent entity of nature. The complete life of man was expressed through the poems of Wordsworth like, “ Tintern Abby”, where he describes nature as his shield of protection:“ The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse, the guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul of all my moral being (Tintern Abbey, lines 112 - 115).

The poems of Robert Frost are connected to Nature, such as Birches where he tells about abiding faith in love offered by the beauty of Nature through the lines,“ Earth’s the night place fro love: I don’t know where its likely to go better” The poem, “ stopping by woods on a snowy evening”, affirms the scene beauty and peace of the snowy woods as a solace and comfort to man amidst the pressing obligations of the time in present; through the lines:“ The woods are lovely, dark and deep, But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep. In the novels of Thomas Hardy, the depiction of nature is evident such as in “ The return of the Native, where he broods over the wild landscape of Edgong Heath alone. In Keats’ poem such as “ ode to Autumn” is a pure portrayal of nature linked with the five senses of man : The sense of smell by the “ the fume of poppies”; the sense of sight through the beauty of autumn; sense of taste through “ all fruit with ripeness to the core” sense of hearing by “ a waitful choir the small gnats nourn”, “ Hedge-crickets sing”, “ red bleat”, “ Hedge crickets sing”, “ red-breast whistles” and the “ gathering swallows twitter; and sense of touch by the wax and honey.

The term ‘ eco criticism’ was first used by William Rueckert in his essay “ Literatureand ecology: A experiment in Eco criticism” (1978). Eco criticism as

a movement is devoted much to Rachel Carson's work ' Silent Spring '(1962). Ecologically minded individuals and critics wanted to know how the writer links the nature into literary texts. For example, George Orwell's " Animal Farm" where all the animals are personified to import his concern of humanity. Critics believe that environment instigates man in expression through symbols, for instance, a rose may serve for any individual as an expression of sensuousness as it may be considered as the symbol of love. Eco criticism is also called " green studies". It began in the late 1980s in the United States and in the early 1990s in the United Kingdom. The United States considered Cheryl Glotfelty as the founder of Association for the study of Literature and environment (ASLE) and the Interdisciplinary studies in ' Literature and Environment' (ISLE) in her house of Journal. The 19th century American writers transendentalists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller and Henry David Thoreau's works celebrate wilderness, nature and life force. Green studies is the term used by the United Kingdom and the founding figure is the critic Sonathan Bate. It takes its bearings from the romanticism of 1790s. The American writers celebrated nature while the British writers depicted the environment threats in their works. Eco criticism is the interconnection of nature and cultural artifacts in literature and language. Eco criticism is the interconnection between the writer, the text and the world. The world does not confine to society but to an entire ecosphere. " Look deep into nature and then you will understand everything better" (Einstein)

The global crisis is because of the malfunctioning of the ethical system of mankind. Literary scholars contribute to the environmental restoration by

adding environmental dimensions to their writings such as in plays such as “Riders to the sea” by J. M Synge. Where thesea, an element of nature implies both destruction and sustenance. Anthropocentric vision of man in ecology is to dominate, violate and exploit the nature whereas bio un criticism focusses on the inter relation of human and environment. Eco criticism has three approaches. Firstly, the domination model where the anthropocentric view of humans dominating the nature is exemplified in pastoral literature. The second one is a care taking model where humans are believed to be the care takers of earth and the third approach is bio centric where the relation between living and non-living is only emphasized. Eco criticism enables the human beings to spiritually connect with nature and to recognize that nature is not separate from them, but that they are a part of it.

Eco, feminism is a specific lens to view feminism. Feminists believe that environment has an interconnection with sexism, racism and colonialism. The earth is considered to be matriarchial while the society is often of patriarchial structures. These are social justice issues linked with the environmental as both the earth and woman lack respect. Eco feminism is a movement which began in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The concept was introduced by the French Feminist Fransois d’Euabonne in her book ‘ Le Feminisms Ou-la-Most (1974). Eco feminism relates to the oppression and domination over subordinates such as women, children, people of different colours and poor ones to the expression of nature. The best example for eco feminist movement was the Chipco Movement (1973) in India which involved women who sacrificed their lines to obtain the cutting

of the trees where the women who were active participants in agriculture as well as for household works suffered due to the extensive deforestation and environmental degradation.

These women protested against deforestation and women were abused by men and threatened with guns but they stood strong to terminate the indiscriminate felling of trees. To examine globally, the prominent eco feminist activisms like the UN conference on women in Nairobi in 1985. Nature also contains a violent trait which affects the life of human beings. Can it be considered as nature taking revenge against man for ill-treating it? Earth is indeed, an ailing planet which is dying and human beings. Can it be considered as nature taking revenge against man for ill-treating it? Earth is indeed, an ailing planet which is dying and human beings alone are its murderers. Man's actions which are undesirable to the environment result in the depletion of its resources causing environmental degradation. The Chennai flood of 2015 which was considered to be a haunting natural disaster became worse due to the negligence of man trying to expand the city as a technological hub, disregarding the revers and man's ignorance of proper waste disposal and treatments and unplanned extraction of groundwater. Chennai which is a marsh land was found to be suitable for urban development.

The paddy fields which used to be around 5000 hectares during independence, reduced to almost 600 hectares around 2010 – 2011. "

Poromboke is not for you, nor is it for me. It is for the community, and it is for the city. It is for the earth". These are the lyrics of TM Krishna's song "

Chennai Poromboke Paadal” provides an insightful message to man to value the water bodies and to save the environment as, “ It was not the river that choose the flow through the cities, rather it was the cities that chose to grow around the rivers. ” T. M. Krishna is a Carnatic music vocalist who won, who won the Indira Gandhi award for National Integration ‘ Poromboke’ is an old Tamil word which means the shared use of community resources like rivers and lands to graze the cattles. This song is on the degradation of Ennore creek which is a backwater located in Chennai. Natural disasters also lead to human trafficking Every country is prone to human trafficking. which is a grave and a pressing social issue in countries where human rights are violated. The vulnerability of individuals is taken as an advantage over them by the cruel men who force them into prostitution, slavery and tiresome labours. The natural disasters in India such as the Odisha cyclone Phailin, the Bihar flood, the earthquake in Gujarat and so on leave the people suffering, destitute and homeless. Due to the loss of property and family the fear of living a poverty stricken life, they get influenced by the human traffickers who sexually exploit them, sell their organs and through hectic labour formed to be done by children make money which is a heinous crime. The lethal floods that hit East Africa, specifically in Kenya in 2018 where human lives are severely affected people are displaced and in order to survive and rehabilitate themselves, to support their family, children indulge in labour. The stark reminder of poverty pressurises children to earn a living. The life of women gets difficult as they walk miles to collect water through areas where safety can't be assured and women and girls of age 10-11 get raped on their way. Women are the major victims of human trafficking. In

Odisha, India due to the lack of options for livelihood, women and children of the state are prone to illegal trafficking to make themselves economically sound. These women and children were trafficked to Uttar Pradesh, Chathisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh. In Odissa, People blindly believed in the myth of curing HIV/AIDS by having several inter course with virgin girls and virgin boys which was one of the cause for human trafficking where virgins were the main targets. 7