

## **ECO-CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE SELECTED WORKS OF R.K.NARAYAN**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Due to industrialization so many trees have been cut down so today's world is facing the problems of global warming, Tsunami, increasing sea level, change in climate or seasons, etc. Our ancestors had known the significance of trees and nature. They present all these things not only in their thought but also in their literary works too. R. K. Narayan is one of the most important writers, in the early era of India English writing, who delineated nature in his works very vividly by creating fictional world Malgudi. Where, he shows the atmosphere of village through happy people. The present paper will try to show the ecology in the works of Narayan.*

**Key words: Ecology, Eco-critical theory, nature, R.K. Narayan, etc.**

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Literature is an interdisciplinary branch of society which has been consisted with many parts and subjects. It reflects nearby all contemporary issues of the society, so there is no exception of Ecology for the literature. In fact, according to many Eco critics without the study of ecology the analysis of literature is always incomplete. The study of environment has been an important topic for the literature since long periods. William Rueckert may have been the first philosopher to state the utility of ecology for the literature. In 1978, Rueckert published an essay titled, "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Eco-criticism." The discussion about the relations between the literature and ecology has been started from the arrival of Environmentalism in the 1960s and 1970s. At first there were no organized movements and branches to study the ecological side of literature, so the work about the ecology was scattered. The ecological perspectives primarily are used in the nature writing, romantic poetry, canonical literature, films, televisions, theatre, animal stories and scientific narratives.

Nature has always proved to be stronger than man. It has often shows its power by controlling manpower through natural calamities like, drought, famine, flood earthquake etc. The life of human being and nature are in actual interlinked. It is not possible for human beings to be individual from the nature. The history of mankind is the best example to reflect the inter connection between the life and the nature. This can be said to be reciprocal relationship between them. Unfortunately, from the inventions of the scientific tools and modernization we are neglecting the nature. Our irresponsible actions cause irreparable damages to nature. This is how the chain of ecosystem works in which everything is related to each other and therefore affects each other. The issue of Global Warming is the outcome of these relations. Literature, therefore, as the responsible branch of the society, has always been focusing on the environment through its various genres such as, poetry, novels, plays and essays.

India is a cultural and traditional country. According to the tradition of India, everyone must worship the nature. In other words, the nature is like the god for Indian people. Consequently one can clearly find out the adoration of nature in the literature of India, since the greatest epics like, 'Ramayana and Mahabharata' to present literature. Now a day, the study of ecology is on full spring in India. The writers like R.K.Narayan, Rabindranath Tagore, Raja Rao, and Kamala Markandya have expressed the importance of nature through their writing. They explore human attitudes towards the environment as expressed in nature writing. Ecocritics and theorists are concerned

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with the questions, if the nature is being represented in a piece of literature or if the values expressed in the work is consistent with the ecological wisdom. Ecology began to explore constructions of environment in literary text and theoretical discourse. There are some novels in the history of Indian English literature which can be read as the Eco criticism. When the history is examined we find R. K. Narayan as one of the most prominent writers of Indian English novels. His depiction of the south Indian village culture and the environmental setting is a true depiction of relationship between man and nature. Especially in, 'Malgudi Days' he depicted the beautiful presentation of the nature. R.K.Narayan wrote in the same decade of Raja Rao, and has given life to a place, Malgudi, or it can be said that he has developed a place as a character which can be seen in almost all his prose fictions bearing the same features. In other words, he used Malgudi as a landscapes an important theme. Even in his popular novel, 'The Guide' R.K. Narayan takes the help of sky, stars and the nature in order to signify the transformation of a common man into a holy saint or swami, who later gives sacrifice of his life for the others. He presents the situation as follows:

" The sky was clear. Having nothing else to do, he started counting the stars. He said to himself, 'I shall be rewarded for this profound service to humanity. People will say,' there is the man who knows the exact number of stars in the sky. If you have any trouble on that account consults him. He will be your night guide for the skies.' He told himself, 'the thing to do is to start from a corner and go on patch by patch. Never work from the top to the horizon, but always the other way.' He was evolving a theory. He started the count from above a fringe of the Palmyra trees on his left-hand side up the course of the river, over to the other side. 'One.... two.... fifty-five....' He suddenly realized that if he looked deeper a new cluster of stars came into view; by the time he assimilated it into his reckoning, he realized he had lost sight of his starting point and found himself entangled in hopeless figures. He felt exhausted."

Through this passage it is revealed that R.K. Narayan has an unconscious love and affection towards the nature. Like him, ecology is mostly used by humanists as a metaphor for describing the inner feelings and emotions of the character. In this sense ecology is a way of thinking about the nature for any writer. In the same novel the flowing Sarayuriver, the ruined temple and the stone slabs influence Raju. This influence contributes to his sainthood. It is the spirit of Malgudi that helps him to face the ordeal of fast in the right earnest. It is the retreat across the river that almost transforms Jagan. His another novel, "The Dark Room" is also having full signs and symbols of the ecology. In the novel the river and the ruined temple near the village leave a benign influence on the central character Savitri. She always compares her own life with the river and the significant ruined temple. In fact it is the spirit of Malgudi that helps R.K. Narayan to build all his settings. Thus Malgudi is a character, when it is material, it is a villain like the gutter in , "The English Teacher" and in , "The Financial Expert". Professor Iyengar rightly pointed out the concept that Malgudi is the real hero of the novels and the short stories of R.K. Narayan. Malgudi becomes the symbol of the tradition of India and accepting the modern civilization.

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Global warming is also a new but unconscious theme of the Indian literature. The depiction of the ruined temples, waterless river, barren forests shows the warning to the readers about global warming. Bhabani Bhattacharya presented the true picture of Bengal famine of 1943, in her novel, "So Many Hungers", in which at least 3000000 Indians died of starvation. The literature teaches us continuously that we should appreciate the nature. The human being properly follow the rules and regulations which provided by the literature for living the life with the nature. The writer tries to show or present the existence and values of the natural things for humanity.

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