



Exploration Of Eco -Critical Aspects In The Selected Novels Of Ruskin Bond

Dr. P. Krishnaveni ¹

Dr. D. Bharathi ²

^{1,2} Associate Professor of English, Department of H&S,

Annamachary Institute of Technology & Sciences (Autonomous), Tirupati.

Abstract:

This paper focuses on Ecological aspects through Literature with special reference to the novels of Ruskin Bond. The novels chosen for the eco- critical analysis in this Paper are *The Room on the Roof* (1956), *Vagrants in the Valley* (1987), *An Island of Trees* (1992), *Book of Nature*(2003).

Ecology is the study of the relationships between living organisms, including humans, and their physical environment. One of the biggest problems facing the world today is global warming. Many experts believe that production of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are the cause of heating in the atmosphere, which is very dangerous to human life. The important solution is to plant more trees. Trees absorb CO₂ and produce oxygen, which is not a greenhouse gas. To protect environment, many Writers have been inspiring through their writings and thereby trying to bring awareness and reduce global warming. Ruskin Bond is an environment conscious writer and the themes in his novels reflect the association and harmony that exists between fauna and flora and ways to enhance the awareness in the society.

Keywords: Ecological aspects, Ecology, Global warming, Greenhouse gases, Environment Conscious.

Introduction: Ruskin bond was born in May 1934. He spent his childhood in the hill stations of Dehradun and Mussorie. Then he went to England for his primary studies. He had forged an intimate relationship with the scenic beauty of the Himalayan region. He was quite by nature and stayed away from the attention of media. Bond is a Sahitya Academy Award Winner for his book, *Our Trees still Grow in Dehra* (1992) and is also honoured with the prestigious Padmashree (1999) for his lifetime contribution to Indian English Literature. He has written short stories, novels, poems, essays, travelogues and many other things. Bond's writings reflect his scholarly exploration of the habitat and emphasize moral, emotional, and ethical bonds

between individuals and their surroundings. Throughout his works, Bond emphasizes the importance of cultivating a love for nature, encompassing hills, mountains, trees, and living beings. In essence, he explores the concept of ecology, focusing on the relationships between plants, animals, and people, and highlights human responsibilities towards the environment.

Ecology is important because of the insights it provides about the ways in which people and nature depend on one another. Understanding the workings of ecological systems more completely allows for predictions about the ways human activities affect the health of the earth over time. Ecology is vitally important in the effort of humans to understand how we fit into the world around us, and how we can use our own energies to get what we need from the earth while contributing to its health and stability in the process.

Global warming is universal Problem in the world. In Ruskin Bond's prose fiction nature always seems to be friendly and it leaves a feeling of warmth and security in the hearts of the readers. Ruskin Bond has an intimate relationship with the environment. The deteriorating condition of the world is not a welcome change for this nature lover and his dislike is often seen in his stories. A thorough research on his works helps the society to know the importance of Ecological issues. The main Concept of this Paper is to enhance Eco consciousness in the Society and the importance of flora in reducing global warming.

The people live on the most beautiful planet, Earth which has very clean and attractive nature full of greenery. Nature is our best friend which provides us all the resources to live here. It gives us water to drink, pure air to breathe, food to eat, land to stay, animals, plants for our other uses, etc for our betterment. All the things we use for our living are the assets of nature which we should not spoil and damage. We should not destroy the originality of the nature and should not imbalance the ecosystem cycle. In the modern technological world lots of inventions are getting launched daily without its advantage and disadvantage to the nature. It is our responsibility to save the declining assets of our nature to make possible the existence of life forever on the earth.

Pollution is the introduction of harmful contaminants into air, water or soil. These contaminants can have dire effects on entire ecosystem, making life more difficult for humans, plants and animals. The planet's health and future depend on the willingness not just of individuals, but governments around the world, to fight the causes of pollution and to work hand in hand to prevent it.

There is one writer whose works show ecology not only as an important or dominant theme, but there is also a concern for natural depletion that is taking place. We are talking of Ruskin Bond. He shows his worry for the un-thoughtful actions of man towards nature. He has tried to convey an important message to everyone, that is, the importance of nature in our life. He points out that man has caused ecological imbalance which in turn will harm mankind spelling disaster someday. Also Bond shows a great path for the betterment of mankind by going green in his stories insisting on the need to grow trees everywhere: The thought of a world without trees became a sort of nightmare for me. It's one reason why I shall never want to live on a treeless moon! (Island 58). Ruskin Bond's *An Island of Trees* is a beautiful example for this kind of attitude in which he pictures the island full of trees. In his '*An Island of Trees*' the grandmother reveals to her granddaughter, Koki, the deep bond that grows between humans and nonhumans if only there is love and compassion. He has always emphasized on the friendly relationship between man and nature and has brought before us our need for each other. That is why we notice his pity for the unsympathetic and cruel actions of human beings towards nature. According to Ruskin Bond, nature blesses us with peace and serenity and casts a positive impact on our personality by instilling simplicity and basic goodness, while warding off evil. His stories succeed in heightening readers' awareness and even encourage them to take action towards it. It is a writing of hope as the awakening of consciousness may lead to some concrete actions in this direction. Ruskin Bond's

statements about environment are successful as the readers understand the significance of the natural worlds surroundings them.

'*The Book of Nature*' is an anthology of stories on ecosystem. This book contains aspects related to the nature and the wide, open skies. The author, who lived in beautiful hill stations from his childhood onwards, uses his personal experiences to describe nature in the astounding way it appears to him. In the beginning Bond talking about his childhood and describing the beautiful lawn he had in his grand-father's house. He used to live with his grand-parents. In the house there was a big banyan tree over which he felt an ownership. Then he talked about his grand-parents house surrounded by a beautiful and well-kept garden. Grand-father looked after the orchard; grand-mother looked after the flower garden. He wished that he had been old enough to prevent that lovely home from passing into other hands. He discussed the flora and fauna of India that is rich as in Eastern and Western Himalayas. The mountain slopes and valleys present remarkable contrasts in elevation, humidity and temperature. Ruskin Bond also discussed about the banyan tree which is his companion since childhood. Mostly he wrote his stories beneath the banyan tree. These trees are extremely big, most gentle and friendly which cannot be seen in the cities because it occupies lots of space to spread itself. Every village has one banyan tree which is not possible in the cities because there is not enough space for people. It has aerial roots which support the tree like pillars and its branches out more twisting and trailing branches so that after some years the tree forms a forest glade of its own. This tree always cool, dark and shady and anyone can easily climb it without any difficulty and there is no danger of falling off. It is also place of living for many birds, squirrels, insects, flying foxes and act as a hotel or boarding house because there are so many families living next to each other without disturbing each other. Nature is affected by the human actions which reduced the quality of water and extend the pollution level in the air, water and soil which leads to the global warming and there is no consistency in the climate. Pollution not only affects the life of humans but aquatic life and animals live on earth because of excessive use of pesticides and chemical used in factories. In his '*Book of Nature*', he elaborates on how the trees shape the life of human beings. He calls them "guardians of my conscience" (121).

'*The Room on the Roof*' sees Rusty the main character breaking familial bonds and social chains to propel himself into the hustling bustling colourful world of India. In the story, even when the beloved is nearby, the protagonist Rusty never fails to appreciate the charm of the landscape from the room window. His gaze out into the natural world signifies his connection to something larger than himself. Through the window, Rusty and Meena observe the Flame of the Forest, its red-hot flowers standing out against the blue sky. The sight of pink bougainvillea creeping into the villa further solidifies Rusty's decision to keep the window open, symbolizing his openness to the world and his unwillingness to shut out the beauty of nature. Ruskin Bond's writings reflect his deep appreciation for nature and his belief in the inherent goodness of humanity. He paints a vivid picture of the natural world and its impact on human experiences, encouraging readers to appreciate and cherish the splendors of the environment. Bond's works serve as a reminder of the importance of nurturing our connection with nature and finding solace, inspiration, and joy in its embrace. Bond suggests that if people develop a love for nature, their mundane daily lives can transform into evergreen plants, continuously blooming with flowers. He describes the blossoming of dawn through Rusty's perception, as objects gradually take shape in the darkness, and the lifting of the veil reveals a streaked crimson sky over the treetops.

'Vagrants in the Valley' book takes Rusty back, again to a new world in Dehra as his search continues while he meets new people, revisits his past, finds out more about his real parents, and continues to wander looking for answers, and after gathering most of them, in the end, he takes a decision, again to become a part of a new reality or rather realities. Statement of Ruskin Bond also coincides with a study defined by the University of Rochester which has found that when exposed to nature, people tend to feel more generous, more connected to their community and more socially conscious. Studies have shown that Hearing the sound of running water can have a calming effect and also having indoor plants can reduce headaches and fatigue. Rusty was in Hathi's house, sitting on a string cot out in the courtyard there was snow on the tiled roof and in the fields, but the sun was quite warm. The mountains stretched away, disappearing into sky and cloud. Rusty felt he belonged there, to the hills and the pine and deodar forests, and the clear mountain streams. (Vagrants in the Valley 182)

Once absorbed into the world created by the author, what you feel for the most is the short-lived nature of the relationships, the interactions, the exchanges that etch across the heart in one moment and the next moment they begin to fade away as each person moves their own way holding in their hearts the bitter truth that they will probably never cross paths again. No one understands the nature like Ruskin Bond. Trees are given a special place in Bond's writings as he perceives them to be a source for restoration and communion with the Divine.

Conclusion:

By this Paper we can enhance responsiveness on environment, the troubling awareness that we have reached the age of environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human actions are damaging the planet's basic life support systems. This awareness sparks a sincere desire to contribute to environmental restoration, not just in our spare time, but from within our capacity as citizens of nation.

References:

Primary sources:

1. Bond Ruskin. *The Room on the Roof*: Penguin Books-India, 1993.
2. Bond Ruskin. *Vagrants in the Valley*: Penguin Books-India, 1993.
3. *An Island of Trees*(1992)
4. *Book of Nature*(2003).

Secondary Sources: Collection of books

1. Cheryll Glotfelty & Harold Fromm. *The Ecocriticism Reader*: The University Of Georgia Press, 1996.
2. Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, 2000, *The Use and Abuse of Nature: Incorporating. This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India, Ecology and Equity*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, Oxford.

Web Sources:

1. <https://pdfcoffee.com/ruskin-bond-4-pdf-free.html>
2. <https://www.impactjournals.com/>
3. https://jetir.org/?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiA_tuuBhAUEiwAvxkgTpTko4XbNgxU51Czxagp3WgpS9vx-mGz6hAjHpm0MOQZYLiyCsk9vhoCEOcQAvD_BwE

