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Ecocriticism in the Fiction of Raja Rao

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Abstract

Now-a-days the literary critics pay attention on study and analysis of the strong bond between nature and society. Ecology and Ecocriticism are the significant aspects for the literary study and research. Ecology or environmental study is the center of attraction for literary personalities as well as the need of time. People are becoming conscious about the environment. Environment balance is the very important in this globalize world. Therefore, so many plans/schemes are being launched for saving the environment-conscious. The present paper seeks to outline eco-critical examination to the relevance and presence of the non-human to human environment and vice-versa in the fiction of Raja Rao.

Keywords- Ecology, Ecocriticism, Nature, Environment, Society

Ecocriticism observes the relation among literature and the bodily surroundings. It takes an earth focused method to literary studies. Eco-criticism is a form of criticism primarily based on ecological angle. Ecocriticism investigates the relation among human and the natural international literature. One of the predominant desires in eco-criticism is the study how people in society and react when it comes to nature and ecological elements. It examines how nature is represented within the text and the function of bodily placing inside the plot of a singular. It additionally analyses whether the values expressed in a literary text consist of ecological know-how, etc. Nature and literature have constantly shared a close courting as evidenced in the works of poets and other writers down the ages in almost all cultures of the world. Now-a-days nature and social world is being analyzed and emphasized in all spheres of understanding and development. The literary critic tries to look at how this near relationship between nature and society has been textualized by means of the writers in their

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works. On this context terms have emerge as very critical now-a-days ecology and ecocriticism. At present ecocriticism is in full swing and is a readily well-known principle worldwide. Its miles stated to be the study of the relationship between literature and environments. Its practitioners discover human attitudes in the direction of the environment as expressed in nature writing. Literary criticism in standard examines the members of the family between writers, texts and “the world”. In maximum literary theory “the world” is synonymous with society --- the social sphares. Ecocriticism expands the belief of “the arena” to include the entire ecosphere. Ecocriticism takes an earth-centred approach to literary complaint. Ecocritics and theorists are involved with the questions if Nature is being represented in a bit of literature or if the bodily putting has a function inside the plot or if the values expressed inside the paintings is regular with the ecological expertise or if similarly to race, mangnificence and gender region need to grow to be a brand new essential and to what effect the environment disaster is seeping into cutting edge literature and famous tradition.

Raja Rao’s deep knowledge of rustic Indian lifestyles, his passionate problem with the Indian freedom conflict evolved Indian modes of shape and fashion to the English language are all found out in the short testimonies within *The Cow of the Barricades and other Stories*. It was, but, handiest whilst he employed these types of in a sustained narrative allowing him enough room and scope to use them extra freely that he created his first foremost work – *Kanthapura*, Raja Rao’s account of the way he wrote the novel is thrilling. In a private letter to me he says: ‘I wrote *Kanthapura* in a 13th century castle in the French Alps belonging to the Dauphins of France and I slept and worked on the radical within the room of the Queen:

Because the Indian rustics of the village Kanthapura came to life in that feudal French fortress, the gracious spirit of the French Queen appears to have prompted the author to make a grandmother his narrator within the novel. In the writer’s foreword to the primary edition of the unconventional, Raja Rao defined the narrative as the story of ‘my village’. Within the later American version (1963), this changed into modified to ‘a village’. Inside the letter cited above. Raja Rao explains the motives for this transformation: ‘the background is my village – Harihalli or Hariharapura, near Kenchamma, Hoskere taluk, Hassan district, but not anything like this drama befell at Harihalli. Consequently in my new edition I’ve the “my” into “a”.

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Kanthapura is a story of a small south Indian village caught within the maelstrom of the liberty-battle of the 1930's, and converted so absolutely in the end that 'there's neither guy nor mosquito' left in it. The village and the changing village scene are so evocatively described that Kanthapura and its inhabitants come to existence perfectly Kanthapura is situated high at the Ghats, makeup the Malabar Coast. The two most important landmarks in it are the Himavathy River and the Tippur Hill. At the outskirts of the village is the Skeffington Coffee Estate presided over by a white Sahib. The village is a sort of divided into Brahmin sector, the potters' area, the weavers' area, the pariah quarter and the sudra area. On the main road Promontory is the brand new little Kanthapurishwari's temple, which becomes the centre of village life, and later, when the liberty-conflict begins, is a safe haven for the villagers. This is how the day breaks over the Ghats:

The day rose over the Blue Mountain and churning through the grey, rapt valleys, swirled up and swam across the whole air. The day rose into the air and with it rose the dust of the morning and the carts began to creak round the bulging the rocks and the coppery peaks, and the sun fell into the river and pierced it to the pebbles, while the carts rolled on and on, fair carts of the Kanthapura fair – fair carts that come from Maddur and Tippur and Santur and Kuppur, with chillies and coconut, rice and ragi, cloth, tamarind, butter and oil, bangles and kumkum... carts rolled by the sampur knoll and down into the valley of the Tippur Stream, then rose again and groaned round the Kenchamma hill (p.39).

And here are two vignettes of the coming of the rains:

The rains have come, the fine, first-footing rains that skip over the bronze mountains, tiptoe the crags, and leaping into the valleys, go splashing and wind-swung, a winnowed pair, and the coconuts and the betel nuts and the cardamom plants choke with it and hiss back. And there, there it comes over the Bebbur hill and the Kanthur hill and begins to paw upon the tiles--- (p.109).

.... There is something dark and heavy rising from the other side of the hill, something heavy and hard and black, and the trees begin suddenly to tremble and hiss... There is a gurgle and grunt from behind the bamboo cluster – and the gurgle and grunt soar up and swallow the whole sky. The darkness grows thick as sugar in a cauldron, while the bamboos creak and sway and whine And then the wind comes

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so swift and dashing that it takes the autumn leaves with it, and they rise into the juggling air, while the trees bleat and blubber. Then drops fall, big as the thumb, and as the thunder goes clashing like a temple cymbal through the heavens, the earth itself seems to heavy up and cheep in the monsoon rains (p.50).

The Serpent and the Rope is hence a singular which invitations a spread of methods. It is like Savithri's words which its hero describes as 'always like a sacred text, a cryptogram, with different meanings at different hierarchies of awareness' (p.211). Examine on the extent of a story, the conventional is the story of the disintegration of an uncommon marriage. Ramaswamy, the hero, is a younger Hindu in his twenties. A scion of an ancient South Indian Brahmin circle of relatives which strainsits lineage again to the legendary Upanishadic sage Yogyavalkya, he goes to France to do research in history, his special subject being the Albigensian heresy. Here he meets Madeleine Roussellin, who lectures on history and they get married. He hopes to complete his doctorate, go back domestic with Madeleine and settle down to the process of a professor at an Indian University. The path in their marriage refuses to run easy from the start. Their first-born dies while most effective seven months vintage. Then comes news that Rama's father is on his death-bed in India, and Rama goes back to settle his affairs at home. The homecoming imperceptibly brings about greater adjustments more in his attitudes than he is at the beginning aware about.

He goes on a pilgrimage to Benares and the Himalayas, along with his step-mother to carry out the obsequies of his father. Each the journey to the holy locations and its occasion make him introspective, and produce domestic to him a renewed awareness of his roots in India. The belief that he has now make-up the head of the own family strengthens his family ties. Moreover, his sensitive thoughts has registered the impact of three separates glimpses of Indian womanhood now found out to him, and this revelation is sure to have an affect on his courting along with his French spouse. First he notes the alternate in Little Mother – his young step-mother – recently widowed. When she had started the pilgrimage, 'she had left such a helpless and damaged-down woman – nearly a girl and now she returned with natural dignity. She walked as though space changed into now not something unreal and undependable, however this was her own earth, her own home, her own returned-yard' (pp.44-45). Her surprising increase in intellectual and ethical stature is the result of the combined impact of suffering and its comfort owing each to her easy and unquestioning faith

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within the conventional religion and manner of life of her forefathers, and to her conviction that though she has lost her husband, some distance from losing her location in the joint family, she is now the nearby consultant of the head of the own family who will quickly return to Europe. The second change concerns his younger sister Saroja. The unexpected ripening of the girl into womanhood is a wealthy and complicated revel in for Rama. He is 'intoxicated with Saroja's presence, like a deer could be before a waterfall or an elephant before a mountain-peak; something primordial was awakening in a creature, and that I felt that adulthood in a girl was like new moon or the alternate of equinox, it had polar affinities' (p.48). His response to this phenomenon makes him privy to his critical Indianness, when he feels he now knows 'why the Indians gave such lovely names to their women, and told us how Malavika when she poured water made the Asoka flower or Sakuntala the Karnikar blossom. What a deep and reverential mystery womanhood is' (p.48). This India which is each a metaphysical and a geographical area 'has no history, for Truth cannot have history' (p.104). India is 'the Guru of the world' and 'the sages have no history, no biography.' Truth begins where sorrow is accepted, and the Gangetic plain: 'is one song of saintly sorrow... So sorrow is our river, sorrow our earth, but the green of our trees and the white of our mountains is the affirmation that Truth is possible.' (p.33). In the vastness of India 'we feel large and infinite, compassion touching our sorrow as eyelashes touch the skin. Someone at the back of and past all dwelling matters gave us the touch, the tear, the elevation that makes our natural living so soft' (p.34).

The Serpent and the Rope is a conscious attempt to forge an English prose style based on an adaptation of some of these features of Sanskrit rhythms to the needs of a narrative of modern life. Consider the following passage:

Just as I could now see *antara-Kasi*, the "inner Benares," India for me became no land – not these trees, this sun, this earth; not these ladle-hands and skeletal legs of bourgeois and coolie; not even the new pride of the uniformed Indian official, who seemed almost to say, 'Don't you see, I am Indian now, and I represent the Republic of India' – but something other, more centred, widespread, humble; as though the gods had peopled the land with themselves, as the trees had forested the country, rivers flowed and named themselves, birds winged themselves higher and yet higher,

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touched the clouds and soared beyond, calling to each other over the valleys by their names (p. 244).

The novelist has conceived Benares and Ganges, with all their holiness, each literally and symbolically. They're ancient symbols of Hindu civilization, and they exist within the focus of one born in Bharatvarsha. Both Benares (now known as Varanasi) and Ganges were literally offered in the visit of the hero with his little Mother and her son Sridhara to the city. Raja Rao catches the real spirit of Benares and is furious at those who have desecrated the location with all their fraud and charlatanism. The purity has been sullied through a few completely mercenary pandas, some of them being thugs without realizing the sanctity of the river Ganges and the holy city. Benares is even within a Hindu, one who is a real Brahmin.

The Ganga is a protector of the people. The hero inside the novel sings *Gangastakam*: "May the waters of the Ganges protect us." The excess sentiments of the Hindus have a propensity to discover meaning even in which that means does not exist. The Aryans in the land profited by the sacred river watering the wheat-stalks and many others. The aura of the ancient can still be seen in the river, and the river-atmosphere. It may be the mother of the philosophies springing up during discussions at the bank. "...that Gargi Yagnyavalkya must have to have walked, and out of their discussion through wood-fireplace and via river-steps have been our philosophy born, and the noble, imperial historical past of our, Sanskrit, the pure, the complete, the specific." "My Aryan ancestors went up the Ganges to seek the solitude of the snows and the identification of Fact." In the Western countries they have got their rivers, however they have got the sensible view of the same. Their colour and the industrial habitations in the cities growing alongside the banks appeal to them. We miss our innate holiness to the rivers and the Ganges has the most important proportion. "Truth is the Himalaya, and the Ganges humanity." This is our mind-set towards the mountains and the rivers. We have to draw a line somewhere between the devout and sentimental know-how of the Hindus and rationally stretched interpretations of Nirad C. Choudhury. In my view, in a manner, I'm an admirer of both. Somewhere else additionally they feel the pious importance of the waters of the Mediterranean: "...the cradle of our civilization...Demeter and Poseidon and the voyage of Ulysses..." It all relies on the human

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mind what shape and shade them characteristic to the sea or ocean or river; may be mystical, like the orientals, or partly actual, like the westerners.

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