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## **Ecological Instability as a Global Issue in the Select Indian Creative Writings in English**

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### **Abstract**

Ecological Instability refers to the degradation of landscapes, frequent climatic changes, global warming, pollution, disappearance of various mammals and birds, acid rains, destruction of the wild habitats, massive upheaval in the aquatic world, infertility of the soil, demolition of trees or deforestation, etc. In the recent years the entire global world has been suffering from different types of environmental catastrophes due to instabilities in the smooth mechanism of the ecosystems in both aquatic and non aquatic regions. The concrete solution or remedy lies in the fact that anyhow self centred and mechanized people happily relinquish their claim to rule over the natural resources and engage themselves in the mission of bringing stability in all parts of the global environment. The present paper brings to light the ecological Instability as an issue of the entire globe by investigating the select Indian creative writings written in English. Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* have unraveled the deep pressing global issue of the ecological unrest by raising the questions of exploitation and extinction of the wild animals and also the impurity or pollution in the river. The paper endeavors its best to find out the solutions to counterbalance the increasing ecological instability for the infinite existence of the Earth.

**Keywords-** Ecology, Instability, Extinctions, Pollution, Conservation, Ecosystem.

### **Introduction**

Ernst Haeckel, the German zoologist, for the first time coined the term Ecology in 1866. The Ecological Society of America defines Ecology as " the study of the relationship between

living organisms, including humans and their physical environment; it seeks to understand the vital connections between plants and animals and the world around them". ( ESA. Web.)

William Ruckert made a strong appeal before the whole world to apply the theories of Ecology to literature and termed it as Ecocriticism. Then after Cheryll Glotfelty played a decisive role in making Ecocriticism reach its zenith of recognition and popularity worldwide. She defines it as "the study of the relationship between literature and physical environment in her prestigious ecocritical book entitled *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (1996), jointly edited by herself and Harold Fromm.

Grey Garrard in the introductory part of a very popular book entitled *The Oxford Handbook of Ecocriticism* writes that "Ecocriticism has given literary scholars. . . a meaningful role to play in addressing the most pressing issue of our time . . . the degraded environment". ( P. XII.)

Amitav Ghosh is a writer of utmost eminence, for he does not make any compromise with the firmness of his commitment in exposing any type of environmental damage as a by product of human laid encroachment in the wild habitats. In '*The Glass Palace*', he strongly blames the foreign capitalist forces for their unethical practice of giving wounds to the elephants through forcibly engaging them in pulling massive and stout trees through the help of ropes.

Amitav Ghosh writes: "Yet until the Europeans came none of them had ever thought of using elephants for the purpose of logging. . . It was the Europeans who saw that tame elephants could be made to work for human profit . . . this method of girdling trees, these ways of moving logs with elephants . . . ( P. 74-75)

The elephants are the blessings of the wildlife but they are mercilessly treated as the carrier machines; they have to carry heavy logs on their shoulders for transportation. The novelist expresses his deep concern over the plight of wild elephants who themselves have been colonized in the hands of the British regime. In other words, the colonization not only brought tears, suffering and slavery in the lives of the inhabitants of that particular region but also in the wild forests. Amitav Ghosh explicitly unhides the uncontrolled devastation of the natural environment, particularly in Burma and India during the colonial period. '*The Glass of Palace*' is an eye-opener novel which unfolds that avarice/greed is the prime cause of the elephant's tyranny by the European capitalists .The subjugation and persecution of the

animals are not only limited to the domestic works but also in heavy and strenuous works. In this novel even the tame elephants become the best examples of having the victims of colonizers' endless selfishness of accumulating wealth and power. The elephant's extinction or disappearance from the global environment is undisputedly in one way or other related to people's anthropocentric mindsets towards the existing species of the earth. The elephants are not properly treated and fed by their masters and are compelled to cross bridges which often prove risky leading to their untimely deaths. Moreover, they pass through trenches and rivers wearing intolerable weight of different kinds of equipments and machines on their shoulders which culminate in their bodily injuries.

When an elephant or any animal comes in direct contact with the uncovered electric wire, it has no chance to survive and remain an integral part of the wild ecology. Thus it is the sole responsibility of the municipality and electric departments to install electric polls very far from the public and forest areas in order to protect the species and property from their decay and extinction from the Earth's environment. Amitav Ghosh does not make the social masses see day dream, instead the bulk of his creative writings reflect an evergreen emphasis over ecological diversity and the people must happily render their services in the environmental conservation. The novel is interwoven with the incidents of the exploitation of the wild elephants during the colonial period and the novelist has a practical experience of the same sort of imbalance of wild ecology during his visits to Sunderbans. The elephants are the indispensable parts of the wild ecosystem; they dig water passages from sand covered or dry ponds and rivers which solve the scarcity of water for the other mammals even during the summer season. They also trample down spiked bushes which help the other animals for hassle-free locomotion from one place to another place. Spiked bushes often get pierced deep into wild animals' skin and legs which make them wounded and helpless. They remain hungry for food and thirsty for water amid bodily injuries. That is why the wild elephants are very useful and friendly for the creatures of the forests and even they in one way or other assist the shepherds and their domestic cattle who come inside a forest in search of the water sources. The novelist has tried his best to teach the lesson of environmental justice to self-centred people who misuse animals for profitable works and plunder the assets of forests. Joni Adamson writes with respect to the environmental justice, "The right of all people to share equally in the benefits bestowed by a healthy environment" (P.4.)

Arundhati Roy has also unearthed much in her novel *'The God of Small Things'* about the ecological instability in the aquatic world which appears in the form of callous and continuous pollution of the river Meenanchal. Estha and Rahel are the prominent characters of the novel and they themselves watch and feel the impact of the overflow of the plastic garbage across the river Meenanchal. Moreover, the river has lost its mobility due to constant negligence by the people of Ayemenem, a place in the district of Kottayam, Kerala. Arundhati Roy pinpoints the condition of Meenanchal contrary to utopia; she embodies her sentiments over the ecological imbalance across the Ayemenem. She writes about the plight of the river as follows, "Bright plastic bags blew across its viscous, weedy surface like subtropical flying flowers". (P. 124.)

The novelist has used simile of 'like subtropical flying flowers' in anticipation of making the humanity change its unfruitful attitude towards the river as the plastic waste materials are ultimately swallowed by the aquatic animals and the animals like cows, buffalos, deer, elephants, etc., are always at the high risks to die due to suffocation if they drink the water of the floating plastics. Arundhati Roy has chosen the aforesaid simile for projecting the climatic condition of the subtropical regions. A subtropical region has two climatic characteristics at the same time, warm and wet. Similarly, Meenanchal river has become warm and wet because of the dangerous acidic fluids and other garbage which directly go into it. The subtropical flower has a special brightness and the plastic made products or garbage shine with the same intensity as a result of the chemical reaction in the water which remains warm and wet.

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* advocates the complete boycott of plastic made goods from any particular society, for she herself has the practical experience of observing the deplorable state of health and hygiene of cattle and humans who hailed from her native place. Kerala is a very beautiful tourist destination and the people across the world in a large number throng to this state per year. Enchanting beeches, coconut and banana trees are the true attractions for all the tourists who anyhow want to get rid of fatigue, boredom, mental or physical anxieties from their fast paced schedule of their domestic or official works. In order to avoid the contamination of rivers, beeches, ponds, lakes, etc., from plastics, both the Govt. and civil societies together have to come to fore for manufacturing bags and baskets made of the dry leaves of banana and coconut or some other ecofriendly

sources. The novelist proves herself as a literary ecologist who has incorporated the ecological issue of the marine world in her novel for mass awakening in all parts of the globe. The Ecological Society of America says, "The many specialities within ecology, such as marine, vegetation and, statistical ecology, provide us with information to better understand the world. This information can also help us improve our environment, manage the natural resources, and protect human health". (Web.)

### **Conclusion**

The present research paper clearly arrives at a straightforward conclusion that whatever the environmental tyranny was felt in the colonial period, the present technological era with double intensity has been heading towards the self suicidal path of environmental calamities. The novels of Amitav Ghosh and Arundhati Roy reiterate the perennial importance of the environmental justice which urges the dwelling people of the Earth for equal consumption of the assets of nature. All the biotic and non biotic resources of nature have their own values in the scheme of nature and they must be safeguarded for a healthy ecosystem. Each animal is important on the earth. The killing and persecution of wild elephants must be controlled through public awareness programs and campaigns in the areas adjacent to wild forests. The rivers symbolize fertility and progress and their impurity directly impacts on the lives of billions of people across the world because a number of towns and cities are situated nearby the rivers. Minimum emissions of toxic gases/pollutants from the nearby industries and maximum dumping of the garbage in a distant location would be an effective solution to avoid the pollution of rivers and the productivity of the land soil for the cultivation of healthy food crops and fodders might be magnified through these ecofriendly measures or initiatives by the humans. Drought, flood and the decay of living and non living organisms of the rivers are directly connected to the global warming and climate change due to the rising pollution in the physical environment.

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