



Original Research Paper

Ecocriticism in Indian Writing: Kalidasa and Other Literary Traditions

Prof. Rama

Principal, Hansraj College, University of Delhi
Email.: principal_hrc@yahoo.com

Dr. Sonam Gupta

Guest Faculty, Non Collegiate Women's Education Board, University of Delhi
Email: guptasakshi621@gmail.com

Abstract:

The paper highlights the sphere where disciplines converge and subjects meet. Here the paper presents the nom de plume of Literature in a very vividly different context and meaning. The argument placed forth by the author is that how the perspective of eco critics also becomes an inseparable and indelible part and parcel of the literature writing in India especially in the legendary works of *Kalidasa* and a few other authors. The paper dwells upon the theme of Eco Criticism where in the larger theme of the conservation, preservation and celebration of nature and the natural bounty in terms which are far more sanguine and realistic than were literary gobbledygook.

Keywords: Kalidasa, Literature, Ecocriticism, Nature, Natural Bounty, Environmentalism

Introduction

The need and requirement of writing in the larger context of environment is not a western phenomenon as it appears generally to audiences worldwide. If one dwells inside the larger relationship with literature and that too, Indian writing then one may fathom very new and uncharted vistas where in the tenets of environmentalism appears anew to us and the audience far removed from the Industry led climate change reforms which have spawned in equally strong and rampant narrative on the condition of nature and planet earth. There needs to be a cautious understanding and comprehension of how Planet Earth is gravely impacted and denigrated by human interventions ushered in by the tides of industrialization and modernization.

The myth lore and ideational perspectives on Environmentalism

Environmentalism has morphed and transformed from local and a domesticity ordained classification and categorization from the to a larger eclectic narrative and proactivity premised upon awareness and related propagation at the Global awareness at the global high-power table of negotiations. Also, as an attendant fact, instruments

and agencies of the order of literature that too, indigenous literature becomes the order of the day on the face of a fast changing and maybe degenerating world which bear adverse and serious repercussions for the future progeny of the Global comity of states.

Fenny Pramita writes that, "Environmental awareness is a critical component of environmental protection. The purpose of this study is to assess students' knowledge of the environment and its influence on pro-environmental behaviour. A survey research design was employed in this study. The survey was carried out by delivering questionnaires students."¹ The author further asserts that, "A linear regression analysis was performed to assess the association between environmental awareness and the ability to maintain nature and the earth. According to the data collected, 67% of respondents strongly agreed and 30% agreed in the first aspect. Furthermore, 68% of respondents strongly agreed, whereas 32% agreed in the second aspect. The third aspect received 66.6% of respondents who replied highly agree and 32.2% who answered agreed, while the fourth aspect received 71.4% of respondents who said strongly agree and 28.2% who answered agreed. As a

¹ Fenny Pramita, "The Significance of Environmental Awareness For Protecting Nature and Cherishing the Earth,"
URhttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/376366328_The_Significance_of_Environmental_Awar

[ness for Protecting Nature and Cherishing the Earth#:~:text=This%20study%20demonstrates%20the%20importance,and%20respecting%20the%20earth's%20ecology.">ness for Protecting Nature and Cherishing the Earth#:~:text=This%20study%20demonstrates%20the%20importance,and%20respecting%20the%20earth's%20ecology.](#) (Online: Web), Accessed on 1 July, 2026

consequence, it can be stressed that respondents are of the opinion that it is a primal concern to be environmentally conscious to protecting nature and our very own Planet Earth. This study highlights and stresses upon the significance of environmental awareness in serving as the able and potent guardrails of mother nature and respecting the earth's ecology."² Unless and until, the student community and the entire swathe of international community is not communicated about the grave conditionality of mother nature and the need to include the idiom of environmentalism and being eco-friendly in every small step of our routinised lifestyles, the larger cause of indigeneity and Climate change concerns would be largely defeated in Public sphere and realm both at the level of an idea and also at the level of proactiveness and congealing with the State apparatus to clean up the stables for our vastly vitiated and polluted environmental ecosystem.

Ecocentricism Criticism

The norm and the central pillar of the lore and construct of environmentalism needs to be adequately posited as an effective narrative in literature too if a profound and path breaking awareness and proactivity levels of momentum are to be achieved through the modicum of literature and creative writing both within and outside Bharat. well received and appreciated by the evaluate where in the uncommon nature of the work will lead to it becoming a seminal work with slight permutations and modifications. The manner in which the author Ghosh has been cited in the work, *The Tiger*, becomes a literary and environmentalist order of the day as far as the narrative and comparisons with other authors are concerned. "I think more than a hundred people are killed by tigers in this area each year. I am referring to the Indian part of the Sundarbans only. The sum is probably doubled with the Bangladesh side included. The aggregated statistics show that at least one person is killed by a tiger every other day in the Sundarbans." As an instance, it can be highlighted in the evaluation that how the entire ecosystem of the romantic and the naturally endowed Sundarbans are threatened by unmitigated techne, modernization through myriad human interventions.

It may be creatively argued that the indigenous Indian writing in English too partook of the pivot of the ancient Indic environmentalism

through the scriptures and amalgamated them with the post-colonial riposte of the Environmentalism. The themes of recurring migration and displacement of the hoi polloi along with the themes of climate change, desertification, the menace of poaching of valuable animal wealth, the ancient tree lineages along with the threat of an ever encroaching "Other" in the form of the high rises, urbanization, satellite townships and the related deforestation.

Thus, we enter the realm of ecocriticism in the larger rigmarole of English literature and the menace of modernization and Urbanization which validates the romantic's pain and despondency at the rising ride of entrant and intervening human civilization. It can be highlighted that the field of ecocriticism focuses on the analysis of the complex interactions between all parts of the natural world, including living and nonliving things. It examines the complex interrelations among live creatures, between living and non-living phenomena, and even among non-living components. One can further bring to bold relief highlights the entire panoply of the inextricable linkage between the theme of environmentalism and the art of literature where in the researcher superbly includes excerpts from literature highlighting the self-same.

The word 'Ecocriticism' first appeared in William Rueckert's essay titled 'Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism' (1978). The author argues here pertinently that the "application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature." The two works which officially heralded 'Ecocriticism' were 'The Ecocriticism Reader' (1996) edited by Cheryl Glotfelty and Harold Fromm and 'The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture' by Lawrence Buell. In his 1995 book "The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture"³ Buell held forth that 'the US literature cannon had a significant and critical roleplay in spawning cultural aptitudes towards the panoply of nature and the theme of environmentalism degradation and harm coming the way of the all subsuming and all pervasive nature. He stressed the significance of analysing the literary representations of the natural world and the ways in which they influenced cultural attitudes and behaviours.⁴

² Ibid

³ Sandip Deshmukh, Savata Phulsagar, "India in the Twenty first century: Development of socioeconomic, " literature and Scientific issues," Lambert Publishing, 2023 URL:

https://www.rpcollege.edu.in/docs_pdf/XrAJ2S3y6u.pdf (Online: Web), Accessed on 10 July, 2026

⁴ Ibid

The litany of examples in Meghdootam refer to the role play of mother nature and the Rain Good through the romanticist cloud cover which has ingratiated the element and the premise of the “Natural” in this text of Kalidasa the all age poet. Existence of human being depends upon into environment. Environment includes air, water, land, animals, birds, insects, trees, flowers, fruits and human being etc. during the growth and destruction of human beings, we not only come into contact with these environmental elements but also, we have to go through the influences and impact created by these environmental substances in our way of life. In my article, concentrating on particular portion of Sanskrit Literature, that is the literature of the famous poet Kālidāsa. His awareness for environment is revealed in his treatment of nature in his Lyrical Works like ‘Meghadūtām’ and ‘Rtusamhāram’. In ‘Rtusamhāram’,⁵ the relationship between environment of different seasons and human life has been suggested and through this attempt Kālidāsa’s thought and consciousness in respect of environment have taken shape. In the ‘Meghadūtām’, nature plays very significant role, the poet with his attempt to associate nature with living beings, has drawn the picture of the cloud as if to be fit for carrying Yaksha’s message.⁶

It has been argued and contended that, “Through the work of poets such as Kalidasa, the author describes how nature becomes a personification of human sentient, characters, and love or desire. Thus, Sanskrit poetry allowed nature and human to intersect, in various ways.”⁷ The author further highlights the Kalidasa’s inclusion of the intertwining between the human and the natural where in, Familiar themes such as depicting rivers as women in the ancient epics, are also explored. Finally, these themes evoke questions of what is real and unreal, and how is it defined by the text.⁸ “It was a popular and often followed and adhered to exercise, with the strivings of the founding fathers of Transcendentalism namely Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Henry David Thoreau, and others. Ralph Waldo Emerson founded the literary genre and canon of Transcendentalism as reflected in his literary outings and essays which also lays the foundation stone of what the larger American Dream and the all-subsuming American melting pot is all about.”⁹ Thoreau’s work *Walden* that came out in 1845 also

propounded the same idea and insisted that by living in close contact with nature, people can attain harmony and peace.”

Women too form a kind of the feminine and the espousal of the cause, function tradition and the larger Imagery of the “natural” which brings out the environmentalism in the larger construct of the Meghadūta.

One may focus upon a critical assessment of the poetry of Wordsworth and Kalidasa where in the age of Romanticism is reflected avidly and greatly in the textual narrative work of the work which is brilliantly and diligently done up and constructed. In the same chapter, the researcher has creatively and pithily brought out a searing and vibrant reflections upon how the Clod messenger in Kalidasa’s, “Meghadootam” brings to the light the sky-scapes and the attendant earthly rain imagery on planet Earth, that is, the “Prithvi”. - mining corporations excavating deeper into the Earth’s crust. than before.

In the beginning of the play, Kaldiasa deliberates on the idea of Shakuntala’s birth and reveals that she was born and brought up amidst nature itself. That is the reason Dushanta is instantly drawn towards her. The gradual development of their liking for each other begins in the first act. At the surface level, it might appear the meeting of two people, falling in love and finally consummating their love. However, Kalidasa’s vision of uniting nature with culture is represented through Shakuntala and Dushanta respectively. Kalidasa’s description of summer season, its beauty, blossoming of flowers, river Malini and the cool breeze blowing near the riverbank soothes the mind of not only the inhabitants of the hermitage but also the readers with the same intensity. The wedding between the groom Mango Tree and Jasmine, the lovely vine can only be seen through the imaginative eyes of Kalidasa. he writes, “Mango tree looks like wedded to a lovely vine”. In fact, later Anusuya says, “Look, Shakuntala, the Jasmine that you named Vana-Jyotsani has chosen the mango as her bridegroom”.

Kalidasa’s literary inclination for “the natural and its beatific impact” is boundless in the fourth act of the Play, “Meghdootam”. The presented play segment refers to the theme that the moving away of Shakuntala from the sanyasin

⁵ Paromita Biswas, “Environmental awareness in Kalidasa’s Lyric Poem,” *Indian Journal of Sanskrit Research*, 2022, Vol. 8, Issue 3, Part D,

⁶ Ibid

⁷ “Humanizing the nature: A Study in the Imagery of Kalidasa,” *Cracow Journal of Indological Studies*, Vol VII (2005)

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

Kanva to her better half's abode makes her bid and take leave of all her kith and kin residing in the near proximity of the hermit. The reading audience can discern that for decking up Shakuntala myriad habiliments such as the silk garments, rose-red juice to tint her feet, and various jewels are offered by the trees of the hermitage itself. Kalidasa's nature does not remain only in the backdrop but becomes a living entity. For him, nature has power enough to raise Shakuntala as her child, be her guardian and offer love like a mother, take care like a nurse, and adorn her like a sibling. No human relationship remains untouched from Kalidasa, which does not find expression in his depiction of nature. It is clearly reflected in the bond shared by Shakuntala with the flora and fauna of Rishi Kanva's hermitage. Once abandoned by her biological parents, Shakuntala is raised in the lap of nature by Shakun birds.¹¹ She is not only the child of nature but also is the parent of many a species there in the hermitage. If she seeks permission from nature before leaving for her husband's house,¹² she also ensures that her child like doe and the fawn is taken care by her friends and her father in her absence.¹³ The Koel also bids her farewell by singing a wedding song through her melodious voice which may not be a common phenomenon of Dushanta's material world.¹⁴ Thus, Kalidasa in a manner unique quintessential approach develops an astute and very pioneering and astute perspective impinging among the theme of the surreal and metaphorical linkage between nature and the Human element. Akin to what Moglee, the post-colonial character brings forth through its *Jungle Book's* Colonial literary cannon, Kalidasa too impinges upon how the lady Shakuntala bereft of her human ancestries and parentage is nested by the Shakun Birds where in she akin to *Moglee* though in a completely different cannon and tranche and

genre, she emerges as the arch protagonist who steals the heart of King Dushyant.

It can be argued that upon the eco-concern one again upon the larger rubric of the natural ecosystem where in the craft and the art of Kalidasa is very beautifully woven in the play, "Meghdootam".. The extensive extraction of rocks and other minerals from the Earth is causing ground instability, which is resulting in earthquakes. The manner in which the researcher brings to the fore, the, larger idiom of environmentalism and the global concern through the human activities of quarrying and mining adds the scientific rationale along with the segments abounding in literary flavour.

Conclusion

As a summation, which serves as the last chapter, the author and the researcher brings to the fore the need of the hour being a gladiatorial human responsibility to show more care and concern for the mother nature where in the larger right to life, right to livelihood are all reflected in the Thesis's content and the reflected narrative. The researcher has avidly utilized the cannons of literary geniuses such as Kalidasa and others all falling in the realm of Indian writing to bring home the pertinent pointer that a larger-than-life responsibility to protect the environment and the nature's bounty lies with a greedy and hell-bent-upon modernizing ways of the world. The researcher culminates the entire narrative with a core refrain that educational Institutions and awareness amongst the youth can assiduously help sustain the nature's bounty and finally the sustenance of balance even through Drama and literature of the current era. This novel approach present throughout the textual narrative is very satisfactory for the evaluator, where, it's a pioneering and innovative work which will go down

¹⁰ Archana Gupta, "Kalidasa's Ecological

Vision: Nature and Culture,"

Abhijnānaśākuntalam, 2022

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

¹³ Shiva, Vandana. *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development*. Zed Books, 1989.

¹⁴ Bishnoi & N. R. Bishnoi (Eds.), *Religion*

and Environment (pp. 128–137). Guru

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[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/2](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260424822_Religion_and_Environment_Conservation_A_Practical_Approach)

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into creating a new chapter and new learning in the context of the entire discipline.

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