



Unfolding Ecocritical Dimensions In The Literary Legacy Of Tagore

Aparna Ray (Phd Scholar Sangam University,Bhilwara) &

Dr.Hitkaran Singh Ranawat(Prof Sangam University,Bhilwara)

Abstract

Rabindranath Tagore-the Indian grande-preneur-wrote a lot of his poems about nature as well as its environs. It is unclear, however how many of his poems explicitly focus on the issue of eco-criticism. Literary ecology was the original idea that developed into eco-criticism. Ecocriticism is a term which refers to the study of interaction between literature and nature. Tagore often criticized the beauty of nature in his poems. He has depicted magnificent scenes of landscapes, rivers, forests, and mountains while going into the details of flora and fauna of the countryside. The present study aims to look into how eco-criticism is incorporated and how important it is in some of the works by the renowned Indian author Rabindranath Tagore. Eco-criticism aimed at highlighting ecological and environmental aspects that are portrayed in literary texts. Though a very recent field of study, with much growing interest in eco-criticism, Tagore's works have not been explored in depth regarding their potential.

Keywords: eco-criticism, environmental aspects, profound connection with nature, vivid images.

Introduction

He often personifies nature in his poetry by making it a voice, he uses the imagination of humans to give life to inanimate things. He narrates "The Gardener" from the point of view of a lover fascinated by the beauty of nature and "The Sunset of the Century" from the point of view of a mourner, crushed by the destruction humans has wrought. Often, while drawing a parallel between the human body and nature, Tagore explains how vital nature is for our life.

But Tagore also reminds of the destructive impacts that man makes towards nature. In "The Sunset of the Century," he laments the loss of natural resources and environmental degradation that modernity and industrialization have wreaked havoc by. He implores people, in "The Last Bargain," to respect nature and to be in tune with their acts. Beside projecting his deep love and admiration for Mother Nature, the poetry of

Tagore also focused the ultimate emphasis on the people's coexistence with nature. It is an important addition to the literature canon in terms of using eco-criticism in poetry, and his writings never failed to prompt readers to respect and preserve the environment.

This collection of poems from Tagore reflects several aspects in nature, as well as how man goes about relating to it. The "Stream of Life" describes how everything in life is connected. "Light, My Light" discusses just how beautiful nature is. Other prominent works of Tagore, which are related to environmentalism, include "The Gardener," "The Sunset of the Century," and "The Last Bargain." Whether these can be considered or not in the category of ecological criticism literature is subjective because with Tagore's great references to nature, it is a difficult task to mark just how many poems fall under this label of eco-critical poetry.

Rabindranath Tagore was one of the best writers and poet, and writer and philosopher from India who cared immensely for the environment and the ecological problem. His works reflect his concern about nature and its preservation. He was a pioneer in the environmental consciousness field. In many of his works, he portrayed nature as a living thing with its own spirit and personality. He suggested that we should love and care for nature as a creature, but also as a spiritual one. His creations depict the fragility of beauty but also how people influence this.

The Gardener, one of Tagore's most familiar works of poetry, extols the mystery and beauty of nature. Yet, the poems contain a reason to save and protect the earth and simultaneously depict it as a source of inspiration and play. He writes in one of them, "The earth is beautiful, and so are you. The earth is yours, and you are mine." You are alive, and your environment is too. You and the land are both delicate."

Tagore also wrote extensively about how industrialization affects the environment. In "The Home and the World," he writes about the detrimental effects of British colonialism and industrialization on rural India. He provides examples of how the emergence of new businesses and technology led to pollution, deforestation, and the elimination of conventional farming practices.

In another composition, "The Post Office," Tagore gives an example of human interaction with the environment. In the play, a small child confined to his house because he's sick takes comfort in a bird that is outside the window. The play warns against destruction of nature and dwells on how important it is for humans to be comforted and inspired by it.

"Dakghar" or "The Post Office" is written in 1912 and applauded as a presentation of eco-criticism reflecting the themes of death and the relationship with nature. The play was set in a small Bengali village showing the real beauty lies in nature. Amal, the young hero who is bedridden because of illness, is longing for the outside world. His love for nature and her wonders increases by the imagination and letters of the

postman. The play comes out as a film and as a television series, and it remains to be one among the great classics of Bengali literature.

"Ghare-Baire" is published in 1916 in Bengali language by Tagore and eco-criticism is discussed from the perspective of western culture and its impact on Indian society that affects the Indian ethos of people, The novel further discusses the colonialism and economy which is influenced by the same. The novel stresses on the environment to be safe so that coming generations will be more comfortable in residing.

Questions of the natural world are engaged in many books by Tagore, including such as "The Home and the World," "Gora," and "The Wreck." For example, Bimala in "The Home and the World" is attracted by natural beauty surrounding her home, and love to nature contrasts with an urban world of industry threatening the same. Like this, Gora, protagonist of the novel "Gora," also deserts his urban advanced life for a more natural and rural one.

Even Tagore suggests a degree of vulnerability as far as human activity is concerned in relation to the environment. Tagore grieves his losses and ecological damages when he narrates the calamity the wreck of a ship brings in *The Wreck*. A lot of emphasis to strong expression of ecological sensitivity too appears through promotion of interdependence and how crucial it becomes to keep making sure they preserve a wholesome relationship with nature.

Significance of the Study

This research has clarified Tagore's distinct vision regarding the living together of humans and nature. Being an ardent environmentalist, it is evident in the writings of Tagore that people and nature go hand in hand. Utilizing the instrumental lens of eco-criticism, research can get a much deeper understanding of how the philosophy of nature by Tagore had helped him construct his literary works and his cause for the environment. Eco-criticism in Tagore will unveil his social, political, and cultural life in his own time. An icon of India's national movement, Tagore, too became a vocal opponent to British colonialism. Political, social, and economic climates impacted his writings. Analyzing his writings from an eco-critical perspective, researchers would be well-poised to understand how nature shaped Indian politics and culture in early 20th-century India.

Methodology and Objective of the Study

To identify the eco-criticism themes and messages present in Tagore's literary works such as poetry, plays, and novels.

The researcher has selected few of the works of Tagore along with the dramatized version: *The Post Office*, *The Home and the World*-novels, and *Gitanjali*-collection of poems-for the analysis on the

relationship between human nature. In order to communicate his ecological messages appropriately, Tagore adopted various literary strategies in his literary writings. Then, this study will create a hypothesis by critically analyzing adequate secondary sources and with an in-depth textual analysis of some novels. In the research for this study, the prime focus is on closely observing some of Tagore's books on relations with human nature, and although it may just point towards other works of Tagore and other writers in passing.

Argued as an interdisciplinary concern, the interface between literature and environment is how eco-criticism functions. It studies through which literary pieces are related to awareness towards relationships to nature and show, criticize, or contribute to environmental issues. This paper attempts to throw some light on the aspect of eco-criticism in a few of the works of the very famous early 20th-century poet, novelist, and philosopher Rabindranath Tagore.

Tagore's writings hold much fertile ground for ecocritical analysis because he loved the natural world to his core and had a deep and sacred relation with nature. It can be understood how he received this philosophy in his mind from nature through his works and how this had developed creativity within him. These issues, such as deforestation, the effects of industrialization, and exploitation of natural resources, have been brought into the centre by the characters, their stories, and lyrical phrases. From examples, one can have a better understanding of the environmental advocacy of Tagore and his urge for the peaceful dwelling of man and nature. Rabindranath Tagore's literary works provide us with a sophisticated and diverse medium through which to examine issues of spirituality, nature, human effect, and their interlinks as we are able to gain essential insight into what he thought to be an understanding of ecological consciousness and what it meant to him to be of philosophical relevance.

Literature Reviews

In the article, "Ecocriticism in Modern English Literature" (2023) Fawareh et al., stated that ecocriticism offers a revisionist and reformist viewpoint that has gained prominence in modern English literature across the globe. This literary analysis explores the complex interaction between nature and humans from both negative and positive angles, taking an ecological point of view. After analyzing these significant works, we can conclude that ecocriticism progresses from considering nature to be a mystic substance to realizing how interrelated nature is and how crucial it is to actively preserve it. The tendency continues to advance the promotion of eco-literacy and eco-consciousness with regard to environmental challenges, culminating in a call to action.

In the article, "A Study of Selected Indian Novels from an Ecocritical Point of View" Kumari et al., seek to examine how ecocritical viewpoints are portrayed in a few chosen pieces of international literature. It is insufficient to address the global ecological catastrophe with science and technology alone. We must change the way we think about nature to acknowledge that literature is a vital component of life, not something distinct from it. Over the past few decades, the escalating eco-disasters have put our ecosystem in

danger and posed risks to both Earth and human civilization. The study specifically explores ecocritical points of view that can be found in a range of English-language works of literature from India and other international locations.

In the article, "The Works of Rabindranath Tagore: An Ecocritical Reading" (2021) Abdul Awal explores Rabindranath Tagore's vast body of writing using an ecocritical perspective. Since the paper adopts a critical perspective towards Tagore's works, with ecocriticism as its framework, it also explores deep into the complex interaction between literature and the natural world. This is done with quotes from the previous chapter that will be relevant to supporting this argument. Additionally, the case study interlaces with eco-philosophy, heideggerian, Cornucopian views, Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism, Shallow Ecology, Social Ecology, Eco-Marxism, Ecophobia, among other modern ecocritical philosophies. In the process of critically analyzing scores of Eastern and Western ecocritical ideologies while focusing on interpreting Tagore's literature, the study forges a bond between humans and the natural environment. It powerfully examines the eco-consciousness of Tagore's personal life and literary works. The project explores people's relationships while foregrounding the bad effects of the excessively exploitative approach toward nature through technology. Tagore's works have underlined the antagonism and dualism between civilization and the ecology and specified the results of these conflicts.

In the article, "An Overview of Ecological Consciousness in Rabindranath Tagore's Plays Sacrifice and Red Oleanders" (2020) Rashmi Priya stated that Rabindranath Tagore, renowned for his poetic masterpiece Gitanjali, became the first Indian Nobel Laureate in 1913, marking a historic milestone in Indian literature. Modern Indian dramatist Rabindranath Tagore had written on a vast range of social, cultural, and environmental themes. He was a modernist and social reformer who earned reputation in the world through the writing of love and beauty for nature. The work takes an approach to ecocriticism to make a study of Rabindranath Tagore's plays to bring out his deep passion for nature. Tagore clarifies that nature has a great importance in human culture and regrets the situation wherein human society has lost its respect toward nature nowadays. Tagore delivers a powerful message to contemporary society through his plays regarding the ecosystem's vital role in maintaining human well-being.

Research Gap

Eco-criticism is a relatively new trend of literary criticism in looking at the different relationship of literature and the environment. Rabindranath Tagore is one of India's greatest authors who has written so much on environmental topics in a wide range. This study explores the novel integration of an ecological model into his poetry, plays, and novels that were not depicted similar ecological concerns before; hence, previous studies were just analyzing the themes and testing the poet's poetry. Hence, it is high time to look into Tagore's works in a more mature and culturally sensitive way.

Conclusion

Tagore's works do reflect rich and layered images of people in interaction with the environment. All of his care for the influence that human deeds have on the environment, his emphasis on everything being interrelated that has life, and his glorification of mystical and spiritual features of nature show off his eco-critical sensibilities. Such has made Tagore's literature really proficient to provide great insights into this ongoing, often one-sided dialogue between art and the world of nature. His works underline the need for taking a holistic and sustainable approach toward looking at the environment. He felt that humanity should live in harmony with nature rather than seeking to exploit it for their own desires. He urged people to act in defense of nature because, as he used to say it, if nature was destroyed, then humanity would become extinct. He has ideas and thoughts in his writings that reflect priceless pearls and significance, revealing the breadth of his environmental concerns and his convictions for the preservation and protection of the natural world. His remarks motivated people to address the ecological crisis and work toward a more environmentally friendly future.

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