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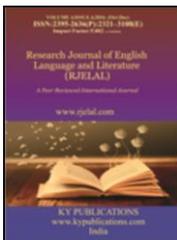
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CANADIAN REALIZATION OF CARING ENVIRONMENT: AN ECOCRITICAL INTERPRETATION OF SELECTED CANADIAN POETS

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ABSTRACT

This essay offers an approach to ecocriticism in the context of contemporary English Canadian Poets. It gives definitions of various contemporary critics on ecocriticism. It specially discuss origin of ecocriticism, nation wilderness and conservative move towards protection of environment through ecocritical approaches of Canadian poets, the essay scrutinize moments of the metaphor, in the age of technology, interrelatedness between nature and human. Ecocritical literatures explored that human construction; adoption of new technology, modernization approach brings tremendous changes in the environment in the twentieth century. The dynamic environment which is brought by the human, exploited the nature. However, transmission of nature is also essential to the development of human being.

KEY WORDS: Ecocriticism, Eco poets, Canadian literature, nation, wilderness, technology, feminism, post-colonialism.

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Canada is largely conquered by wilderness. The majority of land is being dominated by forest and Rocky Mountains but, it no longer scenario due to modernization. The political as well as ongoing public controversial issue as construction of hydro electric dams, tankers, the continuing infringement of indigenous sovereignty and this lead to rethink of ecocriticism. Thus, it takes more pressing need of environmental approaches of Canadian poet.

Michael Moore, Partick D. Murphy, Pamela Banting contemporary Canadian literary scholars argues that environment and ecology are prominent features of Canadian consciousness comparing to other countries. The idealized natural environment and the critiques of the technocratic society strongly advocate environmental awareness and green politics in their context.

P.Banting rightly sensed that the term ecocriticism has not been surpassed in Canadian literature compare to US which contributes greater volume. However, there has always been seen a significant amount of literary criticism devoted to the landscape and nature. (1)

Dana Philips criticized the ecocriticism as literary quality and scientific accuracy of nature writing in his work "The Truth of Ecology" and he argued ecocritical discourse to be recognized as environmental justice movement. (2)

Glotfelty defines ecocriticism is one of the goals is to study the professional dignity. It talks about the relationship between literature and the physical environment "undervalued genre of nature writing". Lawrence Buell defines "ecocriticism' ... as a study of the relationship between literature and

the environment conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmentalist praxis". (3)

Literature is the best way for reflecting the contemporary issues. The increasing technology, industrialization, urbanization sought greater significance of the green world so the twentieth century writers were concerned in dealing their works with beauty and power of nature. However, it concern for ecology and continuous mistreatment of environment. This sense of concern and its reflection in literature that has given rise to a new branch of literary theory, namely Ecocriticism. The ecocriticism is study of relationship between literature and the environment. The study approached some essential aspects in its core such as nature writing, environmental literature and literature of wilderness. Initially, the word 'ecocriticism' first appeared in William Rueckert's essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism" in the year 1978. Yet apparently it remained inactive in critical vocabulary until the year 1989. Western Literature Association meeting use the term in critical field which thereafter had been used as 'the study of nature writing'. Glen Love is also used 'ecocriticism' at the same WLA meeting. Since, that meeting in 1989 the usage of the term 'ecocriticism' has bloomed in the literary context. However in the beginning, the scholars who were working in this field of literary theory remained insignificant. In 1992, the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) was established the term along with the Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment (ISLE) in 1993. In 1996, it is said to be officially heralded by the publication of two seminal works: *The Ecocriticism Reader*, edited by Cheryll Glofelty and Harold Fromm and *The Environmental Imagination* by Lawrence Buell. (4)

The future ecocriticism sets multidisciplinary discourse in academic studies such as environmental ethics, sociology, psychology and globalism and so on. It has deepened in cultural issue as gender, race, identity, social issue and suppression of weaker sex. It also recently focused to environmental justice movement. Especially, it emerged new avenue of postcolonial studies with

interdisciplinary theory such urbanization, modernization and feminist ecocritical studies.

Ecofeminism is related study between feminism and ecology. It believed that French writer Francoise d'Eaubonne coined the term in her book *Le Feminisme ou la Mort* in 1974. It brings connection between exploitation of women and domination of natural world. Initially, it seeks to bring justice against social injustice of women and degradation of environment. According to Mary Mellor's "Feminism & Ecology" ecofeminism movement emerged in the year 1970 and the second wave brings feminism and green movement. Green movement deals with ecological issue whereas ecofeminism targets about oppression of women "the green movement a concern about the impact of human activities on the non-human world and from feminism the view of humanity as gendered in ways that subordinate, exploit and oppress women." (4)

The chasing environmental crisis prevented to talk about national frontier issues, national identity, and racism. Ecocriticism viewed as vibrant aspect of the literary context in Canadian literature. The national policy, laws affects the national landscape and nature. The emerging trend of ecocritical study indicates the essential of ecocriticism, feminism and postcolonial issues which closely related to social, ecological and cultural matters with their influence on national, ethnic, gender identities. Margaret Atwood, famous Canadian who contributed key concepts in Canadian literary tradition. Early Canadian poets set various problematic theme such as unifying national culture, geographical area, multi linguistic, self identification in their work. Later years, the introducing of pipeline, construction of dam and various projects in the name of urbanization, modernization which disturbs the modern writer to seek greater significance in environmental protection. The echo of environmental conscience of writers reflects in literary field. This sense induced eco-critical approach to the poem in the twentieth century.

Duncan Campbell Scott reputed twentieth century poet expressed his sense of modernization which lead environmental destruction in his poem 'Long Sault'. It sets seen of construction of the

hydroelectric dam at Cornwall. He express his miserable state exploitation of landscape and his another poem 'See' the author brought the notice to the reader about power of utilization which lead environmental reshaping.

"the new islands
submerged highways
man-made cut,
parkway,
control dam"

Kevin McNeilly asserted that "sets in motion an anti-colonial poetics challenging the egocentricity of the lyric voice" ecocritical poets emerged in twentieth century in his 'Credo' poems and he referred Don McKay, Jan Zwicky, Roo Borson, Tim Lilburn, Robert Bringham and Dennis Lee as eco-poets whose work are highly ecological dominated issue in the twentieth century and in the twenty-first century Anne Carson and George Elliott Clarke are reputed eco-poets. (5)

Frank Davey in his 'From There to Here; A Guide to English-Canadian Literature' opined Fred Wah writing involves geographical and historical description rather than any other issues. Fred Wah's 'So Far', 'What Prevails', 'Spring Geography', 'Anthropomorphia', 'White Lake' and 'How to Get Across a River / Any River' seem to be an ecocritical approach in the context. Ed Dyck viewed Fred Wah used untraditional language and notion in his poem which gives source of critical studies that he "is one of the most de-constructive poets writing in Canada today"

George bowering claimed in his 'Loki Is Buried at Smoky Creek Selected Poems of Fred Wah' predominate involvement of aesthetic writing (6). This is exemplified in the poem 'Mountain'

"How the earth
Dangles
Eyeing over the geographical heap
now the nation smothers
lays onto the private magic state"

The poem states that the wonder of geographical changes but it mainly insists that the changes made by human 'nation smother' and he approaches the poem as 'nature writing'.

Nicholas Bradley explains Dennis Lee's 'Civil Elegies' visualized urban city as part of natural world and

show keen concern for the environmental protection of the city and wilderness.

D.M.R Bentley in his essay 'The Gay] Grey Moose' critically commented the relationship between poetry and landscape from the 17th century to the present and he sketches modern Canadian poet as "an ecological poetics". This poetics explains two key concepts of ecological assumptions that interdependent of man and nature 'community of interdependent parts' and he argued that the diversity between man and natural world must be eradicated and he feels that this kind of ecological moment of the writer would create oneness of human and nature so it brings against denatured uniformity and the same thought is expressed by Lawrence Buell's "Writing for an Endangered World" where he mainly focuses "to put 'green' and 'brown' landscapes, the landscapes of outskirts and industrialization, in conversation with one another". He defines 'nature' and the 'human construction' as inclusive of environment and this physical change of environment brings anthropogenic issues "human transformations of physical nature have made the two realms increasingly indistinguishable.... Indeed, the nature-culture distinction itself is an anthropogenic product". (7)

John Terpstra sparked his concern of ecological damage through his prose 'Falling into place'. He portrays physical and social geography of Hamilton harbour has changed due to formation of sandbar. Especially this work scrutinized consideration of modern society's broader and negligence of landscape alteration. "we're made of this stuff, this earth, this shale, this mud and suffering clay." (8)

Ella Soper and Nicholas Bradley in 'Greening the Maple' closely examined the urgency of focusing on ecocriticism in the context of Canadian literary studies "the investigation of the many ways in which culture and the environment- the realm that both includes and exceeds the human- are interrelated and conceptualized" and additional raised further scope of introducing intersection between ecocriticism and postcolonialism. Especially, the theory

conceptualized the implications of postmodern theory for ecocritical writing.(9)

Campbell's 'persona' illustrated his self with landscape and his poem 'Land song' explores his sense of realization of natural world and awareness of interrelatedness between self and environment.

"No longer
an observer
part of the land
I belong
my difference unique
the grass and me equal"

The poem express speaker as participate of nature which is meant in the line "part of the land" and similar feeling is expressed in 'Echo Lake'.

Alden Nowlan reveals environmental issue in his poem 'St.John River'. It explicitly concern about water pollution in St.John River. The author reflects less significant with the reciprocal interaction between speaker and environment and he mainly inferred destructive output of human. He expresses awareness of environmental destruction and human compliance in his usage of ecolect and own undermining strategies.

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