

## Biodiversity in Indian Fiction

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**Abstract:** *Writers and poets have provided works that reflected the close relationships between nature and literature. Biodiversity is the genetic variation, ecosystem variation, or species variation within an area, or plant. Concern for biodiversity is one of the most discussed issues today. It is the issue of concern of every country to replenish the decreasing factors of ecology which threatens human beings the most. Literature reflects the concern for biodiversity that have remained unaffected from this theme. The world of literature packed with works dealing with beauty and power of nature. Biodiversity has come to mean not only the application of ecology and ecological principles to the study of literature, but also the theoretical approach to the interconnected web of natural cultural and supernatural phenomena. In the history of Indian English literature, there are a few novels, which can be related to the biodiversity. The scope of biodiversity in fiction is widened because of the inclusion of the different perspective proposed by the critics around the world.*

**Key Words:** *Biodiversity, relationship, concern, threaten, literature, nature,*

### Introduction

Writers and poets in almost all cultures of the world have provided works that reflected the close relationships between nature and literature. This intimate relationship between the natural and social world is being examined and discussed in all departments of knowledge and development. The literary critic studies how this close relationship between nature and society has been discussed by the writers in their works. In this context the term biodiversity has become very important. India is a country with variety of ecosystems. With time, however, these ecosystems have been unpleasantly affected due to increasing population and greed of mankind.

Literature certainly influenced of this depletion and my paper is all about the biodiversity in Indian fiction. The two parts of nature, organisms and their environment are not only much complex and dynamic but also interrelated. Biodiversity is the genetic variation, ecosystem variation, or species variation within an area, or plant. It can be described as the way in which plants, animals and people are related to each other and their environment. In this relationship they are so much interrelated on each other that any disturbance in one disturbs the other. It is clear from the history that has proved this that with every change in the civilization the relationship of animals and human beings have also changed and the effect on civilization has been so severe that sometimes it has wiped the whole civilization from the face of the earth. Therefore, concern for biodiversity in ecology is one of the most discussed issues today. It is the

issue of concern of every country to replenish the decreasing factors of ecology which threatens human beings the most.

### **Detailed Analysis**

Literature reflects the contemporary issues that have remained unaffected from this theme. The world of literature packed with works dealing with beauty and power of nature. However, the concern for biodiversity and the threat that the continuous misuse of our environment creates on humanity has only recently caught the attention of the writers. Nature is a chief factor controlling the earth. Nature change will interact with other factors to affect the availability of suitable environment habitats. The difficulty for conservation endeavors will be to identify those rare species which are limited by dispersal rather than establishment or habitat availability. There is very little information for both common and rare cryptogam species, making such predictions difficult. White eagle or white tiger are disappearing. Transplantation experiments describes that a successful physical bond between nature and man is changed. There is a mismatch between the nature and man as we have knowledge of species' dispersal and those which appear likely to be most impacted by climate change. Studies of birds and animals show that there is dangerous change in nature. Moreover insect distributions may be hard to detect as accurate data are lacking. Greater risks clearly exist for habitat specialists in isolated places.

In order to understand the impacts of climate change on biodiversity one must understand the reasons behind it. The free use of plastic without any pressure causes damage not only us but also nature. The growth of Mechanical items, growing number of industries, and important man who is not only responsible for all this but also himself doing irreparable actions like cutting the trees, destroying the rocks.

However, in the beginning scholars doing work in this field of literary theory continued marginal until the early 1990 when the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) was established in 1992 along with the Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment (ISLE) in 1993. With time these ecosystems have been disturbed due to increasing population and avarice of mankind. In this paper the focus of study is on how this close relationship between nature and society has been textualized by the writers in their works. Ecology and eco-criticism are two important terms. Raja Rao depicted relationship between man and nature. R.K.Narayan has given life to a place. The other writers such as Bhabani Bhattacharya, Kamala Markandya, Ruskin Bond, and Anita Desai in whose works we see the dominance of nature images and landscapes to tell the changing circumstances or to describe the mood. So biodiversity gives increased attention to literary representatives of nature and is sensitive to inter-dependencies that ground the author, character or work in the natural system. The scope of biodiversity widened because of the inclusion of the different perspective proposed by the critics around the world.

The African American writers refused to be a part of this as they believed themselves as a politically, economically and socially marginalized section. There have also been many discussions on whether to involve human culture in the physical world. Despite the wide scope of inquiry all ecological criticism shares the fundamental premise that human culture is related to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it. In the past the literary criticism shows the basic gap between nature and culture. An element of artificiality can be noticed in this perceived separation, for nature and culture often termed as twinned process. It can be said that culture is produced by human beings and is therefore different from nature bypasses the fact that all human culture lives in the natural world. Man accepts this very existence to its processes.

Therefore, his every action toward the natural world is an action toward oneself and toward one's culture. At present biodiversity is in full swing and is easily accepted theory worldwide. It is possible to say that the study of the relationship between literature and the environment. Human attitudes toward the environment as expressed in nature writing, is explored by the researchers. It is a wide area that is known by many names like green cultural studies, and environmental literary criticism, which are some popular names for this relatively new branch of literary criticism. Literary criticism explores the relations between writers, texts and the world.

Biodiversity has come to mean not only the application of ecology and ecological principles to the study of literature, but also the theoretical approach to the interconnected web of natural cultural and supernatural phenomena. It started to explore constructions of environment in literary texts and theoretical discourse. Since literature has always shaped not only our philosophical understanding of nature but also, of environment. Moreover most ecological work has a common motivation, that is, the awareness that we have arrived the age of environmental limits, a time when the results of human actions are damaging the planet's basic life support system. This awareness takes in us a wish to give to environmental restoration, not only as an interest but as a representative of literature. Ecocritics motivate others to consider seriously about the aesthetic and ethical dilemmas posed by the environmental crisis and about how language and literature cross values with profound ecological implications.

In the history of Indian English literature, there are a few novels, which can be related to the biodiversity. It is true that nature has been used as an important backdrop against which the story develops. The progress at that time was not very important, and the writers were not seriously aware to understand and write about something significant for the human society. In Indian English literature Raja Rao is one of the most noticeable writers of Indian English novels. His presentation of the South Indian village culture and environmental setting is a true portrayal of relationship between man and nature. In his novel 'Kanthapura' he has described how rivers and mountains have an important role in people's lives. They have many names for them. In this novel they named the mountain as Goddess Kenchamma and they believe it responsible for both – their prosperity and their adversity. Raja Rao describes Kenchamma in the novel as the goddess.

R. K. Narayan is the another writer who wrote in the same decade and has given life to a place, Malgudi, or it is possible to say that he has created a place as a character which can be found in almost all his prose fictions bearing the same features. In fact, he portrayed landscape as a prime theme and as described in the earlier chapter this is also one of the important considerations under biodiversity. In 'The Dark Room' the river and the ruined temple have a significant effect on Savitri. The flowing Sarayu, the ruined temple and the stone slabs affect Raju in 'The Guide', and donate to his sainthood. It is the spirit of Malgudi that motivates him to face the difficulty of fast in the right earnest. It is the recede across the river that almost changes Jagan. In this way Malgudi is a character. Under the pleasant influence of pure nature Krishna becomes so spiritual that he is ready to communicate with the soul of Susila. Professor Iyenger justifiably advocates the theory that Malgudi is the real 'hero' of ten novels and the many short stories of Narayan and that underneath the seeming change and the human drama there is something the 'soul' of the place that defies or embraces all changes and is triumphantly and unalterably itself.

Moreover, Malgudi becomes the symbol of the traditional Indian shedding the age old traditions and accepting the modern western civilization. The Malgudi novels and short stories are strongly infused with what D. H. Lawrence has called 'the spirit of place'. Nature is stronger than man. It has often proved its power by controlling manpower through natural calamities like flood, famine, drought, earthquake etc. Nature and Man's life are so interlinked that it is not easy for human beings to separate themselves from its influence. Therefore they have no option but to accept both nature's bounty and adversity. This can be said to be reciprocal as nature too is the recipient of man's action. Our irresponsible act gives serious damages to nature. In this way the chain of ecosystem works in which everything is related to each other and therefore affects each other. The effect of one such natural calamity on the humanity can be found in Bhabani Bhattacharya's 'So Many Hungers'. The true picture of Bengal famine of 1943 in which at least 3,000,000 Indians died of starvation can be found. The novel is loaded with the ingredients of sighs and tears, misery and squalor, hunger and poverty and heroic suffering and sacrifice. The Bengal famine of 1943 which destroyed millions under its disastrous results forms the major part of the novel's plot.

Kamala Markandya's novel 'Nectar in Sieve' is another work that presents. In this novel the writer has very well described the control of nature over human beings. Nature is presented as both the destroyer and the preserver in this story. The dangerous feature of nature is found in the pathetic condition of the villagers due to the rain and storm.

Ruskin Bond is the writer whose works present ecology not only as an important or dominant theme, but there is also concern for natural reduction that is taking place. The beautiful natural scenes of Dehradun and Mussoorie almost always form the setting of his works and show his passionate faith in the healing powers of nature. He presents his worry for the thoughtless actions of man towards nature. Through his short stories for children he has worked hard to give an

essential message to everyone, that is, the importance of nature in our life. In his 'An Island of Trees' the grandmother discloses to her granddaughter, Koki, the deep relationship that increases between humans and nature if only there is love and compassion. It describes the pathetic condition of the animals after deforestation. He has always focused on the friendly relationship between man and nature and has presented the need for each other. His concern for the unsympathetic and cruel actions of human beings towards nature is revealed from his works.

He discloses the limitations of human beings. If nature takes revenge for our cruelties towards her the whole humanity which boasts so much of their brain will be washed away from the face of the earth. He portrays the political system that is involved in the name of protecting animals and their natural habitat at the cost of innocent lives.

It is possible to say that climate change is a prominent threat to global biodiversity. Changes in the location of nature will drive species range-shifting, but various factors (e.g. land use change, species' characteristics) will put limitations on the ability of species to find suitable climate. This has offered the proposals for the use of a particular type of species translocations for conservation during climate change.

## Conclusion

To sum up, as a different approach to the practice literary criticism, biodiversity offers increased attention to literary representatives of nature and is sensitive to interdependencies that ground the author, character or work in the natural system. This major approach moves critical attention from social relations toward natural relationships and considers the individual as a member of ecosystem. With the beginning of literature the writers have revealed their interest towards nature, culture and landscape. For example writers like Narayan landscape was the part of the theme or the characters which portrayed growth with time. Apart from this the natural disasters that the country faced from time to time also used as themes for novels of writers like Bhabani Bhattacharya and Kamla Markandya. In the later years it took speed and more and more works of different writers were published which could be read under this school of criticism. This can be said that the scope of biodiversity in fiction is widened because of the inclusion of the different perspective proposed by the critics around the world.

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