

Eco-Criticism in the Book of Nature by Ruskin Bond



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A

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Certificate

I hereby certify that the dissertation entitled “Eco-criticism in the Book of Nature” by Gurdeep Kaur for the award of M.A. degree is a record of research work done by the candidate under my supervision during the period of her study (2015-2017) and that the dissertation has not formed the basis for the award of any other degree, diploma, associate ship, fellowship or other similar title and this dissertation represents independent work on the part of the candidate.

Place: Jalandhar

Sukhvinderjit Kaur Chopra

Date:

Supervisor

Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled Eco-criticism in The Book of Nature by Ruskin Bond is a record of first hand research work done by me during the period of my study in the year 2015-2017 and that this dissertation has not formed the basis for the award of any other degree, diploma, associate ship, fellowship, or other similar title.

Place: Jalandhar

Signature of the Candidate

Date:

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Introduction

The present dissertation entitled “Eco-criticism in Ruskin Bond’s *Book of Nature*” explores the writer’s passion for nature and his experience with it. He discussed his love and care for nature. Ecology without Nature by Timothy Morton, Eco-criticism by Greg Garrard, Writing for an Endangered world by Lawrence Buell, discussed about the environmental issues in their books. Ruskin Bond also discussed the human activities that disturb the nature and soothing effect of nature on the lives of living beings. At the outset of the study it is significant to point out the ideas that motivated the researcher to take up the topic of the present dissertation. The intensive review of literature of past and present was done and found a veritable research gap. Bond discussed about the relationship between living beings and the environment. It motivate the readers to appreciate the nature and preserve their natural surroundings, and make the organisations that work to preserve the nature.

Ruskin bond was born in May 1934. He spent his childhood in the hill stations of Dehradun and Mussorie. Then he went to England for his primary studies. He had forged an intimate relationship with the scenic beauties of the Himalayan region. He was quite by nature and stayed away from the attention of media. Bond started writing in England. He wrote his first novel named *Room on the Roof* when he was 17. It was a semi-autobiographical story on the life of an orphaned Anglo-Indian boy, reflecting his own life. He won the prestigious John Ie wellyn Rhys prize that is awarded to a British Common Wealth writer under the age of 30. The book based on the Himalayan and captures the beauty and ethos in a manner that was never tried before. Its sequel named *Vagrants in the Valley* followed it. He tried to make readers understand the landscape and ethos through carefully mastered words. His stories manifest a deep love for nature and people, replete with unassuming humour and quite wisdom. His mesmerizing descriptions about the flora and

fauna of Himalayas cannot be missed in his hundred something short stories, essays, novels and books of children that he has written. He has always been inspired by the hill stations and the foothills of the Himalayas. Some of his novellas mirrored the kind of life and experience he had when he was young. His novel named 'The Flight of Pigeons' has been adapted into the acclaimed film Junoon. *The Room on the Roof* has been adapted in to a BBC produced TV series. He received the Sahitya Akademi Award for English writing in India for 'Our Trees still grows in Dehra' in 1992. He has also been conferred with Padma Shri, one of the most prestigious civil awards in India. In literature Eco-critics encourage creative writers how language and literature can help in transmitting values with profound ecological implications and restore the aesthetic beauty of the Earth. Ruskin bond's dominant theme is ecology and environment. A natural scenic hill of Dehradun and Mussoorie always constitute the setting of his works and reflects his faith in the healing power of the nature. Through his short stories he conveys the significant message to the readers and forwards his worries for the cruel actions of the man towards the nature.

He emphasizes that there is a relationship between man and nature and both are interdependent and interrelated. He feels pity for the cruel and unsympathetic nature of humans towards nature. His empathy for nature and animals is depicted in his stories and poems. Many of his stories are set in the landour cantonment in the upper reaches of Mussoorie. His works preserve the tranquillity, beauty and serenity of the Garhwal Himalayas. He has written over three hundred stories in which he brings the vivid picture of Himalayas and deals with different aspects of the region from beauty of nature to recent environmental degradation. He talked about the two human stages the children's thoughts and adult's reactions. Children love nature, birds and animals. They never harm or exploit them this comes naturally to them. Only the adults are drive by monetary considerations. If a leopard skin fetches them good price they would kill it. Compassion, kindness, pity, trust and

love mean nothing to them. This cruel selfish attitude of humans shatters the idyllic natural world causing worry and chaos for other creatures on the Earth. He touches the burning issues in a very light manner the awareness of the evils of deforestation and other environmental imbalances. The deep bond that grows between humans and non-humans only if there is love and compassion. He wrote 'An Island of Trees' in which grandmother discusses her father and his great love for trees and flowers and had blind passion for planting trees. Ruskin lives in the foothills of the Himalayas since his childhood. In his stories there is references of irresponsible acts and behaviour of humans. One can easily find the sympathy and love for animals and nature in his stories and he could feel hurt for the creatures being shot for pleasures and other monetary gains. On the whole Ruskin's stories preserve his great love and concern for nature. We need to develop the sincere, selfless, honest, and loyal toward nature and inculcate the true essence of environmental ethics and ecology.

The book under study, *Book of Nature* would be analysed through the angle of Eco-criticism. It is the study of literature and the environment from an interdisciplinary point of view, where scholars analyse texts that illustrate environmental concerns and examine the various ways literature treats the subject of nature. Literature is known for reflecting the contemporary issues, the world of literature throngs with works dealing with beauty and power of nature. However, this of concern and its reflection in literature has given rise to a new branch of literary works and of the relationship between literature and the environment. Eco-criticism is the understanding of the environmental crises of modern times. The number of significant developments in literature which took keen interest in nature as a subject and wrote about industrialization which effect the natural world and the meaning of living in harmony with nature and soul. Eco-criticism defined as the relationship between literature and the physical Environment. It is also called as 'Green studies'. This term is considered a critical approach which started in the USA in the 1980s and in the UK in the 1990s. It warns

us about the environmental threats emanating from governmental, industrial, commercial, and neo-colonial forces. Eco-criticism talks about the issues of the social and linguistic constructed-ness of reality. The attitude towards nature vary some of which are culturally determined but this is regarded differently in different cultures. Nature which contains all of us in the cycle of growth, maturity and decay. We have nature and culture and states partaking of both all these are real. We call outdoor environment as an adjoining and overlapping areas which move from nature to culture such as area one: ‘the wilderness’(e.g. deserts, oceans, uninhabited continents) area two: ‘the scenic sublime’(e.g. forests, lakes, mountains, cliffs, waterfalls) area three: ‘ the countryside’(e.g. hills, fields, woods) area four: ‘the domestic picturesque’(e.g. parks, gardens, lanes). Through these areas move from pure nature to predominantly culture. The main aim of Eco-criticism is to present how the literature is concerned about the environment and tries to solve the ecological concerns. And this is depicted very subtly in the works of Ruskin Bond, where this reality is not explicit but has to be inferred. The scope of Eco-criticism has been expanded by nature writing romantic poetry The word Eco-criticism first appear in William Rueckerts essay literature and ecology and experiment in Eco-criticism in 1978. Eco-criticism today, is in full serving and is readily accepted theory worldwide. It is referred to as the study of relationship between literature and the environment. In this the human attitude toward environment is explored and is expressed in nature writing.

The collection of Ruskin Bond’s works brings together the best of his writing on the natural world not just the Himalayan foothills but also the cities and small towns that he has lived in or travels through as a young man. In book of nature he describes the nature, he was living with his grandparents in the hills of Himalayas he discussed the trees, flowers, animals, natural elements through the short stories. He discuss his own experiences, observations like the fight of mongoose and snake and that he listened to the whistling of the Himalayas on the

banyan tree at his window the blissful memories which arouse the joy in the readers. He is talking about natural surrounding and his lonely childhood. He discussed that earlier people having big lawn or park in their houses and they used to maintain the gardens and decorate with flowers, trees where there were so many birds and animals. It shows that now a day's people don't have time to do such activities and he was living with his grandparents but now a day because of lack of time they don't have leisure time to spend it in the lapse of nature. Nature has the aesthetic pleasure which soothes the mind and has the power to one should get rid off from the tensions and hustle-bustle of the daily life. He wrote about the leopards in the Mussoorie at night and the padding down uproar of monsoon coming up with new life. Bond describes the insects at twilight outside his windows, ancient banyan trees, Cosmo flowers a bat who strays into his room and gives him company and makes the night less lonely this work proves further serenity and lyricism of his prose and his sharp sympathetic eye. He pens down the images of his experiences with nature in this book.

The book of Nature is a perfect example of Eco-criticism in which firstly he discussed his experiences with nature. He was living with his grand-parents. In their house was a garden where he used to play, sit on the trees and watch the birds chirping and make their house on the trees. The branches of trees bent over his window. He used to sit under the shade of the trees and write his stories. His grand-father had so many pet animals and all were his friends. He feels nature has a healing effect. It soothes the mind in the company of nature one can be relaxed. It works as a stress buster. One cannot feel lonely in the lapse of nature as the plants and animals were his companion. He used to explore the flora and fauna of the place where he was living in Dehra. From his house he could see the vast forest. He discussed the cruel behaviour of the human how they destroy the Nature, cut trees and sell the wood for monetary gains. They kill animals like tigers to get their hide and smuggle only for money. The poachers and hunters are oblivious of that they are ruining the nature. If trees are not

there on Earth, humans will not survive. The species of plants and animals thriving in forests will not have place to live and grow, so gradually, they'll disappear. The trees help in generating rainfall and prevent the soil erosion. If trees are cut down there will be less of rain which would lead to drought and there will be no land for farming also, the fertility rate of soil will diminish. It would be impossible for a man to grow crops. He talked about these issues in this book which make people realise their callous attitude in order to bring awareness in order to protect Earth from further damage. This book makes us aware about the environmental issues and wildlife conservation. It is an example of both aspects of nature; a positive one on how Nature is useful and helps in day to day life. Nature works as a stress-buster for the humans and they learn so many things from it and the other is destructive, wherein he gives examples of earthquakes and storms.

SCOPE

This dissertation shall focus on the research problem, that is Ecocriticism in the Book of Nature by Ruskin Bond we see he manifest the deep love for nature and its relation with human beings and with modernism the people are not attentive towards the nature they are dependent on the nature but they totally ignored it. Many works has been done on the Ruskin Bond but this topic Eco-criticism is not particularly by anyone that's why I choose this topic.

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this dissertation is to explore the elements of Eco-criticism in literature. To analyse how Eco-criticism is used what does it explain, how it is implemented and major role does it play in literature

1. To analyse chapters philosophically.

2. To analyse phrases philosophically.
3. To analyse short poetry.
4. To analyse flower haikus.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative in nature, thorough reading of the text, library search and various research papers and internet are undertaken. Regarding the format of the dissertation, the instructions of MLA Handbook (Seventh Edition) will be followed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chetan Trivedi in his article “Portrayal of Indian social customs, festivals and Gods in the works of Ruskin Bond” states that Ruskin Bond is a writer who is sensitive and has the deep essence of nature. He described the multilingual and distinct culture of contemporary Indian society. Bond as a novelist, short story writer also wrote for the children’s. He is fond of India so in his works he depicts the Indian festivals and culture and its effect on the people. He describes the Indian culture, tradition and festivals and he depicts in a true sense without any exaggeration.

Debashish Opadhya Bandy in his article “Quest for an Authentic Literary Grain: Two Versions of the Eyes Are not here” states that Ruskin Bond describes the impression of place and sense of belongingness. He relates the human and non-human environment, the natural surrounding and his affection for his place. He depicts his childhood and his real life experiences and his love for nature. There are some autobiographical elements in his works.

He talked about his isolation and lack of many friends in life. He talks in flashback and keeps thinking about his past and compares his past life with the present.

Ganesh Sali in his book “Our Enduring Bond” says that, Bond is a storyteller for whom independence is more important than fortune whose life is simple and down to earth. His stories illustrate the summer afternoons in the mountains which turn into dusky golden hour, a tender remembrance, a feeling of fainthearted.

Greg Garrard in his book “Eco-criticism” says that he is inspired by Ruskin Bond. Eco-criticism explores the ways in which we imagine and portray the relationship between humans and the environment. He traces in his volumes the development of the movement and explores the concepts which have most occupied Eco-critics, including pollution, wilderness, apocalypse, dwelling, animals, Earth.

Chapter 1

Eco-Criticism with reference to situations in the book

In the beginning Bond talking about his childhood and describing the beautiful lawn he had in his grand-father's house. He used to live with his grand-parents. In the house there was a big banyan tree over which he felt an ownership. He describes the pets used to live there firstly the squirrel which became his friend whom he usually feed him with his hands. The squirrel used to delve into his pockets and helped himself to whatever he could find. In the spring, when the banyan tree was full of small red figs, birds of all kinds would flock into its branches, the red-bottomed bulbul, cheerful and greedy, gossiping rosy-pastors, and parrots and crows, squabbling with each other all the time. During the fig season, the banyan tree was the noisiest place on the road. He built a small platform halfway up the tree on which he often spent his afternoons. One day he saw an exciting thing, fight between a snake and a mongoose. The cobra stood on the defensive, swaying slowly from side to side, trying to mesmerize the mongoose into making a false move. The mongoose knew the power of his opponent's glassy, twinkling eyes, and refused to meet them. He fixed his gaze at a point just below the cobra's hood, and opened the attack. His grand-father had unusual pets; a baby elephant in his North India house and a cassowary bird. But the cassowary bird was different no one had ever seen such a bird before not in India. Grand-father had picked it up on a voyage to Singapore, where he had been given the bird by a rubber planter, who got it from a Dutch trader who brought it from Indonesia. The house was full of pets there were spotted owlets a small birds fully grown one is no larger than a thrush and they have none of the sinister appearance of large owls. Bond put the outlets under his bed and then they were on the window ledge just inside the mosquito netting. The owlets became regular members of his household and were among the few pets that his grand-mother took a liking to. She objected to all snakes, most monkeys and some crows that he had all these pets time to time. He says while looking back on these childhood days, he carry a picture of grand-mother in

her rocking chair with a contended owlet sprawled across her aproned lap in his mind. While she was taking a nap, owlets had crawled up her pillow till his head was smuggled under her ear both grand-mother and the owlet were snoring. He and his grand-parents moved from Dehra to Lucknow with all the pets they had parrots, small squirrel, Timothy, a cub. Timothy was discovered by grand-father on a hunting expedition in the Terai jungle near Dehra, and when the tiger was six months old, he was put into a zoo. Bond always had the dream of possessing a garden of his own. Not a very formal garden certainly not the stately home type with its pools and fountains and neat hedges as described in the essay 'of Gardens' by Bacon but to be a little untidy, unplanned, and full of surprises. Which gives him a few surprises at times? He talked about the admirer of the nature poetry of Wordsworth who decided to have his own field of nodding daffodils, and planted daffodil bulbs all over his front yard. And Annie Powell who at the age of ninety, was up early in the morning to water her lovely garden. Then he talked about his grand-parents house surrounded by a beautiful and well-kept garden. Grand-father looked after the orchard; grand-mother looked after the flower garden. He wished that he had been old enough to prevent that lovely home from passing into other hands.

Bond spoke of Delhi when it had begun to grow. Many new colonies sprung up on the out skirts of the capital. There were no gardens; the treeless colonies were buffeted by hot, dusty winds from Haryana and Rajasthan. To escape from the city life that constantly oppressed him, he walked across the main road into the fields, finding old wells, irrigation channels, camels and buffaloes and sighting birds and small creatures that no longer dwelt in the city. In summer and winter he scorned the dust and the traffic and walked all over Delhi, in search of quiet spots with some shade, a few birds, flower and fruit. He spent many of his afternoons lying on the grass near India gate. He describes the bushes that he liked it the most, they may have been in the ground a long time thirty or forty years or more continuing

to remain a bush, man-sized and approachable. Bushes are ideal for binding the Earth together and preventing erosion. He loved to live in the mountains where crime and random violence were comparatively less.

When Ruskin was a little boy he wants to visit the river but between the boy and river there was a mountain. He stood in front of his house on the hill opposite the mountain and gazed across the valley, dreaming of the river. The path to the river dropped steeply into the valley, then rose and went round the big mountain. He started walking barefoot so that he can feel the warm stones and cool grass. Early in the summer the grass on the hills was still a pale yellowish green, tinged with brown, and that is how it remains until the monsoon rains bring new life to everything that subsists on the stony Himalayan soil.. The hunters who often visited the jungle at night and killed deer and leopards to sell their skin in Delhi for mere thousand rupees each. When he walked through the roofless ruins, he was struck by the silence that surrounded him, the absence of birds and animals, and the sense of complete desolation. When he walked home through the silent forest; it was very silent, almost as though the birds and animals knew their trust had been violated. Whenever he walked into the hills, he came across gangs of road- workers, breaking stones, cutting into the rocky hillsides, building retaining walls. A new road is one more road to explore, and in the interests of progress he is prepared to put up with the dust raised by the occasional bus. And if it becomes too dusty, one can always leave the main road.

He discussed the flora and fauna of India that is rich as in Eastern and Western Himalayas. The mountain slopes and valleys present remarkable contrasts in elevation, humidity and temperature. All the year round, the hills are steeped in a tangle of blossom and verdure. The valleys, winding down from snowy heights, and carrying streams from the snows to the scorching foothills, are full of vegetation which seldom loses its vivid green. He tried to convey to the reader an impression of the floral delights that await the trekker, the

lover of mountains, and the amateur botanist. In the lower foothills, the greater number of trees is deciduous. They acclaim the spring with an outburst of blossom. This variety is very characteristic of tropical vegetation. He talks of trees being very important for Earth which helps in rainfall and prevent soil erosion. Trees for him are like the guardians of his conscience. He always used to watch from his windows, looking at them as a marvel of nature. In monsoon trees were like an orchestra pit with the musicians constantly tuning up. Birds, insects and squirrels expressed their joy at the termination of the hot weather and the cool quenching relief of the monsoon. Bond with toy flute in hands with his poor musical ability piped and birds and insects maintained a pained and puzzled silence. Many birds gathered at the trees rested when night fell munching as they clambered over the branches. He usually sat beneath the trees and listened to the wind playing softly in its branches. He went among the trees in hills often acknowledging their presence with a touch of his hand against their trunk. The walnut trees were smooth and straight and polished. Sometimes he sat under the tree and listened to the wind passing through the branches of blue pine softly. When he opened the window at night he used to listen to the whistle of owlets, or cry of a barking deer which indicated the presence of panther. Some sounds of the trees in the dark scratching their limbs, shifting a little and flexing their fingers. He feels that all the mountains trees know him well. They know his face in the window, they see him watching them, watching them grow, listening to their secrets, bowing my head before their outstretched arms and seeking their benediction. The Sal considered to be important among the tribes of central India. At the time of marriages one pole of bamboo and one of Sal are used in the marriage shed and anointed with oil and turmeric. One unwilling to go through with the marriage takes a leaf of Sal and tears it into two. Then he talked about the beautiful tree Mahua which is also important for the tribal people because its flower can be eaten raw or cooked in some tribes at the time of drought people depend mostly on the Mahua crop. It

blooms in the beginning of hot weather. Both animals and humans are fond of Mahua. Ruskin Bond also discussed about the banyan tree which is his companion since childhood. Mostly he wrote his stories beneath the banyan tree. These trees are extremely big, most gentle and friendly which cannot be seen in the cities because it occupies lots of space to spread itself. Every village has one banyan tree which is not possible in the cities because there is not enough space for people. It has aerial roots which support the tree like pillars and its branches out more twisting and trailing branches so that after some years the tree forms a forest glade of its own. This tree always cool, dark and shady and anyone can easily climb it without any difficulty and there is no danger of falling off. It is also place of living for many birds, squirrels, insects, flying foxes and act as a hotel or boarding house because there are so many families living next to each other without disturbing each other. Its wood which is tough and elastic used to make poles and yokes for bullock-carts and its leaves and twigs are the good feed for elephants. It can be found at the roadside with beautiful supporting roots. It deserves our love and care because this noble tree give us cool, refreshing shade in the hot summer days.

The peepal trees are great show-offs because its leaves spin like tops and attract the attention and invite people into their shades even when there is no breeze. Its slender like tips strike with each other which produce the sound like the pattering of raindrops. It is also known as tree of wisdom because rishis used to sit under it for meditation. It is considered as a sacred tree in Hindus. It is believed that its roots represent Brahma, its bark Vishnu, and its branches Shiva. It can be easily grow anywhere its seed falls. Its leaf has a perfect point during the rain water drip from the tip. It is also said that mostly this tree is residence of a most of the ghosts and mischievous spirits which rushes on buses, bullock-carts to disturb them. It is also believed that to cut this tree is a sin and if plant this tree get the blessings of generations to come. We should plant more trees not only peepal but also the other trees for

shade and shelter, fruit and flower, beauty and utility. The mango trees called as the king of fruits. The fruit used as in pickles and chutneys and also eat as ripe and taken as flattened and dried and also as juice. It is also worshipped by the woman-folk to protect the children from the disease and sometimes also set up when Ganesh is worshipped. It is the favourite nesting place for the parrots during the breeding season. The silk-cotton trees are tall, leafless covered with crimson flowers it look beautiful. It is a good shade tree, losing its leaves for only a brief period, just before it flowers. During the summers its seeds covered with white cotton that is blown with breeze but this cotton is not used for spinning and weaving for clothes but used as stuffing the pillows and cushions. Bond visited the pink knoll it's the place of peace and power for him. He said when trees saw him they made him too turned to their direction and he feels that trees always remembered him and the slow wind blow welcoming him to home. He went through the trees and feels the welcoming of trees by touching their trunks. When the rains over he usually visit their so that he can feel the peace and power of this place because there is so many things happen in the world but here he seen the most of things happen which has a positive effect on him. Then he talked about the sacred trees in India which over the period of civilization has an important place the minds and hearts of people. The strong refreshing aroma of neem pods when crushed under foot lingers in the air this tree gives the more oxygen than other trees. It has medicinal properties its leaves, bark and sap used in the medicines.

The neem tree purifies the air. This tree also used to cure the disease like small pox and by chewing the leaves of neem it purify physically and spiritually. These trees considered to be sacred in India because of their mystery growth and movement of leaves and branches the way they lose and again in the spring they regain their leaves, branches and flowers. It is surprised for the people they think that it is done because of some miracle or any spiritual power and they devoted to the spirit or tree- god who occupied it. People have many believes

regarding trees that one should not shake the tree at night they think that the spirit sleeping that might be disturbed by this. Some other facts the mahua tree tribal people before wedding the bridegroom goes through the mock marriage with a mahua tree. Some other trees like champa people hung their bangles those who want kids and the saint as per his own wish snatched a bangle to anyone and she wore that in her arms. The trees like dhak or palas used to dye the colours used in the festival of holi and the wood of these trees used to lighting the holi bonfire. The babul or kikar grow anywhere in the plain areas and there are some beliefs associated with it like it can cure the headache and fever by tie seven cotton thread to it and embrace the trunk seven times. And some other belief is that if you water babul tree regularly for thirteen days one can control over the spirit who occupied it. The other believes regarding tree is the mango tree which is consider as the wish filling tree. If anyone wants to make the wish they have to close their eyes and get lead to the mango tree and rub the mango blossom in the hands and make the wish. And the other wishing tree is kalp- vriksha is an old mulberry tree. In Indian forests there are so many sacred trees such as in Berar which is related to the old temple and other one in Mathura where lord Krishna spend his childhood. But now a day's trees are cut down because of increasing demands of population. If one should not want to worship the tree spirits but one can love the trees. Then he talked about the flowers 'a new flower' a bright yellow flower like a star and no knows its name but it is recorded in the botanical garden. There is mystery or dishonesty in the nature these wild flowers reveal it out and the un-identify flowers has been discovered and are tempted to improvise and all these flowers are found in those areas where the least possibility. And some of the flowers are found in the grave yards. But some of the flora and fauna of Himalayas or the wild flowers found between the six and seven thousand feet in the Himalayas they are like those temperate countries who don't have their identification. Some flowers like oxalis and sorrel found in the hill slopes sometimes called as khatta- mitha because of mild acidity of its

leaves. Cows usually feed on it and it is said that the milk of that cows cannot be turned into butter easily. The flowers come out in the spring and autumn are pink and flaky like the confetti. They are also acidic but they are good for the sheep. Sometimes when Bond is in a bad mood said that the names of flowers are like the names of diseases, some from the vermin, and some from the blockheads that it should be confusing. In the Himalayas in the spring season jasmine flowers and the basant flowers are more common in the winters. There are twenty kinds of daisies and ten kinds of dandelions are found. Some species of flowers are easily recognised like dog rose in the spring season at the hills its name because of Greek names which is used to cure the hydrophobia. There are so many flowers which have medicinal properties or food values. Some plants themselves indicate their usefulness like walnut its hard from outside and from inside its structure is like human brain it signified that it cures all the troubles of brain. Some plants are known for their usefulness and harmfulness like tobacco has a lovely flower but it is harmful for the health and potatoes have the lovely flower but it belongs to the poisonous night shade family. Bond said that it's difficult to remember the names of all the flowers as given by the botanists they are very confusing and discouraged the flower lover but one should just enjoy the beauty and mystery of wild flowers which wonders us.

The cosmos are simple stands tall and erect and its foliage is complicated but are bold, fresh and cheerful. These flowers need less care a handful of seeds just thrown into the soil and after few months they grow in mass. Bond saw these flowers in his childhood when he was wandering in the forest it's large in size but he feels that these flowers fall down and looking at him as his friend it's foliage is like feather and has faint aroma and now when he looking at these in the hills they are like his old friend and feels like pressing his face. He said that people didn't grow these flowers because they feel that it causes them hay fever he feels that people are snobbish towards these flowers they only grow flowers like marigold which

they can be used to make garlands and are not delicately scented and are easily grown in the backyard. His grand- parents fought over it to plant the marigold but grand-mother refused they didn't speak to each other for many days but when grand-father said it is a French marigold she agreed to plant these flowers to have some French item in the garden. Bond gets more pleasure from the wild flowers than the domestic one. While going through the forests he notices so many flowers like sunflowers, Californian poppies, winter jasmine, wild strawberries. There are some plants like his friends he feels that most garden flowers are fair-weather friends because they go in the winters when times are difficult up in the mountains. He said that who stand with you in adversity either human or plants are your true friends there aren't many around so cherish them and take care of them in all seasons. He said that he had a loyal plant friend ivy that was spread on the wall of his room. It was like study cum bedroom for him where lots of light and sun when he opens the window cool breeze from the mountains floats it was gentle and balmy.

He was like the plant doctor because he used to collect the discarded plants that he nurse and get back to health. He feels that loyalty of plants should be rewarded there was no double standards; they are generous and not greedy. Then he talked about the 'Haikus' it's a Japanese lyric poem of a fixed five to seven syllable and maximum two or three lines. Later he talked about the rainfall in the mountains. The monsoon is always been favourite time for him. The wind suddenly dropped and then there was a hushed expectancy in the air and then out of the dust big black rumbling clouds came. The monsoon come to break the monotony of the summer months first a drop of water on the window sill and then patter on the roof. He feels like the thrill of anticipation and a mountain of excitement. The groaning and lightning across the sky and explosion of sky. Ruskin experienced the rain by take off his clothes and ran on the roof and shouting and dancing madly in the rain. The rain water brought the freshness and great relief washed away the stagnation had been settling on him and poisoning

his mind and body. The rain cleanses the sky and the earth. The trees and flowers bent beneath the force of wind and water and flattened to the ground. And suddenly the rain stops and the sun came out and the rays fall on leaves and petals and the drops sparkled like silver and gold. The sunless heat and the dampness and the mildew are so depressing and the rains brought the momentary elation like the first shower that seemed fiercer and fresher and then it rained every day. During the rains the frogs are like the perfect country music festival. They are of two types they sing antiphonal chants all evening and each one gave the fairest chance. They are just seen in the monsoon. After the sun and dusty landscape tremble in the dim distance, one welcomes the mild light, green earth and purple hills clear and transparent. The rains also indicate the arrival of leopard and the leeches. The rain has drumming on the tin roof all night. There has been no storm no thunder just the steady rain which gives the feeling of being untouched by and yet in touch with the rain. The monsoon has reached its peak the seeds of cobra lily are turning red, signifying that the rains are coming to end. Then he talked about the birds he loves the sounds and calls of the birds who activates at night it pleasing to the ears. The owls have the pleasantest of calls. The little jungle owlet has a note which is both mellow and musical. Whenever one can go from the mountains or foothills can easily recognise the birds from their voice rather its appearance or colour.

As per Ruskin birds are also like politicians they love their own voices and only few of them answer each other from different trees. Ruskin when he came first time in the hills he heard the song of Himalayan whistling thrush that caught his attention. He used to sit in the window at night and listen to the beautiful calls of birds that never fail to enchant him. First the birds starts with a hesitant whistle they trying to be in tune and then confident of the melody and into full song. The birds are the liveliest in summer but in winter with snow lying on the ground they would start singing. In the monsoon with its magic touch brings life and greenness on the earth it also arouse the insect musicians that whole air dusk seems to tinkle

and murmur to their music. The males sing to attract the females. The music indicates the presence of males as in other creatures it is colour and odour. Later he talked about the leopards that are easily seen in the hills. Leopards are the fascinating creatures, graceful, muscular and powerful and also beautiful. He said that leopards rarely attacks on domestic animals. In the hills and forests they roam freely and stay away from the humans. He talked about the earthquakes and all the natural calamities such as tidal wave, hurricane flood, blizzard all these are to remind us that we are not all the masters of the universe. We tread upon our natural heritage and do best to destroy it but the natural forces are greater than humans and nature will always have the last word. He describes the earthquake in Assam that it was so severe that the region of Brahmaputra river basin hasn't settled down even today. Thunderstorms in hills are mostly in late spring or early summer. The clouds turned into dark and then bolts of lightning sizzling in the sky which enlightens the whole mountains. When the storm overhead without any pause in the frequency of lightning it's like a bright light without any interruption switched on and off and the hills shake when thunder growl and yell in the valley. Later he described that trees sum up the nature's perfection which can be seen in every leaf, flower, seed, and creatures great and small. We do not stop learning from the nature. Nature's notebook is never closed.

In the month of June a strong winds and thunderstorm cool down the temperature. It was cloudy, cool, drizzling. The birds enjoying the cool weather. In this weather Ruskin feel lazy and don't want to do any work he just find out the simple pleasure while listening to the cooing of doves and pigeons and watching blue rollers indulging in their aerial acrobatics and another pleasure is walking barefoot over dew drenched grass. Towards the end of the year the monsoon clouds still remain on the hills are no longer burdened with rain and assume unusual shapes and patterns across the sky and disappeared in the sunset. This was the best time in the hills the sun submerged hillsides are still emerald green and the air is crispy.

In our day to day life nature plays an important role. We are depending upon nature for our basic needs. For the fresh air we need plants which produce oxygen that is important for living beings. We get food from the plants. The fuels we get from plants. Some plants with medicinal properties that used in the medical sciences to cure many diseases. Nature has a healing impact on us because now a days people has so many problems in their life, people stress, anxious, and helpless which cause so many problems like blood pressure, heart rate, and muscle tension, if a person is in nature or viewing the scenes of nature, it reduces their stress, anger. Nature pleases the humans and changes their mood. It makes the people strong emotionally, psychologically and physically.

These days day's people are more busy in their they don't have time to sit in the lap of nature. Everything is available in the market they just it from it. They don't have time to maintain the gardens in their houses, all are following the supermarket culture. All are working no one is interested in having a small kitchen gardens in their houses and don't want to waste their time. And people having small houses there is no place for the gardens. Everyone is more materialistic, if everything is available in the market why to waste time or efforts.

Human population these days has so much increased. People are cutting down the trees to make the houses, factories, companies. This leads to the depletion of resources like air, water and soil. People are not getting proper resources and suffering from many diseases. These human activities disturb the ecosystem and natural habitat. Forests are cut down for the human benefits, wild animal's extinct because of the human activities their natural has been destroyed. Environmental degradation leads to the reduction of social and ecological objectives and needs. Economic growth pollute the natural surrounding and decrease the natural resources.

Chapter 2

Poetry, Haikus and Phrases

Ruskin Bond from his childhood lived in the lap of nature. He enjoyed the company of nature and grew up in the natural surrounding and start reading books like Kensington Gardens, the wonderland of Alice, the Mowgli etc. following the footsteps of the writers of these stories and start writing about natural history while observing and recording the natural life around him and expressed his happiness, joy and his relationship with nature in the form of essays and stories and poems. In this book he wrote poems in every chapter about his love for nature, trees, and animals that nature has influence and support him over the years. In this book he used the term Haikus. A 'Haiku' is a traditional Japanese three-line poem with seventeen syllables, written in a 5/7/5 syllable count. It focuses on the images of nature, and it emphasizes on simplicity, intensity and expressions. This word began in the thirteenth century in Japan as an oral poem hundred stanzas long which again broken into much shorter stanzas in the sixteenth century. It was written in the present tense and focused on association between images and there is a pause at the end of the first and second line and the word describe the time of the year. This form of poem has many rules but these rules are not followed such as the 5/7/5 syllable not followed properly and the focus should be on moment in time and the use of provocative and colourful images and the poem should be read in one breath and has the sense of sudden enlightenment and illumination. Ruskin bond used this form of poetry in his book. Such as Blossom Time:

Poinsettia

“Bright red

The poinsettia flames

As autumn and the old year wanes.”(168)

Poinsettia is the bright cherry coloured flowers used in the decoration of Christmas. These symbolises as the year passes out and the autumn also passed and now it's the beginning of something new and fresh. The poinsettias are growing and its fragrance spreading all around.

Ferns

“Shaded in a deep ravine

The ferns are upright, dark and green.”(168)

Ferns are the flowerless plants they have feathery and leafy fronds. It has layers of leaves which provide dark shade.

Jasmine Time

“Jasmine flowers in her hair,

Jasmine scents are everywhere.

Languid summer days are here,

There's sweet longing in the air.”(168)

These are the white colour flowers very attractive which blooms in the summers and women's are fond of putting this flower in their hairs to mark their presence like jasmine. It's fragrance is sweet and very last longing in the air.

Geranium

“Red geranium

Gleaming against the polished floor:

Memory, hold the door!”(168)

These flowers are bright red colour which fall on the floor even floor was also clean and shiny but the brightness of the flowers was more. It's the part of memory that this flower always in the season fall at floor.

Rose of Harsil

“Her beauty brought her fame.

But only the wild rose growing beside her grave

Was there to hear that whispered name:

Gulabi.”(168)

In this he talked about the girl that she was appreciated because of her beauty but when she died no one is talking about her even remembered her. The only wild flowers are listening to her who are grown near her grave.

Begonia

“There's a begonia in her cheeks,

Pink as the flush of early dawn

On Sikkim's peaks.”(168)

There is a comparison between the things among the nature. The beauty of nature is compared with blushing cheeks of a girl. When from the highest peak of Sikkim we look down when the day at its end the colour same as this flower.

Snapdragon

“Antirrhinums line the wall,

Sturdy little dragons all!”(168)

As human beings are fond of things they love the most similarly the bees are fond of snapdragons. They disappear completely into the snapdragon as if they want to completely merge themselves into the antirrhinums.

Petunias

“Petunias I must praise-

Their soft perfume

Takes me by surprise!”(168)

In this the writer appreciate the flower that it has a sweet and gentle smell he is surprise that how can a smell of flower so soft how it comes into the flower and who put this. Because man thinks that he can do everything but he cannot put perfume into the flower. Man feels that he is superior from everyone these take him away from the nature.

Rose of Tibet

“Take thou this rose, but don’t forget

The wild red rose of old Tibet.”(168)

He appreciated the bright red roses which blooms in the valleys of Tibet and has gentle fragrance. In this poem he said that after the hardship plants grow so humans also don’t lose hope and work hard in life and one day will overcome the obstacles of life and reach the platform of success.

Firefly in My Room

“Last night, as I lay sleepless

In the summer dark

With window open to invite a breeze,

Softly a firefly flew in

And circled round the room

Twinkling at me from floor or wall

Or ceiling, never long in one place,

But lighting up little spaces.....

A friendly presence, dispelling

The settled gloom of an unhappy day.

And after it had gone, I left

The window open, just in case

It should return.”(31)

In this poem he talks about that one firefly comes in his room at night when he was feeling sleepless it captures his attention he opens his window to cool and fresh air comes inside the room. The firefly fly in the room on the wall and ceiling and floor which refresh the mood and changes the boring environment of the room and then went out the room but he left the window open so that firefly come back. Nature is the rescuer because in the lap of nature one can feel comfort and soothes the mind and it brings out the happiness and joy in one's life. Nature has the positive effect on the human beings. The components of nature help the human beings to cop up with their daily problems like in the poem firefly changes the

unhappy mood of the writer and filled him with joy and enthusiasm and it gave the hope to the writer so that he can in touch with happiness throughout his life.

“Most bats fly high,

Swooping only

To take some insect on the wing;

But there’s a bat I know

Who flies so low

He skims the floor,

He does not enter at the window

But flies in at the door,

Does stunts beneath the furniture-

Is his radar wrong,

Or does he just prefer

Being different from other bats?

And when sometimes

He settles upside down

At the foot of my bed,

I let him be.

On lonely nights, even a crazy bat

Is company.”(57)

In this poem writer talks about the bats which flies high in the sky and find insects but there is a bat whom writer known and like his friend which flies down and wandering around the poet like at the door and floor and around the furniture. He feels this bat weird because this bat different from others and it settles at foot of bed at night like he found a companion in it. Nature has both parts like destructive and ailing it's up to the humans how they take it everyone has it's own perspective. As in this poem the writer talks about the bat that is different from others because it wanders around the writer and he finds a companion in that which helps him to come out from his loneliness. Not humans can be the companions or friends one can have the nature and creatures that are part of nature can also be the friend of humans who accept them with their weaknesses and never demands anything and never complaints. Animals are better than humans because they are not selfish and give unconditional love and filled the life with happiness and joy and take away from the stress and from the hustle- bustles of life and one can never feel alone with them.

Silent Birth

“When the earth gave birth to this tree,

There came no sound:

A green shoot thrust

In silence from the ground.

Our births don't come so quiet-

Most lives run riot-

But the bud opens silently,

And flower gives way to fruit.

So must we search

For the stillness within the tree,

The silence within the root.”(149)

Through this poem the silent birth he explained its humbleness, endurance, sufferance and silence of the little seed when it gives birth to a baby plant. He rendered the harmony between nature and human in it. It is to show the suffering in silence in the tiny seed who sacrificed itself to create a new life in the world. In this poem the writer describe the two worlds the Eco-world and the human world. The Eco-world as the positive and the human world as negative. He has used the imagery of maternal which embody nature as a living being. He compares the earth with human that both are giving birth but nature gave birth silently and humans make noises and surrounded by so many people. He has used the metaphors like silence; green shoot and stillness for nature that calmly doing the work and on the other side for humans used riots and don't come quiet. Through this he represents the psychological and cultural aspect humans and ecology. The stylistic device he used such as gave human reference to the earth and images and metaphors has been used.

Winter Rain in the Hills

“In the hushed silence of the house

When I am quite alone, and my friend, who was here, has gone,

It is very lonely, very quiet,

As I sit in a liquid silence, a silence within,

Surrounded by the rhythm of rain,

The steady drift of water on leaves, on lemons, on roof,

Drumming on drenched dahlias and window panes,

While the mist holds the house in a dark caress.

As I pause near a window, the rain stops.

And starts again.

And the trees, no longer green but grey,

Menace me with their loneliness.”(185)

In this poem the writer is saying that it was a rainy day he was sitting alone and there was extreme silence and he can listen the sound produced by the rain drops when it fall upon the roof. In this he talks about the existential point of view of nature. Nature love essence, not the existence. Nature is indifferent as well as hostile. When a person is alone go to the nature not because of love just for utility, because they feel alone, anxiety, and dreadful and meaningless. Nature is gives you what you gave to nature, that doesn't wants the existence, it just want the love and care. They should spend their time with nature and can find a companion in nature so that he can never feel bored and loneliness and brought happiness from the little things.

Jean Paul Sartre states that:“What is meant here by saying that existence precedes essence? It means first of all, man exists, turns up, defines himself. If man, as the existentialist conceives him, is indefinable, it is because at first he is nothing. Only afterward will he be something, and he himself will have made what he will be.”

The whistling Schoolboy

“From the gorge above Gangotri

Down to Kochi by the sea,
The whistling- thrush keeps singing
His constant melody.
He was a whistling schoolboy once,
Who heard lord Krishna's flute,
And tried to play the same sweet tune,
But struck a faulty note.
Said Krishna to the erring youth:
A bird you must become,
And you shall whistle all your days
Until your song is done.”(200)

It's story of a young boy who is known as whistling thrush because one day the lord Krishna was sleeping and this boy stole the flute of Krishna and trying to play as Krishna plays but he failed and Krishna got angry with the boy and changed him into a bird so that he can forget the tune of God's enchants. And this boy now sings like the whistling thrush. Through this poem he reflects the religious aspect and beliefs of the people regarding the birds and animals and nature.

May There Always be Tigers

“May there always be tigers.

In the jungles and tall grass.

May the tiger's roar be heard,

May his thunder

Be known in the land.

At the forest pool, by moonlight

May he drink and raise his head

Scenting the night wind.

May he crouch low in the grass

When the herdsmen pass,

And slumber in dark caverns

When the sun is high.

May there always be tigers.

But not so many, that one of them

Might be tempted to come into my room

In search of a meal!"(245)

In this poem discussed the love, fear and relationships. Everyone likes nature but no one wants to be the part of nature. He talks about the binary thing distant and near. There should be natural surrounding but at cost of others. In this poem Tiger symbolises the fierceness, life, and nature. There should be tigers but they should be hidden or covert. They should be exist on the land but on the cost of others. Humans feels that they are superior than other living beings, more valuable and only they have the right to exist. Tigers are only for aloofness and

separate from humans and they are coexist, so that they cannot eat them they enjoy the
without the part of nature.

Conclusion

I can conclude that in this book Bond has just expressed his passion for nature. He has shared his journey with nature from his childhood. His experiences with nature that nature is not only the songs of birds and the submerge daffodils. He talks about the other aspects of nature from his memories such as collecting seashells, wandering in the forest through the flowers and trees. He grew up in the natural surrounding which later inspired him to write. All writings based on the nature. He reflects his love for nature through his writings which give him joy and happiness. According to him one can feel more relaxed and comfortable in the company of nature. Nature gave us so many things like wealth, happiness, progeny, food, protection that we desire for but nature doesn't promise these things but it's a reward from the nature to human beings. Humans taking all the advantages of nature. We have to appreciate the nature and try understand the nature and love it that gave us everything goodness of the earth, sea, sky, food, water, and air but we are taking these for granted. We take too much advantage and mis-use its which leads to the major destructions like earthquake, tidal wave, floods, drought and nature again settles down and resumes its generosity. From this Bond wants make people aware about the nature and environment. Nature is destroying by the human actions. Now day's technology has so much advanced inventions of new automobiles which create pollution. The population is increasing day by day people cut down the trees to make their houses which leads to the cutting of vast forests that disturb the natural habitat.

Nature is affected by the human actions which reduced the quality of water and extend the pollution level in the air, water and soil which leads to the global warming and there is no consistency in the climate. Pollution not only affects the life of humans but aquatic life and animals live on earth because of excessive use of pesticides and chemical used in factories. Now day's humans are trying to be more civilized and getting away from the nature but they are forgetting that we all are truly natural beings. The advancement in technology

takes us away from the natural surrounding and natural environments are reducing and all the humans lost their affection for nature. But the nature still has positive effect on the humans. Nature gave everything to the living beings without any terms and conditions and it's like the gift to the humans. In the company of nature one can forget their all worries and tensions. One can never feel loneliness and bored in the company of nature.

Animals are the good friend of humans they only needs love and affection from the man their love is unconditional not selfish. They filled the life with joy and happiness. They gave the hope that they will never leave the person whom they love. This book represents both the aspect of nature positive and negative. Positive effect of nature on the human's life and negative effect of humans on the nature. Bond shows his passion through this book and expressed his experiences with nature. Everyone through this book gets the pleasure of nature, and conserves the wild animals and plants, save the endangered species. The aim of this to make people aware towards the nature so that everyone does efforts to protect the nature from destroying. So that the coming generations also enjoy the lap of nature.

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