

Reflection of Environmental issues through Literature

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Abstract

It is said that literature is the mirror of society because literature is an inexorable part attached to our life and life is incomplete without environment. In literature 'environment' refers to socio-economic, political, cultural and the nature also. The physical, social or cultural setting exists on the basis of nature. Nature is an umbrella term which covers all the elements such as air, water, sky, soil, forests and so on. Nature has been giving uncountable things to all living entities on this planet but due to the boon of brain and technological advancement human beings started taking undue advantage of this nature which has given birth to many environmental issues such as water, air, soil pollution. Many literary works have given voice to these environmental issues such as soil, water, air pollution readers connect with the environmental issues. The destruction of forests causes water scarcity, decrease in oxygen level. The discharge of destructive materials into air causes the air pollution. In literature Interdisciplinary environmental studies, ecocriticism these subjects' focuses on the cycle of nature and how the human behaviour and actions affects the planet earth badly. The present paper deals with the environmental issues discussed in the literature.

Keywords: Interdisciplinary, Environmental issues, Literature, social concern, ecocriticism, human behaviour.

Introduction

Our environment is made up of nature and nature is the by-product of earth, water fire and air. Nature is the corporal world and everything in it not created by human beings. Without water, fire and air no life on the planet. These elements are the source of living for all living entities on the earth. It takes years to convert rocks into soil and soil holds the strength of giving birth new life in the form of trees, plants, crops, minerals and so on. Air's existence is because of sky we can't live without breathing and breathing needs air. In short the cycle of nature should work smoothly to maintain the life on the earth but unfortunately this cycle of nature is disturbed by the actions of human beings. These actions directly harming the natural sources that causing harm to human life and killing the purity of nature as well. The days are near when there will be no pure air, water and soil to maintain living on this earth.

Although literature is an indistinguishable aspect of our lives, it is said to be the mirror of society. Literature and our lives are closely related. The term "environment" in literature describes the social, cultural, or material setting in which a story is situated. Furthermore, readers are able to relate to environmental challenges through the literary work's physical, social, or cultural context. The cycle of nature and the negative effects of human behaviour and acts on the planet Earth are the main topics of interdisciplinary environmental studies and ecocriticism in literature.

Literature and Environment/Nature Bonding

Literature throws light on the interdependence of organisms on the planet earth. Interdisciplinary environmental studies help readers and researchers to understand the role of literary works in shaping and creating awareness among people about the environmental issues which are responsible for environmental degradation such as population explosion, pollution (water, air, soil, plastic and so on), urbanization, global warming, expansion based on encroachment of technology. The thought provoking essays such as tries to create awareness among people about environmental degradation and the root causes of it.

Depiction of Environment in Literature

The loss of Human Values has increased the unending competition among people to show their superiority over each which has given birth to the urbanization, migration of village population to cities to earn their livelihood and at the same time for changing their lifestyle and social status also. The letter 'A Simple Philosophy' written by the Red Indian Chief Seathl of the Suwamish tribe of the State of Washington, to the US President Franklin Pierce is an inordinate piece of irony and also bears inevitable consequences that he was apprehensive about which the Earth is facing today. The Red Indian Chief has skilfully tried to aid and assist a fervent interest towards the wellbeing of the nature and the called 'bests', which the 'white man' used to kill with immense pleasure. A critical ideology relating to the utter pointlessness of nature's destruction roused in Seathl's heart that eventually made him try to make the White man attentive of the vim and vitality of a healthy environment that is prerequisite for the existence of human race. The use of the term 'savage' in any way, is defending the Chief from being counter attacked.

In a nutshell, Seathl has strongly attempted to make the US President very clear that the concept and ideologies of the white man, in accordance with their negotiations with nature, are simply fallacious with the sarcastic elucidation of the wrongdoings in the corridor of white man's power and pleasure. Seathl's complete humility in attempting to illuminate the idea of being eco-benign has been appreciated with self-acceptance of the red tribe being a savage. Before giving the US government the Red Indian tribe's territory, Seathl must impose certain requirements. Requesting favours was difficult for Seathl, especially when it came to the mind-set that should be used to protect the plants and animals. He must be genuinely logical in his justifications of his tribe's sentiments in order to provide a foundation upon which to make reasonable arguments and then demand that the "beasts" be treated as "brothers," that nature be preserved, and that the land be left undivided. Seathl drew a satirical comparison between two races and basically pondered his tribe as a colony of nature enthusiasts. The intellectual defence is subtly nullified by the usage of the term "savage" to refer to the tribe. Additionally, he insisted that the black people not be reduced to slaves or "the beasts of burden" in order to oppress and hinder the aboriginal people, or Members, for the enjoyment of white men. The word "savage" is used five times in one letter. The use of the word "savage" five times in one letter has profound significance when considering the US president who had requested literal friendship before enforcing the Suquamish tribe's territory by allowing their surrender for both their personal safety and future security.

What is environmental disaster? We find the concept odd. In this instance, Seathl has outright disputed the reality that the capitalist world exists. He has been unable to comprehend how the white people divided and categorized the various elements and facets of nature. In the past, his tribe regarded them with equal respect and admiration. As a result, they could never consider causing natural disasters and so dividing the entire environment for the sake of enjoyment or suffering. They could not ignore the notion that human life depends on its environment since they were well aware of the natural disaster that may have resulted from their brutal actions. They were fairly clear in their belief that the world has adopted this mind set, which is just as important as the concept or technological power that can change people's lives or, to put it another way, improve things generally. The current natural catastrophes of "Global Warming," recurrent floods, famines, pollution in all its forms, and chronic diseases brought on by human carelessness and selfishness would not have existed if everyone had adopted the Red Indian tribe's way of life.

What is an Environmental Disaster?

Environmental disaster an eventuality that occurs due to natural reasons resulting in mass destruction of life, nature and property. According to the data of Ox tam organization who works for famine relief the number of climate related disasters has tripled in the last 30 years.

These disasters are badly affecting the lives of people; many races have to migrate from their own land. The rate of global sea-level rise was 25 times faster than it was for almost all of the 20th century. More than 20- million people a year are forced from their homes by climate change. There are many reasons responsible for environmental degradation such as:

Expansion based on the progression of Technology

Suburbanization- The process by which more and more people relocate from rural to urban regions, leading to the expansion of cities and towns, is known as urbanization. Numerous causes, such as increased infrastructure, better access to services (such as healthcare, education, and employment), and economic opportunities, are responsible for this occurrence. Particularly in the last few centuries, urbanization has been a worldwide trend that significantly accelerated during the Industrial Revolution.

Important Aspects of Urbanization:

Urban populations are growing quickly as individuals move to cities in search of employment or better living conditions. Overcrowding and strain on housing and infrastructure may result from this.

1. Development of the Economy:

More career prospects are frequently found in urban regions, especially in high-tech, service, and industrial sectors.

- Population Detonation
- Societal
- Dogmatic

- Pecuniary
- Inclination

The intimate bond between humans and the natural world is often cited in literature to illustrate how environmental issues are interconnected. One of the most powerful and insightful ideas is provided by Native American Leader Chief Seattle from the 19th century. His remarks demonstrate the profound knowledge and respect for the natural world that indigenous cultures have long held dear.

In his famous speech, which is frequently called the "Chief Seattle's Speech," he makes a strong case for the interconnectedness of the world and all living things. An early form of environmental consciousness may be seen in his ideology, which emphasizes the idea that the air, water, and soil are sacred and cannot be possessed or exploited without consequences.

Chief Seattle expressed the belief that all living things, including people, animals, and plants, are a part of a greater whole. "Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth." This idea highlights the intimate connection between nature and human life, suggesting that harm to the environment always has an impact on humans.

2. Sacredness of Nature: He asserted that because nature is sacred, it ought to be honored and revered. The planet was not a resource to be exploited for financial gain, but rather a living entity that sustained life. His talk's main takeaway was that nature is a gift that should be valued and protected.

3. Warn Against Exploitation: Chief Seattle warned that if humans continue to use the planet carelessly, they will pay a price.

well-being.

If nature were used for personal gain, it would ruin the ecosystem and the people that depend on it. This message is particularly relevant now because a lack of awareness of the earth's boundaries and excessive consumerism are the direct causes of modern environmental problems including pollution, deforestation, and climate change.

4. A Request for Accountability: When discussing the obligation to future generations, he underlined that the globe is not something to be owned or utilized for short-term gain. This aligns with modern environmental ethics that encourage sustainability and preservation of the ecosystem for future generations.

In simple terms, Chief Seattle's philosophy is:

The fundamental belief of Chief Seattle's philosophy is that humans are not separate from nature, but rather are a portion of it. Being a living, breathing thing, nature ought to be respected and protected rather than governed. Environmental exploitation leads to the degradation of human existence, whereas care, respect, and responsibility maintain the equilibrium of life.

His views are consistent with those of numerous modern environmental organizations that advocate for a deeper understanding of sustainability, a greater respect of nature, and an awareness of how human activity affects the environment.

His writings, which usually warn against the dangers of unchecked industrialization and the need for a moral relationship with the natural world, have impacted writers and thinkers who support a return to earthly equilibrium.

How the disturbed cycle of nature affects human lives?

The Climate change gives birth to the rising malaises of the air, water and earth and it leads to rise into water level and the air pressure causes floods, hurricanes, wildfires (California fires) and ultimately it results into environmental degradation. This climate change is beyond our control. There are various causes responsible for this change in nature cycle such as indicative patterns, Sense of pre-eminence of man due to Sciences and Scientific encounters, Ill-treating the ecology, Long Lasting Serious Effects, Worst wounded –subjugated and poor-women, children old, Migration and dislodgment, Bereavement, Psychological Trauma- amplified mental health issues, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, chronic disease, Economic redundancy and so on.

Resolves

1. Afforestation
2. Population control
3. Pollution control
4. Using biodegradable products
5. Increasing awareness

Conclusion

Literature is an excellent instrument for addressing and reflecting on environmental issues because it reflects how civilization interacts with the natural world. It connects the dots between the effects of environmental deterioration and human experiences. The dependent relationship of all living things and the holiness of nature are emphasized in works like Chief Seattle's address, which calls for responsibility and sustainable actions. Driven by urbanization, technological advancement, and climate change, environmental disasters exacerbate psychological

trauma, lead to ecological and economic crises, and have long-lasting repercussions on marginalized people. Humanity must embrace remedies like afforestation, pollution prevention, population management, and raised awareness in order to lessen these effects. In addition to educating and enlightening, literature motivates people to take action as a group to protect the environment for coming generations.

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Conflicts of interest

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