



Eco-critical Reading of Indian Literature on Green Energy

YVR Prasanna Kumar

Department of English, Nagarjuna Government College (A), Nalgonda, Telangana, India

*Correspondence for materials should be addressed to PK YVR (email: prasuy@gmail.com)

Abstract

Eco-criticism is a critical theory in literary studies which questions the complexity of human culture and the natural world. In canonical Indian English literature, especially novels, short stories, and ecological stories, there is an ecological inoculation of ecological erosion through industrialisation, fossil-fuel addiction and anthropocentric growth. This paper will analyze how implicitly and explicitly chosen literary texts propagate the paradigms of sustainable living, renewable-energy awareness, and ecology custodianship, and hence congruent with the current discourses about green energy. The paper, by performing an eco-critical exegesis of texts by Amitav Ghosh, Arundhati Roy, Ruskin Bond and Mahasweta Devi, argues that literature anticipates the current environmental remedies by a critique of exploitive energy systems and an imaginary recasting of the harmony between humans and nature. Finally, it is suggested in the study that literary imagination is a central jump-starter to fasten ecological sensitivity and to foster a sustainable ecosystem, which makes green energy not just a scientific but also cultural, and ethical obligation.

Keywords: Eco-criticism, Indian English Literature, Green Energy, Sustainability, Environment, Literature and Ecology

Introduction

The environmental crisis with which modern society faces is interwoven with the dependence of humanity on fossil fuels and the exploitative manufacturing paradigms, which have been spreading throughout the last century. Under the circumstances of the meteoric economic growth of India, the consequent environmental degradation is expressed through the prevalent air pollution, mass water pollution, increased deforestation, and augmented climate vulnerability. The fractured nature of the human relationship with the natural world has long been questioned by the humanities although both the scientific and policy discourses are moving to insist on a shift to renewable modalities of energy.

Considering this crossroads, Lawrence Buell argues that, environmental crisis is more than just a scientific and technological issue but a cultural and imaginative issue as well (in *The Environmental Imagination*). This claim by Buell prefigures the need to reframe the ecological issues culturally and imaginatively.

The Indian English literature provides a vast creative domain where the issue of environmental misuse is sharply revealed and alternatives to it actively imagined. The context of green energy discussed in this paper is placed in the context of eco-critical literary studies that hold that literature develops the cultural and moral base that is needed to sustain growth.

Methods

This section is adapted for literary analysis; the journal structure requires it. Methods involve eco-critical exegesis and textual analysis of select works by Amitav Ghosh, Arundhati Roy, Ruskin Bond, and Mahasweta Devi, drawing on definitions and frameworks from key eco-critics such as Cheryll Glotfelty, Greg Garrard, and Ursula K. Heise.

Eco-criticism examines the correlation between literary works and the physical world, and criticizes anthropocentric world systems which celebrate the dominance of humans over a harmonious ecological world. Eco-criticism refers to the study of the connection between the physical environment and literature, as defined by Cheryll Glotfelty as the study of how texts make ecological values. Cheryll Glotfelty defines "eco-criticism as a question on how the literary work presents nature and the ways in which the presentations of nature shape cultural relations towards the environment. The centre of this relationship is on energy production. Modernity in industrial sectors has been informed by fossil fuels which have as well brought about pollution, displacement and ecological imbalance. According to Greg Garrard, eco-critical texts are a response to an ideology of progress where the world

believes that it can perpetrate endless growth in an otherwise limited planet. Garrard points out that eco-critical literary works question the myth of unrestrained growth that is maintained through fossil fuel dependency (Garrard 2012). According to Heise, cultural narratives play an important role in determining how the population will accept sustainability transitions, such as the adoption of renewable energy (Heise 2016).

Results

Industrial Energy, Development, and Ecological Crisis in Indian Fiction Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* In *The Hungry Tide*, Amitav Ghosh explains about the delicate nature of the ecology of the Sundarbans, and highlights the harmful effects of the state-led development processes and industrial intrusions. The novel describes the landscape under a constant threat of both nature and human intervention hence creating a strict boundary between environmental demands and human policy efforts that disregard the aspect of ecological balance.

Ghosh observes: "The ebb and flow go up to the very imagination, to transform the land and life."

This dynamic ecological vision challenges the fixed, centralized models of development that are dependent on fossil fuels. By foreshadowing co-existence with nature and not opposition, the narrative puts itself in alignment with the idea of renewable energy that hopes to work in harmony with the natural systems and not to interfere.

A number of researchers have questioned *The Hungry Tide* as a ground-breaking eco-critical work. Mukherjee provides an argument that Ghosh in fiction has reinvented the relationship between humans and nature by disapproving anthropocentric developmental models (Mukherjee 2010). DeLoughrey also notes that the author views the Sundarbans as a place in which ecological vulnerability uncovers the ineffectiveness of the energy-intensive governance of the modern day (DeLoughrey 2014). These critical lenses support the implied promotion of sustainable and adaptive systems in the novel - ethics that is in line with renewable energy ethics.

Pollution and Consumerist Energy Culture in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* presents environmental degradation as a consequence of unchecked industrialization and consumer culture. The polluted Meenachal River becomes a powerful symbol of ecological decay. Roy observes: "The river shrank and became a narrow ribbon of thick water... bright green, with weeds choking it." The transformation of the river is also symbolic of the toxic impact of the industrial waste that is largely based on fossil fuel. The analysis made by Roy suggests that there is an urgent need to allow the implementation of cleaner, decentralized, and community-oriented energy infrastructures. Her story, though implied, promotes sustainable alternatives by championing and protecting ecological integrity as well as human dignity. The environment vision of Roy has received a significant academic interest. Nixon (2011) sees the images by Roy of contaminated landscapes as exemplary cases of slow violence that industrial modernity and fossil fuel economies have created. Mukherjee (2013) also notes that the oeuvre of Roy is linked to ecological degradation with social injustice, and therefore, environmental degradation is reflected by moral decadence. Therefore, the story of Roy is a criticism of unsustainable energy practices with an implicit suggestion of more life-sustaining alternatives, which are cleaner.

Simplicity and Sustainability in Ruskin Bond's Short Stories Ruskin Bond's short stories consistently celebrate nature as a source of moral wisdom and balance. His emphasis on simplicity and restraint challenges energy-intensive modern lifestyles. Bond writes: "There is a quiet joy in living close to the earth, in taking only what one needs." These philosophical principles strike congruently with the current discussions in renewable-energy ethics, prefiguration of conservation, reduction of ecological footprint and sustainability via coexistence. The literary works of Ruskin Bond are repetitively challenged in the context of environmental humanities. According to Bate, the nature-centred prose of Bond allows an ethic of restraint and ecological humility to be proclaimed (Bate 2000). Sharma argues that the work of Bond is a counter-narrative of the overwhelming demands of energy-consumptive modernity praising the low-consumption ways of life (Sharma 2016). Therefore, the literary vision of Bond is consistent with the current discourses of sustainability and renewable-energy.

Subaltern Ecology and Extractive Energy in Mahasweta Devi Mahasweta Devi's writings expose the violent consequences of extractive industries on tribal communities and natural landscapes. Her stories critique mining and industrial projects that exploit both land and people. As Devi asserts: "Development has always meant displacement for the tribal." Her eco-political stories presuppose an element of environmental justice, and they emphasize the ethical incompetence of development fueled by fossil fuels. The eco-political work of Mahasweta Devi has received a lot of critical attention in academia. Guha identifies her work as a foundational one to the discourse of environmental-justice in postcolonial India (Guha 2000). Huggan and Tiffin argue that Devi demonstrates the destructive nature of extractive capitalism on the ecosystem and the indigenous bodies (Huggan and Tiffin 2010). Her criticism of mining and industrial energy regimes supports the argument of decentralization of energy sources, which are renewable.

Discussion

Literary Imagination, Sustainable Futures and the Ethics of Renewable Energy Literature is not merely a recreation of an environmental crisis, but fancies another possible future. Buell argues that literature may rediscover the human role in nature. Eco-critical texts challenge anthropocentrism and introduce ecologically friendly futures based on an ecological balance. Green power reflects such an ethos. The concept of renewable resources expresses a more worldview that places a premium on continuity, regeneration, and respect of natural limits, which are heavily mixed with eco-critical literature. Literally speaking, green energy represents a unified union of technology and the need to preserve the environment. Literature therefore serves as a cultural initiator in that society is being ready to see renewable energy as an ethical necessity and not a scientific innovation.

Green Energy and Sustainable Ecosystems: A Cultural Perspective The renewable energy sources (especially the solar and wind sources) are aligned with the paradigm of the eco-critics who focus on sustainability and balance. The academic world of literature supports the thesis statement that to be good environmental stewards, one must not only be technologically innovative, but must also be required to undergo cultural transformation. The literature aims at serving as a spur to environmental awareness, moral responsibility and sustainable thinking. The eco-critical narratives have reconfigured the cultural imagination, making societies more receptive to the use of renewable energy solutions.

Conclusion

This contribution to environmental consciousness is substantive, and this paper will be carrying out a rigorous eco-critical inquiry wherein the Indian English literature will be used to critique the industrial exploitation and also project the idea of sustainable living. Through a close analysis of novels and short stories, the paper will establish that literature prefigures and reinforces the modern discourse on green-energy, and thus, become a mode of technology solution and a culturalized ethic that cannot be handled away to guarantee a clean environment and a stable ecosystem in India.

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Author Contributions

PKYVR conceived the concept, wrote and approved the manuscript.

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