



To the Ambivalent Human-Nature Relationship: Eco-Consciousness and Natural Forces in Ruskin Bond

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Abstract

The damaging effects of colonialism, urbanization, adult attitudes toward nature, and the ethical ramifications of environmental degradation are all severely examined in Ruskin Bond's writings. Through the application of Eco critical theory, this study emphasizes the role that literature plays in both advocating for a renewed ethical and sustainable interaction with environment and depicting ecological realities. In addition to offering literary enrichment and philosophical assistance in the face of current ecological issues, the comparative approach used in this study offers insightful information about how various literary traditions portray humanity's changing connection with the environment. The environment, which encompasses all living and non-living phenomena that sustain and sustain life, is inextricably linked to literature. While certain works are specifically designed for specific age groups, it is nevertheless necessary to incorporate characters of different typical ages. Examining the numerous characters in connection to their psychological, cultural, sociological, and other factors is a necessary part of analyzing any literary work. The environment and nature are wholly biological, not artificial. There is no role for humans in the natural world. India is a country known for its rivers. The rivers are vital to business, employment, and agriculture.

Keywords: Consciousness, Natural, Forces, Ruskin Bond and Nature

1. Introduction

Since its origin, literature has maintained an inherent relationship with the environment. The connection between nature and language, whether written or spoken, is one of the most ancient and significant in human history. Dr. Savita Singh notes, "The connection between nature and literature dates back to the dawn of time." It was referred to as 'natural writing' and is now termed 'environmental writing.' This ongoing discourse between literature and the natural environment persists in shaping humanity's understanding of its role within the broader ecological framework. Environmental Issues in Selected Short Stories by Ruskin Bond.

Literature represents a deep articulation of the human identity in its many forms. It embodies personal and communal reflections, addressing a diverse range of global issues. Writers, artists, philosophers, thinkers, critics, social reformers, scientists, and spiritual leaders have used literature as a platform to examine subjects from cultural traditions to urgent contemporary concerns. Through their creations, they not only advocate for alternative lifestyles

but also aim to contest antiquated traditions and promote awareness among the populace. The founders of several religious and philosophical communities have expressed their theories and teachings via literary genres.

Literature is fundamentally connected to the environment, which includes all living and non-living phenomena that support and maintain life. The relationship between literature and the environment, whether overt or nuanced, direct or indirect, is unequivocal and persistent. Literature encapsulates the physical, psychological, and spiritual facets of human life, all of which are intricately connected to environmental situations. All human interactions whether with other organisms or inanimate objects occur within this overarching environmental context. Consequently, while literature examines human existence, it always interacts with environmental reality as well.

Throughout all stages of social development, literature and the environment have consistently been intertwined. Environmental aspects pervade several literary forms, including fiction, non-fiction, science fiction, nature writing, travelogues, short stories, novels, dramas, and particularly

poetry. Shafiqur Rahman accurately notes that this link is both profound and enduring.

Nature has had a prominent role in the literature of both primitive and highly industrialized nations throughout history. Eco-conscious themes have been in literary works since antiquity, predating the official development of ecological studies. Early oral traditions and poetry often derived inspiration from natural events, illustrating humanity's profound connection with the environment. Classical authors from many civilizations continuously derived their themes and images from the natural environment around them. The oldest manifestations of both oral and written literature demonstrate a profound and lasting relationship between the physical world and human existence, highlighting nature as a crucial source of creative and intellectual contemplation. (An Ecocritical Study of Ruskin Bond's Select Short Stories 2).

2. Literature Review

Shalini (2024) ^[1]. The paper analyzes the depiction of environmental thought in English literature, emphasizing the portrayal of ecological issues across several literary epochs. The research examines the changing significance of nature in literature, from the Romantic era's focus on its inherent worth to the emergence of modern ecocriticism and current climate fiction (cli-fi). The review employs an ecocritical perspective to examine fundamental topics like anthropocentrism, environmental degradation, and ecofeminism, analyzing how literature mirrors and analyzes human engagement with the environment. The research also examines the influence of literature in promoting environmental consciousness and motivating activity. This analysis highlights the significant influence of literature on environmental discourse by examining works from canonical sources, including Romantic poets like Wordsworth and contemporary authors such as Rachel Carson and Margaret Atwood. The thesis posits that English literature not only reflects ecological issues but also significantly contributes to the advancement of sustainability and environmental ethics in modern society.

Saparuddin R, Darmawansah, Abdi Masbara (2024) ^[2]. This research aims to examine the representation of environmental consciousness in modern English literature and assess the degree to which these narratives influence and reflect society views on ecological issues. This study used a qualitative research approach and applied narrative and theme analysis to examine chosen works of contemporary English literature. The writings were selected based on their publication dates, emphasizing the 20th and 21st centuries. The texts were selected for their relevance to environmental concerns and the variety of authorship, intending to capture a broad spectrum of opinions. The approach used a meticulous analysis of the text, concentrating on pivotal sections, literary devices, and prevalent themes with exceptional accuracy and attention to detail. The study revealed a variety of environmental themes interwoven into modern English literature. Themes like the Anthropocene, sustainability, and intricate human-nature connections were prominent, emphasizing literature's capacity to both reflect contemporary ecological issues and

engage in environmental discourse.

Bishakh Choudhury, Dr. Ashok K Choudhury (2023) ^[3]. Since the inception of the ancient age, texts and Vedas have shown the relationship between humanity and the environment. It emphasizes the significance of environmental protection and the prudent use of resources. The 'Prithvi Sukta' from the 'Atharva Veda' states, 'Earth is my mother and I am her son.' The Hindu scriptures convey that God is inherent in every aspect of the cosmos and advocate the principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The whole world is one family). Therefore, all organisms need to be regarded with equal consideration. These evidences demonstrate that individuals in that era wholeheartedly adhered to the scriptures and customs, establishing a connection between religion and ecological protection. This research seeks to elucidate the core environmental concepts found in the Vedas, other holy texts, and our extensive folklore and literature, including both Indian English and Bhasa literature, from the Vedic era to the contemporary day.

M Bonnett (2023) ^[4]. I provide comments to each of the aforementioned symposium talks and use the opportunity to elucidate and expand upon some significant concepts that arise for debate. The contrast between science and the prevalent scientism in contemporary culture is emphasized, as is the nature of my phenomenological approach. I examine the importance of humility as a fundamental virtue in environmental awareness and advocate for the transformative potential of mythopoetic engagement in fostering environmental consciousness as a compelling opportunity. Contemplating the notion of an environmentalized rationality prompts me to elucidate the nature and type of conceptualization inherent in the direct experience of the natural occurrence of phenomena, as well as to investigate potential synergies between this concept and principles derived from Zen culture. Themes encompass: the nature and importance of direct embodied knowledge; the cultivation of an authentically receptive consciousness; and the necessity to examine our relationship with nature to prevent a diminished comprehension of our environmental circumstances and erroneous notions of sustainability. Jagdish Batra (2020) ^[5]. The specter of global warming has profoundly unsettled humanity. Unrestrained urbanization and industrialization, with emissions from automobiles and air-conditioning units, along with reckless deforestation and resource exploitation, have presented us with a formidable predicament. It is fitting that the literary community should advocate for public awareness, particularly among the youth, on the need of implementing remedial actions. Prominent Indian authors have created literary pieces that emphasize their apprehension about this matter. My paper examines the realm of Indian English Fiction, critically analyzing works by prominent authors such as Amitav Ghosh, Kiran Desai, and Arundhati Roy, as well as lesser-known writers. It concludes that, despite addressing diverse issues in various contexts, these works share a common thematic concern.

3. The interaction between adults and their environment in the selected works of Ruskin bond

Children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly (including men and women) are all equally significant in society and have

played a vital role in all genres of writing. The societal structure is founded upon the demographic pyramid. The percentage of the aforementioned variables directly influences the nation's strength. Literature mirrors society, or more precisely, the demographic structures of its people. Every literary work has diverse characters that embody various age groups, philosophies, social backgrounds, and other distinctions. Certain works are explicitly tailored for certain age groups; nevertheless, other representative age characters must also be included. Analyzing any literary work entails examining the many characters in relation to their psychological, cultural, societal, and other influences. Adults are the primary demographic and societal unit. Adults are a unique demographic characterized by relatively uniform traits in both societal contexts and literary representations. The age groups have some similar perspectives toward many aspects of life, society, and the environment. In Ruskin Bond's works, several people interact with the environment in distinct ways. Their perspective on the environment is distinct, and it is inherent. This chapter seeks to examine the interaction between adults and the environment in literature broadly, with a special focus on the works of Ruskin Bond. This study examines adults' attitudes about the environment and their consequent influence, positing the idea that adult behaviors are detrimental and perilous to the ecosystem.'

3.1 Adults

Adulthood is generally defined by psychological and physical development, and in contemporary society, it is also determined by legal age and responsibilities as stipulated by law. In some cultures, additional variables beyond psychological, physical, and legal concerns may be taken into account. There is little commonality across adult age groups across many communities and nations. To comprehend the adult age demographic, one must examine the concepts of adulthood. Numerous definitions of adulthood exist. The subsequent definition of an adult is as follows: An adult is a fully formed, mature individual. An adult has attained the age of legal accountability for their conduct. (Collins Online Dictionary).

The first criterion for determining adulthood is the individual's age. The age range of 25 to 64 is classified as adults. The categorization of adults is delineated in the 'Age classification' by Statistics Canada, established in 1971: "children are defined as individuals aged 0 to 14 years, youth as those aged 15 to 24, adults as individuals aged 25 to 64, and seniors as those aged 65 and above".

3.2 Adults Eco-friendly

The narrator recounts the tale of a kind Khalasi stationed at the railway tunnel in "Kipling's Simla." His task was to expel the animals from the tunnel to prevent them from being killed on the train tracks throughout the night. The Khalasi has profound knowledge and comprehensive comprehension of the forest and its wildlife. In the darkness, he could discern the presence of certain creatures without visual confirmation. His compassion for the animals and his commitment to his task are evident in the following lines: "The train is imminent," he murmured frantically. We must expel the creature from the tube. Otherwise, it will be terminated. Once you have lived in proximity to mountains

75. Khalasi's commitment to environmental sustainability and his dedication to his responsibilities are commendable. Rather than dreading wildlife attacks in the profound darkness, he consistently fulfilled his obligation to save wild creatures. It demonstrates his commendable eco-conscious disposition.

His profound connection, comprehension, and trust in nature and the environment are evident in the following words when he addresses the speaker in the same narrative: 'Do not worry, Sahib.' I am familiar with this leopard. We have encountered one another several times. He has a fondness for stray dogs and goats, but he will not pose a threat to us. Once you have lived in proximity to mountains, pages 75-76.

3.3 Adults' hazardous activities towards the environment

In accordance with the Ashrama System and societal traditions, adults are classified as Grihastha (householders). This implies that adults have the familial obligation and, hence, are compelled to provide income. Adults often want to generate income by both ethical and unethical means, driven by limited options and the paucity of natural resources. Adults may engage in hunting, deforestation, and other illicit activities to generate more income with less time and effort. Occasionally, adults engage in hunting only for amusement and thrill. The subsequent instance of hunting by a renowned adult for amusement and social prestige among peers shows the perilous attitude of adults toward the environment:

At October 1998, while filming 'Hum Saath Hain' at Bhagoda ki Dhani, Kankani hamlet near Jodhpur, Salman Khan reportedly killed two Blackbucks. He was indicted according to Section 51 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act and Section 149.

The fact that a prominent youth figure in the nation has committed such a heinous crime only for amusement and to boast to his peers is a grave worry. It leads him to environmental destruction. In such instances, the legal system needs more time to penalize the hunter. At times, no substantial penalties are imposed, yet environmental deterioration persists. Wildlife hunting is among the most ancient practices in human history. It has been conducted globally since antiquity. In India, the influence of religion rendered animal hunting an unprestigious practice. It gained prestige with the entrance of the British in India. During British colonial authority in India, tiger hunting was considered a regal pastime. The article on Achuup.com from 2022 states that animal hunting has gained popularity under British authority. As stated in the article:

Tiger hunting was considered a royal pastime from 1858 to 1947 under British administration in India. India's wildlife is formidable; nevertheless, the majority of the populace is unarmed and hesitant to kill most animals owing to their religious convictions (Tiger hunting in India).

3.4 Ambivalence in adults about environment

Adults may concurrently possess varying opinions toward

environmental treatment. In identical circumstances, some individuals may exhibit an empathetic, nurturing, affectionate, supporting, and courteous demeanor, and others may have a markedly contrasting attitude. That reflects the ambivalence adults possess toward the environment. In the short tale "A Job Well Done," the narrator recounts an incident involving a well. The well served as the only water supply during the summer and as a home for pigeons and other avian species. The pristine water from the well has been used for gardening and several other applications. The narrator's stepfather disapproved of the exposed well along the walkway and instructed Dhuki, an elderly gardener, to fully cover it. The narrator illustrates the ambivalence in their perspectives throughout their conversation:

'What will happen to the pigeons?' he asked.
'Oh, surely they can find another well,' said my mother.
'Do close it up soon, Dhuki. I don't want the sahib to come back and find that you haven't done anything about it' (The House of Strange Stories 53).

His stepfather, mother, and gardener are all adults, illustrating the variance in perspectives on the issue. The ambivalence is evident in their mindsets. The stepfather intended to seal the well promptly. He had little concern for the birds inhabiting the periphery of the well. He was reluctant to acknowledge the significance of the well in the ecosystem and for living beings as a source of water and refuge. However, Dhuki, a humble elderly guy, has comprehensive knowledge about the well and its ecological importance. He is concerned about the pigeons residing in the well. His mother disregarded the well and the pigeon, however sought to avert her husband's wrath by compelling Dhuki to seal the well without delay. Dhuki is not yet prepared to shut the well. He is contemplating the birds. His spiritual mentality is inhibiting him from doing so. He restrains himself, and his apprehension around birds is evident in his demeanor. His remorse for the man's ignorance is evident when he states: "It is a lamentable task to seal this well." He further states, "Only a fool or a drunkard is likely to succumb to it" (The House of Strange Stories 54).

Dhuki represents a completely aware consciousness of the surroundings. He accurately said, "The aware individual never fears falling into the well, but the fool or the intoxicated does" (The House of Strange Stories 54). As a servant, he is obligated to comply with his master's directives. Nevertheless, he attempts to provide the pigeons in the well a more day, stating, "I will do it tomorrow." Not at this moment. Allow the birds to stay for an additional day. "In the morning, Baba, you may assist me in driving the birds away from the well" (The House of Strange Stories 54). Dhuki is completely aware of the birds and want to preserve their refuge. He argues that it is unjust to forcibly expel people from their natural environment. It is contrary to the laws of nature to displace any individual from their natural home for personal benefit. However, he could not postpone the task for an extended period. Being a servant of the household, he was able to postpone for at least one day, allowing the birds to inhabit and recuperate in the calm, secure environment of the well, and he executed this

decision.

4. Nature: A force of horror, destruction, law and punishment in the select works of Ruskin bond

Nature and the ecosystem are entirely organic, not synthetic. Humankind has no part in the existence of nature. All living entities, including flora, fauna, and microorganisms, as well as inanimate objects like rocks, soil, mountains, seas, valleys, and forests, existed on Earth prior to humanity's emergence and will persist after it. The formation of nature and the natural environment occur independently of human assistance. According to Collins Online Dictionary, "Nature encompasses all animals, plants, and other entities in the world that are not human-made, along with all events and processes that are not instigated by humans". Clearly, humanity is an integral component of nature; nonetheless, the inception of nature predates that of humanity. Nature has formidable forces that govern almost all phenomena on Earth. Nature serves as both a creator and a destroyer. Nature has a distinct mechanism to regulate the essential occurrences necessary for sustaining life on Earth. The definition of nature articulates its distinctiveness as:

'All organisms, flora, geological formations, and other elements in the earth, together with the natural phenomena, forces, and processes that occur or exist autonomously from human influence, including meteorological conditions, oceans, mountains, reproduction of fauna and flora, and growth. (Cambridge Online Dictionary).

The term elucidates the preeminence of nature on Earth. Nearly all vital elements for life are products of nature, which has developed them via its own autonomous processes, without requiring any external human involvement.

From its inception, nature has never been an element of human creation. All human creations are seen as artificial rather than natural. The inherent force of invention and innovation on Earth, which beyond human capability, is referred to as natural. The Oxford Online Dictionary defines nature as "all the plants, animals, and entities that exist in the universe and are not created by humans." The definition extended the inherent capacity for creation beyond the terrestrial realm as well. Entities are generated not alone on Earth but also in extraterrestrial realms. This indicates that all entities in the cosmos, in space, are produced by nature and are classified as natural or of nature.

Destruction is always inherent in the processes of creation. Organisms in nature has a specific lifespan. The cycle of birth, development, maturity, conclusion, and subsequent birth (not rebirth) is the fundamental principle of nature. Nature has an inherent system to regulate and maintain the appropriate balance of all elements throughout the cosmos. It is a natural force. The force appears in several forms, including creator, guardian, giver, and destroyer. The destructive power of nature is a crucial element in maintaining harmonious cohabitation on Earth. The natural world and the environment have facilitated human existence on Earth. Nature is fundamentally accountable for the existence of humanity. Human existence has thrived only by the assistance of nature. Human existence is not feasible

without the presence and availability of natural resources on Earth. All natural components adhere to inherent laws; thus, it is anticipated that humanity should comport itself in accordance with the principles of nature. When humanity transgresses boundaries, inflicting harm upon both living and non-living elements of nature, including themselves, nature issues a cautionary warning. Ultimately, should humanity exceed all limits, nature retaliates with devastating force to penalize these transgressions.

Descriptions of nature's calming impact in literature are a common theme. The current study examines the link between children, adolescents, and adults and the environment in the first chapters. In the selected works of Ruskin Bond, nature is shown as nurturing, bountiful, and kind towards children, adolescents, and adults, as long as humanity coexists with nature in accordance with natural principles. This chapter examines the themes of terror, devastation, and retribution for violating natural laws, specifically in the selected works of Bond.

4.1 Force

The word force has both psychological and physical dimensions. Essentially, it is a force, whether animate or inanimate, that has the ability to alter entities either partly or completely, for a little duration or an extended period. There are two categories of force. One is positive, signifying creativity and affection, while the other is detrimental, indicating destruction. It is the force produced by both living and non-living entities. Force is defined as "violent physical action employed to obtain or achieve something" (Oxford Learner's Online Dictionary). Force is defined as violence. It is used to get a desired outcome typically, and if unsuccessful, then by coercion.

4.2 Natural Force (Destructive)

In science, several categories of physical forces exist, although natural force refers to the capacity and destructive power of nature in its diverse manifestations. It induces alterations in terrestrial systems and entities. The chapter addresses natural forces only within the context of literature, rather than in scientific discourse. Nature has both constructive and destructive powers. The destructive power of nature is frequently termed natural force. It may be envisioned, anticipated, and experienced as well. The natural force has the most destructive potential in the globe. Destruction refers to the act of annihilating something or the condition of being obliterated (Cambridge Online Dictionary). Natural forces of destruction manifest as "natural disasters," including heavy rainfall, drought, famine (both wet and dry), cloudbursts, lightning, thunder, cyclones, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, landslides, epidemics, heat waves, cold waves, hailstorms, and blizzards. All these natural catastrophes result in extensive devastation of lives and property. It also influences human values, beliefs, and relationships with established social norms. These catastrophic calamities serve as retribution by nature for humanity's anti-environmental actions.

4.3 Horror

Horror constitutes a psychological construct. It is an experience of profound shock or an action that induces a

state of fear. The severity of terror is contingent upon the individual's psychological state and the characteristics of the circumstance. Horror is defined as "a feeling of great shock, fear, and worry caused by something extremely unpleasant" (Collins Online Dictionary). The catastrophic occurrences in nature that may cause widespread devastation, instilling concern, shock, and fear in humanity, are the terrors of nature. The planet is encountering several devastations manifested as natural calamities. Literature elucidates and examines natural catastrophes, their impacts, causes, and solutions, drawing on both genuine experiences and the creative process of authors and poets. In literature, some supernatural aspects and their actions are used to evoke terror in readers.

4.4 Law of Nature and Punishment

There are two categories of laws in general. One pertains to the law of the land, while the other pertains to the law of nature. The land law is formulated and instituted by the governing authority for a specific region of land. Natural law involves the formulation of an esteemed ethical framework. The law of nature is the most ancient law, not established by any organization or authority, but rather practiced and anticipated from the dawn of time. In contemporary society, courts recognize the need of safeguarding the inherent rights of individuals and all other beings on the planet. Natural law is predicated on the equality of all living beings and their inherent rights to exist in peace and dignity. Natural rules facilitate symbiosis on Earth. Philosophically, natural principles instruct us to exhibit empathy for all components of nature. The phrase "Natural law" refers to a philosophical concept of rights and justice considered universal to all people, originating from nature rather than societal regulations or positive law. (Britannica.com) Punishment is a kind of suffering imposed by authorities as a consequence of an individual's transgressions or breaches of established laws and regulations. Punishment is the imposition of suffering or loss on an individual as a consequence of wrongdoing (Britannica.com). The judiciary have the power to penalize the individual for his unlawful actions. However, many human behaviors remain unpunishable by legal courts, and their severity, owing to the participation of the whole human species, results in significant detriment to the natural environment and the planet as a whole. Nature exacts retribution in many ways for transgressions against natural rules. The retribution of nature is the most severe globally, and no one can escape it.

4.5 Ghosts, Soul and Horror

Wikipedia defines "supernatural" as phenomena that some individuals consider genuine, but are not part of nature or explicable by scientific principles and natural laws. It is impossible to ascertain the veracity of these things. Individuals often possess divergent perspectives and reasoning on supernatural phenomena. Supernatural aspects have been used in many literary works and storytelling from antiquity and will persist indefinitely. Supernatural aspects are used in literary works for dramatic effect. It is mostly used to evoke sensations of dread and terror. The supernatural components include magic, miracles, precognition, demonic possession, souls, spirits, and ghosts.

Ghosts, souls, and spirits are the predominant supernatural components used in literature. It has been used in all literary genres, mostly in oral narratives from antiquity. Numerous ghost narratives are included throughout Bond's oeuvre. These narratives instill terror in the minds of readers. Sapna Pandey and Dr. Prachi Dixit, succinctly noted:

Ruskin Bond recounts his own experiences, however many horror tales are entirely fabricated. It is quite remarkable that a simple and sensitive someone like Bond can conceive horrific scenarios and portray them to appalled readers. (Ghosts and the supernatural in Ruskin Bond's oeuvre 166).

4.6 Conflict between Man and Animals

The conflict between humans and wildlife, particularly tigers and leopards, is a significant problem in environmental conservation and in the writings of Ruskin Bond. It represents a facet of nature's terror. The scarcity of prey, human expansion on forest peripheries, and habitat disruption result in tigers and leopards often invading human settlements, leading to alarming incidents for the community. Wild animals prey on livestock, leading to human casualties and fostering animosity towards wildlife. Humankind is accountable for everything. This has occurred as a result of humanity's ignorance of nature. All confrontations between humans and wildlife (except hunting) result in the loss of animals, agricultural goods, crops, and human life. These are many manifestations of nature's retribution for environmental deterioration. Amitav Ghosh addresses environmental concerns in his novel *The Hungry Tide* (2004). In this renowned book, Ghosh elucidates the underlying roots of the problem, referencing factors like as overcrowding and habitat encroachment in the statement: 'Perhaps it has something to do with overpopulation, or encroachment on the environment, or anything like that' (*The Hungry Tide* 240). Habitat is the essential need for all organisms. Nature has provided an adequate environment for every organism on Earth. Humans are the most formidable intruders and devastators of the natural habitats of other organisms. Encroachment onto natural ecosystems is a grave transgression of natural law, perpetually perpetrated by humanity due to the overwhelming pressures of overpopulation.

4.7 Storms and Lightning's

Storms and lightning exemplify nature's devastating might. Numerous individuals have perished or been displaced, losing their cattle, property, and agricultural land globally due to storms and lightning strikes. In the narrative "The Wind on Haunted Hill," Bond depicts a terrifying storm encountered by a girl named Usha. The dreadful wind, as described by Bond: Who, who, who, lamented the wind as it descended from the Himalayan snows. It rushed across the hills and passes, resonating and lamenting through the towering pines and deodars. Haunted Hill had few obstructions to the wind—merely a few stunted trees, plants, and the remnants of a tiny village (*The House of Strange Stories* 46).

The fierce wind, accompanied by a dreadful noise, engulfs the vicinity with terror and apprehension. Wind and storms are natural calamities, and even in the era of modern science

and technology, the world has yet to develop methods to halt or manage them. Natural catastrophes disproportionately impact the impoverished. The affluent use more natural resources, resulting in environmental deterioration, whilst the impoverished endure harsh repercussions from nature manifested as natural catastrophes. Bond accurately described it as: 'Individuals placed substantial stones on their tin roofs to avert their displacement by strong winds' (46). The mud dwellings with tin roofs are more susceptible to damage during natural disasters. Tin roofs consistently leak and are susceptible to being dislodged during storms; to mitigate this, the impoverished have piled substantial stones onto them, resulting in accidents and fatalities in the residences below. Usha, a youngster in the narrative "The Wind on Haunted Hill," was ensnared by the terrifying wind and lightning while returning from the bazaar in the darkness. As an alone youngster in the nocturnal wilderness, she experienced profound terror. Her wretched state is evident in the lines: 'Who, who, who...' The wind howled. Usha saw the wild plum tree oscillating, its leaves striking the ground as she navigated through the ruins, aided by the persistent flash of lightning (*The House of Strange Stories* 49).

4.8 Rivers, Rain, Cloud Burst and Floods

India is a nation characterized by its rivers. The rivers have a crucial role in agriculture, industry, and employment. The flooding of rivers in India is one of the most significant natural disasters. Each monsoon results in significant loss of lives and property due to flooding. A natural correlation exists between precipitation, cloudbursts, and flooding. The discourse centers on tragedy and devastation shown via flooding. The devastation of floods and its repercussions on the nation's economy, including the associated terror and destruction, is articulated in "Floods in India" on Wikipedia as:

Floods are the predominant natural calamity in India. The intense southwest monsoon precipitation causes the Brahmaputra and other rivers to overflow their banks, often inundating adjacent regions. While floods provide rice paddy farmers a mostly reliable supply of natural irrigation and fertilizer, they may also result in the deaths of thousands and the displacement of millions. Excessive, irregular, or late monsoon precipitation may obliterate or adversely damage crops. Nearly the whole of India is susceptible to flooding and severe precipitation events, including flash floods and heavy rains.

Throughout the nation, during the monsoon season, floods inflict devastation on people, animals, and agricultural land. Flooding is the most certain natural calamity, and the government has already identified hazardous flood zones around the nation. Floods are shown as a terrifying and devastating natural force in Bond's writings. The depiction of floods in his writings is grounded on his own experiences and the historical context of floods in India. Some of the floods he described are occurring now, just as he depicted them. Bond depicts a catastrophic flood in the Alakananda River in his narrative "Sacred Shrines along the Way." Regarding the devastation, Bond states: 'I was disheartened to discover that it had been obliterated by a formidable flood in 1970, when a cloudburst and ensuing landslide on the Alakananda caused significant havoc downstream.' Once

you have resided in the presence of mountains, (80-81). Factors contributing to floods include road building, mining, deforestation, urbanization, sand extraction, and construction along riverbanks. It is nature's retribution for human avarice. The Economic Times, on June 19, 2021, reports the disaster caused by the flooded Alaknanda River, stating: 'Numerous low-lying regions in Srinagar, Uttarakhand's Pauri Garhwal, were inundated after a rise in the water level of the Alaknanda River due to intense rains'. On 26 February 2021, the same website reported that 71 corpses and 30 human body parts had been collected from various locations in the avalanche-affected regions, of which 40 bodies and one body part have been recognized. Ruskin Bond has depicted the 1970 flood in his writings. The articles in the aforementioned publications pertain to the catastrophic floods that have occurred recently. The catastrophic flood shown in Bond's paintings recurs annually, inflicting harm on life, property, and the environment. Governments and manufacturers disregard its potential and persist in development inside flood-prone areas, obstructing the natural flow of rainwater and exacerbating the risk of flooding.

The pattern and duration of rainfall have been significantly altered owing to climate change. The rain has gotten erratic. The occurrences of unexpected rainfall have been on the rise. The length of the monsoon has diminished. The characteristic of the monsoon in India presently is prolonged periods of no rain followed by abrupt, intense downpours. The atypical rainfall is causing difficulties for several events and for farmers. In countries such as India, timely rainfall is crucial for agriculture, whereas unseasonable and untimely precipitation results in losses in agricultural, trade, commerce, and other commercial operations. The rain creates difficulties in both scenarios. Insufficient, excessive, or unseasonable rainfall results in complications. Life on Earth depends on rainfall.

4.9 Earthquakes

Another devastating, damaging, and penalizing natural phenomenon is the earthquake. Nature's ultimate power manifests as devastation, serving to temper human passion and resilience in the face of calamity. Contemporary scientific prowess has shown inadequacy in the face of nature's devastating forces. The globe has a singular method to mitigate the loss of life and property during earthquakes. It is impossible to entirely halt or regulate the natural catastrophe. Nature has retained its boundless power in this domain. The earthquake-prone region impacts most of India, as shown in the following paragraphs of an article on Google.com:

This zone encompasses the Kashmir area, the Western and Central Himalayas, North and Middle Bihar, the North-East Indian region, the Rann of Kutch, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Regions characterized by trap rock or basaltic rock are susceptible to seismic activity (earthquake-prone zones in India).

As an ecologically aware author, Bond has recounted several seismic experiences in his writings. In the fourteenth chapter of the book, Delhi is Not Far, the author depicts the first earthquake as:

At ten o'clock on a rainy night, Pimpalnagar experienced its first earthquake in thirty years. It lasted precisely five seconds. An ominous rumbling was followed by several rapid tremors, causing the water surahi to leap from the window sill and shatter on the floor. (The Finest Works of Ruskin Bond 400).

5. Conclusion

The essay describes destructive attitudes, sympathetic attitudes, and the simultaneous ambiguity between these two dispositions in adults. Ruskin Bond handles natural disasters with deep concern for people and the environment in all of his works, including novels, short stories, children's books, poetry, essays, and his one and only short play, "It Must Be the Mountains" (Rain in the Mountains 64). His keen observation of small-scale natural events, phenomena, and environmental shifts is always successful. He is highly aware, involved, and sensitive to his surroundings and life. The damaging effects of colonialism, urbanization, adult attitudes toward nature, and the ethical ramifications of environmental degradation are all severely examined in Ruskin Bond's writings. While certain works are specifically designed for specific age groups, it is nevertheless necessary to incorporate characters of different typical ages. Examining the numerous characters in connection to their psychological, cultural, sociological, and other factors is a necessary part of analyzing any literary work.

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