

Chapter I

Chapter I

Introduction

The dissertation titled “The Struggle against Anthropocentrism in the Select Works of Lawrence Anthony” focuses on the environmental issues, particularly on animals against anthropocentrism. Human being’s lives are stacked with bliss, futility, satisfaction, misery and so on. They accomplish their bliss alone in a tenacious way and push the other remaining living things into a fiasco. The avarice of man has made him disregard the earth completely. It is the individuals, who rely upon other living things to survive however recurrently, entertain themselves and are tempted into all the illegal activities, not for a contented life but rather to have an extravagant existence. In that activity, man pulverises natural resources and generates imbalanced circumstances in nature.

For years the literary field has been widened because of rapid changes taking place in the society. Earlier, many writers were depicting the society using different themes like motherhood, adultery, childhood, feminism, sociological problems, psychological problems. Nobody bothered to know what is happening to nature. In the name of development, nature is facing serious crisis all over the world. During the sixties and seventies, no newspaper, no articles, no journals, no literary professions and no groups or organisation have discussed the environmental problems. Instead, they were concerned about social movements like the civil rights and women’s liberation movements until public and organisations came forward to create an awareness amongst the society about the environment. This chapter attempts a brief survey of the origins of

ecocriticism and its definitions. It also examines how ecocriticism differs from other critical approaches.

The societies, as well as literature, is cultural discourses which are primarily concerned with human perception of the environment, and they all are anthropocentric. However, the ideologies, philosophies and attitudes towards nature, its flora, and fauna, determine the way non-human aspects of this universe are well elaborated on literature. The man considers himself as an intellectual being and he tries to exercise his control over everything. He thinks that the process of society is a complex phenomenon whereas nature is a simple one. But it depicts his anthropocentric vision, as nature and its laws are not as simple as human beings think. So, the need of the hour is to criticise this anthropocentric vision to make human survival inhabitable not only for the present but also for the progeny. So, literature, especially one that focuses on urgent and vital issues, plays a significant role to bring out the environmental issues to the forefront.

Environment plays a significant role in the life of social beings. Environment degradation has become a major problem such as global warming, wildlife extinction, ozone layer depletion, air and water pollution, exhaustion of natural spaces and the like. These changes affect day to day life and subsequently create dreadful conditions in the life of human beings as well as it causes great chaos in the food cycle. Human beings consider themselves superior to nature and take advantage of other living things. This attitude of human is the root cause of all the environmental devastation and its related effects such as floods, famines, global warming, tsunami, and extinction of animals. This attitude of human superiority gains its power from the conception of anthropocentrism. So, trying to find a balance between the two interrelated but sometimes conflicting viewpoints, the

dissertation is an attempt to critique the notion of anthropocentrism by studying relations of humans and nature.

Various kinds of people at the grassroots level rebelled all over the world against ecological degradation. Many environmental non-governmental organisations also focused on ecological issues like pollution, climatic changes, biosphere conservation, deforestation, depletion of the ozone layer, animal rights, and wildlife conservation. Numerous international agencies like the United Nation, World Wide Fund for Nature, International Union for Conservation, Greenpeace International Conservation organised various conferences and convictions based on ecological problems amongst public and national governments to raise awareness about the crisis. Writers started to concentrate on the environment as a new approach in the literary field. From ancient times there were writers and they had a bond with nature too. Even in the arena of the education field, new departments, institutions, centers have been opened to study exclusively on the particular topic-nature in greater assortment and profundity. Many literary geniuses have enlightened the problems of the environment in their works. In that way, in this postmodern age, there is a complete dichotomy in writing style.

Ecocriticism is an approach to analyse the representation of nature in literary texts. It is concerned with creating awareness in the society about environmental degradation. The anthropocentric activities are considered as the major factor resulting in the devastation of ecology as well as animals. In *A Handbook of Literary Terms*, M.H. Abrams opines that ecocriticism is “The critical writings which explore the relations between literature and the biological and physical environment conducted with an acute awareness of the devastation being brought on that environment by human activities” (98)^[1].

The statement proves that anthropocentric attitude of humans towards nature is the cause of environmental degradation.

The term ecocriticism is the study of literature and the environment from an interdisciplinary point of view, where literature scholars analyse texts that illustrate ecological concerns and examine the various ways literature treats the subject of nature. Some eco critics brainstorm possible solutions for the correction of the contemporary environmental situation, though not all eco critics agree on the purpose, methodology, or scope of ecocriticism. In comparison with other political forms of criticism, there has been relatively little dispute about the moral and philosophical aims of ecocriticism, although its scope has broadened rapidly from nature writing, romantic poetry, and canonical literature to take in film, television, theatre, animal stories, architectures, scientific narratives, and an extraordinary range of literary texts. At the same time, ecocriticism has borrowed methodologies and theoretically informed approaches liberally from other fields of literary, social, and scientific study.

In the 1970's, literature and environment developed as a genuine subject and far-reaching interest among writers and researchers. Numerous eco-critical scholars published essays about eco-theory and criticism since the late 1960's and 1970's. The possibility of ecocriticism was begun in the US, researchers from different disciplines started concentrating on nature writing. Amid mid-eighties, numerous researchers started to embrace extends under environmental literary studies. Nature and landscapes were the kinds of themes they employed. Indeed, a few authors even began giving significance for nature writing. Additionally, unique sessions were organised on the topic nature writing or environmental

literature. Preceding the rise of ecological literary studies as a scholarly field in the late 1980's, there was no discourse of ecocriticism as such. It showed up as a general discourse of nature writing.

Early ecocriticism appears to have been driven just in a roundabout way by environmentalism itself. Hence it is a new area of study, researchers are yet engaged in defining the scope and aims of the subject. As an emerging discipline, ecocriticism still does not have a generally known concept about suspicions, conventions or strategies. It is not merely an activity in dissecting nature in literature, however, it is more of a move towards an expanding of man's idea of worldwide group to incorporate non-human living things and the physical condition.

Frederick O. Waage in the year 1985, revised *Teaching Environmental Literature: Materials, Methods, Resources*, which is about course description from nineteen different scholars and to hunt further "a greater presence of environmental concern and awareness in literary disciplines" (Glotfelty xvii)^[2]. Alicia Nitecki established *The American Nature Writing Newsletter*, to distribute notes, papers, book reviews and data with respect to nature writing. To get a better knowledge about the topic different exceptional sessions appeared, in which the most outstanding session was composed by Harold Fromm, entitled *Ecocriticism: The Greening of Literary Studies*, the main intention of this session is to encourage "new nature writing, traditional and innovative scholarly approaches to environmental literature, and interdisciplinary environmental research" (Glotfelty xviii)^[3].

Amid the yearly meeting of Western Literature Association, a new association for the study of the Literature and Environment (ASLE) was framed. Scott Slovic was chosen as the president and the ASLE'S mission seems to be:

To promote the exchange of ideas and information pertaining to literature that considers the relationship between human beings and natural world and to encourage new nature writing, traditional and innovative scholarly approaches to environmental literature, and interdisciplinary environmental research. (Glotfelty xviii) ^[4]

In the beginning, there were three hundred members in ASLE. In the second year the number was multiplied and the third year it was raised to seven hundred fifty. The group created an electronic mail to interconnect with the members and to disregard the data among them. Patrick Murphy established a new journal, *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, to “Provide a forum for critical studies of the literary and performing arts proceeding from or addressing environmental considerations. These would include ecological theory, environmentalism, conceptions of nature and their depictions, the human/nature dichotomy and related concerns” (Glotfelty xviii) ^[5].

These works were scattered such that there was no legitimate development to contemplate the effect of writing in making ecological concern. Later in 1993, the strong bond and interest between the young researchers and graduates composed arranged sessions and meetings on the topic ecocriticism and ecological literary study rose as an outstanding literary field. Eco-criticism became a wide field of study after a meeting was organised in association with (ASLE) or the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment in the United States of America. It arranges two meetings per year which discuss environmental concerns in literature and furthermore distributes a journal called “Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment (ISLE)”. Lastly, whether it is environmental literature or nature writing every one of these gets its name as ecocriticism.

Human exercises are in charge of the debasement conveyed to the earth. The earth has been to a great extent influenced by global warming and it is particularly important for man to reevaluate his association with the non-human aspects of the world. The term ecocriticism was first begotten by William Rueckert in his essay, "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism" wherein he states the importance of "the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature" (Glotfelty xx) ^[6]. The essay "Some Principles of Ecocriticism" by William Howarth outlines the word ecocritic as "*Eco* and *critic* both derive from Greek, *oikos* and *kritis*, and in tandem, they mean "'house judge,' . . . So, the *oikos* is nature, a place Edward Hoagland calls 'our widest home,' and the *kritos* is an arbiter of taste who wants the house kept in good order..." (Howarth 69) ^[7]. Cheryll Glotfelty, in a compilation, *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, elaborates the term as:

Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender-conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts, Ecocriticism takes an earth-centred approach to literary studies. (xviii)^[8]

Men began concentrating on the encompassing condition and its related issues which is dangerous to the entire humanity and seemed genuine and fast approaching. It is an exceptionally critical hypothesis from the point that it mulls over the non-human types of living organisms. Ecocriticism helps in understanding a nature-centered system as opposed to human-centered values. The changing relationship of individuals with the

earth can be comprehended through the yardsticks of ecocriticism hypothesis. Greg Garrard endeavours to characterise the term more comprehensively as:

Ecocriticism is unique amongst contemporary literary and cultural theories because of its close relationship with the science of ecology. Ecocritics may not be qualified to contribute to debates about problems in ecology, but they must nevertheless transgress disciplinary boundaries and develop their own 'ecological literacy' as far as possible. (5)^[9]

Man has been in contact with nature from antiquated circumstances. Be that as it may, steadily, over exploitation of assets by man has prompted immense harm to the earth. The intellectuals become aware of the outcomes and summits are hung on an expansive scale. The issue has been raised to a worldwide level. As an outcome, the idea of ecocriticism came into prominence in the mid-twentieth century in the field of scholarly criticism. Earlier, it was additionally alluded to as a study of nature writing. In Joseph Meeker's essay "The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology", he coined the term literary ecology, which referred to, "the study of biological themes and relationship which appear in literary works. It is simultaneously an attempt to discover what roles have been played by literature in the ecology of the human species"" (Glotfelty xix)^[10].

Simon Estok noted in 2001 that "ecocriticism has distinguished itself, debates notwithstanding, firstly by the ethical stand it takes, its commitment to the natural world as an important thing rather than simply as an object of thematic study, and, secondly, by its commitment to making connections" (Buell 220)^[11]. It is contended that the development creates awareness about the environmental threats which people have to

face in near future, that is the Holocene extinction. Expansionism, industrialisation and other human-centric exercises are the essential reasons for the debasement of the earth. Throughout mankind's history, numerous conspicuous masterminds and erudite people have held the view that man envisions himself as the focal position on the planet. Peter Barry lists some of them, for example, a Greek philosopher Protagoras says, "Man is the measure of all things" (251)^[12].

Anthropocentrism, according to Eccy Jonge, is self-centeredness as egocentricity means to be disconnectedness and dominance over others. The foundations of Anthropocentrism can be followed from sixteenth century onwards when reason, rationale, and keenness- every one of these ideas appeared and the individuals thought about themselves as the leader of the kingdom. At that point, the illumination of the eighteenth century was one reason of human mastery. It was in this period industries prospered all through the world and prompted widespread exploitation of natural resources. In edification period, masterminds like Francis Bacon, Immanuel Kant, Rene Descartes and others concentrated on reasons as a medium to take care of all the critical issues and focused on this particular characteristic as inherent in human beings only.

Indeed, even a significant number of the philosophers like Kant, Heidegger, and Stoic have contrast opinions, they set humans in the unrivalled level above all other animals. They contended that humans are linguistic beings as against animals who are non-linguistic beings. The division of nature and culture has made a limit amongst people and creatures. People regarded animals as their hirelings who anticipated that their pets would comply with their requests. Man, dependably searches for his egotistical intentions which is one of the reasons that individuals keep pets either for their monetary

advantages or to flaunt their expectation for everyday comforts. These methods for treating animals are excessively savage. Jeremy Bentham, an English author, and a social reformer, has likewise centered his thoughts on animal rights. He was one of the principal persons to contend that brutality to animals is entirely unsatisfactory.

It is in the social standards that man dependably sees himself as predominant which makes an unconcerned state of mind towards different animals. “Franz Boas is in favour of traditional hierarchical notion of the superiority of cultural beings over natural beings by creating boundary between nature and culture” (Sheenam 156- 7) ^[13]. He contends that people procure culture by living in the society as opposed to animals who live in the forests. Therefore, it is clear that man tries to set up progressive levels and gives himself the best need. This need of people over different species once in a while brings about bungle amongst nature and culture. The primary attitude which exists in the minds of humankind is that the world was created for the desires of mankind. Man sees himself as a legend who has raised his need and desires to the extent that he does not care about the biological survival of other species. He deliberately overlooks the ecological harm in his environment. This musing is not only harming the present condition but will be awful for his imminent ages.

Val Plumwood, a contemporary environmental philosopher argues that the environmental emergency is the after effect of western attitude to nature and man’s inclination to imagine nature as an immense resource to be utilised. She comments in her book *Environmental Culture*, that the ecological crisis is “Both a crisis of dominant culture and a crisis of reason, or rather, a crisis of the culture of reason or of what the dominant global culture has made of reason” (5) ^[14]. Thus, there is a dreadful need to

protect the deteriorating environment and to reframe the prevailing modes of development. For many theorists, anthropocentrism is the main driver of ecological corruption. It is the vision of human domination over other forms of life which has led to ecological devastation. It is understandable that transformation in the culture of human beings leads to transformation in the environment.

Prior to this scenario, humans used to live incongruity with nature yet now his attitude has changed impressively. The agrarian practices have turned out to be motorised, urbanisation and rising expectations for everyday comforts and in addition the approaches of advancement are the explanations behind the pulverisation and exhaustion of natural resources. In these times, it has become a challenge to critique anthropocentric point of view adopted by the human beings for their survival. Rob Boddice in an introduction of his book *Anthropocentrism: Humans, Animals, Environments* rightly validates that, “Anthropocentrism is expressed either as a charge of human chauvinism or as an acknowledgment of human ontological boundaries. It is in tension with nature, the environment and non-human animals” (1)^[15].

In the field of ecocriticism too, it is argued that “the reigning religions and philosophies of Western civilization are deeply anthropocentric” (Abrams 99)^[16]. It means that these are basically concerned with the interests of human beings who consider themselves superior to the animal species and they use them for their self-interests. This concept of man being the centre of the universe can be better understood from the perspective of anthropocentrism. Humans are dependent on animals as well as nature for their survival even then they put forth their own interests against theirs.

In the words of Boria Sax, “Anthropocentrism is the tendency to vastly exaggerate human dominance, understanding, power, autonomy, unity, guilt, virtue, wickedness and morality” (36)^[17]. Anthropocentrism becomes an important part of other philosophies. Human being positioned himself as one of the significant form of other non-human forms of life. Nowadays, it is very difficult to displace the notion of anthropocentrism from the centre. As a result, humans are on the core ground and every rule and law is framed according to his priorities. The value of other forms of life is determined by man himself.

Richard Kerridge opines, “Anthropocentrism is the placing of humanity at the centre of everything, so that other forms of life will be regarded only as resources to be consumed by human beings” (532)^[18]. Anthropocentricity is considered as the root cause of the problems created in the environment by human beings. According to M. H. Abrams, anthropocentrism can be defined as, “Considering man to be the most significant entity in the universe; interpreting or regarding the world in terms of human values” (Fishe 3)^[19]. Animals are regarded as mere objects as they thought to be devoid of a soul. Man, ill-treats them as they do not have the capability to realise their pain. Kant, a well-known philosopher considers that human beings possess traits of rational thinking whereas animals lack this rational mentality. This is the major cause that they are perceived as a commodity to be used in whichever way man desires.

One of the main reasons of the destruction of natural resources and dominion over the animals is the belief that humans are in the centre of the universe and they can use nature and animals for their own benefit. Lynn White argues that “What people do about their ecology depends on what they think about themselves in relation to things around

them” (9)^[20]. Consequently, the relation between humans and nature has become the relation of power and powerlessness respectively. Thus, anthropocentrism fails to understand the nature of other living forms of life by going against them. Man imposes his own desires upon them and wants to treat them in a particular manner. With the advent of modernity, the society is heading towards more and more westernised form of culture and ideology. Western culture considers humans as a superior race. As a result, individualism emerged as a major phenomenon due to which the sole importance shifted to man himself. This ecological crisis will continue if man’s attitude towards nature remains anthropocentric.

The basic tendency of man is of dominance, he tries to manipulate nature which has resulted in the imbalance of natural environment. To transcend above civilisation, it is mandatory for man to reconcile with nature and not to generate a dividing line between the two. It is possible when human beings adopt an attitude of humility towards nature. It is the only way to overcome anthropocentric belief inherent in the psyche of human beings. Literature makes people aware of how they are damaging their natural surroundings. One can probably say that literature cannot exist solely in the vacuum and the activities that take place in this society are related to the human life that exists on this planet. Ecocriticism is one such theory which is trying to create an awareness regarding natural destruction. Through the analysis of literary works this theory, it is well presented.

In *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and Environment*, Timothy Clark has argued that ecocriticism finds its most striking ethical challenge in the question of animal suffering. Sumathy, an ecocritic has rightly opined: “Literature plays a very important role in creating awareness about the environment. Just as postcolonialism

champions the cause of the “other”, Ecocriticism upholds the voice of the “nonhuman other”” (1)^[21]. In the colonial countries, the colonialists are considered as superior and victimisers as the other. When countries became free from the clutches of the colonisers then within their territory, men turn into masters and they treat women as the other. In the same way, humans tamed animals and treat them as the other. In the words of Richie Nimmo,

Humans are subjects while non-humans are objects. This in turn enables humanity to be elevated and centralized, while its necessary other – it’s very conditions of existence – are suppressed and marginalised, relegated to the status of a ‘context’, a mere ground upon which human subject stands. (61)^[22]

As the theories of Postcolonialism, Feminism and Race Studies play an important role in indulging people to think about a particular issue prevailing in the society, so does the theory of Ecocriticism. It chooses environment centered approach to literary studies. Peter Barry mentions that the theory tries to focus on the ecocentric values of “meticulous observation, collective ethical responsibility, and the claims of the world beyond ourselves” (255)^[23]. It makes people conscious of the causes which pollute the natural resources. The texts related to Ecocriticism have become a part of the environmental awareness which connects the human world to that of the non-human world. As Cheryl Glotfelty also mentions in the introduction that

Ecocriticism takes as its subject the interconnections between nature and culture, specifically the cultural artefacts of language and literature. As a critical stance, it has one foot in literature and the other on land; as a theoretical discourse, it negotiates between the human and the non-human. (xix)^[24]

Nowadays, modern man has become apathetic to nature. It has resulted in the environmental crisis on the global level. The ecological crisis has become a burning cultural issue as it does not affect a single discipline, but the whole universe. Human beings think themselves as powerful and reasoned intellectuals, and neglect their liability towards their Mother earth. Literary figures elaborate the role of nature in the lives of human beings and they highlight man's indifferent attitude towards the natural world. They try to remind the individuals that they have a duty towards the environment and human beings must be aware of the ecological issues and concerns, as they are a part of nature.

In this present era, the greatest predicament is the degradation of the environment. It is said that "There is an urgent need to understand that, Environment is not the 'other' to us but part of our being" (Buell 55) ^[25]. Ecocriticism emerges as a movement when threat to the planet has become visible. It is influenced by various approaches like Feminism and Marxism, as these approaches act as a socio-political structure for reading the ecocritical texts.

Ecocriticism represents nature and the behaviour of people towards nature in a particular age. For instance, in the seventeenth century, nature was worshipped as a goddess but in the present era human being considers nature only as a commodity for his personal use. In this context, Ramchandra Guha, a well-known historian and Environmentalist writes, "This destruction owed itself to the fact that modern man had desacralized nature viewing it as a source of raw material to be exploited and thus emptying it of the mystery the wonder, indeed the divinity with which premodern man saw the natural world (13) ^[26]. The third world countries are following the western ideologies of development that has resulted in the complete destruction of natural

environment. A lot of raw material is used in industries and it is an over exploitation of the natural resources.

Guha rightly says in his book named, *Environmentalism: A Global History*, “Nature became a source of cheap raw material as well as a sink for dumping the unwanted residues of economic growth” (4)^[27]. There is another reference from Arundhati Roy, an intellectual and an environment conscious writer who is concerned with two major ongoing issues prevalent in India: the Narmada Bachao Andolan and The Campaign against Nuclear Weapons in India. In her essay “The Greater Common Good”, she reminds of the coming dangers in the future. She asserts: “. . . We have to fight our specific wars in specific ways. Who knows, perhaps that’s what the twenty first century has in store for us. The dismantling of the Big bombs, big dams, big ideologies, big contradictions, big countries, big wars, big heroes, big mistakes. Perhaps it will be the Century of the Small” (5)^[28].

Greg Garrard in his book *Ecocriticism*, affirms that “. . . the study of the relationship of the human and the non- human, throughout human cultural history and entailing critical analysis of the term ‘human’ itself” (5)^[29]. His book traces the development of the movement in the field and exploring the various key concepts such as pollution, pastoral, wilderness, apocalypse, dwelling, animals and earth. The ecocritic Dana Phillips has criticised the literary quality and scientific accuracy and to have a better understanding of nature writing in *The Truth of Ecology* and Timothy Morton’s *Ecology without Nature*, “that ecocriticism frequently involves a simplistic view of representation, a naïve ‘ecomimeticism’ committed to exactitude and immediacy” (Gerrard 11)^[30].

In the beginning, nature writing was the only the scope of ecocriticism which later emerged into a multiplicity of approaches and subjects for study were amplified.

Ecocriticism is a broad approach and has many other names such as green (cultural) studies, environmental literary criticism and ecopoetics are the other terms in use. Some of them are nature writing, deep ecology, environmental literature, the ecology of cities, environmental justice, pastoralism, human ecology, regionalism, biopolitics, social ecology, environmentalism, ecology, environmental history and sustainable designs and the list goes on. Love states that, “expansion of the canon to include previously unheard voices, and the reinterpretation of canonical works of the past” (Love 5) ^[31].

Ecocentrism, according to M.H. Abrams is the view that “all living things and their earthly environment, no less than the human species, possess importance, value and even moral and political rights” (100) ^[32]. They believe that anthropocentric thinking has made humans alienated from their natural environment and it can be disastrous. As Anil Prasad in his article named “Globalization, Modernity, and Literary Ecology: A re-reading of T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*” mentions that, “The modern human being stands in the egocentric position of looking at things and thus suffers from human centeredness” (17) ^[33]. An Entomologist named Semenov-tian-shanskii combined his laboratory experience with nature. He collected numerous species of insects and contributed it to the Zoological Museum in Moscow.

The era of the 1980s is considered as the most destructive period for natural environment as industrial development was at its peak. As a consequence, man’s relationship to nature totally changed. Earlier, he considered himself as a part of nature, but now he has become a tool in the hands of commercialisation. Lynn White argues,

“Formerly man had been a part of nature, now he was the exploiter of nature . . . Man and nature are two things, and man is the master” (8)^[34]. There is a strong connection between the conservation and the poverty prevailing in the third world countries. These countries face an acute shortage of funds and land for conservation which is a primary need for saving environmental destruction. It is this concern which grabbed the attention of Guha as well as other environmentalists like Madhav Gadgil, Vandana Shiva, Medha Patkar, as well as Wangari Maathai. These activists have largely contributed to understanding the sufferings and the hardships faced by the poor people who survive in the shelter of nature.

Guha advocates that there is a strong link between ecological degradation and poverty prevailing in these third world countries. The notion of deep ecology is refuted here because there is a need of large unused tracts which is impossible in these densely populated countries. But the conservation policies which are adopted are in accordance with the western outlook. The ideas of the west adopted for the conservation is not suitable for the local areas as it denies the social and cultural needs of native people. There is a censure on the foreign agencies, which for their own selfish interests look for conserving a particular species in the third world countries and it can be one method of indirect rule over the third world nations. It is a kind of neo-imperialism, which Ghosh critiques in most of his novels. By providing grants and foreign currency to the poorer nations, the first world countries try to dominate and thus lead to impoverishment of the poor tribal people.

In ancient times, nature and humans have remained in harmony and a balance was maintained between the two. But a few years back man has adopted an indifferent attitude towards nature which resulted in disruption of ecological balance. One cannot

deny the environmental aspect because it is our surroundings that are extremely important for our well-being. Nature remained an inexhaustible resource always but man began to consider nature as an exploitable resource. This change in attitude is one of the most important reasons for environmental problems occurring at fast pace these days.

“The environmental movement grows in reaction to economic growth” (Martinez 1) ^[35]. Environmental Justice Movement emerged in India just as the movements for the rights of people began, without taking into consideration their caste, creed or race. It includes the sacredness of the mother earth and everyone’s right to remain free from the destruction of ecology.

Contemporary fiction writers are very well aware of the ecological degradation which is taking place in the whole world. There are many authors like James Herriot, Gerald Durrell, John Muir, Peter Matthiessen, Thoreau, Iain Douglas – Hamilton and Nadine Gordimer, who depicted the theme of natural devastation in their works. Sometimes, this ecological crisis has been consciously taken as a major theme of the novels to make people aware of the devastation taking place because of human activities.

Ecofeminist critics have argued that in the patriarchal society women have been considered closer to nature than men and that this association has validated the subjugation of both. Speaking of other forms of life, ecocritics also speak for human minorities whose exploitation is often closely interlinked with exploitation of nature – the fact that is often concealed in hegemonic naturism.

Ecocriticism in the inter-relatedness of nature, human life and literature cannot be ignored. Natural environment has always remained an important part of many literary texts and with the recent increase in environmental problems and issues, writers have

specifically focused on environmental problems. In the field of literary criticism also, attempts have been made to keep focus on environment while analysing literature.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Henry David Thoreau and other writers in America and England were already drawing attention to the threats to the environment by urbanisation and industrialisation. Thoreau was an active member of the Transcendental Club. He believed that there is oneness of God, man, and Nature. He loved nature. Thoreau wanted to establish a harmonious relationship with nature. He, therefore, decided to live in the wilderness and moved into his cabin at Walden Pond. He attempted to reduce his needs to the barest essentials of life and to establish an intimate, spiritual relationship with nature. Thoreau wrote about his experience in the wilderness in his famous book *Walden*. He writes about winter animals and birds that haunted its precincts.

Rachel Louise Carson was an American marine biologist and conservationist, a great woman who created an environmental awareness among the Americans about the environmental problem which arises due to the usage of synthetic pesticide, in her book, *Silent Spring*. It is the first book that met with fierce opposition by chemical companies, but it spurred a reversal in national pesticide policy and led to nationwide ban on DDT for agricultural uses. It inspired an environmental movement that led to the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Her other writings like *The Sea Around Us* won her a US National Book Award. Her next book, *The Edge of the Sea, Under the Sea Wind*, were also bestsellers. Her sea trilogy explores the whole of ocean life from the shores to the depths acclaimed with proceeding the global environmental movement.

Cynthia Moss, a former journalist and present director of the Amboseli Elephant Research Project in Kenya, has studied the same population of elephants for forty-four

years. She was born in 1940 in Ossining, New York, U.S.A. In 1972, she started the famous Amboseli Elephant Research Project at Amboseli National Park in Kenya. Since then she and her research associates have identified and recorded more than one thousand four hundred elephants belonging to fifty families at an immense of four hundred square miles. For fourteen years Cynthia Moss traced the histories of twenty-five elephants living in four related families at Amboseli National Park in Kenya. Her works include *Elephant Memories*, *Elephant Woman*, *Little Big Ears*, *Echo of the Elephants*, *Portraits in the Wild: Animal Behavior in East Africa*.

The book *Elephant Memories* is about the park and the researchers who helped her there, but mainly it is about the complete history of Amboseli elephants. She has watched the birth and death, observed the young females reach sexual maturity and mating. With her in-depth study of these elephants, she became a connoisseur of elephants. She has gathered information on daily movements, association pattern and behaviour even during her absence with the help of the workers. Her frequent visits made the elephants more casual towards her and they easily recognised her from a distance as well.

Edward James Corbett was born on 25 July 1875. He was a British hunter and tracker who turned conservationist, naturalist, and writer. He was colonel in the British Indian Army and frequently called upon by the government of the United Provinces. In Indian states like Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, he hunted a large number of man-eating tigers and leopards that were preying on people in nearby villages. His famous books are *Man-Eaters of Kumaon*, *The Temple Tiger* and *Man-Eating Leopard of Rudraprayag*. The stories of Jim Corbett are stories of hunting. The protagonists are the big cats. Nevertheless, from his writings emerge a vibrant picture of Indian villages, of men,

women, and children toiling for a livelihood under the constant shadow of the man eaters. Corbett shared a symbiotic relationship with the villagers. They needed him to kill the predators while Corbett needed the support of the locals as drum beaters, coolies, and runners to accomplish his task.

Iain Douglas – Hamilton was born in Dorset, United Kingdom. He is a zoologist known for his study of elephants. He is considered as one of world's foremost authorities on elephant conservation, focused on understanding elephant choices by studying their movements and integrating findings into conservation and management strategies. He is the founder and CEO of Save the Elephants; a UK trust whose mission is to secure a future for elephants in Africa. During the 1960s, he carried out the first in-depth scientific study of wild elephant social behaviour in Tanzania, which paved the way for much of elephant research and conservation today. He introduced behavioural ecology to elephant conservation through detailed monitoring and recording of births, deaths, and migrations. During the 1970s, he investigated the status of elephants throughout Africa and was the first to alert the world to the ivory poaching holocaust. He is the author of two books on elephants: *Among the Elephants* and *Battle for the Elephants*. His books reveal the life of elephants and their behaviour.

Jeff Corwin has been active for the conservation of ecosystem and imperiled species around the globe since he was a youth. Animal Planet channel audiences knew Jeff as host of The Jeff Corwin Experience, a standout amongst the most mainstream programmes that appear on cable television. Since 2000, Jeff has joined forces with Discovery Communications and Animal Planet as executive producer and host of The Jeff Corwin Experience. He likewise fills in as the executive producer of the new

series Corwin's Quest. His first book *Living on the Edge: Amazing Relationships in the Natural World from Rodale*, showed with his own particular photos about his risky and clever voyage in nature. He additionally investigates the awesome connections among the differing greenery in four exotic ecosystems: The Llanos meadow in Venezuela; the Costa Rican rainforest; the Savannah of southeastern Africa and the Sonoran Desert of Arizona.

Corwin addresses issues relating to natural life, ecology and preservation to gatherings of people over the United States, when not in the field. He likewise settled an intuitive exhibition hall and environmental education center called the EcoZone. He spent his adolescence in Norwell, Massachusetts, based on which is constructed. The objective of the EcoZone is to create awareness for the wildlife and ecology unique to the wetlands of southeastern Massachusetts. Presently a specialist in rainforest animals, Jeff was first to introduce the tropical rainforests in 1984, while on an attempt to Belize. His first experience energised his enthusiasm for the investigation and protection of these ecological marvels. In 1993, he tended to the General Assembly of the United Nations with respect to the need to save neotropical rain forests. By 1994, he had filled in as an endeavouring naturalist for The Jason Project, the acclaimed documentary series produced by National Geographic and EDS under the direction of Robert Ballard.

Corwin pursued his Bachelor of Science degrees in Biology and Anthropology from Bridgewater State College and from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst respectively. He obtained his Master of Science degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation. In 1999, Bridgewater State College respected Jeff with a doctorate in government-funded training for his work in conveying about the requirement for a feasible way to deal with utilising characteristic assets and the significance of rationing

jeopardised species. He solidly trusts that through education and awareness, the natural resources, untamed life, and ecosystems that make up our planet will be monitored for future generations. Some of his famous television shows include Good Morning America, Tonight Show with Jay Leno, Today Show, CBS Morning Show, Extra, Access Hollywood, and Oprah. In 2004, Jeff won best performer award in a children's series.

Lawrence Anthony took his root in Johannesburg, South Africa. He is considered as untamed life master in South Africa. He is a global conservationist, environmentalist, explorer and bestselling author. He endeavoured to bring to light issues of the earth and to secure imperiled species, including the northern white rhinoceros. He was the organiser of South Africa environmental group, the Earth Organisation. He claims the Thula Thula game reserve which spreads across more than five thousand sections of land in Kwa Zulu-Natal. He was born on September 17th, 1950 and breathed his last on March 2nd, 2012. He was an international member of the esteemed Explorers Club of New York and a member of the National Council of the Southern Africa Association for the Advancement of Science, South Africa's oldest scientific association.

Anthony had a notoriety for striking preservation activities, including the safeguard of the Baghdad Zoo at the stature of the US-driven Coalition attack of Iraq in 2003, and transactions with the infamous Lord's Resistance Army rebel army in Southern Sudan, to bring issues to the light of the earth and secure imperiled species, including the remainder of the Northern White Rhinoceros. His preservation exercises were acutely noted and in regional and international media including CNN, CBS, BBC, Al Jazeera, Sky TV, and highlighted in magazines, and journals such as Readers Digest, the

Smithsonian, the Explorers Journal, Africa Geographic, Men's Journal, Shape magazine, Elle magazine among others.

Anthony arranged preservation affair supper in Durban to raise global awareness for the rhino-poaching emergency and to dispatch his new book, *The Last Rhinos: My Battle to Save One of the World's Greatest Creatures* on March 2012, but before it was published, he died of a heart attack at the age of sixty-one. To everyone's astonishment, for his passing, there were reports that some of the traumatised elephants which he spared from death and he strived to make a connection between them, went to his family's home as per the way elephants more often than not grieve the demise of one of their own and remained around in an obvious vigil for two days, before dispersing.

Anthony's grandfather, who was a miner in Berwick-upon-Tweed, England had migrated to the area to work in the gold mines. His father, who ran an insurance business, later propelled new branches crosswise over Southern Africa. He was brought up in provincial Malawi, Zambia, and Rhodesia and later settled in Zululand, South Africa. Following his dad, he proceeded with his vocation in the insurance sector and as well concentrated on real estate development business. Mutually he likewise worked with the Zulu tribes, by observing nature. Anthony was hitched to Francoise Malby and lived on the Thula Thula game reserve in Zululand. He has two sons (Dylan and Jason) and two grandsons.

By mid-1990s, his enthusiasm for the African shrub roused him to switch professions and he began working with Zulu tribes. Later his energy toward nature made him purchase the Thula Thula game reserve and he started his career as a conservationist. A defining moment came in his life when he was called by a conservation group to save a herd of nine elephants who had escaped their enclosure and were inflicting havoc across

Kwa Zulu-Natal and were to be shot dead. He endeavoured to communicate with the matriarch of the herd through the tone of his voice, and body language, eventually safeguarded them and brought them to the reserve, and later he archived his association with the group in the book known as *The Elephant Whisperer*.

In the coming years, he set up a conservation group, The Earth Organization in 2003, and his initiatives prompted the foundation of two new reserves, the Royal Zulu Biosphere in Zululand and the Mayibuye Game Reserve in Kwa Ximba, that opted for giving local tribe wage through wildlife tourism. He strived to provide job opportunities to the local tribes. He even kept up a decent association with them. As an African wildlife expert, Anthony was long involved with programmes to encompass remote African tribes in conservation on their own traditional land, an activity he considered essential to the future well-being of conservation in Africa.

He has won numerous honours for his contribution to the society, some of them are The Global Nature Fund, Living Lakes Best Conservation Practice Award, for “A remarkable contribution to nature conservation and environmental protection”. The Earth Day medal presented at the United Nations by the Earth Society for his rescue of the Baghdad Zoo, The IAS Freedom Medal, The Earth Trustee Award, The Rotary International Paul Harris Fellowship for outstanding contribution to the ideals of Rotary, The US Army Third Infantry, Regimental Medal for Bravery in Iraq during the Coalition invasion of Baghdad, The Umhlatuzi Mayoral Award for Outstanding Community Service, Member of the Governing Council of the Southern Africa Association for the Advancement of Science, International Membership, the Explorers Club of New York were some of the distinguished accolades conferred on him. At a presentation in Washington, DC in March

2009, respected international journalist Tom Clynes named South African conservationist Lawrence Anthony amongst his six most remarkable and significant people in a lifetime of reporting. Other names on the list include such personalities as Sir Edmund Hillary. The greatest recognition came from the elephants Anthony saved when they travelled to his home to lament on his sudden passing.

In April 2012, Anthony was retrospectively bestowed honorary Doctor of Science degree by College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science, University of Kwa Zulu-Natal. He had served on the National Transitional Executive Committee during the South African Governments evolution from Apartheid on the panel for the electronic media which appointed the Board of Directors of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and on the committee, which appointed the Film Board of South Africa. The media dubbed him ‘The Elephant Whisperer’ and ‘The Indiana Jones of Conservation’.

Anthony is a bestselling author and his books have been translated into several languages. His brother-in-law, Graham Spence co-authored his three books, as he himself is a freelance journalist and author who was raised up in Africa and at present is living in England. Anthony’s first book *Babylon’s Ark* is the true story of the wartime rescue of the Baghdad Zoo. It has won literary awards including the Booklist Editor’s Choice in the category adult books for young adults, and the French 28th Prix Littéraire 30 Million d’Amis literary award, popularly known as the Goncourt for animals. It is the genuine story of the wartime rescue of the Baghdad Zoo animals. The state of the zoo animals is explored because of man’s wrong demeanour towards nature.

Man’s avidity and pride over the neighbouring countries made him take up arms against his own species, which has harmed the entire ecosystem. Nobody knows with

conviction how many people and animals have been killed and injured in Iraq since the 2003 United States intrusion. Hundreds of animals and birds had kicked the bucket, got away or had been stolen for sustenance by people. Anthony thought that it is important to instruct civilians about the risk of unlawful and unregulated poaching. The manipulation of natural resources that often leads to animal extinction is firmly connected to a monetary advance of nations where this procedure happens. Consequently, he tended to the issues which were an overwhelming test to him. Hence Anthony voices out the cries of the voiceless animals of the Baghdad Zoo.

Anthony's second book, *The Elephant Whisperer*, tells the story of his adventures and his connection with a rescued herd of African elephants. Deep ecology states eight principles and using these principles the book is examined. Anthony was solicited to acknowledge a group of maverick wild elephants on his Thula Thula game reserve in Zululand. In the previous reserve, the herd was tormented deeply, the herd's matriarch and her calf were shot to death, in the presence of other elephants which turned them into a fierce group and compelled them to target people. In the beginning, they were extremely forceful and brutal against people who struggled to get near them, which delineates the herd's loss of confidence in mankind.

Anthony had demonstrated that great contemplations and genuine care towards these gentle giants changed the attitude of these tremendous warm-blooded animals towards mankind. His private concentration was the recovery of the traumatised African elephant and this automatically paved respect to each animal in his zoo. Anthony too underwent serious traumatic pressure, to save their lives from the previous reserve owner as well as from the poachers and he was also concerned about the Zulu tribe's livelihood.

As he engaged to create a bond with the elephants, he came to comprehend that the elephants had a prodigious pact to teach him about life, faithfulness, and liberty.

Anthony's remorseless efforts at animal protection and his extraordinary connection with nature proved his humanness.

Anthony's third book, *The Last Rhinos*, is the true story of his inclusion to saving the enduring Northern White Rhinos in the DRC Congo. When he discovered that the northern white rhinos, living in the war-desolated Congo, were on the very verge of extinction, he knew he needed to act. He tried to strike peace, provided knowledge and sought attention from the LRA soldiers to help him to protect the remaining northern white rhinos from the bush. He could not save these animals singlehandedly from the highly trained poachers. The interest in rhino horns in the Far East has transformed poaching into a perilous underground market that debilitates the lives of not just these rare species, but also that of the rangers who secure them. People in rich nations are one of the reasons for the dwindling of an animal population. It is important to create an awareness among developed and developing nations to include in the issues, for example, increment punishments for poaching and unlawful trafficking while at the same time extending living space assurances for threatened animals. A theory states that hierarchical hypocrisy is the reason, the species has become extinct.

Anthony has also written a poetry text called *Lyrical Foreplay* which contains twenty-six poems. He is new to the poetry scene. Poets have long been inspired to tune their lyrics to the variations in landscape, the changes in season, and the natural phenomena around them. His poetry is provocative, astoundingly and astutely composed. It elevates, rouses, moves, penetrates the spirit, and puts a spotlight on disputable issues.

The hypothesis has been framed to studying the works of Lawrence Anthony which broadens into an ecologically oriented study, by focusing on one of the world's greatest animal rescue operation; the interconnectedness of humans and animals and to describe the illegal trade in rhino horns. It has been guided by the following aim and objectives:

1. To analyse the man-animal strife that emerges because of anthropocentrism or human-centrism.
2. To examine the relationship between Anthony and animals specifically and the world in general.
3. To scrutinise the various ways in which animals are tortured through the hands of man because of their avidity which has pushed some of the animal species into the verge of extinction.
4. To evaluate Anthony's writings which have educated several people about how to maintain a healthy relationship with environment and to lead a life in an eco-friendly society.
5. To discover the style, technique, and language implemented by Anthony
6. To bring the vision that until society becomes aware of the significance of these problems there would not be any kind of strong global resolution.

In order to analyse the topic of study, a distinctive methodology inclusive of a set of rules or modes has been employed. The analytical method is deployed to examine the animal's sufferings and illegal poaching by human beings. The descriptive method exposes many situations about the extinction of several species and the steps taken by

various organisations and government to stop the violation against animals. Interview method is espoused for collecting data from a forest officer. The methodology includes an analysis of the books by Lawrence Anthony in the light of ecocritical approach. Theories like the intrinsic value on animal, deep ecology and social ecology have been used to analyse these texts. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* seventh edition format has been followed throughout the research paper.

A review of literature is vital to assess the different facets of this study. There is a lacuna in research as scholars have hardly focused on people who have hands-on experience and have dedicated their lives to conserve wildlife. Several eco-concerned books have been compared and contrasted with current issues all over the world. An article on “A Message to Humanity” by The Earth Organisation about Anthony has also been used for cross-referencing. Many of his bold achievements were covered by CNN, BBC, CBS, Men’s Journal, Elle magazine, Reader’s Digest, The Smithsonian, Carte Blanche, The Globe, and others sources have been added to enrich the research. Also collected information data from journals, articles, reports, use of books, websites, newspapers, actual cases for present research and other related sources of data have been used to enrich this study.

The thesis is divided into five chapters: The first chapter, ‘Introduction’ traces the origin and development of ecocriticism, its contribution, the life and works of Lawrence Anthony and his contemporaries. In the second chapter ‘The Intrinsic Value of Animals’, the book *Babylon’s Ark* is dissected using Tom Regan’s theory of Intrinsic value of animals. It depicts Anthony’s struggle in rescuing the Baghdad Zoo animals. Chapter three, ‘The Interconnectedness of Humans and Animals’, is analysed using Arne Naess’s

deep ecology theory, based on the book *The Elephant Whisperer*. It tells the story of his adventures and connection with a rescued herd of African elephants. Chapter four, 'The Combat to Save Endangered Species', examines the book *The Last Rhinos*, and Murray Bookchin's social ecology theory is a tool to provide a new dimension. It is about the true story of Anthony's inclusion to saving the enduring Northern White Rhino in the DRC Congo. The last chapter 'Summation' sums up the arguments of the preceding chapters and traces the similarities in each chapter. It also throws light on the style and technique used by Anthony. The study explores ecological concerns in Anthony's books. Finally, the main focus of the research is to identify the books with ecological concerns and analyse them under different subfields of ecocriticism.

The following chapter traces Anthony's inclusion and his troubles in rescuing the surviving animals of the Baghdad Zoo, amid the US lead Coalition attack of Iraq that has been dismembered intricately.

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