

Acknowledgement

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Abstract

Abstract

The new literatures in English give significant concern to nature writing in literary texts. Ecocriticism refers to the environmental study in literature, art and its theoretical approaches which emphasizes such practices. It is a new critical technique for critics to analyze from an interdisciplinary perspective in which all the branches of science is brought together to bring about a possible solution for the present day ecological problems. The ecological devastation challenges the society and mankind to think about their sustainability. Thomas King focuses on the interrelationship between culture and environment with reference to First Nations people. Thomas King reveals the fact that mankind has deviated from the cultural ethos which has traditional practices of protecting the environment.

Thomas King was born on April 24, 1943 in Sacramento, California. Thomas King has begun writing in the early 1980s and has published an array of novels, short stories, scripts, children's books and works of non-fiction. He has won many awards in which Order of Canada in 2004 and Governor General's Award in 2014 are considered to be prestigious. The novels chosen for study are *Medicine River*, *Truth and Bright Water*, *Green Grass*, *Running Water*, *The Back of the Turtle*, and the trilogy: *UFOs That Crashed to Earth*, *Martian Fever* and *Message from Titan*. Most of Thomas King's works are based on First Nations people and their oppression and environmental degradation.

Chapter I - The introductory chapter traces the origin of Ecocriticism and gives the glimpse of novelists who create awareness on environmental degradation, critics who develop ecocritical literary theories and conservationists who strive hard to protect nature. It gives a brief introduction about the Native American culture. The biography of author

and summary of his works are given in detail. Thomas King reveals the cultural sustainability and the harmonious coexistence between man and nature. Mankind's insatiable appetite for power has paved way for ecological degradation. The technological dependence distanced mankind from nature. The thesis aims to study the interdependence of culture and biodiversity; it focuses on the manner in which the process of modernization and assimilation of colonial culture has distanced the indigenous people away from their cultural ethos resulting in unimaginable threat to ecology.

Chapter II entitled 'Cultural Anthropology in *Medicine River* and *Truth and Bright Water*' analyzes the First Nations people's culture which is inextricably connected with nature. It focuses on the manner in which dominant society makes First Nations people to assimilate with the dominant culture. The First Nations people merely witness the environmental devastation done by capitalists. Cultural anthropology studies the differences and resemblances across cultures and how culture transforms as time progresses. Thomas King highlights the culture of First Nations people by explaining their history, culture and traditions in the novel *Medicine River*. In *Truth and Bright Water*, Thomas King brings to light the humiliation faced by the First Nations people who were ill-treated by the dominant society which snatched away their lands and forcibly chased them away. Encroachment of lands makes the First Nations people poor and unemployed; the consequence is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter III entitled 'Eco-socialism in *Green Grass, Running Water*' focuses on the Eco-socialism as the novel depicts how imperialism forcibly transforms the lives of Native Americans. The landscape is transformed through the construction of a dam which has an adverse effect on the Native people. Ecosocialism is the ideology that merges both

social and ecological concerns. Eco-socialists believe that capitalism eventually resulted in social exclusion, poverty, war and environmental ruin. The dam becomes the ultimate point of conflict as the manmade structure is holding back the force of nature. With the construction of dams and nuclear power plants, the environment is introduced to the world of toxins which is analyzed in the next chapter.

Chapter IV entitled 'Ecopedagogy in *The Back of the Turtle*' attempts to analyze the novel as a case study of ecopedagogy as it creates awareness by throwing light on the darker side of the defoliants, genetically modified organisms and weight loss supplements which affect both environment and living beings. Ecopedagogy is a movement that emerged to educate people and to create awareness regarding ecological devastation done to plants, animals and numerous organisms. The defoliant, Green Sweep poisons Smoke River, near British Columbia; it kills vegetation and many species including human beings. After the environmental disaster, the next thing left is apocalypse and post-apocalypse which is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter V entitled 'Apocalypse and Post-apocalypse in *UFOs That Crashed to Earth*, *Martian Fever* and *Message from Titan*' examines the Apocalypse and Post-apocalypse in Thomas King's science fiction trilogy as they portray the horror of the earth's technological civilization that brings an end to sustenance of all life. Apocalypse means the destruction of the world; such fiction exhibits the result of nuclear destruction and environmental degradation. Post-apocalypse is the life or settlement after a catastrophe. Thomas King shows how the nuclear weapons pollute the earth in *UFOs That Crashed to Earth*. The other two novels, *Martian Fever* and *Message From Titan* are futuristic novels which project sustenance of life aftermath nuclear destruction. Both the novels take place on another planet. Thomas

King has created two sets of characters in which one set long for the utopian society and strive hard to create a better place to live. The other set of characters are the ones who do not hold any societal responsibility and destroy the world. The world is filled with different kinds of people and the problems arise every single minute but that should not stop people from their responsibility of safeguarding the natural resources.

Chapter VI - The Summation highlights the types of environmental destruction with reference to the novels taken for analysis. The research infers that the exploitation of nature occurs due to the broken cultural heritage which is deeply intertwined with the physical environment that supports to sustain all lives. The rapid growth of capitalist economies urged for homogenization of cultures and landscapes. The combined loss of cultural and ecological knowledge led mankind to exploit nature; the implication of which is evident today. Reestablishing the inherent knowledge imbedded in every culture can help people broaden their understanding of wholeness and interconnectedness that balance all life forms. This chapter highlights certain environmental conservations introduced by both government and private agencies worldwide to protect nature.