

The Rise of Eco criticism: A Review

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Abstract

“Since prehistory, literature and the arts have been drawn to portrayals of physical environments and human-environment interactions”. As the modern environmentalist moment came from 19th century it gives birth to “rich array of fictional and nonfictional writings concerned with humans’ changing relationship to the natural world”. And only from, early 1990s they merged into the concept of literature and most found was the concept of “eco-criticism: an eclectic and loosely coordinated movement whose contributions thus far have been most visible within its home discipline of literature but whose interests and alliances extend across various art forms and media”. In these aspects eco-criticism converges with: “environmental anthropology, environmental history, and environmental philosophy”.

Key words: ecocriticism, environmental, philosophy etc.

Introduction

“Eco-criticism is the study of literature and the environment from an interdisciplinary point of view, where literature scholars analyze texts that illustrate environmental concerns and examine the various ways literature treats the subject of nature”.

With the help of interdisciplinary point of view of authors, researchers, one can be able to find criticism. “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 eco-criticism”.

“In the United States, ecocriticism is often associated with the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE), which hosts a biennial conference for scholars who deal with environmental matters in literature and the environmental humanities in general”.

It is a broad path which is known by no. Of other descriptions: "green (cultural) studies", "eco-poetics", and "environmental literary criticism", and is “often informed by other fields

such as ecology, sustainable design, bio politics, environmental history, environmentalism, and social ecology, among others.”

Definition

“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”. And with this it has taken “methodologies and theoretically informed approaches liberally from other fields of literary, social and scientific study”.

Cheryll Glotfelty's working definition in *The Ecocriticism Reader* is that "ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment", and one of the implicit goals of the approach is to recoup professional dignity for what Glotfelty calls the "undervalued genre of nature writing". Lawrence Buell defines "'ecocriticism' ...the relationship between literature and the environment conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmentalist praxis”.

Review of literature

(Mishra, 2017) studied "*Ecocriticism: A Study of Environmental Issues in Literature*" and observed that “During the last few decades, Environment has posed a great threat to human society as well as the mother earth”. Due to huge misuse of the natural resources we are left with the few. “The rainforests are cut down, the fossil fuel is fast decreasing, the cycle of season is at disorder, ecological disaster is frequent now round the globe and our environment is at margin”. And because of these situations, emerges a new theory of nature which is named as “Eco-criticism”.

(City, Branch, & Grady, 1994) studied "*About Ecocriticism*" and observed that The word "Ecocriticism" traces back to William Rueckert's 1978 essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism and apparently lay dormant in critical vocabulary until the 1989 Western Literature Association meeting (in Coeur d'Alene), when Cheryl Glatfelter (at the

time a graduate student at Cornell, now Assistant Professor of Literature and the Environment at the University of Nevada, Reno) not only revived the term but urged its adoption to refer to the diffuse critical field that heretofore had been known as the study of nature writing."

(Tripathi, n.d.) Studied *"An Analysis of Eco-criticism"* and observed that "the task of Eco-criticism, is to formulate a conceptual foundation for the study of interconnections between literature and the environment". We can say that literature can be seen as "aesthetically and culturally" constructed element of the environment. "Since it directly addresses the questions of human constructions, such as meaning, value, language, and imagination, which can, then, be linked to the problem of ecological consciousness that humans need to attain".

(Tošić, 2006) studied *"Ecocriticism – interdisciplinary study of literature and environment"* and found "that Eco is short of ecology, which is concerned with the relationships between living organisms in their natural environment as well as their relationships with that environment". Analogy says that eco-criticism matters with the relations of literature and environment. "These are obviously interdisciplinary studies, unusual as a combination of a natural science and a humanistic discipline. The domain of Ecocriticism is very broad because it is not limited to any literary genre".

Ecocriticism development

"Ecocriticism has grown exponentially from its inception in the early 1990s as an organized initiative (1, 2). The Association for the Study of Literature and Environment has become a worldwide movement with chapters throughout Europe, East and South Asia, and Australia-New Zealand, though scholars from the Anglophone world, especially the United States and the United Kingdom, still predominate".

From Aristotle, criticism in literature has taken interest in the setting. However other concerns have also be seen. "Literature environment studies have always sought at least in principle to encompass not only such specific genres as nature writing and nature poetry, but also all expressive media, including visual, musical, and cinematic as well as more purely instrumental forms of expression such as scholarly articles and the conventions of legislative documents, reports from nongovernmental organizations, and the like".

Imagination of place: from local to global

“First-wave ecocriticism attached special value to the aesthetics and ethics of place attachment at a local or regional scale, as modelled in the bioregional thinking of such environmental writer-critics as Wendell Berry and Gary Snyder, whose essayistic writings were more influential as catalysts for ecocriticism than were their fictive works”.

Literature, science, environment

This concept has an extraordinary relationship with “natural sciences”. “Eco-criticism, like environmentalists more generally, rely on the insights of biologists, ecologists, and chemists as the basis for their claims about the state of nature, and research findings from the natural sciences provide much of the social legitimating for efforts on behalf of conservation”.

But some also watch all that “as root causes of ecological crisis, both in reducing nature to a mere object to be studied and manipulated by a detached observer, and in amplifying people’s ability to inflict damage on nature”.

Gender

“Although commonly identified with the radical political movements of the 1970s and 1980s, ecofeminism (environmental feminism) has a much longer history, perhaps even extending back to prehistoric goddess worship”.

“The term ecofeminism was coined by the French feminist Franc,oise d’Eaubonne in 1974 to represent women’s potential to instigate an ecological revolution entailing new relations between women and men and between people and nature in the name of ensuring human survival”.

It argues that there is no difference in the exploitation of women and nature. With some eco-feminists claiming “a parallel in men’s thinking between their ‘right’ to exploit nature, on the one hand, and the use they make of women, on the other”.

(Post) colonialism

The most exciting development is showing more interest in “non-western literature”. Scholarly interest in how creative texts from “Africa, Latin America, and Asia discuss the environmental aspects of (post)colonialism has expanded particularly rapidly, quickened by the increasing interest of environmental and postcolonial literary critics in one another’s writings”.

There is important to see that there is growth in the tendency of the literature scholars who accepted both the post of “non-western literature and the need to offset conventional nation-centric approaches by focusing on transnational and global cultural flows”.

Recent one have built more relation in between imperialism and ecological distress within the literatures not only of “Europe and Anglo North America, but also of Africa, Asia, and Latin America”. This increased attention to non-Western literature’s engagement with both local ecological concerns and global environmental issues, “including toxification, climate change, and environmental injustice, has focused on a wide array of creative landscapes on every continent”.

Conclusion

“Eco-criticism started as an organized movement within literature studies in the early 1990s, a scholarly generation later than the first such movements within the environmental humanities. Ecocriticism as a Library of Congress subject heading dates from 2002”. Its progress has been rapid, such that within two decades it is well on the way to extending itself worldwide from its original “Anglo-American base and now boasts half-dozen scholarly journals in Europe, North America, and Asia in addition to ASLE’s flagship journal, ISLE”. Issues of methodology and proper future course remain matters of debate, as confirmed, for example, by the ongoing dispute as to the proper relation between scientific and aesthetic methods of inquiry and the comparative recency of attention being accorded to non-Western literatures. Even though the shift of interest which is taken by film in this concept may advice: *“that literature-environment studies would exert a broad ripple effect across criticism of other expressive genres, in the fields of visual art and music this cross-fertilization is still in its very early stages”*.

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