

Ruskin Bond and Environment

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Abstract:

Ruskin Bond has been labeled as a unique writer who deals with nature its aspects and humans. His stories are pieces of an artist who wrote for adults but his characters are small yet they teach lessons to readers. Nature is depicted as a thing which is continuously degraded and hurt by people. Man has lost touch with nature and feelings of care and love have been removed from his bosom. Many people have written about nature but Bond had composed his short stories in support of nature. Whether males or females children play prominent roles in his short fiction while remaining in the lap of nature and thus teach us the essence and love of nature. His writings give a clear and lucid picture of Himalyan region of shimla. He tries to develop feeling if security for nature in his readers. His writings surround nature and he treats it as a home for whole creation. Critics have studied his art as eco-critical and found environmental concerns in it.

Key Words: Nature, environment, art, degraded and hurt etc.

Introduction

Ruskin Bond has produced art in abundance and his focus is man and eco-system. From 1951 to present he has written many short story collections and talked about ghosts, man, children, nature, its beauty and colour, women, man's attitude towards nature and many other things. He prefers to use first person though sometimes we do find third person narrative technique in his stories as well.

Review of Literature

"In his Ruskin Bond's Book of Nature he gives detailed description of trees, its usage, effect on people, association with daily chores of life and the myths associated with it. He pays compliment to the trees for

shaping his whole being” (Dr. Sonia Verma 28). Bond tries to portray trees as if they are part and parcel of life. In his writings he sometimes call them his and at other times his father’s trees. This seems to suggest that Bond has personalized trees and made them his own. But looking at the function and use they serve to man we must at least have consideration for them. Throughout his short story The Cherry Tree he wants to impress up on man that trees have to be planted and taken care of. “Even when there was rain, Rakesh would sometimes water the tree. He wanted it to know that he was there” (Bond 135). Raki does not only plant a tree but he waters it, surrounds it with pebbles to make it safe from external danger and thus acting as a kind of ecological sympathizer.

“I sat alone beneath a tree, I felt a little lonely or lost. As soon as my father rejoined me, the atmosphere lightened, the tree itself became more friendly” (Bond 145). Bond has not only displayed his love for trees but had shown how passionate and important are trees on his life and life of people. They provide shade in the scorching sun and they also provide paper, medicine, clean environment which seems that God had made it a special bonus for man.

“It is also important that we respect them”, said grandfather.” We must acknowledge their rights. Everywhere birds and animals are finding it difficult to survive, because we are trying to destroy both them and their forests. They have to keep moving as the trees disappear” (Bond 156). Bond has eyes of an owl and senses of a shark. He seems to ponder on not only birds and animals but also of man. When he talks about other creations he does want to express that they are world rather he says that they are important and even essential for the survival of man on this earth. His characters tell us that we need to take care of nature and environment. He does not want to tell that nature is a place of solace for man but a place where man is rooted. By giving them their rights he suggests that we must recognize their need and importance for us.

“The skeletons of a few trees remained on the lower slopes. Almost everything had gone grass, flowers, shrubs, birds, butterflies, grasshoppers, lady bird. A rock lizard popped its head out of a crevice to look at the intruders. Then, like some prehistoric survivor, it scuttled back into its underground shelter” (Bond 496). Bond loves birds and animals, even land and plants have been given proper place in his art. His writings tell us about how much terror is caused by the man and how much afraid are other creations by his actions. He is a man who

has lived in nature and cares for it as it is essential for man. He is not the one who conceals but the one who reveals the place of nature in the life of the man.

For Wordsworth nature occupied centre in life and for Bond nature is all. He has included ghosts in nature and his wrings are pleas for environmental preservation. “If people keep cutting trees, instead of planting them, there’ll soon be no forests left at all, and the world will be just one vast desert. The young Bond spends an entire day, planting trees on a small rocky island, and his father tells him that the trees used to move and they will move again.” See how they reach out with their arms” (*My Father’s Trees in Dehra* 300). Here in this quote again the focus is how to save environment from pollution and degradation. People have turned out to be brutes, don’t they know what are trees and other creations for them. If they are bent on degrading environment then what will happen to them in future? World will become void with no fresh air and good environment. His writings are acting just like sermons to awake people from slumber of materialism to show them the path of humans so that they care take care of nature and so themselves.

“In Death of the Trees, Bond writes sadly of the building of roads by the PWD, and the ruthless felling of trees he loves, the maple, the deodar, the pines, the oaks. He bemoans the flight of beautiful forest birds, the magpies, the Barbet, the Minivet and others, as their shelters and homes are destroyed. The sound of dynamite has scared away the other animals too. He ends” (Savita Singh 212). Bond enjoys the scenes and sights of nature, he praises nature like that of Keats yet he is more passionate about it in terms of care and concern. “Never mind. Men come and go, the mountains remain” (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life* 461). Bond has suggested clearly that mountains are there and will remain there.

Conclusion

Bond from the very beginning of his life has been a destitute. He was left by his mother and brought up by his father but his love for ecosystem is fine and passionate. He is the only Indian writer who has shown deep insight for nature and its bonus for humans.

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