

ADORATION FOR NATURE IN RUSKIN BOND'S THE ROOM ON THE ROOF

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ABSTRACT

Nostalgic childhood days have long been forgotten in the fast tract of materialistic world. Technology occupied minds have started, thronging the Job markets like a tree clouding the wood. They find no time to spare and glance at the beauty of nature, ironically some keep nature wallpapers, to beautify their computers. Mother Earth is confronting the ecological imbalances and few environmentalists are ready to make revolution, against deforestation, pollution and injustices done to nature. This is the present scenario of our cosmos. Few environmentalists are ready to make revolution against deforestation, pollution and injustices done to nature, including literary writers. Literature as a mirror of society, presents the importance of awareness towards the environmental concerns. Love of nature in the literary works, reflects present day issues. The good old games of the neighborhood children were now emerging like a phoenix in the name of summer camps. The habit of using healthy food and the use of mud pot vessels is being excavated, from unforgotten habits of the humans and are being released as new inventions. Ruskin Bond, one of the most prominent writers admires nature and makes his readers to love nature. In the light of ecology, his works can be analyzed, not only from the light of ecologists, but also from the common man point of view.

KEYWORDS: Nature, Ecology, Literature and Nature, Ruskin Bond

INTRODUCTION

Adoration for Nature in Ruskin Bond's the Room on the Roof

Rabindranath Tagore writes in his immortal work Gitanjali,

The morning sea of silence broke into ripples of bird songs; and the flowers were all merry by the roadside; and the wealth of gold was scattered, through the rift of the clouds, while we busily went on our way and paid no heed.

We sang no glad songs nor played; we went not to the village for barter; we spoke not a word, nor smiled; we lingered not on the way. We quickened our pace more and more as the time sped by. (1-6)

This is a booster for Nature lovers and a soft alarm to the ignorant. At first, the silence of the morning and the songs of the birds are heard, but at present mobile phone alarm does the job, of waking up the people. On their way to the office, they neither see flowers nor clouds, as the time moves faster people also move faster. To recognize the fallacies of daily life, literature gives way to understand the life, which colors the minds of the people with imagination. Literature students are highly blessed because, it is more than a subject as it influences and impacts readers. Literature transforms life and reflects the society, with its virtues and vices. Nature plays a vibrant role in literature. The nature is to be admired and the lovers of nature are to be celebrated.

Remarkable as an Indian writer, Ruskin Bond's works show the harmony between nature and human being. He was born on May 19, 1934 at Kasauli. Ruskin Bond's philosophical description of social environment is vital in his works and his moral temper, emotional feelings and ethical bonds are stimulated in his writings that give the splendors of environment and individuals. He insists on the significance of loving nature with its hills, mountains, trees and living things. Ecology can be defined as the relationship between plants, animals and people. His works show ecology, with the underlying core of human responsibilities. The hills of Mussoorie and Dehradun are the settings of his works that reflect his dedication, towards the power of nature.

Ruskin Bond's relationship with the natural world can be seen in the debut novella *The Room on the Roof*, published in 1956. For this novella, he won John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize in 1957; the highest award for the young writers in Britain. He loves the tranquil glory of nature, that captivates the hearts with such wonderful scenes. He brings lively images, that make the readers spellbound. The keen observation of nature is omnipresent in his works. The high regard, he gives to nature records his bond, with the natural world. He finds fullest enjoyment, in travelling around landscapes. Ruskin Bond is a passionate devotee of Mother Nature. He writes the very first line of *The Room on the Roof*, with the description of nature,

The light spring rain rode on the wind, into the trees, down the road; it brought an exhilarating freshness to the air, a smell of earth, a scent of flowers; it brought a smile to the eyes of the boy on the road. The long road wound round the hills, rose and fell and twisted down to Dehra; the road came from the mountains and passed through the jungle, and valley and, after passing through Dehra, ended somewhere in the bazaar. (1)

Little birds and wild flowers make him to refresh creative thinking. The sounds of raindrops, birds, brooks, plants and breeze give him the blissful minutes with nature. To rain, Rusty and Somi are going on the bicycle in their first meet, where Ruskin Bond tells that, the "cycle moved smoothly over the wet road, making a soft, swishing sound" (4). Ruskin Bond's characters, tend to be in close contact with nature and they are drawn from Indian society. His characters also observe the dew of the morning time, chirping of birds, the beauty of sunrise, the movement of clouds and the natural aroma around them, which make them forget unhappy minutes.

In *The Room on the Roof*, Rusty represents Ruskin Bond's excitements and feelings in the surroundings of nature. The passionate images of scenes, arrange for the comprehension of the condition of the protagonist Rusty. When Mr. Harrison, his guardian was going to Delhi, Rusty intended to make his absence, a pleasant one. He wanted to feel the word 'freedom'. In those times, he always thinks to "explore, get lost, and wander afar; even if it were only to find new places, to dream in. So, he threw himself on the bed and visualized the morrow, where should he go- into the hills again, into the forest?"(14). Even in the difficult situations, the soothing thoughts, about nature give solace to Rusty. Rusty is beaten by Mr. Harrison, when he went bazaar, without his permission. Rusty fears and gets away from the house of his guardian, and he finds no place to go, so he came to the bazaar. The sound and noise of bazaar arrest his attention. A sad song of the women, in the cry of the jackal and in the condition of the lean dog, Rusty compares his disastrous state. Rusty leaves from Harrison's house, that shows the quest of an Anglo-Indian boy, who finds happiness in the healthier society of Indians and his departure, from the place makes unfortunate situations into enthusiastic and the happiest one.

Ruskin Bond describes climates of a day, along with the mindset of the characters. He says that, "It is a cold morning, sharp and fresh. It was quiet, until the sun come shooting over the hills, lifting the mist from the valley and

clearing the bloodshot from the sky. The ground was wet with dew.” (16) It can be analyzed in the way that, the people are living a dumb life till morning, to the evening. They get happiness on the break of the day; unfortunately it is not long lasting. The view of the natural surroundings makes them chill and fresh. The unhappy mist of the previous day has been wiped away, but still the ground of their feelings is wet with tears. Ruskin Bond writes, “The afternoon was warm and lazy, unusually so for spring; very quiet, as though, resisting in the interval between the spring and the coming summer” (29). People yearn to admire nature, and they are forgetting or neglecting by their panic routine.

The Room on the Roof brings the relationship between man and nature. The outbreak of spring makes the people to fall in love, with the surroundings of nature. Ruskin Bond presents the circumstances of the blooming of flowers and the new leaves of the trees, give ecstasy to the minds of the people. The beauty of nature gives quicker reclamation from misery and tension. It is nature that stretches the unconditional love and care, to bloom flowers, in the tedious desert of the life. Ruskin Bond writes the change of season and the mentality of the people,

And truly, that day there was an outbreak of spring.

The sun came up, and the bazaar woke up. The walls of the houses were suddenly patched with splashes of colour, and just as suddenly the trees seemed to have burst into flower... the snow in the mountains had melted, and the streams were rushing torrents; the new leaves on the trees were full of sweetness, and the young grass held both dew and the sun, and made an emerald of every dewdrop. (37)

Ruskin Bond tries to establish the relationship between man and nature, so that the harmony with nature can be enriched. As John Keats said in his *Endymion*, “a thing of beauty is a joy forever”. People must admire and worship the nature, and everyone can behold and enjoy the pleasures of nature, as Ruskin Bond's central characters prefer their affection for countryside life, to have a high regard for nature. With various genres of literature, like short stories, poems, novels and novellas, Ruskin Bond portrays the life and experience of human beings, along with nature. He has a concerned viewpoint that portrays the enjoyable, hostile, ugly and graceful aspects of life. He writes his works, with no evil force in it because, he believes in the goodness of humanity and the showering love of nature. Eventhough, the beloved is nearby to Rusty in the novella, he never regrets to admire the beauty of the landscape from the room window. Ruskin Bond writes, Meena and Rusty stood by the window in silence, hand in hand. Rusty was prepared to stand there, holding hands for ever. Meena felt a sisterly affection for him; but he was stumbling into love... From the window, they could see many things. In the distance, towering over the other trees was the Flame of the Forest, its flowers glowing red-hot against the blue of the sky. Through the window came off shoot of pink bouga, in villa keeper; and Rusty knew, he would never cut it; and so he knew he would never be able to shut the window. (85)

In Ruskin Bond's works, children and nature always have dynamic part. His characters and nature are rooted together, with their natural atmosphere that adds to the greatness of the story. Teenage characters like, Rusty, Somi, Ranbir, Kishen and Suri, in *The Room on the Roof* and *Vagrants in the Valley* are admiring towards nature, and they seemed to be the worshippers of nature. Ruskin Bond's adoration comes from the imaginations of a disciple of nature. He zealously notes the different components of nature. Animate and inanimate, unseen or open, that surprises his readers by its realistic feelings. His nature portrayal streams like a fine fountain, that makes the people feel free in the tedious daily routines and the problems, that the people face for survival.

Ruskin Bond tells about the actions of squirrel, as it “brushed its nose with its firepower... ran up a pillar of the

banyan tree.” (86) Rusty, then started to listen to the lazy drone of bees, the squeaking of squirrels and the incessant bird talk. Eventhough, these are supplying the readers with a familiar set of locations and sounds that can be easily drawn, in the imagination of a reader, he makes his descriptions much lovelier than the real enjoyment. His writing style is like writing a travelogue, that relief the readers with its great love of beautiful portrayals. In the backdrop of nature, he has created credible characters, with the identification of their lives and day-to-day problems. The distress and the worry of Rusty are typically shown, through the locale of the scene. Rusty admires nature, but he is lonesome and destitute, yet he is optimistic about the future.

If people love nature their daily life of monotony would change into an evergreen plant, that gives flowers forever. As Ruskin Bond describes the blossoming of dawn into lightly, as it is seen by Rusty,

At first everything was dark, then gradually objects began to take shape-the desk and chair, the walls of the room-and the darkness lifted like the raising of a veil, and over the treetops the sky was streaked with crimson. It was like this for some time, while everything became clearer and more distinguishable; and then, when the nature was ready, the sun reached up over the trees and hills, and sent one tentative beam of warm light through the window. (90)

The happiness lies plenty out of the window. Ruskin Bond tries to make the windows of the readers to be opened so that, they can enjoy the ecstasies of the nature.

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