

The Creative Launcher

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Environmental Concern in the Poetry of Syed Ameeruddin

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Abstract

In the process of modernization human beings are using environment and natural resources to fulfill their needs. In this process our environment and its elements are being used recklessly and without proper concern. Due to unethical ravishment of physical nature and environment different kinds of problems have emerged before human beings. Different kinds of diseases are spreading time and again. Taking these problems as serious issue contemporary thinkers have started a kind of campaign to make people aware of the facts that knowingly or unknowingly we are responsible for these distressing issues. Now the deep concern of human beings is how to save our fragile world from ecological disaster. Global warming, pollution, Ozone depletion and deforestation are increasing day by day. Worldwide environmental awareness is being created by academicians, thinkers, politicians and environmentalists to protect and preserve eco system by living more and more eco-friendly and to bring about environmental conservation through protection of flora and fauna by providing clean energy and sustainable development. Today world peace is threatened not only by warfare conflicts but also by lack of due respect for nature and its elements by its irresponsible and reckless exploitation and destruction. During 20th century different movements started to make us aware of some facts regarding disturbances in the environment. It has been in our sensibility to understand and respect nature and its parts since the dawn of human existence but it was not studied till 1960's.

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In field of literature a new concept of environmental studies emerged in the European countries during 1970's and 80's. Though nature and environment have been part and parcel of literary activities yet they were not studied in literary fields. Nature and environment have been represented by literary luminaries in literary works since dawn of literary activities. After a conscious invocation by the literary leaders critics started paying attention about ways of representation which started a mode of criticism that is termed as Ecocriticism. It is kind of study which studies the relation of literature with nature. It focuses ways representation of the physical environment. It became a theoretical concept with the publication of William Rueckert's essay, "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism" in 1978. The term, "Ecocriticism" was first used by Rueckert in the above essay. He tried to search its roots in the USA by quoting and exemplifying three major nineteenth-century American writers, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller and Henry David Thoreau whose works celebrate nature and the wilderness as manifested in American literature as well as in the works of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats and other figures belonging to romanticism in Britain. It is said Wordsworth mystifies and romanticized nature, Keats aestheticized and Shelly revolutionized nature. They were three great British poets of the Romantic Period. It was Rueckert who started giving importance to nature and environment in literary texts. It is also termed as "Green Studies", "Environmental Studies" and "Nature Writing". Though these terms may be different in words yet sole aim of these terms are to show representation of nature and environment in literature and literary works. Some writers have represented nature its positive and caring side while some have represented its destructive side. Cheryll Glotfelty is a well known name who worked and popularized the term and made it familiar in the whole world with the help of his critical insight. He received this term in "Western Literature Association" meeting, and worked for it and its uses in the literary-critical field which hereafter has been used as 'the study of nature writing'. Since 1989 the usage of the

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term 'ecocriticism' has bloomed in the field of literary studies. The term, Ecocriticism revolted against previous critical theories and concepts which concentrated that the world and its meaning is made of language and linguistic structures. Ecocriticism focused that the world and its meaning is created by nature and physical environment. The Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) was established in 1992 along with the Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment (ISLE) in 1993. In 1996 it is said to be officially heralded by the publication of two seminal works: *The Ecocriticism Reader*, edited by Cheryll Gloyfelty and Harold Fromm and *The Environmental Imagination* by Lawrence Buell. Day by day it is getting popularity amongst the academicians and literary critics. We hope people will realize the importance of nature and environment with the help of ecocriticism. Ecocriticism took its root from the term "Ecology" which studies physical environment and dwelling places of human beings. Ecology is the study of dynamic interactions between organisms and their environment. Like this "Ecocriticism" studies representation of physical environment and organisms in literary works.

Syed Ameeruddin is contemporary poet, environmentalist, critic, and chronicler. He is one of the great the contemporary Indian English poets who talk about peace and good health of environment and the earth. He was born on the 5th December, 1942 in India. His published collections of poems are *What the Himalayas Said*, *Dreadful Doom to Come*, *A Lover and Wanderer*, *Petallic Love Times*, *Visioned Summits*, *Visions of Deliverance* and *Rainbow Rhapsodies*. He has shown keen interest in the human miseries, plight of downtrodden and diminishing goodness of nature and environment. There is deep impact of nature and its elements in his personality, spirit and poetic endeavour. He has used environment and nature as background in most of his poems. His poems have reflection of human actions which have vagueness of ideas, complexity of thought and corruption of human mind and body. Syed Ameeruddin is a poet of love, religion, and world peace. His poems reverberates the heats of people but he always remembers the places and green lands which are present on the earth in different ways. He presents how environment and natural resources are getting shorter and

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shorter day by day from this motherly earth. According to the poet everything has been going from the earth which is soothing, peace giving and procreating human heart and imagination. The poet has great love, feeling and concern towards the elements of nature and environment. Taking some examples which are full of emotions, the poet refers the dilapidated natural world and environment. The parts and parcel of nature have become totally out of tune. Now the environment and ecological parts have become imbalanced which were once balanced and beneficial to human beings. In Arnoldian tone he laments for the things, emotions, gone due to materialistic concerns of the people. These lines express his sensibility towards pastoral and perfumed air of the past:

Once

We used to walk a quiet woodland path

In perfumed air and dappled light,

Locked arm in arm,

With sensuous, caresses warm.

(Simmering Loneliness: 15)

He has keen insight to understand the problems of our society and the world. He has explored the age old themes of love of human beings, love of nature and respect for humanism. There is touch of fondness for good health of human beings and natural elements. The impact of his poetic vigour is very universal. He has shown sincere love towards India's age old culture and her people. These are streaks of love towards nature, mountains, rivers, animals, birds, trees, hills, villages and islands. For Ameeruddin Himalaya is an embodiment of sincerity, purity, oneness and good health. The rivers which come out from it are symbols of love, goodness and perennial source of human values.

“What the Himalaya... Said” is one of the most significant and symbolic poems of Syed Ammeruddin in which he has shown and reflected great concern to nature and physical environment. The poem has been compared with “Tintern Abbey” by some literary scholars and critics for its thematic concern of Wordsworthian notion of nature and environment. Like

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“Tintern Abbey” it also shows changes of natural aspects of particular locality. Themes of this poem show the problems of drought, sterility, fragility, pollution, lack of forest and greenery due to avoidance of nature and environment. In the Modern Age deforestation, ozone depletion and ecological imbalance have caused a lot of problems. The poem “What the Himalaya... Said” opens with, “A deadly drought”. The phrase shows extreme bareness and a state of nothingness because drought is prefixed by an adjective that is “deadly”. Here the word “Deadly” means dangerous where fertility has gone. The poet portrays a state where famine is ghostly. Famine itself is not acceptable. Now it has become ghostly. Every object of this earth and human body has become dry, sterile, dirty and stagnant. Depletion of ozone layer has caused a kind of panic, menace and fury. Turbulent storms are full of thunders and the earth is being shaken by frequent earthquakes. Humanity has been suffering under the fatal floods of imbalance of environment and ecology. Anybody can hear and feel the yells, shouts, screams, and bewilderments occurring on this earth which was once symbol of love and happiness. People on this earth have diverted their mind set up so they have become bewildered, embarrassed, puzzled and baffled. They don’t have proper understanding to be calm and peaceful. Each and every where we can witness split in relation, emotion and thought. Ameeruddin has symbolically tried to disburse the goodness of god because people are not able to get knowledge and wisdom from this great source of light and height. People have become so disturbed that they are not getting peace from those things which are supposed to be symbol of peace like dawn, dusk, river, trees flowers and other kinds. Dawn is symbolically most peaceful occurrence of the world. The Sun has become much bright resulting global warming which is causing evasion of icebergs. Rivers are shrunken and trees are fully unfruitful and barren.

Most of the poems written by Syed Ameeriddin have deep concern to the environmental organisms. He reflects in his poems about the life giving forces of nature and their importance in human life. Man cannot live without natural resources and good health of environment. Different kinds of measure have been given by researchers and scientists to

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measure the health of nature but none of them are complete one. They have been changed time to time to meet necessities of human beings. Ameeruddin has very thoughtful and pragmatic views towards this world. He finds problems and interruption everywhere. The following lines are remarkable to disclose the reality of the present world. He counts:

Adulteration and corruption

Pollution and prostitution

Day dreaming and deception

All for this bewitching deity... (29)

To conclude this paper it can be said that Syed Ameeruddin has heralded environmental studies through help of his poetic genius. He seems suggesting, foregrounding and making us aware about present and future environmental disasters and issues. His poems are emblem of world peace, fraternity, love human values, secular religious ideas and good health of nature and environment. Like Wordsworth he priest of nature in some or other ways.

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