

Deep Ecological Perspective: Metaphysical Holism in the Novels of Amitav Ghosh

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Abstract: In recent years we can actually say that mankind is committing ecocide making the planet a huge dustbin which is a threat to any sort of life to lead their lives. Curbing these impacts on the environment has been a big problem in recent years, in today's modern world; humans are in their need in switching their attitude from independent to interconnectedness and mutual living. This transformation in the man's attitude shows clearly that mankind is ready to take up the blame on him for all his malevolent ecocidal activities towards nature. His radical change in his attitude shows mankind's positive step in seeking solution for the welfare of the "Oikos". i.e., (from dominative to friendly) that leads mankind to share a multifarious interrelationship between human and non-human. In order to bring about this metaphysical holism it is important to follow objectives of ecocriticism by diverting the human attitudes which are anthropocentric to biocentric. Literature is the mirror of life that exclude the material world, but rather includes the whole global network in which humans, ethics, and ecosystem are interconnected. This article tries to focus the harmonious existence of man and nature in the novels of Amitav Ghosh which is based on Carolyn Sigler's proposed third model which insists on the biocentric model that totally neglects the anthropocentrism and paves way for bringing in interconnectedness between human and non-human to lead a harmonious integrated existence.

Keywords: Biocentric , Deep Ecology , Ecocriticism, Mutual living, Oikos.

Introduction

Ecocriticism is itself a theory which is multifaceted which not only analyses about the damage caused to the environment directly by mankind but also discusses the interconnection as well as the harmony between human and nature. According to Thomas. K. Dean:

“Ecocriticism is interdisciplinary. In order to understand the connectedness of all things including the life of the mind and life of the earth. One must reconnect the disciplines that have become the sundered through over specialization....In large part, environmental crises are caused due to humanistic disconnection from the natural world, brought not only by increasing technology but also by particularization; in other words, a mentality of specialization that fails to recognize the interconnectedness of all things” (p 5).

William Howarth (1996) in his essay *Some Principles of Ecocriticism* describes Earnest Haeckel’s idea of similarity that both ecology and economy shares and he states:

“*Ecology* inflected the Linnaean term natural *Economy* from Oikonomia to Oikologia, house mastery to house study, a shift that changed species from resources into partners of a shared domain” (p 73).

So it is apparent that the theoretical context economy insists on understanding the oikos at a household level which is concerned about habitants and its structure. Moreover ecology engages in realizing Oikos as home and its connection with the Oikos both physically and emotionally. Similar to the understanding of the idea of ecology, the study of literary ecocriticism deals with mankind’s place on the Earth, i.e., in the Oikos or home. As Selvamony et al (2007) a renowned ecocritic sorts out:

“First, ecology is the scientific study of the relationship between the organism and the environment. The second is the deep ecological definition which adopts a philosophical and metaphysical approach in the study of the relationship between the organism and the environment. The third defines ecology as the study of Oikos, Oikology” (p xi).

With reference to the third definition if ecology is the study of “Oikos” then it is also significant to note that the kind of ecocriticism which implies the concepts of Oikology to read the text can be referred as Oikocriticism or Oikopoetics as it is mentioned earlier through Rueckert’s definition of ecocriticism as the application of ecological concepts. Selvamony et al (2007) emphasizes “ecocriticism could be understood as the systematic application of

(deep) ecological concepts to the cultural texts” (p xix). Ecocriticism grows out from the two basic platforms ecology and deep ecology which focuses on the place.

Sigler’s model of rejection of anthropocentrism and embracing biocentric attitude is found in the deep ecology as Cochrane (2016) accentuates:

“Deep ecology is that which rejects anthropocentrism and takes a “total-field” perspective. In other words, deep ecologists are not aiming to formulate moral principles concerning the environment to supplement our existing ethical framework. Instead, they demand an entirely new worldview and philosophical perspective” (p 1).

Closely following the above mentioned idea, it is clear that the significant dogma of deep ecology is to bring about the revolutionary change in the philosophical world view due to the increasing deviation from caring of the oikos.

It is to be noted that there is a connection between ecocide and oikos we live in. The prefix “Eco” of the word ecocide is derived from the Greek word “Oikos” which means house, dwelling place, habitation and family that insists on the humans being in the position of habitants who are supposed to be the stewards of the planet but fails to maintain a good connection with the environment which breaks the harmony between human and non-human. As Polly Higgins (2010) states “Without the well being of ecology of our planet, our well-being suffers” (p xii). It is noted that once the world loses its sustainability the good life of habitants is also affected at a greater level. This is caused due to ecocidal activities where humans are projected as mere “killer”. The word “Ecocide” is the combination of Greek word “Oikos” (eco) and “cide” form Latin word (*Caedere*) which means to strike down, cut, destroy, and slay. This human ecocide, which is contagious without control, slays down the lives of all the species that comes on its way. This man made destruction affects locally as well as globally.

Equally as Synder (1985) stated : “Knowing who we are and knowing where we are intimately linked”(p 189) highlights on the spiritual, emotional, physical bonding that humans share with their place, because the place where we live defines who we are. The environment we inhabit plays a crucial role in the physical and psychological development of mankind. The environment (the sense of place or Oikos) where the people habituate can be considered sensual because they share intimate configurations with their own surroundings where the human feel connected through all their senses.

Apart from being interconnected through soul, body and mind, as Dreese (2002) expands the “sense of place” needs more of significant basic understanding of “beyond’s

one's sense of place (or) home" (p 2). As Berry (1987) in his book *Home Economics* opines, "when we propose that humans should learn to behave properly with respect to nature so as to place their domestic economy harmoniously upon and within the sustaining and surrounding wilderness" (p 151). This idea of Berry clearly brings out how man has to pay enough reverence to nature and to the land in order to bring about the domestic interconnectedness among human and non-human for the harmonious well being of the earth. It is also important to note that the loss of harmony leads to mental illness which can be seen as a significant variable that undergoes changes which evidently shows that interconnection between the environmental and existence of human are mutually interdependent.

To elaborate, for an even better understanding of nature, philosophically speaking, there are various subfields namely environmental ethics, deep ecology, ecofeminism and social ecology which contributes more in order to bring in among human's mindset the basic understanding and reasons responsible for the environmental depletion and to bring about the alternate inhabiting style that will lead to a harmonious relationship with the earth. It is important to note that only a philosophical approach will lead mankind in attaining ecological wisdom.

This ability of moving one's own ecological thinking which basically begins at home and further extends to society and becoming interconnected as one with whole physical environment is possible only when an individual considers that the other non-living and living entities also have the same inherent value similar to the value which an individual possesses for their existence in the environment. All creatures on the earth have same intrinsic value and this realization and understanding is considered to be a part of self-realization as Naess (2008) states: "self-realization implies broadening and deepening of self" (p 82). For example, if a place is destroyed, the individual feels as though something within him has been killed, he becomes a part of the place where he drops his ego and goes beyond ego for a better understanding of ecological self which results in ecological harmony.

It is worth mentioning here that the basic idea of man himself connected with other ecological entities through self-realization is seen similar to the idea of "Oikos" that can be seen in a novel or play which encompass the chief character or protagonist. There are several oikos which can be seen revolving around the chief character. For example, the first oikos can be considered to be that of man himself and his place in the physical environment (himself, his family, his ancestors). The next oikos could be the community where he is placed (may be among their land, their family, street, ancestors, tribal community).

This chief character incase if he becomes the representative of the family then he will be considered as the unit of that oikos (community). This can be understood in other way where first oikos clubs with that of the second oikos and becomes the unit of the second oikos. It is obvious that the physical environment becomes the “Oikos” (house/home) and human as the unit of the Oikos. It means man becomes a part of that physical environment where he identifies himself with other oikos which houses the ecological harmony between human and non-human. According to Selvamony (2007):

“for, the oikos which is the ultimate subject of ecology and related disciplines, is a real community located in the definite place. However “oneness” is at times treated as an equivalent of ontic continuity or identification. For example, Arne Naess interprets as ‘the mature experience of oneness in diversity’ where he affirms the diversity and sense of self are essential” (p xxi).

It is also observed that the principle of deep ecology that stresses on the biocentric egalitarianism which is based on the equalitarianism adheres to man and nature as interdependent, equal, and intrinsically related and also encourages symbiosis of all creatures in the world that results from self realization. Unquestionably adding stress to the above discussions, as Suzuki (2015) states:

“The significance of ecological concepts lies in the realization that all of nature comprises of a single organ system, simply in other words various elements in an ecosystem are connected, creating a mesh of interrelatedness. Human beings exist in relation to eco and to other entities that share eco, all of who coexist in a state of mutual influence” (p 112).

This postulates man as a part of nature and everything is interconnected which is achieved through a sense of self. This idea strikes a similarity between Nirmal Selvamony’s integrative oikos and Naess’s deep ecology and accentuates an ecophilosophical sphere of self realization. Both stress the need to create ecological harmony. Selvamony’s original theory “Oikopoetics” (means oikos of the society) which is tend be taken from Tinai an Indian ecophilosophy. Tinai (Oikos) means to live in integration. In the South Indian context, tinai refers to an embraced system of living as Selvamony (2004) explains:

“Earth is tinai because it is an unbroken continuum out of the compacting of sand, rock, soil and other substances... By extension, tinai can also refer to any specific place on earth; especially, a house with its own land surrounding it, a

homestead ... third, namely human community indigenous to a specific ecoregion'..." (p 1).

Equally to that of Selvamony's, the term Oikos is derived from the Greek word "Oikos" which means 'Household'. Further Suzuki (2015) explains:

In ancient Greek, the term Oikos referred to a clan or group of home or community. It is a fundamental unit of the ancient Greek society that included head of the household, his wife, children and any slaves living under the same roof. Based on the situations and context the word can be used with a broad meaning. Gradually the scope of the word expanded from the individual houses to the wider holdings of the head of household and from there, to collections of homes, communities and towns .It even had abstract meaning group of commonalities or place where such group existed. (p 110).

Moreover, this oikos also refers to the realm of spatio-temporal that interlinks the wider cosmos of the universe and world with the human environment that is a part of that macrocosm. Oikos can be considered as the heart of the homeland where people share their happy and sad moments. Oikos is abundantly interwoven by the harmonic complexity of spatio-temporal domain distinguished by quality instead of quantity. In other words it is coalition of human, nature and spirit and as Nirmal Selvamony (2001) defines, "It is something that integrates specific space and time, nature-cultural elements, and human action" (p 1). Selvamony (2001) dilates oikos through two types. they are Integrative and Non-Integrative. As the name denotes Integrative Oikos "integrates the sacred, nature, culture and the humans in a complex kinship, even as a family of kith and kin" (p 1) Moreover it is cognizant that the power is not vested on an individual but it is distributed. On the contrary the Non-integrative Oikos is built upon on the hierarchy where the members of oikos are related in a hierarchical manner. This non-integrative oikos leads to anarchy. Deep ecology that is similar to integrative oikos ultimately stresses on change in the human mindset and consciousness. This revolution in mankind's consciousness springs when man let go his ego where he tries to think of serving the earth instead of involving in saving the earth. This perception of mankind in realizing that other living as well non –living things as one among him happens only when human goes beyond his true self and ventures into an organic wholeness. This is possible only in an Integrative Oikos. This integration and unity between human and non-human happens only through self-realization which means going beyond one's ego and indentifying with wholeness of the world. If integrative Oikos is the interconnection of sacred, nature, culture and human as whole then from deep ecological point of view Gary Synder, gives a perfect answer for the

actual meaning of “sacred” in one of his most important essays “Good, Wild and Sacred”. He also gives new version to the stereotyped meaning of “sacred”.

As Clark (2014) highlights the Gary Synder’s idea which stresses the need for us to move from the world where the position of sacred is ruled by man’s ego:

“In addition he explains the sacred as precisely that which helps us escape from this prison of ego. It “refers to that which helps take us (not only human beings) out of our little selves into the whole mountains-and-rivers and universe. When we begin to awaken, we find the way of nature in ourselves, in the places in which we dwell, in ecosystems, in the whole biosphere, and in the living Earth” (p 159-160).

With reference to above explanation, considering something sacred should begin with one’s self. It is possible only if an individual sheds his ego to connect one’s self with the broader ecological entity. Integrative oikos stresses on a state where human will come out of his ego and connect himself with the other natural forces and other non-living entities (like mountain, rivers, forest, cosmos) and the whole of ecosystem. Reformulations such as locality of the place and symbiosis can be seen as alternatives to self-realization. There are strong situation to witness the biotic community or natural environment as something close to, respectable, irreplaceable for humans. For example, although people cannot replace their native place with other, they can make their land untouched, fertile or infertile, similarly people can identify their selves with one among green tree (or) bare mountain. Thus this shows the way where they find a way to connect themselves emotionally with the nature (or) biotic community. This ability of connectivity with innate feel (or) innate sense where one finds way to connect with nature paves way to realize the true sense of self –realization. This emotional feeling of pain, grief, loss of places not only describes the identification of self with larger ecological whole but also refers to yearning for the loss of places can be seen through nostalgia. As Edward Casey (1993) states:

“to lose one’s best, truest self, one’s most intimate identity... No wonder we are nostalgic (literally, pained at the [non]return home), not just over cherished childhood places but over many now inaccessible or despoiled places, often in consequence of ecological damage or negligence” (p 38).

With reference to the proposed idea, it is significant to note that the self comprises of association with other circles in nature and it includes both human and non humans. Moreover, it is important to note that the self constitutes of place and place constitutes of self which shows the sense of self place a fundamental role in connecting and maintaining

harmony among human, land and other living creatures. Sense of self has its strong roots connected with physical environment which helped them to have an integrated oikos among their community. This chapter throws light on ecosophy keeping it as the fundamental basis of reference to self-realization and to analyse characters' place-based, land-based nostalgia, pain and grief through empathy for the lost oikos.

The novels of Amitav Ghosh shows the multiple challenges faced by place (or) "home"/Oikos (or) land at the time of globalization namely – through the sense of yearning for the land and dwelling through memories which shows the way the people and characters identify themselves with their native places, land and with their cosmos which helps them to attain self-realization. According to Lawrence Buell (2005): "A place is seen, heard, smelled, imagined, loved, hated, feared, and revered" (p 63). This idea of Buell explains clearly the diverse intuitive feeling that mankind has towards land. Thus it can be inferred that place is something which is experienced beyond one's ego so that there exists a human bonding towards the land. The native land or landscape can be considered to be the warehouse of memories for the people who have seen themselves as one with nature. Ghosh in his novel *The Hungry Tide*, narrates a breathtaking incident where people are one with nature but on hierarchical grounds there erupted an ecological disharmony as to whose life is important whether it is man or nature. The novel highlights the Morichjhapi Massacre a real incident happened in the year 1979. The author highlights the factual incident using fictional characters. The government evicted thousands of refugees on the ecological grounds. The refugees are actually from the Sundarbans. They made their illegal settlement on the Morichjhapi Island from the refugee camps allotted by the government due to intolerable conditions prevailing there. The harmonious lives of refugees are disrupted and their forced eviction raises the question of intrinsic value and justice as the refugees struggle for their lost land. One among the thousand refugees was Kusum who shares her pain and grief over her native tide country from where she has been moved to Morichjhapi. Ghosh (2004) accounts it through the words of Kusum:

"For those who lived there, that dust was gold, they loved it just as we loved our tide country mud. But no matter how we tried, we couldn't settle there: rivers ran in our heads, the tides were in our blood..." (THT, p 165).

Here Ghosh gives a beautiful picture of sense of belonging through the memory of Kusum. Kusum is totally unhappy in an alien land and longs for her native land.

The Morichjhapi inhabitants are originally displaced from their home where they feel for their place and identify their true self through their connection with their native land.

Ghosh (2004) puts it in strong words as Kusum expresses “rivers ran in our heads, the tides were in our blood” (THT, p 165) clearly shows their height of integrated living with their land. They imagine their land and other elements of the environment as parts of their body. They connect their sense of self with the complex whole of natural world. From the deep ecological perception there is a clear picture that they long and yearn for the place and land through their memories.

The ancestral practice of worshipping nature as deity and their spiritual and cultural traditional belief system is witnessed through the detailed depiction of the character Bon Bibi as Ghosh (2004) summarizes through the character Kusum:

“Bon Bibi (the forest Goddess) rules over the jungle, that tigers, crocodiles and other animals do her bidding... The statues are of Bon Bibi. You would think that in a place like this people would pay close attention to the true wonders of the reality around them. But no they prefer the imaginary miracles of God and saints” (THT, p 102).

This place was not only a place of her ancestral homeland but also a place where the religious, spiritual, natural and cultural bonding were witnessed through as it is practiced in “the integrative oikos”. It is only in an integrative oikos that humans sees beyond ones sense of self and connects themselves with the natural world that is considered as divine. Ghosh (2004) has brought out the integrated living of natives where the natives consider dolphins as messengers of ‘Bon Bibi’, the forest goddess. The natives believe that these dolphins carry messages of tides and impending danger who travel in the waterways. Kusum, the native of tide forest feels that she is never alone. She feels that dolphins are good companions who direct her through water journey:

“When the day breaks, you’ll see it is time for low tide; cross the island and go to the northern side. Keep your eyes on water; be patient and you’ll see... they’ll will keep you company till the waters arise... Anyone can see Bon Bibi’s messengers if they know where to look” (THT, p 234).

Even in Indian Vedic literature there are many philosophies which preach the cultural practices of considering nature as sacred and thus Chappel (1993) opines:

“Hinduism holds India’s mountains, rivers, forests, and trees are sacred and regarding them to be manifested along with the individual spirits (jiva) and with all universal consciousness (brahman). It is this form of giving religious metaphors thus encourages continuity and reciprocity. Even the knowledge of the herbs, plants, trees was not mere material knowledge but a result of

—interactions with living, spiritually empowered beings inhabiting them. This form of animism “means which believes that all nature, animals, plants, mountains, forests, rivers and oceans were governed by spirits and possess spiritual essence” (p 113).

This shows how the religious beliefs and cultural traditions insisted man to maintain harmony with nature. Thus bonding was encouraged through spiritual powers in the world. This similar bonding is seen in Kusum and her ancestors who worshipped nature possessed a spiritual essence and they feel the connection of their true self with the cosmos.

This nostalgic memory of their harmonious living also stresses the deep ecological principle that all creatures which live on the earth have their own value and right for their existence. Here Kusum, the representative of all the refugees goes beyond her ego and identifies her sense of self with her land, her community and her cosmos. The sense of belonging and longing for her native land resembles similar to the suffering experienced by the Palestinian poet, Mahmoud Darwish (2000) in his poems. The similar pain and grief for the loss of home was expressed in one of his poems “A Diary of a Palestinian Wound”. This poem is considered to be the significant poem where the poet writes about the interconnection with his homeland and sense of longing for home going on his exile as refugee. The poet and his parents were forced to leave their homeland. The poet personifies the land thus: “Our land and we are one flesh and bone We are its salt and water” (p 165). The poet refers ‘we’ to the Palestinians and their land. ‘salt and water’. Just like how the salt cannot be separated from the sea water easily similarly their homeland cannot be separated from the Palestinians. They may be forced to leave the place but in the memories the bonding with the homeland remains connected. This stresses how the poet identifies his sense of self as one with his physical environment.

Similar to Kusum, Deeti in *The Sea of Poppies* could feel the change in the surroundings that underwent a sea change due to poppy cultivation. Ghosh (2008) brings out the impact of the place in the memories of the character as Deeti feels:

“The landscape on the rivers’ shores had changed a great deal since Deeti’s childhood and looking around now... the opium harvest having been recently completed, the plants had been left to wither in the fields, so that the country side was blanketed with parched remnants. Except for the foliage of a few mangoes and jackfruit trees, nowhere was there anything green to relieve the eyes” (SOP, p 192).

These lines show her closeness towards her home and its surroundings through childhood memories. She feels the change with her then and now. She identifies herself with the place once she was very close to. She feels the place, smells it, loves it and mingles with it. She escapes from her narrow ego and goes beyond the conscious mind to empathize with her native land. She becomes a part of the whole mutated ecosystem. She even feels the changes of the place as the changes take place within her. A person who has no love will never feel for nature whatever mess it undergoes but it is not the same with the Deeti. Her mingling with the nature and environment makes her to compare her past with the present condition of the land. Thus, Ghosh through Deeti's mind voice realistically portrays the emotions of a common man who really yearns for the old virgin land which was greener. This shows how Deeti's past life was purely integrated with her surroundings.

Not only Deeti suffers the pain of leaving her mother land but also the natives of the village as the Ibis, the schooner that was carrying the diverse people as refugees to Mauritius anchors at the native shore, i.e., Sagar Island, situated in the Ganges Delta. Before the ship leaves the shore of its native land, refugees boarded on ships started recalling their ecomemories connected with their native land. Each person had millions and millions of memories connected with the home land and their emotions for the land. The natives love and celebration of being one with their home land is clearly shown through the lines where Ghosh (2008) describes: "the knowledge that this was the last that they would see their homeland" (SOP, p 397).

Each character in the novel feels a deep sense of displacement and nostalgia for their homeland. The sense of belonging and longing for the native land and its environment churns the minds of the characters. For some characters like Deeti, who has experienced the richness of her native land from the childhood till the present could not forget about the natural beauty of her village, her memory of ancestral practices of harvesting, the greenery and the poppy covered fields. Ghosh (2008) not only puts forth the connection with the homeland through Deeti but also through the other women characters in the ship as they recall, "The talk was of the past and the little things that they would never see, nor hear, nor smell again, the colour of poppies" (SOP, p 397). This shows how much the characters cherish the memories of their connection towards their native land, culture and traditions. Deeti expresses her pain of going away from home through a song. The pain of leaving her native land is similar to the pain expressed by a woman who is separated from her parent's care and attention. She feels the native land as part of herself. Ghosh (2008) realistically narrates Deeti's extreme longing for her native through her words as she says: "there is nothing worse than to sit here and feel the

land pulling us back” (SOP, p 401). It shows how Deeti lived in harmony with her oikos. Further it is cognizant that Deeti suffers when she is separated from her family and her village (her Oikos). It is indicative that the way pre-colonial oikos was totally integrated and connected to its mother land. She feels the ups and downs in her life when there is a transformation in the fertility of the land as she was connected to the land with her true consciousness. She undergoes a mental trauma as her mother land suffers. Deeti’s emotional connection with her native land is expressed through the words of Lovino (2010), an Italian philosopher, cultural and literary theorist who says about the sense of self in connection to the birth of ecological ethic:

“An environmental ethic displaces its focus from the ‘monological’ centralism of the Cartesian self (the one who says: ‘I think, therefore I am’) to everything that in nature undeniably *is*: that is, to everything that may not have language, or reason (at least in a human sense), but nonetheless has autonomy of life. We could say that such an ethic is no longer an ‘ego-logical’ ethic founded on the primacy of the human ego, but an ‘eco-logical’ ethic – one open to the multiplicity of natural life and drawing on the breadth of a context, of a (*oikos*) ‘home-place’” (p 35).

This postulates the need for man to think and live by extending their sense of self to broader ecological circles and by seeing the whole landscape itself in ecological terms. These sort of values extending to multiple environmental elements results in perfect harmony in the natural world which will lead to an integrated oikos as experienced and enjoyed by Deeti.

As analogous to Deeti, Fitcher in *River of Smoke* mourns the disappearance of the Botanical garden Pamplemousses, an hour ride from Port Louis. This place is considered to be an important botanical garden for its founders and curators over there. Fitcher was almost shocked to hear that the garden was no more. Fitcher had already visited this place once when he was on his first voyage to China, and as comes again after many years to visit the garden he expresses the shock over the place. The place which was the warehouse for thousands of rare species has completely transformed. Ghosh (2011) picturizes Fitcher’s suffering and yearning for the lost place thus:

“He received a shock that almost toppled him from his mount, where once there had been orderly, well spaced trees and broad, picturesque.... He shook his head in disbelief and looked again more closely ... yet this did nothing to mitigate fitcher’s revulsion at the sight of the wilderness that loomed before him now. Yet he was mourning the garden’s demise” (ROS, p 38).

This depicts that character's innate connectedness as he mourned the transformation that happened in the place. He felt as though something in him had undergone a change which led to a mental shock. The reason Fitcher found for the demolition of garden expresses similar to the place based concept expressed through the words of Entrikin (1991): "place serves as an important component of our sense of identity as subjects." (p 13). This clearly unveils the fact of a person identifies his self through the place. The concept of place plays a significant role in understanding one's own identity. Each person's connection with the place varies. Inside every person there is emotion, fascination, love, memories, and experience based on a particular place. This also stresses on the integrated relationship that human and oikos share with each other. Each person identifies his true self with a particular place through many ways. The same happens with Fitcher where he identifies himself with connection to the beautiful garden of the past. He feels the agony as he sees the changes in that place.

Another instance wherein Ghosh brings in the sense of interconnectedness in *The Circle of Reason* where he describes the immigrant's longing for their homeland that is rich in culture, tradition and fertile ecosystem. This novel focuses on the man's ecocidal activities that has created the ecological disturbance and has changed the cultural landscape due to globalization. The novel provides several instances where the natives long for their native land. This novel projects a time where amidst the richness of the village where people lived in an oikic community and harmony with the physical environment. Ghosh highlights how the past harmonious relationship is frozen in their memories and they are left with an yearning for their mother's lap (home/ oikos). They could not forget their integrated way of living, where everyone in the village felt their oneness with the undisturbed ecosystem.

The wet memories of the past with respect to the oikos are interpreted through the words of Shubha Tiwari (2012):

"There used to be times when people used to be solidly rooted. Identities were clear. Everyone knew everyone else in the village or in the locality. Families used to be super strong. Human beings fought with elements; not with each other. There was no fear of 'being lost'. Everyone was cared for. Alas! this is not our present day world. 'Home' as a metaphor has been lost. The native village is home; mother's lap is home. One does not know as to where is home. Things have gone far off. Things that used to matter have been lost" (p 1).

These lines highlight how the integrated dwelling is dismantled by the unwanted ecological chaos. It also indicates the sense of attachment that natives had towards their native land “beyond their senses”. They would have been physically separated but emotionally they are intuitively rooted to their land. The land-based nostalgia is expressed through Ghosh’s (1986) words:

“The settlers’ nostalgia for the lost home is presented as a sort of pastoral longing,... a longing for a land where green was greener, the rice whiter, the fish bigger than boats, the vocation of the melancholy is not anger but mourning” (TCR, p 63-64).

This shows how nature and surrounding plays a significant role in the characters’ lives. Their identity was through their land and now it was taken away from them.

The people of Lalpukur long for their land because their relationship with land is interlinked with voice, mind and body through the sense of self. It also shows the people’s symbiotic dwelling in an oikic way as expressed by Neruda et al (1998) in his poem *Birth*. In this poem the poet voices out his integrated living with his native land and his yearning for his birth place:

“And that’s where I’m from,
that Parral of the trembling earth,
a land laden with grapes...”(p 113).

The poet has a close connection with the particular place called Parral, a place situated in the south of Chile which is his birth place. Similarly Feinstein (2004) highlights in his essay *From the Rich Heights of Machu Picchu* about the poet’s throwback to the pleasant memories with respect to his motherland “I come from the other end of the republic. I was born in a green country with huge, thickly wooded forests. I had a childhood filled with rain and snow” (p 180) shows the poet’s infused and integrated living in his birthplace’s make him to stay connected with his birth place and nowhere. His connection to his oikos beyond his personal ego. The person cherishes about his native land in his memoirs only when he becomes one with the environment.

Thus similar to the poet’s emotional attachment with his oikos, the people of Lalpukur yearns for their greener oikos. Wallace Stegner (1992) elaborates :

“A place is not a place until people have been born in it, have grown up in it, lived in it, known it, died in it—have both experienced and shaped it as individuals, families,...communities, over more than one generation”. (p 2).

It can be further explained that oikos gets its value only when people experience the place physically. This shows how an individual identifies himself with his native land and vice versa. The significance of the oikos (place the individual live) totally depends on individuals, families, their communities and forthcoming generation only when the place is experienced by members of the oikos. On the whole the integrated and symbolic communion can be achieved by following certain ethics towards the land or place. As Aldo Leopold (1997) argues:

“The land ethic reflects the existence of ecological conscience and this in turn reflects conviction of individual responsibility for the health of the land... land is not merely soil, it is a fountain of energy flowing through circuit of soil, plants and animals” (p 12).

This implies that, land is not only a sole thing but also constitutes all the members from human to stones both living and non-living as a whole. The energy flows through all the members and is interlinked and interdependent. The love, attachment, respect for land by a member of biotic community and moreover following ethics such as land ethic to protect the land, being a morally responsible member of the biotic community begins only after self-transformation through self-realization. It means one gives up one's ordinary conscience and takes up an ecological conscience. It is evident that Ghosh's characters experience and maintain such integrity where they see their land as part of themselves which has left the green footprints in their memoirs. This solidarity is echoed in through the author's portrayal of incidences.

It is through these incidences the author tries to stress on the need for returning to ancestral roots which embodies the integrated living, memory and importance. Thus this chapter analyses the characters visualizing their past through the lens of oikos by showing their passionate attachment for their place by valuing and respecting it. The author ventures to establish land ethics by creating interconnectedness and sense of belonging to their native lands through the nostalgia of characters memoirs to influence the mind of the readers.

Conclusion

Consequently, oikos as it is already mentioned it is more of qualitative in its requirements where the human have relationship with the environment / place / oikos with respect to space and time. It is significant to note that human beings experience an affective relationship with oikos. This interconnectedness towards a place results in an integrative oikos and the characters' emotional attachment for the place make them aptly call as

“Topophilia”. This term was coined by Yi-fu Tuan (1974), a Chinese –U.S based Geographer in his book titled as *Topophilia :A Study of Environmental Perception ,Attitudes and Values* where topophilia means fond attachment to the place. In addition, Tuan defines the term as love of place is which is part of our “affective ties to the environments” (p 93). Thus this word expresses quite diverse interrelationship a person makes with a particular place either as an individual or as a participant. This love for a place can also be identified as nostalgia of their oikos or home. Such intense bond between people and place or setting exemplifies the sense of belonging to their lost oikos, through self realization.

Similar to Ghosh ‘Furusato’ by Irwin (1998) expresses the idea of the longing for the home:

“I chased after rabbits on that mountain.
I fished for minnow in that river.
I still dream of those days even now
...Where the mountains are green, my old country home,
Where the waters are clear, my old country home” (p 1).

This poem exemplifies an individual’s emotional bonding towards their place in through nostalgia. The song actually was sung during the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami disaster. Through the lines of the song it is understood that the lines portray the typical rural Japanese village. The lines of the song expresses the only the glad memories connected with their oikos where people left their spiritual old village which is more than their home. Though modernization has alienated them from the village they connect themselves beyond their sense of self to the joyful experiences which they had in their oikos in the past. They feel for the changes that happened in their place and year for past in their reminiscence. The thirst for the space and time which they experienced when they lived in harmony which was once was and no more in the present gives a clear picture of oikos.

Similarly, Ghosh through his novels portrays similar incidences of how everyone feels close to their native land / the places where they have their fond attachment. This intimate bonding becomes a feeling for the lost home where they once lived integrated and in harmony. Oikos in the Furusato as well as in the Ghosh’s novels conveys the same idea where the characters undergo different experiences but the memories are deeply rooted with their oikos in the form of home and finally their purpose of hankering for the bygone past remains the same.

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