

ENVIRONMENTAL REPRESENTATION FROM TANIKAWA SHUNTAROU’S POEM: AN ECOCRITIC APPROACH

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Abstract

Tanikawa Shuntarou is a Japanese poet who was born in 1931 and also works as a translator and picture book author. His poetry has been widely read and translated into English. The puns and rhymes in Tanikawa's poems are well known. Tanikawa's poetry covers a wide range of topics, including human relationships, fantasy, and the environment. However, few people are aware that Tanikawa's environmental poetry can be analyzed through the lens of literary ecocriticism. The study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment is known as literary ecocriticism. Ecocriticism can present the author's representation, attitudes, and perspectives on the surrounding environment, whereas literature can express ideas about the environment. Humans cannot exist apart from their surroundings. Based on this premise, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the representation of nature and the environment in Tanikawa Shuntarou's poetry. The literary ecocritic approach will be an ethical study that looks at the cultural and ecological dimensions of Tanikawa Shuntarou's poetry.

Keywords – *ecocritic, literature, poem*

Introduction

Literary texts are works of art that are rich with human ideas and thought. Literature is a one-of-a-kind creative effort. Literary works are not only a unique phenomenon, but also a complicated and deep human phenomenon.

According to Abrams (1976:8-26), there are four approaches to the meaning of literary works. First, an expressive approach that is personal to the author. Second, there is an objective approach to literary texts known as structuralism or inherent structuralism. The third approach is a mimetic approach to the cosmos (universe). Fourth, the pragmatic approach is concerned with the reader's interpretation of literary materials.

According to Abrams, literary works are primarily the author's response to the condition in their surrounding community. Literary work is a reflection or reflection of life in society as viewed by the author and tempered with the author's reaction or response and imagination to life.

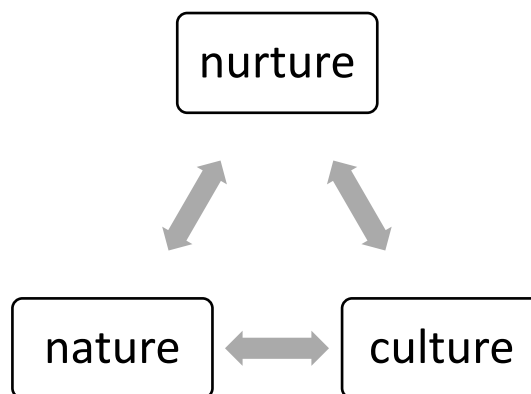
A literary work conveys information to readers as a result of the author's creation. Literary works are designed to convey ideas, thoughts, and experiences, not to be read alone. With the hope that what is presented can be interpreted as something valuable for the reader's own development. This can demonstrate how literary works can contribute to the development of a community's life and culture, as well as a means of expressing criticism of social phenomena.

Poetry is a type of literature. Poetry is a type of literary work in which writers communicate their emotions and societal situations. Poetry not only composes words, but also expressions and shapes of the poet's response to social phenomena around him as an expression of his imagination.

Ecocritical poems are those that deal with the poet's concerns about environmental change. Ecocriticism is derived from the phrases ecology and criticism and is an English term. Ecology is the scientific study of how plants, animals, and humans interact with one another and with their surroundings. Criticism can be defined as a way of expressing one's opinion about something's good or negative aspects. Ecocriticism can be defined as "environmental criticism" in simple words.

Ecocriticism was proposed by Glotfelty and Fromm (1996), who explained the concept of returning to nature in literary works utilizing an earth-centered approach. According to Glotfelty and Fromm, the urgency of ecocriticism can be effectively communicated by asking a series of questions, such as: (1) What role does nature have in poetry? (2) How important is the physical setting (environment) in a novel's plot? (3) Are the values expressed in a poetry, novel, or play environmentally wise? (4) How do land (earth) analogies influence how we approach it? (5) How do we categorize nature writing as a genre? (literature) (6) Should it be positioned as a new crucial category in terms of race, class, and gender? (7) How did environmental criticism permeate contemporary and popular literature, and to what effect?

In the context of American ecocriticism, there is a trichotomous nature-nurture-culture triad mindset (nature-nurturing-culture). The nature-nurture-culture paradigm views that ecological networks form the linkages between nature, maintenance and culture in an ecosphere. (Hutomo, 2008:34) Thus, the object of ecocritical study must be seen in that paradigm. The nature-nurture-culture trichotomous triad pattern can be patterned as follows:



According to Putra (2016), climate change has emerged as a dominant theme in literature and literary studies. There is a rise of ecopoetry, poetry that exhibits ecological awareness and engages with the world's current state of environmental degradation. Putra also stated that the increasing number of ecocritical analyses of climate change literature, particularly novels, is helping to shape a canon of climate change fiction.

Mishra (2016) on his research, *Ecocriticism: A Study of Environmental Issues in Literature* stated that environment has posed a great threat to human society during the last few decades. Under this circumstances, arose a new theory of reading nature writing called ecocriticism. Mishra focused his paper on ecocriticism as interpretive to of analyzing nature writing and explore the ecocritical perspectives as envisaged in some select world literature as well as Indian writing in English.

Ecocriticism, according to Garrard (2004), investigates how the human-environmental interaction is described in all forms of creative output. Ecocriticism considers environmental ideas and representations to exist in a wide range of cultural contexts, including poetry. As a result, the purpose of this research is to look at how nature is depicted in poetry.

The poetry used in this study is a poem by a Japanese poet, Tanikawa Shuntarou. Japanese poetry was chosen because of the past few years, Japan is concerned about the environment and environmental degradation. The signing of the Kyoto Protocol, an international accord on global warming, on December 11, 1997, was one of Japan's environmental obligations. Countries that ratify the Kyoto Protocol agree to decreasing carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions or to cooperating in emissions trading.

Meanwhile, Tanikawa Shuntarou is a contemporary Japanese poet who has been spectacular since his first poetry collection, "Nijuu Oku Kounen no Kodoku" (Alone in Two Billion Light Years), was published in 1952. Tanikawa has published over 60 books of poetry, encompassing lyrical poems, analytical prose poems, narrative poems, epic poems, satirical poems and highly experimental poems. His words are clear, his lines are easy to understand yet his poetry is highly sophisticated. His poetry has been widely translated into Mongolian, Korean, Chinese and most Eastern and Western European languages. He has received many awards, recognitions and prizes for his poetry.

Methods

The research method is a scientific approach for gathering data with specific goals and applications (Sugiyono, 2016:2). Using qualitative research methodologies, this study investigates the representation of nature in Tanikawa Shuntarou's poetry. The qualitative research method is a research approach based on postpositivist philosophy. Because the research is conducted in natural settings, qualitative research methods are also known as naturalistic research methods.

The essential instrument is the researcher. An ecocritical method is employed to gain an understanding of Tanikawa Shuntarou's poetry. There are two major methods to ecocriticism: the discourse approach, which prioritizes literature research, and the reality approach, which stresses field research. The discourse technique is used in this study, which focuses on the poetry of Tanikawa Shuntarou. The ecocriticism chosen as basis of discussion in this study is to show that literature can be seen from the nature-nurture-culture paradigm. The literature under consideration is a poetic representation of nature as part of its relationship with nature, culture, and preservation. The poetry discussed is "Asa no Riree" by Tanikawa Shuntarou (Morning Relay).

Finding and Discussion

The poem investigated in this study is Tanikawa Shuntarou's "Asa no Riree" (Morning Relay). Because it is included in junior high school textbooks, this poem is widely popular in Japan (SMP). "Asa no Riree" appears in Tanikawa's poetry anthology "Inoranakutemo ii no ka" (Is It Fine if I Don't Pray), published in 1965, as well as in the poetry collection "Kore ga Watashi no Yasashisa desu" (This is My Kindness), released in 1993. Because of its use of the issue of globalization, this poem is widely utilized in the worlds of education and advertising, and it has been adapted into songs and picture books.

The following is the text of the poem "Asa no Riree" with its English translation:

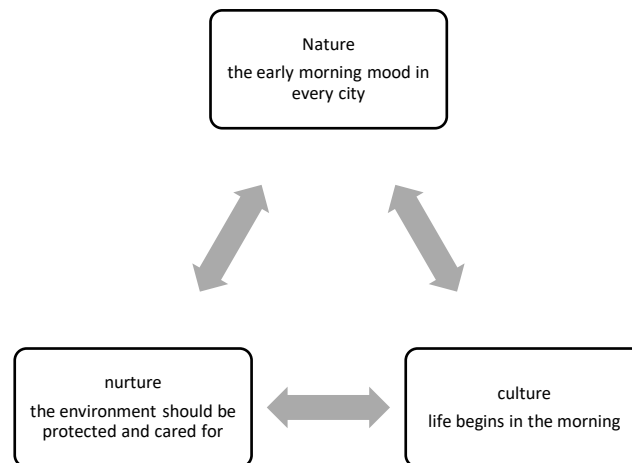
<p>「朝のリレー」 谷川俊太郎 カムチャッカの若者がきりんの夢を見ているとき メキシコの娘は朝もやの中でバスを待っている ニューヨークの少女がほほえみながら寝返りをうつとき ローマの少年は柱頭を染める朝陽にウインクする この地球ではいつもどこかで朝がはじまっている ぼくらは朝をリレーするのだ 経度から経度へと そうしていれば交替で地球を守る 眠る前のひととき耳をすますと どこか遠くで目覚時計のベルが鳴っている それはあなたの送った朝を 誰かがしっかりと受けとめた証拠なのだ</p>	<p>“MORNING RELAY” Shuntaro Tanikawa While a young man in Kamchatka Dreams of a giraffe A young girl in Mexico Waits for the bus in the morning haze While a little girl in New York Rolls over in her bed with a smile A little boy in Rome Winks at the morning sun that colors the column capital On this Earth Always, somewhere, morning is starting We are relaying mornings From longitude to longitude Taking turns protecting Earth, as it were Pick up your ears awhile before you go to sleep And somewhere, far away, you'll hear an alarm clock ringing It's proof that someone has firmly caught The morning you've passed on</p>
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The poem "Asa no Riree" clearly depicts a unified world. Despite the fact that they are from different countries, humans live on a planet named Earth, which must be preserved. The poetry above also necessitates understanding of nature, nurture, and culture in each of the domains stated.

Tanikawa began his story with a young man in Kamchatka having a dream about a giraffe. Giraffes are animals that are commonly seen in Africa and will find it challenging to live in Kamchatka. In this sentence, there is nature as the context of nature in Kamchatka. The next phrase makes it apparent that nature in this poem refers to the context of nature in each place. Mexico is described as foggy in the morning. Rome is defined as a region with golden morning sun.

In the context of nature, nurture refers to the life cycle and the upkeep of the earth. The context of nurture is found in the words "そうしていれば交替で地球を守る" (*Soushite iwaba koutai de chikyu o mamoru* Taking turns protecting Earth, as it were). As though they were taking turns safeguarding the planet. It is critical for all of us who live on Earth to work together to care for the planet and its inhabitants.

While the concept of culture is reflected in the statement "この地球ではいつもどこかで朝がはじまっている。ぼくらは朝をリレーするのだ" (*kono chikyu dewa itsumo dokoka de as aga hajimatteiru. Bokura wa asa o riree suru no da* Always, somewhere morning is starting. We're relaying morning). In Japanese, there is a proverb that says, "hayane hayaoki" (sleep early, wake up early), which means that getting up early in the morning is a positive thing. As a result, in every culture, sunrise marks the start of a new day. When you get up in the morning, you have a commitment that needs to be fulfilled. This is what "morning relay" or "continuing the morning" refers to. If described as an image, the concept of nature-nurture-culture in the poem "Asa no Riree" will be as follows.



Conclusions

Ecocriticism in literary studies fosters environmentally responsible literary criticism. The poem "Asa no Riree" takes on new meaning when viewed via an ecocritical lens. The ensuing new meaning is primarily about the environment, and the most important thing is to take care of the world, beginning when you wake up from sleep in the morning. If used correctly, eco-criticism can make a genuine contribution to the environmental political movement in the interest of protecting the environment for the benefit of both nature and humanity.

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