

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF PATRICK WHITE SELECTED NOVELS TO EXPRESS ECO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES

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Abstract:

This article examines the unique moments of self-discovery that the characters in Patrick White's novel *Voss* and *The Tree of Man* surrounded by the natural surroundings to provide a new reading of the book by examining it via an eco-psychological lens, emphasizing how the environment becomes essential to the characters' travels and stressing the connection found in all of nature's creations. The emerging science of eco-psychology aims to comprehend and resolve the complex interaction between humans and the environment. It highlights how the natural environment has a significant impact on human psychology and demonstrates how our awareness is intricately linked to the earth's elemental forces. Earth-centered religions that aim to recognize and honor the great power and comfort found in nature's embrace will find resonance in this viewpoint. The fundamental interdependence between people and their surroundings is revealed through this reviewing and highlighting the transformational power of nature in influencing human perception and experience. This eco-psychological analysis shows how the characters' harmonious and balanced ecological-human relationships are exemplified in *Voss*'s book, demonstrating the significant impact of their environment on their identities. Real interactions with nature give Patrick White's characters distinct insights, and his skillful depiction of the Australian countryside distinguishes his work. It also examined through the eyes of the characters in Patrick White's book *The Tree of Man*. The story of Stan Parker, his wife Amy, and their children in early 20th-century rural Australia is told in the book. A realistic yet lyrical depiction of passion, beauty, and complexity via the epic story of the Parker family. The research examines how the natural environment becomes an essential part of human existence via an eco-psychological perspective, illustrating how all living things are interrelated. Recognizing the significant influence of ecological interactions on physical, spiritual, emotional, and psychological well-being, eco-psychology is a contemporary movement that aims to balance the connection between humans and the Earth. This study clarifies the harmonious and balanced eco-human bonding shown in his works highlighting the timeless strength of nature's comforting force, by analyzing the text using an eco-psychological framework.

Keywords: Ecopsychology, Knowledge, Eco-human, harmonious, spiritual, realistic, interdependence

I wandered lonely as a cloud, That floats on high o'er vales and hills, When all at once I saw a crowd, A host, of golden daffodils; Beside the lake, beneath the trees, Fluttering and dancing in the breeze. (69 William Wordsworth)

INTRODUCTION

With origins in the late 1970s, ecocriticism emerged as an academic field in the 1990s and examines how nature is portrayed in literature to highlight the complex interrelationships between the two. The term ecocriticism, which was first used by William Rueckert in his 1978 article *Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism*, provides a prism that allows readers to see the environment as a vital component of human existence and the interdependence of all of nature's creations. Texts reveal the characters' harmonious and balanced ecological-human interactions through ecocritical analysis, demonstrating how their identities are significantly shaped by their environment. Although many people place a higher priority on science and technology, ecological principles and moral principles that influence inner ecology are frequently disregarded. Taking up ecocriticism demands a reassessment of the beliefs of contemporary society, with a focus on a return to Earth-centered viewpoints. By examining the scientific, spiritual, and psychological aspects of characters, environmental analysis of literature illuminates their environmental beliefs and behaviors. Ecocriticism is therefore an essential framework for comprehending the complex interactions among literature, the environment, and human perception. Scholars and activists have begun to examine the inner world of people's relationship with nature in recent years. How closely our human minds are linked to the Earth's elemental forces is explained by the emerging subject of eco psychology. Eco psychology is a contemporary social and intellectual movement that aims to recognize and balance the interaction between people and their environment. Earth-centered religions strive to

honor the deep strength and comfort that may be found in the embrace of nature. Eco psychologists examine the psychological mechanisms that both connect and distance us from nature, acknowledging the close relationship between the natural world, which represents life and awareness, and the human mind. The transition to an eco-friendly way of living is a comprehensive change that affects all aspect of a person's life. People frequently develop a greater respect and care for the natural world as a result of their interactions with it. People may give up certain scientific facts in favor of accepting new ideas and behaviors by embracing ecological commitments. Thus, ecological writing, which reflects humanity's changing relationship with the Earth and its ecosystems, continues to provide a literature of hope. A timeless truth that many people acknowledge is reflected in the comfort that may be found in nature notwithstanding life's hardships. Although the exact beginnings of environmental psychology are still not entirely apparent, Willy Hellpach is sometimes given credit for introducing the idea, particularly in his book "Geopsyche," which examines how the sun, moon, and other celestial bodies affect human behavior. Prominent environmental psychologists including Carl Friedrich Graumann, Egon Brunswik, Gerhard Kaminski, Kurt Lewin, and Jakob von Uexkull have made substantial contributions to the topic throughout the years. In particular, "The Voice of the Earth" by Dr. Theodore Roszak explores the complex connections between the human psyche and the environment as well as between psychology, ecology, and new scientific understandings of natural systems. These academics have improved our knowledge of environmental psychology by illuminating the deep relationships that exist between people and the natural world. Abraham examines how humans see the natural world, emphasizing the close connection between the human mind and the environment, while Dr. Paul Shepherd asserts that both evolution and environment affect human character. These academics have improved our knowledge of environmental psychology by illuminating the deep relationships that exist between people and the natural world.

Relationship Between Humans and Nature:

Exploration of new, previously unexplored places within the literary canon led to a profound change in the landscape of English literature in the late 1970s. In his introduction to The Cambridge History of English writing, George Sampson echoed the opinion of many renowned critics of the day, which was that Australian writing was still in its infancy. However, the topic of Australian Studies changed and moved past its previous apparent marginality as literature started to embrace cultural variety and cross boundaries. Since then, it has contested the conventional narratives that rule traditional cultural forms, claiming its position and importance within the larger framework of world literature.

This development is indicative of a larger movement to value and acknowledge the variety of voices and viewpoints that add to the depth of the literary legacy of the world. With its distinctive fusion of ethnic variety, historical nuance, and inventive narrative, Australian literature has become a vital and vital part of this global fabric. Australian literature is praised for its vibrant and significant presence in the world of letters rather than for its beginnings, as readers and academics continue to examine and value the many contributions of Australian authors.

The significance of land in Aboriginal stories demonstrates a close, social, pragmatic, and spiritual bond between Indigenous Australians and their surroundings. Aboriginal people use place names as a potent narrative tool as they travel throughout the country, enshrining law, history, and wisdom in the same terrain they are traversing. This tradition serves a number of vital purposes, all of which are interconnected and represent the holistic Aboriginal worldview in which the material, social, and spiritual spheres are inextricably linked.

Objectives of representing Eco psychological crisis:

First of all, the objective of these stories is to preserve or educate. The locations of essential resources, like as food and water, are transmitted from generation to generation through tales. As oral maps that guarantee survival in Australia's varied landscapes, these tales also chart the geography, indicating safe routes and warning of hazardous places. In addition to being useful, this geographical information has cultural importance and directly connects survival skills to ancestors' wisdom and the ongoing presence of the Ancestors in the environment.

Second, it is impossible to overstate the societal role that these stories play. Large clans may come together for meetings when stories are frequently told and locations are named. These get-togethers provide

chances to preserve linguistic and tribal identities, strengthen social relationships, and pass on culture from seniors to younger members. Each group's social fabric is strengthened via the development of a sense of community and belonging via shared tales.

Finally, these acts' religious or ritualistic purpose emphasizes the spiritual bond between Aboriginal peoples and the land. The myths, which describe the travels and deeds of ancient creatures who built the globe, are not only accounts of geographical locations; they are also infused with spiritual meaning. These stories frequently serve as the foundation for rites and ceremonies that are essential to the community's and the land's spiritual well-being. Aboriginal people preserve their ties to the Dreaming, the eternal period of ancestral beginnings, by reciting the stories and performing the ceremonies.

Psychological and environmental connections:

White's stories shed light on the intricate linkages that exist between people and their environments through their in-depth examinations of character psychology and environmental connections. In addition to highlighting the physicality of the Australian terrain, his paintings also give it existential and symbolic meaning, addressing more general issues of alienation, identity, and belonging.

The idea of eco psychology as it is presented in Patrick White's book *Voss* and *The Tree of Man* is examined in this essay. White offers a provocative examination of our innate connection to the world around us by allowing readers to explore the deep interaction between the human mind and the natural environment through his complex story. Patrick White's *Voss* deftly combines the tales of Laura Trevelyan, the niece of Sydney businessman Edmund Bonner, who sponsored Johann Ulrich Voss's voyage, and Voss, a megalomaniacal adventurer. Voss becomes the main character throughout the book, evoking classic heroes like Odysseus or Don Quixote who learn from their experiences with the natural world. Voss brings together a varied group of adventurers, all of whom get personal meaning from the voyage. He exhibits a cyclical cycle of decline and rebirth, as well as remarkable challenges. Voss finds comfort in nature, bridging the gap between the self and the environment, and is enthralled by the unpredictable beauty of the wild. He sees identity as malleable via interaction with nature and believes in the transformational potential of ecological immersion. But as the expedition moves more into the jungle, the severe weather, dangerous terrain, and aggressive interactions with native peoples cause Voss's superhuman look to wane. The trip is not considered a failure even if its main goals were not met. As Voss faces his own pride in the face of the desert's difficulties, his trek turns into a monument to his fortitude and humility. Voss experiences a significant personal metamorphosis by hardship and adversity, surpassing his early goals of learning more about the world and himself. Voss's ecological journey stems from his sensory immersion in nature, which allowed him to get significant insights into spiritual realms. Voss discovers the intricacies of psychology as well as the possibility of enlightening insights and visions via his harmony with the surroundings. The body becomes deeply intertwined with nature, acting as a conduit for taking in the world's beauty and pain. The way that Patrick White portrayed Voss highlights how the natural environment is intricately linked to human quests for self-realization, fulfillment, and insight. People get priceless knowledge and insight from their interactions with nature, creating spiritual and physical bonds that go beyond just survival. Moments of revelation are facilitated by solitary contact with nature, which enables people to tune into the various voices of the Earth and listen to their deepest selves. A deep feeling of connectivity and respect for the world around us are fostered by investigating the environment, which develops empathy and compassion for all living things. The borders between the soul, body, mind, and the spirit of the natural world converge in this symbiotic link between humans and nature, enhancing the human experience and expanding our comprehension of the interrelated web of life. Through experiences with the humbling and comforting aspects of nature, ecological connections do have the power to strengthen one's moral compass and heal the wounds of the inner self. Nature appears as a powerful trigger for the characters' deep internal changes in Patrick White's novel *Voss*. A sense of mystical oneness with their environment is evoked by their encounters in nature, leading to discoveries that represent important turning points in their moral and spiritual development. These realizations are epiphanies that become into timeless standards by which people evaluate their own progress. They are ever-present sources of inspiration that reinforce belief in the mysterious secrets of nature. People frequently take comfort in the memories and experiences created in harmony with nature during difficult times, finding fortitude and resiliency in the face of life's obstacles. As a result, the strong

and unbreakable connection that exists between people and the natural world acts as a beacon, showing the way to increased moral and spiritual awareness.

Nature as a Destructive power and Security:

Being exposed to the destructive elements of nature is a powerful reminder that adopting an ecological viewpoint does not equate to tranquility, security, or boundless plenty. The environment's natural cycles and shifting ecosystem provide a great deal of stability, but it's important to understand that this stability is not totally free from turmoil. People who spend a lot of time in nature soon come to appreciate its innate spontaneity and understand that humility is a necessary trait for peaceful cohabitation. People are prompted to reconsider their life's purpose and strengthen their ties to the planet by painful periods of withdrawal and abandonment. The internal conflict is reflected in Patrick White's portrayal of Voss, who turns to reflection for comfort amid the chaos of his journey. Voss is shown as being tall and muscular, with a strength that is akin to that of a rock or stone, signifying his inner strength and fortitude.

Voss's travel from Sydney to see Edmund Bonner is described in the novel's early chapters as a nature walk that may provide him with a break from life's stresses and support his emotional and mental health. As Voss traverses the natural terrain, Patrick White eloquently conveys his mental condition. Voss's mind could have been temporarily relieved of the burden of his problems in the embrace of nature, taking comfort in the serene beauty all about him. White captures Voss's absorption in the natural world's sensory sensations, which may inspire awe and renewal amid the lush surroundings. Voss's mind may have roamed freely in the woods, away from the stresses of city life, enabling him to enjoy times of meditation and introspection. Readers may get a glimpse of the fundamental interaction between human consciousness and the natural world through White's narrative lens, which shows how nature slowly changes Voss's perceptions and feelings.

Ecological impacts on lifestyles:

On the other hand, he explores how the environment shapes characters' identities in Patrick White's *The Tree of Man*, highlighting how ecological lifestyles may change lives. It looks at how ecological living affects every facet of a person's life and helps characters develop a greater respect and care for the natural environment. Characters travel a path of knowledge and modesty via revelatory encounters in both wild and domesticated places, finding comfort in the wonders and difficulties of nature. Through their relationship with the environment, the characters in the story find solace in the face of life's hardships, making it a work of hopeful fiction. On the other hand, experiences with the devastating powers of nature are powerful reminders of the complexity of ecological interactions by carefully examining the ways in which the characters engage with nature. The research investigates how the Australian environment may be a source of revelation, change, and comfort. Through the integration of eco-psychological viewpoints and literary analysis, this essay sheds light on how deeply White depicts the impact of nature on human identity and awareness in *The Tree of Man*.

Self-Revelation through Nature:

The first few chapters of "The Tree of Man" tell the story of Stan's trek into the wild bush to cultivate the land his father left him. He builds a modest home with hard work and perseverance, setting the groundwork for his future goals. In the neighboring village of Yuruga, Stan meets Amy Fibbens in the middle of this untamed terrain. After a quick relationship, they set off on a joint adventure to travel to Stan's property, which is tucked away in the wilderness. Throughout the years, Stan and Amy devote themselves to the upkeep of their property, caring for the land and the cattle. As they adjusted to the difficulties and benefits of living in the country, their lives were interwoven with the cycles of the natural world. They develop a close relationship with their surroundings via unceasing work and support from one another, finding fulfillment and satisfaction in the serene beauty of their surroundings. They withstand the challenges and celebrate the victories of rural life together as they negotiate its complexities. They turn their humble abode into a haven of warmth and plenty with teamwork and unrelenting dedication. With their lives entwined with the ageless rhythms of nature, Stan and Amy find a deep feeling of belonging in the embrace of the bushland as they tend to the land and nourish their dreams.

Nature as a Symbol of peace and personal development:

In contrast to those living in urban environments, the study's findings showed that those who spent time in woods had lower cortisol levels, slower pulse rates, and lower blood pressure. The idea that being in

nature reduces stress is supported by ecocriticism, which emphasizes how all living things in natural settings are interrelated. Symbolized by the word 'tree' in the novel's title, nature provides comfort in the face of life's hardships, mirroring Stan's pursuit of vitality and personal development. The tale begins with the portrayal of two important trees, demonstrating Stan's love of the natural world. The carriage came to a stop after passing between the two large stringybarks. In one section of the woods, there were dominating trees that rose with the simplicity of real grandeur over the involved undergrowth.

Eco psychological development of varied characters:

Stan sets out on a path of self-discovery and reinvention in an attempt to forge a life that goes beyond the restrictions of the Australian bush town where he was raised because he refuses to be constrained by them.

“At Willow Creek, God bent the trees till they streamed in the wind like beards. In the streets of towns the open windows, on the dusty roads the rooted trees, filled him with the melancholy longing for permanence.” (13 *The Tree of Man*)

They invite him to go off on a path of reflection and self-discovery since they stand for a haven of tranquility and rebirth. Stan embraces the opportunities and difficulties that lie ahead in his search for a life of fulfillment and purpose while finding comfort and a new beginning in the peaceful seclusion of nature.

“Stan Parker, began to tear the bush apart. His first tree fell through the white silence with a volley of leaves. Many days passed in this way, the man clearing his land. Seen through the trees, it was a plain but honest house that the man had built.” (17 *The Tree of Man*)

Amy finds a feeling of purpose and belonging in the midst of the beauty of nature, and the soft rhythms of the natural world revitalize her spirit. Amy has moments of happiness and fulfillment as she loses herself in the beauties of nature, and each encounter is evidence of the continuing power of nature's comforting embrace. “She should plant the white rose, where the slope of the land was still restless from the jagged stumps of felled trees.” (28 *The Tree of Man*). From her comforting depths, the stillness of the surrounding environment called to her.

Through the experiences of the Parker family, Patrick White's brilliant tale illuminates the intricacies of Australian culture by examining the junction of individual and social histories. The Parkers become representative of the larger struggles and goals of the Australian people as they traverse the difficulties and victories of rural life. *The Tree of Man* becomes a profound examination of identity, belonging, and the enduring power of human connection via its intricately interwoven storyline and striking portrayal of the Australian countryside. In addition to commenting on the larger cultural currents that influence their environment, White's evocative language celebrates the passion and tenacity of individuals who call the bush home, capturing the essence of Australian existence.

Wisdom of Nature:

Fundamentally, revelations improve ecological events by revealing the remarkable in the commonplace, altering one's perspective on life, and testing the limits of reason. People face the boundaries of their knowledge and accept newly discovered humility and wisdom through epiphanies. Revealing encounters broaden one's perspective and reveal new facets of existence, elevating the commonplace to the remarkable, whether in the middle of a harsh wilderness or tranquil natural settings. The everyday world has a dazzling glow among these discoveries, beckoning people to embrace the deep secrets and glories of the natural universe. The human soul, permanently changed by the beauty of the environment around them, finds inspiration, comfort, and a closer bond with the planet via these transcendent experiences.

Therapeutic value of gardening:

White has emphasized the therapeutic value of gardening throughout the book. Something very deep within us is called to by nature. A fundamental aspect of the human experience is biophilia, or the love of nature and living things. In his well-known essay "Everything in its place," Dr. Sacks argues that everyone has experienced being both calm and reenergized, mentally engaged, and physically and spiritually renewed while strolling through a verdant garden or a timeless desert, strolling beside a river or the ocean, or scaling a mountain. Numerous authors have discussed the basic and wide-ranging impact of physiological conditions on both individual and societal health. White explains that the gardens have

strong effects in the book *Voss*. 'The man and woman were walking over grass that was still kindly beneath their feet. Smooth, almost cold leaves soothed their faces and the backs of their hands.' (87 White)

The objective of Voss's psychological investigation is determined by the natural surroundings throughout the story. His dynamic holiness was shown to Voss in a variety of ways once he observed it in nature. Voss encountered his multifaceted divinity in nature, which led to a variety of revelations. Voss values the natural world's knowledge, which he inherited. The conscience barrier that a person has constructed in accordance with his particular worldview might be broken by revelations. A feeling of destiny may accompany revelatory events, beckoning one to unimagined possibilities. People who travel and take pleasure in spending time in nature frequently say that the world's complementary diversity makes them less egocentric and increases their empathy for other living things. There are revelatory experiences that might awaken one's knowledge and modesty when one stays in both wild and domesticated situations, usually in areas of natural beauty. One's view is curiously extended during revelatory times of encounter with the natural Self-Revelation via Eco-Psychological Study of *Voss* by Patrick White environment. The commonplace appears extraordinary when you encounter a new dimension of existence.

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