



Exploring the Themes of Nature and Nostalgia in Certain Selected Works by Ruskin Bond

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ABSTRACT

Ruskin Bond is one of the prominent Indian authors, who writes euphorically about the foothills of the Himalayas and humans life, in which complex feelings entwined with nature. This journal article reviews the themes of nature and nostalgia as represented in Bond's select works, particularly focusing on "The Room on the Roof," "The Blue Umbrella," and "Rusty, the Boy from the Hills." Through the analysis of these texts, the paper aims to bring forth how the flair of Bond as a storyteller captures the uplifting spirit of nature and the heart-warming nostalgia for the times gone by into a single, unified piece of unique literary experience that strikes a chord with the readers.

Introduction

The literary work of Ruskin Bond is abundant with colourful landscapes and profoundly nostalgic reflections. His ability to take up these feelings, while reminiscing about the past. He simultaneously elaborates nature with its minute details, makes his works classic. The objective of this paper is to elucidate such themes recurring in his selected works and how these have been dwelt with and have impacted the shaping of the narrative in his works and the characters.

The Theme of Nature

Nature finds a prominent place in Ruskin Bond's stories, often taking the place of more than just a background. In "The Blue Umbrella," he has taken much care while describing the natural surroundings of the village Garhwal, emphasizing the interdependence of the villagers and their surroundings. The central character Binya forms an attachment to her blue umbrella, which may be seen as symbolizing the bonding with nature. Bond writes, "The umbrella was like a flower, a great blue flower that had sprung up on the dry brown hillside" (Bond, The Blue Umbrella 24).

In "The Room on the Roof," the description Bond gives about the Indian countryside drips with charm and fascination. In Dehra, natural beauty soothes Rusty, the lonely protagonist whose life is stormy. The story shows how nature becomes an agent of therapy in the self-finding mission of the central character. This is expressed by the following passage in Bond's description of Dehra, which is also full of appeals to the senses: "The trees were green, the sky was blue, and the birds sang as though the world was still good" (Bond, The Room on the Roof 45).

The Theme of Nostalgia

Nostalgia is one of the common theme in the writings of Ruskin Bond, identifying with his personal reminiscences of childhood in India. "Rusty, the Boy from the Hills" is a semifictional autobiographical anthology identifying with the spirit of a bygone day, serene, warm, and innocent. Bond's stories bring nostalgia for bygone days, as he writes, "Those were the days of my youth, and everything was bright and beautiful" (Bond, Rusty, the Boy from the Hills 12).

In "The Room on the Roof," Rusty's journey is filled with nostalgic reflections, beginning from his childhood. And it is within these contrasts of present difficulties that Rusty faces, coupled with the more pleasant memories of his life, which makes this story a sad one. Bond constructs warm and evocative descriptions of the past: "He remembered the old house, the mango tree, and the sound of rain on the tin roof" (Bond, The Room on the Roof 78).

Interlinking of Nature and Nostalgia

Nature and nostalgia are deeply intertwined themes in the works of Bond. Nature acts as a catalyst for the optimistic reflections that provide characters with the background necessary to reminisce about their past. In "The Blue Umbrella," for example, the natural surroundings of the village are time and

again a reminder of the simple, unhurried life dear to the hearts of the characters. The attachment of the villagers with their surroundings would suggest that the village folk perhaps wanted to hold on to their traditional lifestyle and ways despite the encroachment of modernity. The hills are the same, but the people are changing, observes Bond (*The Blue Umbrella* 59).

Similarly, location of the childhood recollections of Rusty, are located in the natural landscapes of Dehra in "Rusty, the Boy from the Hills." The hills, forests, and rivers are not just physical spaces; they held experience and emotions. The descriptions by Bond make the place fathom through timelessness, allowing the reader to partake of the nostalgic journey of Rusty: "That part of India lies in my heart, near the center of my heart" (Bond, *Rusty, the Boy from the Hills* 102).

Human connectivity with Nature

The works of Ruskin Bond are full of deep commentary on the relation of men and their environment in nature. In most of his stories, it seems nature is acting as a salvation and inspiration. Comfort and beacons of clarity seem to present themselves in the lives of all the central characters of his stories, quite in complete contrast to the turmoil and confusion of life. This connective thread between nature and human experience runs through most of Bond's stories.

Also, Bond's nostalgia isn't an emotional dwelling on the past, rather a musing on time's inexorable passage and changes. The characters of him face continual challenges associated with the change between holding onto precious memories and inevitability towards change. This tussle between past and present so beautifully was penned down by Bond that it struck a nerve with his readers over the generations.

Conclusion

The rich literary heritage of Ruskin Bond is completed in deep gratitude to nature and reflected nostalgia. Nature and memory are all woven into a world that has been created through deep descriptions into his mind and poignant story ideas. His stories remind us of the need to preserve our natural surroundings and memories that shape our identity. We, as readers, are encouraged to travel through the literary landscapes created by Bond where the past and present intermingle in tranquil amity and nature serves as the cohesive tissue between them

Works Cited

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