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Environmental Ethical Awareness in G.B. Shaw's Play *Androcles and the Lion*

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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Tej Narayan Sharma has completed his thesis entitled “Environmental Ethical Awareness in G.B. Shaw's Play *Androcles and the Lion*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from August 2009 to March 2010. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Environmental Ethical Awareness in G.B. Shaw's Play *Androcles and the Lion*”, submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Mr. Tej Narayan Sharma, has been approved by undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

This research explores the Environmental Ethical Awareness in G.B. Shaw's Play *Androcles and the Lion*. Androcles, who runs away from his cruel master, encounters with a hurt lion in the dark forest and helps it for pulling a great thorn out of its paw. Later, Androcles is caught and taken to the palace of emperor where he is condemned to be thrown to the lion. It was the same lion he had helped therefore, it helped Androcles to be free from slavery instead of killing and eating him up. Androcles, too carries him out from the cage. Both the characters, who is one of human and another animal respect environmental ethical codes and conducts by sharing the mutual help with each other to be free from slavery and cage. The role of Androcles, the lion, Megaera and the emperor is dominant by which the author depicts their different activities of life signifying them as members of the same biotic community whose life is interdependent to each other. Shaw intends to deliver the message that one must treat the fellow animals with ethical touch and understand their sensation of being.

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I. Environmental Ethical Awareness in G.B. Shaw's Play *Androcles and the Lion*

George Bernard Shaw's play *Androcles and the Lion* presents environmental ethical awareness in the play. Hearing the melancholic roar of lion, while passing through the jungle, Androcles goes near and pulls out a huge thorn from his forepaw. A captivated slave Androcles gets free from slavery of emperor with the help of lion. The lion is also released from the cage with the help of Androcles. Androcles, the former to be free from slavery and the latter from cage share mutual help each other and make intimate companionship by respecting environmental ethical codes and conducts.

The ethical sequence may be described in ecological as well as in philosophical terms. An ethic ecologically is a limitation on freedom of action in the struggle for existence. An ethic philosophically, is a differentiation of social from anti-social conduct. The thing has its origin in the tendency of interdependent individuals or groups to evolve modes of co-operation. An ethic, ecologically deals with the relation among human beings, non-human beings and nature as well. An ethic may be regarded as a mode of guidance for meeting ecological situations. Animal instincts are modes of guidance for the individual in meeting such situations. Ethics is possibly a kind of community instinct in-the-making.

All ethics so far evolved rests upon a single premise that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts. We can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love or otherwise have faith in. We should not knowingly allow any species or race to go extinct. And one should let go beyond to begin the restoration of natural environment in order to enlarge the biological wealth.

Edward O. Wilson regarding the environmental ethics writes:

All other species are our distant kin because we share a remote ancestry. We still use a common nucleic-acid code, even though it has been sorted into radically different hereditary language. Such is the ultimate truth of every kind of organism, large and small, every bug and weed. The lack earth is alive with a riot of algae, fungi, mites, springtails, enchytraeid worms, and thousands of species. (155)

Humans did not arrive on this earth as alien. Humanity is part of nature, a species that evolved among other species. The more closely we identify ourselves with the rest of life, the more quickly we will be able to discover the sources of human sensibility. We go on living comfortably in a biologically impoverished world.

The anthropocentric (human-centered) perspective judges the value of animals and plants in terms of satisfaction of human needs or interests. The anthropocentric perspective has dominated the philosophical thoughts of humanity and intrinsic value of environment. Of the recent attempts to create and justify a system of environmental ethics, the work of philosophy professor Paul W. Taylor of the City University of New York, may have a notable work. Taylor explains the meaning of the “inherent worth” of all living organisms and how this concept coupled with a rejection of human superiority can form the basis for a justifiable system of environmental ethics. The following section is from *The Ethics of Respect for Nature, Environmental Ethics* (Fall 1981).

In this paper I show how the taking of a certain ultimate moral attitude toward nature, which I call “Respect for Nature” has a certain place in the foundations of a life- centered system of environmental ethics. I hold that a set of moral norms (both standards of characters and rules of conduct) governing human treatment of the natural world. Concept

of ecological homeostasis, equilibrium and integrity provide us with normative principles with regard to ecosystem. (249)

According to anthropocentric views, human actions affect the natural environment and its non-human inhabitants. We may have responsibilities with regard to the natural ecosystem and biotic communities of our planet, but the natural resources have been exploited only for the well-being of human life not for their biotic life. Two theories, life-centered and human-centered, contrast with each other. From the perspective of a life-centered theory, we have moral obligations that are owed to wild animals and plants as members of the earth's biotic community. We are morally bound to protect or promote their good for their sake.

A life-centered system of environmental ethics suggests our duties to respect the integrity of natural ecosystem, to preserve endangered species, and to avoid environmental pollution to achieve and maintain a healthy existence in a natural state. Such obligations are due to those living things out of recognition of their inherent worth.

If we accepted a life-centered theory of environmental ethics, a profound reordering of our moral universe would take place. We would begin to look at the whole of the earth's biosphere in a new light.

George Bernard Shaw, who has written fine plays, was born in Dublin on 26 July 1826. He is regarded by different readers as the greatest English dramatist of nature, of religion or of politics. He has written many plays differentiating the characteristics for the different groups of people. He has written especially four types of plays; the plays pleasant, the unpleasant plays, plays for puritans and plays of maturity and other.

The category called the plays pleasant consists his different plays like, *Candida*, *Doctor's Dilemma*, *Arms and the Man* and *The Man of Destiny*. The unpleasant plays are *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *The Widower's House*, *The Philanderer*. Being a Christian, Shaw wrote some plays for puritans such as *Devil's Disciple*, *Caesar and Cleopatra*. Finally, *Man and Superman*, *Heart break house*, *Pygmalion* are plays for maturity.

The plays pleasant were for independent theatre. This type of concept was revolutionary and new in England. These plays evoked humour and laughter on audience and aimed for social reformation. Unpleasant plays focused the contemporary social situation of England. These plays were filled with satire and irony. Similarly, plays for puritans reflect the Puritanical codes and conduct.

Shaw presented these dramas very stylistically. His language and vibrant dialogue expose his capacity and competency in English language. His language and style are beautifully expressive of his thoughts and sentiments. The brilliance of his dialogue leads beyond the limitation of his own thoughts. We can say that to his own generation he has been a great figure and he has given more delights in the theatre to the world at large than any man of his time.

Shaw believes that the purpose of nature is to evolve the race of human beings and other non human beings. Nature employs human and animal for the procreation of race. Life force is Shaw's idea of inherent potentiality which works through human beings and other living beings which he defines as "the force that ever strives to attain greater power of contemplating itself" (Hinderson 771). It is Shaw's original and unique idea. Every human and other non-human being has his own inner resources, force which leads him to conflict and as well as protect from the destruction. It is purposive because it has to evolve into higher and higher forms of life. This inspiring

force is the life force which gradually develops through the stages of experiment and close examination. Shaw's life force is optimistic one which continues up to the environmental organism.

Shaw's idea of life force and creative evolution concern with environmental relation, love, virginity, morality, beauty, reality and spirituality. It is a conscious force towards its aim. Life has not been perfect yet, life views life, but has been directed towards perfection. For him life force is a conquest which is the real conquest. In the play *Androcles and the Lion*, the central Character, Androcles, is attracted by life force. So he tries to remain independent from the domination of emperor and make the lion a companion. He challenges the world. In Shavian Fabian society, life force has been considered as the alternative to god's power. Shaw has taken human and animal with his life force theory with sound argument. Though life force works equally in man and animal, its force is stronger in animals. Shaw desires the harmony in environment through life force.

Shaw is a great advocator of environmental ethics and animal rights. He says that animals should be equally treated like human beings. Shaw's environmental awareness always acts a rule for preservation of environment. He levels environment in high rung of ladders. His life force works with self efforts and self determination. Through self determination, animals will eliminate man's domination and free themselves from the primitive beliefs.

Darwin's theory of evolution i.e. doctrine of *Natural Selection and Survival of the Fittest* has inspired Shaw to propound the idea of life force. Shaw's life force according to Hinderson is a god in creating of himself. Thus, rather of downfall, this life force helps man and animal to create better life. In *Don Juan*, Shaw's ideas are expressed as;

This is the law of my life. That is the working within me of Life's incessant aspiration to higher organism, wider Deeper, intense self consciousness and clear self understanding. Life force may go the man from nature, the man per animal the angel to the archangel and finally omnipotent god. I tell you that as long as I can conceive something better than myself, I can't be easy unless I am striving to bring it into existence or clearing the way for it. (Hinderson 578)

Darwinian Theory ignores the truth that the circumstances and environment are created by life. The creative evolution of G.B. Shaw counterattacks the Darwinian theory of *Natural Selection*. In Darwinian Theory, only fittest survives and there is a constant struggle for existence; in that struggle unable creatures are wiped out.

Darwinian Theory under evaluates the area of will.

There is a spiritual power in the universe; call it the life force, about its origin, we know nothing; it is neither all powerful nor all knowing but strives to become both through its own creations. It goes slowly forward by a process of trial and error. Man is the latest trial. He may be an error but he is not a base accident in nature. Hence, the above mentioned description of creative evolution and life force create dramatic characters in Shaw's plays. These characters embody these two forces out of themselves. Again it is nature which creates and deserves human beings, non-human beings, beasts, wild animals, green plants and love to each other. In this respect too, Shaw has strong favor for relation between human and nature. "Nature is able to overcome more disasters because nature exists for the purpose of carrying life to higher level". (qtd. Lord 186)

G.B. Shaw says, "Natural world consists everything for its own sake but to fulfill the end in view for which the life force has created it" (qtd. in Jaboson 144).

Again to Shaw, the high grade of life force in man and animal, in *Androcles and the Lion* he suggests “especially man and animals are nature’s contrivance for perpetuating its highest enchainment. Man and animal are continua for fulfilling nature’s behest in the ecological way” (35).

Therefore, Shaw’s depiction of animal in the plays is remarkable as he created in *Androcles and the Lion*. He recognizes purpose and will in the world because he is very much conscious of it. Hence, whatever Shaw gives a space for animals and environmental balance is his desirable advocacy of ecological power as a radical environmentalist does. His sense of balance of ecology shows vividness and reflect higher sense of life force.

The fable of Androcles and the lion has been a favorite story since it was written down some eighteen hundred years ago by a Latin grammarian, Aulus Gellius, who was born probably in Rome. He went to Greece and dwelt for a time near Athens, compiling while there a book in twenty sections called *Noctes Atticae* (Attic Night) from the fact that he wrote it on winter nights in Attica, the country in which Athens was the chief city.

In Bernard Shaw’s play, the old story is followed in out line so far as it concerns the encounter between the hurt lion and Androcles. Arguments and discussions presented in the preface and in the different acts deal with fun and satire to make it attractive to theatre audiences. This additional material turns the ancient fables into an original modern play which owes only small debt to Aulus Gellius.

It is a play, moreover, that only Shaw could have written, for no one but he would have ventured to combine comic nonsense with a serious study of ecology regarding the relationship between man and animal. It would be easy to suggest that he was attached to legend of Androcles and the lion because he loved animals, such

suggestion would not be justified. Shaw was not an animal lover of the kind that likes to keep animals in captivity as domestic pets, nor for exhibition in cages. He respected animals rather than loved them.

Shaw was a life long vegetarian because he felt a strong personal disgust towards the eating of dead flesh; but even could have enjoyed meat as a food he would still refrained from it because of his conviction that it was altogether wrong to slaughter helpless and defenseless animals. He said in fun that his funeral would be attended not by coaches full of mourning men and women but by herdes of oxen, sheep, swine, flocks of poultry and a small traveling aquarium of live fish. Shaw was respectful and just to all living things. He had no doubt that all men and animals are bound in honor not only to live freely themselves but also to do their utmost to ensure that others have equal opportunity to live fully.

Shaw says in the preface to this play *Androcles and the Lion* that there are people who think a man is either alive or dead and never consider the important question how much alive he is. Helpless and defenseless animals or those which are ruled by fear of any kind were in his opinion only half alive. The play inspires one to strive for better world, a world in which it will be possible for all to develop their individual power unhamper by physical, mental and spiritual oppression.

The last words spoken by Androcles to the lion are significant: “While we stand together, no cage for you: no slavery for me” (III. 92). Shaw was convinced that freedom, no cage, no slavery is the absolute right of every creature. He held that all the evidences of history goes to show that men suffer according to evil nature of themselves and that faith in divine redeemer cannot avert the penalties of ill doing. Even more is the balance of the play upset by the lion’s comic behavior towards the

end of the play which obscures the serious theme of environmental ethics and the necessity of obeying the voice of conscience.

Although in the play Shaw lapses from his usual high standard of skill as a play wright, the incongruous element of farce is not unintentional. He held rightly that an audience will not listen attentively to serious arguments unless this is offered in an entertaining form lightened with wit and humor as happens in parts of *Androcles and the Lion*. The characters have independent life in this play, we feel that they might do or say something unexpected and surprising that they might at any moment cease to obey the author's order and go beyond his original intentions and speak and behave according to some inner law of their own nature. Shaw acknowledges this in the appendix, where he describes lion as a clever and fearless free thinker, the emperor as comparatively stupid and conscience ridden Megaera as a blackguardly debauchee and Androcles as a humanitarian naturalist whose views surprise everybody. Characters have a measure of the individual freedom of thought and action which Shaw insists on the birthright of all living things.

In Shaw's *Androcles and the lion*, the characters come to life as individual and express attitudes and points of view. Nicholes Grene, a critic, comments and relates the play with the standpoint of the indispensable struggle for mastery. Existence of each individual is meaningful if one is ready to sacrifice the life for the betterment of the society. He writes:

The play's central theme recurrent in Shaw, is that one must have something worth lying for an end out side to make life worth living.

Androcles, he enters the ring to be sacrificed, that struggle shakes heart of each. Captured by emperor's men, Androcles is sent to the colosseum to face the lion along with other. (I. 25)

Shaw's play *Androcles and the Lion* needs to be considered in close relation to its preface if its serious purpose is not to be underestimated. When witnessed in performance on the stage it tends to appear slight and lacking in substance, whereas most of Shaw's other plays, both earlier and later than *Androcles and the Lion* are packed full with matter for thought and meditation as well as wit and humor. There is a balance between education and entertainment.

In *Androcles and the Lion* that balance is upset mainly because Shaw attempted the impossible by bringing on to the stage in the figure of the lion, a mere make believe character of the kind that audiences had become accustomed to the farcical shows. In the prologue, Androcles himself and Megaera, his wife closely resembles the comic character of the meek husband and the scolding wife who commonly provide much of the rough fun.

In *Androcles and the Lion*, the lion plays the magnificent role of a superb animal character. Besides, the lion itself is powerful, strong, kindly and candid. The lion is Shaw's matured animal character who possesses the true sense of love and ecological understanding. Without help of the lion, the life of the central character called Androcles would become sorrowful and painful. The lion is storehouse of consciousness.

The play *Androcles and the Lion* has been a well known story since it was written down in which the writer presents the concerns of the friendship or companionship between man and animal. For the central character Androcles, the creature like lion is as much god's creature as human beings are. Androcles considers such creatures as human being's fellow being and treats accordingly.

Shaw advocates through this play that a loved person or a loved animal often becomes a mere pet, and very few pets are allowed to live their own lives freely. To Shaw, justice, respect, and morality on the biotic life which we call environmental ethics, employ freedom and equality.

II. Environmental Ethics: A Strategy to Promote Bio-centric Eminence

Ecocriticism is a form of literary criticism based on an ecological perspective. Environmental issues, cultural issues concerning to the environment, and attitude towards nature are presented and analyzed in this form of criticism. Ecocriticism as a literary perspective investigates the relationship between literature and the physical environmental ethical aspects. Ecocriticism studies human culture and its interconnectedness with natural world.

The term “ecocriticism” was used first by US critic William Rueckert in his essay *Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism* (1978). His intention was to focus on the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature. A few works of literary criticism may be said to have been ecocriticism before the term was invented. These were informed by environmentalist ideas and asked some of the questions that were to become important in ecocriticism, but it was not until the beginning of the 1990s that ecocriticism became a recognized movement.

Ecocriticism studies the reciprocal relationship between human and nonhuman beings in relation to the land or the earth, which is only the source of all necessary ingredients to human life. In fact, everything else is interconnected with everything in the natural world although human perception of nature can vary. Nature interacts with cultural influences in shaping human attitudes and behavior. These attitudes and behaviors lead human beings towards the consciousness, which definitely helps to preserve and protect natural phenomena. Ecocriticism mainly concentrates on how literature interacts with and participates in the entire ecosphere and Joseph Meeker puts it as:

Ecocriticism, then, offers a unique fusion of literary, scientific, ecological and Philosophical perspectives. It is ones that attempts to

transcend the duality of and life, human and the natural, and to work along the principle of interconnection between them. Establishing an ethical and aesthetic ground towards a renewed understanding of both literature and ecology is the purpose behind. (74)

Ecocriticism, in western world as a literary criticism got its place only in the 1990s with its own professional organization-the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) established in 1992. ASLE now has its organization in many countries like Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom and Korea whose purpose include sharing of facts, ideas and the environment. However, Cheryll Glotfelty traces the origin of ecocriticism which was possibly coined by William Rueckert in his essay, "*Literature and ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism*".

Every literary theory examines the text with its own focus on any aspect of criticism. Ecocriticism expands the notion of the world to include entire eco-sphere. It gives the earthiness approach to the text. The implication of natural study in literature reveals human age-old relation to the nature. It is because human civilization is possible only with the advent of the nature. In some cases, ecocriticism seems to have emerged out of the dominant modes of contemporary theory. Ecocriticism gives the earthiness approach to the text . As an earth centered approach, ecocriticism assumes that no thoughts, no philosophy, no theory or culture predates the earth. In this regard, Harold Fromm expresses:

Ecocriticism is the study of relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines female issues and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to reading of texts, ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies. (xviii)

The study of literature's relationship to the physical world has been with us in the domain of the pastoral tradition since ancient times. Representation of physical world and human world in the field of literature is not merely the present phenomenon. Physical environment and human world, two entirely distinct ontological zones, have been brought together and integrated in mythology, literature and philosophy. We can find biometric vision of the nature even in the religious mythology along with its focus on horizontal relation of all the entities of the world. According to the bible, the god created first human beings Adam and Eve and let them be nurtured in the Garden of Eden.

Similarly, Greek and Roman literature also represented physical environment in their literature. Dante's *The Divine Comedy* opens with the vast wilderness of the dark world. Likewise popular Greek play *Oedipus Rex* begins with the plague upon the land. English romanticism focused on nature as the source of beauty and its relation to human. The American transcendentalism laid emphasis on organic vision and pantheistic notion of nature.

This form of criticism has gained a lot of attention during recent years due to higher social emphasis on environmental destruction and increased technology. Ecocriticism is an intentionally broad genre that is known by many names. Green cultural studies, ecopoetics, and environmental literary criticism are also popular for this relatively new branch of literary criticism. Due to amalgam of various aspects of physical as well as human environment, it has become the subject of vastness in literary criticism. In this regard, Danna Philips says:

The fact of matter is the ecological research is extremely difficult. The grand sweep of many ecological theories is a response to the vastness and complexity of nature; comprehending this vastness and complexity

on an appropriate scale and in meaningful detail is hard to do well. The intellectual and methodological challenges of ecology further compounded by a host of very basic technical problems. Ecologists cannot comfort from and refuse in a well-equipped laboratory purchased right off the shelf and marked “for the use of ecologists only”. (221)

All ecological criticism share the fundamental premise that human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it. Ecocriticism investigates environmental issues, cultural issues and attitude towards the nature. Jones of the main idea in eco-criticism is to study how individual behave and react in relation to the nature and ecological aspects.

Ecocriticism can be further characterized by distinguishing it from other critical approaches. Literary theory, in general examines the relations between writers, texts, and the world. In most literary theory the world is synonymous with society or the social sphere. But, ecocriticism expands the notion of the world to include the entire ecosphere. We must assert that literature does not float above the material world. Classical writers were unwittingly doing ecocriticism for centuries before the genre came in to light onto this academic scene in the early 1990s. From Virgil’s *Georgics* to John Clare to Thoreau to Rachel Carson, sensitive people had actually noticed that they were living on and from the primal mud of earth.

The early years of ecocriticism brought together contemporary writers of nature, admiring critics of classic nature writers, focusing the growing problems of air pollution and environmental degradation. The ecocritical net has been cast over wider and wider territory to include the ecology of cities, environmental crisis, environmental law, colonial exploitation and much more.

Although the cultural studies that took over the humanist academy during the last quarter of the twentieth century have slowly begun to recognize ecocriticism. All sciences come together to analyze the environment and bring possible solutions for the correction of the environmental contemporary crisis in ecocriticism. Joseph Carroll tends to emphasize on the role of environment as:

The environment depicted in literary works are tacitly understood correspond to the enveloping natural world. It follows that interpretation can be greatly enriched by an understanding of intersection. Between humans and their environment. All works of fiction take place in an environment, and that environment impacts character, actions, conflict, mood theme, and so on. (303)

Before 1960s and 1970s, there was no organized movement to study greener side of literature. These important works were scattered and categorized under different subject headings like pastoralism, human ecology, regionalism and so on. British marxist critic Raymond Williams, for example wrote a seminal critique of pastoral literature *The Country and the City* which spawned two decades of leftist suspicion of the ideological evasion of the genre. He proposed a version of an argument that was later to dominate ecocriticism and environmental philosophy.

In the mid-eighties, scholars began to work collectively to establish ecocriticism as a genre. Gardens, landscapes, geography, representations of the natural world are used to draw a connection between the individual and the external world. Ecocriticism should be wary of the tendency to commit the ecological fallacy. The idea that the job of ecocritics is to privilege the natural over cultural elements of the text under consideration, and so make their criticism uphold on a way that

previous criticism did not the palpable and meaningful expression of selected text's ecological unconscious.

Ecocriticism is not just a means of analyzing nature in literature. It implies a move towards a more biocentric world-view. It is an extension of ethics, a broadening way of humans' conception of global community to include nonhuman life forms and the physical environment. Just as feminist and African American literary criticism call for a change in culture, they attempt to move the culture toward a broader world-view by exposing an earlier narrowness of view, so too does ecological literary criticism advocate for cultural change by examining how the narrowness of our culture's assumption about the natural world has limited our ability to envision an ecologically sustainable human society.

Ecocriticism launches a call to literature to connect to the issues of today's environmental crisis. In another sense, ecocriticism is directly concerned with both nature and the environment. But the attempt to synthesize natural phenomena with literary criticism raises conceptual problems, because ecology itself is an abstract concept that emerged in a historical process of academic formation. Alan Sokal points out that:

If ecocriticism tends to formulate a response to crises and problems of the ecosystem theorizing on the relationships between literature and the natural world, it should first focus on the parallel paradigms in literary theory and parallels in the natural sciences, Particularly quantum physics, biology and geography. Despite the conceptual problems, however, it is possible to develop an ecologically informed critical theory from theoretical elements implicit in the natural sciences. (233)

Consequently, ecocriticism today is in a process of inventing and shaping itself, borrowing largely from other disciplines and the natural sciences. Even the example of postmodernist fiction that mostly foregrounds meta-fictional games, and privileges textuality, shows that it incorporates the cultural, social, and ecological themes in a dynamic interaction with the textualist strategies. Ecocriticism helps establish relationship or connections between literary and ecological texts. The very multidimensionality of literature itself opens new critical paths to be explored. It would be necessary to choose an adequate critical perspective that synthesizes the natural and the literary phenomena. From the literary stand point ecocriticism needs a more inclusive and interdisciplinary approach.

The ecological investigations and interpretations of the relationship between nature and culture toward formulating ecologically informed critical principles in literary criticism and theory, inevitably lead to an ecologically oriented critical approach. Today more and more young academics respond to the global environmental crisis by turning to the new field of literary ecology. The growing number of ecologically informed critical studies, however, signals the necessity to develop an ecological or environmental criticism in the profession of the humanities, as well as to bring ecological consciousness to the practice of literary criticism.

This new eco-theory as a result responds to the global ecological crisis and addresses important environmental issues, specifically by examining values, in literary texts, with close ecological implications. Then, ecocriticism arrives with the promise of offering a unique combination of literary and natural scientific discourses. Ecocriticism thus, takes an earth-centered approach to literature, and an ecological approach to literary criticism. Simon C. Estok talks about the literary approach of ecocriticism in this manner:

Human beings are earth's only literary creatures. If the creation of literature is an important characteristics of the human species, it should be examined carefully and honestly to discover its influence upon human behavior and the natural environment to Determine what role, if any it plays in the welfare and survival of mankind and what Insight it offers in to human relationships with other species and with the world around us. It is an activity which adapts as better to the world or one which estranges us from it. (3-4)

Ecocriticism attempts to find a common ground between the human and the non-human to show how they can coexist in various ways, because the environmental issues have becomes an integral part of our existence. This is what ecocriticism addresses in its attempt to find a more environmentally conscious position in literary studies. Although ecocriticism can and indeed should explore the ways in which literature and ecology interact, it should not do so at the expense of a naive reduction of literary texts into mere transcriptions of the physical world. Ecocriticism does enable the critic to examine the physical environment in literary discourse itself, and to develop an earth-centered approach to literary studies.

Ecocriticism also denotes the view that nature culture relationship can form the basis of our understanding. Nature and culture are not two separate fields but are twinned process which overlaps each other. Therefore, nature culture duality no longer suits to domain of literature and environment. Dualities like nature versus culture, and wilderness versus the city are constantly breaking on. Nature is equally valuable as culture is. Hence, ecocriticism seeks unique balance between nature, culture and other things. So it would be mistake to separate culture from nature and

superiorize one above another. In his letter on PMLA, Michael P. Cohen for instance, traces the value of nature:

A particular piece of land, valley a homeland, may be value of a particular person or community. But the love of the natural world in which human being find themselves is not a regional or local issue consider the obligatory scene in the proletarian novel where the immigrant mother leaves the sweatshop in an American city and reminds herself and her children of the green world of the country.

(1092)

Therefore, a new ecological vision is shaping itself among the theorists now, one that allows negotiations between nature and culture as inseparable processes. Thus, ecocriticism advocates a rethinking of our commonly held beliefs and perceptions and our versions of nature, towards creating a consciousness of the essential unity of all life. Then a dialogic interaction with nature's language would challenge the status of humans as the privileged speaking subjects. Hence, the literary concept of ecology is not only linked to the question of inter-relatedness between literature, theory and ecology, but to the entire system of their implications. Literary studies become an integral part of wholeness, interconnections and interrelatedness of all organisms, human and nonhuman alike.

Environmentalism has been the slowest to develop a school of criticism in the academic humanities, of the radical movements that came to prominence in the 1960s and 1970s. environmentalist critic, Kerridge, introduces "environmentalism" as that "began to take shape in the second half of the twentieth century, in response to perceptions of how dangerous environmental damage had become" (127). He further adds, "environmentalism is a critique of industrial modernity and another product of

it, a distinctively modern movement in which an indispensable role is played by science; by the methods and technologies, for example, that can identify chemical traces or analyze atmospheric data” (132).

Environmental problems are frequently invisible, deferred, gradual, too small, too large, and subject to radical uncertainty. Often we are not confronted with the environmental harm we do, because it occurs later and elsewhere. For environmentalists, the task is to persuade the world to take these dangers seriously and do what is necessary to avert them. The obstacles are daunting. Actions available to individuals may seem as insignificant as to be scarcely worth taking.

Environmentalist philosopher Val Plumwood writes, in “environmental culture”:

Massive process of biospheric degradation and the failure are permanent endangerment of many of the world’s oldest and greatest fisheries, is the Cause of the continuing destruction of its tropical forests and the loss of much of its agricultural land. Evidence accumulates, but there are few single Events large enough to shock the world into action, such as the Chernobyl nuclear Power station disaster in 1986, fade from memory. (67)

Environmentalists are conventionally seen as defenders of nature. It is generally argued that all human behavior, including the environmentally destructive, derives from natural impulse. We need to value natural ecosystems and acknowledge our dependence on them. “Unnatural is often a term which suggests nature of abuse used to degrade environment. Though literature of the past used to incorporate with environment, there was no such theoretical tool to see the perspective positively. Human being subconsciously seeks the connection with the rest of the life. This attitude gave rise to environmental ethical views.

Environmental ethics may be regarded as rules of conduct based on the system of environmental moral principles. Species are disappearing at an accelerating rate through human action primarily habitat destruction, pollution on environment and the introduction of exotic species into residual natural environment. More of the species of animals and the plants would vanish or be doomed to early extinction unless better efforts are made to save them. Environmental ethics implies respect for the bi-centric community as such. Our main concern is about to ask questions ourselves, what difference does it make if some species are extinguished, if even half of the species on earth disappear. The consequence would be that new sources of scientific information will be lost. Vast potential biological wealth would be destroyed. Still undeveloped medicine, crops, pharmaceuticals, timber, fibers, soil, restoring vegetation, petroleum substitutes, and other products and amenities will never come to light.

It is also easy to overlook the services that ecosystem provides humanity. They enrich the soil and create the very air we breathe. Without these amenities the remaining tenure of the human race would be nasty and brief. The life sustaining matrix is built of green plants with legions of micro organisms and mostly small, obscure animals — in other words weeds and bugs. Humanity evolved within living communities and our bodily functions are finely adjusted to the environment already created. Mother earth is no more than the communality of organisms and physical environment.

To disregard the diversity of life is to risk, catapulting ourselves in to an alien environment. Edward O. Wilson while explaining about environmental ethics brings the reference of biophilia which he calls “the connections that human being subconsciously seek with the rest of life”. To biophilia can be added the idea of wilderness, all the land and communities of plants and animals still unswilled by

human occupation. In to wilderness people travel in search of new life and wonder and from wilderness they return to the parts of the earth that have been humanized and made physically secure. Wilderness is a metaphor of unlimited opportunities. Wilderness settles peace on the soul because it needs no help, it is beyond human contrivance. We think more carefully and turn philosophy to the central questions of human origins in the wild environment.

We do not understand ourselves if we forget how much the natural world means to us. There can be no purpose more inspiring than to begin the age of restoration, reweaving the wondrous diversity of life that still surrounds us. The man is in fact, only a member of biotic team as depicted by an ecological interpretation. Conservation provides state of harmony between men and environment. Aldo Leopold strongly disfavours men's evil instinct of exploiting the natural environment. He focuses especially on how human beings have violated the environmental ethical norms. His main concern is with land ethic in which he writes:

A land ethic, then, reflects the existence of ecological conscience and this in turn reflects individual conviction of responsibility for the health of land. Health of the land is the capacity of the land for self-renewal. Conservation is our effort to understand and preserve this capacity. It is necessary to look at the entire "biotic community" and beyond short-term self-interest in our attitude about the land and our use of its resources. (229)

It would be inconceivable that an ethical relation to land exists without love, respect and admiration for land and a high regard for its value. By value, we mean something far broader than mere economic value. We can first sketch the pyramid as a symbol of land, and later develop some of its implications in terms of land-use. Plants absorb

energy from the sun. This energy flows through a circuit called the biota, which may be represented by a pyramid consisting of layers. The bottom layer is the soil. A plant layer rests on the soil, an insect layer on the plants, a bird and rodent layer on the insects, and so on up through various animal groups to the apex layer, which consists of the larger carnivores.

The species of a layer are alike in where they came from, but rather in what they eat. Each successive layer depends on those below it for food and often for other services. Thus for every carnivore there are hundreds of his prey, thousands of their prey, millions of insects and uncountable plants. The pyramidal form of the system reflects this numerical progression from apex to base. Man shares an intermediate layer with the bears, raccoons, and squirrels which eat both meat and vegetables. The lines of dependency for food and other services are called food chains. Each species, including ourselves, is a link in many chains. Evolution has added layer after layer, link after link.

Land, then, is not merely soil; it is fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants and animals. Food chains are the living channels which conduct energy upward; death and decay return it to the soil. The circuit is not closed; some energy is dissipated in decay, some is added by absorption from the air, some is stored in soils, peats, long-lived forests; but it is a sustained circuit, like a slowly augmented revolving fund of life. When a change occurs in one part of the circuit, many other parts must adjust themselves to it. Change does not necessarily obstruct or divert the flow of energy; evolution is a long series of self-induced changes. Fertility is the ability of soil to receive, restore, and release energy.

Water, like soil, is part of the energy circuit. Industry, by polluting water or obstructing them with dams, may exclude the plants and animals necessary to keep

energy in circulation. Some large animals are lost; swampy forests have become meadows or plow land. It is necessary to examine each question in terms of what is ethically and aesthetically right. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.

Historically, western philosophy has paid little attention to the environment. The anthropocentric perspective has dominated the philosophical thought. The value of animals and plants was considered exclusively in terms of their satisfaction of human needs or interests. During the twentieth century, however the ecological perspective that views the need for human beings to exist in harmony with nature has begun to appear slowly rejecting the notion that nature is a hostile environment that needs to be subdued and dominated. Although anthropocentrism is still a dominant perspective, the biocentric, or ecocentric views expressed in the writing on such environmentalists as Aldo Leopold, John Muir, Paul W. Taylor and Edward O. Wilson have grown in popularity. Leopold's proposal of a land ethic based upon the notion of a community that includes non-human life and inanimate objects as well as human beings has inspired him to consider the possibility of developing a general system of ethics based on ecological perspective.

Professor, Paul W. Taylor, of the City University of New York has the most notable works, on the recent attempts to create and justify a system of environmental ethics. He especially focuses for the ethics of respect for nature. He argues that considering the attitude of respect for nature determines our moral relations with the earth's wild communities of life. He writes:

When we adopt the attitude of respect for nature as an ultimate moral attitude we Make a commitment to live by certain normative

principles. These principles constitute the rules of conduct and standards of characters that are to govern our treatment of the natural world. The ethics of respect for nature sets the total framework for our responsibilities towards the natural world. (253)

The rules of duty governing our treatment of the natural world and its inhabitants are forms of conduct in which the attitude of respect for nature is manifested. To justify the attitude of respect for nature is to justify the commitment to these principles and thereby regarding wild creatures as possessing inherent worth.

We must keep in mind that inherent worth is not some mysterious sort of objective property belonging to living things that can be discovered by empirical observation or scientific investigation. To ascribe inherent worth to an entity is not to describe some of its features. It is not also the concept of a being having a good of its own. In order to show such inherent worth to an entity we must place value upon it, conceiving it to be valuable. It is human who must do the valuing, for the ethics of respect for nature. That is to say, it is not a value derived from considerations regarding human well-being or human rights. It is a value that is ascribed to nonhuman animals and plants themselves, independently of their relationship to what humans judge to be conducive to their own good.

The attitude towards living things in the natural world depends on the way we look at them. Underlying and supporting our attitude is a certain "belief system" that constitutes a particular world view or outlook on nature and the place of human life in it. We must first articulate the belief system which underlies and supports to assimilate the attitude of respect for nature. This belief system of respect for nature reinforces to adopt oneself the whole set of the earth's natural ecosystem cannot be proven to be true, either inductively or deductively. The system as a whole constitutes

a coherent, unified and rationally acceptable inter-relationships. By examining each of its main components and seeing how they interconnect together, we obtain a well-ordered conception of nature and the place of humans in it.

The belief system, underlying the attitude of respect for nature, is regarded as biocentric outlook on nature. This view “the biocentric outlook on nature” might best be described as a philosophical world view, to distinguish it from a scientific theory or explanatory system. Thus, the environmental ethical awareness suggests the interdependence of all living things in an organically unified order whose balance and stability are necessary conditions for the realization of the good of its constituent biotic communities.

The environmental ethics, according to Paul W. Taylor, is made up of three basic elements; a belief system, an ultimate moral attitude, and a set of rules of duty and standards of character. These elements are connected with each other in the following manner. The belief system provides a certain outlook on nature as an ultimate moral attitude, the attitude of respect for nature. When an agent understands its moral relations to the natural world in terms of this outlook, it recognized the attitude of respect to take toward all wild forms of life in the earth’s biosphere. Living things are regarded as a being possessing inherent worth. One, then, places intrinsic value on the promotion and protection of their good. As a consequence of this, one makes a moral commitment to abide by a set of rules of duty and to fulfill certain standards of good character. One considers those rules and standards to be validly binding on all moral agents. They are seen as embodying forms of conduct and character in which the attitude of respect for nature is manifested.

The biocentric outlook on nature has four main components. (1) Humans are thought of as members of the earth’s community of life. (2) The earth’s natural

ecosystems as a totality are seen as a complex web of interconnected elements, with the sound biological functioning of each being dependent on the sound biological functioning of the others. (3) Each individual organism is conceived as a teleological center of life, pursuing its own good in its own way. (4) The claim that humans by their very nature are superior to other species, must be rejected as nothing more than an irrational bias in our own favors. The conjunction of these four ideas constitutes the biocentric outlook on nature.

Environmental ethical view, thus, advocates us to respect nature and show its inseparable relation to human existence. The nature should get utmost respect but man should not underscore its grandeur. The life sustaining matrix is built up on natural world and other nonhuman beings. Human centered perspective of the environment dominated the philosophical thought of humanity. This view judges the natural things such as animals, green plants, land etc in terms of human need and satisfaction. But, it is necessary to look at the natural world through environmental ethical perspective. The relation of nature and species living in the physical world has unavoidable intricate to the earth that goes its roots to the beginning of its birth. Thus, environmental ethics develops the new ecological view which considers the whole earth as an environmental community with all its things, living as well as non living things as the members.

III. Projection of Biocentric World View in G.B. Shaw's play *Androcles and the Lion*

The theory of biocentric world view considers each and every organism as the essential part of nature. It is a common view that envisions the natural world as a living, sacred thing, in which each individual feels intimately bonded to a relation where human beings live, in interdependence and reciprocity with the living things, plants and animals. Since time immemorial when the human beings started acquiring knowledge, they thought that they were supreme in comparison to the animals. Human beings, now-a-days, are in the term to disturb the biotic world.

George Bernard Shaw, in the play *Androcles and the lion*, deliberately focuses on this fact reflecting the idea of biocentric world view. Nevertheless, he seems to accept some of the hegemonic sides of human beings regarding their supremacy over animals; yet, these can be justified or neutralized by his eagerness to keep on with his positive and sympathetic views on animals throughout the play.

Paul W. Taylor grounds a kind of the ethics of respect for nature in which “we adopt the moral attitude on biotic community following certain normative principles” (253). This ecological truth has to do with Shaw's views on human, animal and their surrounding as reflected in the play *Androcles and the Lion*. Although there is prevailing of an imbalanced relation between human and animal, no one can deny that there is a kind of web in between them.

The play begins from the prologue in which Shaw first presents the description of the environment of jungle such as jungle path, sounds of animals, atmosphere etc. While passing through the jungle, Androcles and his wife Megaera hear a melancholy roar of lion and sees his painful condition as he is wounded. It is described in the prologue as:

A jungle path, a lion's roar, it is repeated nearer. The lion limps from the jungle on three legs, holding up his right forepaw, in which a huge thorn sticks. He sits down and contemplates it. He licks it. He snakes it. He tries to extract it by scraping it along the ground, and hurt himself worse. He roars piteously. He licks it again. Tears drop from his eyes. He limps painfully off the path and lies down under the tree, exhausted with pain. Heaving a long sigh, like wind in a trombone, he goes to sleep. (prologue.1)

The jungle is obviously the habitats of many animals and birds. Androcles and his wife enter into the world of animals where Androcles within short span of time makes animals and birds his friends. He could make them as fellow beings due to his nature of respecting and understanding their interests and feelings. Respecting to non-human beings and intending to preserve their habitats is to respect the biotic community, therefore from the very beginning of the play, the dramatist shows Androcles as a character who has possessed the capability of understanding the sense of biocentric world view. Androcles cannot live happily unless and until he gets supports from rest of the things found in the environment such as birds, plants, other animals and so on. How he loves to animals and birds has been presented as:

Megaera: What worse again your being addicted to animals. How is any woman to keep her house clean when you bring in every stray cat and lost cur and lame duck in the whole countryside? You took the bread out of my mouth to feed them, you know don't attempt to deny it.

Androcles: Only when they were hungry and you were getting too stout, dearie. (I.3)

Androcles has the habit of bringing stray animals to the home and enjoying with them and feeding them whatever they like. He even prepares the place for living them in the house or on the backyard of house or on the countryside. His wife Megaera wonders why his husband loves to the animals. She even goes on to scold him: “Well, if you’re fonder of animals, you can live with them there in the jungle” (I. 4).

The need of companion is emphasized from the side of both Androcles and the lion throughout the play. Loneliness of human as well as animal has been linked to the importance of interconnection, whether this may be of same species or of one species to another. There is a connection between one living thing to another living thing and also between living thing and non living things found in the environment. This chain of cycle of dependence or interconnection has direct influence between one non living thing and another living thing. This fact can be seen in the loneliness of Androcles. Although he has his wife, children and other relatives, he can see flowers, the sea, the far-off island, and the sun; he is feeling a kind of lacking within himself. The main lacking within him is friendliness. Thus, there is a mutual relationship and friendliness among characters. Shaw’s dramatization of the central character Androcles’s loneliness also emphasizes on the realization of sense of biotic community regarding the relationship between man and animal.

The lion lives in the jungle whereas Androcles is a human and lives in the society comprised of many people: yet there is a sense of friendship and dependence. In the jungle, the birds sing for Androcles, in turn, Androcles sings for them. Thus, there is the sense of respect for non human creatures. Focusing on the respect for environment, Shaw mentions in the prologue:

Overture: forest sounds Christian hymns faintly. The people had lived so long with animals that they themselves were patient as an animal.

People kept remembering how they laugh and the last notes of the song had sounded. When they were so nearly asleep that could hardly tell whether they were remembering them or hearing , they were still certain that would be back-after they are fast asleep. Neither thinking nor dreaming, had they still smiled. (Prologue.2)

G.B. Shaw wants to stress on the liberation of animals so that animals, too, are accepted as the essential member of biotic community in the play. Shaw's effort on the efficiency of animals in doing anything that is considered to be able of human being's intelligence only can be seen as one becomes friend with them which is presented in the play as:

The lion emerges from the passage, waltzing with a yell as he sees Androcles. The lion bolts wildly up the steps in to his box, and slams the door. All, Christians and gladiators alike, fly for their lives, the gladiators bolting into the arena the other in all directions, the place is emptied with magical suddenness. All think at a moment animals are also wise and never make a mistake. (I.46)

In the ensuing paragraphs, emphasis has been laid on the lion's efficiency in doing anything that is considered to be able of human being. Psychologically, Shaw puts his attention on human beings' nature of making mistake despite of their so-called intelligence. When the emperor accepts that the animal i.e. lion never makes mistakes, it means that he is focusing on human beings' pretension of making mistake to be of animals' quality. The truth is that mistakes are deliberately done by human beings. Animals never pretend themselves of what they are unable to do. They do have a static nature of their own. Their mistakes are not to be considered as mistakes because of the fact that they are guided by the law of biocentric world view.

The emperor has been shown as a character who violates the environmental ethical norms and values. Killing or capturing and putting animals in the cage is the pleasure of his life. Now, what we can see is that the emperor represents all the humans of the world who does not have ecological awareness. Such people trespass from one ecosystem to another forgetting that it brings a massive devastation and problem in the environment, as in this dialogue an attitude of indifference towards environment is depicted:

The Emperor: I must conquer these unkindly terrors. I think you could cut anything and kill beasts. It's the menagerie service. My team of oxen is drawing the new lion to the coliseum. You clear the road. That don't matter, you can choose your own alter, sacrifice to Jupiter: he likes animals; he turns himself into an animal when he goes off duty. There will be no pretending about the new lion; let that be enough for you. He's hungry. (II.48)

The emperor takes part in violation of environmental ethics not only by inspiring people to kill the wild beasts but also by allowing people for cutting trees for making their huts. People clear the jungle and begin to plough the field with the permission of the emperor. Habitats of many wild animals and birds have been destroyed by those people who cut the trees and make field to plough. Moreover the emperor also let people establish fire-producing cottage industries which cause pollution of air in the environment. Environment has got polluted by the different activities of the people of the emperor in the play such as making fire, abusing of land or soil, cutting trees and destroying the habitats of animals and birds, establishing the cottage industries and so on. Thus, the emperor is totally ignorant about the hazardous consequences that would be caused by environmental devastation.

Humans must not trespass animals' boundary. Shaw creates like a family in which Androcles, the Emperor, the lion and such other men and animals are seen as members of the family. Shaw's purpose of creating the family in this play is to bring harmony and one to one corresponding relation in the different members of environment. This also means enlarging a balanced relation in between them so that each and every individual of each kind maintains its own function for the swift-running of the biotic organism. Because of interconnection there is attraction than repulsion among humans, animals and other beings; although there is a vast difference. Thus, Shaw emphasizes on peace and harmony which can be brought by a balanced relation between human and animal. The key to understanding such a network is to find the ways in which each part depends on the rest. We can seek relationships which is a series of human activities to the ecosystem on which they depend and which they in turn affect.

The contrasts between the lion and the man named as Androcles have numerous; yet, both of them feel exactly alike. It is possible because of a kind of force of attraction between two members of biotic community. As mentioned in the act I of the play, Androcles and the lion are so connected to each other that it is impossible for them to depart from each other; the bond between them is too much stronger. Androcles's fondness of animals has been revealed even through Megaera's following dialogue:

Megaera: You used to sit and talk to those dumb brute beasts for hours, when you hadn't a word for me. Yes, insult me, do (rising) oh! I won't bear it another moment. Oh, you haven't danced with me for years: and now you go off dancing with a great brute beast that you haven't known

for ten minutes and that wants to eat your own wife. Androcles: Well, dear, do you want to see one? (I.4)

Magaera is a woman character, wife of Androcles who directly comes to contact with environment for accomplishing her daily works, for instance, she brings firewood from the forests or from her surrounding for cooking food, she carries her cattles to the forest for grazing, besides she depends upon the natural resources for running her family life. Yet she scares from the wild animals. She also does not allow keeping animals like wild cat, dog, lion, horse as pet in the home, though her husband Androcles is fond of such animals. This shows that Magaera exploits natural resources for her livelihood but she is unconscious on the fact that she herself is one of the members of the biotic community. Magaera uses natural resources like water, land, air, firewood which are available in her environment. What is necessary her to understand is she must contribute something for the conservation and preservation of these natural resources. However, she is not on the way of respecting environment and animals of it. She assumes animals are those beings which cannot accompany with human beings for life sustaining matrix. Her such attitude has been revealed as:

Magaera: I don't believe a word of it. You always threaten me with wild beasts to make me wad the very soul out of my body when I can hardly drag one foot before another. We havnt seen a single lion yet. I wont go another step. Androcles. [Pleading wearily] oh! Not again, dear. What's the good of stopping every two miles and saying you wont go another step? We must get on to the next village before night. There are wild beasts in this wood: lions, they say. (4)

The lion, birds, Androcles and the emperor in the pay have an interaction of dependencies. While presenting the dialogue in the play, although in a fantastic way,

Shaw seeks to combine the relationship of dependency. At the beginning, the lion depends on the man, and in turn, the men depend on the lion. Regarding the food chain, Shaw emphasizes on the concept of dependency and interaction among man, animals and other living things of environment. It is known fact that we human beings like to eat cooked food, whereas the animals which belong to the aquatic habitat do not eat cooked food. Bigger tiger eats smaller animals like goat, sheep, etc. It is, now clear from this fact that each and every individual of any environment searches its own kind of food to sustain its life. Nevertheless, fish is the common food for both of the animals and humans. How to eat, it is a matter of the system of ecosystem. Everything depends on everything else, ecologically. This also brings check and balance in the environment so that it adds energy to the functional system of environment.

Shaw's depiction of the fire can be related to the concept of the violation of environmental ethics. It is directly related to an attempt of pollution. It is from the man-made fire that smoke in the form of carbon monoxide spreads on the surface of the ecosphere which brings pollution that is detrimental to the health of the living things including both plants and animals. Servants of the king, in the play, go to the jungle for hunting animals and birds. They make fire and spend the whole night. They are totally indifferent towards the life and health of the wild animals and birds. Shaw's play *Androcles and the Lion*, in this way, advocates for acknowledging the importance of the biocentric world view.

Moreover, the emperor's way of bringing the lion forcefully from the jungle to his palace shows human's way of dealing with the animals revealing human chauvinism. Thus the emperor's attitude towards the lion and the lion's living condition in the cage has been depicted in the play as:

They pass from the square westward. The oxen, drawing a wagon with a great wooden cage and the lion in it, arrive through the central arch. The Keeper. Here is a nice business! Who let that out of here down to the dens when we were changing the lion into the cage next the arena? Lavinia. The poor best was starving. I couldn't help it. Look at his face. I can't help smiling. The Keeper. Saved him! Saved him that has just got mad with hunger wild one that came out of the forest not for weeks ago. What am I to do? What am I to say to the emperor when he sees one of my lion coming into the arena half asleep? (II.52)

By chance, lion's environment undergoes a tremendous change. He is kidnapped and taken from a jungle to cage of the emperor. When the lion is kidnapped and taken to the emperor's palace, he learns that loyalty is a characteristic which differs from the law made by the emperor. In the jungle, the lion believed that he was very powerful, for he was the most important animal. All of the other smaller animals give up their power to a bigger and stronger lion and can merely hope that the lion will protect them in time of need.

The natural world is dominated by rules and codes just as the civilized world is, and in these words, lion can understand the subtlest of controls. One can reframe lion's journey in *Androcles and the lion* as a search for companionship. The lion is never alone in the play, but instead travels between a various number of humans and other animals. The lion always dreamed of his companionship with humans. Then, men and the lion were united by mutual goals, mutual fears and mutual desires. When the lion is visited the lone by Androcles in the jungle, he finally understands the meaning of the call that he has felt. Lion's relationship with the man is like his relationship with other wild animals. When Androcles is sent to fight with the hungry

lion , he licks him because he love him. As much as the lion loves Androcles, he finds his real happiness roaming the woods, searching his own food, constantly engaging in the act of defending or sustaining his life.

Throughout the play Shaw questions the idea of humanity with relation to respect for biotic world as a virtue. Shaw demonstrates clearly that men do not innately possess any virtues, and that in some circumstances, men are the most virtuous who have become the least civilized. He also makes it clear that the virtues assigned to the idea of humanity fit equally well into the world of animals. The idea of humanity as a virtue suggests that civilization has allowed human beings to morally develop further than wild creatures. But, the emperor represents the most “civilized” people in the world and he ultimately acts selfishly and cruelly. In contrast, the lion and Androcles sacrifice their own interests solely for others; however, they also enforce a strict code of putting the survival of the group as a whole above the mere survival of the individual. When the lion meets Androcles, he does begin to perform selfless acts, because he is inspired by love, but those acts have nothing to do with any notion of humanity rather those acts have direct relation with biocentric world views.

The lion tries his best to overcome the attack of those hunters of the emperor, but it is in vain, at last, they capture him remorselessly and bring to the emperor’s palace. The first attempt of intervention in the biological system has been imposed by the hunters of the emperor. To say the truth, actually, they have no any right to capture the animals they like, yet the intention of the hunters to tame the lion in a friendly manner can be accepted to some extent. If those hunters of the Emperor had acted out of selfishness, it would be ecologically acceptable; however, the domineering attitude cannot be justifiable in the biological system. The ignorance and powerlessness of animals have been utilized frequently by the humans for their own

benefit. We, in our daily life, do not use human skin to make clothes. In the play, the lion has been given a bearskin to sleep on. Even the servants and other emperor's attendants sleep on the bearskin. It is from this that we can identify human's utilitarian attitude towards the animals-how human treats animals. The following dialogues indicate the same thing:

Ferrovius: You must go as a lamb to the slaughter. Not as a lamb is slain by the butcher [*looking at the editor*] a silly ram whose head he could fetch off in one twist.

The emperor [*standing on a chair inside his box and looking over the wall*] Sorcer, I command you to put that lion to death instantly. It is guilty of high treason. Your conduct is most disgrace [*the lion charges at him up the stairs*] help! [*He disappears. The lion roars against the box, looks over the partition at him, and roars. The Emperor darts out through the door*]. (II.37)

Animals are all the time suffering of manipulation laid on them by human. This manipulation is done on the ground that animals are ignorant and they do not have mind. In the act II of the play, there are several instances of human's anthropocentric attitude towards animals. Killing one animal in the name of taming the other cannot be an acceptable task in the environmental community. People in the palace of the emperor kill other small animals but tame the lion forcefully. Humans are facing towards their own destruction by killing animals and cutting plants to fulfill their vested interests. A so-called supreme mind is heading towards its own destruction. Shaw, thus, intends to project the same message of biocentric world view.

The lion eats what it has to eat, whereas, humans cross the boundary of their food chain showing their power over the animals. These derive much of their force

from their subversion of the boundaries of the human. The lion has many qualities that can be considered similar to human beings such as the way of sitting on the table and eating and drinking from dish and bowl. The lion checks at the sight of Androcles's face. Lion then smells him, arches his back; purrs like a motor car; finally rubs himself against Androcles, knocking him over. The lion limps on three paws, holding up the other as if it was wounded. From these evidences what we can infer is that the animals which can be easily domesticated are completely different from those animals which are difficult to tame. This also helps us to infer about the common sentiments found among different members of biotic community. Androcles says:

Androcles: Never be afraid of animals, you worship that the great secret. He will be as gentle as a lamb when he knows that you are his friend. Stand quite still, and smile; and let him smell you all over just to reassure him; for, you see, he's afraid of you; and he must examine you thoroughly. Oh don't talk like that, sir. He understands every word you say: all animals do; they take it from the tone of your voice [the lion growls and dashes his tail] I think he's going to spring at your worship. There! You see, your worship, a child might play with him now. See! [He tickles the lion's belly, the lion wriggles ecstatically].
Come at pet him. (II.46)

We need not to undermine the animals as irrational because of the fact that we thrive on this ecosphere due to the presence of the animals around us. However, the relationship between the emperor and the lion and the lion and Androcles becomes so strong that one cannot live without the other.

Among present theories of justice, Harvard philosopher John Rawls asserts, "the destruction of a species can be a great evil, no account is given of right conduct

in regard to animals and the rest of the nature. Killing an individual animal adds the destruction of a whole species" (60). Love, domination, friendliness, togetherness, community feeling, and manipulation run in an equal way throughout the play. All these themes have relationships of their own, and this can be viewed from an ecological perspective.

One of a very prominent issue raised in the play by G.B. Shaw is the notion of "live and let live" which is directly related to an idea of biocentric world view. The protagonist of the play Androcles and another important animal character, the lion, obey the same rule of "live and let live". If Androcles would not have intention to let the lion live, he would kill or capture it when it was lying on the ground being wounded in the dark forest, or rather he would just leave it to suffer and die. But, instead Androcles by respecting the life of animal and by understanding the feelings, pains and suffering of animal, goes near the lion and helps to pacify the excessive pain of wound. Androcles's help to the wounded lion has been presented in the play in this way:

The lion utters a long snoring sigh. Androcles sees the lion, and recoils fainting into the arms of Megaera. The lion is heard groaning heavily in the jungle. The lion rises with a great groan and limps it piteously before Androcles. He pulls gingerly at the thorn, with an angry yell of pain. Well, one more little pull and it will be all over. Just one little, little pulls; and then will live happily ever after. He gives the thorn another pull. The thorn comes out. The lion yells with pain, shakes his paw wildly and embraces Androcles. (I.4)

The lion on the other hand let live to Androcles by following the environmental ethical norms. As the emperor gathered the mass of people to watch the interesting

fight between the lion and the man and forced Androcles to go to arena to fight with the lion, the lion looked at his face, smelt him, and finally loved him instead of involving in the fierce fight. The lion, if he intended to take part in the fight with Androcles, he would surely kill Androcles and tear him up. But the lion does not do so as he remembers Androcles the same man, help him in the jungle while he was once fallen down on the ground being wounded by the huge thorn. Here, the lion too, respects the organism of biotic community. To reveal this fact Shaw expresses;

The lion bounds into the arena. He rushes round frisking in his freedom. He sees Androcles. He stops, rises stiffly by strengthening his legs; stretches out his nose forward and his tail in a horizontal line behind, like a pointer, and utters an appalling roar. Androcles crouches and hides his face in his hands. The lion checks at his sight of Androcles's face; smells him; arches his back. They embrace rapturously, finally waltz round the arena amid a sudden burst of deafening, and out through the passage, the Emperor watching them in breathless astonishment until they disappear. (III.91)

Shaw seeks two view points of the animals regarding their relationships with humans in terms of awareness. The lion loves Androcles but dislikes the Emperor. Therefore, the realization of proximity between the lion and the emperor is somehow less than that of the relation between the lion and Androcles. The two major character Androcles and the emperor are human characters whereas the lion is animal character. One may, here, surprise observing the relation of the lion with Androcles and the emperor, why the lion is befriended with Androcles and hostile with the emperor. This may be because of the fact, that Androcles respects the freedom of animals and thereby lets to live in their own way whereas the emperor attempts to

tame the lion restricting its freedom and rights to live. A lion is usually wild by nature as expressed in the following lines:

The lion utters a fearful roar. The emperor dashes madly up the steps, across the landing, and down again on the other side with the lion in hot pursuit. Androcles rushes after the lion; overtakes him as he is descending; and throws himself on his back, trying to use his toes as a brake. Before he can stop him the lion gets hold. The lion gathers himself for a spring, swishing his tail to and fro through the dust in an ecstasy of anticipation. Yes, we are warned that he has the strength of an elephant and the temper of a mad bull. (III.86)

Many people in the emperor's palace admire the lion. The admiration of such animal relies on the principle of respect for the biotic community; which is itself a product of unity in diversity. Only the Emperor is a person who lacks himself ability for understanding the inherent worth of natural things. Throughout the play, G.B. Shaw frequently emphasizes on the freedom of animals. The following lines uttered by the character named Androcles too emphasize the essence of freedom:

Androcles: [*Distressed*] Not if they are in cages. They should not be kept in cages. They must be all let out. [*The lion starts up and faces them*] I thank your worship. Thank you all, ladies and gentlemen. Come, Tommy, whilst we stand together; no cage for you; no slavery for me. [*He goes out with the lion everybody crowding away to give him as wide a berth as possibility*]. (III.92)

Consciously or unconsciously; in a way, by being of others or making others as food all of them are interrelated for the purpose of survival. However Androcles, the emperor, Megaera and the lion are major characters, Shaw provides little role to other

small animals like bird, horse, sheep, etc. Psychologically, Shaw wants to unite all the animals with the human beings and ultimately to the environmental community which gives the sense of biotic world view. From this, what becomes clear is that Shaw is conscious of goodness of biotic community. For the goodness of biotic community, animals are the essential units. To support the idea of biocentric world view, all the units of ecosystem have to perform their own functions so that there remains a harmonious relation of balance among the essential units of the world's organism. The harmonious and balanced relationship between man and animal can be seen by the following lines:

The lion limps on three paws, holding up the other as if it was wounded. A flash of recognition lights up the face of Androcles. He flaps his hand as if it had a thorn in it, and pretends to pull the thorn out to hurt himself. The lion nods repeatedly. Androcles holds out his hands to the lion, who gives him both paws, which he shakes with enthusiasm. Androcles takes the end of his tail in one paw, places that tightly round his own waist resting it on his hip. Androcles takes the other paw in his hand, stretches out his arm, and the two waltz rapturously round and round. (II.45)

Loving animals brings a long-term happiness whereas killing them for immediate benefit may bring a vast disaster. As the emperor remorselessly attempts to utilize the strength of lion for his own pleasure and benefit his kingdom has been challenged even by the animals. As depicted at the last act of the play, emperor runs away cowardly when the lion angrily attempts to attack him. Suggesting this, Shaw warns us not to kill animals. Shaw's dream of a green world where creatures of the different kinds live together involving in different activities of life is profound from an

ecological perspective. The happiness of the lion is the happiness of Androcles; and the lion gets happiness in the human world as the people admire and lay him although he may be a wild creature. An acute sense of help from animal's side may make us surprise, but Shaw's intention behind creating this scene is to reflect ecological awareness. He wants to make us conscious of the fact that all the organisms of the natural world are members of a same family; so, directly or indirectly, every organism of the natural world is the member of the biotic community. For Shaw, the green field, forest and wild creatures signify a sound environment where life becomes easy for each and every creature, suggesting this he expresses:

Androcles: [*Sitting down sadly on the ground with his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands*] we all have to think of ourselves by the name of the animals. We have no right to. I have had such friends in dogs. A pet snake is the best of company. I was nursed on goat's milk. Is it fair to them to call the like of him a dog or a snake or a goat?

Ferrovius: I only meant that they have no souls.

Androcles: [*Anxiously protesting*] oh, believe me. They have, just the same as you and me. I really don't think I could consent to go to heaven if I thought there were to be no animals there. (II.24)

Almost all of the evidences that are mentioned above to clarify Shaw's idea towards biocentric world view thrive on the principle that human beings live in interdependence and reciprocity with other living things – the interdependence between and among emperor, Androcles, the lion, the horse, Megaera and so on. The description of the greenery side of environment itself brings an environmental awareness. Shaw, in the play, does not describe only the animals, forests, meadow,

and other small creatures, but also delivers the message of environmental awareness showing the interrelation among nature, creatures and humans.

Shaw even signals a hope to replace anthropocentrism by bio centric world view. Just as the whole organisms of the world live together in the ecosphere depending on the other organisms, so as Androcles, Emperor, the lion, Megaera, and other animals and birds live together happily. Thus, Shaw hopes to bring a balanced relation between human and animal for the long sustenance of biotic world.

IV. Conclusion

Creating a biotic community comprised of human beings, animals and their surrounding, G.B. Shaw in his play *Androcles and the Lion*, prominently raises the issue of environmental ethical awareness. The relationship among the animals, humans and other creatures has been shown in such a way that no humans can live without the animals and vice-versa. Moreover, the description of the places such as the jungle, the brooks, the den, the hut etc. evoke the sense of ecological consciousness. The role of Androcles, the emperor, Megaera and the lion is dominant by which the author depicts their different activities of life signifying them as members of the same biotic community whose life is interdependent to each other.

G.B. Shaw is conscious of the fact that human being has created a relation of imbalance in which animals are considered as creature of insolence. The play begins from the description of the encounter between hurt lion and ordinary Roman poor man Androcles, in the dark forest. Androcles who is accustomed to love animals, exposes his love to the injured lion, caressing, touching and finally pulling out a huge thorn that he has got on his forepaw. Androcles, once befriended with lion later is released from the prison of the Roman Emperor with the help of lion and the lion too is taken away from the cage of emperor's palace. Thus, both the characters Androcles and the lion who is one of human and another animal respect the biocentric world by helping with each other.

Moreover, the emperor, Megaera, hunters and other human characters treat animals as an object to satisfy their need by neglecting animal's inherent worth. Finally, they meet great disaster on their life due to their irresponsibility to the environmental community. Utilitarian view of environment causes the degradation of

nature. Therefore Shaw, emphasizes on the environmental ethical aspects for bringing well-being of humans as well as animals and ultimately of natural world.

All of the organisms of the biotic world have their own role to play resting on the network of interdependence. It is only the human's effort that can bring peace and harmony in world's organisms. Shaw intends to assert that it is wrong to abuse and exploit the environmental resources and every humans will realize this truth sooner or later just as the emperor, Megaera and other characters realized finally in the play.

Shaw prominently raise the issue of human animal relationship and thus, tries to deliver the message to the whole human civilization: treat your fellow animals with ethical touch and respect them for their sensation of being. In other words, love for nature and animals should come out of human heart; one should feel the suffering of animals. Shaw's portrayal of Androcles as an animal lover and the lion as a conscious member of environmental community, tries to show that present human beings should learn something from these two characters. Shaw raises the questions and redefines so many issues related with the human beings' attitude toward environment and their treatment towards animals but above all he tries to answer the century-long question of whether animals do have rational faculty or not and whether they possess inherent worth or not. The central character Androcles speaks for the respect for nature and for animals. He attends himself in service of sick, dying and dead animals.

Shaw intends to express the message that human beings should treat animals with love and compassion because they can feel the pain and pleasure like us and they also do have sensation of being. Androcles boldly speaks on Emperor's mistreatment of animals and his indifference towards environmental ethics. Almost all the characters in the play have personal attachment with the animals and their environment and what Shaw urges through their behaviour is to develop a pure and

ethical relationship with our fellow animal beings along with environmental ethical awareness. Even, one of a central character of the play, the emperor, who dislikes animals and always wants to utilize them in his own benefit and never utters a word on animal's issues, finally finds himself in the service of the animals.

But it is not only the relationship between animals and human being that is highlighted in the play *Antrocles and the Lion*, the most significant aspect that Shaw attempts to focus is to make everyone aware on environmental ethic. The play presents man and animal characters such as Androcles, the emperor, Megaera, the lion, the horse, the bird etc through which the dramatist projects the biocentric worldview.

Thus, the play "Androcles and the lion" depicts the constituents of the environment such as man, animal, birds, green vegetation, land, water, soil etc to which Shaw binds them in an ethical response. From the very beginning to the end, the play, emphasizes on the environmental ethical awareness for which it attempts to urge the rest of the non human world to think for its inseparability to human world.

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