

Reason's Assault upon Nature in Faulkner's *The Bear*

This study examines William Faulkner's *The Bear* from the eco critical perspectives with special attention to the relationship between nature and culture. Faulkner presents the indigenous peoples engaged in the wild purpose and the reasons assault upon nature. The title *The Bear* is itself associated with the nature and the wilderness of human. *The Bear* has been entitled in the name of the major character Isaac Mc Caslin who remains a central figure throughout the novel and the Old Ben 'The Bear' a ferocious, gigantic beast who becomes legendary as an immortal force in the novel. Isaac Mc Caslin taught to hunt as a young boy by Sam Fathers, he remains deeply committed to the wilderness and to hunting. Isaac hunting evolves into the act of discovering the synthesis between an individual's self-identity and immutable truth of the inter-connected oneness of nature. It is the essence of freedom. Furthermore, Old Ben and Sam Fathers are ultimately appear to be the same characters, as they both evoke within the respect, difference and filial love of nature.

To analyze *The Bear* in the shade of eco critical perspective, I have used some of the concepts of eco-critics such as: John Hannigan, Scott Russell Sanders, Val Plumwood, and Paul W. Taylor. The major arguments of all these theorists are incorporated to analyze how reason's assault upon nature that have affected non-human world. These theorists expose the disturbance, damage and destruction caused by human beings. Such suppression and domination lead to ecological crisis. In this research work, by applying the theoretical insights of the eco-critics, I contend and exposes impacts of anthropogenic activities to wild animals and other beings of the non-human world. Human beings have used animals and other as commodity to satisfy their materialistic interests.

William Faulkner's *The Bear*, under scrutiny is analyzed to explore the

reason's assault upon nature by using the eco-critical insights. Primarily, the entire text is about the attitude toward the land. The major events of the novel revolve around the Native American culture that the land belongs to no one but instead exists for communal use. Some scholars have highlighted that the ecological crisis is a crisis of failing understanding the intrinsic values of which creates ecological nature crisis. Though the text can open up with several issues for wider and intensive debates, it has largely occupied the notion of eco-critical perspectives to look it differently.

The Bear emerged as a dissenting voice in the clamor cheering the contemporary American Development. *The Bear* tells the story of a young member of an affluent family who moves between his homes in Yoknapatawpha country and the wilderness surrounding the Tallahatchie River, where he and several others hunt Old Ben, one of the last grizzly bears in the American South East. Literally, the novel unfolds the story and it is Faulkner's most intense, focused and symbolic exploration of the relationship of human and nature. Throughout the novel we can find the relationship between the human and the non-human world. In one hand, it exposes the exploitation of nature and overpowering of human to the natural world. On the other hand, the characters are presented as victims and sufferers. Here, men and nature are the two characters in the novel but both are presented as a different categories: one as suppressor and the other as suppressed. Men are presented as a suppressor group who put their minds to work on the single purpose of hunting, and are in some way representative of man's drive to control nature. In the same way, men's domination over the non-human creature through the act of some male characters- Boon Hogganbeck, Major De Spain, General Compson, Sam Fathers and Isaac Mc Caslin. Sam Fathers was an expert hunter who taught Isaac hunting and the

ways of forest at the age of ten. Old Ben and Sam Fathers are the same characters, as they both evoke the respect, difference and filial love for nature. But, Boon Hogganbeck was the different character who was an alcoholic hunter and trained the dog lion and eventually kills the bear Old Ben with his hunting knife. They hunted to obtain food and enjoy strictly masculine company since woman as a rule were excluded. Dogs were used to kill a bear. So instead of using dogs to kill bear, hunters would shoot their quarry once it was cornered, using rifles, shot guns, revolvers and sometimes a knife, the way the character Boon does on the fictional Old Ben.

The term “eco-criticism” was the interdisciplinary study of the literature and the ecology. According to the Oxford Advance Learner’s Dictionary, “Ecology is a branch of biology that deals with the relations of organisms to one another and to their physical surroundings” (485). This definition hints the ecological concerns of nature. It emphasizes on the relationship between human and non-human creatures. Their consequences is to balance the environment for human life and sustainable existence through harmonious relationship between human and non- human worlds.

Eco-criticism studies the relationship between human and non-human life as represented in the literary texts. It is the ecological approach on the study of relationship between literature and environment. It studies the reciprocal relationship between the human beings and land. Eco-critics view that eco-criticism is fundamentally an ethical criticism that investigates and helps to make possible connection among self, nature and text. Hence, it is the response of the need of humanistic understanding of our relationship with the natural world. Chery Glotfelty defines eco-criticism as “the study of relationship between literature and the physical environment, taking an earthcentred approach to literary studies” (xvii). Similarly, William Rueckert defines eco-criticism as “the application of ecology and ecological

concepts to the study of literature” (qtd. in Glotfelty xx). Since, eco-criticism has interdisciplinary nature. It invites several perspectives into its term in order to understand the co-existence of living and non- living creatures. So it is not just a means of analyzing nature in literature, it implies a move towards a bio-centric world view, and extension of ethics, a broadening human conception, global community to include non-human life form and the physical environment. Eco- criticism rests on the principle of “earthcentredness”. It rejects the human -centered along with its establishment of bio- centric vision of the world. Contrary to anthropocentric world view, bio- centric world view shows the horizontal relation of all entities of the world. Bio- centric view focuses on the nature having its own right to be protected and create harmonious relation among all the components. In biocentrism all organism are independent to each other. It considers humans as members of the earth’s community where, there is complex web of interconnected elements in the universe. It views the need of human beings to exist in harmony with nature. Earth is source of all lives and it is the essence of our existence. So, we need to concentrate on the environmental issues. We should pay the due respect to our natural world in which we exist. This view develops the ideas of environmental ethics.

In this way, eco-criticism provides us with an analytical tool to prove the logic of ecological interconnectedness in the literary text. Among the theorists John Hannigan, in his essay, "Environmental Discourse" agrees on the eco-criticism by mentioning, three defining features of Arcadian discourse: externality, iconisation and complementary. “Externality means the Arcadian nature is constructed as something external to human society, or least removed from everyday life in the city” (108). Hannigan claims that nature is constructed by the authorization of human beings. Similarly, “Iconisation suggests that the image of nature in the Arcadian tradition is

modelled on stereotyped visual images that become embedded in cultural memory” (108). He further states that nature is represented as stereotypical in the memoir of the humans. And, finally “complementary stands in the counterpoint to the urban industrial society and to the social and all of the ills attached to it” (108). By this definition, Hannigan admits that the diversity of life on earth must be maintained because it has an intrinsic value. All the discourses are analyzed to make a balance between the lives of human and non-human creatures. He further explains that different trends of eco-criticism and writes nature as “back to nature movement, thirst for wilderness, remoteness and celebrating pure pleasures in the era of the plastic garden, the steel city, the chemical countryside” (108). Hannigan insists that due to human rational behavior nature has to face difficulties to survive. Natural world are damaged because of the human superiority. Also, we have to pay due respect to the natural world in which we exist. This view develops the idea of environmental ethics. Environmental ethics talk about the appropriate human moral attitude towards nature and natural ecosystems. In this respect, in "The Ethics of Respect for Nature", Paul W. Taylor explains the meaning of the inherent worth of all living organism. So environmental ethics goes against anthropocentrism in favor of biocentrism. Biocentrism rests on the belief that the natural world has intrinsic value and the idea of intrinsic value promotes human respect and moral obligation towards nature. Similarly, eco-criticism develops the concepts of “Land Ethics” that also attempts to extend the moral concern towards the natural world. Land ethics is based on the belief that all living creatures have a common origin and history on the earth and they are ecologically connected and independent. The land ethics takes the earth as biotic community. Aldo Leopold in “The Land Ethics” opines, “the land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to includes soil, water, plants and animals

or collectively the land” (39). The land is community for both the living and non-living components and it includes soil, water, plants and animals along with human beings. These all are the interdependent components of the community.

In *Speaking a Word for Nature* a literary critic, Scott Russell Sanders concerns with the place, landscape and home have led logically to a passionate commitment to nature writing. He has been deeply affected by his geographical and environmental surroundings. He describes himself as a passionate product of his environment. He is represented as a famous environmentalist. According to him, “on the surface they were concerned with the human world, with towns and ships and cultivated land, with households and the spiderwebs of families; but underneath they were haunted by nature” (101). In this statements he admits that nature is destroyed by the different technologies and rational behavior of human beings. Additionally, he affirms that “Although the American scenery is often so fine, we feel the want of association such as cling to scenes in the old world. Simple nature is not quite sufficient. We want human interest, incident and action to render the effect of landscape complete” (103). Through this statement we can see that how nature is being exploit by the human beings. Human has a great role to destroy the natural world. Human’s unnatural behavior has an effect on the non-human world. His emphasis on the perspectives of the assaulting upon the nature through the different media. At the same time, he dismantle the line by showing the relationship of wilderness of nature and human.

Agreeing the theory of eco-criticism, Val Plumwood an Australian philosopher and ecofeminist in “The Blindspots of Centrism and Human self-enclosure” highlights the human centeredness. She quotes that “Dominant policies of ecological denial add to the evidence that the ecological crisis is not just or even

primarily a crisis of technology, but is rather a crisis of rationality, morality and imagination” (98). In her understanding human centeredness promotes a various demanding forms which exploit the nature. She further mention that, “Nature as a resource, as labor, and as externality is to subordinated other in systems of oligarchical economic centrism, where there is radical economic inequality and hyper-separation between classes, those of ‘persons’ who are owners and those who are counted as property or as externality” (110). The statement forecasts the domination upon nature by the superior one who can rule over the inferior one. It is stated that people who are in the power they can exploit the nature as a wastes resource. Also, nature has been categorized by the so called high class people living in the society. Similarly, human beings also treat nature as other and instrument. Nature is represented wild, chaos, savage, irrational and threat to human settlement.

While reviewing on the major theory of eco-criticism, we find many research works. They have come up with the many innovative ideas to deal with the concept of eco-criticism. Some of the researchers who have carried out their research on eco-criticism are: Katrina Dodson, Matthew Wynn Sivils, Kris Fresonke and Matt Low. They have treated the term ‘eco-criticism’ from the eco-critical perspectives. However, they all have agreed to the notion of interconnection between human and non- human world. According to Katrina Dodson, eco- criticism has defined its critical objects as texts that merge the literary and environmental, and it as one the environmental ethics and activism. The researcher in her journal, *Eco- Critical Entanglements* affirm the conception of eco-criticism as:

The growing attunement to a newly foregrounded ecological context has registered in the humanities through increasingly interdisciplinary approaches to understanding how something “nature” is conceived or acted upon. These

lines of inquiry are not new, but they have taken on a more recent ecological emphasis and disciplinary consolidation in scholarship through the still evolving field of eco-criticism. (6)

It acknowledges that the term eco-criticism has not been emerged before in the universe, since, then there has not been used the term 'nature' widely as before but of some disciplinary approaches people are conceived the importance of nature and the eco-criticism. This argument claims that in ecological context, there has some approaches in the field of humanity to understand the nature is conceived or acted upon. As a whole, the major argument of the researchers is that there is the hands of people for the ecological disasters. Moreover, due to the destructive activities of people environment is destroyed and lot of atmospheric disturbance hang over all around the world. Also, there cause an economic collapse, pervasive terror, hysterical politics, ecological disaster.

Emphasizing on the contention of a researcher, Matthew Wynn Sivils in a journal *Faulkner's Ecological Disturbances*, writes that the concept of eco-criticism as the interconnection between the nature and culture. The researcher has studied eco-criticism connecting it to the entire ecological sphere and human species. Sivils argues, "In ecological terms, such trauma falls under the category of disturbance, and those disturbances illustrate a strong connection between environmental abuse and human suffering especially in terms of radical oppression" (489).

These lines illustrate that because of the humans the nature falls under the destruction. Human is assaulting nature and also shows a strong connection between human and non- human world. Similarly, Sivils also claims that,

Ecological disturbances largely involve concepts that not only speak to environmental concerns but also work within the realm of human

communities. It is a responsible to connect a science that so elegantly overlaps with human communities with Faulkner's writing, which often addresses the complexities of human interaction within a disturbed natural world (489).

The extract basically hints the concept of eco-criticism deals with the realities of ecology and human beings. Faulkner's south represents a collection of disturbed ecosystems and studying his fiction within framework of ecological disturbance, reveals the way that his writing comments on the complicated interactions between humans and environment of the South. The ecological disturbance is caused by the human beings. Human communities create the environmental abuse and human suffering upon natural world. Indeed, he admits that human survival and the existence completely depend on healthy and balanced environment.

Kris Fresonke, a scholar in an article, "Is Nature Necessary?" views on the eco-criticism in terms of eco-critical perspectives. The researcher blends the ideas upon ecological ethics. The major argument of Fresonke is that eco-criticism is a study of ecology and it is a part of nature. Fresonke defines, "I mean 'nature' primarily as American landscape and Wilderness" (130-134). He also claims that natural disasters are also the product of human assault upon nature. .

In "The Bear" Faulkner's (Re) - envisions for a deeper ecology" Matt Low, a researcher who approaches the notion of ecological degradation because of not following the basic principles of deep ecology. Matt Low, he states that,

The celebration and mystery of the wilderness, the lament for its decline, and the place of indigenous people in a modernizing and industrializing society and natural world, and the role white men have played in the settlement and commodification. (59-60)

The extract seriously draws attention towards the forms of domination that human

impose to non- human. The researcher indicates that human used nature as an instrument to suppress the non- human world. In the line, “the intersections of nature and culture in ‘The Bear’” (55). In Matt Low view, there is an interconnection between the nature and culture. Nature is always suppressed by the culture on the basis of the reasoning quality.

Presenting some glimpse upon the theoretical insights of eco-criticism, which juxtaposes the human and nature, we come across many scholarly writings that interlink human and nature in different dimensions. A few researchers who have studied and researched on inter- connection between the human and non- human world, Barton, Jason J. and Ryder W. Miller. These researchers have uncovered the inter relations of human and culture in terms of their oppression exchange of attributes and origin of creatures.

Barton, Jason J, a critic in a critical text, *I will have to look at him: An eco-critique of Faulkner’s The Bear*. He generalizes nature and human as single entity by attributing there qualities to each other. He states that, “The bear once held sacred properties linking it to a greater metaphysical whole beyond human observation. These powers have long been the envy of humans from diverse cultures in what we now know as North America” (1-2). This statement hints that, the quality of nature has a different value. And, Jason adds that both human and culture have a diverse properties and only the human who have power to control over nature. Similarly, Jason declares that “. . .As humans moved from hunting and gathering, whence they lived largely at the mercy of the elements, to agriculture, we began to bring natural processes under human control” (2). The extract signifies that human techniques to control the nature. Human’s radical exclusion brings the assault upon nature. Jason, in his writing focuses on the idea that valorizes nature and criticize human rational

behavior in reciprocity of shared qualities.

In a research work, *Faulkner and the Ecology of the South*, Ryder W. Miller views, “Faulkner’s literary depiction of a nature, a depiction that includes people in its ecological web. Ecology here is not solely about natural sciences or preservation, but is more broadly defined to include civilization and its denizens” (2). The statement of Ryder W. Miller claims that the way of treating nature as human communities. They are inter-connected with each other. Human civilization depends upon the natural process. “Nature was sometimes part of his exploration of place and one can find passages in which characters interact with and appreciate the natural world” (2). An individual physical shape, size, color as well as internal characteristics are shaped by the place where he/ she was born and brought up.

Reviewing the research on *The Bear* we have some significant pieces of research that have revealed the multiple ideas of the novel. The novel has a large number of critics who have critically examined and analyzed from the different perspectives. By going through these various issues and themes, I come to realize that the novel *The Bear* has multiple features to interpret it from multiple angles of understandings. The aforementioned critics and scholars have interpreted and analyzed the novel through the spectacles of American wilderness, ecological degradation, environmental ethics, aesthetics and eco-system. Therefore, my stand point in this research is to study and analyze *The Bear* as an eco- critical text.

Analyzing *The Bear* with the lens of eco-poetic reading, I have presented some textual evidences that are analyzed with the theoretical insights developed by John Hannigan, Scott Russel Sanders, Val Plumwood and Pawl W. Taylor. Additionally, the ideas of some other researchers like, Barton, Jason and Ryder W. Miller are also taken as references to support my claims.

Taking John Hannigan's theoretical insights into consideration, we have some textual evidence that clarify Hannigan's claims. Hannigan insists that ". . . counterpoint to the urban industrial society and to the social and all of the environmental ills attached to it" (110). He simply draws, the land belongs to no one but instead exists for communal use. Due to the stereotypical representation it affected the non-human world. In the line, "the wilderness, like the forests, was once a great hindrance to our civilization; now, it must be maintained at great expense because society cannot do without it" (41). He suggests to protect the nature because without it no human being can survive. Therefore, there is the interrelationship between the human and non-human world.

Similarly, in *The Bear* it incorporates the wilderness of nature and human. This incorporation is represented in the following lines:

. . . the old bear absolved of mortality and himself who shared little of it. Because he recognized now what he had smelled in the huddled dogs and tested in his own saliva, recognizes the existence of love and passion and experience which is his heritage but not yet his patrimony, from entering by chance the presence or perhaps even merely the bedroom of a woman who has loved and been loved by many men. (262)

In these lines, Faulkner's the bear is alive in the sense of morality. Here, the bear is represented as a symbol of wilderness. He also informs that the life of bear is not for one man but for all the men needs. He hints that the bear rearing here and there of the fear and search of love and existence.

By, high lightening the relation between human and non-human worlds. The writer mentions, "So I will have to see him. . . I will have to look at him. . . (262). Though, the statement is wholesome understanding of nature's inter-link, Isaac the

major character who seems to be the lover of nature have the strong bond to the nature.

Furthermore, Hannigan's views in terms of eco-criticism perceives the techniques that the wild nature was transformed from a nuisance to a sacred value. But the androcentric world view regard nature and women as other and treat them as instrument to reach their ends. Such patriarchal domination is depicted in *The Bear* as follows:

As Europe and America became increasingly urbanized at the close of the nineteenth century, views towards nature began and to undergo a major transformation. In particular, the concept of 'wild nature' as a threat to human settlement. (109)

The extract focuses on the increasement of radical exclusion. In past era, the nature was regarded a threat to the human civilization and, nature was threatened by the human beings. Human beings feel of being superior to animals and other beings of nature on the basis of his unique quality of reasoning rationality.

In the lines, "I was in twenty- feet of him and I missed five times....but we have drawn blood" (277). Boon tries to kill Old Ben five times but he ran away. They play with the blood of creatures monstrously. In the same way, he did not feel ashamed of killing a nature rather he feels upset because he could not become successful to kill The Old Ben. It shows how human physically harm towards the nature. Killing the non- human creature has shown the immoral attitude towards nature. Life is degraded when non- human world is taken as instrument to satisfy human desires. The headlong thirst for attaining materialistic happiness by suppressing and dominating animals and plants is not sustainable.

While, describing the nature the writer has attributed as "It wasn't even a bear.

It was just a deer” (257). Faulkner has exposed the fact that human beings have distorted the natural beauty. He recognize the Bear as a symbol of wilderness. Isaac is the character in the novel, *The Bear* who has bio-centric world view. He attempts to save the wild animals so as to maintain ecological balance. By highlighting, the relation of nature with entire human species the poet mentions, “It was an animal of course, a big one, and the colt was dead now, wherever it was. They all knew that. It’s a panther. General Compson said at once” (268). Though the statement is wholesome understanding of human and non- human world. Human’s rational behavior destroy the natural world. They kill a bird to fulfill the desire of superiority. It shows a reason’s assault upon nature.

Aligning to the theoretical insight of Scott Russell Sanders on eco-criticism, with the theory of wilderness of man and nature, we can supply some of the textual instances that Russell’s standpoint on eco-criticism. Russell believes that he himself as a passionate product of his environment. He defends that nature is a part of the human life as, “...the landscapes lived, and lived as the world of gods, unsullied and concerned....man did not exist for it” (101). Russell explains that nature is gifted by the God. No one has the right to destroy the landscape of earth. Human beings have the greater role to assault upon nature.

The writer treats the land,

. . . . and no hope for the land anywhere so long as Ikkemotubbe and Ikkemotubbe’s descendants held it in unbroken succession. May behe saw that only by voiding the land for a time of Ikkemotubbe’s blood and substituting for it another blood, could he accomplish his purpose (301)

Faulkner’s attitude towards the wilderness for the nature. He illustrates the fact that there are several functions the wilderness represented in the novel. A human beings

exists entirely in the order of nature and selling a land, there is destruction of ecological balance because life is degraded when land is traded. Moreover, Isaac saw the land which has already been cursed by the blood of innocence which should get justice. The writer represents 'Old Ben' 'The Bear' of it as nature. He describes:

an eagerness, passive; an abjectness, a sense of his own fragility and impotence against the timeless woods, yet without doubt or dread; a flavor like brass in the sudden run of saliva in his mouth, a hardsharp constriction either in his brain or his stomach, he could not tell which and it did not matter; he knew only that for the first time he realized that the bear. (259)

He portrays 'the bear' as a symbol of power and inscrutability of nature. He is immortal, nearly invulnerable, and capable of wreaking havoc on human settlements and establishments. He serves as a metaphor for the wilderness invaded by the people who must bring wildness under control as they seek to prepare the land for agriculture, roads, railroads and other elements of the burgeoning economic infrastructures.

On the other hand, Faulkner describes the nature of the character as stereotypical representation in the novel *The Bear*;

Dog the devil, Major de Spain said. I'd rather have Old Ben himself in my pack than that brute. Shoot him. No, Sam said. You'll never tame him. How do you ever expect to make an animal like that afraid of you? (271)

In these lines, the poet describes the rational behavior of Major de Spain who tries to kill the Old Ben. Here, humans becomes superior to kill the animals. Human uses the otherization to suppress the non- human world. Human physically attacking the natural world to show that they are in power. In the same way, nature is destroyed by the humans reasoning.

In it, the characters pursue and ultimately lament the death of one of the last grizzly bears in the American Southeast. His death is an ominous indicator that something has been lost in industrializing America. With these developments the sanctity of the natural world diminished and wilderness was seen as an unpredictable chaos, an adversary to human wellbeing.

Unlike Hannigan and Russell, an eco-critic Val Plumwood views upon nature and human from the perspectives of critiquing anthropocentrism. She agrees that nature and woman are similar in terms of bearing domination and suffering from human civilization. She elucidates that,

nature as a labor, and as externality is also the subordinated other in systems of oligarchical economic centrism, where there is radical economic inequality and hyper-separation between classes, those of ‘persons’ who are owners and those who are counted as property or as externality. (110)

Plumwood has distorted that the nature has classified by the groups of people living in the high class society. Human who do have power they rule over the non-human creatures. Also, they create an inequality upon nature.

She adds that “But, in the age of ecological limits we have now reached, it is highly dysfunctional and the insensitivity to the other it promotes is a grave threat to our own as well as to other species survival” (122). The statement of Plumwood, marks that the domination of the human civilization, nature is otherized. Humans are exploiting nature. Supporting this claim, Faulkner writes “. . . ill effects fall on the ‘nature’ side of monological and centric relationship. . .” (98). The line describes nature is falling ill because of the exploitation of the people who assume to be the owners and natural resources are counted as property.

Destruction of nature is projected in the novel, by praising the power of

masculinity as the creator of the earth. It stated that “doe’s throat torn out, and the beast had run down the helpless fawn and killed it too. . .” (268). The writer has elevated the value and position of male and power and devalued the natures and objectify the earth as a source of use. In the line, “We’ll back- track her tomorrow and see” (269). It shows that all the creatures and plants are under the control of Major De Spain. It is an instance of the domination of nature by the men. The men, who puts their minds to work on the single purpose of hunting ‘The Bear- the Old Ben’ are in some way representative of human drive to control nature. Furthermore, Plumwood elucidates that the human domination tendency on nature and their sufferings as, “Human centered culture springs from as impoverished and inadequate conceptual and rational world; it is helping to create in its image a real world that is not only ecologically, biologically and aesthetically damaged, but it is also rationally damaged” (100). She argues that human centered framework have been functional for the dominance of the natural world. Human’s rational behavior had affected the ecological balance aesthetically and biologically. The world is full of human rational activities. Human domination over non- human creatures is projected in the novel by praising the power of masculinity as the creator of the earth. It stated that;

But I missed him, Boon said, “I missed him five times. With Lion looking right at me. ” “Never mind,” Major de Spain said. “It was a damned fine race. And we drew blood. Next year we’ll let General Compson or Walter ride Katie, and we’ll get him. (277)

Here, Faulkner presents the wilderness of nature. He further claims that Major de Spain are the people from the high class society, they have the power to rule over the non-human creatures. Nature is otherized by the so called culture. So, there is an interconnection between the human and non- human world.

As Plumwood advocates, an eco-critic, Paul W. Taylor upon the balance of nature and culture argues:

The balance of nature is not itself a moral norm, however important may be the role it plays in our general outlook on the natural world that underlies the attitude of respect for nature...it is the good (well-being, welfare) of individual organisms, considered as the entities having inherent worth, that determines our moral relations with the Earth's wild communities of life. (74)

Natural world has its own intrinsic value. All the organisms have 'inherent worth' within themselves and human being should not judge in terms of their needs and interests. Thus, the idea of intrinsic value promotes human respect and moral obligation towards nature. The lines of *The Bear*, ". . . the tree, the other axle-grease tin nailed to the trunk, but weathered, rusted, alien too yet healed already into the wilderness concordant generality, raising no tuneless note, and empty. . ." (350).

Clarify the fact that there is nothing useless in nature. Everything, has autonomously located traits that help to maintain harmonious relation among beings and things of the ecosphere. Furthermore, Paul W Taylor on "The Ethics of Respect for Nature" says:

When we take this views we come to understand other living beings, their environmental conditions, and their ecological relationship in such a way to wake in us a deep sense of our kingship with them as fellow members of the Earth's community of life. Humans and non-humans alike are viewed together as integral part of one unified whole in which all living beings are functionally interrelated. (83)

So, understanding of intricate relationship between the creatures of the biosphere develops the affinity in relation and helps to maintain the balance among them. In the

novel there is not much difference among people on the matter of perception and perspectives towards their dependency on nature. From Isaac, Sam Fathers and The Old Ben all are in common part of the biotic community. They function on this very nature and they have their basic dependency on land and nature in the same way. So, their attitude towards land and feelings for it same. People are shaped and behave according to their social norms and, guidance and their different culture prevalent in the society. They show their attitude towards their surroundings; land, animals and human in accordance to their culture, status and position in the society. They have the emotional attachment with everything land, animals and nature around them. Their culture and attitude do not harm nature. They do not separate themselves from the environment. Instead they consider the environment as community. All the plants and animals and other species along with human beings are the equal members of the natural community. Such a human relationship with nature does not harm anything rather it brings interconnection between the nature and culture as a whole.

After killing the Old Ben, Isaac remembers that there is no- nature, no humanity except there left a wilderness. The heart of the issue, the wrapped idea of the ownership of land, is revealed throughout the clash of human and non- human world in a wild chase that ends in blood and death. On one level Isaac share the Native American view that the land belongs to no one but instead exists for communal use. Isaac also sincerely, believes that the land itself cursed by slavery. Sam and The Old Ben are ultimately the same characters, as they both evoke within Isaac a respect, and filial love for nature. This shows the humans' attachment with natural world and people cannot live without nature.

Like many other eco-critics, Barton Jason and Ryder W. Miller view upon the relationship between the nature and culture. Both the writers accept that the nature

and culture are the two integral forces for the destruction of the human life. Both the scholars believes that human beings use their quality of reasoning/ rationality to destroy the non- human world. In this respect, in *I will have to look at him: An eco-critique of Faulkner*, Barton Jason explains,

In it, characters pursue and ultimately lament the death of one of the last grizzly bears in the American Southeast. In the Faulkner's story the eponymous character, Old Ben symbolizes wilderness itself, and his death is an ominous indicator that something has been lost in industrializing America.

(2)

It affirms the concept of instrumentalization to suppress the non- human world.

Barton believes that due to the loss of non- human creatures it really affect the lives of the people. Here, the superiority of human reasoning has destroyed the existence of the Bear, other animals, plants and land. The lines of, *The Bear*, "This is a rabbit shot: he thought and the gun snicked and he thought: the next is bird shot: and he didn't have to say pump it; he cried, 'Don't shoot! Don't shoot!' but was already too late too, the light dry vicious snick! Before he could speak and the bear turned and dropped to all fours and then was gone" (348). The lines describe non- human creatures are exploiting by the humans' rational behavior. This also shows the reason's assaulting upon nature. Faulkner writes, "you the direct male decendent of him who saw the opportunity and took it, brought the land, got the land no matter how, held to bequeath no matter how, out of the old grant, the first patent, when it was a wilderness of wild beasts and wilder men" (299). Isaac repudiates his inheritance after he discovers incest and miscegenation in the family history. The final part concerns Isaac's affinity for nature and his dismay at its gradual destruction. Isaac is the main character to love toward nature. He was the only one who don't harm the

nature and shows a respect to the land. Therefore, there is the interrelationship between the nature and culture.

Similarly, Ryder W. Miller's *Faulkner and the Ecology of the South*, views:

By ecology we do not exclude the natural world, though what we have in mind is more a kin to the idea of a human ecology, the interaction of humans with the environment- made and found, communities as well as habitats. (1)

Ryder believes that nature was sometimes part of his exploration of place and no one can find passages in which characters interact with and appreciate the natural world. We are the part of the nature and we don't have any right to exclude from the natural world. Nature is otherized by the human civilization and due to the rational activities human assault upon nature. One of the instances that depicts nature as commonality:

Old Ben had killed and the cribs he had rifled and the traps and deadfalls he had wrecked and the lead he had probably carried under his hide- Old Ben, the two-toed bear in land where bears with trap ruined feet had been called two-toe or three-toe or cripple foot for fifty years, only Old Ben was an extra bear and so had earned a name such as a human could have worn and not been sorry. (281)

The Old Ben was trapped and killed by human without felt any guilt and sorry. Boon has used the trap to kill the Bear and also use the different weapons like; rifle, knife, and gun. In the novel, *The Bear* shows the relationship between the nature and culture. Bear is killed by the rational behavior of the culture. Also, it represents the power of masculinity to destroy the existence of Bear, plants and land. Human use the unique trait of reasoning to suppress the non- human world. This shows that the human plays a vital role to destroy the existence of The Bear, plants and land in the novel.

Ryder also projected some of the claims upon the nature:

Humankind often plays a negative role in the ecology of Yoknapatawpha Country. They bring with them a selfish genetic divine, which has caused devastation to land community, civilization and psyche. (2)

This line hints, the human plays a negative role in the ecology. Human beings become selfish for to fulfill their desires and wants. Human superiority and the unique reasoning quality assault upon nature. The situation appears in the lines, “Don’t be afraid. He won’t hurt you” (281). It shows the wilderness of nature. Nature have also the destructive part to maintain the ecological balance between nature and culture.

Isaac become afraid of The Bear, a ferocious, gigantic beast who become legendary as an immortal force in the forest. Here, The Old Ben, Isaac and Sam Fathers possesses the filial love for nature. So, in the sense, nature is everything for Isaac which indirectly states that nature is truly and eternally bound with the culture. One of the instances that depicts human’s rational attitude towards nature is:

Boon was kneeling at the bear’s head. His left ear was shredded, his left coat sleeve was completely gone, his right boot has been ripped from knee to instep; the bright blood thinned in the thin rain down his leg and hand and arm and down the side of his face which was no longer wild but was quite calm.
(288)

This is the reference when Boon had killed the Bear with no regret rather he feels proud to show his power of masculinity in the nature. He played with the blood of the non- human creature. Humans rational behavior towards plants and animals are regarded not having the reasoning capability so they are in this world to serve human interests and desires. Similarly, the situation appears in the lines as, “It fell all of a piece, as a tree falls, so that all three of them, man, dog and bear, seemed to bounce

once” (288). Nature is destroyed as they scattered into the pieces. Also, human beings treat nature as an instrument. Isaac believed that he had tamed an order it for reason that human beings he held in bondage and in the power of life and death. It is mentioned in the lines as, “Did you kill him Boon? No! Boon said. No! , Tell the truth, Mc Caslin said” (297). Isaac Mc Caslin wants to know the truth about the death of the innocent creature. He shows the respect towards nature. He is only one character who has an affection to the land. But, Boon is a character who seems to be ruthless to the nature. It also shows that how human have a negative attitude to the non- human world. The moment that encapsulates human’s delight that nature enhances can be seen in the lines as:

You, the direct male descendent of him who saw the opportunity and took it, bought the land, took the land, got the land no matter how, out of the old grant, the first patent, when it was a wilderness of wild beasts and wilder men. (299)

By internalizing the description of the lines, we come to know that Isaac Mc Caslin the young hero of *The Bear*, remains a central figure throughout the novel as well. He believe the land was to hold and bequeath since the strong and ruthless man has a cynical foreknowledge of his own vanity and pride. Isaac repudiates his heritage after he discovers incest and miscegenation in the family history. Isaac’s hunting evolves into the act of discovering the synthesis between an individual’s self -identity and immutable truth of the interconnected oneness of nature. It is the essence of freedom. The relationship that Isaac develops with nature is one of the reciprocity, as Isaac learns that he is just as a part of the natural order of things as Old Ben is.

Thus, this research paper has made an attempt to analyze and interpret *The Bear* in terms of eco-critical perspectives; a theory that examines the relationship between the wilderness and human world. Theoretical parameters to analyze the primary texts have been developed from the insights propounded by the eco-critics

like; John Hannigan, Scott Russell Sanders, Val Plumwood and Paul W. Tylor.

Particularly, the focus has been given to Hannigan's 'Arcadian discourse'. His standpoint on the arcadian discourse has helped to uncover the human and non-human relationship. The novel exposes the harmful impacts of the so-called human reasoning ability or rationality that radically excluded nature and treat nature as instrument. Such human rationality makes humans to have stereotypical representation of non-human world as threat to human settlement. This led to ruthless deforestation and develop prosthetic world. Non-human world has been taken as dumb, inorganic entity. Human beings exploit nature as inexhaustible resource to satisfy their instant gratification. By, otherizing nature, humans place themselves in the center of the ecosphere and consume other being carelessly. Faulkner's *The Bear* exposes the human stupidity in the name of having reasoning ability. Many species have been disappeared due to harmful anthropogenic activities. The biodiversity has been disturbed, damaged and destroyed. The only way to restore biodiversity is to regard each and every being have equal right and share over the ecosphere. Human being is not a part of nature. Human beings is not an exploiter and conqueror but a member of the world's ecosystem. Human being should see others in themselves and themselves in others.

Faulkner's *The Bear* clearly shows the fact that assaulting nature by the pride of having reasoning ability is digging our own graves. Such thinking has created environmental crisis. Environmental crisis has given birth to many catastrophic disaster in the ecosphere. The Bear, human being, and other animals, with respect to plant ecology should go hand in hand to keep things whole so that human beings along with non-human world be protected from the usual fragmentation that goes on individual life and cosmos.

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