

Effects of the transformed Environment on Human Psyche and Emotions: An Apocalyptic Study of J.G. Ballard's *The Drowned World*

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Abstract: Eco criticism analyses the link between humans and the natural world in literature. It deals with ecological and traditional issues related to the environmental changes. James Graham Ballard is known for his fictions of environmentally ransacked landscapes caused by technological excess and non-ecological attitudes of humankind. Ballard wrote in a period before global warming happened and had been identified by scientists, and his fictions are to be both psychological and ontological since it concerned with biological factors of the environment. Ballard portrayed the effects of the changed human psyche and emotions as individuals as apocalyptic study that highlighted the developed new relationship of human beings with the adversely transformed environment. This article focuses on exploring the novel based on psychological disturbances that occurred within human beings in relation to the apocalyptic analysis in J.G. Ballard's climate fiction, *The Drowned World*. Eco critical perceptions and social ecological viewpoint have been applied to expose the Ecological crisis. *The Drowned World* is set in the tropical London during the year 2145. The novel portrays a post-apocalyptic world that represents the effects of the extreme environmental changes. Besides, exposing natural calamity, the novel highlights how disaster destroys the socio-cultural systems that help mankind to sustain his struggle within the hostile universe. This study therefore intends to analyse Ballard's post-apocalyptic climatic novel.

Key Words: Environment, Climatic Changes , Human Psyche, Ecological crisis, Apocalyptic world

Literature is one of the best ways to generate the eco-critical psyche as an extensive expansion of Literature and Science as frightening scenarios in which humanity suffers due to hunger, lack of water, extreme colds, and burning caused by overheating. Literature has been connected with nature, human and environmental

concerns from the early period to the present. The scientific and technological advancements in the world has altered earth and earthly evolution into a trap. Many novels portrayed different concepts as a metaphor in different directions by which humanity can explore and end up with a believable future. Climate fiction came into being existence during the beginning of the 21st century- the climate fiction dealt with narratives related with climate change. The term was coined by the journalist Dan Bloom in the early twenty first century. Climate fiction reveals the effects of catastrophic climate changes that results in causing havoc on human life. Climate fiction portrays an apocalyptic devastation of humanity, foresees the downfall of economic, political and social conditions that have brought due to climatic issues.

Climate Fiction paved a way to formulate a societal awareness on how human harm environment and its climate system. climate fiction has been recognised both in educational output and as an authorized narrative genre. The effects of global warming and other global related environmental issues are the themes of fiction that highlighted the need for a narrative exposure in writing about the changing world. There are scientific proven reasons for each such causes and effects of ecological change, the world longed for effective narrative responses with imaginations to the themes concerned with such environmental issues.

Eco critical study analysis on how nature is affected due to the deeds of the humanity. In most of the eco-critical literary works, nature is shown as unresponsive by human beings. Humans destroy nature, barge into the ecosystem, and by polluting the beauty of nature. In this controversial lifestyle, there are many novels

that portray nature encroaching in to human lives that eradicate the artificiality life style of humans and thus tries to regain the wilderness.

The responsiveness of climate change has triggered many future imaginings of drowned cities, mainly coastal and low-lying capitals, they also developed a part of a thorough history of collective uncertainties of apocalyptic floods that dates back to pre-history through countless stories of extreme floods. The forthcoming drowning is due to the unusual effects of climate change, basically by the rises in the sea elevations that triggered by the melting ice in the Polar Regions and Greenland, that has become a central motif in climate-change fictions.

The Setting of the eco- critical novel consists of the surroundings where the characters continue their lives and the period of time when the story occurs. The details of the location, climate, weather, social, and cultural surroundings can be found in setting. In ecology novel, time is an essential element because all the destructive deeds of human occurred in a long time period since it is not taken seriously but humans unconsciously involved in continuous polluting of the environment. Time is not considered to be the centre of the incidents but it is specified by the author on the basic idea to illustrate the long term results of man-centred actions on nature. In eco-fiction novels, authors use places such as forests, mountains, rivers, and nature. The target is to create humans' oneness with nature. Real names for the places are applied in setting.

Climate change is one of the most urgent critical issues of the twenty-first century. The dystopian world created in the novels of J. G. Ballard is the result of the rift between Nature and Culture. The imaginative power of the author builds the degrading dull picture of the world by revealing the contemporary problems to an extent that lead the entire humanity towards a peculiar end.

Novels of the modern period focused on the futuristic visions through dark dystopias. These visions of revolutionary worlds produced most famous novels, movies, comics, and music of our time. Many philosophers and authors viewed fiction with visions of the future where totalitarian rulers governed the life of the common citizens. Their works explored many themes of dystopian societies such as suppressive social control systems, influence of technology on human life, managing mechanisms, individuality,

freedom of life, restriction, sexual repression, class distinctions, artificial life, and human interaction with the nature. Thus the imaginative faculty of the author creates the disastrous pictures of the world by spreading the contemporary problems to an extent that led the entire humanity towards a peculiar end. James Graham Ballard's climate fictions of the early 1960s comprises some seven characteristics. His novels are filled with contemporary environmental issues with the sense that they have a settings in near place may be in the present or the near future. their settings are important and noteworthy even in our present day, even though they were published earlier. The novels cannot be limited with any particular era or period.

James Graham 'J.G.' Ballard was an English writer and a notable member of the 'New Wave' movement. James Graham Ballard's fictional works are set in an ecologically ruined world resulted by environmental disasters such as storm, drought and crystallization. James Graham Ballard, novelist, essayist and short-story writer. He handles the theme of negative physical alterations that occurred due to environmental disasters. The altered changes drastically brought physical and psychological aberrations in the life of humans.

Ballard's post-apocalyptic novels have controversial ideas, themes and incidents by forming four distinct disaster settings as air, water, wind and earth. Ballard thus explores climatic disaster through these four elements.

Beginning in the 1960s, Ballard wrote *The Drowned World* (1962), *The Wind from Nowhere* (1962), *The Burning World* (1964), and *The Crystal World* (1966). His novels *Crash* (1973; film 1996), *Concrete Island* (1974), and *High Rise* (1975; film 2015) depict 20th-century middle-class people transform into barbarity. Ballard's first four novels, *The Wind from Nowhere*, *The Drowned World*, *The Drought* and *The Crystal World*, can be identified with a continuous use of variations on the global catastrophe novel.

The major delegates of climate fiction are J.G. Ballard's apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic quadrilogy of the early 1960s, such as, Frank Herbert's *Dune* (1965), Ursula K. Le Guin's *The New Atlantis* (1975) and *Always Coming Home* (1985), Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006), Jennifer Egan's *A Visit from the Goon Squad* (2010) and Margaret Atwood's

Oryx and Crake (2003) and *The Year of the Flood* (2009). Climate fiction serves a great purpose in raising awareness against climatic crisis and highlights the human responsibility in saving the environment.

This article discovers ingenious ways of understanding in terms to future cities and climate revolution by centring on depictions of urban sinking and submergence of land based on, climate-change fiction by J. G. Ballard, *The Drowned World* (1962). The paper aims to put forward the effects of the transformed environment on human psyche and emotions in J.G. Ballard's *The Drowned World*. Eco critical perceptions and social ecological viewpoint have been applied to expose the Ecological crisis.

Ballard's novel *The Drowned World* picturizes an extreme climate change that results in unwanted changes of landscapes and reflects how these changes affect people living in near-future London. The novelist depicts how Kerans struggle psychologically as well as emotionally due to this ecological crisis. Kerans establishes new relationships in an ecologically imbalanced environment.

In this novel there are two types of narratives, they are the imagined post-diluvian cityscapes experienced as in the future after a catastrophic flood, later on there seems a progress of the flood that steadily transforms into an urban environment.

Ballard reveals a heavily flooded world in which the rising temperatures have resulted in raise of sea level that led Earth towards a submerged globe. Apart from dealing with the post-apocalyptic distresses of how human life on Earth is ruined, Ballard reflects the effects of the apocalypse on human body, psyche, and emotions as humans cultivate a new relationship with the negatively transformed environment. To reveal these effects in the novel, this article emphasizes on exploring the novel in terms of eco-critical study.

In the words of Sellars and O'Hara, the novel *The Drowned World* uses 'the external transformation of the urban landscape to reflect and unit with the internal transformation' of Kerans, who is the only character in the novel to fully embrace both of these transformed worlds (90). Ballard argued in the novel based on the extreme urban transformation that he depicted in *The Drowned World* as- by any other estimation a catastrophe - might provide the only environment in

which genuine human transformation might occur (202-203).

The most significant important thing is that J. G. Ballard's novel, *The Drowned World* was published in 1962. Though written before the period of global warming, the novel has been regarded as a major influence on climate change fictions and has a prophetic note of real climate related disasters.

The Drowned World envisages London as a city that has been swamped by unusual flora and fauna. Ballard has indicated as "nature itself consumed the city's half-submerged steel supported tower blocks; giant iguanas that made their homes in the boardrooms of former offices; outsized bats that created their eyries in the ruined buildings; and, in between the last vestiges of the city, a network of lagoons filled with rotting vegetation and the carcasses of dead animals. (19) .

Ballard's forthcoming drowned city has a post-urban environment in which the traditional social relations are totally disengaged. Ballard purported that individual psyches have the possibility for transformation, but it resulted with almost total isolation and seclusion. In the words of Trexler this has proved to be a problematic precedent for fictions that address anthropogenic climate change because it "acts as a terrific form of compression, homogenizing a whole world of ecological and climatic variation into a single, distorted disaster". (28).

The Drowned World is set in the tropical London during the year 2145. Kerans lives in Ritz Hotel is an isolated protagonist. The protagonist of the novel, Dr. Robert Kerans, is a 40-year-old biologist at a testing station works to examine the changes in his flooded region and remap the submerged landscape regularly. In the submerged area, Colonel Riggs helps Kerans at the biological testing station and wanders on his patrol boat to pick up the people who still strive to survive in those swamps and tropical jungle. Dr. Alan Bodkin, an assistant, helps Kerans in the testing station. Bodkin expresses the new psychological settings that overwhelms Kerans and other characters in the novel. Beatrice Dahl is Kerans' neighbour, choose to stay in London and he never wanted go to the Camp Byrd which is in Northern Greenland in order to save his life.

He is one among a group of scientists who are gathering information about the drowned cities, before moving to the last place which is left out, considered to be fit for human survival. It is the arctic - where the residue as remnants of humanity have been gathered. The temperatures and humidity in relation to the raise of water rises as each day passed on. Kerans undergoes a psychic equivalent of unrest, and latter on embraces the new atmosphere and the surrounding which is before him.

Kerans is a biologist and as a part of an expedition, the troop is sent to explore the area once used to be the London years ago. The earlier British Capital has been submerged partly up to a long period of time and thus changed into a tropical lagoon due to a climatic disaster. The expedition undertakers start dreaming strange dreams in connection with environmental changes. Entering deep into the arctic regions, the only creatures left are the humans, who can live in favourable conditions which are suitable for them. It is the only way which is possible for them to live in-between the new seas and the new tropical forests. It is full of large reptiles and dangerous insects. Among the troop members, some of the troop members decide to go towards the south. Kerans is among the very few who decided to stay in London, but their peacefulness is disturbed by a group of men who came looking for the old treasures from the city.

The novel portrays a fictitious illusive vision as hallucinatory image of future London that has been sunk below the vast flood waters formed due to the melting of the polar ice sheets, caused due to a rapid global warming occurred from a sudden raise in solar radiation. The novel highlights a post-apocalyptic world that exemplifies the effects of the extreme environmental changes. The novel focuses on how environmental disaster destroys the socio-cultural systems that help mankind to reduce his struggle within the hostile universe. These resonances have a long history of imagined drowned cities that lend a way towards the effects of climate change in a local background. Ballard's novel portrays a hallucinatory apparition based on a future London that has been ruined below the vast flood waters formed by a sudden melting of the polar ice sheets and the latter is caused by a rapid global warming that rose from a sudden increase in cosmological outcome.

Ballard's *The Drowned World* portrays the extreme climate change and unsolicited deviations of landscapes. It also discloses out how these changes disturb people who are living in near-future London. The novel mirrored the struggles linked with both human and nonhuman form and thus becomes a warning for future generations. So that the future generation can help saving nature. By various literary writings, humans' relationship can be restored with climate, land, and nature. The novel's title signifies a post-apocalyptic world in which the temperature rises and thus it led to a flooded tropical Earth. The novel elucidates the effects of radical environmental changes on both human physique and mind.

The novel portrays a changed environment to highlight the loss of ecological stability and delineated a deterioration in flora, fauna, landscape, and human psychology towards the Triassic period. There are references from the text, such as: "60-feet-high plants" and "a giant reptile indistinguishable from the Pelycosaur" (8), "a giant Anopheles mosquito, the size of a dragon-fly", and "a giant water spider" (10),

The novel reflects an analysis on environmental collapse that happens due to the solar storms that dismantled the Van Allen Belts and emitted an extreme solar radiation, thus resulted in raising the Earth's temperature for about a period seventy years. It gave an outcome of a higher levels of radioactivity by emitting ionizing the radiation and caused changes in the environment. Due to the overheat the icecaps melted and there occurred a rise in global water levels. Hence it created a land of lagoons all over the world. It also resulted in a way that humans have been in a situation to move towards the Camp Byrd in Northern Greenland where life is suitable and sustainable. The novel hints on the outcome of the catastrophe on physical, psychological, and emotional health of humans, through the voice of the characters in the novel, with an outcome of environmentally imbalanced milieu.

The negative effects of the climatic changes also affected the human mind in several ways. The external environment in connection with nature and the struggled human psyche are deeply interconnected. The old buildings' upper floors of the tropical London where submerged into the water and it affected the characters' thoughts generating a new atmosphere

often humans were like moving in dream world with a changed life.

The novel has its conclusion that with this 'second Adam' who heads towards south to meet his certain death. Ballard's vision and the power of his prose find a the way in which the changed urban environment plays the role as a mirror, images of the processes going on in Kerans's psyche, and when he becomes the abandoned clock towers which he sees, their faces without hands (63), or a chalk-white colonnade visited by Kerans that reminds him about of an Egyptian necropolis (68).

In response to the climatic change, the novel labels an enduring and agonising emotional struggle of humans who are referred as psychopaths, who suffer due to malnutrition and radiation sickness and manic-depressive personality due to the flood disaster (12, 126). Such existential desolation creates a psychological shift that changes the life of the inhabitants, a change in landscape and loss of social communications. The novel explores the theme of place and identity in relation to the mental health risks of individuals as well as the communities caused by the lagoons.

The drowned world in the novel with a sense of place, identity, and well-being of the remaining survivors resulted in loss based on the lively human relationships with the environment. This loss are exposed through the feelings such as grief, depression, anxiety, alienation, trauma, and homesickness. The individuals never left their acquainted home space. In the novel Kerans and other survivors struggle due to the prolonged grief since they have lost nature, treasured places, and their spiritual bionetwork by living within the parameters of lagoons with the existing practises of life.

The effect of Kerans's hallucinations get enlarged as he dives into the deep "aqua incognita for the sunken London planetarium" (86). The deeper Kerans dives in, the deeper he gets into depressed within his inert unconscious self. The submerged planetarium delineates him into the warm water. The lagoon that Kerans, lives develop into the pool of Thanatos, and it is highlighted as the title for ninth chapter of the novel (105). The pool of Thanatos signifies both as a death drive and life drive in the lives of Kerans.

Kerans even once thinks of committing suicide in the pool of Thanatos as a way to escape from necessity and pain of living in a much loved but desolated home. He seeks to recover his mental and emotional sphere by finding a way back to the place where once he identified it as his home. Though Kerans knows in the beginning that "the lagoon was nothing more than a garbage-filled swamp" (13), he develops a new kind of attachment with that place which is surrounded by lagoon. He strives hard to keep his connection with the lagoon as he states that "in an insane Eden" (58). When water is pumped out of the city, his personal bond with his much-loved flooded place gets disconnected. Since he got a solace from that lagoon he tries to get back the same solace but he fails in it. His physical environment itself gets transformed into an unwanted location transformation with flooded home environment and then resulted with the draining of the lagoon. After seeing the drained lagoon Kerans drowned deep into a state of dulled inertia, from which he tried himself to get out of being inactive.

Kerans never wished for the lagoon to disappear since he has adapted to live in this submerged home territory as his own survival place. The flood disaster, bitter outcome due to overheat and abounding gigantic vegetation all have overpowered his identity. Kerans experiences a negative transformation resulted due to desolation of the physical environment.

Kerans's sense of being in his locale and tracing identity, his physical and mental health, and his general goodness, welfare, all challenged by the undesirable environmental changes. He tries to cope with the negative changes that occurred in the environment. But during certain days after the changes occurred, both nature and humans met with desolation and isolation conditions.

Kerans, the protagonist of the novel, is a part of a group of scientists who are involved in collecting information about the world's drowned cities and the remnants of humankind. The novel ends with providing a way that Kerans will die in his quest of burning dreams that flames within him tends him towards the south. As days pass, the temperatures and humidity rises, Kerans experiences his own psychic identifications as reversion and deterioration in the form of accepting the new jungle which is before him. At the end of the story there is a resolution, the level

of water decreases and a ray of hope appears. The novel has its conclusion by pointing out a 'second Adam' (), who moves south towards his ultimate death. Ballard transmuted the urban environment, as a mirror image of the processes that undergoes in Kerans's psyche, through his perpetual hostility with the submerged city.

Ballard's *The Drowned World* is connected with the biopsychic unity of humans and their archaeopsychic relation to their subconscious memory in relation to the ecosystem. The novel reveals the connection between ecological balance and humans' physical, psychological and emotional unrest by examining what Kerans experiences during the global flood disaster. The novel under the eco-critical study shows how climate change instigate a transformation in the biophysical environment and thus it has an influence on humans' mental health and well-being. It can be evident as seen through the characters from the novel, through Kerans and other survivors. People in the novel are influenced and affected by the environment around them. Hence it is clear that the surrounding environment if get changed then its ecosystem will be affected and there are countless possibilities for the life supports to be changed.

Throughout the story these scientists and inhabitants of the city have experienced extreme heats, encountered mutated animals, witnessed diseases such as skin cancer, tried to survive among the giant creatures and had frightening dreams which consist of archaic memories. At first "Kerans and later Strangman and Bodkins come to realize, the increase in temperature is not a symptom of climate upheaval; climate upheaval is itself a symptom of devolution, which is the underlying cataclysm." (Clarke, 2013, p. 9).

In *The Drowned World*, time is used as the symbol of archetypal memories which underline human awareness. Jim Clarke claims that "If Ballard conflates climate with time, he also conflates it with psyche." It can be analysed that people get accustomed to the changing conditions in time and they are trying to live even in the worst conditions. People are trying to escape and find new places to survive on and "Now they were to abandon yet another city." (19). The abandoned places are applied to create the feeling of isolation.

Negative transformations of ecosystems challenge the life of Kerans based on identity crisis, sense of loss in the form of both his place and peace, experiences changes both in relation with physical and mental health, leave back all his belonging and control, and finally he passed only despair, isolation, and loneliness psychic disorder. As a result he is involved with a continual recognition of the place which he has lived in once, well known and loved ended with physically damage and transformed permanently.

The novel focuses on human activities that results in an imbalanced environment in the ecosystem. The world portrayed in the novel is not an unfamiliar one hence all can understand the struggle of Kerans due to climatic change. The novel highlights the natural, psychological and cultural collapse. Therefore, it can be identified that Ballard has given a sensible justification to his portrayals of the destructions. His novels stresses the cause and effect theory in relation with human and their actions, thus his novels have a complex tie of plot and subplots. The novel examines a vast canvas of destructed landscapes that comprises London and moves towards the remote corner of a Jungle in South-Africa. The cause and effect in the unity of the novel reveals a narrative focus from the destructed landscape to another.

The changed environment resulted with certain biological and psychological changes that occurred both in and around the surroundings. The novel depicts the global warming and its aftereffects that has retrieved world into the earliest period of the Mesozoic era. It can also be defined based on anthropological era since the novel created an image that led towards the beginning of human civilization. The novel conveys the message that the sky, land, water, plants and animals all that sustain humans' well-being will turn against humankind when humans fail to live without ecological consciousness.

In *The Drowned World*, it is found that there are humans like Kerans and Bodkin who embrace nature and there are humans like Riggs and Strangman, who fight against nature, trying to control natural environment. This is depicted in the novel, when Strangman evacuate the lagoon, and Kerans, drains of the lagoon to be unnatural, and decided to blow up the dam and used obstruct efforts to retrieve the city from the waters. The climatic changes in the novel lead the

way about to the succession of gigantic geophysical upheavals that transformed the Earth's climate.

The novel conveys a series of violent and prolonged solar storms lasting several years resulted in to a sudden instability in the Sun and led to enlarge the Van Allen belts and diminished the Earth's gravitational hold upon the outer layers of the ionosphere. This outcome as solar radiation and the temperatures began to raise steadily, the heated atmosphere expands outwards into the ionosphere where the cycle was completed. (11-12), this depicts how climatic concerns are expressed in this novel.

The novel reflects the true elements of a climate fiction text that deals with a real yet imaginative world which portrays humans to be adaptable and struggle to survive the harsh environment brought about by the climate change. The novel reflects the threat of rising flood waters, and its effects in the political, economical and social life of the inhabitants who visualise the kind of transformational change and faces a new global climatic order. The novel also highlights the disturbing features with reference to the environment crisis. The end of the novel is not concerned with any religious principles, but it is connected with a fictional world in which the characters are treated as humans devoid from identity represented a future world, thus becomes a voice to save the environment.

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