

Identification and Evaluation of Environmental Concepts in Paulo Coelho's "The Alchemist"

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Abstract : Ecocriticism is the study of relationship between human and environment which has been represented in literature since the very beginning in pastoral tradition. However, the analysis of such representation is new as compared to the other critical evaluations like Psychoanalysis, Marxism, Post-colonialism, Modernism and many others. Ecocritics seek to find information like anthropocentrism, ecocentrism, ecofeminism, eco-Marxism, representation of environment and environmental concept and several other topics. In the current study the representation of environmental concepts, were ecocritically analyzed in Paulo Coelho's The Alchemist, one of the most read novels throughout the world, having been translated into many languages. Analysis of the text revealed, the representations of environmental ideas like landscapes and tourism, biodiversity, land-sea displacement, environmental disasters and warfare, desert winds and sand dunes. 'This desert was once a sea' throws light on different theories of land-sea displacement, one being the plate-tectonic theory which proposes Earth's lithosphere to be divided into different large and small plates, continuously moving toward, away from or parallel to each other, resulting in land-sea displacement. Another theory is the continental drift theory which holds onto the belief that one large landmass—Pangea, broke down into smaller pieces of land that moved relative to each other and formed continents of the present time. The cause of desertification may, however, be natural i.e. climate change or artificial i.e. by human activities. Imagery of the environmental concepts, at some instances in the novel, is detailed and at other instances, is not as striking, but still is capable of arousing readers' imagination. The study suggests that ecocritical justifications of environmental concepts in the text will increase the interactions between literature and environment which should be encouraged in order to induce environmental awareness among the readers.

Keywords : biodiversity, ecocritical analysis, ecocriticism, environmental disasters, landscapes

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