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STREAMS OF CONSCIOUSNESS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF
RIVER SYMBOLISM IN ENVIRONMENTAL POETRY OF
A.K. RAMANUJAN AND KEKI N. DARUWALLA

Arnab Das¹, Manjusha C B²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, VNIT, Nagpur.

²Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, VNIT, Nagpur.

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ABSTRACT

Through the complex symbolism of the river, the poems "A River" by A.K. Ramanujan and "The Ghaghra in Spate" by Keki N. Daruwalla offer moving meditations on the environmental effects of climate change. This research article compares and closely examines the ecocritical analysis of each poet's use of the river symbol to highlight how humanity has disrupted the natural order. Ramanujan's cyclical structure and meditative approach are infused with philosophical perspectives that represent the river as a symbol of the interconnectedness between mankind and nature. On the other hand, Daruwalla reflects unchecked environmental degradation by portraying the river as a force tainted by human exploitation through his vivid imagery of violent floods. Both poets skillfully manipulate the rhythms of nature through poetic craft, despite stylistic and cultural differences, to highlight humanity's profound disruption of the relationship between nature and humans. According to this study, their symbolic depictions of the river both effectively dramatize the environmental crisis and promote the restoration of the harmony between humans and nature that is under threat from modernity. This research article examines how diverse cultural voices can use literary craft to access shared languages of environmentalism through a comparative analysis of river symbolism, urging readers to confront the anthropogenic climate impacts.

Keywords: Climate Impact, Ecocriticism, Human-Nature Relationship, Flood Imagery, Forced Disruption

INTRODUCTION

"Stream of consciousness is a narrative technique in literature that attempts to depict the continuous flow of a character's thoughts and impressions in an unfiltered, authentic way that mirrors

the mind's associative leaps and internal rhythms; some hallmarks of the technique include interior monologue wherein the text reflects the private thoughts of the character rather than an external perspective, fragmented structure that disregards orderly sequence in favor of sporadic, jumping thoughts, free association between ideas based on spontaneous connections rather than logical transitions, lack of overt authorial control so the text appears to record thoughts in real-time, and an overall sense of fluidity and rhythm as thoughts unfold freely across the page" (William James, 1980). But "Streams of consciousness" more broadly refers to the concept of human consciousness on river, using the metaphor of a stream to convey the dynamic, fluid, and fragmented nature of our thought processes, memories, sensations, and inner experiences that comprise our mental life. Social sciences, and the humanities in particular, "provide us with a diverse range of tools, approaches, and methodologies through which we can come to better understand the multiple dimensions of human relationships with the watery part of our world" (McKinley 2023, xxii). In their environmental poetry, Ramanujan and Daruwalla employ rivers as symbolic streams of consciousness, with Ramanujan's river embodying cultural continuity and collective identity as an ancient, timeless entity that has carried the silt of history for generations, while Daruwalla's river represents nature's indifference and complicity, but both poets use water metaphors to effectively reflect different facets of inner life and humanity's relationship to the natural world, inviting the reader to reconsider our interconnectedness and ethical responsibility through a blue humanities lens that reveals consciousness itself to be a flowing stream, continuously shaped by and shaping our place in the web of life.

The complex symbolism of the river has long provided poets an impactful metaphor to explore humanity's delicate relationship with the natural world. In the poems "A River" by A.K. Ramanujan and "The Ghaghra In Spate" by Keki N. Daruwalla, the river becomes a dynamic symbol through which each poet crafts a poignant meditation on the environmental effects of climate change. Water reworks boundaries as much as it bounds; it territorializes as it deterritorializes. Lowell Duckert (2017, 55) by applying foundational ecocritical perspectives, this article conducts a comparative ecocritical analysis of the rich river symbolism developed in these two poems. Cheryll Glotfelty (1996) defined "ecocriticism as the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment". Ecocriticism, she wrote, emphasizes "relationships between things . . . between human culture and the physical world" (1996). Despite differences in cultural background and poetic style, the study finds that both Ramanujan and Daruwalla skillfully manipulate the rhythms of nature, via the symbol of the river, to highlight profound disruptions in the relationship between humankind and the environment. Theoretically, ecocriticism sees literary texts as shaping human consciousness regarding nature, with language itself having the power to either reinforce or reshape cultural attitudes toward the environment. Ecocritics also critically examine how environmental degradation has disrupted humanity's harmonious relationship to the natural world. Through close reading informed by these ecocritical lenses, this article demonstrates how Ramanujan and Daruwalla, though writing from diverse contexts, both access a shared environmentalist discourse through their adept crafting of the resonant river symbol.

Specifically, Ramanujan's cyclical structure and philosophical framing represents the river as a symbol of the deep metaphysical interconnectedness between mankind and nature. The repetitive shifts of his river mirror larger patterns found in the natural world, subtly advocating for respect of ecological balance. Meanwhile, Daruwalla reflects unchecked environmental exploitation by using vivid imagery to portray the river as a destructive force tainted by human industry and negligence. A nuanced analysis of their river symbolism reveals how both poets, through their masterful craft, urgently confront readers with the need to remedy escalating anthropogenic climate impacts threatening the human-nature relationship.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- ◆ A comprehensive analysis of the symbolic representation of rivers in A.K. Ramanujan's "A River" and Keki N. Daruwalla's "The Ghaghra In Spate" within the realm of environmental poetry.
- ◆ An ecocritical analysis of each poet's depiction of rivers, aiming to deepen understanding of the impact of climate change on the natural world.
- ◆ Compare and contrast the stylistic choices and cultural perspectives evident in Ramanujan and Daruwalla's treatment of rivers in their respective poems.
- ◆ Identify shared thematic concerns related to environmental stewardship and advocate for the restoration of balance between humans and nature amidst climate change-induced disruptions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Das, S. (2002). In his research thesis titled: *A Study of AK Ramanujans poetry in relation to themes and images* (Doctoral dissertation, University of North Bengal) has discussed Ramanuja's poetry and how he employed Indianess, environmentalism and myth to analyse the poetry of Ramanujan. It helps me to understand the connection between human and nature.

Perry, J. O. (1994). In his research paper titled: *Contemporary Indian Poetry in English*. *World Literature Today*, (68(2), 261-27)has discussed on how the contemporary Indian poets deals with the themes of indianess.

Glotfelty, C., & Fromm, H. (Eds.). (1996). *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in literary ecology*. University of Georgia Press. The Ecocriticism Reader serves as an illuminating introduction and sourcebook to the field of literary ecology, defining ecocriticism through a diverse collection of essays that analyze literature to understand humanity's relationship with and impact on the natural world. It helps me to understand the concept of ecocriticism through the poems of A.K. Ramanujan and Keki Daruwalla.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ◆ In what ways do the symbolic representations of rivers in *A River* and *The Ghaghra In Spate* reflect broader cultural, philosophical, and ecological perspectives, and how do these perspectives shape the poets' environmental consciousness?
- ◆ How do Ramanujan and Daruwalla employ ecocritical principles to explore the environmental implications of river symbolism in their poetry, and what insights do these analyses offer into the poets' engagement with climate change?
- ◆ What stylistic elements, such as imagery, tone, and narrative structure, characterize Ramanujan and Daruwalla's portrayal of rivers, and how do these elements reflect their individual artistic sensibilities and cultural backgrounds?
- ◆ What insights do Ramanujan and Daruwalla's poetry offer into the urgent need to address climate change and promote environmental activism and awareness, and how do their works contribute to broader discussions on sustainability and ecological ethics?

STYLISTIC DIFFERENCES OF RIVER SYMBOLISM

According to R. Parthasarathy, A. K. Ramanujan's poetry is "rooted in and stem from the Indian environment and reflects its mores, often ironically".

*"In Madurai
City of temples and the poets
Who sang of cities and temples"* (AK Ramnujan, 1996)

"Madurai," a setting city noticed for its historical significance and cultural heritage, is introduced by AK Ramanujan in this poem. Madurai was presented as microcosm representing broader environmental challenges faced by the urban centers of climate change. While temples and poetry celebrate the city's cultural richness, the poets might overlook the environmental degradation, such as drying up of the river. However, it also suggests a historical focus on human constructions and cultural artifacts, overshadowing the natural world and environmental concerns.

*"... every summer
a river dries to a trickle
in the sand,
baring the sand ribs..."* (AK Ramnujan, 1996)

Here the word, "every summer" denotes the continuous cyclical nature of environmental changes, particularly the recurring phenomenon of the river drying up during the summer. This highlights the vulnerability of water resources to seasonal variations and long term climate trends, such as rising temperature and changing precipitation patterns. The imagery of the river diminishing to a trickle emphasizes the severity of water scarcity, consequence of climate change induced droughts and reduced water availability. This changing transformation stresses the ecological impact of altered hydrological cycle on ecosystems, wildlife habits, and human societies dependent on water resources. The description of "sand ribs" refers the skeletal body of the river exposed by receding water levels. This imagery conveys a metaphor for the vulnerability and fragility of river ecosystem in face of climate change and environmental degradation.

*"... straw and women's hair
clogging the watergates
at the rusty bars..."* (AK Ramnujan, 1996)

The depiction of debris such as "straw and women's hair" clogging the river alludes to human activities contributing to environmental pollution and degradation. The imagery of "clogging the watergates" suggests the obstruction of natural flow by human-made structures or debris, exacerbating water scarcity and ecological disruptions. This highlights the consequence of human interventions in natural hydrological systems, which can worsen the impacts of climate change on water and ecosystems. The mention of "rusty bars" alludes to the deteriorating state of infrastructure, such as bridges and watergates. This imagery underscores the need for adaptive infrastructure and resilient management practices to mitigate the impacts of climate change on water infrastructure and ensure the resilience of urban centers and communities. As Žižek writes *"the main consequence of the scientific breakthroughs in biogenetics is the end of nature. Once we know the rules of its construction, natural organisms are transformed into objects amenable to manipulation..."* (Sherman, 2020). *"... nature is no longer "natural," the reliable "dense" background of our lives; it now appears as a fragile mechanism which, at any point, can explode in a catastrophic manner."* (Žižek 2008a, p. 435).

*"... the wet stones glistening like sleepy
crocodiles, the dry one's shaven water-buffaloes lounging in the sun"* (AK Ramnujan, 1996)

The imagery of "wet stones glistening like sleepy crocodiles" juxtaposes natural elements with anthropomorphic qualities, blurring the boundaries between the human and natural worlds. This imagery conveys a sense of interconnectedness and symbiosis between humans and nature, underscoring the shared vulnerability to climate change and the need for collective action to address environmental challenges. This imagery conveys a sense of interconnectedness between humans and nature, underscoring the shared vulnerability to climate change and the need for collective action to address environmental challenges. The imagery of "shaven water-buffaloes lounging in the sun" further underscores the ecological impact of climate change on wildlife habitats and biodiversity. This image conveys a feeling of helplessness and dislocation as animals adjust to shifting environmental circumstances and look for safety in altered environments. It also calls into question the sustainability of ecosystems over the long run and the necessity of conservation measures to safeguard vulnerable species from the destruction and loss of habitat brought on by climate change. Themes of continuity, interconnectedness, and cyclical patterns are all present in "A River" by Ramanujan.

Daruwalla's *The Ghaghra In Spate*, reflects on environmental issues, highlighting concerns of environmental degradation and climate change-induced disasters. Daruwalla's portrayal of the river as a force of destruction and chaos reflects a cultural consciousness shaped by industrialization, urbanization, and modernization.

*"And every year
the Ghaghra changes course
turning over and over her sleep..."* (Daruwalla)

The opening lines of the poem *The Ghaghara In Spate* set the tone for the poem, highlighting the unpredictable nature of the Ghaghra river's behaviour. The river is personified as a dynamic force, endlessly moving and altering its "course". This serves as a metaphor for the fluctuating weather patterns and growing incidence of severe weather occurrences, like flooding, that are intensified by climate change. Bill McKibben (2006) laments in *The End of Nature* that:

"We have changed the atmosphere, and thus we are changing the weather. By changing the weather, we make every spot on earth man-made and artificial. We have deprived nature of its independence, and that is fatal to its meaning. Nature's independence is its meaning; without it there is nothing but us. [...] A child born now will never know a natural summer, a natural autumn, winter or spring. Summer is becoming extinct, replaced by something else which will be called 'summer'. This new summer will retain some of its relative characteristics - it will be hotter than the rest of the year, for instance, and will be the time when crops grow - but it will not be summer, just as even the best prosthesis is not a leg." (Bill McKibben, 2006)

*"... In the afternoon she is a grey smudge
exploring a grey canvas.
When dusk reaches her
through an overhang of cloud
she is overstewed coffee.
At night she is a red weal
across the spine of the land..."* (Daruwalla)

The poet describes the river as a "grey smudge" and "overstewed coffee", suggesting a gloomy and ominous appearance. This imagery can be interpreted as a reflection of the polluted and turbulent waters often associated with flooding, which can be worsened by deforestation, urbanization, and other human activities influenced by climate change. The imagery of a "red weal" indicates the river's violent

and destructive force, leaving scars on the land. It suggests the lasting impact of floods caused by climate change, which can lead to erosion, loss of vegetation, and damage to infrastructure.

*"... And suddenly at night
the north comes to the village
riding on river-back..."* (Daruwalla)

The destructive force of the river is portrayed as an aggressive, invading force that targets and subdues the village at night. In *Ecology without Nature*, Timothy Morton (2007) calls Nature "a transcendental term in a material mask [that] stands at the end of a potentially infinite series of other terms that collapse into it" (Morton, 2007: 14). The imagery of the "north" coming to the village "riding on river-back" suggests the relentless advance of the floodwaters, overwhelming everything in their path. This vivid personification highlights the catastrophic impact of the flooding and evokes a sense of nature's frightening power. Within the broader context of climate change, the flood imagery could symbolize the growing threat that extreme weather events pose to vulnerable communities.

*"... But it's when she recedes
that the Ghaghra turns bitchy
sucking with animal-heat,
cross-eddies diving like frogmen..."* (Daruwalla)

The imagery of the "bitchy" river "sucking with animal-heat" and "cross-eddies diving like frogmen" conveys a sense of aggression and chaos, emphasizing the destructive power of climate change-induced disasters even in their aftermath.

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES AND DISRUPTION

Floods evoke diverse cultural responses rooted in each community's unique history, geography, and beliefs. Different cultures have developed varied perspectives on flooding based on lived experiences and traditions. Some may see floods as natural events to appreciate or ritualize, while others view them as catastrophic or as divine punishment. Despite the disruption floods cause, communities frequently tap into cultural resources like folklore, practices, and shared strength to manage the crisis. Appreciating these nuances is vital for disaster response to consider local norms and dynamics in order to build resilience for future floods.

Ramanujan captures the communal response to the flooding,

*"... People everywhere talked
of the inches rising,
of the precise number of cobbled steps
run over by the water, rising
on the bathing places..."* (AK Ramnujan, 1996)

The phrase "People everywhere talked" conveys a sense of collective engagement and dialogue among diverse communities affected by the floods, emphasizing the shared experience of environmental upheaval. The "inches rising" of water underscores the precise measurement and monitoring of water levels, highlighting the empirical approach taken to understand the magnitude of the flooding. Similarly, the focus on "the precise number of cobbled steps" refers to the meticulous attention given to the damage inflicted on the built environment, reflecting the tangible impact of the floods on human infrastructure. The flooding of the bathing areas suggests the disruption of daily life and communal activities by climate change-induced disasters. Overall, this excerpt illuminates the interconnectedness of human societies and the natural environment, as well as the communal effort to comprehend and

respond to the challenges posed by environmental disasters. These lines illustrate Assmann's concept of "communicative memory" - the lived memory and experiences shared by individuals within a group or society. It captures people talking about the tangible effects of a rising tide in their daily lives. It highlights how shared traumatic events become etched into a society's "cultural memory" through common narratives, images, and measures. The exact inches and cobbled steps mark this event as memorable. Tracking the rise of water levels implies how communities develop a sense of identity through remembering and quantifying disasters. Remembering the details shows how the event affects the group and shapes its self-understanding. Assmann argues that cultural memory is constructed through texts, images, rituals, and repetitive practices that provide a coherent narrative about the past. This quote reflects a process of narrativization occurring, as the rising tide becomes a measured, shared story. The water levels represent a collective experience, transmitted through communicative memory into cultural memory through storytelling, measuring, and commemorating. It illustrates Assmann's theory about memory shaping community identity.

*"... it carried off three village houses
one pregnant woman
and a couple of cows
named Gopi and Brinda as usual..."* (AK Ramnujan, 1996)

The phrase "it carried off" conveys the relentless and indiscriminate force of the flood, suggesting a merciless sweeping away of life and property. The mention of "three village houses" being "carried off" highlights the extensive destruction inflicted upon entire communities, emphasizing the enormity of the disaster and the upheaval it brings to human settlements.

Lewis argued in *The Abolition of Man*, that "we reduce things to mere Nature in order that we may 'conquer' them. We are always conquering Nature, because 'Nature' is the name for what we have, to some extent, conquered. The price of conquest is to treat a thing as mere Nature. Every conquest over Nature increases her domain. The stars do not become Nature till we can weigh and measure them: the soul does not become Nature till we can psychoanalyse her." (Lewis 2001, p. 43). Furthermore, the inclusion of "one pregnant woman" among the victims serves as a heart-wrenching reminder of the vulnerability of marginalized individuals during such calamities. The imagery of a pregnant woman being swept away by the floods evokes a profound sense of tragedy and loss, underscoring the devastating impact of the natural disaster on human lives, families, and future generations. Additionally, the reference to "a couple of cows named Gopi and Brinda as usual" imbues the scene with a poignant sense of familiarity and attachment, emphasizing the intimate connection between humans and animals in rural settings. Through these meticulously chosen details, Ramanujan skillfully captures the profound human and emotional toll of the flooding, painting a vivid picture of the devastation and tragedy wrought by the forces of nature.

Keki N. Daruwalla convey a sense of desperation and helplessness in the face of the devastating flood caused by the Ghaghra River:

*"... If only voices could light lamps!
If only limbs could turn to rafted bamboo!..."* (Daruwalla)

The poet encapsulates the profound sense of desperation and helplessness experienced by the community in the face of the devastating flood caused by the Ghaghra River. These lines reflect the cultural, climatic, and disruptive dimensions of the disaster. The wish for voices to "light lamps" speaks to the cultural significance of light as a symbol of hope and guidance, highlighting the community's longing for effective communication and collaboration to address the challenges posed by the flood. In a practical sense, the disruption of electricity and traditional lighting methods due to the flood

exacerbates the community's plight, underscoring the need for innovative solutions and collective action. Similarly, the desire for limbs to "turn to rafted bamboo" underscores the community's yearning for physical transformation and adaptation in response to the flood. Bamboo, known for its strength, flexibility, and buoyancy, symbolizes resilience and adaptability, traits that are crucial in navigating and surviving the disaster. This line reflects the community's recognition of the need to adapt to the changing climate and environmental conditions, highlighting the urgency of addressing the challenges posed by climate change-induced disasters. Overall, these lines convey a poignant sense of longing for effective communication, collaboration, and adaptation in the face of the crisis, underscoring the imperative of addressing the multifaceted dimensions of climate change-induced disruptions through both practical and innovative means.

*"...a buffalo floats over to the rooftop
where the men are stranded..."* (Daruwalla)

The description of a buffalo floating onto the rooftop vividly captures the surreal and chaotic scene during the flood. Water levels have risen so high that even buffaloes, animals that are vital to village life and agriculture, are helplessly carried by the floodwaters. The strange sight of a buffalo marooned on a rooftop with the stranded men emphasizes how the flood has turned the world upside down and disrupted normal life. The presence of the buffalo, a symbol of rural livelihoods, serves as another reminder of the widespread devastation caused to both humans and animals by the catastrophic flooding. This surreal imagery underscores the immense scale and impact of the flood disaster.

*"...Children have spirit enough in them
to cheer the rescue boats;
the men are still-life subjects
oozing wet looks..."* (Daruwalla)

In these lines from "The Ghaghra In Spate" by Keki N. Daruwalla, the poet poignantly contrasts the reactions of children and men to the arrival of rescue boats amidst the chaos of the flood caused by the Ghaghra River. This juxtaposition serves to illuminate the resilience and emotional disparity present within the community during times of crisis. The phrase "Children have spirit enough in them to cheer the rescue boats" captures the youthful optimism and resilience inherent in the younger members of the community. Despite the perilous situation and uncertainty that surrounds them, the children exude a sense of hope and vitality as they eagerly cheer for the approaching rescue boats. Their spirited response symbolizes an innate ability to find light in darkness, offering a glimpse of resilience amidst the turmoil. In contrast, the depiction of the men as "still-life subjects oozing wet looks" paints a stark picture of resignation and despair. The phrase "still-life subjects" evokes a sense of stagnation and lifelessness, suggesting a profound emotional and physical toll inflicted by the flood. The descriptor "oozing wet looks" further emphasizes their subdued and overwhelmed demeanour, conveying a deep sense of exhaustion and defeat in the face of adversity. Through this striking contrast, the poet underscores the multifaceted responses of individuals to crisis situations. While children embody a resilient spirit and unwavering hope, the men's reactions reflect the weight of the disaster and the toll it has taken on their emotional and physical well-being. This nuanced portrayal adds depth to the poem, offering a poignant reflection on the complexities of human resilience and vulnerability in the face of natural disasters.

SHARED CONCERN

A.K. Ramanujan navigates the intricate interplay between the river's aesthetic allure and its devastating power during the annual floods. The line, "the river has water enough to be poetic about only once a year," encapsulates a profound observation on the ephemeral nature of beauty in the natural

world. Here, the river is depicted as a transient muse, its poetic potential reaching its zenith during the fleeting period of the floods, when its waters surge with a majestic and awe-inspiring force. The temporal dimension not only underscores the cyclical rhythms of nature but also invites contemplation on the transience of human experiences and the impermanence of beauty itself. However, this fleeting poetic charm is swiftly juxtaposed with the harsh reality of the floods, as the speaker vividly recounts how the river "carries away" three village houses within the first half-hour of its unleashed fury. This sudden and catastrophic destruction serves as a stark reminder of the river's dual nature, capable of both ennobling and annihilating human existence. The citation of "a couple of cows named Gopi and Brinda" and "one pregnant woman anticipating identical twins" further underscores the profound human toll of the floods. Through these specific and deeply personal examples, the speaker humanizes the tragedy, inviting readers to empathize with the individuals whose lives are irrevocably altered by the merciless force of nature. Moreover, the meticulous attention to detail in describing the pregnant woman expecting identical twins with distinct physical characteristics, such as "no moles on their bodies" and "different coloured diapers," adds a poignant layer of individuality and intimacy to the narrative. Here, amidst the broader devastation, Ramanujan zooms in on the minutiae of human existence, highlighting the uniqueness and complexity of each life lost in the deluge. The speaker addresses the deep existential issues that are part of the human experience through this nuanced examination of beauty and destruction, challenging readers to consider the precarious balance that exists between human existence and the powerful forces of nature.

In Keki N. Daruwalla's poem "The Ghaghra In Spate," the portrayal of floods as a destructive force serves as a poignant call to action, urging readers to confront the consequences of human-induced environmental degradation and take proactive steps to address climate change. Daruwalla employs vivid imagery, poignant symbolism, and a unique cultural perspective to advocate for environmental awareness and promote a deeper appreciation of the natural world.

*"...She flees from the scene of her own havoc
thrashing with pain..."* (Daruwalla)

The Ghaghra River as it retreats from the flood-ravaged landscape, highlights the relentless and devastating power of the floodwaters. This imagery not only conveys the immediate destruction caused by floods but also symbolizes the broader environmental consequences of human activities such as deforestation, urbanization, and unsustainable land use practices. By depicting the river as in pain, Daruwalla emphasizes the urgency of addressing human-induced environmental degradation and its impact on natural ecosystems.

*"...houses sag on to their knees
in a farewell obeisance..."* (Daruwalla)

Furthermore, the imagery paints a vivid picture of the destruction and loss experienced by communities affected by floods. Readers are prompted to consider the human cost of environmental degradation as the sinking houses represent the susceptibility of human settlements to natural disasters. This image serves as a powerful reminder of the need of infrastructure development, disaster preparedness, and sustainable urban planning in order to lessen the effects of floods and other natural disasters on communities that are already vulnerable.

*"...the paddy fields will hoard the fish
till the mud enters into
a conspiracy with the sun
and strangles them"* (Daruwalla)

These lines depict the long-term consequences of floods on ecosystems and livelihoods and highlight the interconnectedness of human and natural systems, emphasizing the importance of sustainable agricultural practices and environmental stewardship. Daruwalla emphasizes the need for coordinated action to address climate change and safeguard the biodiversity and resilience of natural ecosystems by demonstrating the effects of floods on agricultural productivity and the delicate balance of ecosystems. All things considered, Daruwalla's poem "The Ghaghra In Spate" is a potent call to action, imploring readers to face the devastating force of floods and take proactive measures to address environmental degradation caused by human activity. Through vivid imagery, poignant symbolism, and a unique cultural perspective, Daruwalla advocates for environmental awareness and stewardship, promoting a deeper appreciation of the interconnectedness of human and natural systems and the urgent need for sustainable and harmonious coexistence with the natural world.

CONCLUSION

This paper illuminates revelatory insights into the nuances of humanity's bond with nature through a masterful juxtaposition of A.K. Ramanujan and Keki N. Daruwalla's distinct symbolic portrayals of rivers from diverse cultural vantage points. Ramanujan's cyclical structure steeped in Hindu philosophies of unity represents rivers as metaphors for the profound continuity between mankind and the natural world – their eternal ebbs and flows encapsulating the rhythms of existence. Meanwhile, Daruwalla's anxious imagery rooted in modern complexities underscores rivers as destructive forces reflecting the devastating impacts of unchecked ecological exploitation. While Ramanujan's meditative verses immerse readers in the intricacies of interconnection with nature, Daruwalla's visceral depictions of climate-induced floods highlight civilizational disruption of these bonds. Their nuanced styles illuminate contrasting facets of the human condition, yet both poets skilfully deploy the resonant river symbol to underscore shared vulnerability to environmental degradation, tapping into a common plea for restoring equilibrium to heal the growing rift between humankind and nature.

Ultimately, their creative expressions underscore how diverse cultures shape distinct yet interlinked relationships with the environment across time and space. This ecocritical and collective memory analysis reveal literature's immense power to unite pluralism in service of our collective future by exploring the universal human connection to nature. It calls for inclusive climate action grounded in compassion and recognition of our shared destiny amidst escalating ecological disruptions. Ramanujan and Daruwalla's works emphasize that as humanity navigates profound environmental threats, our duty remains mindfully stewarding the Earth so all species may thrive in balance, like an eternal river's ceaseless flow. Their poetry highlights how cross-cultural solidarity, healing and justice are imperative for cultivating ecologically thriving, resilient and just societies across the planet. This research illuminates how diverse literary voices further the urgent cause of sustainability by deepening understanding of our common struggle to harmoniously inhabit this fragile world.

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