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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ECOCRITICISM IN THE NOVELS OF WILLIAM GOLDING USING RAIMON PANIKKAR'S THE
COSMOTHEANDRIC EXPERIENCE.

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Abstract

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The twentieth century British writer, William Golding's novels carry the background of natural settings. The construction (premise), having nature as the backdrop, brings the essence of oikology (landscape ecology). The most common of all nature writing, is, beautifying nature, hailing nature, eulogizing nature, survival issues, the fight between the nature and the human, exploitation of nature, empowerment of humans over nature, over usage of resources and the aftermaths of them. The novels of Golding also contain such insights, which take a different shape when the principle of Cosmotheandric Experience is embedded. Cosmotheandric principle is not about the above mentioned nature oriented problems (portrayal of nature), but a solution to the present scenario of nature and the Organisms (human and non-human) existing under the same Cosmos.

Cosmotheandric principle is not about anthropos (justifying man's stand) or ecology. Deviating from the usual path of ecocriticism, Cosmotheandric principle locates human beings amongst other organisms and supports the unifying process of making cosmos, organisms and the Spiritual united. The Unifying process is sought to be the exalted process, under the Open Horizon. Open Horizon is a place where many horizons meet together to form a bigger horizon and the lofty position that the mind is encompassed to create the unifying process.

Cosmotheandric principle is not a sudden hike of a perspective, but a step by step process, which tries to make the unifying process for the survival of both nature and the organisms under the Cosmos. Cosmotheandric Perspective follows two important stages (perspective), the Ecumenic or Ecology or the non-historical period and the Humanistic or economic period or the historical period and then comes the Cosmotheandric or the Catholic perspective. They are the Kariological movements of consciousness according to Panikkar. The Ecumenic or the Ecology period according to Panikkar was the non-historical period, which does not fall under history. This was the time when the Organisms (human animals as well) lived in par with nature and many a times under nature. The people, did not have to struggle for the future and they had a past to follow and following the past, did they live their present. "Nature is the Oikos, the house, the habitat of Man. Here the divine is subsumed in Nature, which is not

merely 'natural' but sacred, and ultimately one with the divine" (24 Panikkar). Here the nature is worshipped as the divine and the gap between nature and the human animals is negligible.

The next stage is the Humanistic phase, which according to Panikkar is the historical phase. This state was the stage when histories were made and recorded. Scripts came into existence and everything was portrayed explicitly. This stage was also called the futuristic stage, because the people wanted themselves to be recorded in the history to make a place for themselves in the future. The life became future-oriented. Man wanted to take the upper hand and wanted to be the master of all trades and above all, over power nature. "Man is the unqualified and sovereign lord of the universe. He is superior to nature. The centre of gravity shifts from the cosmos to Man" (36 Panikkar).

The next stage is the stage of Cosmotheandric principle, which this paper tries to highlight, in connection with the novels of Golding. Due to the lack of Cosmotheandric experience, the recognition seems to be lost and there is an absence of getting to know each other (the unification of the cosmos, human animals and the divine) and the process needs to be taken for better understanding. This stage is not eliminating or abolishing the economic moment, but to overcome its absolute grip on man. The Cosmotheandric perspective which is described by Raimon Panikkar is about the mutual understanding and sharing among or sharing between nature and the other organisms. Cosmotheandric perspective may be rooted or initiated from the spiritual movement and that spirituality drives its knowledge into the ecocritical path for the fulfillment which seems to be lacking in the novels of Golding. Panikkar declares that this principle is not going back to the past (non-historical), but is the Unifying process that helps for the survival issue of the present. This is totally present oriented and stresses on the relativity principle. "The cosmotheandric principle stresses the intrinsic relationship among them, so that this threefold current permeates the entire realm of all that" (72 Panikkar)

In the novels *Lord of the Flies* and *Pincher Martin*, the characters get caught in the place of wilderness. There seems to be extreme confusion, complexity, anxiety and quest for life according to their economic needs. In the novel *Lord of the Flies* the young boys, on a trip, fall into the uninhabited island due to an accident, where there were no elders to guide them or to save them. "We are on an island. We've been on the mountain top and seen water all round. We saw no houses, no smoke, no footprints, no boats, no people..." (40 Golding, *Lord of the Flies*). To survive in that wilderness they viewed nature as their slave which is for them, a mere provider. They viewed nature as their tool for every benefit. "This is our island. It's good island. Until the grownups come to fetch us we'll have fun" (42 Golding, *Lord of the Flies*). Later they disturbed nature by hunting animals (pig) further pushing themselves to human animal killing. They burnt all the dry and green leaves for smoke and fire spread everywhere. This shows the failure of mutual understanding and this shows how the ecological (humanistic) phase is adverse in the very consciousness of the minds of the young children.

The children, unable to go to the non-historical phase, where the cosmos, humans and the divine unite, fall prey to the humanistic phase and wanted to win over nature. The space that nature gave them was not utilized by the children to get assimilated, in turn used the economic minds to mark a stand or make a history. The children kept a distance from nature and the relationship with the nature was not reciprocal (as in the Cosmotheandric perspective).

"Man's increasing estrangement from Nature, not only through the ascendancy of his reason, but also through his feelings and his history. This alienation seems to be the price paid for the Man's hypertrophied consciousness of his individuality." (36 Panikkar)

In the novel *Pincher Martin*, Martin fell into the empty island due to shipwreck and he tried to survive alone in that place. He fights with nature, challenges nature that he will be rescued by the human force and later he would rule nature.

"I don't claim to be a hero but I've got health and education and intelligence. I'll beat you. The sea said nothing. He grinned a little foolishly at himself. What I meant was to affirm my determination to survive." (79 Golding, *Pincher Martin*)

The humanistic consciousness in man is again reflected in this novel. When the nature gave Martin some time to assimilate, he took advantage over the silent provider and started ruining the whole area. The fear of survival sprung in him a very historical man, facing future. The Open horizon was not sought and the unifying process was not

allowed to be carried by the historical (economic or humanistic) man. Martin suffered death due to lightning, witnessing the power of nature.

In both the novels of Golding, there seems to be a major issue with the 'human' in mind. The consciousness of the non-historical man and the historical man varies to a greater extent that, the concept of Open horizon itself is eliminated in the latter case. According to Panikkar, humans are now helpless, because humans are into the economic phase and are unable to shift themselves to the past. Panikkar accepts that going to the non-historical phase cannot occur and setting themselves in the humanistic phase could not help. The emergence of a New innocence and self-consciousness is the Cosmotheandric intuition, which is the need of the hour for every single being under the macanthropos to survive. "If man is a microcosm, the World is a macanthropos (65 Panikkar). Macanthropos is, the entire cosmos treated as a single organism. When man treats each and every organism (including macanthropos) with a new refined self- consciousness and the New innocence, without going back to the primordial stage and without staying in the historical consciousness, an Open horizon is created. There comes a unifying process, without fearing nature (like the primordial man) and without overpowering nature (like the historical man). The Cosmotheandric principle is a self-realization of the consciousness to create a New innocence, which is living an ascetic life in the modern world (mentally).

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