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Reclaiming Nature Through Storytelling: An Ecoaesthetic Analysis of Tejaswi's *Carvalho*

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Abstract:

This paper discusses eco-aesthetic consciousness in the narrations of Poornachandra Tejaswi, primarily concerned with his famous novel *Carvalho*. The research focuses on the novel's eco-aesthetic elements, and the author's narratives encourage the readers to conserve the ecosystem around the Western Ghats of South India. The author's narrative skill celebrates Karnataka's biodiversity while critiquing human exploitative tendencies. The presentation of ecosystems is through characters like the love between animals, the destructive effect of greed, and the urgent call for man to reconnect with nature. They have conflict and growth, emphasizing the neighbourhood and environmental conservation since they depict people as ecosystem stewards. Tejaswi has social dimensions, gives a social commentary on injustice, and talks of adaptations and relations to cultures. Through characters, the novel paints ecosystems in a social and anthropomorphic outlook, portraying ecosystems as impacting human and animal characters. The works of Tejaswi show that he was a proponent of humane relations between humans and animals and how the greedy behaviour of the former has led to the disastrous consequences evident in his works.

Keywords: Eco-aesthetic, Narrative skill, Biodiversity, Exploitation, Ecosystem.

Ecoaesthetics studies how art and literature can evoke ecological awareness and sensitivity. The poet draws out his relation to nature, unfolds and revels in the natural beauty, and provokes environmental contemplation through his creations. Unlike other attempts to define the aesthetics of ecology, eco aesthetics examines human beings' relation with the other aspects of the world beyond mere labels of the natural environment. It practices ideas that include harmony between man and nature and aims to reach a shared understanding and change the world based on harmony among human beings, nature, and society. The research focuses on the author's eco-conscious themes, critiquing modernization and industrialization's environmental impact. He employs Kannada myths and local knowledge to call for protecting the environment and explaining the relationship between man and nature. His works serve as a lasting contribution to Kannada literature and the concern for ecology.

Ecoaesthetics is a field rooted in philosophy, environmental studies, and art. Immanuel Kant, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and John Ruskin are key pioneers of discourses of eco-aesthetic elements in their writings. The ecocritics John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, Arne Naess, Timothy Morton, and Arnold Berleant discourse various perspectives of eco aesthetics in literature. Kant's *Critique of Judgment* explored the sublime and beautiful, while Emerson's *Nature* and Thoreau's *Walden* emphasized nature's spiritual and aesthetic value. Ruskin, a Victorian art critic and social thinker, stressed the beauty of the natural world in art and architecture. Early environmentalists and writers, such as John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, and Arnold Berleant, combined ecological awareness with poetic descriptions, showcasing the beauty and sanctity of wild landscapes. Modern thinkers and theorists like Naess, Morton, Berleant, Tagore, and Wordsworth have connected ecological activism with aesthetic appreciation. Tagore has a kind of respect and love for nature but with certain forgivable naivety, which is the same with the Indigenous communities belonging to archaic strata of culture and civilization who indeed have ideas about the eco-aesthetic perspective in views and arts. The chosen classicists, including William Wordsworth and the Romantic Poets, Idolized Nature as a source of beautiful, spiritual, emotionally expressive, and sustainable energy. Edward Abbey merged environmental advocacy with vivid and aesthetic depictions of wild landscapes in works like *Desert Solitaire*.

K.P. Poornachandra Tejaswi is a Kannada writer who focuses on environmentally conscious literature, focusing on the contemporary plight of the environment. He left city lifestyles and high-paying jobs to settle in Modigere as a peasant, emphasizing the importance of nature and the relationship between humans, nature, and the environment. His works, *Jugari Cross*, *Chidambara Rahasya*, and *Carvalho*, have been translated into English and reflect profound ecology principles. *Carvalho* is a novel set in the fictional Norway forest in South India, where a renowned botanist, Carvalho, embarks on a quest to find a prehistoric flying lizard. The story follows a group of people, including a scientist, a naturalist, a photographer, a cook, a snake catcher, and a pet. The narrator is impressed by Carvalho and accompanied on a journey to find the lizard. The novel explores themes such as environment, evolution, and curiosity about natural creatures.

The narrative strategy of reclaiming is one of the most effective approaches to promoting human relation to the world and changing the malign disposition towards nature. It brings humans and nature together, awakening the ecological aspect, bringing back humanity in nature, and evoking emotions. It reflects cultural displacement, educates about ecological disasters, mobilizes for change, and imagines possible more sustainable worlds. The eco-aesthetic narration includes rich references to the position of the landscape and ecosystems, symbolism, and mythologization to restore eternal references to nature. The *Carvalho* of Tejaswi is an instance of narration that glorifies Karnataka's rich flora and fauna while exposing the exploitative side of humans. In Tejaswi's *Carvalho*, storytelling becomes a tool of reclamation by resurrecting the lost sense of wonder in the face of nature to paint an ecological aesthetic in tandem with critical representations of ecologic dissonance and to prod readers into engaging themselves with the environment. Tejaswi expresses his devotion to nature and outcry at the planet's destruction through his works. *Carvalho* used new evidence to document harmony between man and nature, especially emphasizing the reciprocity of the world.

Tejaswi's work involves dignifying ecosystems as characters and presenting ways they affect human and animal beings. He captures the western ghat, forests, and everything that lives within those incredible forests. The narrator, Mandana, Briyani Kariyappa, Carvalho, Yenka, and others have close relationships with wildlife. Tejaswi presents the Lohia philosophy through the journey in the deep forest, discussing the evolution of life and Charles's theory of survival.

He symbolizes the lizard's escape from human cruelty, symbolizing the wilderness as a sanctuary. His characters have a deep bond with nature derived from their environment. In *Carvalho*, the narrator loves and cares for his pet Kiwi and instructs his servant Payara to take care of it. The narrator and Payara are worried about the pet's health, but Payara assures them that he loves Kiwi just as much as his brother. The language used for animals denotes their treatment as humans, such as 'he,' 'him,' and 'brother.' The narrator feels the pain of his pet being bound and tied during treatment, demonstrating the deep bond between humans and animals. Tejaswi treats humans and animals equally, inspiring readers to develop strong bonds. Dr. H. Shashikala's article "*Tejaswi Yamba Vismaya Prapancha*" highlights the difference between the literature of Tejaswi and Kuvempu. Kuvempu sees the forest as a part of human life, while Tejaswi sees it as a challenge to understand and be part of. They capture the desire to find helplessness in the wild and the consequences of human greed.

Tejaswi's work, whose storylines include environmentalism, depicts several natural environmental elements such as biodiversity, protection of nature, and the felling of trees. He condemned the trends of modernization and industrialization, pointing out their destructive, polluting effect on human life. Environmental concern is also featured in his works because it seeks to inform the readers about the problems currently ravaging the ecological world. Nature is the main character of his works, restoring Indigenous knowledge and conveying the readers with humor. His writing has had a long-term impact on Kannada Literature and eco-friendly ideas. The first half of the novel is an allegorical representation of society influenced by industrialization and capitalism, where the poor are victims and crushed under the power of these capitalists. The social disequilibrium focused on the atrocity of police, caste domination, and delayed expensive justice.

Tejaswi is a literary genius who blends ecological themes with Kannada culture and folklore. He employs his works to discuss more general wetland issues, including deforestation and loss of biodiversity, because of portraying the villagers' interaction with forests, rivers, and plant growing seasons. He uses Kannada folklore as an environmental narrative to teach people how to cherish their environment. He highlights indigenous wisdom and practices, such as sustainable farming and herbal medicine, and uses myths and cultural metaphors to frame

ecological issues. He employs language as a cultural and ecological signifier that alludes to the sound patterns of nature's qualities and the tenor of the rural folks. He can be seen as using folklore to evidence the folly of modernity where, in one breath, wisdom while in the next breath, there is ecological calamity resulting from modernization. His works do not simply embellish the cultural diversity of Karnataka but also advocate for protecting its environment and history. Dr. Jalajakshi discusses the ecocritic aspects of Tejaswi's writing in her '*Tejaswiavara Kathasahityadalli Adonikate*.' She argues that the environment teaches us about equality, involving all creatures from nature. Further, he adds that Tejaswi is an eco-writer and an environmental resident who creates an environment where people coexist, including insects, birds, rivers, plants, and trees.

Tejaswi's works represent nature as a background to show the relationship between protagonists and the world. He was a great follower of the Lohiya philosophy, which places more importance on nature. Many of his characters are undergoing transition through trials and transmutations. This theme shows how human actions on the environment mutually affect all forms of life around them. In *Carvalho*, his adventurous journey into the deep forest of Norway illustrates the literal, learning, and searching journey and purpose. Rural life and traditions in Karnataka symbolize a connection to roots and authenticity, while contrasts between light and darkness symbolize ignorance and evil. Tejaswi critiqued social injustices and inequality, using symbols related to caste, class, and exploitation to depict struggles faced by marginalized communities. As an example of social injustice, the novel discusses the forest officials' exploitation of Yankta and his wife for poaching and deforestation. Tejaswi states in his collection of stories '*Narabhakshakaru*' that the message needs to be established while confronting all the conditions of the natural wealth that man uses.

An environment without forests and wild animals looks worse than a graveyard. If I say that forests and wild animals should be preserved, it is more because of my subjective relationship with them than because of my understanding. When we destroy the forests, the animals, and their environment, our younger generation loses a secret, a constant treasure of wonders. Analyzing the suffering of this disaster, based on numbers and theories, people feel like they need to talk about environmental protection. Because of

minds that have not seen or experienced the forest as I have seen it, how can I express my thoughts by analyzing inanimate numbers and creating a response? (Tejaswi-54)

Eco-consciousness is a theme that runs through Tejaswi's literature since most of her characters learn to live with the changing natural world. They virtually embedded characters with the land setting, especially their vegetation, wildlife, and weather cycles. These adaptations are closely associated with culture and spirituality to confirm their cultural identity and responsibility for the environment. Mandanna and Carvalho are the enzymatic characters, and the Narrator and Kariyappa are the middle characters, all balanced playing the needs vs conservation. In *Carvalho*, the protagonist and narrator move to a remote" village, learning about local plants and integrating with their surroundings. Their curiosity and interest in nonhuman life lead to friendships and projects in the Norway forest, part of The Western Ghats from South India. Lankesh reveals his writing concern on nature in his Weekly Lankesh Patrike, "I feel you are an apt person who loves nature deeply after Karant and Kuvempu in Kannada literature. This novel (*Carvalho*) is a mirror phenomenon of environmental destruction. Our pastoral folk are slaving to the devil forces of environmental destructions." (Lankesh)

Tejaswi depicts character transformation in his narrations as they engage with the environment and shift from an anthropomorphic lens to an appreciation of life and its forms. The narrator's visit to Carvalho's office transforms him from having a mere curiosity about wildlife to having a profound appreciation of wilderness. Mandanna acquires a new life after Carvalho discovers a scientist interested in him, changing his social status. The novel delves deep into the psychological realms of extra-plot characters, thus showing their modernity. He stresses the appreciation of indigenous knowledge and cultural practices that aim at maintaining balance in the natural environment. The protagonist, Carvalho, a scientist and narrator, and Mandanna, an experienced explorer, harmoniously reveal the connection between humans and the environment. Tejaswi's travelogues provide details and a comprehensive portrayal of Indigenous flora and fauna, where he mentions honey bees, glow worms, flying lizards, some species of orchids, and bamboo grass, taking the readers into the realm of the wisdom of wildlife. His other works promote a more biocentric approach to the environment and appreciation of indigenous knowledge systems. In *Carvalho*, through a description of the Norway forest extending up the Western Ghats, Tejaswi delves into his fascination with the topographical area and the

landscape. His remarkable ability to narrate a fictional story makes the readers believe it is accurate.

Tejaswi's writings celebrate the aesthetic beauty of nature, highlighting its worth in cherishing and protecting. His realistic descriptions of the Western Ghats and the variety of orchids, ferns, and wildflowers make his work appealing. He has a positive attitude toward nature reflected in anthropomorphizing facets of nature, thereby appealing to readers about these entities from the human. In his writing, Tejaswi manifests great concern for ecological problems when he asserts that nature is the mother to all and the landscape is the director who fosters human personality and happiness; the same feeling can be encouraged by critics of his works. The quote from the story reveals his eco-centric views that "Nature is not part of our life but we are the part of nature." (71). As much as he is proven correct, the notion that there is no life for humans without relations in harmony remains valid. His stories generally revolve around conserving our natural resources and encouraging views regarding environmentalism, although the programs also acknowledge the human part in the process. His works, including *Carvalho*, depict phenomena of environmental degradation and call for the preservation of natural resources. Experiences gained in naturalist and wildlife activities were incorporated into his literary production process, contributing to the discovery of conservation themes. He speaks to some of the most pertinent environmental issues like deforestation, habitat loss, and exploitation of natural resources. His writings focus on preserving the environment and maintaining woodlands so that people can be environmental guardians and promote how culture and ethics convey the readers for nature conservation. It signifies human harmony with nature and the planet.

Ecoaesthetic narration integrates human well-being, cultural flourishing, and ecological health, promoting sustainable practices and social justice. It promotes the readers for the conservation and sustainable practices.

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