



## ECOCRITICAL AWARENESS IN THE NOVEL *ANIMAL'S PEOPLE* BY INDRA SINHA

Ridha Ikhva Erviana<sup>1</sup>, Yuliana Triyani<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1,2</sup>Universitas Pamulang

Email: [dosen01219@unpam.ac.id](mailto:dosen01219@unpam.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>, [ytriyani17@gmail.com](mailto:ytriyani17@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>

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### Abstract

This study aims to depict the ecological crisis and the portrayal of environmental awareness in Indra Sinha's novel *Animal's People* (2007), set against the backdrop of a devastating chemical accident. The research examines how the novel's characters, who are victims of the disaster navigate their disrupted lives while grappling with the environmental chaos that occurs. Through the lens of Greg Garrard's (2004) ecocriticism and ecology theory, this qualitative analysis delves into three distinct forms of environmental awareness: pastoral, wilderness, and dwelling. These concepts are used to unravel how the novel critiques industrial society's impact on nature and advocates for a deeper, more harmonious relationship between humans and their environment. The findings reveal that the characters' struggles are not just for survival but also for reclaiming their connection with the natural world, which has been severely compromised by the disaster. This study highlights the novel's powerful commentary on the urgent need to address environmental degradation and the social injustices intertwined with ecological issues, emphasizing the importance of preserving the surroundings for future generations.

**Keywords:** *ecological crisis, ecocriticism, ecocritical awareness*

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### Introduction

The advent of globalization and the digital economy has brought about significant advancements in technology, contributing to economic growth and improved human life. However, these advancements have had an unintended negative impact on the environment. Increased urbanization, construction of tall buildings, and exploitation of natural resources have resulted in the depletion of green spaces, contributing to the loss of forest areas globally. Indonesia, once known as the "lungs of the world," has seen a

dramatic loss of forests, endangering biodiversity and the well-being of its citizens. Another pressing environmental issue is waste management, which remains a major challenge in many countries, including Indonesia. The nation's waste volume has steadily increased, with 70 million tons recorded in 2022 (Duka, 2022). The management of this waste continues to be a concern, as improper waste disposal contributes to environmental pollution and health issues. This problem is not unique to Indonesia but is a global concern, necessitating collective efforts in promoting responsible waste management and environmental education. The challenge of addressing environmental degradation is compounded by societal habits that prioritize convenience over environmental responsibility. In some developed countries, sophisticated waste management systems and early childhood education about environmental stewardship have led to more sustainable practices. However, developing nations often lack the necessary infrastructure and governmental systems to address waste management effectively, further exacerbating environmental issues.

In light of these concerns, ecocriticism has emerged as an important field of study within literary studies, emphasizing the relationship between literature and the environment. Ecocriticism broadly examines the relationships between literature, the environment, and human culture (Madula et al., 2017; Garrard, 2004). Moreover, Bachtiar (2019) stated that the primary goal of ecocriticism in literary criticism is to contribute to the resolution of environmental degradation and the preservation of the biosphere. On the other hand, in his comprehensive work, Garrard (2004), contended that "accessible volume traces the development of the movement and explores the concepts that have most occupied ecocritics, including pastoral, wilderness, and dwelling" (p. 12). Pastoral literature advocates for humans to view themselves not as owners of the earth, but as stewards who should treat the environment with respect and care for other species (Garrard, 2004). Pastoral literature often portrays nature in ways that encourage environmental care and protection. Garrard (2004) argued that categorized the pastoral into three branches; 1) classical pastoral, 2) romantic pastoral, and 3) American pastoralism.

Wilderness, within the context of ecocriticism, represents a perspective that emphasizes the preservation of nature, while maintaining a comfortable lifestyle. Meanwhile, Wilderness refers to natural environments that remain untouched by human civilization, presenting a powerful construct of nature (Gerrard, 2004). These areas are specifically organized to protect ecosystems and species, offering a retreat for individuals seeking to escape the moral and material challenges of urban life. In ecocriticism

wilderness is significant as it symbolizes a renewed and authentic relationship between humanity and the earth (Garrard, 2004).

Ecocriticism generally categorizes wilderness into two distinct views regarding its treatment. Garrard (2004) believed that new world wilderness is different with old world wilderness. On the other hand, The concept of dwelling in ecocriticism is inherently positive as it emphasizes living in harmony with one's environment. It is also significant because it challenges more transient or superficial interactions with nature, advocating instead for a deep, long-lasting connection with the land and its history.

Regarding the concept of dwelling in ecocriticism, Garrard (2004) contented that “dwelling is not a transient state; rather, it implies the long-term imbrication of humans in a landscape of memory, ancestry, and death of ritual, life, and work” (p. 108). Garrard’s inclusion of “memory, ancestry, and death” emphasizes that dwelling involves a recognition of the past and a connection to those who have come before. It is a state of being that respects the history of the land and acknowledges the cycles of life and death that occur within it. This connection to the past is crucial in fostering a sense of place and belonging. Dwelling also encompasses the daily activities and rituals that sustain life. These are not merely functional but are imbued with meaning, contributing to the ongoing relationship between humans and the landscape. This idea opposes the notion of nature as a backdrop for human activity; instead, nature and human life are deeply connected through the rhythms of work, life, and ritual.

Novels remain popular and serve as valuable learning resources for the younger generation. Clearly, “novel writing prose is long and contains a series of stories about a person’s life with those around him by accentuating the character and nature of the perpetrators” (Siswanto, 2008, p. 141). Unlike more complex genres like romance, the issues explored in novels are usually diverse, and the events are often confined to a specific period. Related to the ecocriticism, the novel *Animal's People* by Indra Sinha provides a compelling exploration of the intersection of industrialization, environmental degradation, and human suffering, particularly in the context of the Bhopal disaster.

There are two objectives of this study. First, it is to find out and describe the depiction of human attitudes towards environmental concerns shown by the characters in Indra Sinha's novel *Animal's People*. The last, it is to describe the dealing of the character and the community of Khaufpur as they experience an ecological crisis in the novel.

This research contributes to the field by highlighting the role of literature in environmental discourse, offering insights into how narratives

like *Animal's People* can influence readers' perceptions of ecological crises and human responsibility. Through this study, the writer seeks to emphasize the importance of ecocritical awareness in contemporary literary analysis and its potential to foster a more sustainable and environmentally conscious society.

### **Research Methods**

A qualitative descriptive approach is used in this study. Qualitative research began with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2016). Qualitative approach focused on how the researchers understand the concepts, experiences, and thoughts in a story of the object of the analysis. It means the results of the analysis are described in the form of an explanation of words. This method is used to describe human attitudes toward an environmental concern and dealing of ecological crisis on the Khaufpur community in the novel *Animal's People* by Indra Sinha.

### ***Data Collection***

There are several steps to collect data for analyzing the object of the study. The first step was to read the novel *Animal's People* by Indra Sinha. The second step, the writer revisited the story thoroughly by rereading and paying close attention to the details of each word to identify the central issue by noting. After that, the data were classified according to similarities or differences to refine the selection for analysis. This classified data were then structured to form a conclusion based on the most dominant findings. Finally, the data were elaborated by using relevant theories that supported the primary issue of the study, which focused on ecocriticism and ecology.

### ***Data analysis***

In this data analysis, the novel *Animal's People* by Indra Sinha is analyzed. The analysis focuses on human attitudes towards environmental concerns shown by the characters as well as to find out and analyze the ecological crisis that affects the characters in affected communities in the novel *Animal's People* by Indra Sinha. Garrard's ecocriticism and ecology theory was used to analyze the attitudes of disaster-affected communities toward the environment and to analyze the effect of ecological crisis was also applied to this research perspective. After the disaster, natural damage by humans has made the conditions in the affected areas undergo many changes. One of them is damage to the air, soil, and water, which indirectly also affects how the characters deal with the ecological crisis that happened in their current environment. The conclusions in this qualitative descriptive study later produced new findings that can be the answer to the research problem. The conclusion is in the form of a description of the object of this

study. Finally, at this step, the results and conclusions of the study were gotten.

## Results and Discussion

### *Results*

The ecocritical awareness which are presented in this story is based on a boy's existence in an environment affected by a chemical accident, that is played by the main character, Animals. This novel talks about a young guy named Animal, who is the story's protagonist, he was born with malformed legs due to a chemical accident and has endured a life of misery. Animal is a strong, resourceful person who uses his intelligence and cunning to live despite his challenges. The narrative chronicles his quest to learn the truth about the catastrophe and those responsible for it to assist his community receive justice. The novel is a powerful depiction of the challenges of the disaster survivors, who must contend not only with the psychological and physical wounds left by the tragedy but also with the pervasive poverty, corruption, and unfairness that blights their lives.

There are some environmental awareness depicted in the novel *Animal's People*. Those environmental awareness done by the character in the novel can be categorized into three branches of environmental awareness such as pastoral issue, wilderness issue, and dwelling issue (Garrard, 2004). The environmental awareness dealing with pastoral issues depicted by the character appears 6 times. Related to pastoral issue, the character reflects the classic pastoral idea of finding peace, harmony, and stability between nature and human. Moreover, there is one picture of classical pastoral theme when the character's reluctance to share his story and his self-deprecating description of him as "a small person who is not even human" highlight a deep sense of humility and connection to the larger realm. This reflects the classic pastoral ideal of finding peace and stability in nature, away from the disruptive forces of societal change. Besides, there are two picture of romantic pastoral theme found in the novel.

Afterward, the environmental awareness shown by the character who deals with wilderness also appears 6 time. They are shown by the character in the novel through various events such as when a character uses some words like "trees, rainbow, and the act of making the earth". It underscores a profound bond with the wild aspects of nature. The protagonist's interactions with these elements highlight a deeper ecological awareness and an understanding of the interconnectedness of life. Most of wilderness issue depicted by the characters also used to show critiques related to the exploitation and manipulation of the wilderness for human benefit that lead to ecological crisis. Meanwhile, related to dwelling issues, it

appears 5 times. From the data, it is discovered that environmental factors and historical experiences have shaped how human civilization views nature as a place of habitation.

On the other hand, there are 6 pictures in the novel that describe how the character deals with the ecological crisis. One of examples is they face environmental injustice when the most vulnerable populations are subjected not only to the physical dangers of pollution but also to the psychological and social harm stemming from systemic corruption and denial.

## ***Discussion***

### ***Environmental Awareness Depicted in the Animal's People***

The culture of protecting the surrounding environment has been introduced and instilled for centuries by our predecessors. This environmental awareness shows how the existence of character instills this in social life.

#### ***Pastoral Issues***

The pastoralism in the novel can be seen in the quotation below.

*"I said, I am a small person not even human, what difference will my story make? You told me that sometimes the stories of small people in this world can achieve big things, this is the way you buggers always talk". (Sinha, 2007, p. 3)*

From the quotation above, it is clear how the author wants to convey a picture of how humans can have stability with nature without having to destroy it. The character's reluctance to share his story and his self-deprecating description of him as "a small person who is not even human" highlight a deep sense of humility and connection to the larger realm. This reflects the classic pastoral ideal of finding peace and stability in nature, away from the disruptive forces of societal change. Moreover, the character's concern for the impacts he feels in the story shows a broader awareness of environmental issues, which is in line with the principles of ecocriticism. Pastoralism in this context, functions as a critique of modern industrial society, stating that true harmony can only be achieved by recognizing and appreciating the interconnectedness of all forms of life. This depiction emphasizes the need to protect nature to maintain balance and stability.

The quotation below describes a character who has advantages when he has physical limitations.

*"I know most of the Inglis words, those I don't know spit their meanings into my ear. C'est normal. Since I was small I could hear people's thoughts even when their lips were shut, plus I'd get en passant comments from all types of things, animals, birds, trees, rocks giving the time of day. What are these voices, no good asking me. When at last I told Ma Franci about them, she got worried, soit un fléau soit une bénédiction, curse or blessing, that's*



*what she said. Well, she should know whose own brain's full of warring angels and demons." (Sinha, 2007, p. 8)*

From the data above, it is also explained how the author views stability between humans and the natural environment as an essential aspect of pastoralism. The protagonist's ability to hear thoughts and receive messages from animals, birds, trees, and rocks highlights a deep, almost mystical connection with nature. The words "animals, birds, trees, and rocks" indicate that the protagonist's ability to hear thoughts and receive messages from other creatures highlights a deep and almost mystical connection with nature. This connection suggests a form of communication and understanding that transcends the human experience, emphasizing a harmonious relationship with the natural world. The character's interactions with nature and his interpretation of the voices he hears reflect the classic pastoral ideal of finding stability and comfort in the natural environment. By illustrating how the protagonist navigates his world with great sensitivity to the natural elements around him, Sinha underlines the importance of maintaining balance with nature. This balance is described as a source of resilience against the chaotic and often destructive forces of societal change.

The next quotation shows that one of the character's duties is to spy on troublemakers if at any time they act as they please in this residence or environment.

*"So Eyes, this was my job, to keep my eyes and ears open and report to Zafar if anything unusual was going on in the bastis. I was to listen in the streets and chai shops, find out what the government, municipal etc. were up to, because those buggers are always up to no good. Thus within weeks I caught a plan to evict some people from near the railway and told Zafar, who put an end to it. People showed me respect because I was one of Zafar's" (Sinha, 2007, p. 27)*

In the quotation above, the author seems to be telling how the characters in the novel try to behave as if the human environment needs to be stabilized against the natural environment, which becomes a reference so that nature and humans can survive. This can be said to be ecocritical, where pastoralism is taken into consideration to convey ideas about ecocriticism. In the passage, the protagonist's role in the community is highlighted. His job is to observe and report any unusual activity to Zafar, who represents the authority figure and protector of society. The figures' vigilance and efforts to prevent the eviction of communities around the railroad tracks show a strong sense of responsibility towards the human environment. This role is in line with the principle of pastoralism, where the stability and welfare of society are closely related to health and environmental protection.

The quotation below shows that the character describes the atmosphere of his environment and can influence the natural surroundings.

*“Step through one of these holes, you’re into another world. Gone are city noises, horns of trucks and autos, voices of women in the Nutcracker, kids shouting, all erased by the high wall. Listen, how quiet it’s. No bird song. No hoppers in the grass. No bee hum. Insects can’t survive here. Wonderful poisons the Kampani made, so good it’s impossible to get rid of them, after all these years they’re still doing their work.” (Sinha, 2007, p. 29-30)*

This quotation also vividly contrasts the factory’s insular environment with the outside world, emphasizing its transformative impact. The description of the factory as a realm isolated from the city’s vibrancy—characterized by the absence of familiar urban sounds—highlights the profound environmental impact of industrial pollution. The word "Gone are city noises" underscores how the factory creates a sensory void, reflecting the extensive ecological disruption caused by industrial activities. The quotation above can be called a pastoral form because the author explains how the thinking above discusses the stability of the human and natural environment. Even though humans do not show they can live stable this is also part of ecocriticism, where the author explains how the human environment can influence the natural surroundings.

The next quotation below shows a portrait of the factory area which has a detrimental impact on the natural environment.

*“A little way off, across the tracks and near the factory wall, is a falling down tower of stone with grass growing out of its walls. Some bigwig built it hundreds of years ago, in those days the factory lands were orchards. It was maybe a tomb, no one knows its purpose, when the poison factory came and threw its wall around the orchards, this ruin was left outside.” (Sinha, 2007, p. 42-43)*

The quotation above shows how ecocriticism is depicted in the novel by the author, where stability between society and nature can actually occur if humans as residents of the earth can take better care of it, so that the environment and nature will be better. This passage juxtaposes the historical and the contemporary, highlighting the transformation of a landscape from a place of pastoral beauty to one dominated by industrial blight. The word “a falling down tower of stone with grass growing out of its walls”, symbolizes a forgotten past and the resilience of nature. It represents a time when the land was productive and cared for, contrasting sharply with the current state of degradation following the establishment of the factory. This is in contrast to the romantic pastoral concept, which highlights the period after the industrial revolution which saw “rural independence” as is not reflected in the current condition of Khaufpur village.



The quotation below literally spells out the idea of human and natural stability.

*"This was the bird-shit scam, we'd play it with me as the number one and Faqri like today flicking the bird-shit. Usually Abdul Saliq would find us the number three, had to be a specialist. We earned well, until I got caught. See, if you are going to con people and get away with it you have to be able to vanish in a crowd, but not many Khaufpuris go on fours" (Part 120-121).*

This passage, ecocritically, the "bird-shit scam" can be seen as a metaphor for the environmental degradation and the pervasive presence of waste in Khaufpur. The scam's reliance on substances often considered waste or byproducts underscores the community's intimate relationship with pollution and decay. This familiarity with waste contrasts sharply with the romanticized pastoral ideal, where nature is pristine and untainted. The passage also touches on issues of visibility and marginalization. The protagonist's reference to "vanishing in a crowd" and the difficulty of doing so due to his physical appearance suggests a critique of how marginalized individuals are often hyper-visible and yet socially invisible, leading to cycles of criminalization and exploitation. This reflects broader themes in ecocriticism that examine how environmental and social injustices intersect, particularly for vulnerable communities.

#### *Wilderness Issues*

Ecocriticism generally categorizes wilderness into two distinct views regarding its treatment. Garrard (2004) believed that new world wilderness, especially prominent in later American literature, adopts the pastoral trope of 'retreat', portraying wilderness not as something to fear, but as a sanctuary. This new world wilderness concept has significantly influenced the 'American identity', often presenting encounters with the wilderness that led to a more 'authentic existence' (Garrard, 2004). The other explanation, old world wilderness, views it as a realm beyond civilization's borders, often perceived as a threat or a place of exile (Garrard, 2004). According to him, the old world wilderness view reflects a historical fear of nature as a wild and untamed force, representing a place beyond the safe confines of human society.

The wilderness point of view in the novel can be seen in the quotation below.

*"The voice tells me things I couldn't know, shows me stuff I don't want to see. If I could open a window and run I would but no escape there's, the window opens inward, to the visions and uncapturable beauty. The trees are tusked in Siva, I vomit rainbows, when I dung I make the earth." (Sinha, 2007, p. 347)*

This quote describes a mystical and transformative relationship between the characters and the wild that seems familiar but feels sad. The imagery of the words “trees, rainbows, and the act of making the earth” underscores a profound bond with the wild aspects of nature. The wilderness here represents both beauty and chaos, reflecting the uncontrollable and untamed forces of the natural world. The protagonist's interactions with these elements highlight a deeper ecological awareness and an understanding of the interconnectedness of life. In the face of ecological crisis, this bond with the wilderness provides a sense of identity and purpose, helping the character navigate the challenges posed by environmental degradation.

The next quotation describes the character's difficulties while living in a damaged environment.

*“I am a small burning, freezing creature, naked and alone in a vast world, in a wilderness where is neither food nor water and not a single friendly soul. But I'll not be bullied. If this self of mine doesn't belong in this world, I'll be my own world, I'll be a world complete in myself.” (Sinha, 2007, p. 350)*

This quotation emphasizes Animal's profound sense of isolation and struggle in a metaphorical wilderness. His declaration to become his own world reflects his resilience and determination to survive despite the harsh and hostile environment. The wilderness here represents not just a physical space but also a state of being—an embodiment of the ecological crisis that has rendered his world barren and uninhabitable. Animal's struggle to carve out his own existence amidst this desolation mirrors the broader struggle of humanity to find balance and survival in an increasingly damaged ecosystem. This part is reflected in the ecocriticism of the old world wilderness which is treated as a threat and feels like a foreign place for Animals living in an unhealthy environment.

The quotation below describes the condition of Animals character every day, who longs for a beautiful life in his environment. “Across the valley trees on another hillside are churning in an invisible storm. I'm lying on my side, looking up into the sky, which is dark, above me large birds are circling.” (Sinha, 2007, p. 351) This passage vividly captures the dynamic and often violent changes in the natural world surrounding Animal. The “invisible storm” and the churning trees underscore the turmoil and unpredictability of nature, reflecting the broader ecological instability caused by human actions. The presence of circling birds and the shifting weather patterns reflect the internal chaos within Animals and the precariousness of their existence. This aligns with the wilderness theme, showcasing nature's raw and untamed aspects, and how it parallels the disrupted lives of people like the character

Animal and other villagers, who must navigate and endure the repercussions of ecological disasters.

The next quotation explains Animal's suffering so far living like in the wilderness. "That night I died. I crawled down from that tree to find somewhere to finish. Fever was crackling in me, I was dry as a sucked-out, shrivelled orange, the lizard was waiting." (Sinha, 2007, p. 351) This passage captures a moment of intense physical and existential crisis for Animal, set against the backdrop of a wilderness that is both literal and metaphorical. His description of crawling down from the tree in a feverish state, feeling desiccated like a "sucked-out, shrivelled orange," vividly conveys his physical suffering and the extremity of his condition. The wilderness here is a place of trial and near-death experience, where Animal confronts the limits of his endurance. The mention of the lizard waiting adds a predatory element to the scene, emphasizing the hostility of the natural world around him.

From an ecocritical perspective, this passage highlights the intersection of human and environmental suffering. Animal's physical deterioration can be seen as a direct consequence of the ecological disaster that has ravaged his community. The wilderness, in this context, is a space where the character's personal crisis is amplified by the broader environmental crisis. The imagery of dryness and decay reflects the larger theme of environmental degradation and its impact on human life.

The other quotation that explains wilderness is;

*"The buffalo says, 'Here I am far from my two Italian greyhounds to offer you a big important job with the Kampani with plenty of salary plus you can ride in my car.' Evening brings Pandit Somraj walking towards me through the trees. He's holding two birds, one per hand, squeezing them to make them sing, says he, 'No music in this world you cannot learn.'"*  
(Sinha, 2007, p. 349)

In this quotation, the imagery of the buffalo and the birds in the hands of Pandit Somraj underscores the complex relationship between humans and the wilderness. The buffalo's offer represents the industrial and capitalist forces encroaching on the natural world, while Somraj's interaction with the birds symbolizes a more intimate, albeit controlling, connection with nature. This scene critiques the exploitation and manipulation of the wilderness for human benefit, reflecting the broader theme of ecological crisis. Animal's interactions with these characters highlight his position between these conflicting forces, showing how the ecological crisis affects not only the environment but also human relationships and societal structures.

#### *Dwelling Issues*

Regarding to the idea of dwelling in ecocriticism, it is discovered that environmental factors and historical experiences have shaped how human civilization views nature as a place of habitation.

The following quotation talks about the place where Animals and other people live in an environment affected by a chemical accident.

*"When jarnaliss and foreigners come to Khaufpur they always think the factory is a big building. It isn't. Its wall seems never-ending, and inside is an area equal to the whole of the Nutcracker. Here and there are holes in the wall as if a giant has banged his fist through, it's where people have dug out bricks for their houses, our end of the Nutcracker is made mostly of death factory. Look inside, you see something strange, a forest is growing, tall grasses, bushes, trees, creepers that shoot sprays of flowers like fireworks". (Sinha 2007, p. 29)*

The passage describes a place "death factory" that has been deeply affected by human tragedy yet it has also become a part of the local community's existence. The word "death factory" indicates that once a site of industrial activity and disaster, have been integrated into the daily lives of the people who live in its shadow. The factory, now a part of the community's physical and cultural landscape, holds layers of meaning—memories of the disaster, the ongoing struggle for survival, and the resilience of both the people and the environment. The word "you see something strange, a forest is growing, tall grasses, bushes, trees, creepers that shoot sprays of flowers like fireworks" describes how nature begins to reclaim the space that has been destroyed by humans, this chaotic dwelling has become part of the existence of the local community forced to become part of their home. This is not simply about residing in a place; dwelling is about more than just physical habitation; it reflects a holistic engagement with the environment that includes cultural and ancestral ties. As well as the rituals and work that give life meaning, all of which shape and are shaped by the human experience, and how these elements together create a deep sense of belonging and identity that persists over time.

The quotation below describes the atmosphere in the village at night which is always the same but looks different. "Endless the way home is, there's moonlight on the ground, splashed all over, making familiar ways strange, it's glittering in the gutters, washing over small unlovely things, transforming them into precious objects." (Sinha, 2007, p. 272) The quotation speaks to this concept of dwelling by capturing a moment where the familiar landscape is transformed into something both strange and beautiful under the moonlight. The word "endless the way home" suggests a journey that is not just physical but also metaphorical, representing a deeper connection to the place that is being navigated. Moreover, the quote reflects the idea that dwelling is not a transient state but an ongoing, enduring relationship with a place. The landscape is not just a backdrop for human activity; it is an active participant in the lives of those who dwell within it, shaping their experiences, memories, and identities.

The word "moonlight on the ground, splashed all over, making familiar ways strange, it's glittering in the gutters, washing over small unlovely things, transforming them into precious objects" highlights the idea that dwelling allows for a re-interpretation of the environment. Even the mundane and overlooked aspects of the landscape are imbued with new meaning and value. In short, the quote fits the context of Garrard's ideas about dwelling involves a profound engagement with the environment that encompasses life, memory, and meaning, which portrays a landscape that is both intimately known and perpetually mysterious. A place where the familiar and the strange coexist, and where every small detail of the environment holds significance. This reflects the idea that dwelling is a long-term, multifaceted relationship with a place that shapes and is shaped by the people who live there.

In short, those quotations align with Garrard's concept of dwelling by portraying a place deeply marked by memory, death of ritual, and life. The factory, now a haunted and shunned location, serves as a powerful reminder of how spaces can be imbued with the past, transforming them into significant sites of memory and reflection. The animal making its lair in the abandoned factory represents the ongoing, cyclical nature of dwelling, where places evolve and are continuously redefined by their history and the natural world

### ***Form of Facing the Ecological Crisis***

According to Garrard (2004), by examining the cultural constructs and representations of nature, ecocriticism offers valuable insights into how literature can both reflect and influence societal attitudes toward the environment. In this way, ecocriticism serves as a vital tool for understanding the ecological challenges depicted in literary works and advocating for a more just and sustainable world. The quotation below shows the actions of government officials that influence distrust in government and worsen the social and psychological clash of the ecological crisis.

*"...everyone here knows it. Government types are lying. Zahreel Khan the minister himself came here to the Nutcracker and in front of a crowd of jornaliss took a glass of well water and drank it to show it was safe. But Chhoté Ram, son of Mukund the tailor saw him a minute later go behind a house and stick two fingers down his throat." (Sinha, 2007, p. 110)*

This quotation underscores the profound mistrust and systemic corruption that intensify the ecological crisis in Khaufpur. The word "everyone here knows it" reveals a widespread awareness among the locals about the contamination of their water supply, despite the government's denial of this truth. Moreover, this incident highlights the stark divide between the lived experiences of the local people and the official narrative

promoted by those in authority. The fact that "everyone here knows it" but "government types are lying" emphasizes the disconnect between the affected community and the institutions meant to protect them. The minister's public act of drinking well water to "show it was safe" is a symbolic gesture intended to reassure the public and uphold the illusion of safety. However, the fact that he "stick two fingers down his throat" which means secretly induced vomiting afterward exposes the hypocrisy and deceit embedded in the government's approach to the crisis. This deceptive show of confidence highlights the calculated efforts of those in power to downplay the severity of the environmental contamination, prioritizing public image over public health. His actions also symbolize a broader issue of environmental injustice, where those in power can shield themselves from the crisis's consequences while the vulnerable population is left to bear the toxic burden.

The passage also illustrates the helplessness of the Khaufpur people in the face of governmental and corporate denial. The minister's actions exemplify how authorities manipulate information to maintain their control, despite the undeniable reality of the contamination. This manipulation worsens the ecological crisis by preventing genuine accountability and meaningful intervention, leaving the residents to suffer the ongoing effects of their polluted environment. This gap between reality and the government's official stance deepens the residents' feelings of betrayal and abandonment, exacerbating the social and psychological toll of the ecological crisis. The passage emphasizes the theme of environmental injustice, where the most vulnerable populations are subjected not only to the physical dangers of pollution but also to the psychological and social harm stemming from systemic corruption and denial.

The next quotation highlights the exploitation and manipulation of people in the aftermath of the ecological disaster. "That Kampani is the very devil. They made it free deliberately because they knew that the poor have no money for the other hospitals." (Sinha, 2007, p. 147) The word "Kampani is the very devil" describes the malevolent role of the corporation responsible for the industrial catastrophe. At first, they appeared to be helping the community by offering free health services. However, the underlying motive is far more sinister—this gesture is a calculated effort to control the narrative and present a facade of corporate responsibility. Furthermore, the metaphor of the word shows the moral bankruptcy of such corporations, highlighting the ethical and human costs of their actions. The fact that these services are provided at no cost poured into words "because they knew that the poor have no money for the other hospitals" reveals the corporation's awareness of the residents' dire economic situation, which they exploit to their advantage. This exploitation of the poor people underscores the intersection of environmental and social injustice, where those responsible for the disaster now use the resulting poverty to maintain their power and influence.

Moreover, the passage touches on the broader issue of environmental injustice, where poor people bear the brunt of ecological disasters and are left with minimal resources to manage the aftermath. The corporation's



exploitation of their vulnerability perpetuates a vicious cycle of poverty and environmental degradation, trapping the marginalized in a system that continues to cause them harm. This analysis calls for systemic change to address the root causes of environmental and social injustice, emphasizing the moral imperative to hold corporations accountable for their actions to protect the rights and well-being of vulnerable communities. The passage serves as a compelling critique of how corporate greed exacerbates ecological crises, leaving poor people to suffer devastating consequences.

The next quotation below explains a powerful condemnation of the extreme environmental degradation and the resulting human suffering.

"Take a look. It's not just blacked out streets and killer traffic, people in this city tolerate open sewers, garbage everywhere, poisoned wells, poisoned babies, doctors who don't do their jobs, corrupt politicians, thousands of sick that no one seems to care about." (Sinha, 2007, p. 151)

The stark depiction of "open sewers, garbage everywhere, poisoned wells" illustrates the city's severe neglect and decay. The ecological disaster goes beyond physical degradation; it is deeply intertwined with social and political failures. The words "poisoned babies" and "thousands of sick" highlight the tragic human toll of this environmental catastrophe, where the most vulnerable are the first to bear the consequences. The failure of healthcare professionals and the corruption among politicians further exacerbate the crisis, transforming it into a pervasive catastrophe affecting every aspect of Khaufpur's life. This imagery of decay and corruption underscores the idea that a broader societal breakdown mirrors the environmental collapse.

Moreover, the passage reflects the normalization of this dire situation, as the people of Khaufpur are described as "tolerating" these conditions. This tolerance suggests a sense of resignation or helplessness, where the inhabitants are forced to accept the intolerable because they have no other choice. The ecological crisis has become so ingrained in their daily lives that it is no longer questioned, only endured. The term "tolerate" also implies a collective desensitization to the suffering and environmental decay surrounding them, further deepening the tragedy. This normalization of the crisis serves as a critical commentary on how prolonged exposure to environmental degradation can erode the very fabric of a community, leading to a state where even the most horrific conditions are accepted as the norm.

Lastly, the passage encapsulates the notion that the ecological crisis in Khaufpur is not merely an environmental issue but also a profound moral and ethical failure. The city's acceptance of poisoned water, sick children, and corrupt governance reflects a broader collapse of care and responsibility. The ecological disaster has exposed the failures of those in power—individuals and institutions meant to protect and provide for the community—who instead perpetuate a cycle of suffering. This failure of governance and social responsibility exacerbates the crisis, making it evident that the disaster in Khaufpur is as much about the collapse of human systems as it is about the destruction of the natural environment.

The next quotation offers a complex interplay of destruction and opposing narratives of hope for renewal after the industrial disaster. "...the factory is still there, blackened by fire it's, but the grass is growing again, and the charred jungle is pushing out green shoots." (Sinha, 2007, p. 365) The word "the factory is still there, blackened by fire it's" shows as a haunting relic, a stark monument to the unchecked industrial forces that ravaged the environment. The eternal presence of the factory underscores the persistent consequences of such devastation, suggesting that the wounds inflicted upon the ecosystem are far from healed. This image sums up the concept of environmental legacy, emphasizing how the repercussions of industrial pollution can persist long after the initial event.

However, the passage also introduces a countervailing narrative of hope. The emergence of the word "the grass is growing again, and the charred jungle is pushing out green shoots" symbolizes nature's resilience and it is the innate capacity to regenerate. This imagery evokes a sense of optimism, suggesting that life can find a way to endure even in the face of adversity. Yet, this renewal is tempered by the ongoing presence of the factory, highlighting the precarious nature of ecological recovery. The juxtaposition of destruction and regeneration underscores the complex and multifaceted nature of the environmental crisis, suggesting that while nature possesses remarkable restorative powers, human-induced damage can leave lasting scars. The image of the factory and the growing vegetation together form a powerful metaphor for the ongoing struggle between humanity and the environment, a battle that continues to shape the future of our planet. Ultimately, this incident invites us to reflect on the delicate balance between human progress in terms of industrialization and environmental preservation.

## **Conclusion**

The form of environmental concern shown by the author in his characters is in terms of the theme of pastoral, dwelling, and wilderness to criticize the impact of modern industrial society on the environment and social justice. The depiction of the lives of the characters and their surroundings highlights the dissonance between nature and human actions. The imagery and symbolism emphasize the need for harmony between humanity and the environment. The exploration of the theme of dwelling emphasizes the importance of respecting and loving one's place of residence. In the study of ecocriticism, dwelling goes beyond mere habitation; it involves an enduring relationship with the land, shaped by memory, ancestry, and the rhythms of life. The novel portrays this through the characters' interactions with a landscape marked by a chemical disaster, where nature begins to reclaim spaces once dominated by industrial activity. The narrative explores the emotional and psychological significance of dwelling, showing how familiar landscapes and the creation of new homes serve as sources of healing and renewal. The Khaufpur community despite

the hardships they face, demonstrates a deep connection to their land, which is closely intertwined with their identity and cultural heritage. This connection highlights the broader implications of environmental degradation, not only on the physical landscape but also on the cultural and social fabric of society.

In addressing the ecological crisis, *Animal's People* underscores the intersection of environmental and social concerns through movements like ecofeminism, social ecology, and ecological justice. This is marked by the characters' responses to the ecological crisis being faced, which is depicted by a complex interaction between disbelief, resignation, and a sense of doom. Lack of knowledge makes them act and feel that the incident is superstitious, therefore many of the victims are always in denial. Other factors of the impact of the ecological crisis such as poverty and their lack of power in the eyes of the government also worsen the situation. The existence of systemic corruption practices and environmental injustice exacerbate the ecological crisis, as seen in government fraud and exploitation of vulnerable populations. As a result, the victims only wait for the uncertainty of assistance from the government and philanthropists to survive during the chaos. The crisis is also not just an environmental or physical reality but is deeply embedded in the psychological and cultural structure of society. Despite the destruction, the narrative offers a contrasting theme of natural resilience, which symbolizes hope amidst ongoing environmental challenges. analyze how literature, through ecocritical analysis, can raise awareness about environmental crises and promote a more responsible and sustainable relationship with nature.

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