Interconnectiveness of man and nature and the Art of survival in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* and Anita Desai*'s The Village by the Sea*

By

Harrison Iweka Nwachukwu
Department Of English and Communication Art,
Faculty of Humanities,
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Port Harcourt

Maria Ajima, PhD
Benue State University, Makurdi
&
Chris K. Ukande, PhD
Benue State University Makurdi

Abstract

This paper investigates Hemingway's masterpiece *The Old Man and the Sea and* Anita Desai*'s The Village by the Sea* from the ecocritical perspective. Under the circumstances of the severe ecological crisis, ecocriticism has become a hot topic. Ecocriticism opened the gates for critics to analyze elements of and treatment of nature and land in literature. This article portrays Santiago the old man and his relationship with the sea. The novel profoundly depict nature's impact on human life and man's relationship with animals and Anita Desai's popular novel *The Village by the Sea* delineates Hari's quitting his village for lack of development options and his self-development in Bombay, where, after passing through a series of difficulties the boy learns adaptation, self-reliance, self-esteem, professional skills and ultimately gains maturity.

Introduction

Ecocriticism explores how authors represent the interaction of human and the natural environment. It investigates human beings' relationship, culture, attitudes, ideas towards nature and its consequences so that the increasing gap between the relation of mankind and nature can be decreased. No institution or constitution can solve such ecocritical problems unless we, the human beings will understand nature as it is and will become able to create bond towards our surroundings.

Today, it is necessary to write and present a study of nature and its relationship with human beings in Post Modern English literature from an ecological perspective. It is

important to know how human being interpret and represent nature, the environment and their relationship portrayed in literature. This ecocritical interpretative approach to study literature will contribute in balancing and harmonizing Man - Nature relations; so that global issues of environment can be solved. This article focuses on the remarkable novels of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and The Sea* and Anita Desai's *The Village by the sea* that profoundly depict nature's impact on human life and man's relationship with animals. The world of nature and its different forms and deep concerns with human life are strongly reflected in these novels.

The Old Man and The Sea is a famous work by Ernest Hemingway. In Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, one can see the major role of nature. The major setting of the novel is in the wilderness of the sea. The novel is based on the struggle of old fisherman for catching big marline fish in Gulf Stream. The main character of the novel is Santiago the old fisherman is unable to catch a fish for continuously eighty-four days. His apprentice, a boy called Manolin, under the pressure of his parents, leaves him and shifts with another boat. Santiago is completely alone. On the 85th day he catches a big marline. He struggles for three days to kill the fish. After killing the fish he ties it to the side of the boat. While returning to harbor, due to the smell of marline's blood a group of sharks is attracted towards the dead fish. They eat the whole fish of the marline. In the end of the novel after a fierce fight, Santiago returns to the harbor only with the big skeleton of the fish. The famous line of the story is - Man Can be destroyed but not defeated.

The Village by the Sea is a story of survival set in a small fishing villlage near Bombay. Lila and Hari, aged 13 and 12, struggle to keep the family, including two young sisters, going when their mother is ill and their father usually the worse for drink. When Hari goes to Bombay to find work, Lila seems to be responsible for everything. Although the book paints a picture of extreme poverty, it demonstrates the strength of the family even in the most extreme circumstances and offers a powerful picture of another culture.

Discussion

The Ecocritical Analysis in *the Old Man and the Sea*

The Relationship between Nature and man can be easily seen in Ernest Hemingway's masterpiece *The Old Man and the Sea*. It deals with natural elements and it's all about Nature versus Man, as well as their interdependence. The sea and man play a vital role in *The Old Man and the Sea.* The nature of man and his attitude of overpowering nature along with the attitude of the sea forms the essence. The plot is mainly set in a frail little boat, which carries an equally frail-looking old man named Santiago. At his age, Santiago should probably fish close to the shore, but he ventures far out. His bravery was a foolishness act of a blind

hero who had no thoughts and was the last resort for a patient and desperately desperate man after waiting 84 days to catch a fish. His bravery was overconfidence; this reminded him of his thoughts and activated his body and made him fully prepared to face any accidental event that was above his ability. He believes he will succeed because he knows some "trick" about the sea and thinks he is strong enough to catch a big fish. He feels hopeful that his luck will soon turn again. Santiago is so optimistic that, he refuses to let his past bad luck cast a shadow over his present opportunity.

In *The Old Man and the Sea*, what is the relationship between the old man and the sea? When he was tired, the old man considered bed as his friend. But the sea and the boat were the bed on which he gained strength. The old man loved the sea, and he considered the sea as a woman, a lovely little woman who could even act coquettishly. If she did something reckless or naughty, that was because she could help it. He would not blame her. He appreciated the beauty of the nature. At the same time, he forgave the cruel sea. In the old man's heart, human was not in the center of the nature. He made every effort to maintain a close and harmonious relationship with nature through the image of woman.

In his mind, creatures in the ocean were all his friends. He loved flying fish, and he was sad for little sea swallow; he liked sea turtles and appreciated their graceful movements. After people killed the sea turtle, its heart would beat for hours. He thought: "I have such a heart too and my feet and hands are like theirs!" A pair of little dolphins swam to the boat and sprayed water. He said: "They are our brothers." He even considered stars as friends. Obviously, the old man's existence and behavior were integrated with nature. The shadow of human had been melt in the natural ecosystem.

In this world, insignificant human, strong fish and wide sea were integrated together. Everything was in the wonderful harmony. The sea was quiet. "The surface of the ocean was flat except for the occasional swirls of the current." When the sun rose, "the water was dark blue now, so dark that it was almost purple"; when the hot sun was high up in the sky, "the sea was very dark and the light made prisms in the water"; at night "there was light on the water surface". "Fish, boat and person floated slowly on the quiet water." This is the ecological overall view returning to nature. The old man sought for himself and the nature as a whole-the harmony and stability of the sea and every other part flying fish, small sea swallow, sea turtle, little dolphin, stars, etcetera., and the close relationship of living and dying together.

In *The Old Man and the Sea* Hemingway also showed that people wanted to overcome the nature to realise self-fulfillment. Catching the big marlin and overcoming the ferocious

shark is not only the old man Santiago's way to establish his own value and prove his ability, but also the whole village's evaluation standard of fishermen's value. In the life-and-death struggle between people and fish, the old man was proud. He considered the solemn and stirring battle with nature as the necessary and essential thing to maintain human dignity. As described in the work, the old man killed the fish "for the sake of pride" to let people and himself believe that "you're good forever", and let nature know "what a man can do and what a man endures". He said to himself: "I must conquer it… thank God they are not as intelligent as we who kill them." The old man considered the big fish as his opponent. He admitted: "Perhaps I was only better armed." Indeed, our temporarily victory gained is closely linked to the weapons created by science and technology. Science and technology has become a double-edged sword of human to conquer nature. This weapon not only induces human to the temporary victory, but also stimulates human's dream of going beyond the natural limits and ignoring the natural law, but in the end it still points to the failure and a wrong way.

Ecocriticism researchers doubt such way of self-realisation of human. They do not agree to prove the greatness of human by conquering nature. They believe that human cannot ultimately overcome nature, no matter how much victory he has obtained and how many times he proves his power by conquering nature. Eventually he will receive the nature's harsh and even destructive punishment. However, the old man Santiago thought: "A man can be destroyed but not defeated." Under the background of human society, this widely quoted sentence may reflect the tragic hero spirit, but in terms of the relationship between mankind and nature, its absurdity is fully revealed. If people have been destroyed, what is the significance of being not defeated?

In *The Old Man and the Sea*, Hemingway created Santiago, an old man, destroying the marine ecological environment and constantly regretting doing it, on the basis of real people and event. The old man said again and again: "I shouldn't have gone out so far, fish. Neither for you nor for me I'm sorry, fish"(45). It is the real of Hemingway's opinion. We have to remember that nature can be trampled, but not conquered. Nature gives birth to us the human, and it is bound to have some sort of rules to constraint human beings. Any behavior destroying the whole harmonious ecological environment will be punished by the nature.

Man's destiny is closely connected to the tempers of his environment. The cruelty that goes along with nature from time to time is shown when the old man's appearance is described. His whole body shows signs of the destructiveness of nature. The sun assailed his skin, leaving "..., brown blotches of the benevolent skin cancer ... on him. His "... deep-creased

from handling heavy fish on the cords" (3), somehow witness the long struggle Santiago had with nature. Of course, there are also the sharks that take away the old man's catch in the end. It looks like nature takes away what it gives. The sharks too are a part of this unity; here they represent the destructive force of nature. One get an impression of how Santiago's environment looks like and learn about the struggles a man experiences on the sea.

As the old man begins his quest the eighty-fifth day his feeling is probably best expressed in the words of Manolin: "It is what man must do" (13). Thus, when Santiago first hooks the fish, his thoughts reflect only his attitude of acceptance. The situation is familiar and inevitable, and he feels no emotion 'other than hopeful expectation, as he coaxes the prey to take the hook: "Make another turn. Just smell them. Aren't they lovely? Eat them good now and then there is the tuna. Hard and cold and lovely. Don't be shy, fish. Eat them" (30). His thoughts and emotions are concentrated solely upon the act that must be performed thus:

> eat it so that the point of the hook goes into your heart and kills you he thought. Come up easy and let me put the harpoon into you. All right. Are you ready? Have you been long enough at table? Now!" he said aloud and struck hard with both hands, gained a yard of line and then struck again and again, swinging with each arm alternately on the cord with all the strength of his arms and the pivoted weight of his body. (31)

When he fails to master the fish immediately and it begins to tow his skiff, Santiago begins to think in terms different from those suggested by relationship between the hunter and the hunted. He now longs to see the fish "to know what I have against me" - (33), and he recognizes the equality inherent in the encounter: "I can do nothing with him and he can do nothing with me ..." (34).

In the next stage of battle, Santiago feels pity for the marlin and speculates about its nature:

> ...He is wonderful and strange and who knows how old he is, he thought. Never have I had such a strong fish nor one who acted so strangely. Perhaps he is too wise to jump. He could ruin me by jumping or by a wild rush. But perhaps he has been hooked many times before and he knows that this is how he should make his fight. He cannot know that it is only one man against him, nor that it is an old man. But what a great fish he is and what will he bring in the market if the flesh is good. He took the bait

> like a male and he pulls like a male and his fight has no panic in it. I wonder if he has any plans or if he is just as desperate as I am? *(35)*

The thoughts of the experience, shared by the hunter and the hunted, are still evident, since the old man reflects on the market value of his capture, but there is a new element. As happens more and more, Santiago also thinks of the marlin as a creature with intelligence and will. The growth is more and clearer as the novel unfolds. The fish and Santiago reflect "Beyond all people in the world" (36). They are "joined together" and there is "no one to help either one of us" (36). Later, he resolves to stay with the fish until death, but adds, "He'll stay with me too, I suppose" (38). When the sun rises further, Santiago expresses the bond between the fish and himself even more strongly: "I love you and respect you very much" (40). When the fish lurches, the old man affirms the unity of their suffering: "You're feeling it now, fish ... and so, God knows, am I" (41). Thus, he is able to express his desire which is strange for a hunter: "I wish I could feed the 'fish ... He is my brother" (44). When the marlin rises from the sea, the implications of the contest becomes clearer. It is no ordinary fish. The old man had seen many great fish, but this was "the biggest fish that he had ever seen and bigger than he had ever heard of' (47). From this moment on, the contest is more than ordinary. Santiago signals the change by his impatience with his cramped left hand. He is irritated with his hand, not because it robs him of his strength, but because such an impairment is unworthy of the battle. Further, that battle is interpreted as a demand upon him to prove his manhood: "I wish I could show what sort of man I am" (47). The climax of this stage of development in the relationship is reached when he dismisses thoughts of the commercial value of the marlin and affirms the noble nature of his adversary: "There is no one worthy of eating him from the manner of his behavior and his great dignity" (57). From that moment on, the man and the fish draw closer. They are one spirit. They are one in conflict, the conflict that noble wills must wage as their preordained task in the universe. So, at times, the result of the challenge is insignificant: "You are killing me, fish, the old man thought. But you have a right to, Never have I seen a greater, or more beautiful, or a calmer or noble thing than you, brother. Come on and kill me. I do not care who kills who" (71),as a result, the moment of death is full of pity and emphasises the relationship between the hunter and the hunted: "... I want to see him, he thought, and to touch and to feel him. He is my fortune, he thought. But that is not why I wish to feel him. I think I felt his heart, he thought" (Hemmingway 73).

One of the most important characteristics of the novel lies in man's relationship with nature. This relationship can be best described as intimate (close and very personal). The old man feels a connection with nature. The distance he travels at sea to catch the marlin emphasizes his separation from the human world and his closeness with the natural world.

He is sensitive to nature and feels her sight, sounds, and smells. Participating in nature makes him feel alive and refreshed, or nature offers him the opportunity to test his skills through forms of competition as hunting and fishing. Thus, he accepts the inescapable violence in nature as a necessary part of nature's overall harmony. In fact, he views "personal violence a healthy win petition between two worthy opponents as a necessary and beneficial aspect of life. By competing with an equally skilled opponent, the man proves his manhood by truly testing his endurance, courage, and spirit. Indeed, he loves nothing more than a challenge of this sort. Although man fears death, he regards his fight to the -death as the ultimate challenge of his worth, and he faces such a challenge with dignity. In contrast to the first half of the book, characterised by a calm sea and the big fish, the second half of the book shows the evil side of the natural world, symbolised by the sharks. Santiago hates them because they are the deadliest creatures of the deep.

Santiago gathers minute information from the sea itself. Looking at the seaweeds, the small fishes, the water current, and the direction of the seabirds, he knows something about the sea and he claims himself as an intelligent person. He is more a spy from the land, trying to trick the sea. The ever-observant Santiago, surveys his environment. He waits for dusk because the setting sun often attracts fish to the surface. He sees the purpleness in the sea caused by the floating plankton, a type of algae on, which fish feed. He spies a bird in the sky; that has come to feed on fish. This is a significant sign for the old fisherman because the bird has probably spied on flying fish, which are also eaten by dolphins. The dolphins, in turn, will attract tuna, which attract the marlin. He cleverly and carefully places his hooks, covered with tuna and sardines, at different depths and rows. And he beseeches the fishes to eat the hook as well as the sardines. The fishes unaware of the traps eat the food offered to them and suffer. In the end, the giant fish humbles him in some ways; the sharks humble him further.

The protagonist of this novel is the sea: The sea is the beginning of life on earth; life originates from the sea. The same element: the sea is masculine to the young fishermen as well as feminine to the old men like Santiago. When the sea is dangerous and destructive, men feel challenged by the sea in a competition or struggle. Then they think of the sea as a man. Those who love him and do not consider him an enemy say that it is feminine:

> He always thought of the sea as *la mar* which is what people call her in Spanish when they love her. Sometimes those who love her say bad things of her but they are always said as though she were a woman. Some of the younger fishermen, those who used buoys as floats for their lines and had motorboats; bought when the shark livers had brought much money,

> spoke of her as *el mar* which is masculine. They spoke of her as a contestant or a place or even an enemy. But the old man always thought of her as feminine. (19)

The sea is the great unknown. It is unfathomable, deep, dark, dangerous, foreboding and unconquerable. The fisherman in their boats profit by it and supply the people ashore with the fish that is provided by the sea. Therefore the sea symbolises fertility. In, the world of Santiago, the sea is considered a woman. This opinion goes hand in hand with the idea that the sea is the mother of life. First of all, they must say that the sea is the largest (both in type and area) that we have on earth. It occupies 71% of the surface of the earth, because of that someone who is out on the sea easily gets a feeling of being lost or at least being much smaller than the mighty sea. It must be called a hostile element, as the human being is a creature that is originally living on the land. The land is their home, but the sea is always something frightening, unfathomable and mysterious. The sea is the shelter for its creatures and it protects them from its enemies. Since they don't belong to the sea they are treated as aliens by it. Santiago is pictured as having to fight the sea. Although he loves to be a fisherman, the waters have not been kind to Santiago.

For Santiago, the sea is a living creature, a beloved, with whom he is closely connected. He feels great love, compassion, and familiarity for birds and creatures of the sea. The bird is a great help for the old man because it provides him the opportunity for his fishing and accompanies him when he is really in need. In, the novel, when he becomes tired after a long struggle against the fish Marlin, his oneness can be seen when he invites the bird who comes toward the skiff from the north; the old man could see that the bird was very tired. The bird made the stern of the boat and rested there. The old man used to talk to him, asking him, 'How old are you? Is this your first trip?'(52). And the bird looked at him when he spoke. The old man offers him to stay and take rest on his boat, Take a good rest, small bird, then. go in and take your chances like any man or bird or fish. He further says, 'Stay at my house if you like, bird (53). Thus we can see the oneness and interdependence between the old man and the bird., The old man provides the birds' comfort, as well as the bird, encourages him to sustain and to fight against the cruel fate. The old man loves the fish; he is very fond of the flying fish as they were the principal friend on the ocean-especially because they lead him to big fish. On the ocean, he very carefully observes and watches the movements of the bird and the flying fish hoping that perhaps the big fish also must be somewhere nearby. Even the weather on the ocean helps the old man to fulfill his task but he feels sorry for the fish as the weather is not in favor of the big fish Marlin that he was hooked. The old man looked towards sky and observes the white clouds built like welcoming piles of ice cream and high above were the thin feathers of the cirrus against

the high skies of September, 'Light Brisa', he said. "Better weather for me than for you fish." (59)

The flying fish, the birds, and the climate made him feel comfortable in solitude. And also, the beauty of the natural world can reduce his loneliness. The beauty of nature fascinates Santiago. In his night dreams, he dreamed of Africa when he was a youngster and the long, golden color beaches and the white color beaches, so white they hurt your eyes and the high capes arid, great brown mountains. He lived along that coast now every night and in his dreams, he heard' the surf roar and saw the native boats come riding through it. He smelt the fragrance of Africa that the land breeze brought in the morning. He now no longer dreamt of storms, or of women or great occurrences, or of fights, nor contests of strength, nor of his wife. He only dreamed of places now and of the lions on the beach, and the old man loved to think of it and dreamt of it. The old man observes green turtles and iridescent bubbles, and he loved to see the big sea turtles eating them. It shows the old man's deep love and attachment with Nature and her beautiful creatures.

This interdependence and old man's attachment is not only confined to the sea and the old man but also with the boy Manolin. Being the part of Nature and environment each and every one on this planet is interconnected. In the novel, the old man, Santiago is dependent on both. The old man has deep attachment and affection towards the boy, Manolin the old man and the boy are more like father and, son. The old man taught the boy to fish and the boy loved him very much. But unfortunately this time the boy is not with him. Manolin spends time with the old man providing him comfort and company. A night before departing for the fishing, the boy stays with him and helps Santiago to hold his fishing tools to his cottage, as Manolin. I would like to go. If I cannot fish with you, I would like to serve in some way... (14). The boy not only provides him comfort and company but also supports him, helping him to sustain his confidence and belief. He tells Santiago, There are many good fishermen and some great ones. But there is only you (34).

The boy also provides him material support thereby knowing that the old man depends upon him much. The old man used to think of the boy at the sea when he was alone and in need, the old man is shown constantly wishing for boy's presence to help him in catching the fish. He wishes for the boy when the huge Marlin that he has hooked began to tow his boat,- he says aloud,' I wish I had the boy. To help me and to see this'(45).

The old man had been the hunter till he conquered Marlin and emerged a victor from this struggle. The situation turns when sharks in large numbers attack him, and he becomes the hunted and the victim. Both are therefore, shown as living the same kind of life. The

old man hunts Marlin for food; Marlin hunts the smaller fish for his food. And the old man himself is hunted by the sharks looking for their food. Both are the hunters and the victims. However, Santiago, though a fisherman, whose duty is to catch and kill fish but he is never satisfied with his duty. He has a great compassion for these creatures. He has a sense of guilt for what he has done and thinks aloud: Perhaps I should not have been a fisherman. But that was the only thing that I was born for (37).

He loves green turtles and feels sorry for them but most-- people are heartless about the turtles and he finds; also heartless because the human beings kill these innocent creatures for their livelihood. The old man remembered the time when he had hooked on a pair of Marlin and separated that pair, avoiding their love and emotions for each other. For the old man that was the saddest thing he ever saw and that time, the boy was also with him, they begged her pardon and butchered her promptly. The old man also feels guilty and sorry for Marlin he has hooked, he was sorry for the great fish that had nothing to eat and his determination to kill him never relaxed in his sorrow for him, he remarks, How many people will he feed? But are they worthy -to eat him? No of course not. There is no one worthy of eating him from the manner of his behavior and his great dignity (57). Santiago catches big Marlin and killed him as his task, but he felt guilty and crime. The old man tries to console himself in many ways, he thinks that it is not a sin to kill the fish; it is his duty to feed himself and his people and to survive.

Thus the old man encourages himself and keeps his hunting on but after being attacked by the sharks he again begins to think whether he had committed a sin by killing these innocent and beautiful sea creatures and Marlin. It is during this fishing expedition that he realizes that men are going beyond their limits. After he has killed Marlin instead of feeling proud and victorious he rather feels sorry and guilty. Somewhere the old man is aware that his deeds are against Nature and the attack of the sharks was a direct punishment for his sins. The main concern of the study is to bring out the relation of man with Nature and his environment where he lives. The environment plays a pivotal role in human life. Hemingway's novel *The Old Man and the Sea* is all about Man-Nature interdependence.

Ecocritical Perspective in *the Village by the Sea*

The novel *The Village by the Sea* by Anita Desai is set in the lush green surrounding of Thul, a village located by the Western coast of India. In this village 'large or small, rich or poor, each had sacred basil plant growing in a pot by the front door' (28). At its surface level, it is a story of Lila of thirteen and her brother Hari only of twelve who are left to themselves. They feel responsible for looking after their two younger sisters; Bela and Kamal, ailing mother, and drunkard father. But at the deeper level, it is more than a children novel. It is

at least two stranded novel. If the struggle of Hari and Lila forms the main strand, the 'environment justice movement' of poor villagers of Thul, Rewas, Alibagh, etcetera and few Bombay men shapes the second strand of the story. Like other novels, Anita Desai this time again did not forget conveying her message to the people and the government officials. It is a purposive novel. Both strands are interwoven perfectly. The novel in a sense contrasts Bombay city having filth and dirt with lush green aura of Thul village. Bombay city is designated in the novel as 'cruel city', 'friendless city', 'city of dust and soot'. Moreover city people had poor memories as Mrs De Silva denies recognizing Hari.

Hari in the novel is depicted very sensitive. One day, he meets Ramu and asks whether something new is being seen in the village. Ramu tells him that "The Government is going to build a great factory here. Many factories, hundreds of them" (13). Hari could not reconcile himself with Ramu and asked, "And what will happen to the hill and the temple on top?"(Desai 13). Hari is worried about the prospect of the village. The city people will come and befool innocent villagers. But Hari was not ready to be fooled by city clever tricksters. Nonetheless, out of his penurious family condition, Hari is hopeful to get a job to restore and redeem his family.

Biju, a notorious smuggler while talking to the stranger (a man posted to look after the factory area) came to know that the government is going to build thousands of factories on their farmlands. Biju gets angry and challenges the stranger, "No one can take our land…. It is ours, and we will not sell" (60). Biju continues, "GO build your factories where the land is barren and nothing grows but stones and thorns"(60). Biju asks the stranger, "And what about us who already live here?"(61). The stranger waves his hand as if he were cutting down weeds. "Like that, your village will go. In its place, factories will come up, fertilizer will be made, gas will be produced, many jobs will be created"(61). Further he says, "You mean these boys are to give up their fathers' land and boats and go to work in factories like city people?"(Desai 61). The stranger told Biju that there would come engineers and machines to operate factories. This puzzled Hari and Ramu and other fellows.

Meanwhile a young man from Alibagh comes over who asks all Thul cottage dwellers to join and oppose government plan of erecting factories over agro-lands. The young man says, "Every one of us is threatened. Our land is going to be taken away…. Our crops will be destroyed so that their factories can come up instead. All the filth of their factories- for when we produce fertilizes a lot of effluents are created which have to be disposed of; these will be dumped in the sea and will kill the fish for miles around. How will we live without our land, without the sea?"(62). He also clarified to Thul villagers that the government

will befool us in the name of jobs. The factories will be run by trained engineers. They do not need us. In this way we all shall be fallen to hard times. He told further that we already tried to inform to government officials but we were driven away by batons of police. So we can no longer stand police rule. Finally it was decided to take out a demonstration before chief minister office.

Finally the band of farmers, Hari one of them, reaches Bombay. An elderly man with white beard of Bombay, who was leading them took the megaphone and said, "I have come here to speak to you, and speak for you, because your green fields and the sea are valuable to all of us as they are to you. Our trees, our fish, our cattle and birds have to be protected..."(77). This man was stranger to the men from Alibagh. Hari was taken aback and wished to know why he cared so much?' The man sensed the feelings of Hari and told that "All the citizens of Bombay are concerned. These factories…will pump deadly chemicals into the air- fertilizer cannot be manufactured without polluting the air for miles around. Sulphur dioxide, ammonia, and dust will be scattered far and wide."(77). By one ruling no factories will be build within fifty miles of big cities. Thul and Rewas are very close to Bombay. "Bombay is heavily industrialized, crowded, and polluted. How much more pollution can we stand?"(77). In Japan, organic mercury was pumped into the sea, it poisoned the fish and the fish poisoned the people who were unlucky enough to eat them. As such the entire eco-system is destroyed.

Sayyid Ali another speaker talks of Alibagh geomagnetic observatory, the only one of the type in the world. If factories came up, this observatory would stop working for good. After sometime they decided to march *Mantralaya* and make Chief Minister aware of. But nobody is talking of Thul and its problem. As one young man says, "Preseve a rotten old observatory just because it is so old? What about our farmers, our crops, our boats? That is what we have come here to see about- not that man's dusty old office or his files or his jobs" (79). As the procession ended, all villagers went back to their homes but Hari stayed back. Hari after several hours came into contact with a coconut seller. The coconut seller asked him why he had left his home. Hari told him that he came with a procession against government plan of setting up a factory in their village farmlands. The coconut seller tells about government's callousness. He said, "Ask, ask, ask the government all you like. Do you think the government has ears and can hear? Do you think the government has eyes and can see? I tell you, the government has only a mouth with which it eats- eats our taxes, eats our land, eats the poor" (85). Hari to see 'the factory belt of Thana, pouring out evil-smelling smoke and chemicals into the discolored sky, all the land around blighted and bare, not a blade of grass to be seen and the few remaining trees coated with suffocating

dust. He wondered if this possibly be the way that the green coastline from Rewas to Alibagh would look like one day" (135).

Finally Hari returned to his home. One day he was talking to Birdwatcher Sayyid Ali Sahib. He told him that he was one among agitators in Bombay. We wanted to stop building up factories over our farming lands. At this, the birdwatcher sighed and said, "So you're one of those who put up a fight. You've lost the fight, you know- we lost the case in court. The politicians won, so they can make plenty of money from the sale of land and licences in the name of progress. Thul is lost…"(154). He further says, "Everything is doomed. The fish in the sea will die from the effluents that will be pumped into the water. The paddy fields will be built over by factories and houses and streets. My little baya birds will find no more paddy leaves for their nests" (154). Hari said to the birdwatcher, "Why do you care so much about the birds, sir?"(154). The birdwatcher answers, "The birds are the last free creatures on earth. Everything else has been captured and tamed and enslaved- tigers behind the bars of the zoos, lions stared at by crowds in safari parks, men and women in houses like matchboxes working in factories that are like prisons." (154). To the end it can be said that The Village by the Sea is an interesting text for eco-readers. In it, Anita Desai stands out as a socialist, environmentalist, and eco-friend.

Conclusion

The new approach to ecocritical writing has a special emphasis on the environmental turn in literature. Several new fields of ecocriticism have been highlighted. The worldwide revisionist movement is trying to grow man's ecocentric attitude among the readers and this kind of ecological literacy will certainly reduce man's indulgence in ruthless destruction of the environment.

In *The Old Man and the Sea* Hemingway shows that people wanted to overcome nature to realise self-fulfillment. Catching the big marlin and overcoming the ferocious shark is not only the old man way to establish his own value and prove his ability, but also the whole village's evaluation standard of how great a fisherman he is. In the life-and-death battle between the old man and the fish, the old man was proud. Santiago's pride carries him far, not only metaphorically but literally beyond his fellow fishermen into beautiful but, in the end, terribly cruel waters.

Anita Desai's *The Village by the Sea* is a story of survival set in a small fishing village near Bombay. Lila and Hari, struggle to keep the family, including two young sisters, going when their mother is ill and their father usually the worse for drink. When Hari goes to Bombay to find work, Lila seems to be responsible for everything. Although the book

paints a picture of extreme poverty, it demonstrates the strength of the family even in the most extreme circumstances and offers a powerful picture of another culture and connectedness with nature when Hari, leaves his hometown on account of lack of options and makes for Bombay. He acquires professional skills and self-development but gradually feels disillusioned with the crowd, filth, pollution and inhumanity associated with the urban life. Therefore, with great optimism and confidence he comes home and unites with his family.

Works Cited

Desai Anita. *The Village by the Sea.* New Delhi: Allied Publishers Limited. 1982.
Hemingway, Ernest *The Old Man and the Sea*. Delhi Surjeet. (1992)reprinted.
Reeta S. Harode" Eco-critical Analysis of Hemingway's *The Old Man and the sea*"

Web

- http://www.amerlit.com/novels/ANALYSIS Hemingway, Ernest *The Old Man and the Sea* (1992) analysis in detail.pdf