



NATURE, SURVIVAL, AND THE ANTHROPOCENE: A CRITICAL STUDY OF RUSKIN BOND'S *DUST ON THE MOUNTAIN*

JYOTI VERMA ¹ | KSHAMTA CHAUDHARY ²

¹ RESEARCH SCHOLAR, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, VARDHAMAN MAHAVEER OPEN UNIVERSITY, KOTA, RAJASTHAN.

² ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, VARDHAMAN MAHAVEER OPEN UNIVERSITY, KOTA, RAJASTHAN.

ABSTRACT:

Modern civilization owes its comfort to human intervention in nature, but reckless exploitation can harm the environment, leading to disasters like pollution, resource scarcity, and desertification. Ruskin Bond, one of India's greatest writers, subtly addresses deforestation on mountains caused by modernization, inspiring readers to cherish and protect nature, which is in an alarming state through his works. This article delves into Ruskin Bond's *Dust on the Mountain*, a novella that intertwines human struggles with the environmental challenges of the Himalayan region. The story follows Bisnu, a young boy forced to leave his village in search of livelihood against the backdrop of deforestation, climate change, and ecological degradation. Using eco criticism as the theoretical lens, the paper examines the Anthropocene's imprint on the story and explores its themes of survival, human-nature interdependence, and resilience. Bond's narrative sheds light on the stark realities of rural communities while offering a poignant message on environmental conservation. Through a close reading of the text and contextual analysis, this paper argues that *Dust on the Mountain* serves as a clarion call for restoring ecological balance and respecting the delicate interconnections of life.

KEYWORDS:

MODERNIZATION, INTERDEPENDENCE, ANTHROPOCENE, ECOCRITICISM.

PAPER ACCEPTED DATE:

16th October 2025

PAPER PUBLISHED DATE:

17th October 2025

PAPER DOI NO:

10.5281/zenodo.17380477

PAPER DOI LINK:

<https://zenodo.org/records/17380477>

RUSKIN BOND: A LITERARY LUMINARY

Ruskin Bond is known for his vivid depictions of nature and the lives intertwined with it. Set primarily in the Himalayan foothills, his works highlight the deep connection between humans and their environment. Bond's ecological sensitivity has established him as a key figure in Indian English literature, blending literary artistry with environmental awareness to address critical ecological issues.

CONTEXTUALIZING "DUST ON THE MOUNTAIN"

Dust on the Mountain is one of Bond's seminal works, where he weaves together themes of environmental degradation, human survival, and resilience. The novella explores the socio-environmental realities of a small Himalayan village grappling with deforestation and economic hardship. The narrative centres on Bisnu, a young boy determined to support his family despite the overwhelming challenges posed by environmental degradation and socio-economic constraints.

The story is set against the backdrop of the Anthropocene

& raises critical questions about the impact of human activity on nature and the cascading effects of ecological disruption:

-How can humanity reconcile its developmental needs with the preservation of nature?

-What responsibilities do individuals and communities have toward maintaining ecological balance?

-How does environmental degradation affect the lives of marginalized communities, such as those living in rural or mountainous regions?

-What are the long-term consequences of deforestation and climate change on the human and non-human world?

Through Bisnu's journey, Bond paints a poignant picture of the fragility of life in harmony with nature and the consequences of ignoring this balance.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION IN *DUST ON THE MOUNTAIN*

The Himalayan setting: a fragile ecosystem: The story of

Dust on the Mountain is set in the picturesque yet vulnerable Himalayan region, where human life has historically depended on the delicate balance of nature. The novella begins with a striking depiction of ecological disturbance: reduced rainfall, minimal snowfall, and burning forests that result in global warming. The narrative captures the plight of local flora and fauna, emphasizing the cascading effects of environmental disruption.

“At night, they sat outside their small house, watching the fire spread. A red line stretched right across the mountain. Thousands of Himalayan trees were perishing in the flames. Oaks, deodars, maples, pines—trees that had taken hundreds of years to grow.” (*Dust on the Mountain*, p. 3)

Bisnu's Journey and Character Development: Bisnu, though only twelve, takes on the responsibility of supporting his family by travelling to Mussoorie and finding work. His resilience and determination reflect the themes of survival and the importance of family bonds. “I will go to Mussoorie and find work”, but Puja, Bisnu’s sister, didn’t want her brother to leave the family, but family circumstances forced him to go to Mussoorie to earn money for the family. In Mussoorie, the characters of Chittru, Bali, and Pritam play crucial roles in his emotional growth and in exposing him to different realities—Chittru’s job at the quarry and Pritam’s experience with the truck crash both demonstrate the costs of modern industry on nature.

DEFORESTATION AND ITS RIPPLE EFFECTS

The novella portrays deforestation as one of the central causes of ecological imbalance. Bisnu and other characters witness barren mountains and dust-filled quarries where lush forests once stood. Bond poignantly describes how deforestation has altered the landscape, robbing it of its vitality and leaving its residents struggling for survival.

“Chittru discloses that once, this place had lush green mountains where wild cherries grew abundantly. But now deforestation left them barren and dusty.”

The novel's focus on the destructive impact of industrialization on nature, especially through deforestation, mining, and reckless development, aligns with key concepts in ecocriticism and environmental humanities. The old man in the bus said “There were trees here once but the contractors took the deodars for furniture and contractors took the deodars for furniture and houses” This line shows depletion of nature by contrasting the lush green mountains of Bisnu’s village with the barren, dust-filled quarries, Bond encourages readers to reflect on the devastating consequences of human actions on the natural world. Bisnu’s sadness at witnessing this transformation embodies the personal loss when nature is altered irreparably.

Bond’s narrative draws attention to the interdependence of humans and nature, showing how the loss of forest cover directly impacts agriculture, water resources, and livelihoods. The imagery of dry rivers and shrinking streams, as described by Puja, sister of Bisnu, further

underscores the chain reaction initiated by deforestation.

“See, it’s only a trickle this year. Remember when there were so many different flowers growing here on the banks of the stream?”

This lament signifies the emotional and cultural disconnection caused by ecological degradation, reflecting the broader consequences of human exploitation of nature.

The industrialization of rural areas, represented by limestone quarries, is another critical aspect of ecological destruction in the novella. The protagonist’s journey to the quarries unveils the stark reality of industrial exploitation. The constant dynamite blasts and extraction processes envelop the mountains in dust, making them unrecognizable.

“Bisnu experiences for the first time the consequences of deforestation, witnessing clouds of limestone dust in the air due to dynamite blasts, which obscure the view of the mountains.”

Through Bisnu’s eyes, Bond critiques the short-term benefits of industrial activities that come at the expense of environmental health. This transformation of a once-thriving natural habitat into a barren, industrial wasteland mirrors the destructive tendencies of human greed during the Anthropocene.

HUMAN-NATURE RELATIONSHIP

The incident with the truck, where nature—represented by the strong tree—saves Bisnu and the other workers, offers a powerful metaphor for the interconnectedness of human beings and the environment. It’s a reminder of how nature can be a protector despite the harm humans inflict on it. This aligns with Bond’s recurrent theme that the natural world, though often taken for granted or abused, still has the power to sustain and protect those who respect it.

THE ANTHROPOCENE AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

Bond’s portrayal of environmental degradation aligns with contemporary concerns about the Anthropocene—a geological epoch defined by human activity’s overwhelming impact on Earth’s systems. By illustrating the domino effect of actions such as deforestation and industrialization, Bond raises questions about human responsibility toward nature. The story’s early depiction of fire spreading across the mountains serves as a metaphor for unchecked anthropogenic activity.

The novella’s critique extends beyond individual actions to systemic exploitation, as seen in the careless practices of woodcutters and the operations of quarries. This highlights a collective failure to recognize the long-term consequences of environmental destruction. Bond’s emphasis on these themes resonates with the urgent need for sustainable practices and environmental stewardship in the Anthropocene era.

THE ROLE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The reduced rainfall and snowfall in *Dust on the Mountain* are direct indicators of climate change. Bond captures the

tangible impacts of global warming on a microcosmic scale, emphasizing how even remote communities are not spared. The drying rivers and diminishing agricultural output reflect the immediate effects of changing climate patterns on ecosystems and livelihoods.

Through Bisnu's story, Bond draws attention to the vulnerability of mountain communities that rely heavily on natural resources. Bisnu's mother recollects her past when there used to be heavy snowfall, the year when her husband died, it was difficult to light his funeral pyre for hours...and now this year they don't have sufficient rainfall as well as snowfall due to ecological imbalance. The cyclical dependency between humans and nature is disrupted, leaving residents like Bisnu's family in dire straits. This portrayal serves as a reminder of the global interconnectedness of climate change and its disproportionate effects on marginalized communities. Bond's *Dust on the Mountain* offers a compelling critique of environmental degradation and its multifaceted side effects. Even the adverse effects of climate could be seen on animals. By addressing deforestation, industrial exploitation, and climate change, the novella paints a vivid picture of life in the Anthropocene. Bond's burnt issue invites readers to reflect on their role in preserving the environment and challenges them to consider the long-term consequences of their actions.

HUMAN RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION IN *DUST ON THE MOUNTAIN*.

At the heart of *Dust on the Mountain* lies Bisnu's story, which is evidence of human resilience in the face of environmental and socio-economic challenges. Despite his tender age of twelve, Bisnu emerges as a symbol of courage and determination. When the ecological and economic hardships threaten his family's survival, Bisnu takes the initiative to leave his village and seek work in the bustling town of Mussoorie.

This journey is not merely a physical transition but also a metaphorical rite of passage. Bisnu's ability to adapt to urban life while holding onto his values illustrates the innate human capacity for resilience. His decision to work in a cinema hall and later as a truck cleaner reflects his willingness to endure hardships for his family's well-being.

"Bisnu is happy to get this job; now at least he would send some money to his family."

Bisnu's optimism, despite the odds, underscores the theme of hope that runs through Bond's narrative. His resourcefulness and ability to navigate unfamiliar environments reflect the resilience required to survive in an increasingly volatile world.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND FRIENDSHIP

Bond's portrayal of friendship and community support further highlights human adaptability. In Mussoorie, Bisnu forms bonds with Chittru and Bali, whose camaraderie provides him with emotional strength. These relationships serve as a reminder of the significance of social connections in overcoming adversity. Bisnu has a good

bond with Chittru. These supporting characters of the story also play a vital role in building up the story emotionally.

The narrative emphasizes that resilience is not solely an individual trait but is often bolstered by collective effort. Chittru's guidance and Pritam's mentorship offer Bisnu a sense of belonging in a new and challenging environment. This collective resilience is juxtaposed with the individual struggles of the characters, highlighting the multifaceted nature of human adaptation.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

While the narrative celebrates resilience, it also delves into the psychological toll of environmental degradation. Bisnu's experiences with deforestation and industrial exploitation leave a lasting impression on him. The sight of barren landscapes and dusty quarries contrasts sharply with his memories of lush green mountains, evoking a sense of loss and longing.

"To see the depleted condition of mountains, the protagonist feels sad and compares the lush green mountains of his region with these dusty mountains."

This emotional response underscores the deeper impact of environmental degradation on human psyche and identity. For Bisnu, the destruction of his natural surroundings is not just a physical loss but also an emotional and cultural displacement. Bond's exploration of these themes invites readers to consider the intangible costs of ecological destruction.

NATURE AS A PROTECTOR AND SAVIOR

Despite the bleak circumstances, Bond presents nature as a source of salvation and hope. The truck accident, where Pritam's vehicle is saved by a strong tree, symbolizes nature's protective role even amidst human-induced destruction.

"... But for that tree, the truck would have finished up at the foot of the mountain, and I wouldn't be here, all bandaged up and talking to you. It was the tree that saved me."

This incident makes sure that nature is our saviour. This event serves as a turning point in the story, reinforcing the interconnectedness of human life and the natural world. Pritam's decision to return to his family after this incident reflects a renewed appreciation for life and the importance of living in harmony with nature. Similarly, Bisnu's return to his village symbolizes a reconnection with his roots and a commitment to sustainable living.

Resilience in Rural Communities: The novella also highlights the collective resilience of rural communities facing environmental and economic challenges. Bisnu's family and other villagers endure hardships with quiet strength, relying on traditional knowledge and practices to survive. The drying rivers and shrinking resources test their resilience, but their unwavering spirit is evident in their ability to adapt and persist. In the story, the people living in the mountains in that village face problems to

meet both ends of life.

“Money would be needed to buy supplies in Tehri, some thirty miles distant. And there was no money to be earned in the village.” I will go to Mussoorie and find work.”

This shows the pathetic condition of people of the hilly regions, where the sources of livelihood are limited.

Bond's depiction of rural life celebrates the enduring spirit of these communities while drawing attention to their vulnerability. This duality underscores the urgent need for environmental conservation to ensure the survival and well-being of such marginalized groups. Through Bisnu's journey and the experiences of other characters, *Dust on the Mountain* portrays human resilience as a response to environmental and socio-economic challenges. Bond's narrative highlights the importance of adaptability, community support, and a deep connection with nature in overcoming adversity. At the same time, it serves as a poignant reminder of the psychological and cultural costs of ecological degradation.

THEMES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY IN *DUST ON THE MOUNTAIN*

Bond's environmental ethos: Ruskin Bond's *Dust on the Mountain* resonates with an urgent call for environmental conservation. Bond employs the narrative to critique unsustainable human activities like deforestation, industrialization, and the careless exploitation of natural resources. Through vivid descriptions of ecological decay, the novella underscores the dire consequences of neglecting environmental stewardship.

The imagery of burning forests and barren mountains serves as a stark warning about the irreversible damage caused by human intervention. The destruction of age-old trees, described as “oaks, deodars, maples, pines—trees that had taken hundreds of years to grow,” poignantly conveys the fragility of natural ecosystems.

By framing these issues through the perspective of Bisnu, a young boy with a deep connection to his environment, Bond emphasizes the moral imperative to protect nature. The author's environmental ethos is not just a theoretical concern but a practical call to action, urging readers to reconsider their relationship with the natural world.

The central message of the novella is the need to restore nature to its pristine state. Bond weaves this theme into the narrative by juxtaposing images of lush, green mountains with the dusty, barren landscapes created by industrial activities. The transformation of wild cherry orchards into desolate quarries symbolizes the loss of biodiversity and ecological balance.

“Chitru discloses that once, this place had lush green mountains where wild cherries grew abundantly. But now deforestation left them barren and dusty.”

Through such contrasts, Bond highlights the value of conservation efforts in preserving the earth's flora and fauna. The story encourages readers, especially younger audiences, to adopt sustainable practices and respect nature's intrinsic worth.

ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD NATURE

Bond uses his characters to explore the theme of ethical responsibility. Bisnu's growing awareness of environmental degradation and his sorrow at witnessing deforestation reflect a moral awakening. This perspective is further emphasized in the incident where Pritam diverts his truck to avoid harming a mule, leading to an accident.

“One day, to save a mule from being crushed under the truck, Pritam diverts the direction of his truck, resulting in it rolling down the valley, where it stops due to a strong tree.”

This moment underscores the interconnectedness of all life forms and the ethical responsibility humans have toward non-human entities. Bond critiques anthropocentric attitudes, advocating for a more holistic and compassionate approach to coexistence.

THE ROLE OF YOUNG MINDS IN CONSERVATION

Through the character of Bisnu, Bond appeals to younger generations to take up the mantle of environmental conservation. Bisnu's return to his village and his resolve to live harmoniously with nature symbolize hope and the potential for change.

“This inspirational story of Ruskin Bond leaves a great message on the young minds to restore nature in its pristine form where the earth was lush green along with rich flora and fauna.”

Bond's storytelling emphasizes that environmental awareness must begin early, empowering children and adolescents to contribute to a sustainable future. The narrative acts as a catalyst for cultivating an ethic of care and responsibility among young readers.

CRITIQUE OF ANTHROPOCENTRIC PRACTICES

A recurring theme in the novella is the critique of anthropocentric practices that prioritize human convenience over ecological health. The careless actions of woodcutters and the exploitative operations of quarries serve as examples of how short-term gains often result in long-term environmental loss.

The narrative also questions the broader implications of industrial progress, urging readers to weigh its benefits against its ecological costs. By illustrating the stark contrast between natural and industrial landscapes, Bond challenges the notion of unchecked human dominance over nature. Bond highlights the disproportionate impact of environmental degradation on rural communities. Bisnu's family and other villagers bear the brunt of deforestation, climate change, and resource depletion, struggling to meet basic needs. This theme aligns with the concept of environmental justice, which advocates for the equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens.

“Here in the story, people living in the mountains in that village face problems to meet both the ends of life.”

The novella serves as a reminder of the vulnerability of marginalized groups in the face of ecological crises. Bond's

work advocates for policies and practices that prioritize the needs and rights of such communities.

Dust on the Mountain is not merely a story of survival but also a profound meditation on environmental conservation and ethical responsibility. Through his vivid storytelling, Bond addresses the urgent need to protect nature and foster a sense of responsibility toward all living beings. The novella's message transcends its narrative, inspiring readers to reflect on their role in preserving the environment for future generations.

RUSKIN BOND'S NARRATIVE STYLE

Ruskin Bond's storytelling in *Dust on the Mountain* is marked by simplicity, vivid imagery, and an intimate connection with nature. His prose, while straightforward, is layered with emotional depth and a keen observational quality. Bond's narrative style ensures that the ecological themes resonate deeply with readers without becoming overtly didactic.

"At night, they sat outside their small house, watching the fire spread. A red line stretched right across the mountain. Thousands of Himalayan trees were perishing in the flames."

This passage exemplifies Bond's ability to paint a stark yet evocative picture of environmental degradation. The imagery of burning forests not only sets the tone of the story but also immerses the reader in the plight of the characters and their natural surroundings.

Character development as a narrative device: The protagonist, Bisnu, is a well-rounded character whose journey embodies resilience and hope. Bond's portrayal of Bisnu's struggles and growth mirrors the larger theme of human resilience in the face of ecological and socio-economic challenges.

Supporting characters like Chittru, Bali, and Pritam enrich the narrative by providing emotional and practical support to Bisnu. These relationships are woven seamlessly into the story, showcasing the interdependence of individuals within a community.

"Bisnu has a good bonding with Chittru. These supporting characters of the story also play a vital role in building up the story emotionally."

The character development in the novella enhances its relatability and emotional impact, ensuring that readers remain engaged with the story's central themes.

Use of setting as a symbol: the setting of *Dust on the Mountain*—the small village in Tehri Garhwal and the industrial sites Bisnu visits—plays a critical role in conveying the story's themes. The contrast between the lush green mountains of Bisnu's childhood and the barren, dusty quarries symbolize the consequences of unchecked industrialization.

The natural beauty of the mountains serves as an emotional reminder of what is at stake, while the industrial settings underscore the price of human progress. This juxtaposition reinforces the narrative's

ecological message, urging readers to consider the long-term implications of their actions on the environment.

Symbolism in the narrative: Bond employs symbolism to add depth to his storytelling. The red line of fire across the mountains, for instance, represents not only physical destruction but also the broader consequences of human negligence toward nature. Similarly, the strong tree that saves Pritam's truck symbolizes nature's resilience and its role as a protector. This incident makes sure that nature is our saviour.

Such symbols enrich the narrative, allowing readers to engage with the story on multiple levels. Bond's use of symbolism ensures that the ecological themes resonate beyond the immediate plot, leaving a lasting impression on the audience.

Themes of Loss and Nostalgia: Bond's narrative is infused with a sense of loss and nostalgia, particularly in Bisnu's reflections on the changing landscape of his home. The protagonist's memories of wild cherries and vibrant streams stand in stark contrast to the barren landscapes he encounters during his journey.

This theme of loss extends beyond the environment to encompass cultural and emotional dimensions, highlighting the interconnectedness of humans and nature. Bond's exploration of these themes invites readers to reflect on their relationship with the natural world.

Ruskin Bond's use of emotional appeal: Bond's narrative is deeply emotive, drawing readers into the personal struggles of his characters while simultaneously addressing larger ecological issues. By focusing on Bisnu's journey and the challenges faced by his family, Bond personalizes the abstract concept of environmental degradation, making it relatable and urgent. Bisnu's optimism, despite the odds, underscores the theme of hope that runs through Bond's narrative. This emotional appeal is further reinforced by the plight of the supporting characters and the vivid descriptions of the changing environment. Bond's ability to evoke empathy ensures that his ecological message is both impactful and enduring.

Linguistic simplicity and accessibility: One of Bond's greatest strengths as a writer is his ability to communicate complex themes through simple and accessible language. The straightforward prose ensures that the story's ecological and ethical messages are comprehensible to a wide audience, including younger readers.

This linguistic simplicity does not diminish the depth of the narrative; instead, it enhances its universality. By making the story accessible, Bond ensures that his message reaches a diverse readership, inspiring a collective awareness of environmental issues.

Ruskin Bond's *Dust on the Mountain* is a master class in narrative technique, blending vivid imagery, well-developed characters, and symbolic settings to convey profound ecological themes. Through his emotive storytelling and accessible prose, Bond creates a narrative

that is both compelling and thought-provoking. The novella serves as a powerful reminder of the enduring bond between humans and nature, urging readers to reflect on their role in preserving the environment.

The legacy of Ruskin Bond's contribution to ecological awareness

Ruskin Bond's *Dust on the Mountain* transcends the boundaries of a simple narrative, serving as a literary lens through which pressing ecological and social issues are examined. Through Bisnu's journey, Bond highlights the tangible impacts of deforestation, global warming, and industrialization on mountain ecosystems and their inhabitants.

The novella's lasting legacy lies in its ability to raise awareness about environmental degradation while maintaining its universal appeal. Bond's focus on humanizing these ecological issues ensures that they resonate with readers on an emotional level, inspiring a sense of responsibility toward preserving nature.

Inspiring a Sense of Environmental Stewardship: One of the key messages of *Dust on the Mountain* is the need for collective action to restore and protect the environment. Bond's depiction of nature as both fragile and resilient underscores the urgency of sustainable practices. This inspirational story of Ruskin Bond leaves a great message on young minds to restore nature in its pristine form where the earth was lush green, along with rich flora and fauna. By showcasing the interconnectedness of humans and the environment, Bond encourages readers to view ecological stewardship as a shared responsibility. His work serves as a call to action, urging individuals and communities to prioritize sustainability in their daily lives.

The Anthropocene in Bond's Narrative: *Dust on the Mountain* can be seen as a literary exploration of the Anthropocene, a term used to describe the current geological condition dominated by human activity. Bond examines the consequences of this era through the lens of deforestation, climate change, and industrialization, revealing the profound impact of human actions on the natural world. The author examines the Anthropocene by exploring its diverse dimensions, including deforestation, its connections with humans and non-humans, and the memory of a once-vibrant ecosystem. The story repeatedly emphasizes the loss of ancient trees like oaks, deodars, and maples. Bisnu's dismay at the deforested mountains echoes the Anthropocene's reality, where forests are rapidly vanishing due to human activities. The quarries serve as a metaphor for the Anthropocene's extractive ethos. By blasting mountains for limestone, the natural beauty of the region is reduced to dust and desolation. The miners' struggles further highlight how industrial practices harm both nature and the vulnerable communities that are dependent on it. The narrative's backdrop—decreasing rainfall, drying rivers, and dying flora—points to climate change, a hallmark of the Anthropocene. Puja's recollection of vibrant streams now reduced to trickles symbolizes the transformation of

ecosystems under anthropogenic stress.

"See, it's only a trickle this year. Remember when there were so many different flowers growing here on the banks of the stream?" This sentiment captures not only the environmental losses of the Anthropocene but also the emotional and cultural losses tied to it.

Bond's nuanced portrayal of these themes positions *Dust on the Mountain* as a significant text within the fields of eco criticism and environmental humanities, offering valuable insights for scholars and readers alike.

Educational and cultural significance: *Dust on the Mountain* holds educational and cultural significance. The story provides a window into the lives of Himalayan communities, shedding light on their struggles, resilience, and deep connection with nature.

The novella's accessibility and relatability make it a valuable resource for educators seeking to in still environmental awareness in students. By presenting ecological issues through the perspective of a young protagonist, Bond ensures that his message resonates with younger audiences, fostering a lifelong appreciation for nature.

The universal appeal of Bond's narrative: One of the hallmarks of Ruskin Bond's writing is its universal appeal. While *Dust on the Mountain* is rooted in the specific context of the Himalayan region, its themes of environmental degradation, resilience, and hope are relevant across cultures and geographies.

This universality ensures that the novella remains timeless, continuing to inspire readers to reflect on their relationship with the natural world. Bond's ability to weave profound themes into a simple yet compelling narrative cements his legacy as one of India's most beloved and impactful writers. *It is not merely a story; it is a poignant reminder of what is at stake in the face of ecological degradation. Through the adventures and struggles of Bisnu, Bond presents a powerful narrative that is as entertaining as it is thought-provoking.*

The novella's blend of vivid imagery, relatable characters, and profound themes ensures that it remains a cornerstone of environmental literature. Its legacy lies in its ability to inspire readers to view nature not as a resource to be exploited but as a vital part of their lives, deserving of respect and preservation.

"Ruskin Bond's work continues to serve as a beacon of hope and a call to action, reminding us of the enduring beauty and fragility of the natural world."

Hence, this story raises serious issues on environment depletion conditions to notice the numerous fierce warnings that are mentioned against the wanton destruction of nature that surrounds us & their role within it. The author examines the Anthropocene by exploring its diverse dimensions, deforestation including its connections with humans and non-humans, genres, memory and cultures. Bond's insightful analysis of various discourses, concepts and expectations offer innovative

approaches to literary analysis, making it a valuable resource for scholars in ecocriticism, environmental humanities, climate fiction, climate change studies, and Anthropocene research.

REFERENCES

PRIMARY SOURCES

1. Bond, Ruskin. *Dust on the Mountain*. Rupa Publications

SECONDARY SOURCES

1. Buell, Lawrence. *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture*. Harvard University Press, 1995.

2. Ghosh, Amitav. *The Hungry Tide*. Penguin Books, 2004.

3. Heise, Ursula K. *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global*. Oxford University Press, 2008.

4. Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Harvard University Press, 2011.

5. Glotfelty, Cheryll, and Harold Fromm, eds. 1996. *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. Athens, GA:University of Georgia Press.

6. Mills, Amy. 2016. "The Role of Memory in the Environmental Narratives of Ruskin Bond." *Journal of Ecocriticism*, 8 (2):15-34.

7. Singh, R. K. 2016. "Ecology and Identity in Ruskin Bond's Writings." *Literary Studies Quarterly*, 24 (1):121-135.

8. Sharma, Neha. 2019. "Ecocriticism in Contemporary Indian Literature: A Study of Ruskin Bond's *Dust on the Mountain*." *Indian Literary Criticism Journal*, 12 (4):50-63.

9. Bond, Ruskin. "An Interview with Ruskin Bond." *The Hindu*, 22 July 2014, www.thehindu.com/features/metroplus/ruskin-bond-on-his-writing-and-life/article

10. Agarwal, Arvind. "Understanding the Anthropocene through Literature." *Indian Environmental Journal*, 10 Oct. 2021, www.indianenvironmentaljournal.org/anthropocene-in-literature.