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Artistic response to ecological problems in contemporary English-language ecopoetry

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Abstract. The paper summarizes the results of analysing contemporary British and American ecological poetry. The research aims to compare the approaches to composing British and American poetic texts focused on ecology. The results proved our hypothesis only in part. The new increasing number of ecological poems does not mean the shift towards ecoactivism. American poets tend to be more ecoactive, whereas British poets take an ecocritical stance. The major theme of the British poems under study is the lament of the gone English landscapes while American poems call for action. At the same time there is a visible growth in the number of English-language poems written by poets from countries that do not have a long tradition of environment protection.

Keywords: ecopoetry, criticism, British, American, sentimentalism, ecodiscourse, political agenda

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1. Theoretical background

During the last decades, nature poetry has undergone significant changes. Scenes of natural beauty and vivid imagery capturing the surrounding world have been widely used in poetry over centuries to appeal to readers and make them observe, penetrate and ponder upon the beauty and the mystery of nature. However, the growing concerns about climate change, global warming, ecological disasters and man-made damage resulted in a shift to a more critical stance toward man-nature relationships. The increasing interest in ecological problems urges new solutions for maintaining ecologically sustainable human existence. The impending threats to nature led literary circles to develop a new approach that would precisely address the environmental changes and challenges facing the world and would urge more proactive measures. The new ecocritical approach emerged as a literary response to study how individuals in society behave and react in relation to nature.

There are several studies which tend to consider that ecocriticism emerged as a literary trend in the 1980s in the USA and later, in the 90s in the UK and Europe.

In the mid-1980s, scholars began to work collectively to establish ecocriticism as a genre, primarily through the work of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment at the Western Literary Association [1]. William Rueckert is believed to be the first to use the term "*ecocriticism*" in his essay entitled "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism" [2], where the focus is to explore how ecology and ecological concepts can be employed in the study of literature [3]. Ecocriticism is also associated with the idea called "literary ecology" (Meeker 1972, cited in [1]) and was later coined as "ecocriticism" [1].

In the seminal work "The Eco-criticism Reader" [4], it is suggested that "ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment." [4. P. xviii]. As noted by Cheryll Glotfelty, "Environmental critics explore how nature and the natural world are imagined through literary texts." [4. P. xviii].

It is essential to highlight that in contemporary ecocritical writing, nature is not the mere focus; moreover, ecocritics are not interested in the study of nature representation. The topics in American ecopoetry are diverse [4. P. xxiii], including wilderness, animals, rivers, mountains, deserts, natives, garbage, alienation from nature, human dominance in nature, disasters, human behavior, man-made challenges, restoration and other problems. Contemporary poetry is focused on transmitting values having profound ecological implications and aims to contribute to the raising of people's consciousness. The underlying argument of the ecocritical approach, as noted by Glotfelty, is that this kind of poetry takes the premise that human culture is connected to the physical world; it affects the world and is affected by it.

Ecocriticism is a broad approach involving "green (cultural) studies", "ecopoetics", and "environmental literary criticism". Ecoliterature is also viewed as a form of ecoactivism, since very often poets are actively engaged in environmental movements. Due to this form of engagement, a new context is created in poetry which forces readers to move from the traditional role of an observer or a passive onlooker, at the same time guides readers to explore the surrounding world and questions men's behaviour in the treatment of nature. Let us note that there are even broader interpretations of ecocriticism suggesting that the approach aims at investigating the global ecological crisis through the intersections of literature, culture, and the physical environment.

As a comparatively new trend in literature, ecocriticism is developing and expanding its research framework. One of the recent branches is the so-called "deep ecology". The term was coined by Arne Naess, a Norwegian philosopher, which emphasizes the basic interconnectedness of all life forms and natural features, in this opposing anthropocentrism to ecocentrism (biocentrism). The main argument that deep ecologists are pushing forward is that nature has an inherent value irrespective of its usefulness to humans [5].

As far as the term "ecopoetry" is concerned, it was coined relatively recently. It is difficult to say who coined it, but *Wordsense*, an online dictionary, defines ecopoetry as poetry with a strong ecological message or emphasis and quotes sources in which the term was used [6].

The earliest mention dates back to 2000. It is a quotation from the book by Jonathan Bate, *The Song of the Earth* [7]. Bate analyses the way nature is represented in English literature as well as studies the relationship between man and nature as shown in English literary texts. Bate, however, indicates that "ecopoetry" is not synonymous with writing that is pragmatically green: "A manifesto for ecological correctness will not be poetic because its language is bound to be instrumental..." Bate insists that "ecopoetry" should "present the experience of dwelling". In this way, Bate takes the traditional stance of English sentimentalism on a man's relationship with nature.

However, later works in the area define "ecopoetry" from a different point of view. In the preface to *"The Ecopoetry Anthology"* [8], the authors attempt to combine all the possible definitions of "ecopoetry" and divide it into three categories: nature poems that consider nature as subject matter and inspiration; environmental poetry directly engaged with active and politicized environmentalism; and, finally, ecological poetry that investigates the relationship between nature and culture, language and perception.

John Shoptaw in his paper "Why Ecopoetry?" argues that an ecopoem needs to be environmental and it needs to be environmentalist [9]. Timothy Clark in *"The Value of Ecocriticism"* argues that ecopoetry involves a protest stance [10].

Ecocriticism focuses on an analysis of the ecological component of literary works. Poets, using language and images, try to convey their perception of nature and urge the reader to penetrate the deeper meaning of its beauty. They explore the relationship between man and nature through metaphors, symbols, or simply describing natural phenomena. Ecocritics draw attention to the human impact on the environment and call for a change in our relationship with it.

However, it is not always analysis and verbal descriptions that can make the reader act. This is where eco-activism in poetry comes in – a voice that celebrates the environment and demands action in its defence. Poets seek to inspire profound change through their work, evoking emotions and awakening their conscience. They become the voice of nature, the voice of the relentless activist who stands for balance in the ecosystem.

In contemporary literature, the interaction of ecocriticism and eco-activism in poetry results in a unique blend of aesthetic and emotional experiences. The poets skillfully use the element of words and elegance of form to convey the importance of the issue and our ability to make a difference. They act not only as artists but also as environmentalists.

The art of poetry makes the reader realize that nature is an important part of our existence and that preserving the environment is a global responsibility for each and every one.

Thus, ecocriticism and eco-activism in poetry play an essential role in contemporary literature, inspiring people to take actions and reminding them to care for nature. Poets become voices that carry important messages about our existence in a world where every step counts.

Further, we will attempt to analyse some poems selected because of their blend of ecocritical and ecoactivist approaches.

Sometimes definitions include elements that feature both ecocritical and ecoactivist approaches. Thus, the online resource *dVerse* repeats the definition given in the Wordsense dictionary but adds that ecopoetry explores nature and its relationship with humans, with ecopoets treating nature as a separate and equal other. Ecopoetry is also about the desire to create change – it is urgent, it aims to unsettle. It has a desire to issue a "warning" of some kind [11]. Probably, this definition suits the purpose of our paper best, because we intend to analyse not simply poems about nature, but poems that contain unsettling, alarming images of nature when it is influenced by people.

It is also significant to refer to the marked difference in the matters that American ecocriticism is concerned with in contrast to British ecopoetry. One of the typical features of American ecocriticism is its spiritual orientation. In addition, researchers mention that it is more concerned with wilderness in nature rather than natural history or native environment, while British ecocriticism is primarily concerned with the native elements of the environment, landscape, and pastoral elements, equally touching upon urban and rural nature. Lawrence Buell contends that European ecocriticism, including the British, deals with pastoral modes and "the physical and social realities of landscape and their representation in literature" [12. P. 15]. Another significant feature is the connection between culture and environment which is prominent in American ecocriticism. According to Jonathan Bate, both are held together in a "complex and delicate web" [7. P. 23]. Yet, another difference is that American poets are more inclined to associate nature with national identity more strongly than the British do.

2. Ecology as a sentimental issue

The Age of Reason and, later, the Industrial Revolution, changed attitudes to nature in two ways and split the society roughly into two parts. While industrialists believed that natural resources should be used to the maximum, other people, including Romantic poets, opposed industrialization. One of the reasons was the damage inflicted on peaceful, eye-pleasing landscapes by new mechanical inventions. It was by no means the only reason; however, poets of the time focused on this aspect of industrialization more often than on unemployment or lower wages.

The first half of the 19th century saw the introduction of factories, railways and other inventions, which did not pass unnoticed by poets and other artistically minded people, some of whom praised the new developments. A renowned Victorian Romantic artist Joseph Turner created a visual hymn to industrialization with his *Rain, Steam and Speed – The Great Western Railway*. Very few artists saw mechanisms as artistic objects, and very few understood the potential of such inventions as the steam engine. The general attitude of Romantic poets was explicitly negative. One notable example is *On the Projected Kendal and Windermere Railway* by William Wordsworth [13]. The poem was written at approximately the same time when Turner painted his masterpiece. Wordsworth was neither an ecologist nor an environmentalist in the contemporary

understanding of the words, that is why he views the railway as an eyesore and a potential threat to the quietness of rural life rather than a threat to the environment. The railway, in his opinion, will ruin that part of the world that remains pure amid the busy life. The words *blight, assault, and ruthless change* demonstrate an extremely negative attitude to "a false utilitarian lure". It is worth mentioning that the poet calls for protests, but at the same time admits that if people fail to do so, nature itself should protest with winds and torrents:

(...) and, if the human hearts be dead,
Speak, passing winds; ye torrents, with your strong
And constant voice, protest against the wrong.

The poet, therefore, believes that technological progress is unnecessary; the poet's point of view is understandable in 19th-century agrarian England – still mostly agrarian, but extremely rapidly turning into industrial. Peter Ackroyd [14. P. 103] states that by the middle of the 19th century, the share of the population engaged in industrial production exceeded the share of farmers. In the 1830s, England was the sole exporter of steam engines in the world. At the same time, Ackroyd claims that as late as the 1840s many inventions were still considered miracles, i.e. many people did not believe in the systemic changes going on.

Wordsworth was, probably, among the first poets whose poems started the tendency in later literary works: either praise the technological progress or praise the good old days of the English countryside, associated with quiet, peace, and natural beauty. Even when Romanticism went out of fashion, the tendency survived, and those writers and poets who wrote much later than Wordsworth can be roughly divided into opponents and supporters of technology. This tendency was observed not only in poetry but also in prose. Tolkien's orcs were characterized by their love for mechanisms; the first sight Frodo sees upon his return to Hobbit Shire is an ugly factory emitting smoke and soot. However, we may safely say that Tolkien was driven by emotion.

Emily Lawless, an Irish poet, in her poems, addressed the place of people in the universe. As a post-Darwinist poet, she uses the language of science to speak of this issue, which, according to Hansson [15. P. 7] makes her extremely different from those poets who regret the loss of beautiful landscapes.

Darwinism enabled people to understand the position of men in the natural world and to realize the interconnections of biological species and phenomena. Although this understanding was a considerable step towards eco-consciousness, it disregarded a powerful driving force that made people act in eco-unfriendly ways: profit-making. Wordsworth spoke about the utilitarian nature of the projected railway, but the financial aspect was not mentioned.

The economy vs. ecology dichotomy is clearly seen in *Going, Going*, a poem by Philip Larkin [16]. Larkin also regrets the loss of the beautiful countryside, sounding almost like Wordsworth.

... And that will be England gone,
The shadows, the meadows, the lanes,

*The guildhalls, the carved choirs.
There'll be books; it will linger on
In galleries; but all that remains
For us will be concrete and tyres.*

However, ironically, he does not deny the necessity of modern technologies: speaking about urban life he says *We can always escape in a car*.

The poet explains the unreasonable behaviour (chuck filth in the sea) by consumerism and greed of the younger generation.

*...The crowd
Is young in the M1 cafe;
Their kids are screaming for more—
More houses, more parking allowed,
More caravan sites, more pay.
On the Business Page, a score*

*Of spectacled grins approve
Some takeover bid that entails
Five per cent profit (and ten
Per cent more in the estuaries): move
Your works to the unspoilt dales
(Grey area grants)!*

Making a profit has become the meaning of life, and in this, the poet sees the end of traditional England. The poem is both pessimistic and escapist – the poet is certain that the end is inevitable, and hopes that he will not live to see it happen.

Philip Larkin was not the only poet who, after World War II, started to resort to ecoactivist ideas rather than ecocritical. In the mid-80s Ted Hughes not only wrote about environmentalist issues, but took an active part in a campaign to clean the River Torridge [17]. Although researchers call Hughes both an ecocritical poet and a green activist, his activism is mixed with a mystical perception of nature, e.g. in *To Paint a Water Lily* and *Hawk Roosting*.

3. Shift from Wordsworthianism: Materializing environmental crisis in contemporary ecopoetry

Jay Parini, American poet and critic, explains in his introduction to *Poems for a Small Planet: Contemporary American Nature Poetry*, "Nature is no longer the rustic retreat of the Wordsworthian poet... [it] is now a pressing political question, a question of survival." [18. P. 7].

Distinct from nature poetry, ecologically oriented poetry explores the complex connections between people and nature, often written by poets who are concerned about our impact on the natural world. Poets today are witnesses to climate change while bringing attention to important environmental issues. Despite the fact that eco-poetry is concerned with the connection of man and nature, what makes this type of poetry different from nature poetry, as John Shoptaw [9] argues, the

former is "ecocentric rather than anthropocentric", which means that human domination of nature is no longer a prevalent perspective in the study of man-nature relationships.

This argument can be observed in Parini's *Some Effects of Global Warming in Lackawanna County* poem [19].

*The maples sweat now, out of season.
Buds pop eyes in wintry bushes
as the birds arrive, not having checked
the calendars or clocks. They scramble
in the frost for seeds, while underground
a sobbing starts in roots and tubers.
Ice cracks easily along the bank.
It slides in gullies where a bear, still groggy,
steps through coiled wire of the weeds.
Kids in T-shirts run to school, unaware
that summer is a long way off.*

The poem captures the implications of climate change by emphasizing that climate change has affected everyone and everything. In the poem, all the seasons have gone out of order which resulted in unusual changes easily observable just outside the classroom window. The poem is built on personification, which helps bring to the fore the connection between nature and human beings – birds who did not check their clocks or calendars are looking for seeds in the frost, roots and tubers sob, as a groggy bear wakes up too early from his hibernation. The personification emphasizes that the effects of the global warming are equally negative for the wildlife and humans:

*As for me, my heart leaps high—
a deer escaping from the crosshairs,
skipping over barely frozen water
as the surface bends and splinters underfoot.*

The metaphoric image (*comparison of a heart to a deer, that tries to escape the strange weather by skipping on barely frozen water, that threatens to break*) shows how vulnerable men are in the situation.

As mentioned earlier, one of the marked features of contemporary eco-poetry is that many of the poets are environmental activists who have first-hand knowledge of environmental issues and whose responses to problems are reflected in their poetry in real-time. This aspect makes the poetic discourse true to fact, as readers are not provided with imaginary problems but real ones happening in the present. Through the language of the poetry, readers are provided with a true picture of reality. The tone of voice in ecopoetry is that of calling for a change in the attitude toward nature.

Linda Hogan is among those American-Indian poets who write extensively about the environment and its impact on the American-Indian community. She is also an environmental activist whose views and works, including poetry, have

contributed to shaping the discourse on environmental issues and the immanent dangers of continuing degradation.

In her *Dark. Sweet* collection [20] it is interesting to explore in what ways ecological problems permeate into the poetic text and how imagery helps create a world fraught with ecological disasters. The poem *Song for the Turtles in the Gulf* [21] is a response to one of the largest ecological crises that ensued in a month-long oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 [22]. The disaster made many headlines in newspapers. The catastrophic damage to the wildlife and coral reef were reported repeatedly. The damage to the surrounding ecosystem has not been estimated yet as the oil spills happen up to now involving damages that are not visible to the eye [23].

The poem has many layers of meanings that open up as the reading progresses. It opens with the memories of the author as a child swimming with a turtle in the ocean. The first few lines impart the peace and harmony of the man-nature connection:

*We had been together so very long,
you willing to swim with me
just last month, myself merely small
in the ocean of splendor and light,*

The still memories filled with splendour and light are marred by the dead body of the turtle covered with the red-black oil in a plastic bin of death, where the nostalgic song develops into a lament for the death of the turtle, represented through simple but true to life images (*dead, plastic bin of death, covered with red-black oil, torched and pained*) which impart the harsh picture of the catastrophe. The reference "the man from British Petroleum" locates the poem in a particular location and time and puts the poem into the context of real events.

*and now when I see the man from British Petroleum
lift you up dead from the plastic
bin of death,
he with a smile, you burned
and covered with red-black oil, torched
and pained, ...*

The lament is mixed with the feelings of anger and the admiration of the majestic beauty of the turtle that no man can create.

*the very air you exhaled when you rose,
old great mother, the beautiful swimmer,
the mosaic growth of shell
so detailed, no part of you
simple, meaningless,
or able to be created
by any human,*

The personification (you, swimmer, old great mother) brings to the fore the idea that wildlife and men are equally a part of nature, so why should men's welfare be achieved at the expense of destroying the beauty of mother nature? Apart from the ecological aspect of the poem, it contains a marked reference to the culture of the Native Americans. The turtle is not only a generic representation of nature, but it also serves as a symbol of cultural identity. In mythology, it represents wisdom, spirituality, resilience, longevity, protection, and fertility. According to some Native American beliefs, the turtle contributed to the creation of Mother Earth and offered its shell for protection. As such, the death of the turtle symbolizes the death of the earth. By referring to the turtle as "Old great mother", the poem articulates the strong connection between the environment, identity and culture that is one of the marked elements of Hogan's ecopoetry.

The poet voices the stored-up anger with men's selfishness, greed, and the irreversible harm done to nature. The last part of the poem voices the deep regret for being thrown off and treating nature as a commodity. Forgetting the primacy of nature is a trespass and forgiveness should be sought for:

*Forgive us for being thrown off true,
for our trespasses,
in the eddies of the water
where we first walked.*

The ecopoetic nature of the poetry is supported by the presentation of the two types of human behaviour; that of the child who looks at nature with concern and admiration and is able to ask for forgiveness for the death of the turtle and the BP man (*he with a smile*), doing his job unaware of the harm of his actions cause to nature. This is a call to consider the mannerism in the treatment of nature, offering choices between sympathy and selfishness; admiration and neglect, rationalism and greed.

The poem *Warned* by Sylvia Stults [24] is another demonstration of the continuing degradation of nature and its resources. The first three stanzas of the poem mention how damaged the environment is, while the first line mentions that the fearful picture has come into being over a vast period of time, as skies were once blue, stars were bright, the waters crystal clear, fish abundant, birds were chirping in the trees. The author touches upon all the aspects of climate change – atmosphere, living organisms, water, and forests, which are all necessary conditions for life on the planet. It is an awareness-raising call to think about what was given to people for free.

*The sands of time have rendered fear
Blue skies on high no longer clear
Stars were bright whence they came
Now dimmed, obscured, pollution's haze*

It is essential to note the application of the contrastive adjectives to demonstrate both the virginity and the degradation of nature (blue skies- no longer

clear; Bright stars -now dimmed and obscure; Sandy white ocean floors – brown, littered), where "blue, bright and sandy white" indicate the intrinsic value of nature which exists at its own right. All aspects in nature are meant to underpin human existence, whereas human interference has devalued nature by risking their own existence.

The last two stanzas of the poem reveal the causes of the ongoing degradation. The proverb "you reap what you have sown" establishes the connection between human behaviour and its immediate consequences. The poem's message is revealed in the last few lines, which articulate the call to reap better seeds, which will protect the waters, skies, wildlife and trees which can pave the way for an ecologically rational co-existence of humankind and nature:

*One can't blame pollution alone
As they say, you reap what you've sown
So let us plant a better seed
Tear out old roots, cultivate, weed*

*Protect what has been given for free
Our waters, skies, wildlife and trees
For once they're gone, don't you say
Consider yourself warned of that fatal day*

This direct address to readers is the warning of the fatal day. The author appeals and urges us to take actions to protect the environment and the resources that have been given to us for free. Nature abuse should be replaced by a more judicious attitude and by sowing the right seeds consistent with ecological wisdom. By this, the poem emphasizes the ideas of cooperation, co-existence and mutual benefit. It is the collective responsibility of humankind to change its behaviour before all is irreversibly lost.

4. Ecology and politics: Global responses

Ecology as a political issue is a relatively new phenomenon. Now, when the Internet makes it possible for more people to be involved in politics, it seems only natural that more poets should express their stance on environmental issues. Indeed, there are plenty of sites where "nature poems" are posted. However, many of these texts are written by amateurs and, although passionate, lack literary merit. Does it mean that renowned poets stay aside from environmental issues? In 2015, Carol Ann Duffy, the then-Poet Laureate acted as a curator for the project *Keep it in the Ground* (<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/series/keep-it-in-the-ground-a-poem-a-day>), launched by *The Guardian*. Twenty recognized British poets contributed poems to the project. Don Paterson's *Nostalgia* could also serve as a motto of the majority of the poems contributed to the project. Most poems can be called Wordsworthian – the feeling of loss and regret permeates these texts. The words *miss*, *cede*, (*not*) *remember*, and *gone*, remind us of the beauty that was lost. Even references to capitalism in several poems of the project do not differ substantially from the "utilitarian lure" in Wordsworth's poem.

Although we by no means say that we have studied all the ecopoems written in the UK in the last three decades, it seems that poets who can and do write on many political issues (Carol Ann Duffy or Paul Muldoon to name but a few) are so bland on the topic of ecology. Although the UK is known for its tough eco-stance, its concern with climate change, its plans to build more windmill farms and other numerous environmental projects, its poets sound dreamy and nostalgic. The call for action is heard from other parts of the world.

One of the reasons for this can be something that a Russian poet and translator Grigory Kruzhev [25. P. 31] said when speaking about British poetry: "many things are expected from (British) poetry these days. It is required to be political, social, gender-related... It is not required to remain poetic." With these words, he described the contemporary tendencies in British poetry in general – lack of structure, free verse, and amorphous texts. According to him, poetic merit has become secondary, which resulted in the appearance of many disconnected lines that can hardly be called poems. That is why many renowned poets may want to keep a balance between the form and the content. And, by doing so, they, unfortunately, fail to produce a text that will not be forgotten after another project is over. It seems that the fears expressed by Mahood [26. P. 6] have come true: ecocriticism has become "alarmingly prescriptive" and the boundaries of the literary canon are "redrawn on the grounds of ecological soundness" [27. P. 296]. Although Hansson [15, P. 7] hoped that such fears "overstate the problem", it looks the opposite now; hence, the general tendency to say that everything written in the form of broken lines is "poetry".

It does not mean, however, that it is impossible nowadays to create a poem in which its literary merit will be combined with a strong political appeal.

A Positively Violent Poem in Five Parts by Jayant Kashyap [28] from India is a good example of how a sophisticated structure can be combined with deep thought. The poem speaks about personal social responsibility – something we can do without waiting for the decision of politicians.

*a whale doesn't bother about capitalism
Racism but it worries about water*

The above lines from the poem underline the importance of personal awareness and personal responsibility. It is not necessary to make this matter political. However, the poet shows that not many people can get up from their chairs and go to the beach to clean it from plastic. The poet also underlines that your activeness or pro-activeness can raise discontent in other people, but if you keep doing what you do, there will be more followers.

*... And that evening we cleaned the beach
there were more people with us now than against*

It is worth mentioning that most poems calling for active behaviour are written mostly by young poets from all over the world who take part in a variety of poetic challenges. These poems do not urge the reader to protest outside government

buildings but learn to be "consistent with ecological wisdom", as Glotfelty [11. P. xix] put it.

5. Conclusion

The overview of the contemporary trends in eco-poetry enabled us to identify certain tendencies.

Eco-criticism, a quickly developing movement, addresses the political issues related to environmental protection and the role of man in the environment. Man is no longer seen as the centre of the eco-system. However, it seems that ecocriticism has gained more popularity in the USA rather than in the UK. British poets tend to continue the Wordsworthian tradition of lamenting the loss of the beautiful countryside and, in more general terms, the loss of the rural past of the country, almost idyllic in their description.

It can be explained from the literary point of view. British professional poets tend to avoid the political agenda in their texts and value the poetic merit of the literary text rather than its political eloquence and passion, as seen in American poetry and among amateur ecoactivists. However, one more explanation of this relative British ecopoetic passivity offers itself. As Thwaites [29] indicates, the United States has fallen behind its European peers in climate change financing per capita. This may serve as an explanation for why American ecoactivists are more energetic and active and are keener to push their political views via poetry. As the UK government is among the world leaders in climate change financing, British poets may not feel the urgent need to express their views on the issue. Besides, environmental protection has ceased to be an issue in the most developed economies only. Therefore, we can observe the shift towards multilateralism in ecopoetry as well. Indian, Canadian and other English-speaking poets across the globe voice their attitudes towards ecological issues.

The discussed aspects make ecopoetry a tool of enlightenment and a teaching instrument. Ecopoetry demonstrates how to be proactive. At the same time, it steps away from ethnocentrism and enables us to have a look at ecological problems in parts of the world other than the UK and the USA.

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