

‘No one ever thought nature was just going to eat us’:

**‘No one ever thought nature was just going to eat us’:
An Ecocritical Perspective on Conor McPherson’s *The Birds***

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Literary criticism has long been concerned primarily with the analysis of human stories. When the natural environment has featured in texts, it has been treated primarily as a backdrop or setting—as nothing more than a stage on which a human drama is enacted. Conversely, an “earth-centered literary criticism” begins with the assumption that the natural environment is foundational not only to human survival and flourishing, but also to our cultural and individual identities. To study literature without a close attention to issues of place and environment is to behave as if humans exist in a void, when in fact we are defined by our relationship to a rich matrix of physical geography, weather phenomena, plants, and nonhuman beings. Ecocriticism takes seriously that these natural forces have stories of their own, and that our own stories cannot be told well or fully understood without attention to ecology. This paper explores one of Conor McPherson’s most famous plays, *The Birds* (2009), from an ecocritical perspective. The work is a bold adaptation of Daphne du Maurier’s short story of the same title, and can be read as a commentary on the woeful circumstances humans encounter if we find ourselves in tension with the natural world. In other words, the play deals with the human condition pushed to its limits, and questions what humans are capable of doing to each other in an “apocalyptic” situation. The present paper attempts to answer the following questions: how is nature represented in *The Birds* and which ecological terms can be applied? In this paper, I argue that, by undertaking an ecocritical reading of how McPherson represents nonhuman beings within stage directions, it is possible to better understand the ways in which humans’ disconnect from the natural world both caused, and affects the outcome of, an apocalyptic situation.

Keywords: Ecocriticism- Conor McPherson -environmental awareness -postapocalypse -the end of the world

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There is not a single literary work anywhere that utterly defies ecocritical interpretation. (Scott Slovic 160)

Introduction:

Theater is one of the forms of cultural representation in the community and therefore should be subject to critical review from an ecological perspective. Una Chaudhuri evocatively puts it, "Ecological victory will require a transevaluation so profound as to be nearly unimaginable at present. And this has the arts and humanities- including the theatre- must pay a role" (25) The ecological perspective seems to be absent in theatre today. Playwrights should focus more on green subjects to have a mass appeal in order to create consciousness to the natural condition of the world that could transform the thought process of an individual. It means that playwrights should instill ecocriticism in the dramatic canon because such ecocritical discourse will further help lessen the gap between literary work and human expression which would create meaning for a tangible environment. In this respect, theatre would act as a medium of exchange for impending ecological concerns to participate in the ecological conditioning of environmental justice.

According to Glen Love, who answered the question of why ecocriticism is important in today's world, "Teaching and studying literature without reference to the natural conditions of the world and the basic ecological principles that underlie all life deems it increasingly short sighted and incongruous." (18) That says the teaching and studying of literature has traditionally been from a particular authoritative perspective. The rapid changes, paradigm shifts and crises of the 20th century disrupted the certainty of traditional perspectives and viewpoints, leading inquiries to fresh directions. Postcolonial, queer and ecocritical lenses are partial expressions of those extensions of thinking. Therefore, literature should inculcate professional literature for

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creative environment in order to fully understand the basic ecological principles of life that would help students to better appreciate the environment and understand the issues.

Ecocriticism: The Greening of Literary Studies

In his pioneer book, *The Comedy of Survival*, Joseph Meeker asserts that “literature should be examined carefully and honestly to ... determine what role if any, it plays in the welfare and survival of mankind and what insight it offers into human relationships with other species and the world around us” (3-4). Ecocriticism is, comparatively a recent addition to literary critical theory exploring the intersection of nature, culture, and literature to address environmental challenges. It applies the theory of environment and ecology to reading and writing literary texts. Environmentalism as a movement to raise awareness about the global environmental crisis and advocate environmental policies, started in the 1960s and, as a literary movement took its momentum in the 1980s. The foundational books that have contributed in developing the theory of ecocriticism are: Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962), Raymond Williams *The Country and The City* (1973), Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden* (1854) (*Walden* has become the touchstone text for ‘ecocriticism’), Laurence Buell’s *The Environmental Imagination* (1996), Jonathan Bate’s *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and The Environmental Tradition* (1991) and recently, Cheryll Glotfelty’s *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996).

In her foundational book, *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, Glotfelty defines ecocriticism as follows:

between literature and physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts,

ecocriticism takes an earth-centred approach to literary studies. (xvii)

She also provides a checklist regarding the questions that ecocritics need to ask when analyzing a literary text. Here is a summary of questions: How is nature represented in the literary piece? Do the values expressed in the literary work express ecological wisdom and an environmental ethic for our troubled times?

Ecocriticism takes the text beyond linguistic and psychological interpretations and gives natural representation the lead. Peter Barry argues that, “Ecocritics reject the notion that everything is socially and/or linguistically constructed”(252), and this is what ecocritics want to convey, nature, as a being and living entity, is always present there. In other words, the representation and acknowledgement of nature’s role and presence in our literature is the major motivation of ecocritical thinking. Hence, ecocriticism begins with nature- a thought that nature is something more than just a thing of beauty or as Timothy Morton eloquently explains “putting something called nature on a pedestal and admiring it from afar does for the environment what patriarchy does to the figure of women. It is a paradoxical act of sadistic admiration”(5). It simply means that we should avoid and resist the representation of nature as prescribed by Romanticism which idealizes it to a greater extent. We need instead, Morton continues, to “hold our mind open for the absolutely unknown that is to come”(190).

What differentiates ecocriticism from other literary approaches is that it establishes nature as “a living entity” that influences human existence, existing beyond the signifying system perpetuated by cultural theories. For so many ecocritics, nature is “more than just a narrative device or presence” because for them, Buell argues, “the nonhuman environment. . . begins to suggest that human history is implicated in natural history.”(7) The point

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is that human history and natural history can no longer be separated but should be intertwined until the end of the world.

To many ecocritics nature is a force in the literary text. For example, J. Joycee and Evangeline Manickam argue that “modernists would like us to believe, nor is it mere physical entity, but a living presence of which the human race constitute a significant part.”(76). Similarly, in *Vibrant Matters: A Political Ecology of Things* (2010), Jane Bennett calls this force a “thing power”. She argues that “objects have the curious ability of inanimate things to things animate, to act, to produce effects dramatic and subtle”(6). That simply means everything has power or agency and can impact back upon us. All matter, Bennett suggests, is “vibrant”, exerting some kind of essential force and telling “its own story”(6). Hence, ecocriticism's basic philosophy is that 'nature is a force- it can sustain and it can hit back if not treated well.

Over the course of centuries, we have seen countless dramatic and literary works in which nature, angered, becomes a threat to humanity and a destroyer of human lives through floods, droughts, spontaneous fires and attacks by violent animals. Voltaire’s *Candide* (1759), for example, the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 is the climatic event, destroying the influence of Pangloss on the main characters. In William Shakespeare’s *King Lear* (1606), the terrible storm the characters to abide nature’s fury outside of castles or houses, but also has the power to reveal the vulnerability human kind, “poor, bare, forced animal,” and thus teach the old king wisdom. Amitav Ghosh’s recent novel, *The Hungry Tide* (2004), dramatizes ecological crises in the Sundarbans at the mouth of the Ganges, which floods regularly. We can say that nature, for the 21st century observers, has become somewhat amalgamated with the environment in response to the potential threat we face. Perhaps, it is the rebellious essence of nature we have neglected for long that reemerged lately.

Introducing McPherson's Life and *The Birds*

Born in Dublin Ireland in 1972 and raised on the northside of the city, McPherson is the most successful of the new generation of Irish playwrights, which includes among others, Martin McDonagh, Sebastian Barry, Billy Roche, and Marina Carr. Of this highly influential group, McPherson is noted as “possessing an amazing gift of storytelling.”(Gamerman 20), “Ireland’s latest literary giant” (Alan Franks), and “one of the leading younger Irish playwrights today”(Sternlicht 160) McPherson plays are not only produced in Dublin now but also in London’s National Theatre on the West End and on Broadway. McPherson’s involvement with theatre developed when he was a University College Dublin student. He wrote and produced a number of plays, including *Taking Stock* (1989), *Michelle Pfeiffer* (1990) and *Inventing Fortune’s Well* (1991). His major breakthrough plays are *St. Nicholas* (1997) and *The Weir* (1997). The latter’s premier in London won the Oliver Award for Best Play.

McPherson’s *The Birds* (henceforth referred to as *Birds*) was first performed at the Gate Theatre in Dublin on 29 Sept. 2009 and received its American premiere at the Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis, on 25 Feb 2012. The *Irish Independent* called it “Deliciously chilling . . . spring-loaded with tension . . . a combination of ‘*Waiting for Godot*’ and ‘*Jagged Edge*’. . . claustrophobic . . . questioning . . . frightening . . . and with a twist.”(<https://bbbblogger.wordpress.com/2009/10/page/12/>)

Birds notably based on Daphne du Maurier’s 1952 short story *The Birds*. Du Maurier’s story reveals humanity’s deep seated distrust and fear of the natural world. The same short story was also adapted into a film *The Birds* directed by Alfred Hitchcock in (1963). In one of his interviews McPherson talks about his aim of the play stating

My instinct with the play was to go with what the original screenwriter had been talking about, it’s

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probably best that we don’t see [the birds] and we just hear them . . . My instinct was probably entirely different to Alfred Hitchcock but I suppose that was why he was so successful. I’m not Alfred Hitchcock! So for better or worse my instinct was entirely different. ([http://www.bradleybarlow.co.uk/interview-with-conor mcpherson/](http://www.bradleybarlow.co.uk/interview-with-conor-mcpherson/))

When *Birds* was written and produced as a film, society was not particularly aware of concepts such as “climate change” or “global warming”. While the human-influenced geologic period was certainly in full swing then, I do not think many were thinking that humanity could possibly have such a direct and devastating effect on the environment. In other words, while the film certainly benefits from an ecocritical reading, one finds it highly unlikely that Hitchcock thought he was making an environmentally conscious statement. He was likely creating a thriller, an exciting and terrifying horror film, which could be in line with the Gothic literary tradition. However, what differentiates McPherson’s *Birds* is that it is regarded as “a gripping, unsettling, and moving look at human relationships in the face of societal collapse” (Dramatists.com/cgi-bin/db/single.asp?key=5162)

McPherson’s *Birds* revolves around four characters: Nat, afflicted by crippling headaches and psychotic breaks; Diane, a middle-aged former novelist; Julia, a young woman seeking refuge from violent scavengers she claimed to be travelling with; and Tierney, a farmer who lives across the lake. It opens in an “old isolated house” in the countryside where Nat and Diane “abandoned our cars and decided to take our chances cutting through the fields and where they “broke into a house beside the water and locked ourselves in.” (*Birds* 157) At the beginning of the play, Nat is recuperating from an illness and Diane notes his temper and fragility. The birds attack with the tides creating a “rustling outside the house” while Diane is “trying to tune in a

radio” but “there is chaos in the studio from where the broadcast is coming” (*Birds* 157). They search for food and begin debating take place regarding the risks of moving to a bigger town. They are all living a precious life.

Into this claustrophobic setting, Julia, the vibrant girl, upsets the delicate relationship between Nat and Diane. Julia has recently left a harsh experience and is seeking refuge. As time goes by, Julia gets closer to Nat. They go off foraging and Diane is visited by her neighbor from across the lake, Tierney. Tierney frightens Diane sows doubts in her mind and makes a scary statement about the birds “They never saw this one coming, ha? No one ever thought nature was going to eat us” (*Birds* 191). Hence, Tierney’s visit changes the course of the play. In Scene 14, Nat confronts Diane about what takes place in between Julia and her. In the final two scenes of the play, Nat and Diane are reevaluating their options of survival and possible future. They leave the house and decide to take a chance in the unknown.

***Birds*: Ecocritical Perspective:**

When asked “Why in many of your plays you use the supernatural an element”?, McPherson replied:

The more we learn from science the more mysterious everything becomes, the more we find out the more questions arise about why everything is the way it is . . . I don’t see any line between the natural and supernatural. To me nature is a mystery, completely and that is what we live in. (278)

The dedication of *Birds* to Genesis and the poet Percy Bysshe Shelly (1792- 1822) is very important to the idea of nature and what happens if we ignore or mistreat it. “Then the Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it . . . you must not eat the fruit of that tree; if you do, you will die the same day” (Genesis 2:16-17). I believe this verse reflects the idea that if we mistreat nature and do not obey its rules, nature will “fight back” and punish us. Similarly, taken from *Hymn of Apollo*,

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Shelly’s lines also reflect the idea of nature’s revenge: “I am the eye with which the Universe/ Beholds itself, and knows it is divine.” To Shelly, nature is “divine”; hence it should be respected because if not, it will punish the guilty.

From the very beginning, the play gives us a hint that it is going to be a highly ecocritical text. The birds that “are going to be crazy outside the house” are addressed similarly to the birds in Hitchcock’s adaptation in that while the text is stubbornly vague about the causes behind the sudden bird assault, the attacking birds quickly make the conflict in the play one of nature versus humanity. According to Rob Nixon, this can be seen as a sort of “slow violence” toxicity and environmental devastation that “occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence” (cited in Taylor Oak 201). Similarly, Jesse Oak use the term ecoapocalypse to distinguish between types of environmental disaster narratives. He describes tales in which

There is a sudden, violent, immense episode of disruption to the planet (epic floods, volcanoes, earthquakes, winter storms etc.) These events gradually happen out of nowhere are of limited duration and significant effect, and lead to rapid breakdown of social and economic order. (200)

By extending the allegory, *Birds* can stand in for a number of environmental concerns and possibly act as a warning call for future generations. In this sense, I will explore some of the ecocritical concepts that could be applied to the play, such as the role of the physical setting, the postapocalyptic world and the end of the world. I will end by questioning whether the play raises a sense of hope of saving the Earth?

According to Glotfelty, some of the fundamental questions raised by ecocritics are “what role does the physical setting of a narrative play in the plot structure? How does place function as a critical category in addition to categories like race, gender and

class?” (xvi). Nature’s agency is evident from the beginning of the play. McPherson heightens the isolation of the characters in many ways. First, the play is set in an “isolated house in the countryside” (*Birds* 157) making it difficult for characters’ to make contact with the outside world. It confronts the reader with the consequences of climate change. Another aspect that reveals alienation of the characters is their inability to get a signal on the radio, reflecting their struggle against nature. The stage directions read

DIANE is trying to tune in a radio. All she gets is static with the odd voice trailing in and out. She adjusts the dial and begins to pick up a signal as voices fade in. throughout the broadcast, random voices and sounds obscure what’s being said. There is chaos in the studio from where the broadcast is coming. (*Birds* 157)

The birds, which “go out with the tides. And they come back at high tide. Every six hours” (*Birds* 161) are presented as malevolent forces targeting human beings. Diane and Nat break into a house beside the water and “locked ourselves in [where] the waves of birds attacks continued for the next two days” (*Birds* 157), so the characters are seen as set alone in a harsh and antagonistic universe. Furthermore, the radio which Nat and Diane repeatedly turn for guidance represents both their isolation and the failure of human technology to withstand a natural attack.

Another ecocritical concept reflected in the play is “the end of the world”. Ecocritically speaking, one can read the play as an attack birds creating a dystopia, heightening the human degradation already in the society and metaphorically leading to the end of the world. In terms of global warming and atmospheric disorder, the play hints at a connection between the tides and the birds, and also the wind that is sometimes silent and at other times howling. The concept of the “end of the world” is explicitly or implicitly referred to and repeated many times by different characters throughout the play:

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DIANE (*deflated*). And here I thought it was the end of the world . . . (*Birds* 177)

TIERRNEY: Not for weeks. Nothing on the radio any more. Nothing on the T.V. Nothing nowhere (Drinks.) What do you think? Are we the last people left in the world. (*Birds* 191)

DIANE: Julia, everyone in the world is dead. We’ve no food and we can’t go anywhere because we’ll be killed. Believe me, I have bigger things to worry about. (*Birds* 201)

When havoc falls upon humanity, it always seems to be every man for himself, and the usual refrain in the play- “are we the only people alive” hints at this concept, the end of the world.

McPherson’s *Birds* depicts the disintegration of social relationships between characters and their families. For example, when Diane is asked about her husband, who is also working as a writer, she replies “we are separated.” (161) She, too, is divorced and her young adult daughter has left her to be with her father:

NAT: What about your husband?

DIANE: We are separated.

NAT: Is this happening everywhere?

DIANE: It seems to be. (*Birds* 161)

Similarly, Nat’s case is similar to Diane’s because he is also away from his family; his ex-girl- friend and her two children and he had not seen them for ten months. The following dialogue reveals the loss felt by the characters:

DIANE: Well, you were a family?

NAT: Yeah

DIANE: How old are they?

NAT: Six and eight. But I haven’t seen them in about ten months, a year.

DIANE: Right. Well, that’s hard.

NAT: Yeah and the breakup was . . . you know. (*Birds* 163)

Nat continues by stating that “she’s absolutely crazy because “she had me locked up” and “signed me into a hospital.”(*Birds* 164). Another example that shows the evident disintegration in society is when Diane tells Nat when she knows that Julia is pregnant and says, “society’s gone, Nat. No one’s keeping score. So you can do whatever you want.” (*Birds* 196)

To conclude, these birds could represent nature even though nature is a complex notion. They are an analogue for the natural world as a whole, a group of avatars that “fight back” against the humanity that has overwhelmed nature for so long. *Birds* as a play has succeeded in raising the reader’s awareness of the natural world and his her connections to it, making it clear that the natural world will always remain a threat, and reminding audiences that taking the natural world for granted can be deleterious to human society. What is interesting about McPherson's *Birds* is that nature in the form of birds could crowd humanity into a corner (the house) and, once there, the three characters must deal with themselves in terms of their personal issues. While there is an ecological crisis going on all around them, they ignore it to deal with issues that will die with them. As Glen Love succinctly puts it:

In the face of profound threats to our biological survival, we continue, in the proud tradition of humanism, to, as (David Ehrenfeld) says, “love ourselves best of all”, to celebrate the self-aggrandizing ego and to place self-interest above public interest, even irrationally enough, in matters of common survival. (226)

If we use Taylor’s terms, McPherson’s *Birds* is clearly “an ecoapocalypse- a sudden, unexplained, and frankly implausible event that causes maximum disruption, and which our attention is directed almost exclusively to human rather than planetary concerns.”(37) Moreover, it is climate-crisis denial--perhaps at a point where it has become too late to do anything meaningful about it. Still, isn't that what we do now? There is a climate crisis

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beyond change at this point. It has become a crisis because we are all--like the characters in *Birds*--dealing with lesser issues and not addressing the deadly changes that continue unabated because we simply cannot be bothered with them. In this sense, the play uses the attack of the birds to create the dystopia, heightening society’s human degradation that leads to the end of the world.

McPherson’s *Birds* might be termed as describing an “ecodystopia” in which human characters suffer “topophobia” i. e. they are alienated from and in fear of the landscape they move through. This is dystopian in every sense, not only in how nature turns on humans and exacts a kind of revenge, but also in how humans turn on one another at the precise moment when community is most needed. In *Birds*, all communication is suspect because all characters are motivated by self- interest, and therefore prone to manipulation of others. Human interactions degenerate into predator prey relationships or in the words of Christopher Murray, McPherson “puts thoughts on breakdown, failure, self-love and dread without the support and comfort of a social community.”(207). In McPherson’s *Birds* the natural world seems to mirror the degeneration and disorder of the human race as if the Anthropocenic climate changes have destroyed all symbiosis in the biosphere.

McPherson’s *Birds* is about degradation, deterioration and a dystopia - our earth seems to have become an explicitly hostile place for human beings. *Birds* is full of dystopia, global warming, atmospheric disorder, human degeneration and end of the world concerns.

“As long as there is kindness, there’s hope. . .right?”:

With all its gloomy atmosphere, the play reveals there a sense of hope is still lurking, as shown on many occasions by the characters. In their celebration of Nat’s birthday Diane says, “I hope you made a wish to get us out of here” to which Nat replies, “as long as there’s . . . kindness . . . there’s hope” (*Birds* 184). Nat continues:

Every day, I've been waking up, wondering if this is my last day alive. . . But I feel that the three of us . . . We can . . . We can . . . We can make it. I know we can . (*Birds* 184)

Nat also says "all the old pain is going to melt away" (*Birds* 180) and "That's all I see, all I see, all the pain stop, Diane. It's like someone opens a little door here and you step into paradise" (*Birds* 180). Julia also expresses hope even in this gloomy dark world when she tells Diane that "The human race has to continue" only when "people can still love each other" (*Birds* 202). It is what [J. Peter Bergman](#) in his review of the play said: "We are faced with the concept of a new beginning, a tale retold, a hope rekindle" (<https://theberkshireedge.com/theatre-review-the-birds-future-shock-at-barrington-stage/>). Everyone should believe and show respect to every living being's right to space and life. Biocentrism also teaches us that we must not be selfish enough to take other's life for our stomach's pleasure.

Conclusion

McPherson's *Birds* is characterized by the urge to warn readers about the consequences of environmental destruction especially through nature, not simply echoing but looming over human destiny. It shows that environmental destruction and the dissolution of human relationships go hand in hand. The dystopic nature of the play seems to offer a symbolic commentary on how selfish human passions, like those demonstrated by Julia and Nat, can lead to catastrophe not only for humans but for the planet as well. *The Birds* is a story about the natural world becoming fed up with humanity and finally asserting its might to rebuff human hubris. The characters are not only clearly unaware of the natural world around them (they fail to see any of the warning signs until it is too late), but they are also openly surprised when confronted by a threat from that world, mistakenly believing that they can "win" against nature, rather than striving to coexist with it. In this regard, the play can be read as a commentary on the woeful circumstances that could befall humans if ever we find ourselves at odds with the natural world. The birds in this play may be similar to ghosts, a tool for McPherson, an antagonistic force that

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 forces his characters to engage in some serious and (for them) seriously frightening introspection.

The play also depicts a grim scenario in which only a few humans have survived an apocalypse whose cause remains uncertain. This apocalypse is manifested as irrational behavior of birds of all species, insane woodpeckers that threaten to perforate the life out of the three survivors who are the play's main characters. The tides have also shifted out of order, signaling that something new, and disconcerting is occurring in the natural world. The human characters' obsession with alcohol and sex makes clear that they haven't learned their lesson- the same anthropocentric hubris that most likely provoked the strange apocalypse continues to dominate their sensibilities, even into the final hour.

The Birds depicts a world in which all relationships have gone awry, where everyone is suspicious of everyone else because of a plague of birds descending upon humankind. The four characters in the play face societal collapse, the end of the world, but instead of pulling together they turn on one another. The play itself might be able to shake the public out of its “climate silence” or climate denial. It is disturbing to learn that, as research in environmental studies, informs us, that we have stepped into the Anthropocene age and humankind itself has become a formidable destructive force damaging the planet and disturbing the ecosphere’s life, sustaining harmony of the ecosphere. The situation calls for seeking a serious understanding of the issues related to the suffering environment and efforts in taking all possible measures that can contribute to minimizing the crisis. Ecocriticism is, in this sense, a powerful tool that can be used in academia to raise critical awareness of the crisis and activate agencies for restoring the health of the environment.

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**"لم يدر بخلدنا أن الطيور ستلتهمنا":
دراسة بيئية لمسرحية "الطيور" للكاتب كونر مكفرسون**

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مستخلص البحث

تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى دراسة نقدية بيئية لواحدة من أهم مسرحيات الكاتب الايرلندي الشهير كونر مكفرسون (1972-). صُدِّرَ البحث بمقدمة عن النقد البيئي؛ لإظهار دوره كهدف أساسٍ للمسرحية، بهدف رفع الوعي بأخلاقيات التعامل مع البيئة. وقد حاولت هذه الدراسة الإجابة عن بعض الأسئلة؛ منها: كيف صور الكاتب الطبيعة؟ وما دور المكان في المسرحية؟ وقد استعان الباحث ببعض المصطلحات الخاصة بالنقد البيئي لتطبيقها على المسرحية، ومن هذه المصطلحات مصطلح: الوعي البيئي، ومصطلح نهاية العالم وكذلك الفوضى البيئية. وقد توصلت هذه الدراسة إلى النتيجة مؤداها أن الإنسان حينما يفصل عن بيئته منشغلاً بذاته فقط؛ يتأذى به الأمر إلى غضب الطبيعة وانتصارها في نهاية المطاف. وفي النهاية نستطيع القول بأنّ النقد البيئي يعد أداة مهمة وقوية يمكن الاعتماد عليها في نشر الوعي البيئي؛ ومن ثمّ استعادة البيئة لتوازنها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النقد البيئي - كونر مكفرسون - الوعي البيئي - نهاية العالم - المسرح الايرلندي