CHAPTER II

ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS AND SOCIETAL COLLAPSE IN
THE WIND FROM NOWHERE AND THE DROWNED WORLD

J. G. Ballard, similar to all his contemporaries, deals with the theme of environmental crises and societal collapse by using two significant entities of nature that is wind and water. In both these novels Ballard has dragged the contemporary ecological problems in the futuristic world and transmitted a message that if human being continued the excessive exploitation of the environment, in near future, he will be on the verge of extinction.

*The Wind from Nowhere*:

*The Wind from Nowhere* is debut science fiction novel by J.G. Ballard as earlier he had published only short stories. However, Ballard later denied the credit of being first novel as he considers it a piece of hackwork written in ten days and rather accepts *The Drowned World* as his first novel. Some critics opine that his first four novels exhibit elemental themes portraying global annihilation caused by air, water, fire and earth. The present novel is first of the series dealing with environmental disaster that imagines the wind as a destructive force. The novel portrays a panoramic picture of the world in which human civilization is destroyed by hurricane. Besides, portraying natural disaster, the novel also explores how disaster destroys the socio-cultural systems that generally help mankind to decrease his struggle with the hostile universe.

The story begins with the description of wind which flows continuously westward and strengthens at the equator. The speed of the wind gradually increases and it is described that how the growing speed
of the wind makes air travel unfeasible. Similarly, to live on the surface of the earth also becomes difficult, as speedy wind compels people to live in the tunnels and basements in order to protect themselves. London authority has established Central Operations Executive in which under the leadership of Simon Marshall, war office personnel work to cope up with the situation. The governments of many countries have taken preventive steps and have designed various plans to protect their people. The missions such as Combined Rescue Operations deal with collapsing buildings and rehabilitation of people.

In the absence of government system and other life-saving facilities, they have to help each other. This kind of behaviours can be seen in the pre-historic period in which the people were living in groups in order to survive from the hostile nature. They have to save each other as the civilization was in its primitive phase. In the novel despite of adverse condition, people are seen helping each other. It is seen in the story that Maitland rescues Marshall when he becomes injured due to collapsing masonry and he brings him to home to recover. As the story moves further, when Maitland visits Marshall’s home, he sees military equipment labeled Hardoon Tower in the basement which surprises Maitland for whom Marshall is really serving. Afterwards Maitland comes to know that Hardoon Tower is similar to pyramid structure which is planned to withstand the wind. It is named as Hardoon because a millionaire businessman called Hardoon is sponsoring. Ballard has depicted him a powerful, rich having a private army. He stands as a symbol of a modern man who has developed arrogance due to this scientific knowledge and the Hardoon Tower is a symbol of human endeavor to gain control over nature.
The destructive wind has altered everything even the psyche of man and his relation to other. Nothing has remained as earlier. It is seen in the story that the relationship of Maitland and his wife is on the verge of end, but he shows his humanitarian view and goes to help her when he heard that she was yet on the upper floor of the apartment while almost all people were underground. Despite of his effort to save her, she is carried away by the wind as she stands in an open window. As the wind gradually takes grim shape, novel further portrays different pictures of apocalypse. Due to destructive wind, COE determines to move from the base to safer place, but meanwhile Kroll arrives there who is one of Hardoon’s officers. Marshall feels that he has come to rescue him by taking him to Hardoon Tower but it proves wrong as Kroll kills him. Later Maitland along with Steve Lanyon, an American submarine captain and Patricia Olsen, a journalist gets rescued from the underground base. While moving Maitland realizes that they are passing close to Hardoon Tower and he decides to investigate it. So he disrupts navigation equipment in order to make his vehicle go to the tower. Hardoon receives the group with information and wants Olsen report the success story of tower but his wish cannot be fulfilled as eventually the pyramid begins to collapse and Hardoon can only watch it helplessly through a special window. Maitland and others make their efforts to save themselves and initially they feel that they succeed in their efforts but later on they come to realize that they are saved because the wind naturally subsided.

_The Wind From Nowhere_ is a novel which can only be studied primarily with ecocritical perspective as it conspicuously deals with the relation between nature and man. The novel keeps depicting wind as central key of action. Similar to many other eco-conscious novels, the present novel also reflects nature as a dominating force that has a
potential to make the scientific advancement insignificant. In it the wind appears as a central character as its fatal existence is ubiquitous throughout the novel. The wind remains omnipotent and omnipresent all over the globe showing its ultimate supremacy over mankind. Dissimilar to his other novels, excluding The Crystal world, The Wind from Nowhere does not present the human interference as a major reason behind the natural disaster but the wind is represented as an evil that proves itself horrendous and monstrous. The novel reminds us of Alfred Tennyson’s poetic line in his “Nature red in tooth and claw” ‘In Memoriam’, Canto IV. This line can be testified as wind in the novel remains responsible for the disturbed disposition, distemper and death of human beings. The novel shatters romantic ideals of nature writing, and as in ‘Ode to the west Wind’ Shelley personifies wind as a wild spirit that moves everywhere and plays a role of “Destroyer and preserver”. But J. G. Ballard depicts the wind only as a destroyer.

The author, by using the pictographic and sound images, portrays a vivid and lively image of the wind. As a reader we do not only read about the wind but rather we feel the wind. He depicts the wind as ballooning the window curtains, slamming the doors, making rattling and clattering sounds. The author depicts that the wind has shown its effect on ocean by creating high tides that even carries a room sized pieces of concrete. There are scenes of tree branches littered on the room due to wind. The author’s pictographic portrayal of the ecological decay can make us visualize the destruction.

The streets were full of rubble and pieces of masonry fragments of ornamented cornices from the older building the remains of roof timbers strewn across the
The most significant characteristic of Ballard’s writing is that he creates very convincing images of societal collapse along with the natural destruction. For instance, the public and private transport is dismantled as the roads are replete with rubble of masonry and building materials. Beside this the human habitation is also destroyed as Dr. Maitland sees—“The Storm driven rooftops stretching to the horizon like huge ragged waves, obscured by a spray of dust and grit”. (54)

The novel while projecting wind as the central key of action also makes reader to realize the aftermaths of speedy wind. The ecological novel usually projects the horrifying aftermaths of ecological collapse which is a prime feature of such novels. For instance, in the fourth chapter entitled ‘The corridors of pain’, we find as its title suggest many painful and ugly pictures of aftermaths.

The roofs had been stripped away and Maitland could see the sky through the open top-floor windows. Many of the upper floors had fallen in. All the small shops and boutiques had been completely gutted, their plate glass smashed, interiors cleaned out to the last hatpin and hair curler. (50)

The above paragraph reveals how the speedy wind has destroyed the day-to-day life of the people. The novel frequently highlights that how human beings are helpless and dependent on nature. The narration suggests that a small jerk from nature is sufficient to destroy all the systems that man has been creating for several centuries. The novel can be seen as a nightmare but it is not a suppressed fear of an individual but a collective consciousness that frequently triggers this fear and explored through the
myths like Noha’s arch, Pralaya or end of millennium. While analysing this deep fear of mankind Gopman in his book *James Graham Ballard’s Shattered World* (1982) writes –

And although their mental state is given a ‘science-fiction explanation’, the real reason lies in that primary feeling of anguish and despair which, in Ballard’s opinion is genetically present in man and which the awakening of a genetic memory brings out from the depths of his subconsciousness. (386)

This feeling is evidenced in the present novel. In the same chapter the author has depicted the sufferings and predicaments of people in detail which fortify the severity of aftermaths. The narrator describes how the social arrangements are shattered and people are left to survive independently. The narrator describes the scene in London as follows—

This building probably will, even if it loses the roof, but already most of the domestic houses in the British Isles are starting to come down. Roofs are flying off, walls caving in—not all that many modern houses are fitted with basements. People are running out of food, trying to leave their homes to reach the aid stations. They’re being sucked out of their doorways before they know what’s hit them, carried half a mile within ten seconds. (47)

The above description throws light on the sufferings of people. The people become helpless as they have no shelter to stay in and even they are facing shortage of food which compels them to take refuge for the aid at stations. They are also unaware of the approaching danger which would carry them half a mile away within a fraction of second.
The novel depicts minutely the aftermaths of environmental disaster. The novel makes pictographic presentation of how the speedy wind creates nuisance to shipping and air travel and causes soil layer of the earth’s top being stripped away. It depicts dystopian world consisting rotten things and dead bodies of animals and humans everywhere. The picture of collapsed buildings is seen commonly in the novel. On several occasions the author describes how seaboard cities went under the water. Thus, the picture of aftermaths projected in the novel is a fictionalized attempt to set a cautionary note for the modern man who lives life without showing concern about natural balance. By projecting fictionalized horrible pictures of aftermaths, novelist seems to give a message that anti-nature activity by mankind may cause ecological decay and consequential adverse situation in near future.

The novel depicts minutely socio-political collapse caused by natural disaster which is also a striking feature of ecological novel. The first chapter of the novel opens with an apocalyptic depiction containing the freaky and highly uncongenial weather condition owing to hurricane like wild and dusty wind. The air passengers have to wait for their scheduled flights. Even a single aircraft cannot make a takeoff due to dusty wind. The winds effects pervade all over the London- Nothing Hill, Hyde Park, Knightsbridge, Edinburgh Gate and 29 Lowndes Square. The dust has scattered all over the street. The novelist focuses on the villainous character of the wind by describing its massive power. The wind is shown throwing away the anchored boats, uprooting sturdy trees, caving in crystal towers. One of the human characters Dr. Maitland is exposed in the first chapter of the novel.

The wind has become rampant all over the globe, by creating havoc in the places like Tokyo, Rome, New York, Venice, Capetown, Singapore.
and many others. The wind has taken the lives of a number of people. All commercial and industrial activities have been ceased. People are engaged in mending the roofs of their houses. They have started stocking up foods and water. In London, to cope with the situation special organizations are set up to rescue sufferers. But the experiences of rescue team members are frustrating. For instance, on one occasion the chief of Central Operation Executive, Marshall mentally gets collapsed when he hears the news of collapse of Russell Square Hotel in London. He becomes exasperated to know that about four hundred people are buried under the debris. People have started taking refuge in the tunnels, bunkers, basements, and sewers to save themselves. The author has described how people behave in the wake of natural disaster especially when it is a time of total annihilation. All the bindings and morals are kept aside and the prime importance is given to survival. It is described as follows—

People were sitting all the way down the stationary escalators, huddled against each other’s knees, blankets wrapped around them, plastic bags at their feet containing gnawed loaves of bread, a few meagre cans and battered thermoses . . . Women and children had been allocated the westbound platform, while the men and service units occupied the eastbound. Wooden partitions had been erected and police patrolled the exits and entrances . . . thousands of people huddled about on the upper level with their bundles of luggage, walling off crude cubicles with blankets and raincoats, cooking over primus stoves, queuing endlessly at the latrines. Sleeping figures and parcels of luggage crowded the floor. (51-52)
The above paragraph picturizes how the thousands of people have become homeless and lack of amenities make their lives miserable. They failed to create a facility for food and drinking water as the number of people exceeds. The station is packed with the luggage, people and their objects of everyday needs. The natural calamity has destroyed their social arrangements and they become helpless to serve themselves in utter misery.

The author has also reflected the socio-political stances taken by different nations for disaster management. The novel depicts that Indian Prime Minister Pandit Nehru plans full scale relief program. News aired on radio reveals that Iraq and Persia collaboratively help the stricken towns and villages. He listens further that United Nations is about to launch a global relief mission to cope up with the unprecedented damage due to deluge. Avery, a surgeon is not happy with governments’ stance over the calamity. She opines that government is only advising the people to stay indoors and hide under staircases. Maitland and Avery are discussing the news which is being broadcasted on the Radio and Televisions. Her communication with Maitland reveals how government becomes helpless as their relief plans failed badly. The Government is unable to cope up with natural calamity and therefore Avery is unsatisfied but Maitland suggests her inability of the government. Their conversation is as follows—

General chaos building up everywhere. What I want to know is, when are they going to start doing something?"

“What can they do?”…Symington paused. “We aren’t getting much news in now from the States and western Europe, but you can imagine what the Far East looks like.
Governmental control no longer exists. Most of the radio stations are just putting out weak local identification signals.”(47-48)

The above conversation makes clear how the natural catastrophe has created the chaos and anarchy. In such circumstances, the government is also unable to provide any facilities to their people in order to save them from the disaster. The control of government is lost. The novel projects the failure of government in its partiality. In the wake of natural disaster, government instead informing their people about the danger of the destructive wind provides prior information to the business-man. The person like Hardon, who is a megalomaniac, eccentric industrialist, businessman, has already an idea about the ferocity of the wind and its increasing velocity 5 mph per day. That is why he collects all sorts of materials like T.V. sets, machines, juke boxes, radios, vacuum cleaner, electric stoves, irons, hair dryers, saws, medicines, weapons etc. and also appoints essential army of technicians and soldiers. He builds a colossus pyramid to reside and to save himself from the wind. The CoE chief and other men from government help him in building the pyramid. These people help him by providing weapons, medicines, machineries, foods etc. clandestinely.

The governments fail to establish a rescue system and could not find out the proper solution to stop the wind. It is observed that instead undertaking a project to investigate the basic reason behind the blowing wind, they prefer to support a private individual who by his radical idea creates a pyramid like structure to stop the wind. All this mismanagement happens only because the reason is uncertain and unattainable. It is a common feature of ecological science fiction as it speculates upon the reasons behind ecological decay. In this novel too, J. G. Ballard has
strained the curiosity of reader to know the scientific explanation behind the sudden environmental calamity. In such kind of depictions, environmental novelists generally are seen convincing to the reader that the excessive human interference in natural cycle causes environmental apocalypse but in the present novel, it is seen that instead of making human beings direct convicted for ecological decay, he has kept the reason uncovered. In his environmental apocalyptic series, he is seen more interested to project abundant pictures of environmental dystopia in order to convey his implied messages for his readers that nature is always superior to man and his scientific and technological gadget will be insignificant in the wake of natural disaster.

J. G Ballard develops systematically the reasoning of environmental decay thorough his literary creativity. It is discussed logically how exceptionally solar storm at the Van Allen Belts triggers the excessive solar radiation in the atmosphere of the earth which further give birth to destructive wind. The narrator, in order to make his narration more convincing and futuristic, has elaborated on how solar radiation triggers the climate change which increases the temperature of the earth.

One of the members of CoE Dr. Lavatt Dickinson, director of the meteorological office speculates on the ecology. He discusses over the wind’s velocity, humidity, density, longitude, and latitude—

Theoretically there are no reasons why it should not continue to revolve at high speeds indefinitely, and become the prevailing planetary system similar to the revolving clouds of gas that produce the rings of Saturn. To date the weather systems on this planet have always been dictated by the
oceanic drifts, but it’s obvious now that far stronger influences are at work. (34)

The above speculation made by Dickinson is confusing as the speed of wind does not fit into the matrix of scientific explanation. He tries to speculate on many grounds but could not find solid reason. However, he is sure that there is something that working behind the cyclone which is not yet comprehended.

Another instance is that when Dickinson points out the possible scientific explanation behind the threat of cyclone. He explains—

Recently our monitors have detected unusually high levels of cosmic radiation. All electro-magnetic wave forms have mass – perhaps a vast tangential stream of cosmic radiation exploded from the sun during the solar eclipse a month ago, struck the earth on one exposed hemisphere, and its gravitational drag might have set in motion the huge cyclone revolving round the earth’s axis at this moment. (48)

The above explanation throws light on the scientific correlation behind the occurrence of cosmic radiation, electro-magnetic waves, gravitational drag, solar eclipse, and consequential gigantic cyclone. He expounds recently their monitors have detected unusual high levels of cosmic radiation. He adds that cosmic radiation might have exploded from the sun during the solar eclipse a month ago, that might have stuck the earth’s exposed hemisphere and its gravitational force might have created the cyclone. However, it is apparent that the scientific reasoning provided by the author emphasizes that man is just “another biological unit” who solely depends on the natural cycles of resurrection. His self-attribution of anthropocentric adjective ‘higher’ in Darwin’s defecation of man as a
“higher biological unit” is challenged and eventually dismantled. Dissimilar to his other novels, in the present novel Ballard has not dragged or exaggerated the real man-made problems of nature but rather develops an imaginary theory of pseudo-scientific truth. The altered universe created with altered realities is a fantastic simulacrum that transmits the fear of annihilation which is suppressed in the collective-psyche of mankind.

In ecocritical writing a dichotomy between science and religion naturally arises. Destructive power of nature always makes the human to recourse not only to science but also to the God. As Dickinson is not sure about his scientific reason of the cyclone, he thinks that it might be the God’s wish to annihilate the human race and to resurrect the green earth. He says “… maybe it’s the deliberate act of an outraged Providence, determined to sweep man and his pestilence from the surface of this once green earth.” (34)

Dr. Dickinson’s thought resembles with the anti-anthropocentric philosophy as he thinks that man is not a superior animal in nature but he is also a small part of animal kingdom that helplessly depends on nature’s mercy. The destructed church stands for the destructed Christian religious belief that human being should be considered as superior to nature. The Christian philosophy has prompted the concept of ‘The Great Chain of being’ in which men assumes the third higher position after God and angles.

Ballard has used Hardoon Tower as symbol of human supremacy over the nature and Hardoon as a representative of modern man who thinks in terms of reason. Similar to mythical figures like Noah or Manu, Hardoon is also trying hard to sustain his existence by defeating nature.
But in the cases of Noah and Manu, the God’s incarnation and intervention saves humanity, however, in Ballard’s story this Deus ex machina is absent which left the humanity helpless. As a result, eventually, the tower collapses and establishes nature’s supremacy over man. The collapse of tower can be interpreted as a defeat of the eccentric rational thinking. The natural destruction shatters the age-old social systems and cultural channels along with religious beliefs that have enforced for several centuries that the first man was made in the image of God. This belief can be testified in Bible or can be evidenced in Greek and Hindu sculptures of God and Goddesses. This superiority complex is dismantled in the novel by destructing the tower. The destructive activity by nature is a kind of rebel against scientific rationality, technological intelligence and all those man-made thoughts which are used to subdue and seduce nature. The novel witnesses much other destruction of man-made monuments before the decline of Pyramid at last. The wind has destroyed the human civilization and its pictorial reflection frequently occurs in the novel for instance, in the conversation of Avery and others reveal that—

“London Bridge is falling down,” he said quietly. “Wind speed’s up to 180. Listening between the lines, it sounds as if things are getting pretty bad. Colossal flooding along the south coast--most of Brighton sounds as if its been washed away. (52)

The wind sweeps all manmade symbols of egocentrism which includes skyscraper of capital, New York City or Nelson’s column, Statue of Liberty or London Bridge. The human endeavors are being destroyed by the wind. The destruction of such monuments is seen as the destruction of the emblem of mankind’s ostentation, creativity and his courage. Ballard
by portraying of destruction of world-famous monuments intends to suggest that whatever the man has created can be destroyed within the fractions of second and this demonstration gives a direct hint to man to surrender to the supreme power of nature.

Beside this one more thing that should be noted here is that Ballard has deliberately elaborated nature’s effect only on human world and not on other animals in order to emphasize how anthropocentric assumptions are insignificant. The highest pyramid created in the novel itself is a symbol of anthropocentric ego of man. Hardoon’s decision to build the pyramid is only to show his distinctiveness with his intellectual power. He wants to show the world that he is resting at height in the pyramid while the rest of the world is taking shelter in the bunkers, tunnels, sewer like insects and worms yielded to the nature.

The novel further incorporates the interesting description of wind trying to make cave in and destroy the man-made enterprises. Ballard’s motif of showing nature a supreme power is so obvious that he has repeatedly incorporated the scene of falling books which symbolically conveys that man’s intellect cannot defeat the powerful nature. The expression is as such—

Book has spilled from the high shelves…Books cascaded from the shelves like toppling dominoes…The bookshelves fell forward and crushed down. (118)

Here Ballard clearly points out that man’s intellect and reason cannot withstand the nature’s power. Throughout the novel wind makes the men aware of their debility and feebleness as wind at the end subsides not by human force but by its own natural phenomenon.
The struggle between man and nature is presented in the novel through the character of Haroon and monstrous wind. Most of the pages of the novel are devoted to depict the duel between Haroon and the wind. Haroon commands the immense resources of technology, power, and energy. Haroon stands for intelligent and science-oriented man who challenges the monstrous wind. In order to overcome the wind, he makes various preparations beforehand to build huge pyramid so that he can prevent adverse condition during the hurricane. His act of constructing the pyramid represents the assertion of human intelligence and to show human potential against the nature. Haroon is seen very arrogant, bold and confident about his experiment of erecting a pyramid like structure to overcome nature. He says—

Haroon bowed his head slightly. “Doctor, you are entirely correct. The wind is, indeed, all I wish to see from here. And at the same time I intend it to see me.” He paused, then went on. “As the wind has risen so everyone on the globe has built downward, trying to escape it; has burrowed further and deeper into the shelter of the earth’s mantle.” …. Only I, in the face of the greatest holocaust ever to strike the earth, have had the moral courage to attempt to outstare nature. That is my sole reason for building this tower. Here on the surface of the globe I meet nature on her own terms, in the arena of her choice. If I fail, Man has no right to assert his innate superiority over the unreason of the natural world. (142)

The above expression by Haroon reveals his arrogance and confidence that he can easily defeat the nature. It becomes clear that only to satisfy his human ego, he has built the tower. He proposes that his attempt
stands for the duel between the reason of man and nature. He praises Dr. Maitland and his companions for showing their courage in battling with the wind and moving on the surface of the globe undeterred. But Hardoon in the course of time starts realizing nature’s power and also admits it to Maitland—

For a moment Hardoon stared at the darkened panels. “Its force is incredible,” he commented to Maitland. “Nature herself in revolt, in her purest, most elemental form. And where is Man, her prime enemy? For the most part vanquished, utterly defeated, hiding below ground like a terror-stricken mole, or wandering about blindly down dark tunnels.”(141)

He knows well the force of nature is so strong and powerful with potential to annihilate everything which would come in its way. He considers man as prime enemy of nature to whom nature have started to destroy.

However, the novel at the end depicts that although Hardoon possesses immense resources of technology, power and wealth becomes unsuccessful to stand against the wind. By delineating the destruction of the pyramid, Ballard wants to point out that man can never be superior to nature. The power and supremacy of nature is indubitably unchallengeable. Though the walls of the pyramid are 30 feet thick; though it can bear the impact of a dozen hydrogen bombs; though it can withstand ten-thousand-mile-an hour gales, the wind being the soldier of the powerful nature caves its in. At the end of the novel, it is seen how enormous Pyramid is toppled by the speedy wind and destroys it completely under huge drifts of dust. Thus, the wind projected in the
novel reveals the immense power of nature and through the character of Hardoon, the ultimate reality of man’s limitation is revealed.

Ecocritical study reflects on how nature is affected by humanity and vice versa. In most of the ecocritical literary works, the nature is shown subdued by human beings. Humans do this destroying wilderness, encroaching in the sacred ecosystem, and by profaning the pristine beauty of nature. On the contrary, there are some novels which portray nature encroaching in human lives, destroying the artificiality and regaining wilderness. The aspect of nature dominance is prominently seen in the present novel. The novel incorporates the story of encroachment of nature in the life of man destroying all his social arrangements. The destroying role of nature is vaguely explained with the help of reasons like solar flare and meteorological conditions. The leading characters of the novel are projected as helpless and passive who can just see their predicament. In other words, the novel projects the whole mankind as mere puppet controlled by the destroying nature as Maitland realizes that they are not saved due to their efforts but they are saved because wind on its own subsides.

The novel also implies that nature has performed poetic justice by rewarding anti-anthropocentric characters with life and punishing anthropocentric character with death. It is seen in the novel that Ballard is intended to focus on the effects of disaster on humans. In the wake of environmental disaster, the real values and qualities of characters are revealed as they react to dislocation, danger and distress. The argument can be sustained in the light of the analysis of Brian Baker in his article ‘The Geometry of the Space Age: J. G. Ballard’s Short Fiction and Science Fiction of the 1960s,’ in which he rightly points out that J. G. Ballard –
‘explores the deep implications of time, space, psychology and evolutionary biology in order to dismantle anthropocentric narratives and, in turn, open up alternative ways of experiencing, and conceiving of, contemporary human subjectivity’ (Baker 13)

In the course of story, we can find two types of character. On one side the character like Hardoon and Kroll represents the ruthless egoism and scientific arrogance. Marshall also reflects the urge for survival and Susan Maitland is shown passive, shallow who succumbs to defeatism in the early phase of disaster. On the other side the characters like Maitland, Lanyon, and Patricia are seen practical and resolute. They all exhibit the quality of resourcefulness, courageusness and compassion for others. They are also seen gaining greater awareness as an outcome of situation they face. The first group characters are destroyed and the characters of second group sustain their existence in apocalypse. In the tradition of universe, it is exemplified that evils are punished and worth is rewarded in order to start new phase of universal cycle. Thus, Ballard has demonstrated the motif of spiritual reality of the universe.

It is seen in the ecocritical novel that environmental catastrophe affects the psyche of the characters. In the novel the characters exist in a psychic limbo between the destruction of artificial man-made environment and dysfunctional natural environment. The ecological novel projects characters exhibiting the feeling of uncertainty, ambiguity and doubt generated by environmental catastrophe. The major characters in the present novel are seen exhibiting the same feeling out of frustration. The relationship between Maitland, his wife and other characters are represented as uncertain and ambiguous. The novel deals with the nature’s impact on human psyches. The wind affects people externally as
well as internally. Owing to wind’s destruction, Dr. Maitland gets mentally disturbed. He fantasizes that he is severely wounded and blinded. In fact, because of his tired body and daunted subconscious mind, he goes on fantasizing eerie things. He has succumbed to the hallucination owing trauma. The characters abandon their civilized behaviour and get ready to kill each other. Kroll fires at Symington and Marshall. Everyone is trying to preserve his interest as for instance Marshal wants to leave the place of havoc along with Deborah only and desires to leave Symington, Kroll, and Chrighton behind.

Maitland is presented as a cold, balanced person but he also due to adverse nature becomes frustrated and confused which compels him to leave his socialite wife. The analysis in connection to the societal collapse can be testified further with the reference of Lorenz J. Firsching and R. M. P’s opinion in their article ‘J.G. Ballard’s Ambiguous Apocalypse’ in which they reveal how the wind has destructed the outer and inner worlds of the characters. In an overarching statement they explore it as follows –

The destruction of urban civilization by the mysterious 550-mile-per-hour winds is foreshadowed in the kind of disruption in the life of the main character, Donald Maitland, which corresponds to Ransom’s divorce in Drought, Sanders’ unhappy love affair in Crystal World, and the death of Halloway’s parents in “City.” Even before the urban old order is destroyed, Maitland has already begun to break the bonds of his personal “old order” by divorcing his wife, leaving his job, and preparing to move to America. On the “exterior” level, the central events in Wind are acts of natural destruction: first of London, then of the giant steel
pyramid built by the industrialist Hardoon to challenge nature and assert man’s supposed dominance. (301)

The above statement reveals that how the external forces of nature affects the inner self of characters which makes them barren and as a result of it, they cannot sustain their relationship. It can be observed that man cannot prevent his world from the destruction and even cannot maintain his culturally cultivated psyche. Maitland’s frustration increases as he moves through various areas of the destructed city. He behaves very strange on certain occasion as if a whimsical person. He seems to be calm and curious but, on few occasions, however he becomes strangely aggressive. He assumes the inevitability of the event but some time he aspires for personal survival.

As he took his seat in the briefing room in the Personnel Reallocation Unit he wondered how far his own character had benefited by the ordeals he had been through, how much it had gained. merit, as the Buddhists would say. Could he really claim any moral superiority over Avery, for example? Despite his near death at knightsbridge he had so far had little choice in determining his own fate. Events had driven him forward at their own pace. How would he behave when he was given a choice? (143-144)

He behaves irrationally when he attempts to redirect an armed man. His motifs are unclear as he takes unnecessary interest to know about Hardoon and his insolent pyramid. Strangely, he does not become restless and panic by the fearful events of speedy wind which creates fear in the mind of others. He shows somewhere no concern to live and sometime he
feels concerned for himself and for others. At certain points he saves the several lives by putting his life at risk.

The novel presents the confusion and lack of faith generated in the minds of people. By detailed description of the inter-personal behaviors, steam of thoughts and the reactions the critical situations, Ballard has successfully depicted the chaotic psychics of the characters. For instance Maitland thinks that—

In addition, there was the gradual numbness that had begun to affect everyone, a blunting of the sensibilities, by the filth and privation and sheer buffeting momentum of the wind. The result was an increasing concentration on ensuring one’s own personal survival, a reluctance, such as he had just seen in a basically confident man like Halliday, to put any trust in the durability of others. (148)

The above paragraph reveals that how environmental catastrophe affects the mind of the people. In the above stream of thought, Ballard has deliberately used the expression like ‘gradual numbness’, ‘blunting sensibility’, ‘reluctance’ in order to throw light on what is happening in the minds of the characters. Everybody is interested to save himself and consistent fear creates the doubt and confusion in the minds of others. It is seen that beside the continuous description of destruction and frustrated psyche, Ballard has also inserted few of the romantic scenes but their motif is not to dilute the grim reality of cyclone but to highlight it.

For instance, the chapter 5 begins with a romance between Lanyon and Patricia, which is deliberately depicted with the words like caressing, kissing, embracing and touching. However, the romantic scene is further followed with the description of harsh reality of the wind. Therefore, it
cannot be interpreted as a romantic relief, but it must be considered as a narrative scheme in which two opposite ideas were juxtaposed to add the emphasis. He has portrayed the plight, misery and predicament of the characters in an utterly detached manner. He even has not developed the characters in the novel elaborately as his focus is not personal or individual but universal. He described the deaths of the characters in a detached manner. Maitland’s wife Susan’s death and Charlesby’s death in hedges appears to be repulsive to the readers but Ballard narrates it without having any emotional effect in his narration. Susan is taken away by the wind, catapulted like an object. The wind spins her like a smashed doll. She falls down and her body rebounds over the roof. Similarly, Charlesloy’s death appears to be hideous and repulsive. When he dies in hedges, field rats and scavengers come out of burrow to feed themselves on his body.

The gradual development of storm and the progression of story towards its climax is maintained with the narrative structure as it is divided in to eight substantial part with the appropriate titles. For instance- the story begins with the chapter entitled ‘The coming of Dust’ that shows the storm is just began, however the seventh chapter which is entitled as ‘The Gateways of the Whirlwind’ shows wind has destroyed everything on the earth. The novel contains the split narrative describing wind’s fatal existence in every chapter. The wind is shown blowing throughout the novel and blowing up man-made world. The novel also implies that all the technological inventions and progress in other fields cannot be used to battle with nature. Similar to narrative structure and the titles of the chapters, the title of the novel is also obvious that not only indicates the wind is a destructive force but it also suggests that the blowing of wind is a natural phenomenon and its source is uncertain. It
also suggests that though man has achieved the extreme heights in gaining the knowledge of his world there are still few things in unlimited nature that are unperceivable to his limited intelligence. In the analysis of the novel, it becomes apparent that novel is a story of resurrection. The dust elements appeared in the beginning is an indication what man has created out of the earth is once again converting to its elements. This idea is a shock to the theological belief that man is like a God. It indicates that man can superficially interfere with the natural cycle but cannot change its process of resurrection.

The novel through the depiction of environmental catastrophe postulates the ecological values. Ballard in this novel by fictional representation of apocalypse and its aftermaths suggests boastful thought of man to control nature is wrong. If human tries to overcome nature, he will not succeed in it. Symington can be seen as mouthpiece of Ballard who has environmental vision and trying to analyse the present environmental catastrophe. While discussing the prevailed natural calamity and its consequences with Marshall whose tone is somewhat egoist and casual, Symington proposes—

On the whole, people had shown less resourcefulness and flexibility, less foresight, than a wild bird or animal would. Their basic survival instincts had been so dulled, so overlaid by mechanisms designed to serve secondary appetites, that they were totally unable to protect themselves. As Symington had implied, they were the helpless victims of a deep-rooted optimism about their right to survival, their dominance of the natural order which would guarantee them against everything but their own folly, that they had made gross assumptions about their own superiority. Now they
were paying the price for this, in truth reaping the whirlwind! (77)

In the above paragraph, Symington clearly points out how modern man becomes insensible and lost his natural instincts that would help him to survive in the natural calamity. The overuse of technology had made modern man to forget his basic instincts of survival and made him to rely on technological comfort. He clearly mentions that their dominance over natural order may surely lead them towards their destruction. He further elaborates how assumption about their superiority is made to repay by nature.

Thus, *The Wind from Nowhere* by creating fictional dooming world deals with major theme of environmental apocalypse and purification of mankind. In his literary ecology while dealing with environmental apocalypse the other themes like ‘resurrection’, ‘conflict between good and evil’, ‘crises between man and nature’ also takes shape. Ballard has utilized symbols, metaphors and allusions from the mythical stories to achieve his literary motif of annihilation in the wake of natural calamity. The novel emphasizes the element of environmental crises and societal collapse as the major themes.

**The Drowned World:**

*The Drowned World* is published in 1962 and is considered as science fiction novel. The present novel is Ballard’s second novel and is an extended version of the novella published in *Science Fiction Adventures* magazine with same title in January 1962, Vol. 4, No. 24. The novel, in order to project post-apocalyptic future, depicts how the global warming has triggered uninhabitable situation in most of the part of the earth and consequentially the world is reverting to its prehistoric
environment. The culprit of post-apocalyptic aroma being depicted in the novel is climate change which was current issue at the time of its publication therefore the novel is considered as founding text of literary genre know as climate fiction. Like other apocalyptic fiction of J.G. Ballard, the story of the present novel also revolves around a major “natural” change in the environment of the earth. The previous novel projects wind as destructive agent whereas flood is being projected as the apocalyptic element in the present novel.

The story is about a team of scientists who stay in flooded, abandoned London to observe ongoing environmental developments for their research. They are accompanied by armed forces to protect people and vacant the place in order to move the mass towards the north. Dr. Robert Kerans is a major character who is a biologist and handles Biological Testing Station as a manager. The said biological testing station monitors and makes research on the ongoing changes such as submerged area of earth, reverts to dense, virtually uninhabitable situation, tropical jungle.

It is depicted in the novel that the atmosphere of the earth is radically altered due to solar radiation flares and as a result of it heat is at its peak. The growing heat and humidity trigger the process of melting ice caps which transforms most part of world uninhabitable. The setting used in the novel is London which is beneath the surface of the water and what visible is topmost floor of few buildings. In an encroaching jungle of sixty-foot-high ferns, Kerans is accompanied with Colonel Riggs, who is an in-charge of the mission to look after the safety of Biological Testing Station and the people who are still living behind in the forest. He uses to convince people with the help of Dr. Kerans to vacate the place and move them towards the north safe zone. Other characters, who stay with
Kerans, are Dr. Alan Bodkin who is an assistant and colleague researching on the new psychophysical realities overtaking and Beatrice Dahl from whom Kearns prefers to live separate due to altered situation.

Kerans stays at penthouse suite at the Ritz Hotel in London well equipped with all modern civilized amenities such as air conditioning, silk shirts, and a very well-stocked bar. The well-furnished and glittering grandeur of this famous hotel is now seen faded way. The objects and furniture of the hotel are rotting and decaying due to heat and humidity. Though, early chapters of the novel propose the activities of Kerans as normal routine such as his dealings with Bodkin, Riggs, and Beatrice and his work at the research station still simultaneously make aware through its dealing that man and his environment is transforming into something abnormal. The altered psyche of man is perceived in Kerans as he becomes aware of the growing strength of his dreams of primitive sun and his growing inclination of isolation from others in order to accept his internal change. He is assigned with the work to monitor the flora and fauna of the environment, but his urge and commitment to his work seems gradually fading as his sense of inwardness becomes more dominant aspect of his personality.

Due to unbearable condition of environment the team of scientist is asked to come back to the north because this is the only place where human can survive and therefore most of the people of south settled there. But Beatrice Dahl and fellow scientist Dr. Bodkin who become habitual to live in isolation are reluctant to go back as their psyche is altering and compelling them to regress into the pattern of Triassic period. Riggs has tried very hard to convince them that the altering environment is dangerous and they would probably die, but he fails. Therefore, he asks Dr. Karance to persuade his friends but even he also fails. At last by
refusing the proposal of Riggs they decide to stay back and settle in the lagoon.

The altering environment makes impact on the minds of those left behind in such a way that they are having dreadful dreams and nightmares. They cannot make difference between dream and reality. So, after making analysis of the dreams, Bodkin comes to conclusion that the root of images in dreams is the subconscious cellular of inheritance memory of mankind. Altered environment is similar to Triassic period and this environment is reactivating the genetic pattern of Triassic time like burning sun. Most of the paragraphs in the novel, through the narration of Bodkin and Kerans, reveals that these experiences are similar to pre-human existence which are not directly revived from brain instead are evolved from cellular genetic pattern of time.

The first victim who surrenders to this ancient stimulation is Hardman who is appointed in the mission as a pilot of helicopter. Due to alerted environment, he has to face persistent dreams which finally trigger the ancient spirit in him. Consequently, he becomes able to face the sever environment to which common human may severely suffer. He can bear the sever heat and flaming sun which makes blind to the others. He flees from the base camp as his human tendencies are ended due to reversed genetic pattern and he moves to the deep jungle in south towards flaming sun. In order to search him, Riggs with his team of scientist design a mission to the south. They search him at every corner of south with the help of helicopter but he is not found. In their search operation, he is found in the building where he hides himself so that he can avoid the human presence. All of them have tried best to catch him but finally he becomes successful to escape and unwillingly they have to stop their search operation.
After Hardman’s escape, Riggs once again tries to convince them to move towards north but Kerans along with his fellow scientist rejects to leave the base and stay behind. Ultimately Riggs with his soldiers moves to the north. The pages of the novel hereafter describe the life of Beatrice, Dr. Bodkin, and Kerans in the lagoon which consists of a constant pursuit of dreams and new realities of their altered world. Their desired pattern of life is destroyed with the arrival of corpse-white Strangman, most crooked and merciless villain. He comes there with his troupe of buccaneers and pirates. He has also cruel looters and two thousand alligator watchdogs in his army. Stangman, in order to convince the Kerans and his friends for going into the submerged London Planetarium, arranges a party. At last Kearns gets convinced and they move towards London. Stangman has only intention to loot the ancient treasure but the aspiration of Kerans seems different.

Kerans with all equipment enters in the dome shape structure of Planetarium. He could see clearly all images and cultural manifesto of ancient time in the water. He imagines as if he sees the entire star map of ancient world. This aroma submerged into water disturbs him in such a way that his materialistic life becomes pale and his desire to embrace this ancient world grows stronger. This makes him to tie off his airline as if he is involuntarily committing suicide. Starangman understands the meaning of this gesture in Kerans and he immediately enters in to water in order to save the life of Kerans and prevent him from the present temptation. He fetches Kerans out of water and soothe him. But Kerans is seen desperate for nightmarish desire of primitive time as he steels the compass which mesmerizes him with the concept of south where reader can guess that the Kerans is surrendering himself to his archaeophysic past.
The closing chapters of the book describe intermittently the ever-increasing inclination of Kerans towards the inner forces. The men of strangeman start looting and cruelly murdering. Every corner is seen chaotic which disturbs life pattern of scientists. Consequently, Kerans with his fellow scientist makes rebel. Therefore, Strangman prisons Beatrics and Bodkin. Stangeman and his men begin to torture them physically. He is about to slay them, but Riggs with his soldier arrives there and save their life. Kerans convinces Riggs to arrest Strageman, but Riggs deny and instead proposes that he should be given meddle for pumping out all water and placing the compound of dam around London. After Riggs departure again Starangman begins to torture them. Kerans is forced by the men of strangeman to wear the head of dead crocodile. After this final gesture, Kerans is imprisoned by Strangman in the sun for several days which makes Kearns literally transformed into the skin of a prehistoric creature. After long torture Kerans becomes successful to escape from the clutches of Strangman. He then makes the blast around the lagoon dam with the help of dynamites in order to destroy the dam. Kerans becomes aware that he will be killed by Riggs or Strangman so he moves towards the south nursing a bullet wound in his leg. In the deep jungle he meets Hardman who is nearly blind. He helps Hardman in the jungle in order to wander further towards the south. After the death of Hardman, Kerans moves further deep in to jungle 150 miles away and continues his journey towards south. Novelist implies that Kearans will die with his unattainable quest. Novelist positively describes him as a second Adam and underpins his quest for lost nature.

Dissimilar to Ballard’s other novels, The Drowned World explore the post-apocalyptic world due to the global warming. But exploration of this global warming scenario might be a surface meaning of the text, as it
has created a simulacrum of the new beginning of the human world. Therefore, the characters should not be considered as a culturally defined human begins, but are the wild beings who are attempting to extend their existence. The altered environment has also triggered certain biological and psychological changes in them. The novel shows that the global warming and its aftermath has retrieved world to the Pre-Triassic period which is a well-defined anthropological era in order to create a replica of the beginning of human civilization. The novel can be read as an attempt to explore the basic reasons behind the ecological decay which the characters have face recently. This exploration ultimately reached to the conflict between the characters which are triggered and psychologically altered due to the Pre-Triassic environment and the characters who attempt to retrieve the civilization with all its security and the restricting rules. This struggle can be seen as the contemporary struggle between the environmentalists and the materialistic people.

The character of Kernas, Dr. Bodkin, Batric Dhal and Herdman who are transformed due to altered environment symbolically represents the environmentalists. They want to sustain their lives in the altered environment without making any change to the present environment for their own survival. Kearns and Beatric Dhal rebel against Strangman and they try their level best to prevent Strangman from interfering in the natural process of nature. Kearns at last destroys the dam in order to restore the natural state of the environment. On the other hand, Colonel Riggs, Starangman and his fellow looters symbolically represents the materialistic people of the modern time who want to alter environment for their own end. They want to utilize the natural resources for making their life easier. Though Strangman and his men are murdering, looting and causing a harm to the natural environment, still instead punishing him
Riggs convinces Kearasn that Strangman is doing good progress in order to make the human life easier and he should be awarded with meddle. Lorenz J. Firsching rightly points out in his article entitled *J.G. Ballard’s Ambiguous Apocalypse*

The actions of the character Strangman form the central episode of Drowned World. Strangman resembles such other characters in Ballard’s fiction as Hardoon, Lomax, and Buckmaster: all are representative, in varying degrees, of the greed, the lust for power, and the fascination with technology characteristic of 20th-century civilization. All flourish in an urban environment, all challenge nature or history with their technology and personalities, and all, ultimately, are failures. (302)

Strangman pumps out water from the lagoon and builds a dam around it so that he can easily utilize the things for his own end. The depiction of this small scale activity by Strangmen symbolically represents the human tendency to overcome nature. Beside, this delineation also represents the beginning of ecological decay by human act from Pre-Triassic period. It implies how human beings over the times invaded nature to make his life easier triggering environmental decay in the form of climate change, global warming, disturbed seasonal cycle, extinction of flora-fauna with various species. Though the novel explores the post-apocalyptic scenario of ecological decay, still it, by portraying climate change in the form of raised temperature, makes apparent that the present condition of the earth is the result of anti-nature activities of human beings since the long time. In this connection current research on environmental study also points out indifferent attitude of human which stands responsible for growing imbalance in the environment of the earth. Peter Miller in his research
entitled ‘What’s Causing Extreme Weather?’ notes his observation regarding the causes of extreme environmental condition. He writes—

Since 1970, the average global temperature has risen by 0.9°F (0.5°C), primarily as a result of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, according to most scientists. This additional heat has increased the chances for severe heat waves, drought, and other forms of extreme weather. (web.)

The above paragraph points out how the scientific experiment like greenhouse disturbs the atmosphere of the earth and raises the heat of the earth causing extreme conditions. The present novel does not directly throw light on the causes of climate change as the novel is about post-apocalypse of ecological decay, but by exploring its hazardous effect on earth intends to encourage us to contemplate on anti-nature activities. The novel gives message through its depiction of dystopian world that soon it would be the situation of our earth as the novel is set in the imaginative future.

The present novel, in order to give impetus to the plot, has utilized the tool of climate change causing flood in all over the world and has delineated many pictures of environmental decay interwoven with the plot of the novel. Though the present novel projects post-apocalyptic global warming scenario of the earth and its altered flora-fauna, still it also points out how the alerted environment is unfavourable for the survival of human population. The novel incorporates many descriptive passages of scientific explanation behind the vulnerable situation of the earth triggered by climate change. The novel begins the story with pointing out the unfavorable situation of climate. It throws light on how
the climate change affects the lives on the earth and implies the ecological decay of the earth:

Soon it would be too hot . . . power of the sun was plainly tangible. The blunt refracted rays drummed against his bare chest and shoulders, drawing out the first sweat, and he put on a pair of heavy sunglasses to protect his eyes. The solar disc was no longer a well-defined sphere, but a wide expanding ellipse that fanned out across the eastern horizon like a colossal fire-ball, its reflection turning the dead leaden surface of the lagoon into a brilliant copper shield. By noon, less than four hours away, the water would seem to burn. (1)

The above paragraph clearly indicates that the climate is abnormal and unfavourable to lead the normal life for human beings. In the normal day time solar disc is bearable and can be perceived but the solar disc described in the above paragraph is abnormal which turns as a fire-ball and its reflection is so severe that it makes lagoon glitter immensely. The description further points out the heat of the sun would increase to such an extent that would make cool water to burn. The novel makes description of nature in extremity which points out the ecological decay. The extreme heat disturbs the ecological balance which creates unhealthy atmosphere for the species on the earth. Ballard, initially, through depiction of atmosphere seems to suggest that ecological decay is the main culprit of plot of the novel which he plans to unfold further.

Generally, ecological novels contain ecological decay as main impetus of their plot and throw light with emphasis on the causes of ecological decay, but the present novel, instead explaining the causes, has simply incorporated implied pictures of ecological decay. It does not
directly suggest that the present climate change is triggered by human activity. The reader of the novel comes to know about decaying condition of the environment through the observation made by the major characters. The major characters of the novel are scientist to observe the physical changes at lagoon in the unknown imaginative parts of London. Colonel Riggs is attributed with the duty to vacate the place and move the mass towards the safe zone. After vacating the place colonel, Riggs starts convincing these scientists to move towards the north for safety but these scientists are reluctant to leave so they make various arguments to stay behind. The most of the chapters of the novel explore their argument which is nothing but vehicle to convey the encoded message of ecological decay. First Riggs convinces Kearns to leave the place and in argument he asks Kearns to listen to the news of all over the world. He explains about the announcement of alert to leave the place for good. He explains further

Came through last night from Byrd. Apparently, the water level is still rising, all the work we’ve done has been a total waste-as I’ve always maintained, incidentally. The American and Russian units are being recalled as well. Temperatures at the Equator are up to one hundred and eighty degrees now, going up steadily, and the rain belts are continuous as high as the 20th parallel. There’s more silt too-(9)

He explains how the environment of the earth is altered rapidly with growing danger of survival. The high temperature with its steady growth would create rain belt and may be dangerous. So, the American and Russian units are retreating. The growing physical upheavals described in the above paragraph imply ecological decay which is imaginative representation of literary ecology as feature of ecological novel.
Afterwards Riggs at another time convinces to Miss Dahl for leaving the place. He makes her aware of the environmental changes which are not suitable for human survival. He unfolds through his argument that the environmental decay is taking grim shape and would turn deadly for her and fellow scientists. He explains

“The temperature is still going up, Miss Dahl, you won’t find it easy to stand one hundred and thirty degrees...When they leave, and the cloud cover goes, the water in that pool” he indicated the tank of steaming, insect-strewn fluid “-will damn nearly boil. What with the Type X Anopheles, skin cancers and the iguanas shrieking all night down below, you’ll get precious little sleep.” (15)

Riggs makes her aware that the temperature of the earth is increasing gradually due to environmental decay and soon it would go beyond the human bearable capacity. He cautious her that the growing environment decays may cause various epidemics.

The novel in order to throw light on the ecological decay has incorporated many references with descriptive passages in the plot. While incorporating the references of ecological decay, the natural literary narrative flow of the novel is neither disturbed nor perceived as artificial. The conversation between Kerans and Bodkin, being biologist, regarding physical changes on the scientific ground is convincing which points out the process of ecological decay as their observation.

“Correct.” Bodkin strolled off among the benches. “During the last three years, Robert, you and I have examined something like five thousand species in the animal kingdom, seen literally tens of thousands of new plant varieties.
Everywhere the same pattern has unfolded, countless mutations completely transforming the organisms to adapt them for survival in the new environment. Everywhere there’s been the same avalanche backwards into the past-so much so that the few complex organisms which have managed to retain a foothold unchanged on the slope look distinctly anomalous—a handful of amphibians, the birds, and Man. It’s a curious thing that although we’ve carefully catalogued the backward journeys of so many plants and animals, we’ve ignored the most important creature on this planet.” (25)

The above conversation reveals that the growing physical changes are the symptoms of ecological decay which would be the main impetus for the plot ahead. The physical changes trigger the thousands of new plant varieties and every species of the earth is trying to get adjusted with the new environment. The most of the changes indicates present status of the earth that is reversing and moving environment of the earth in the primal stage of its development.

The present novel also explores the pictures of the aftermaths of ecological collapse which is most striking feature of Ecocriticism. Most of the ecological apocalyptic novels present the natural disaster as founding reason behind the portrayed dystopian plot. These ecological novels first throw light on ecological decay and systematically unfold the aftermaths as plot moves further. But the present novel, instead, depicts the simultaneous scenes of ecological collapse and its aftermaths. Rather the present novel is an explicit account of aftermaths of ecological collapse as the novel is post-apocalyptic in nature. The focus on ecological decay is implicit as it implies the decay started in remote past
and gradually reaching to its climax. The prime focus of the novel is to project the account of aftermaths of ecological decay.

The novel incorporates broadcasting information about melting polar ice-caps which serves the purpose of a sound background to the ecological apocalyptic plot of the novel. As aftermaths of ecological decay, the temperature of the earth grows to such an extent that polar ice-caps begin to melt down. Beside even the ice-seas also starts melting and as a result, the half of the world is submerged under water. The novel imaginatively presents that the most important part of the land of the world submerged under water, which includes Greenland, North America, Russia and Northern Europe. As aftermaths of this natural calamity, people have to migrate for their survival. The disastrous panorama all over the world generates the feeling of chaos and fear. The same thought can be observed in Adrian Tait’s article ‘Nature Reclaims Her Own: J. G. Ballard’s The Drowned World as he writes –

As our own climate continues to warm, it is also amongst his most prescient, highlighting not only our vulnerability to the impact of climate change, but the fragility of personality and individuality, the cults around which post-modern societies have (self reflexively) constructed themselves. The Drowned World calls it all into question. (4)

As Bodkin points out while having conversation with Kerans “most biological memories are unpleasant ones, echoes of danger and terror. Nothing endures for so long as fear.” (26) This feeling of chaos and fear is depicted through the characters, like Bodkin and Kerans, which, in turn, represent the feelings of fear and confusion of mankind at large. There are many incidences of confusion and fear which are described in
the novel as aftermaths. Once Bodkin sees water around him and he cannot grasp where he is. So with confused state of mind he asks Kerans where they have arrived. Then Kerans assures Bodkin that the place is familiar to him and most of the part of it is called London.

As aftermaths of ecological decay, the behavioural pattern is altering in most of the species including human beings on earth. They behave in such a way which is generally sign of abnormality. Most of the members of the testing station deliberately keep distance with each other and maintain isolation. Narrator describes this growing abnormality due to environmental decay as

This growing isolation and self-containment, exhibited by the other members of the unit and from which only the buoyant Riggs seemed immune, reminded Kerans of the slackening metabolism and biological withdrawal of all animal forms about to undergo a major metamorphosis. (8-9)

The altering behavioral pattern is a sign and warning for all animal that the major change is about to take place in near future. Being biologist, Kerans observes the behavioral pattern of all animal around him and forms a solid ground for this altered attitude. He observes for long time that his fellow members maintain long silence and keeping distance from each other as if they are self-contained. In the base camp most of them become aware of the psychological and biological changes taking place in human nature except Riggs who could keep aloof from this growing syndrome. Kearns can formulate such hypothesis on the basis of his observation of people with whom he comes in contact. Dr. Alan Bodkin is another fellow assistant and colleague of Kerans who also assumes that new psychophysical realities are surpassing the human beings around him.
Beatrice Dahl is one more character who is accompanying Kerans with whom later on he maintains a distance. He abandons her in the flat as the changes occur though they together have decided to stay behind in encroaching Jungle. So, it is seen that as an aftermath the psychological factor of loneliness grows in the major characters.

It is seen in the novel how the aftermaths of ecological collapse affect the inner world of characters. The sever flood, growing temperature and lagoon generates the feeling of insecurity in the minds of all characters. The novel illustrates natural disaster can severely destroy the human life and compel them to migrate from one place to another in order to survive. Due to migration, the feeling of loneliness and isolation develops. The external upheaval creates mental upheavals and as a result of it, most of the characters in novel become the victim of the sever experience of loneliness and nightmare. Each character suffers from the same feeling like Kerans and is unable to keep relation with others. It is also rightly pointed out by Lorenz J. Firsching that

The reader who expects some sort of relationship between Kerans and Beatrice Dahl, or between Kerans and Bodkin, will be disappointed (no doubt intentionally). Each of these characters is isolated, exploring his or her own inner universe. In the emerging new order, isolation seems to be the rule-and not only in Drowned World; witness the isolating effect of the breakdown of the relationships (302)

The above criticism reveals that how the external factors have distorted the inner self of characters as aftermaths of ecological collapse. The sufferings due to ecological collapse develop a sense of fear, loneliness and isolation in the psyche of character automatically which is a new
psychology of new environment that prevents them to maintain relation with each other. In the novel, there are many references which reveal the inner chaos. Therefore, the behavioral pattern and their line of thinking can be perceived as abnormal. Narrator skillfully describes the inner chaos in the mind of Kerans. The shattered situation of his psyche is described as

The sea was no longer visible and he was alone with these few lifeless objects. . . . Overhead the sky was dull and cloudless, a bland impassive blue, more the interior ceiling of some deep irrevocable psychosis than the storm-filled celestial sphere he had known during the previous days. . . . find him stumbling about the silent basins, their floors cracked into hexagonal plates, like a dreamer searching for an invisible door out of his nightmare. (168)

The above paragraph clearly indicates the feeling of loneliness and insecurity which makes him a negative man. To highlight the pessimism for life, narrator has used the imagery like ‘lifeless object’, ‘sky was dull and cloudless’, and ‘silent basins’. Ballard in his present literary ecology has skillfully portrayed the terrible and disturbing pictures of the aftermaths without making deliberate attempt and for this purpose he has incorporated the real places, rational assumptions and human emotions to convince its severity with natural grace.

The present novel unfolds the environmental apocalyptic world with logical reasoning based on scientific facts which is one more feature of ecological novel. The novel has incorporated scientific facts of Environmental Study and skillfully fused it with the imaginative plot, in
order to fortify the literary effect of arty-craft. The scientific truth behind portrayed ecological dystopia play the vital role of a sound background and make story of the novel more real and convincing. The novel hints in the initial pages that the novel is about climate change. The novel begins with pointing out the extreme heat which is unbearable for human beings and other animals of planet. The novel gradually with logical coherence unfolds the scientific reasons behind present natural catastrophe as the plot of the novel proceeds. In the second chapter of the novel the process of natural catastrophe which was started in the remote past as a result of ecological decay is explained scientifically as the climate change taking its grim shape.

The succession of gigantic geophysical upheavals which had transformed the Earth’s climate had made their first impact some sixty or seventy years earlier. A series of violent and prolonged solar storms lasting several years caused by a sudden instability in the Sun had enlarged the Van Allen belts and diminished the Earth’s gravitational hold upon the outer layers of the ionosphere. As these vanished into space, depleting the Earth’s barrier against the full impact of solar radiation, temperatures began to climb steadily, the heated atmosphere expanding outwards into the ionosphere where the cycle was completed. (12-13)

The above paragraph makes clear how the geophysical upheavals starts making changes in the environment of earth long back, and instability in sun creates solar storms that causes earth to lose its gravitational power. It explains what causes the temperature of the earth reaches to unbearable peak point as there is a full impact of solar radiation. The scientific information incorporated in the novel confuses its reader to such an
extent that he may feel as if he is reading the book on Environmental Study, instead the fictional story of literature. However, it serves as a solid ground for the fictional depiction ahead with truthful orientation.

The extreme natural calamity explored in the novel is flood which causes societal collapse and chaos in the world. But instead directly throwing light on the main cause of flood, novel systematically unfolds the scientific facts which serve the purpose of the motif and entertainment. It serves the purpose of grand exposition as the scheme of novel genre should be elaborative. Therefore, first it exposes the causes of altered pattern of climate of the earth as heat becomes extreme, and later, it throws light on other consequences based on scientific facts. The exploration of these logical reasoning regarding scientific truth continues further as

...the second major geophysical upheaval. The continued heating of the atmosphere had begun to melt the polar ice-caps. The entrained ice-seas of the Antarctic plateau broke and dissolved, tens of thousands of glaciers around the Arctic Circle, from Greenland and Northern Europe, Russia and North America, poured themselves into the sea, millions of acres of permafrost liquefied into gigantic rivers. (13)

At the primal stage, novel explains how the solar storm triggers the temperature of the earth, and as a consequence of extreme heat, it skillfully unfolds its consequential second stage, in which, polar ice-caps begins to dissolve. Novelist brilliantly justifies the reasons of extreme natural calamity of flood which is the core theme of the plot of the novel. The scientific information of environment and plot of the novel are not perceived as artificially juxtaposed but rather it seems that the scientific
information used in the novel is an integral part of story which comes in flow as a solid background for the environmental catastrophe. Thus, Ballard in order to construct his literary ecology has explored reasoning of decay with logic, which stands in turn as a backbone of the theme of environmental catastrophe explored in the present novel. The successful effort of Ballard to incorporate the scientific reasoning of decay in the novel makes this novel specimen of literary arts-craft which reveals its immense potential of literary creativity.

In the theoretical part it has been discussed that the ecological apocalyptic novels use to incorporate the exploration of ecological destruction and socio-political collapse as the major theme of their literary enterprise. This novel too being ecological novel devotes most of the pages to explore on ecological destruction and consequential socio-political collapse. The novel, instead, depicting elaborative account of environmental decay, gives much more preference to the picturization of socio-political collapse, as the novel is about post environmental decay.

The novel from the very first chapter starts to explore on societal collapse. The novel opens with unbearable heat at testing station in the south London of which most areas are sinking in water with tropical jungle. There are few scientists with military soldiers left. Riggs is the in-charge of the mission who gives all freedom to Kerans and Bodkin to work and keeps “busy himself with the jobs of mapping the shifting keys and harbors and evacuating the last inhabitants”. (7) With such reference it becomes clear that the prevailed climate is not favorable to the human beings so military soldiers are trying to shift people to the safer place. Most of the people unwillingly left the place and those are left behind will have to abandon the place due to environmental and societal collapse. The chapter also throws light on the socio-political collapse as
the title of it, ‘The coming of the Iguanas’, suggests that the world is dominated by new species with new environment as the socio-political system of civilization has sized its existence. Being biologist, the team of scientists set out to note their observation in the south and during their journey they observe many scenes of socio-political collapse.

The bulk of the city had long since vanished, and only the steel-supported buildings of the central commercial and financial areas had survived the encroaching flood waters. The brick houses and single-storey factories of the suburbs had disappeared completely below the drifting tides of silt.

The above paragraph reveals that most part of the city has lost its existence in sever natural calamity of flood and the place which was once hub of civilization is no longer remain. The ruined images of the houses make clear reference to total annihilation of social civilization. The steel-supported buildings of finance and commercial complex are the sole stresses of civilization.

As the plot of the novel moves further, it explores the pictures of societal collapse. It is depicted that extreme heat is increasing day by day and making the human life impossible. The high temperature and encroaching tropical jangle generate the fear of survival among human beings. Therefore, the world witnesses mass migration in search of safe place. The situation is described as

All over the world, mean temperatures rose by a few degrees each year. The majority of tropical areas rapidly became uninhabitable, entire populations migrating north or south from temperatures of a hundred and thirty and a hundred and
forty degrees…During the next thirty years the pole-ward migration of populations continued. A few fortified cities defied the rising waterlevels and the encroaching jungles, building elaborate sea-walls around their perimeters, but one by one these were breached…Cities on higher ground in mountainous areas nearer the Equator had been abandoned despite their cooler temperatures because of the diminished atmospheric protection. (13)

The situation all over the world depicted in the above paragraph reveals how the environmental disaster makes the human existence impossible as most part of the world become uninhabitable and migrating to safer place in order to protect their lives from high temperature. It is also seen that every attempt of made by people to overcome nature fails and they are badly witnessing the socio-political collapse. The socio-political collapse portrayed in the novel does not seem artificial or digressional rather it makes organizational whole with the consequential hazardous outcomes of environmental disaster. The novel by depicting imaginative societal collapse in the post environmental degraded time seems to convey a message to humankind at large that if we do not stop unnecessary interference in the cycle of environment then the day is no long when we all would be on the verge of diminution. The novel does not just limit its depiction with the pictures of mass-migration and uninhabitable panorama, it goes further and depicts the other facets of social and political collapse resulted from environmental disaster. It is seen in the plot of the novel, Riggs, while leaving towards the north along with his soldiers of the unit, convinces Beatrics, Kerans and Bodkin to move at the safer place before circumstances become worst, but they have refused and stay behind. After some days at the lagoon unusual happenings start and
in this uninhabitable place they see the boats and ships with various machineries which were once not permissible. It is described as

Kerans guessed that this was the group’s depot ship, and that they were engaged, like most of the other freebooters still wandering through the Equatorial lagoons and archipelagoes, in pillaging the drowned cities, reclaiming the heavy specialised machinery such as electrical power generators and switchgear that had been perforce abandoned by the government. Nominally such looting was highly penalised, but in fact the authorities were only too eager to Payagenerous price for any salvage. (55)

The above paragraph makes clear how the government becomes paralyzed in the wake of ecological disaster. As the people migrate by abandoning their native place and government is also helpless to work against natural calamity, the chaos is prevailed everywhere. The social system is totally collapsed and no longer symmetry remains in political system. In such circumstances there is no hold of government. As a result of it, people start looting fearlessly the machineries and objects which are under government custody.

The chapter of the novel entitled, ‘The Ballad of Mistah Bones’ and ‘The feast of Skulls’ is crammed with detailed account of the anarchy and chaos prevailed in the society. Strangman and his men are the prominent figures of these chapters who practice their illicit activities by looting and murdering people in the wake of natural calamity. They can easily manipulate and bully the people like Kerans, Beatrics and Bodkin. Strangman cruelly practices his power in absence of political system.
Thus, the novel brilliantly makes cautionary note very glaring that humankind may sustain his existence peacefully in the presence of harmonious nature. By depicting prevailed anarchy and chaos, it forcefully opines that ecological collapse symbolically represents collapse of civilization.

In the theoretical part of the thesis, there are many pages which throw light on the relationship between man and nature. The present novel also by depicting the bond between human and nature illustrates the feature of eco-criticism. Like other novelist, J. G. Ballard is not just concerned with the depiction of usual human apocalypse caused by natural calamity, but rather, he seems interested in depicting how the altered physical universe alters the psychic pattern of human beings by penetrating the heart of the apocalyptic experience. It is seen in the novel how the psyche of his characters unintentionally develops intense bond with nature, partly from nightmarish fantasy, and partly, as a result of genetic unconscious memory. Dr. Bodkin explains to Robert long-lived relationship between man and nature. He says—

The innate releasing mechanisms laid down in your cytoplasm millions of years ago have been awakened, the expanding sun and the rising temperature are driving you back down the spinal levels into the drowned seas submerged beneath the lowest layers of your unconscious, into the entirely new zone of the neuronic psyche. This is the lumbar transfer, total biopsychic recall. We really remember these swamps and lagoons…”(45)

While exploring on the climate change, Dr. Bodkin being biologist makes an analysis of the present condition and proposes an opinion that the
present changes in nature have already witnessed by mankind and mankind is continuously got developed in the presence of nature from the ancient time.

Kerans and other principal characters become aware of internal changes taking place in flora and fauna, along with, mankind to adjust with new environment. This tendency is being developed in the major characters in the novel can be interpreted as a surrendering to nature. Narrator in order to throw light on the developing tendency of surrendering the nature narrates the observation of Kerans. It explains—

Sometimes he wondered what zone of transit he himself was entering, sure that his own withdrawal was symptomatic not of a dormant schizophrenia, but of a careful preparation for a radically new environment, with its own internal landscape and logic, where old categories of thought would merely be an encumbrance. (9)

The novel makes glaring presentation of oppressive sense of heat and crowded vegetation which becomes more assertive in the later part. Parallel to environmental assertion, the novel also projects the gradual uncontrollable human adaptation of changing environment. Kerans becomes aware of the psychological and biological changes taking place in human behavior. Kerans speculates about growing isolation and self-containment in all human beings, as if, preparation to surrender and unite with nature. It is rightly pointed out by Jim Clark in his article ‘Climate change in J.G. Ballard’ that—

In these texts, Ballard’s solitary protagonists traverse liminal states, often as psychological as physical, in which civilization recedes to the status of memory, and existence
comes to be dominated and defined by the environment and its monothematic transformation. (7)

Many major characters are seen surrendering to the climatic changes though it is suicidal. Kerans is the central figure in the novel who stays in the lagoon with his causal partner like Deatrice Dahl and Bodkin. In spite of Riggs’s insistence to leave their solitary scientific existence as it is impossible to survive in such adverse environmental condition, they decide to stay. The lagoon where they decide to stay is a part of London and which is sixty or more degrees hooter than the normal temperature of modern reader’s environment. Their decision to stay back in such adverse environmental condition is very dreamlike experience as it goes against what you consider to be their survival instincts. Soon the stock of food would run out and fuel powering the generators used for keeping climate-controlled rooms would also have short of fuel. Despite of all these things their decision to stay in lagoon is suicidal and can be interpreted as a tendency which Ballard wants to intensify is to surrender to nature.

In the course of the story further it is elaborated that Kerans and Hardman are more able than the others to bear extreme heat with light of the sun, but it is ironical that they cannot sustain their survival as their bodies unable to make significant response demanded for survival. In novel, Ballard does not explore the scientific heroes who attempt to modify catastrophe environmental condition which pose a threat to mankind. He simply makes the projection of a man who just reacts to the changes and tries to modify himself according to nature in order to survive.

Ballard, in the present novel, reveals his ecological vision through his ecological symbolism. We find the description of two hanging
paintings in Beatrice Dahl’s apartment. The first painting is of ashen-faced naked women dancing with skeletons, clothed in a tuxedo which is Delvaux’s surreal image, and another painting is of wild jungles of Max Ernst portraying living organisms, which struggle about devouring one another under a tropical sun. The painting suggests the upcoming frantic dance of death in a vegetable universe which is proposed in the course of the novel but this dance does not end in death but in curious optimistic assimilation with nature as the novel projects the theme of surrendering to nature.

Thus, after the analysis of these two novels in the light of eco-criticism, it becomes apparent that Ballard’s motif is to deliver a message pertaining to the environmental decay. These novels can be read as an indication of future destruction.