

From “Topophilia” to “Topophobia”: Critique of Developmentalism and Ecological Utopian Imagination in Park Wan-seo’s Novels

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This paper examines the nature writing in the novels of South Korean writer Park Wan-seo (1931–2011) against the backdrop of the “developmentalism” era, arguing that Park constructs a profound dialectical ecological vision. On one hand, she incisively exposes how anthropocentrism and materialism, amid industrialization and urbanization, led to the systematic destruction of the natural environment, transforming once “paradisiacal lands” into polluted, alienated spaces that evoke “topophobia.” On the other hand, she nostalgically reconstructs an ecological utopia modeled after her hometown Bakjeokgol in Gaeseong, embodying “topophilia” and the deep ecological ideals of life equality and harmonious coexistence. Through a close reading of core texts such as “Children of the paradise land” (Nakto ui aideul) and *Who Ate Up All the Shinga?*, this study reveals how Park uses literary narrative to critique the anti-ecological essence of South Korea’s modernization and articulate her unwavering pursuit of an ecological ideal where humans and nature reconcile.

Keywords: Park Wan-seo, ecological criticism, developmentalism, topophilia, ecological utopia

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