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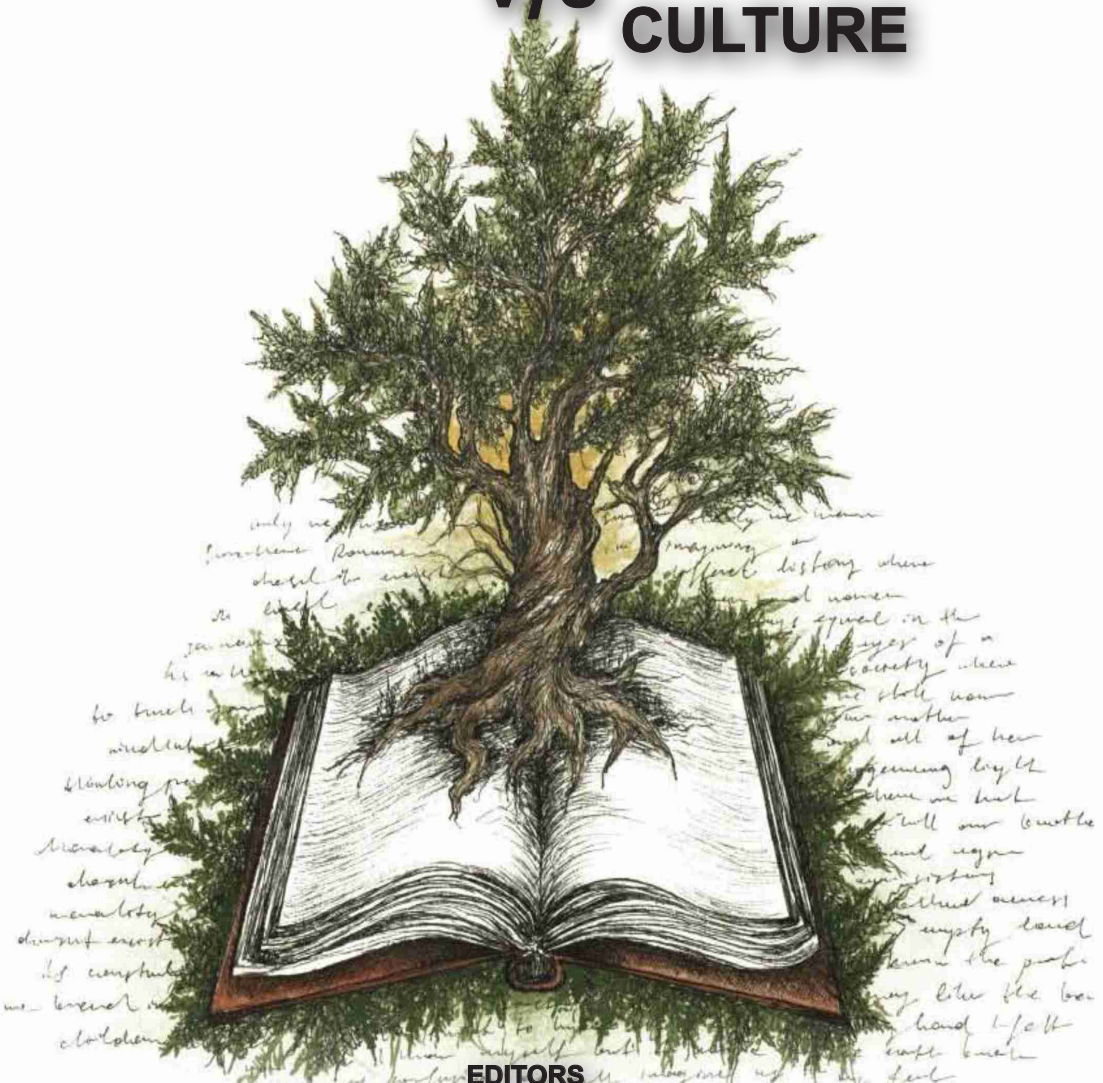
NATURE V/S CULTURE



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CONTENTS

A Note on Nature vs. Culture

This volume collects a selection of papers presented at the Seventeenth International Cultural Studies Symposium with the theme “Nature versus Culture” which was jointly hosted by the departments of American Culture and Literature and English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Letters at Ege University. With this opportunity, we would like to present our gratitude to Prof Ufuk Özdağ, Prof Serpil Oppermann, and Prof. Cian Duffy for their inspirational keynote speeches. They have contributed greatly to the creation of an atmosphere, enwinding our horizons on the theme of Nature vs. Culture.

In this volume, we present a selection of articles that aim to reconsider and hence redefine our constructed attitudes toward nature and culture. More specifically, the articles reveal the vital and mutual significance of nature and culture. It is obvious that themes of nature, ecology, Anthropocene are subject matters that are receiving more and more attention each day both because young people are learning ecological consciousness at an early stage of their lives, such topics are also becoming one of the most debated topics from politics to social sciences and of course literature. As the subject of nature and ecological concerns have caught more attention, many anthologies that have contributed to the development of this field have been published. With this volume of articles, we hope to enhance the interest in this topic and increase the interaction among the academics that are working in this field and those that would like to contribute to this field.

This book consists of three parts. In the first part that is titled “Panoramic Depictions of Nature and Culture”, we would like to introduce a group of articles that have specifically focused on the intricate relationship between nature and culture. The opening article of this section belongs to Ufuk Özdağ who has contributed to this field both with her books and academic publications in the field of nature and ecological studies. Ufuk Özdağ’s article titled “Feeling like the Colorado River: A Groundwork for Restoration Ecocriticism” introduces the reader to a panoramic view of nature, at the same time it provides a theoretical background on the concept of what Özdağ has coined as “restoration ecocriticism.” The article defines restoration ecocriticism as the ecocritical study of literary and cultural texts that explore or inspire individual or collaborative community restoration efforts in the degraded lands/waters/marine environments, most often caused by anthropogenic activities. The contribution of Slobadan Dan Paich’s article titled, “‘To Be or Not to Be’: Questions of Trusting and the Senses and Inborn Perceptions” seeks to reveal the reasons behind the choice of the broad reference sources for

reflections on artificial and natural. Within this article, Dan Paich provides a range of examples from ancient, indigenes, industrial, and Anthropocene relationships to nature. Next, Ela İpek Gündüz in her article titled, "Nature & Culture Dichotomy in Roland Joffe's Movie *The Scarlet Letter*" attempts to find an answer to the question of whether nature leads the characters to act upon their instincts or human nature that shapes their uncivilized but true to nature desires. Klára Kolinská's "We have to learn to be dogs again:" Human-Animal Consciousness and the 'Joy in Language' in André Alexis' *Fifteen Dogs*" in which Kolinská analyzes what looks like a retelling of a classical myth or animal fable attempting to find an answer to whether animals would be happier if they were endowed with human consciousness. The author by touching upon human values such as individuality and personal freedom and their impact on the traditional hierarchical social order of dog packs. In her essay titled "Seeing Nature and the Cities in Aesthetic Narratives and Literary Forms," Tzu Yu Allison Lin divulges on acknowledging nature and culture. To achieve this aim, the author focuses first on Edith Wharton's New York stories and Harold Pinter's play *The Birthday Party*. In both literary texts, Lin proposes that there is a conflict between the expected social codes of society and the protagonist's nature. Subsequently, in their joint article titled "The Violation of Culture, Nature and Traditional Taboos in Chigozie Obioma's *The Fishermen*" Behbood Mohammadzadeh and Adesanya M. Alabi intends to explore the violation of culture, nature, and traditional taboos in Obioma's *The Fisherman* and how the action of the character involved in the text leads to a tragedy of necessity.

Another group of interesting articles take place in Part Two which is titled "Fundamental Depictions of Nature. In this group of articles, the essentiality of nature is in different forms through these articles. The first article in this part is "The Representation of Nature as a Symbol of National Identity in Folk Literature. The Case of *The Norwegian Folktales*." Mette Rudvin explores the role of oral narrative in the development of Norwegian national identity and how the portrayal of nature played an important role both in those narratives and in the presentation of narratives through book illustrations and paintings as an expression of Norwegian identity that recognizes the value of nature for which it nurtures deep respect. Next, on account of the exploration of Mary Oliver's poetry, Naghmeh Varghaivan and Karam Nayebpour's joint article titled "The Dream of Nature Awareness in Mary Oliver's Poetry" traces the impact of nature in her poetry. She is not only depicted as a nature poet but as a teacher of nature poetry as well. This article reveals to us that her nature poetry was distinct from that of the Romantic movement because her poetry differentiated itself in terms of its self-containment. In her article titled "The Supremacy of

Nature over Culture in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*" Sedef Güzelyurt proposes to reread *The Tempest* in order to reveal nature's supremacy over culture by providing various examples through the characterization of Caliban, Prospero, and Miranda. Afterward, with her article titled "Reflections of Culture Within Nature/Nature Within Culture: American Indian Poetry" Demet Satılmış provides a reading of Native-American poetry in which nature had a central place in hunting, harvesting, ceremonies, stories, dances, songs, and daily lives of Native tribes. She argues that nature still appears to be a recurrent theme and an intrinsic part of Native-American poetry in the form of natural kinship, a provider, a protector, and the source of consciousness both tribal and individual identity among others.

In the third part of this book that is titled "Essential Depictions of Culture" we would like to provide a group of selected articles that significantly reveal the importance of culture. The different perceptions in this group portray how culture is also unneglectable in understanding the interaction between nature and culture. The first article in this group is Dilek İnan's article titled, "David Greig's *Outlying Islands*: A Blend of Poetic Sensibility and Scientific Discovery." Through the exploration of this play, the intricate relationships between the natural world and human social order in which nature is dominated and subordinated by culture, politics, and authorities are disclosed. Next "Ned Ludd Lives: A Re-interpretation of Luddism in Charlotte Bronte's *Shirley*" by Mehmet Can Yılmaz. Debates on a passive consciousness against the ecological degradation in the Victorian period in relation to the emergence of Neo-Luddites against the spread of internet use in the mid-1990s, thereby bringing a new dimension to the present dichotomy between the natural landscape and cultural environments. Afterwards, Sinem Türkel in her article titled "Rediscovering Humanimality in Margaret Atwood's *The Maddaddam Triology*" aims at shedding light on the importance of discovering the interconnected nature of the human and animal relationship in Margaret Atwood's dystopian novel series, the *MaddAddam Triology*. Lastly, "Nature and Performance as Resistance in *Feeding the Ghosts* and *Cambridge*" by Hilal Şengenç scrutinize from a postcolonial perspective, the colonial encounter, which gave birth to the institution of slavery is interpreted not only as of the subjugation, loss, and marginalization of its non-Western participants but also as an experience of resistance and declaration of identity. Therefore, Şengenç seeks to unravel in two contemporary Caribbean-British and Guyanese-British authors' works the black female protagonists as the representatives of nature against the hegemony of white culture.

All in all, through the selection of articles, we aim to reconsider and hence redefine our constructed attitudes towards nature and culture. Within the framework of this book, we also attempted to heighten our perception of the natural world and create environmental awareness and perhaps provide new perspectives on Nature and Culture. Finally, through this volume of articles, we may conclude that concepts of nature and culture will continue to be challenging as a part of an inescapable human destiny.

Özlem Gümüşçubuk

Introduction: thinking again about 'nature' and 'culture'.

'Let nature be your teacher'.
William Wordsworth, 'The Tables Turned', l. 16.

In May 1798, the English essayist and critic William Hazlitt went to Nether Stowey, in the West Country, to visit his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge. On the day that Hazlitt arrived, the two men walked over the Quantock Hills to Alfoxden House, where Hazlitt was introduced to William Wordsworth.[1] This meeting inspired a pair of poems by Wordsworth which he included in the collection that he was preparing to publish with Coleridge: the epoch-making *Lyrical Ballads, with a few Other Poems*, which came out in July and went on to transform the history of English literature. 'Expostulation and Reply' and 'The Tables Turned' take the form of a dialogue between the poet ('William') and his 'good friend' (called 'Matthew', presumably to avoid another William) about whether 'books' or 'our mother earth' can better 'feed this mind of ours'.[2] Both poems 'arose', Wordsworth tells us in the 'Advertisement' to *Lyrical Ballads*, 'out of conversation with a friend [Hazlitt] who was somewhat unreasonably attached to modern books of moral philosophy' – and both, not surprisingly, decide very much in favour of 'the lore which nature brings'.[3] In the first, Matthew chides William for ignoring his 'books' ('that light bequeath'd/ To beings else forlorn and blind') and preferring to 'dream your time away' sitting 'for the length of half a day' on an 'old grey stone' ('Expostulation and Reply', ll. 1-6). William responds by rejecting the idea that 'books' are the only 'light' by which humans can see and recommends instead 'a wise passiveness' in which we remain open to the influences of the natural world, to the 'powers,/ Which of themselves our minds impress' ('Expostulation and Reply', ll. 21-4). In the second poem, it is only William who speaks. He exhorts his friend to leave what he calls the 'dull and endless strife' of 'books' and to 'come forth into the light of things' and 'let Nature be your teacher' ('The Tables Turned', ll. 9, 15-16). 'One impulse from a vernal wood', he assures Matthew, with his unreasonable fondness for 'modern books of moral philosophy', 'may teach you more of man;/ Of moral evil and of good,/ Than all the sages can' ('The Tables Turned', ll. 21-4). The poem ends,

[1] Hazlitt recounts these experiences in his essay 'My first acquaintance with Poets', which was published in 1823 in the third number of *The Liberal*, the periodical which had been established by Percy Bysshe Shelley, Leigh Hunt and Lord Byron in the previous year.
[2] William Wordsworth, 'Expostulation and Reply', ll. 1, 15, 5, 9, 23; quoted from William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, Lyrical Ballads*, ed. Fiona Stafford (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2013).
[3] Wordsworth and Coleridge*, Lyrical Ballads*, p. 4; Wordsworth, 'The Tables Turned', l. 25.

like ‘Expostulation and Reply’, with a rejection of ‘our meddling intellect’ – which, William says, ‘mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things;/ We murder to dissect’ – and recommends, again, an unmediated receptiveness to the influences of the natural world: ‘Come forth, and bring with you a heart/ That watches and receives’ (‘The Tables Turned’, ll. 31-2).

In May 2019, more than two hundred years after Wordsworth and Hazlitt debated the merits of nature and culture, delegates assembled for the 17th International Cultural Studies Symposium, organised by the Departments of American Culture and Literature and of English Language and Literature, at Ege University in the Aegean city of Izmir, where human culture has interacted with the beauties of the natural world for more than 6000 years. The theme of the Symposium, at which the essays in this volume were first delivered as papers, retained something of the antagonism of Wordsworth’s debate with Hazlitt: ‘nature vs culture’. That particular binary opposition is, of course, one of the most familiar to researchers and teachers across the humanities, along with cognates like ‘country vs city’, ‘savage vs civilised’, and ‘nature vs nurture’. Scholars have shown that the various forms of this opposition have a long history, in Western thought at least, predating Wordsworth’s debate with Hazlitt by many centuries. In his seminal study *The Country and the City* (1973), for example, the cultural historian Raymond Williams notes that ‘a contrast between country and city, as fundamental ways of life, reaches back into classical times’, finding its earliest (extant) literary expression in the fountainhead of the pastoral tradition: Hesiod’s *Works and Days*.[4] But if the opposition between ‘nature’ and ‘culture’ has been a fairly consistent feature of the Western tradition, it is no less accurate to say that the polarity of that opposition has been anything but constant. Put differently: the values associated with ‘nature’ and ‘culture’, and the respective valorisation of ‘nature’ and ‘culture’, have shifted dramatically over time. Speaking of ‘the country and the city’, Bunce reminds us that the two spaces ‘have acquired a range of contrasting associations’ whilst Williams charts, within an English literary tradition, dramatically varying imaginative and ideological investments in city and country from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries.[5]

Most cultural histories of ‘nature vs culture’ agree, however, in pointing to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Europe, that is to say to the so-called ‘Romantic’ period, as a watershed in the reconceptualisation of the relationship between humanity and the natural world. Specifically, Romanticism

[4] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 1, 14.
[5] Michael Bunce, *The Countryside Ideal* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 1.

is often said to enact an epistemic and ontological shift from an essentially hierarchical (and often religious) understanding of culture or civilisation as the transcendence of the state-of-nature towards the idea that human existence, in all its forms, should be (re)aligned with natural laws and processes. This recalibration of attitudes dominates the political theory of the time, both progressive and conservative. We might recall, for example, Jean Jacques Rousseau's insistence in *The Social Contract* (1762) that 'man is born free, and yet is universally enslaved'; Edmund Burke's defence of the aristocratic structure of British society in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) as the 'happy effect of following nature'; and the controversial argument made by Thomas Malthus, in his *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798), that poverty, war and disease are natural mechanisms for keeping population in check.[6] And the same recalibration of course pervades much of the canonical, Romantic-period poetry which we read with our students. It is visible, for instance, in the two poems by Wordsworth with which I began and in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's celebrated conversation poem, 'Frost at Midnight' (1798), where the speaker contrasts his childhood 'in the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim' with that of his son, who will 'wander like a breeze/ By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags/ Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds'.[7] It is fair to say, in other words, that a radical reassessment of the relationship between nature and culture has become synonymous with the thing we call 'Romanticism' and that it is from the Romantic period, for better or for worse, that we have inherited some of our most powerful and most enduring attitudes to the natural world. Not for nothing, then, did some of the earliest works of ecological literary criticism focus on Romantic-period writers and what they could tell us about the relationship between humanity and the rest of nature: Jonathan Bate's *Romantic Ecology* (1991) and Timothy Morton's *Shelley and the Revolution in Taste* (1994).

The continued legacy of the Romantic revalorisation of the natural world has not been without its problems, however. In the two editions of his *Guide to the Lakes* (1810, 1835), William Wordsworth worried about the increasing numbers of tourists (so-called 'Lakers') visiting the region. In doing so, he confronted a problem which has become far more urgent today: how do we valorise the wild and beautiful places of the world without commoditizing and thereby destroying them? When Caspar David Friedrich painted in 1818 his

[6] Jean Jacques Rousseau, *A Treatise on the Social Compact* (London, 1764), p. 2; Edmund Burke, *Reflections of the Revolution in France* (London, 1790), pp. 11, 47.
[7] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'Frost at Midnight', ll. 52, 54-6; quoted from *The Complete Poems*, ed. William Keach (London: Penguin Classics, 2004).

archetypal image of the individual Romantic communion with nature, *Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer*, he could never have imagined that it would become the urtext of innumerable selfies, but for a viewer today, it is difficult to look at that painting without thinking of queues of tourists just out of shot, of queues stretching up towards the Hilary Step, of overcrowded Alpine huts, of Alex Garland's remote beach forced to close because of damage caused by tourists. This is the paradoxical legacy of what Timothy Clark, following Jonathan Bate, identifies as a 'romantic humanism': 'celebrating engagement with the wild, either immediately or in literature, as the recuperation of some supposed natural part of human identity seen as suppressed by the effects of [...] culture'.[8] If everyone wants to experience the wonders of the natural world for themselves, will this lead inevitably to the destruction of those very same wonders; if we try to use nature to fix our culture, will we destroy both in the process? These dilemmas are prime examples of what Timothy Morton, drawing on Ulrich Beck's *World Risk Society* (1998), identifies as a key area of concern within the environmental movement: the troubling fact of 'unintended consequences'.[9] In such scenarios, 'what was once the nature/culture dichotomy becomes', as Timothy Clark puts it, 'the incalculable interaction of imponderable contaminated, hybrid elements with unpredictable emergent effects'.[10]

'Nature' and 'culture' are *words* – albeit, as Raymond Williams observes, perhaps 'the most complicated words' in the English language.[11] Poststructuralist critical philosophy calls us to remember that binary oppositions, like 'nature vs culture', are better understood as linguistic constructs, as effects of how we *represent* the world, than as an index of any underlying reality.[12] Hence it is worth asking: does it really make sense to talk about 'nature vs culture' at all; or, at the very least, what might be the 'unintended consequences' of suggesting that the two are opposed? As Clark points out, 'human nature' has 'too often' been elided, 'as a separate issue', in ecological discussions.[13] Surely it could be argued that human culture is just as much a product of natural processes as an anthill or a beaver dam or a beehive? Surely to consider human culture as somehow *separate* from natural processes is to

[8] Timothy Clark, 'Nature, Post Nature', in Timothy Morton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and the Environment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 75-89 (78).
[9] Timothy Morton, 'Introduction', in Morton (ed.), *Literature and the Environment*, p. 1.
[10] Clark, 'Nature, Post Nature', p. 80.
[11] Raymond Williams, *Keywords: a Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 62, 155.
[12] Raymond Williams, *Keywords: a Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 62, 155.
[13] Clark, 'Nature, Post Nature', p. 84.

re-engage, perhaps unwittingly, with earlier, hierarchical and/or anthropocentric models of the cosmos? We can, of course, talk about questions of *scale* and *influence*. All organisms, from the smallest to the largest, deliberately, instinctively or automatically modify their environments to suit their needs. Humans, however, are the only organism (that we know of) which are capable of modifying the environment on a planetary scale, an ability acquired in the Romantic period at the beginning of what has become known as the *anthropocene* – although that term is, as has often been observed, problematic to the extent that only a comparatively small subset of the human population has the ability to effect such global transformation.

The disastrous (if unintended) impact on the natural world of carbon-fuel based technologies, industrial food-production and burgeoning overpopulation has been a marked feature of the anthropocene. Indeed, this is 'the major irony' of the anthropocene, as Clark explains: that human geological agency 'manifests itself to us primarily through the natural becoming, as it were, dangerously out of bounds'.[14] But ecological criticism has made clear that *culture* too has played a role in creating the state of climate emergency in which we live today – and indeed that the factors mentioned above are to an extent only manifestations of an underlying, *cultural* problem, in the west at least. 'One of the most distinctive features of western thought', as Morton puts it, 'has been the depth and destructiveness of its assumptions about the human relationship to the natural world'.[15] Anthropocentrism is the underlying 'destructive' 'assumption' which Morton has in mind here: a system of representation which we might very well identify, in Wordsworth's phrase, as the product of a 'meddling intellect' that 'mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things', that dangerously misrepresents the actual relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world.

Ecological criticism has drawn attention to how profoundly anthropocentrism has informed the writing, the reading, and the teaching of literature. It has shown how even those cultural movements ostensibly most favourable to the natural world, like Romanticism, have been implicit in its commoditization. And it has shown how readers, professional and private alike, have often rushed to assume that images or entire works ostensibly about nature must 'really' be about something else, something human. Metaphor, allegory, personification, pathetic fallacy – each is a mode of anthropocentrism. Perhaps most importantly of all, ecological criticism has illustrated the extent to

[14] Clarke, 'Nature, Post Nature', p. 79.
[15] Morton, *Literature and the Environment*, p. 1.

which shifting cultural constructions of 'the natural' have been repeatedly imposed upon, and obscured, nature understood as the material world of which we are a part. 'It is arguably various norms of human nature', Clark notes, 'that have utterly determined conceptions of nature'.[16] Environmentalists continue, rightly, to call for a paradigm shift away from an anthropocentric and towards a biocentric worldview, towards what Wordsworth would call sympathy with 'the meanest thing that feels'.[17] As literary and cultural critics, perhaps we should make a comparable call to abandon modes of representing and reading which mediate nature primarily through the human in favour of modes which insist, rather, on the ontological distinctiveness, on the alterity, on the *non-humanity*, of nature. It is difficult to predict what such modes might look like. But here, too, the Romantics arguably led the way by posing the same question. Percy Bysshe Shelley, for instance, in the final lines of his 1816 poem 'Mont Blanc' wonders precisely what nature would look like if we could see and represent it independently of the various cultural preconceptions which we impose. 'And what were thou', he asks the mountain, 'and earth, and stars, and sea,/ If to the human mind's imaginings/ Silence and solitude were vacancy?'.[18]

The 18th International Cultural Studies Symposium at Ege, planned for May 2020, was cancelled because of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Such things had happened before, of course (the Black Death, the Spanish flu) and we knew that they could and would happen again. But few were prepared. The influence on human life and human culture has been profound, perhaps even transformative in the long term. The pandemic has also been a timely (and in fact comparatively gentle) reminder of how vulnerable human culture is to natural processes. In the spring of 2021, when the global climate emergency shows no signs of abating, it is more important than ever for us to remember that how we *represent* the natural world and our place within it has incalculable, indeed existential significance for the future not only of our culture but actually of our species. *Nature* will continue; a catastrophically warmed or cooled planet will still exist; some life may survive, evolve and even thrive in such altered circumstances; 'if only man was swept off the face of the earth', Birkin says to Ursula in *Women in Love* (1920), 'creation would go on so marvelously, with a new start, non-human'.[19] But human *culture*, as we know it, will not survive unchecked climate change. It is not the planet, not nature, which is at stake. It is

[16] Clark, 'Nature, Post Nature', p. 84.
[17] William Wordsworth, 'Hart-Leap Well', l. 180.
[18] Percy Bysshe Shelley, 'Mont Blanc', ll. 142-4; quoted from Jack Donovan and Cian Duffy (eds.), *Percy Bysshe Shelley: Selected Poems and Prose* (London: Penguin Classics, 2016).
[19] D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* (New York: Viking Press, 1960), p. 120. Thanks to Professor Dr. Zekiye Antakyalioğlu for reminding me of this exchange.

ourselves. Each in their own way, the papers in this volume examine aspects of the cultural history which has brought us to this dangerous and decisive moment, of the various ways in which we have represented and continue to represent the world, and of the complex consequences of those representations. These articles are, in that respect, contributions to an urgent conversation – because if we continue to configure the relationship between nature and culture as a struggle, as a ‘versus’, then we are engineering a struggle which we will lose.

Cian Duffy,
Lund University

PART I:

PANORAMIC DEPICTIONS OF NATURE AND CULTURE

Feeling Like the Colorado River: A Groundwork for Restoration Ecocriticism

Ufuk Özdağ *

Abstract

Environmentalism has entered a new phase. For the past three decades, communities around the world have been voicing land, air, water pollution, toxicity, diseases connected to contaminated environments, clearcutting, soil erosion, mountaintop removal, and other anthropogenic damages to the environments. Currently, there is action in the most hands-on way. Within the ecological restoration movement, grassroots regreening activities have speeded up and communities are engaged in extensive land healing efforts for land productivity, food security, and human/ nature wellness. This article poses the question: what will be the response of the English profession to this new trend of ecological restoration? Although existing ecocritical schools have contributed to environmental awareness broadly, this article proposes the study of literary and cultural texts inspired by landscape and local environmental history for hands-on awareness and engagement. The article defines restoration ecocriticism as the ecocritical study of literary and cultural texts that explore or inspire individual or collaborative community restoration efforts in the degraded lands/waters/marine environments, most often caused by anthropogenic activities. It lays the groundwork of how ecocritics may contribute to restoring the lands/waters/marine environments (and native species) in the UN Decade

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on Ecosystem Restoration through Edward Abbey's Desert Solitaire, a landmark text that inspires river restoration in the local areas around the globe.

In the first year of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, I present my vision of a restoration ecocriticism, and hope that this new component becomes a future focus in ecocritical scholarship, a useful source to draw attention to many threatened areas caused by human-induced environmental degradation, poorly-planned economic development, and other ills, which in turn may foster land restoration in such places around the globe.[1] From the shrinking Aral Sea in Central Asia, to the global river ecosystems, from the diminishing wildlife habitats, to degraded forests around the world, there is an urgent need to re-establish the disrupted lands through collective collaborative action. The restoration efforts in degraded lands, such as Kenya's influential Green Belt movement[2] to India's current initiative to restore 26 million hectares of land (by 2030), are road maps for building resilience across the earth. As E. O. Wilson stated, "There can be no purpose more enspiriting than to begin the age of restoration, reweaving the wondrous diversity of life that still surrounds us" (*The Diversity of Life*). The father of ecological restoration, Aldo Leopold had stated, "The time has come for science to busy itself with the earth itself. The first step is to reconstruct a sample of what we had to start with" ("Arboretum and the University" 211). Continuing the Leopold family legacy, Scott Freeman, in his timely nature writing book, *Saving Tarboo Creek* (2018), on community-based restoration, stated, "In restoration is the preservation of the world" (97). These forceful calls explain why I wish to add a restoration ecocriticism dimension to environmental criticism. The restoration ecocritic, with deep sympathy for the losses, may have an important role to play. From Freeman's *Saving Tarboo Creek,* on the reforestation of the Tarboo Creek watershed on Washington's Olympic Peninsula,[3] to Freeman House's *Totem Salmon,* on the restoration of the Mattole watershed in northern California, to Mustafa Sarı's *Vazgeçme* [Do Not Give Up], on the revival of the pearl mullet for a healthy Lake Van in eastern Turkey, ecocritics may be inspired to search for texts on similar community restoration efforts of degraded lands, species, and wildlife across the earth. Equally important for ecocritics will be fiction/ nonfiction texts on individual restoration efforts, from past to present, such as Jean Giono's *The Man Who Planted Trees* (1954) and James Barilla's *My Backyard Jungle* (2013),[4] eye-openers for the value of restoring lands. Moreover, many texts that take up degraded waters, such as Edward Abbey's monumental *Desert Solitaire,* can be considered within the scope of restoration ecocriticism as, over the years, they inspire and lead to various restoration efforts, such as the ones

promoted by the Glen Canyon Institute.[5]

In view of the ecological restoration movement that has gained attention across the world,[6] it is likely that the literary scholar will also join the movement. Texts, past and present, that narrate actual or imaginary restorationist endeavors in the local regions, and touch our hearts, may become the new passion of the ecocritic who is in search of an interactive way of responding to environmental devastations around the globe. The fact that the United Nations General Assembly declared 2021-2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration[7] points at this urgency.

In an article I published in 2009, I'd coined the term "restoration ecocriticism."[8] My decision was prompted by a resolution from the delegates of the 6th World Wilderness Congress (Bangalore, India, 1998) who called on the United Nations to declare the 21st century as "The Century of Restoring the Earth." Now I wish to introduce how we might utilize texts on restoration, or texts that inspire restoration, both fiction and nonfiction, to protect and to restore our wounded lands and waters, to help initiate ecological restoration in some degraded landscapes around the globe. This may help to turn the tide and reverse the Anthropocene. In view of the magnitude of current environmental devastations, embracing a restoration ecocriticism has become more than an urgency for the environmental humanities scholar. Heartfelt narratives of restoration, in fiction and nonfiction, may help spread the significance of the ecological restoration movement to diverse communities. This article, then, lays the groundwork for a new school within ecocriticism, a restoration ecocriticism, utilizing Abbey's plea for the restoration of Glen Canyon, in his monumental *Desert Solitaire.*

Desert Solitaire as text that inspires restoration: Remembering Glen Canyon

Environmental challenges are many-layered and complex, but some warrant more attention than others. Disruption in the life of rivers, the veins of the planet, is one of them, in view of the ages-long reciprocal relations between rivers and communities. The examples of such ecosystem disruptions from around the world are numerous, the Colorado River being one of the most conspicuous, a river that has been over-used along its entire course, from the Colorado Rocky Mountains, through Utah, Arizona, Nevada, California and Mexico, before reaching the Gulf of California, its home.[9] Among American nature writers, Edward Abbey witnessed the "damming of every wild river,"[10] and the Colorado River's predicament formed an important place in his oeuvre.

Let us consider Abbey's *Desert Solitaire* as a text that is prompting ecological restoration. When Abbey published his nature writing classic *Desert Solitaire,* a colossal dam, rising 700 feet above bedrock within the steep walls of Glen Canyon had been established on the Colorado River in northern Arizona. It was constructed, in public discourse, to provide for the water and power needs of millions of people in the West. Full of emotions, Abbey had rejected the construction of Glen Canyon Dam, for Glen Canyon was "a living thing, irreplaceable" (*DS* 189). The dam was a "transforming event" in his life.[11] He had ridiculed the "impounded waters" of Lake Powell, the "reservoir" that came into being by flooding the Glen Canyon, a lake that has 2000 miles winding shoreline.[12] As Abbey narrates in *Desert Solitaire*:

This reservoir of stagnant water will not irrigate a single square foot of land or supply water for a single village; its only justification is the generation of cash through electricity for the indirect subsidy of various real estate speculators, cottongrowers and sugarbeet magnates in Arizona, Utah and Colorado (188).

These words are from "Down the River" chapter*,* which narrates Abbey's experience of the river before Glen Canyon Dam was put into place. In fact, he had memorialized his rafting down Glen Canyon from the Colorado River before the completion of Glen Canyon Dam.[13] In his narration of the trip through Glen Canyon, all the way to the dam construction site, he is immensely critical of the federal government; he fills the pages with the spectacular scenery that he witnesses with his rafting mate, and their anger for the canyon's fate… soon it would be submerged under 400 feet of water. For him: "Surely, no man-made structure in modern American history has been hated so much, by so many, for so long, with such good reason, as Glen Canyon Dam."[14] Thirteen years after the publication of *Desert Solitaire*, Abbey delivered a speech, at this much "hated" construction site, which he titled "Remarks, Glen Canyon Dam, Spring Equinox 1981," and in this speech, he predicted, with sarcasm, its future demise. Abbey stated:

We are gathered here today to celebrate three important occasions: the rising of the full moon, the arrival of the Spring Equinox, and the imminent removal of Glen Canyon Dam. I do not say that the third of these events will necessarily take place today. … Glen Canyon Dam is an insult to God's Creation, and if there is a God he will destroy it. And if there isn't we will take care of it, one way or another, and if we don't then Mother Nature most certainly will. Give her a few more centuries and the Colorado River will fill Lake Foul (*Lale Powell*) with mud. … The collapse of Glen Canyon Dam is as

inevitable as the rising of the moon, or the revival of spring, or the flow of the river home to the sea (quoted in Philippon, 163).

Significantly, in *Desert Solitaire,* Abbey condensed the three seasons as a park ranger with the National Park Service (1956, 1957, 1965) into one season which actually overlapped with the construction years of Glen Canyon Dam (1956-1966). Abbey's return to the Arches, in 1965, to complete his explorations of the Colorado Plateau resulted in his nature classic *Desert Solitaire* in which he voiced his ultimate concern: let the desert remain wild with its free-flowing Colorado River .[15]

Disturbances to the Colorado River ecosystem

Desert Solitaire awakened many readers to just how much damage was being done, for business interests, to public lands and waters. In "Down the River," Abbey celebrates John Wesley Powell, the explorer and conservationist, the first man who rafted down the Colorado before the construction of Glen Canyon Dam, and whose name was disrespectfully given to the gigantic reservoir.[16] This is how Glen Canyon, "a portion of earth's original paradise" was named by Powell:

On the walls and back many miles into the country, numbers of monument-shaped buttes are observed. So we have a curious ensemble of wonderful features -- carved walls, royal arches, glens, alcove gulches, mounds and monuments. From which of these features shall we select a name? We decided to call it Glen Canyon (Powell, 32).

Figure 1: Glen Canyon Before Flooding, 1898. Credit George Wharton James.[17]

Cecil Kuhne, in her book *River Master: John Wesley Powell's Legendary Exploration of the Colorado River and Grand Canyon,* remarks that at the time of Powell's expedition (1869) "Colorado Plateau remained the largest unknown region of a rapidly developing America, and much of this sprawling expanse was truly terra incognita" (xiv). Yet, destruction started soon afterwards. William Smythe, known as the founder of the national reclamation movement at the end of the 19th century, and for whom nature had no value in and of itself, was on the side of "colonial expansion at home," "a policy of peaceful conquest over the resources of a virgin continent" (3). In his *The Conquest of Arid America* (1900), which reflects his instrumental reasoning, Smythe said, Colorado River is flowing uselessly through the desert. Thinking "irrigation is a miracle" (40), Smythe proposed to improve the river's efficiency. For him irrigation should be a national movement in the service of turning the desert into green lands. Smythe said, "The enormous water supply which now flows uselessly to the Gulf of California through the channel of the Colorado River must be extensively availed of in time" (Smythe, 240).

His prophesies were fulfilled with numerous dams, spanning the 20th century, with first large scale diversion of Colorado river water in 1901 which gave birth to California's Imperial valley. As Donald Worster explained, "The big dam building era, however, did not really start until the 1930s, under the New Deal of President Franklin Roosevelt" ("Attitudes toward Water"). What follows is the technological conquest of the Colorado River in the seven states of the Colorado River basin. Following the Hoover Dam, in the Black Canyon of the Colorado River in 1936, dozens of dams were constructed in the 20th century. In the opening of Glen Canyon Dam, First Lady of the US, Claudia Taylor Johnson, stated: "America is entering a new era of wise water conservation."[18] This mentality linking water and power was to turn urban life more comfortable and prosperous for millions. But there was also regret over the years. David Brower, the executive director of the Sierra Club from 1952 to 1969, had proposed the Glen Canyon, upstream on the Colorado River from the Grand Canyon, for the construction of a dam, who later admitted that it was a big mistake. As John McPhee explains, in "Conversations with the Archdruid,"

David Brower believes that the dam in Glen Canyon represents the greatest failure of his life. He cannot think of it without melancholy, for he sincerely believes that its very existence is his fault (McPhee,1971: 163).

At the time, Brower was actually trying to save Dinosor National Monument from being flooded by a dam. For him, Glen Canyon, the heart of the Colorado River, should have remained untouched, and he remained a

strong supporter of draining Lake Powell Reservoir and restoring Glen Canyon for the rest of his life.[19] In "Let the River Run Through It," Brower stated,

Whatever Lake Powell's water losses turn out to be, the draining of the lake simply has to happen. The river and the regions dependent upon it, including Baja California and the Gulf of California, can no longer afford the loss of water.[20]

Nevertheless, Colorado River and its tributaries, are now controlled by an extensive system of dams and reservoirs, for agricultural irrigation as well as supporting millions of people in 7 American States. Lake Powell is now filled, in Abbey's words, with motorboats, "scumming the water with cigarette butts, beer cans and oil, dragging the water skiers on their endless rounds, clockwise" (Abbey, 1971: 188). A river "largely unchanged through eons of history" (McNeese, 4) but devastated within half a century, is awaiting urgent restoration so that the river and its Delta in Mexico, parched and withered, regain their past glory. Now is the time to revere the sacrality of the once mighty Colorado river, and highlight, once again, its predicament to include it to a movement, around the world, that is gaining momentum—granting legal rights to natural phenomena, including rivers, lakes, and mountains. Herein lies the significance of Abbey's feelings of sympathy to a river, a "living thing," which was indeed fundamental to his morality.

Feeling like the Colorado River

When Abbey (1982) stated, "Think like a mountain, urged Aldo Leopold. Quite so. And feel like a river, says I," (5), he was thinking of the river as a metaphor for life, drawing a parallel between the river and the bloodstream, and making a plea for a river's moral considerability. To replace Leopold's more rational stance (as an ecologist), Abbey was thinking of the circulation in our veins, and the river's circulation, "the lifeblood of mother earth,"[21] and proposing to sympathize with natural phenomena.[22] Abbey was thinking that a river might be within ethical considerability just by being alive. During the 150 mile down the river, as narrated in "Down the River" chapter of *Desert Solitaire*, he unofficially grants personhood to the Colorado River.

Although the immediate context is the "canyon World," he wishes to sanctify the river all the way from its headwaters to its home in the Delta:

Heart of the whole and essence of the scene is the river, the flowing river with its thin fringe of green, the vital element in what would be otherwise a glamorous but moon-dead landscape. The living river and the

living river alone gives coherence and significance and therefore beauty to the canyon World (227-228).

In "Down the River" chapter, Abbey depicts the river voyage as a voyage through paradise. As he narrated, "I saw only a part of [Glen Canyon] but enough to realize that here was an Eden, a portion of the Earth's original paradise" (189).[23] Rafting on the river Abbey stated, "we are indeed enjoying a very intimate relation with the river: only a layer of fabric between our bodies and the water" (191). The river that "bears us quietly along" (197) and that "has no false pride" (199) looms larger than life and gives life to the entire Colorado Plateau. Thus, is born Abbey's sentiment of a river as a being worthy of moral consideration and not as a resource to exploit for economic development. His years at the Arches National Monument which laid bare a vast landscape as far as the eye can reach made the Colorado River itself the desert's solitaire… the jewel that was giving meaning to the entire Colorado Plateau.

The view is open and perfect in all directions except to the West where the ground rises and the skyline is only a few hundred yards away. Looking toward the mountains I can see the dark gorge of the Colorado River five or six miles away, carved through the sandstone mesa, though nothing of the river itself down inside the gorge (5).

These lines from the very first pages of the book suggest that his *Desert Solitaire* was penned not only for the restoration of Glen Canyon, but the restoration of the entire Colorado River, a more-than-human river that has the right to be protected in its entirety. As "sole inhabitant, usufructuary, observer and custodian," Abbey felt love and respect for the river that eclipsed any desire for an instrumental outlook. Abbey, in his "Down the River with Henry Thoreau," significantly referred to Thoreau's dictum, "In wildness is the preservation of the world" (468). This living river that flowed for eons, that brought life to its banks, and to the Delta, indeed had every right to reach its Home—the sea.

The Colorado River delta: Past and present

The Colorado River delta was once a lush network of wetlands. One only needs to read "The Green Lagoons," one of the Chihuahua and Sonora essays in Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac*, on the Delta's breathtaking past life—the lands that the waters of the Colorado River once flowed into. When Leopold first took a boat trip in the Delta of the Colorado River in 1922, he was awed by the scenery of the entire region. "'He leadeth me by still waters' was

to us only a phrase in a book until we had nosed our canoe through the green lagoons. If David had not written the Psalm, we should have felt constrained to write our own," he wrote in "The Green Lagoons" (*Almanac,* 142). In the Delta, Leopold was also amazed with the abundance of wildlife. "A verdant wall of mesquite and willow separated the channel from the thorny desert beyond," he stated. "At each bend we saw egrets standing in the pools ahead, each white statue matched by its white reflection. Fleets of cormorants drove their black prows in quest of skittering mullets; avocets, willets, and yellow-legs dozed one-legged on the bars; mallards, widgeons, and teal sprang skyward in alarm" (142). During the boat trip that Leopold took with his brother, awed with ecosystem health, and never imagining the magnitude of the destruction in the years to come, he wrote: "The river was everywhere and nowhere."[24]

Figure 2: Aldo Leopold with his brother, at the Colorado River Delta, 1922.
Courtesy of the Aldo Leopold Foundation and University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives.

For Leopold, this splendor had to live perpetually, but he also had deep mistrust in the market economy that would sooner or later devastate the stunning beauty of the Delta. In "The Green Lagoons," emotion laden he wrote, "I am glad I shall never be young without wild country to be young in" (148-149). Today, we watch with dismay, the dying breath of the Delta, once comprising over 2.5 million acres of wetlands. We read about the native vegetation that provided habitat for over 300 species of plants and wildlife. We hear the laments of the Cocopah Indians who dwelled along its shores, thousands of them, and made a life from the ecosystem by fishing, hunting and farming. Following a century long human impact filled with ecocatastrophes, the waters that flowed for millions of years from the Rocky Mountains to the

Gulf of California, in Mexico, do not reach the sea any longer. This paradise that the Colorado River flowed into, and Leopold was afraid to turn back, is a parched delta, a wasteland, today.[25] A century long private interests and energy development with massive dams, Hoover and Glen Canyon dams being top destroyers, disrupted the life breath of the Colorado River turning the river's end in the Gulf of California into a "dead ecosystem."[26]

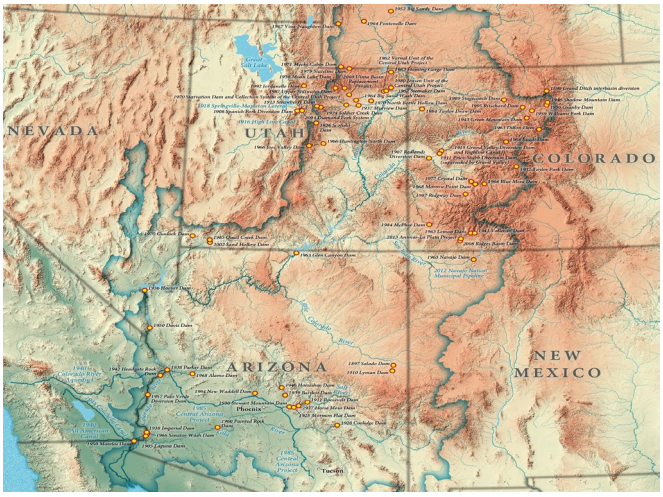

Figure 3: Colorado River Basin. Dams and diversions. Used with the permission of The Colorado, LLC

One day, the waters of the once mighty Colorado River may finally reach its Delta after a century of desacralization, and the parched Colorado River Delta may gain its waters back. But there is a need for a whole-river consciousness that Abbey cried out with his *Desert Solitaire.*

Figure 4: Colorado River delta today. Photography Murat Eyuboglu

Figure 5: Tidal waters of the Colorado River delta today. Photography Murat Eyuboglu

Laying the groundwork of restoration ecocriticism

Environmentalism has entered a new phase; now there is action in the most hands-on way. Grassroots restoration activities are soaring, especially in the U.S. where communities are engaged in land healing efforts, in "land doctoring" in Leopold's terms. [27] Let me give my definition first: restoration ecocriticism is the ecocritical study of literary and cultural texts that explore or inspire individual or collaborative community restoration efforts in the degraded lands/waters/marine environments, most often caused by anthropogenic activities.[28]

What will be the distinctive features of this new ecocritical school? First, as restoration ecocriticism will aim to reverse the degradations on local lands/coastal waters/ecosystems, hope will replace despair in ecocritical scholarship. Wangari Maathai's words, in the "Foreword" to the twentieth anniversary edition of Jean Giono's influential narrative on restoration, *The Man Who Planted Trees,* explains best. With reference to the Green Belt Movement, she stated,

Like the narrator of *The Man Who Planted Trees*, I saw human communities restored along with nature. ... Human beings cannot thrive in a place where the natural environment has been degraded (viii).

Dealing with texts, fiction or nonfiction, that restore human communities along with the restoration of nature will be the defining feature of a restoration ecocriticism, then.[29] When the Leopold family began planting pines and prairie on their sand farm, they were healing the land. As Leopold's daughter Nina Bradley Leopold remarked, they were also

healing themselves.[30] Second, natural history will become an integral part of this new ecocritical subfield. The restoration ecocritic will pay special attention to the lands before and after anthropogenic damage. Nature writing on community ecological restoration projects, such as Freeman House's *Totem Salmon* or Scott Frieman's *Saving Tarboo Creek,* describe the long, patient process of restoring damaged landscapes/ rivers/waters back to their original healthy states. The texts ultimately teach the value of rebuilding natural habitats and restoring native species. Third, the restoration ecocritic will connect individual or collaborative community restoration projects to sustainability in the local areas. Exploring *Totem Salmon,* for instance, restoration ecocritic will connect the narrative on the activities of local communities on the Mattole River watershed of northern California to sustainability.[31] As Freeman House narrates in *Totem Salmon*, two decades long restoration in the Mattole Watershed has contributed to community well-being and local livelihoods.[32] Finally, highlighting hands-on involvement on restoration projects will lead to greater ethical responsibility.[33] One only needs to read the articles in the *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* (2017), to realize the value of restoring what has been lost.[34] This new ecocritical school will lead to the recovery of hundreds, perhaps thousands of places of misery, and thus, to the salvation of the planet. In "A Roundtable Discussion on Ecocriticism," I'd stated:

Ecocritics need to step outside the classroom and be a connector, i.e., there should be a "tangible" problem—awaiting urgent solution—for ecocritics, and their essays should take up this real problem. The ecocritical pen should hit the target. For me this is what ecocriticism is. The blunt truth is today there is no place on earth that has not seen devastation. In my country, numerous wetlands have been drained, rivers have been polluted, soil erosion is a massive problem, woodlands have been clear-cut, marine ecosystems have been devastated, fisheries have collapsed, past biodiversity has vanished, our waterbirds have left our skies…. There are hundreds of diminished areas in Anatolia that need to be taken up by Turkish ecocriticism so that recovery efforts can possibly take place. A restoration ecocriticism I'm talking about has the potential to transform the field" (461).[35]

I follow Cheryll Gloftelty's lead in listing some questions.[36] Restoration ecocritics will ask questions such as the following for texts featuring/impacting restoration practices:

*In what ways is the author keeping the memory of diminished landscapes/waterscapes/ wildlife alive?

*How does the author draw attention to before and after states of the damaged environments / endangered species?

*Was the restoration area devastated because of human impact / natural causes?

*What reasons are given for the need to restore the land/wildlife/the species?

*Is restoration done by individuals or by community involvement?

*What are the ways in which community-based restoration activities develop in devastated areas? How does the community act as a team?

*Is there a keystone species in the literary work? Which native species got extirpated?

*What narrative strategies inspire ecological restoration in the literary work?

Addressing these questions in literary and cultural texts may create an awakening for local lands with similar disturbances. With the impact of a restoration ecocriticism approach, hope may arise for their recovery. *Desert Solitaire* is ultimately a text that inspires ecological restoration. Abbey underlines damage to a section of the Colorado River ecosystem in such a forceful way that watershed restoration (in the Delta) has started; and dam removal projects in its course will soon follow. The river's Delta itself is making the call to bring health to the river and its tributaries.

The Colorado River's restoration is an urgency

Greatly altered by human activity, much of it barren mud or salt flat, and a waste waterway, the Colorado River Delta has been calling its waters back. The nature lovers would like to see the Colorado River granted legal personhood, much as the legal personhood of the Whanganui River in New Zeland, third largest river in the country.[37] A first in the world, the Whanganui River is being protected, in its entirety, by the law, but one only needs to remember that the conceptual foundations of a river's personhood were thrown by Abbey decades ago. In Abbey's estimation, reaching its home was the most natural right of a living river. He used his pen to help masses of people acquire this mindset so that effective restoration could take place. Getting to the root of the problem, Abbey suggested the decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam and the draining of Lake Powell in his *Desert Solitaire,* a guidebook for all the bloodstreams of the world. Today, following many adverse environmental consequences, there are debates

on the decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam and draining Lake Powell which will help bring the river and its delta back to life. It will be a giant step towards the personhood of the Colorado River that has been draining away somewhere in the Mexican border.[38] Pseudo-restoration efforts in the Delta are ineffective as there is very little water that reaches the Delta.[39] This topic has been widely researched by historians and other scholars, but a recent documentary, *The Colorado,* shows the magnitude of the devastation in the Delta.[40] As Murat Eyuboglu, the director of *The Colorado*, explains, purchasing the "water rights" from the farmers in the Delta, then using this water in the restoration areas remains ineffective as the amount of water that reaches this area is less than 1% of its original (0.6%).[41] In any case, in the Delta region, there are five restoration areas that are actively involved in the healing, involving the participation of stakeholders.[42] But for real healing to take place, bold dam removal projects are needed for the multitude of dams on the Colorado River's path. This will revitalize habitats along the riverbeds, and lead to a strong base flo . The region wants its bloodstreams restored back to their health and Abbey's *Desert Solitaire* is, still, right in the middle of this restoration debate to recognize the value of a free-flowing Colorado Rive .

Today, following many adverse environmental consequences, it has become an urgency for local decision makers that legal rights are extended to the Colorado River, to be followed first by the decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam and the draining of Lake Powell. This would be in line with actions that have been happening in other parts of the world—granting legal rights to natural phenomena, including rivers, lakes and mountains.[43] The waters of the once mighty Colorado River may finally reach the Sea after long decades of desacralization, and the parched Colorado River Delta may gain its waters back in "the century of restoring the earth."[44] The force of literature has been great in water decisions.[45] Now, in the midst of controversy, the force of *Desert Solitaire* will be even greater in announcing the personhood of the Colorado River, that it is a living being, not a waterway for ecosystem services.

Abbey's deep sympathy with the pains of the meandering river now makes us optimistic about all future restoration efforts in its path. The Arches National Monument has become an aesthetic indicator, a keystone location, a gemstone that gives meaning to the entire Colorado River Watershed. From this vantage point, the sublime slickrock, that is onlooking the Colorado River and its tributaries, Abbey has been spreading his message for the region, a disinterested look for the vast landscapes of the Colorado Plateau that

otherwise would be open for more "development," for more mining and drilling.

With dreams of restoring the canyon,[46] Abbey's eco-warriors in his *The Monkey Wrench Gang* wanted to blow up the Glen Canyon Dam. Their fictitious project failed, but dam removal projects are alive and well in the US.[47] Abbey's three seasons as a ranger at Arches National Monument, in Utah, is exemplary to an entire nation, to all the countries on the earth planet, at the moment. A set of values on the rivers, telling us how to lead an ethical life with our waters, our watersheds, our environments is becoming more forceful. Detesting the commercialization of the lands, Abbey asked how much "development" must we have to be content, and changed people's perception of the entire Colorado River watershed that defines the American West. Convinced that natural phenomena have purpose and personhood, and that we have ethical obligations to all of these entities, he made his readers re-value these vast landscapes and waterscapes and made a plea for a renewed relationship with the Colorado River long before the advent of officially granting legal rights to natural phenomena around the globe.

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration could not have come at a better time. The ecocritic will hear its "global rallying cry to heal our planet," and delve into new research on restorationist themes in literary and cultural texts. This may become a new hope for the earth's life support systems that have been disrupted for decades.

Endnotes

1 It is widely acknowledged that 25 percent of the earth's total land area has been degraded, and that land restoration is the remedy. See, for example, the GEF website: https://www.thegef.org/topics/land-degradation

2 See the website at: http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/

3 Land restoration is a family legacy initiated by Aldo Leopold. Scott Freeman and his wife, Susan Leopold Freeman, with thousands of local peoples of the region, have been restoring the Tarboo Creek watershed that has been exposed to massive deforestation between 1880 and 1930.

4 In *My Backyard Jungle*, Barilla connects individual restoration efforts with "a culture of coexistence" (p. 480, ebook). See also Tallamy's *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard* (2020) on the need "to restore nature to our home landscape" (p. 94, ebook).

5 See the website of Glen Canyon Institute ("dedicated to the restoration of Glen Canyon and a free flowing Colorado River") at https://www.glencanyon.org/restoring-glen-canyon/

6 See Paddy Woodworth's book, *Our Once and Future Planet: Restoring the World in the Climate Change Century*, "an eight-year journey into restoration, through a series of encounters with individuals and cultures, with species and ecosystems and landscapes, and with ideas in ferment" (1) exploring ecological restoration projects in different parts of the world.

7 See https://www.decadeonrestoration.org/. For the "Resolution" adopted, also see https://undocs.org/A/ RES/73/284.

8 See Özdağ, "An Essay on Ecocriticism in the Century of Restoring the Earth." I'd stated, "Restoration of degraded lands and diminished wildlife populations is the grand legacy of Aldo Leopold. Scott Russell Sanders, in his, 'A Conservationist Manifesto,' has made a forceful call for land restoration, saying 'conservation means not only protecting the relatively unscathed natural areas that survive, but also mending, so far as possible, what has been damaged.' Therefore, I envision embracing what I would like to call a restoration ecocriticism, in the Century of Restoring the Earth. This will give rise to not only conserving lands but also restoring damaged lands" (140).

9 Over its 2,334 kilometres, the Colorado River sustains some 40 million people with 2 million hectares of farmland.

10 See David Gessner, All the Wild That Remains: Edward Abbey, Wallace Stegner, and the American West, (200).

11 See James Bishop, Jr.'s words in *Epitaph for a Desert Anarchist*, "If there was one transforming event in Abbey's life...it was the construction of Glen Canyon Dam" (122).

12 For Lake Powell, Abbey (1971) ironically stated, "The impounded waters form an artificial lake named Powell, supposedly to honor but actually to dishonor the memory, spirit and vision of Major John Wesley Powell, first American to make a systematic exploration of the Colorado river and its environs" (188).

13 For the time span, see Jared Farmer's words, "Abbey made his river trip in June and early July 1959 when Glen Canyon Dam stood half built" (157).

14 See Daniel J. Philippon's "Edward Abbey's Remarks at the Cracking of Glen Canyon Dam" 165.

15 Abbey had also taken up in his novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (1975) the need to decommission the dam, and free the waters of the Colorado River. In his novel, four eco-warriors make plans to blow up the Glen Canyon Dam. For the reference, see also Özdağ's "Türkçe Baskı için Sunuş" [Introduction to the Turkish Translation], p. 21, in Abbey's *Çölde Tek Başına* [*Desert Solitaire*].

16 John Wesley Powell led two expeditions down the river in 1869 and 1871. See his "The Exploration of Glen Canyon" in *The Glen Canyon Reader.*

17 See information (public domain) at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:A_bend_in_Glen_Canyon_of_the_Colorado_River,_Grand_Canyon,_ca.1898_(CHS-4708).jpg

18 For the reference, see the documentary, *The Colorado*, directed by Murat Eyuboglu, script by William deBuys and Murat Eyuboglu.

19 See "David R. Brower Conservation Award" at https://www.glencanyon.org/the-david-r-brower-conservation- award/

20 See Brower's "Let the River Run Through It" at https://vault.sierraclub.org/sierra/199703/brower.asp

21 See the use of the term in Coleen A. Fox et al., "'The river Is Us; The River Is In Our Veins': Re-defining River Restoration in Three Indigenous Communities" (521).

22 On the comparison between Leopold and Abbey, see also Menrisky's words: "One wonders what 'feeling like a river' adds to Leopold's original and influential appeal to a 'deeper meaning, known only to the mountain itself,' but at the very least the reference reinforces the fact that Abbey, in his patch of desert, replaces or overlays social mores with ecological forces" (63).

23 See Farmer's words, "the draft of 'Down the River' went by the title 'A Last Look at Paradise.'" (157-158)

24 Leopold wrote, "It is the part of wisdom never to revisit a wilderness, for the more golden the lily, the more certain that someone has gilded it. To return not only spoils a trip, but tarnishes a memory" (141).

25 Now the memory of this river is celebrated in *The Colorado*, a documentary by a Turkish film director, Murat Eyuboglu, giving a powerful environmental message with stunning aerial views of the devastation in the Delta. As narrated in the documentary, starting from the construction of the Hoover Dam (1936), Between the years 1890 and 2013, dozens of dams were constructed.

26 See Glenn et al., who stated: "It is sometimes assumed that the Colorado River delta is essentially a dead ecosystem" (1176).

27 In 1935, Leopold published an article in *American Forests:* "Coon Valley: An Adventure in Cooperative Conservation." With references to the Coon Valley Erosion Project, he gave a powerful message to the locals, on how to "rebuild" the Coon Valley. Emphasizing collective collaborative community action, Leopold launched the field of ecological restoration.

28 For my earlier article on restoration ecocriticism, See Özdağ, 'Evrim orkestrasının trompeti' turnalar: Bir restorasyon çevreci eleştirisi uygulaması [Cranes are the 'trumpets in the orchestra of evolution': A restoration ecocriticism approach]. 137-149.

29 Leopold's daughter, Nina Bradley Leopold, narrate in the *Green Fire* movie, that restoring the shack pulled the family together. See at https://www.aldoleopold.org/teach-learn/green-fire-film/

30 Nina Leopold Bradley's reference is to the Leopold family. Ecological restoration has become a family tradition. Scott Freeman and Susan Leopold Freeman's new book, *Saving Tarboo Creek*, shows that this passion for restoration is alive and well. Freeman and his wife Susan, Aldo Leopold's granddaughter, have been restoring a property in the Pacific Northwest

31 Mattole River watershed communities collaborated for two decades to bring back the Mattole Salmon back to the river's tributaries.

32 Freeman House was the founder of the Mattole Restoration Council. His nature writing text, *Totem Salmon*, is a monument both to the ecological restoration movement and to restoration ecocriticism.

33 See A. Carl Leopold's "Living with the Land Ethic" on ecological restoration leading to "a personal sense of ethical responsibility to the natural world" (149-154).

34 See the articles at https://annals.mobot.org/index.php/annals/issue/view/volume102-2 . I am grateful indebted to Dr. Curt Meine for his guidance in the field of ecological restoration. See Meine's words in "Restoration and 'Novel Ecosystems': Priority or Paradox?" in which he evaluates ecological restoration as "serving a land ethic that is itself continually evolving" (224).

35 See my words on ecocriticism in "A Roundtable Discussion on Ecocriticism" in *The Future of Ecocriticism: New Horizons*. Eds. Oppermann, Özdağ, Özkan & Slovic. 459-479.

36 See Glotfelty, "Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis," (xix).

37 New Zealand's Parliament has declared in 2012 that the Wanganui has "the same legal rights as a person." The recognition of the river as a "living entity" is a first in the world. See Kennedy Warne's "A Voice for Nature."

38 For water rights and duties between Mexico and the US, see O'Donnell's "Restoration of the Colorado River: Not a Minute to Spare," 413-448.

39 See Sonoran Institute projects to revive the Colorado River Delta. https://sonoraninstitute.org/

40 See https://www.projectcolorado.com/

41 Director of *The Colorado,* Eyuboglu explains the "water rights" in the Delta: The water rights pass on to the son from the father. If you purchase land, you're purchasing it with the water rights. So farmlands, whose water is coming from the Colorado River, are precious. No matter how severe the drought is, water rights are under guarantee for all times." (Personal communication, 16 Nov. 2019)

42 See the video of the Sonoran Institute about their various Delta Program initiatives, about the partnership between Mexico and the USA. https://sonoraninstitute.org/card/colorado-river-delta/

43 After the granting of rights to the Wanganui river, New Zealand granted legal personhood to the Te Urewera forest in 2014. Three years later, legal personhood was granted to India's Ganges and Yamuna rivers in 2017.

44 The reference is to my article, "An Essay on Ecocriticism in the 'Century of Restoring the Earth.'" I refer to the delegates of the Sixth World Wilderness Congress who resolved that the 21st century be announced as the "Century of Restoring the Earth." (139-140)

45 See, for example, Sara L. Spurgeon's article, "Miracles in the Desert," on "the power of literature to move people, to shape discourse" (758).

46 For Abbey's "calling of the restoration of Glen Canyon," (1403), see Laura Smith's "What if Edward Abbey's 'Monkey Wrench Gang' had Succeeded? The Ghosts of Glen Canyon Past, Present, and Future."

47 See the video of Elwha River dam removal at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VipVo8zPH0U

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"*To Be or Not to Be*"
Question of Trusting the Senses and Inborn Perceptions

Slobodan Dan Paich

Figure 1: Human Proportion Studies - Artship Foundation 2006 (A•Aech)

Introduction

The discourse's theoretical concepts are based on the research of the author of this paper bringing to cultural history findings from other disciplines corroborating or contrasting his finding since 1969 and Artship Foundation's since 1992. In this manner the paper opens discussion about possible roots of culture in the senses and inborn perceptions from a point of view of *Comparative Cultural Studies.* The finding and hypothesis are pared, challenged or confirmed with published specialized scientific literature.

Cultural animation of objects and places by ancient humans bridges *tangible reality* of the manifest world and human *metaphorical thinking* based on experience. An example is the traditional concept of *genius loci - spirit of place,* with its number of meanings ranging from the special atmosphere of a place, human cultural responses to a place, to notions of the guardian spirit of a place, which may offer a common link to the archaic layers of our socialized self and shed some light on the rituals of bonding and common anxiety-release through personifications and enactments.

The Singers of Tales and Cultural Memory

One of essential and central carriers of cultural values and reassuring, that edified the expression of communal sharing were Singers of Tales. The *Singers of Tales* performed vast repertoire entirely from memory. The existence, training and form can be found in ethnographic and musicological research documents and early recordings from Central Asia, Caucasus, Black Sea regions, Anatolia, and Balkans.

In the seminal book on oral tradition and epic poetry by A. Lord, *The Singers of Tales* there is a translation of a live interview with one of the last oral epic singing practitioners surviving among mountain regions of Bosnia, recorded in the 1930's by M. Parry:

When I was a shepherd boy, they used to come [the singers of tales] for an evening to my house, or sometimes we would go to someone else's for the evening, somewhere in the village. Then a singer would pick up the gusle, [bowed string instrument typical of the Balkans used specifically to accompany epic poetry] and I would listen to the song. The next day when I was with the flock, I would put the song together, word for word, without the gusle, but I would sing it from memory, word for word, just as the singer had sung it… Then I learned gradually to finger the instrument, and to fit the fingering to the words, and my fingers obeyed better and better… I didn't sing among the men until I had perfected the song, but only among the young fellows in my circle [*druzina*] not in front of my elders. (Lord 1960)

Now imagine any contemporary teenager first listening to an epic for several hours and then repeating it the next day from memory. How many graduate students or doctoral candidates can do that with their thesis? By contrast, the non-literate shepherd boy was equipped with the necessary plasticity and capacity of brain independent from written record and entirely confident in the ability of comprehension, retention and reproduction through oral means alone.

The songs, stories, epics and myths retold were the focus of events celebrated outside places of worship. For the understanding of the relationship of cultural and natural the tradition of training of diverse trades, all manner of crafts, varieties of music traditions and transcendence are part of apprentice learning, cultural sharing and retention of knowledge that include trained memory.

The other part, which obscures that tradition’s intellectual discipline and rigor, is the fact that most of *Singers of Tales* were "illiterate" in the sense of not using reading and writing as a mnemonic nor means of communication. The emphasis on literacy is a product of western, state, ecclesiastical or imperial

control of knowledge and the values imparted in that worldview that stigmatizes *illiteracy* by denying a person any intellectual worth.

There is evidence of systematic observation and retention methodologies of complex and sophisticated systems, recorded orally as mnemonics of *Wisdom Transmitions* and *Cultural Sharing*. The reflection and understanding of these *social examples* contributes to the study of Cultural continuity approaches and strategies.

Allegorical And Metaphorical Thinking

The sapient ability of allegorical and metaphorical thinking is briefly approached here to prepare for the papers five examples. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their book *Metaphors We Live By* state, "metaphor is a matter of concepts, not of words". This articulation about metaphorical thinking helps in understanding results of biological information assimilated from the senses and inborn perceptions as *Natural* basis of *Cultural Experiences*. Describing metaphor, Lakoff and Johnson write:

Metaphor is one of our most important tools for trying to comprehend partially what cannot be comprehended totally: our feelings, aesthetic experiences, moral practices, and spiritual awareness. These endeavors of the imagination are not devoid of rationality; since they use metaphor, they employ imaginative rationality. (Lakoff-Johnson 1980)

Myths, particularly when sung or narrated are full of metaphors. This triggers an inter-communal sharing, a sense of wellbeing and bonding on a deeper level than through mundane conversations and proliferation of decontextualized information.

Metaphorical Thinking and Information Processing Ability (Kamalanabhan 2014) help provide an approach to the organic and behavioral connection between Biological processes and Cultural experience.

Human Biology As Mythic Container

Viewing the Embryo and child development as one of the roots of Cultural Experience may help to_open an approach to the organic and behavioral connection between Biological processes and Cultural experience.

Transitional Object

Studying infants evolving from complete dependence to gradual self-reliance, D. W. Winnicott (1896-1971) pediatrician and psychologist observed a

natural, transitional, intermediate *developmental phase*. This sequence is where the time of transition creates a new awareness for the baby, a new *relational space* between the inner psychological and outer, external reality. Regardless of geography and culture at this time of transition, the outer space and the intimate space between the mother and the child acquire a new sense of mutual learning, broader sense of the inner and outer world for the baby and challenges of managing this dependence/independence.

From Winnicott's writing, we get a strong sense of *transitional phenomena* taking place in the *transitional space* that begins to include elements of the outside world entering between a mother and a child. In this space Winnicott observed and articulated the emergence and presence of the "transitional object."

The Location of Cultural Experience

Also helpful for this discourse is psychologist D. W. Winnicott's significant contributor to play theory where he included ideas and observations about the *cultural experience* in relation to the *transitional phenomenon*. Winnicott describes *cultural experience* as an extension of the initial learning process and a necessary nexus for rich, sharable human experiences. In his *The Location of Cultural Experience* (1967), he writes:

The potential space between baby and mother, between child and family, between individual and society or the world, depends on experience, which leads to trust. It can be looked upon as sacred to the individual in that it is here that the individual experiences creative living.

In his essay *Playing: Its Theoretical Status in the Clinical Situation* (1971), Winnicott states:

The place where cultural experience is located is in the potential space between the individual and the environment (originally the object). The same can be said of playing. Cultural experience begins with creative living first manifested as play.

Winnicott's observations help place cultural experience as one of the central fields for deepening self-knowledge and cultivating the abilities of immersion and sharing.

Some contemporary schools of psychology overlook or take for granted two aspects of playing: intimacy and companionship. They articulate causes for playing as libidinal expressions, safety vehicles for aggression and anxiety releases. The author of this paper through his own research, observation and

teaching agrees with Winnicott's understanding of the intimacy of play which connects the child with an innate quest for wholeness and finding one's place in the outside world, while keeping in touch with fantasy and the internal processes of image making. When this intimacy is shared with a companion or companions, a very rich interplay of fantasy and reality is contained by the actively of play. Similar experiential subtleties and richness happens between audiences and players, spectators and visual arts or readers and texts. Also between ancient listeners and singers of tales and narrators of Myth. Winnicott writes in *The Location of Cultural Experience* (1967):

I have used the term cultural experience as an extension of the idea of transitional phenomena and of play without being certain that I can define the word 'culture'. The accent indeed is on experience. In using the word culture, I am thinking of the inherited tradition. I am thinking of something that is in the common pool of humanity, into which individuals and groups of people may contribute, and from which we may all draw if we have somewhere to put what we find. (99)

The diversity of *the common pool of humanity* although astonishing in its variety when observed globally or across time, shows some underlining commonality and traits based on biological, natural roots of human consciousness. The explorations so far and the reflection triggered by Winnicott's ideas are intended to pave a way for probing their *Inter-Cultural* commonality, which Myth making and metaphorical thinking are one of the foundation stones.

Mythology as a Cultural instrument is a cultivator, educator and inspirer of the continuity and bonding impulses that play a significant part in individual and social formations and are as natural as a running brook.

1. MYTHOLOGICAL INTERWEAVING OF NATURAL AND HUMAN

Appeasing The Seas trough *Isis Navigum - Goddess Isis Boats Festivals* present in ancient Mediterranian Civilizations in and beside Egypt

To contextualize *Appeasement* as one of the forms of *culture-nature* relationship, we open with some general comments and sketch possible categories.

Appeasement as a duality position of *Human versus Unknown* can be approached on many levels and has diverse cultural expressions clearly governed by *the time, the place and the people*. These practices range from merging into the causality according to local believes and traditions through

specific, person to person transmitted nonverbal silent practices. (Miller 1985) Ubiquities to many cultures are usages of definite words for inner invocations or outward chanting. (Herodotus/ Macaulay 2006) The even more embodied practices offer food, special objects or minerals, plant or animals prepared for the occasion. (Witt 1971) The most extreme and polarizing are the rituals of angry execrations and maledictions. (Mark 2017)

Joshua J Mark's article about execration rituals in Ancient

Egypt gives a sense of one of the ancients' appeasement psychological methods:

An example of this is the *Magical Lullaby* in which a mother or caregiver would recite prescribed words to ward off evil spirits but, it is thought, also had the herbs and vegetables on hand in the room - such as garlic hanging by an entrance - to keep such spirits at bay. (Mark 2017)

J. J. Mark describes how Ancient Egyptian priest/scribes compiled ritual defence incantations and wrote them on red ceramic earthenware and then smashed them as a defence procedure. J. J. Mark explains:

The *Magical Lullaby* does not follow this pattern completely, however, as it was more of a charm of protection ... (Mark2017)

The examples chosen for this chapter look at cultural processes intended to conciliate vast natural phenomena with human everyday reality. As we stated in the subtitle the central example in this chapter is *Appeasing The Seas* through *Isidis Navigum* (Isis Boats) Festivals. This paper's reflections and analysis are a means of exploring complexities of the *Culture-Nature* relationship from the Comparative Cultural History standpoint.

Isidis Navigum Festival traditionally happened on the 5th of March in Ancient Egypt, the sailing season opened on that day. The celebration consisted of chanting, devotional singing, ritual and communal dancing, prayers and benedictions to the Sea. The central ritual was the blessing of boats and petitioning for support and protection from Isis, goddess and inventor of sails. The festival also included lamentations and prayers for the dead and helping the living to sense the inner working of natural and transcendent processes.

To understand the centrality of Isis in the ancient world we turn briefly to the second book of Herodotus - *Histories.* The Herodotus' Opus is named after the Muse Euterpe and titled *An Account Of Egypt.* In describing multiple regional beliefs, deities and appeasement offerings Herodotus explains:

[...] not all the Egyptians equally reverence the same gods, except only Isis and Osiris [...], these they all reverence alike[...](Herodotus 15)

R. E. Witt in his book *Isis In The Graeca-Roman World* also point to centrality and plurality of *Isis Personifications* as cultural focus:

There, in the beginning was Isis. Oldest of the Old, she was the goddess from whom all Becoming arose. She was the great Lady-Mistress of House of Life, Mistress of the Word of God. She was Unique. In all her great and wonderful works she was wiser magician and more excellent than any other god. (Witt 1971)

With this background and cultural sense *Navigum Isidis* - Ships of Isis Festivals with their appeasing boat rituals, ceremonial music and dance extended throughout the Roman Empire. March 5 was the Greco-Roman holyday *Ploiaphesia* - the Ship of Isis Festival. The boats dedicated on this festival day came under protection of Isis

Exploring the issues of *Culture versus Nature* through examples of appeasements as one way to address that dichotomy is the continuity, adoptions and interpretations of *Navigum Isis Rituals*. This may give a greater critical perspective. One example is the *Greek Orthodox Christian* tradition directly continuing Ancient Egyptian ritual relationship to the Sea.

The Greek Festival

The Blessing of the Waters happens on the day of Epiphany, January 6. On this day a priest blesses a special cross, used for this occasion and throws it into the sea. That gives the sign to many valiant young men waiting to dive into winter waters to retrieve the venerated object. The young man who recovers the cross would be blessed and is presumed would have good luck in the coming year. The Epiphany festival also features the blessing of models of boats and ships let loose to the sea throughout the day. Often the little boats are made by children and youth helped by their parents and teachers. Like its ancient Egyptian Isis Mother festival the occasion has its music, dancing and food component. Philip Chrysopoulos in his article *Epiphany: A Greek Orthodox Celebration Rich in Tradition* point to a significant ritual singing still surviving in geographies that use to be under Roman Jurisdiction but preserved earlier, pre-classical celebratory practices. P. Chrysopoulos remarks:

Like Christmas and New Year's Eve, the Epiphany holiday in Greece has its own carols ("kalanda") as well. (Chrysopoulos 2019)

Herodotus - in his second book of nine part Histories titled and dedicated to Euterpe, muse of *music*, *sharing* and *well-being*, describes public festivals of Ancient Egypt. Herodotus reports how the Egyptians hold their religious public

assemblies often, “with the greatest zeal” and devotion. So the festival at the city of Bubastis for Pasht is not an exception. Herodotus describes the festival:

They sail men and women together, and a great multitude of each sex in every boat; and some of the women have rattles and rattle with them, while some of the men play the flute during the whole time of the voyage, and the rest, both women and men, sing and clap their hands; and when as they sail they come opposite to any city on the way they bring the boat to land, and some of the women continue to do as I have said, others cry aloud and jeer at the women in that city, some dance, and some stand up and pull up their garments. This they do by every city along the riverbank; and when they come to Bubastis they hold festival celebrating great sacrifices, and more wine of grapes is consumed upon that festival than during the whole of the rest of the year. To this place (so say the natives) they come together year by year even to the number of seventy myriads of men and women, besides children. (Herodotus 2006)

This description points to a deeply established tradition of public festivals with definite music and choreographic elements as well as a display of individual free expression of woman within the festival’s framework.

The Egyptian deity *Pasht* is an aspect of Isis cult, one of many faces of Isis. Herodotus equates with *Greek Artemis - the huntress* but the Egyptian feline goddess also has some characteristics of *Hecate - moon goddess*. With the emblematic sun disc on her lioness /cat head she hunts by night. This fully empowered feminine goddess may point to the importance of some woman in the boat procession braking away from singing, clapping and shaking rattles to cry aloud, jeer, dance, and pull up their garments that would be understood by the indigenous people but may baffle an uniformed observer, Herodotus judging only the external behavior.

To consider the depth and shared meaning of the festival contents and proceedings, we bring a comparative example. N. Krishnaswamy in his interpretive book *The Rig Veda for The First Time Reader* writes:

The Rig Veda is comprised, as its name indicates, of Riks or hymns, of which there are 10028, not counting 11 supplementary hymns, spread over 10 Books called Mandalas, a name that is also applied to the stellar constellations. These are hymns of adoration of several deities personifying the physical powers of Nature ... The sacrifices and the hymns that accompany them thus carry an appeal as much to the common man as to the initiate. (Krishnaswamy2014)

Jeanine Miller's paper The *Vision of Cosmic Order in the Vedas* has a chapter titled *Cosmogonic Speculations In Vedic Samhitas* (collection of hymns, mantras, prayers, benedictions, petitions and laments). J. Miller's description of the goddess Aditi is conceptually and devotionally extremely similar to the universal characteristics of Isis:

... She [Aditi] bears relation with the conceptions regarding cosmogony especially in the later portions of Rig-Veda. The chief characteristic of this deity is motherhood. ... Her invocation in Rig-Veda, along with waters and earth as one of the sources of origination of deities underlines her creative power. The hymn is as follows:

For worthy of obeisance

Gods are all your names

Worthy of adoration and of sacrifice

Ye who were born from waters

From Aditi and from the earth

Do ye here listen to my call

(Miller 1985)

This Vedic invocation is very similar to the concept and attributes associated with Isis as *Protennoia* [The First Thought] found in the *Gnostic Protennoia Text* (Meyers2009) from the ancient *Nag Hammadi Gnostic Library* discovered 1945 in Egypt:

I am *Protennoia*, the *Thought* that dwells in the *Light*. I am the movement that dwells in the *All*, ***She*** in whom the *All* takes its stand, The first-born among those who came to be, ***She*** who exists before the All I move in every creature I fertilize myself and I breed and mate, with those who love me I am the fulfillment of the *All*, *Meirothea*, the glory of the *Mother* I cast voiced *Speech* into the ears of ***those who know*** me. I am a Voice speaking softly. I dwell within the *Silence* that surrounds *every one*. It is the hidden Voice that dwells within me: Within the incomprehensible *Thought* Within the immeasurable *Silence*

The above text is John D. Turner's translation of the *Gnostic Protennoia Text* from the ancient *Nag Hammadi Gnostic Library* discovered 1945 in Egypt. Subtly edited here to give it a reconstructed sense, however feeble, of a meaning communicated with strophic cadence and poetic mode of evoking rather than describing.

Contained within specific social *mores and lore* the ancients had the access to conceptualized subtlety and universality of *primordial causes* shared

by all strata of society. Evident by wide spread worship of Isis in Greco-Roman world and the Christianized version as *Notre-Dame - Our Lady*.

On the Cultural level *the Appeasing the Sea* and the related sacrifices, festivities and the blessing of boats, offered reinsuring communal bonding and release. *Isidis Navigum* celebration also pays respect and reverence to the Sea as a vast, immeasurable aspect of Nature. Because of shared noise, exuberance and fisting and in spite of it, the festival's focused, stylized proceedings contained a vague individual sense of something like "the incomprehensible *Thought,* within the immeasurable *Silence"* personified by Isis and belonging to everyone's deepest cultural recesses of Humanness.

2. HUMAN-BIRD RELATIONSHIP • BIOLOGY AND SYMBOLOGY

The intention of this chapter is to create a framework, context and sense for *Human Cultural* response to and coping with *Natural Phenomenon* through ancient *human-animal relationships* in general and birds in particular.

Massey's Zootypes Symbolic Language

The stark vulnerability of humans against elemental forces is expressed and contained in animals representing natural and transcendent forces. G. Massey clarifies animal representations with this statement:

"[...] the primary representation of the Nature-Powers (which became the later divinities) ought to have been anthropomorphic, and the likeness reflected in the mirror of the most ancient mythologies should have been human. Whereas the Powers and Divinities were first represented by animals, birds, and reptiles, or, to employ a word that includes all classes, they were portrayed by means of zootypes." (Massey 1907)

Gerald Massey (1828 - 1907) was 19th century English Egyptologist. His definitive, encyclopedic writing and ideas were published almost posthumously in the last year of his life in the 1907 edition of *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*.

Relative to our interest in the *animal-human relationships* is one of Massey's observations refuting western cultural axioms that ancient humanity had infused the image of itself upon the external world and natural phenomenon. Massey argued that anthropomorphic representations don't express the vastness of the unknown and don't reflect the observable experiential reality and genuine mythic communication. These are the elements essential to communal bonding as a cultural defence against vastness and unpredictability of Nature. To pay homage to Massey's Zootypes hypothesis

and open to the examples of embodied and symbolic inter-species relationship we introduce lesser-known examples from Siberian Folklore.

Role of Migratory Birds in Siberian Altaic Culture

Figure 1: Siberian Votive Images of Migratory Birds (Metter 2013)

To open reflections on the multiplicity of strands of the *human-bird relationship*, the ancient understanding and anticipation of migratory patterns of birds played an important role. The website *The Grammar of Metter* (Metter 2013) dealing with lesser-known aspects of cultural history and folkloric practices explores Siberian shamans' relationship to migratory birds. Illustrations and some topics for this examples come from that website. *The Grammar of Metter* website introduces the main topic of their article in these words:

Migratory behavior of certain waterfowl, such as geese, cranes and swans, which has lent these birds such a centrality in the diverse shamanic cosmologies of Eurasia.

The Grammar of Metter article has a translation of Roberte Hamayon's study of Siberian shamanism – *La Chasse à L'Âme* (The Hunt of the Soul) in which there is an illustration from the book of an Evenk shaman's house looking like a tipi but made of wood. Extending from the dwelling is a pass edged by tall poles topped by wooden models of birds. *The Grammar of Metter* article introduces their translation with "Hamayon's accompanying text explains the significance of migratory birds to shamanic cosmology." The article quotes:

In the majority of Siberian societies, the great rituals took place in the summer season, during the stay of the migratory birds, marking their arrival and

their departure (looking forward to their return the following year). It can be said that during the winter the shaman lacks the power to shamanise effectively because the birds have not returned to reinvigorate him/her. These migratory birds (swans, geese, cranes…) seem to play the role of carriers (porteurs), not of countable, individual souls, but of a 'life force', a soul-substance underlying all animate being. The birds' return coincides with the thaw at the end of the scarcity of winter." (Hamayon 1990)

Figure 2: Siberian Votive Images of Migratory Birds (Metter 2013)

To continue and contextualize reflections on the multiplicity of strands of the *ancient human-bird relationship* we honor and remember A. F. Anisimov who researched concerning the origin of North East Asian Evenk shamanism. His influential paper in the field is *The Shaman's Tent of the Evenk's and the Origin of the Shamanistic Rite.* The abstract for the paper says:

The study of shamanism with a view to revealing its origins is not only fully justified in the eyes of historical science, but is also of great historical cognitive importance." (Anisimov 1963)

The concept of "historical cognitive importance" is essential in this comparative cultural study.

A. F. Anisimov in his paper has described and analyzed in great detail organization and imagery of the Evenk shaman's house and the protective, votive and evocative imagery and spatial arrangements inside and outside the shaman's house environment.

Figure 3: Bird inspired Siberian Shaman Costume (Artship Archives)

The Grammar of Metter article concludes with a brilliant comparative example demonstrating the cultural underpinning of Turkic and related cultures over a vast geographic area. The image chosen is of an Anatolian shepherd's bag showing symbolic stylized motives of migratory birds and the cross patterns of their nests representing " the theme of good fortune returning with migratory waterfowl, woven in."

Figure 4: Anatolian Shepherds Bag (Metter 2013)

The complexity and richness of the *Altaic Cultural* example paves the way to a contextualizing general discussion. The following example is *human-bird relationship* as a contribution to the tangible skills set.

Possible Navigational Use Of Birds

James Hornell's essay *The Role of Birds in Early Navigation* points to lesser known, inter-culturally significant domestication and observational practice. To introduce the notion J. Hornell writes:

It is not generally recognized how important a part was played by birds in the guidance of early voyagers when sailing on the uncharted seas of the ancient world, and how their regular migrations year-by-year and season-by-season, along definite routes have contributed to the discovery of many lands and isolated islands. (Hornell 1946)

Figure 5: From De Arte Venandi Cum Avibus (Kent 2019)

The navigation role of birds in the early sea-faring history points to an intentional methodology of facing and dealing with the unknown. The *Culture vs. Nature* theme offer container for exploring issues and ambiguous bounders between physical and non-material, tangible and intangible, practical and psychological. The following example attempts to approach this dichotomy and symbiosis.

Tangible and Intangible Heritage of Omphalos Stones

As navigational archeology is almost nonexistent, an indirect hint of the navigational use of birds may be found in the obscure and little documented comparative history of *Sanctuary Omphaloses*, earth's navels and their association with birds.

Omphalos / Navel of the world - stone markers at Ancient Oracle Sites possibly involved the ritual use of specially trained birds associated with them linking vast geographic areas and specific places. This also points to shared cultural sensibilities by diverse people.

There are a number of ancient sanctuaries around the Mediterranean that have egged shaped ritual stone markers referred to as *Navels of the World.* Most of these sites were the nexuses of earlier cults of mother goddesses, places of veneration, pilgrimages and in some cases, of prophecy. The most famous Omphalos is from Delphi in Greece. They are also found in Greek

temple complexes at Delos and in the Ancient Egyptian Nubia, at the temple of Amon. The Omphaloses with birds sitting on or near them are represented on a number of Greek bas-reliefs and coins, as well as in the written versions of the Egyptian Book of the Dead. The birds represented sitting on Omphaloses are the same type used by the ancients for navigation, homing pigeons, crows and ravens. So far there is no positive verbal documentary evidence for the similarity between navigational and Omphalos' birds. One hypothesis is that the specially trained birds offered practical or ritualized connection between sanctuaries of the ancient world. (Temple 1976)

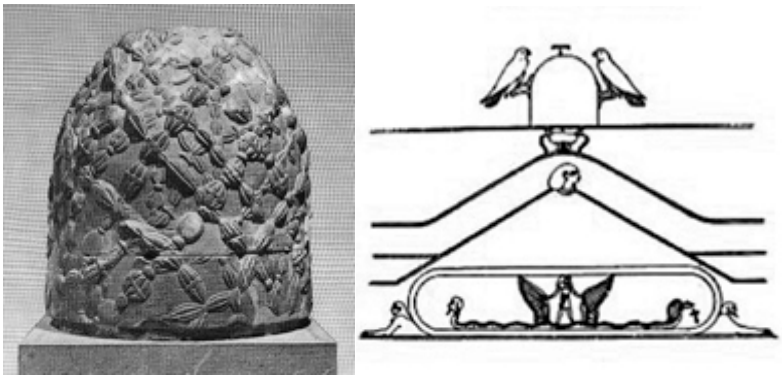

Figure 6: Delphic Omphalos and fragments from a rendering of Egyptian book of the Dead (Artship Archives)

The ancients certainly observed the miraculous ability of birds to navigate over large areas, particularly at the time of their migration. Modern science has just begun to represent a possible mechanism of these navigational skills. In the summary of their paper, The Magnetic Sense of Animals, T. Ritz and K. Schulten write:

Animals have several types of magnetic organs, often separately specialized for determining direction versus location. Recent results offer hints about how these once-unimaginable detectors may have evolved.

The authors also write:

Although the use of the geomagnetic field for directional information is well established experimentally, it is not known by which biophysical mechanism magneto-reception is achieved. The magnetic sense is maybe the last perception mechanism for which the nature of the receptors and of the biophysical mechanism remain unknown. (Ritz and Schulten 2000)

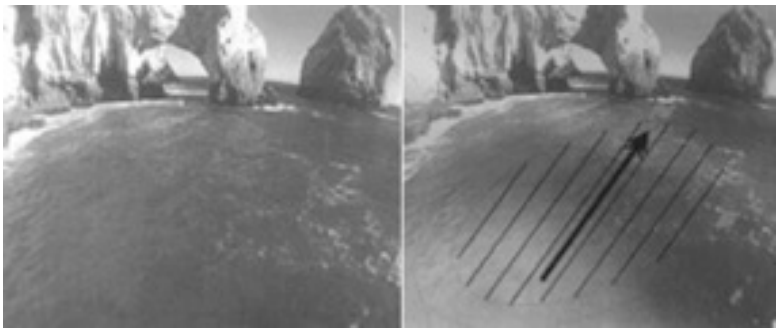

Figure 7: Human and Birds' Perception (Ritz and Schulten 2000)

In the illustration above T. Ritz and K. Schulten represent the perceptual sensitivity of birds to the overall earth magnetic field.

Exploring the examples of human-bird relationship, teamwork and mythology may give a sense and breath of *culturally ordered* responses to *the natural phenomena*. Human-Birds interactions besides practical issues like navigational partnership are also symbolic, metaphorical ritual relationships. Traces of keen observation and practices of the ancients lead us to include this inter-species partnership as one of the paradigms of approaching *Culture vs. Nature* conundrum.

3. HUMAN SYMBOLIZING AND NATURE

Re-Enactment as Plea for Fecundity

Shinto Ise Shrine in Japan has been reconstructed every 20 years for millennia.

The Ise Shrine references in this chapter, beside cited sources are based on a kind of academic hearsay, discussions and sharing with Japanese and Non-Japanese colleagues from a number of disciplines since 1969. Inclusion of the Ise Shrine's continuity process in the paper for the conference exploring *Culture / Nature* dichotomy, relationships and consequences offers multiple points for discussion. Is the contextualizing, conceptually framing of Nature a way of dealing with it?

The *Ise Shrine* is dedicated to the sun goddess Amaterasu where she is believed to reside as Genus Loci, the Spirit of the Place. Nihon Shoki, the author of *Nihongi - Japanese History published in 720 CA (1299 years ago) estimated that 15 generations before him, approximately* 2000 years ago Ise Shrine was established. Like many examples in this paper which point to

possible historic continuity and origins centuries, even millennia before the first written record appeared.

The Ise Shrine *construction matrix* is its own variant of the principal *Bringing forth the new shoots - Yuitsu shinmei zukuri* based on archaic rice granaries building arrangements. It is conceived and built as a germinating place of values, a kind of highly abstracted Architectural womb, a place where seeds of communal fecundity and bonding are germinated. The Shrine and its surroundings give a sense of implied care and intangible nurturing, one of the characteristics of Japanese esthetic.

The most important and striking characteristic of Ise Shrine is the twenty year *cyclic rebuilding* as the essential part of its ritual process. The Shrine is situated on two adjacent sites. One site houses the current Shrine where all inner works and rituals take place, while the other site is left vacant, awaiting its turn. Yet the vacant site it is regarded as holding the essence of renewal. It is referred to as the *small power unit* like battery- *kodenchi*. In the middle of the vacant site is placed a new sacred central pole of the next Ise shrine contained in a small wooden hut so it is always out of site, an ancient, archaic expression of preserving purity. The rest of the site is covered with white pebbles delineating, marking and protecting the place.

Ise Shrine's last rebuilding in 2013 generated commemorative publication in English of the booklet *Soul Of Japan* - An Introduction to Shinto and Ise Jingo[1] giving insight of Japanese cultural relationship to nature:

There are *kami* (essences/spirits) of the mountains, and *kami* of the sea. *Kami* are all around us, in every thing and every person. They may be worshipped anywhere, but many people visit Shinto shrines, called *jinija,* to pray. Shinto has no dogmas, doctrines or founder. It origins can be seen in the relationship between ancient Japanese and the power they found in the natural world. Only by receiving blessing of nature and accepting its rage can we maintain a harmonious connection to the world around us.

These commemorative descriptions aim at helping non-Japanese sense the atmospheres and containers of Shinto's relationship to nature and transcendence discretion. These cultural sensibilities have some undercurrents similar to the previous examples. Although Isis festivals are demonstrative and visible they contain the oral traditions' transmitions independent of written word and embodied in the festival's ritual atmosphere. Reading the skies and expecting birds has archaic respect and understanding of cyclic revival. *Soul Of*

[1] Public Affairs (2013), SOUL of JAPAN - An Introduction to Shinto and Ise Jingo, Public Affairs Headquarters for Shikinen-Sengu Publication, Tokyo, ps.

Japan booklet explains the embodied and intangible aspect of Ise Shrine re-building:

Wood is central to Japanese civilization. The concept of sustainability and reutilization, and the maintenance of know-how and skills are considered more important than the actual physical existence of a structure of building. This is the essence of 'eternity' as it is expressed at Jingu, and the reason for choosing to build and rebuild dwellings for *kami,* instead of permanent structure in stone.

Soul Of Japan booklet points out that seasonal and cyclic rituals and particularly physical rebuilding of shrines has a learning and continuity component:

Shikinen Sengu [Shinto Ritual Rebuilding] plays one very important role by enabling the transfer of our technical skills and spirit to the next generation. This transfer maintains both our architectural heritage, and over 1,000 years of artistic tradition involving the making of divine treasures - including 714 different kinds of sacred objects.

Chizuyo Lucas in her article *Living Heritage: Ise Grand Shrine,* discuses the millennial nature of Ise Shrine and its deep, infused connection to Amaterasu - Shinto Goddess of the Sun. Chizuyo Lucas points to Ise Shrine as a continuous presence in the culture as a living sanctuary:

While many cultural institutions and sites in Japan have elected to register with UNESCO as pieces of world heritage, Ise Grand Shrine has resisted this trend, as the traditions and rituals that take place there, far from being relics of the past, are still very much alive. (Lucas2017)

Jordan Sand approaches layers of Japanese Imperial History in his deeply researched, critically observant paper *Japan's Monument Problem: Ise Shrine as Metaphor.* One of his many judiciously chosen references is the work of Lafcadio Hearn *The Genius of Japanese Civilization* published in 1895. J. Sand comparative use of Hern's observations is helpful in this discourse:

... after climbing through miles of silence to reach some Shinto shrine, you find vividness only and solitude, an elfish, empty little wooden structure, mouldering in shadows a thousand years old. The strength of Japan, like the strength of her ancient faith, needs little material display.

Japanese were innately frugal, and accepted the ephemerality of life. Hearn presented Ise Shrine's periodic renewal as exemplary of this, and found that ultimately, not only was this the strength of the Japanese people, but it revealed 'weaknesses in our own civilization. In effect, Japan and its humble, regularly rebuilt shrine offered a new model of civilization, a virtuous antithesis to the West.

Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904) was of Greek and Irish origins sent to America as a youth. In America he became a writer and journalist who spent approximately the second half of his life in Japan and was deeply absorbed into the Japanese way of life and interpreted it from experience for the American and Western readers. In his work *The Genius of Japanese Civilization* he writes about Japanese ways:

Ability to live without furniture, without impedimenta, with the least possible amount of neat clothing ...

L. Hearn points to the contrasting sets of values by comparing Western affinities with the Japanese way of life:

... it shows also the real character of some weaknesses in our own civilization. It forces reflection upon the useless multiplicity of our daily wants. (Hearn1895)

Ise shrine's simplicity referring to ancient rice granaries is the testament to simplicity. Over time and fully integrated into Ise Shrine's structure are some elements from Buddhist iconography like *Nirvana Jewel Orbs.* This integration and Shinto undercurrent of the Japanese relationship to Nature and Unknown are an example of cultural continuity.

The final brief historic reflection of this chapter attempts to bring forth the sense of Japanese cultural integration and continuity. Yael Hoffman compiled and introduced the book *Japanese Death Poems - Written by Zen Monks and Haiku Poets on the Verge of Death.* In the section dedicated to Shumpo Soki ex-Samurai, who became a Zen Monk and a poet with considerable following. Y. Hoffman describes the last days of the 88 old teacher (Hofman1987):

Shumpo directed his disciples to burn his corps and bury the ashes in the ground, forbidding them to erect a burial stone in his memory. He ended his will with the following poem:

No single bone in my body is holy -

It is but an ash heap of stinking bones.

Dig a deep hole and there bury these remains

Thus, not a grain of dust will stain

The green mountains

The starkness and sparseness of these words is rooted, celebrates Shinto's simplicity and unity with Nature.

4 PARTNERSHIP MODELS

Human Made than Adopted, Redefined by Nature -

Building of a small lake in Southern Italy - 1976-1979

Making a Lake and its geographic and conceptual context

Fano - Educational Village; British Summer School in Southern Italy (1975 - 1980), convened practicing and future architects, landscape architects, urban planners, established artists and art students. Building a *small lake* that involved multiple skills was the curriculum intention of this *central communal experimen*t. It gave the participants visceral experience of using ancient technics and pre-industrial methods. The learning intentions were to better value, question and understand the benefits and shortcomings of mechanization, automation, absence of toil and consequence of the indirect social bonding in contemporary culture. For thousands of years people at Fano in southern Italy have maintained a rare, almost unique fresh water stream and carefully diverted it into irrigation canals. This meticulous art deeply understood water and its potential. This tradition became the basis of building the lake at Fano. The schools improved the land, repaired the ancient dry-stone dwellings, some of them had prehistoric origins and were maintained by successive occupants since Paleolithic times. These activities in some way echo Mumford's thoughts on pre-industrial technics, tools and bodily engagements:

The essential distinction between a machine and tool lies in the degree of independence in the operation from the skill and motive power of the operator: the tool lends itself to manipulation, the machine to automatic action. (Mumford2010)

Luis Mumford (1895-1960) was an environmental, urbanism/architectural and art/cultural critic whose writing and prognostic thinking influenced the introduction of regional planning, environmental awareness and cultural degradations of the Machine Age.

The reason for including *building of a small lake* in Southern Italy as a partnership model and an example in this paper is the learning it offered. The reflection on caring out the partnership with the nature processes can be a contribution to informed responses to environmental design issues and one of the starting points for approaching Culture-Nature perceived dichotomy. The disciplines of *doing and making,* are often visceral and most of the time a non-verbal process. In traditional society such rich learning surrounds children. In the modern urban life, learning is allotted to the school environment and children rarely see parents or neighbors engaged in learning, particularly

visceral learning where they could potentially participate. Most architectural, landscape and planning students come from this model of *segregated learning*. Because building, gardening, arts and crafts activities, learning and production are often considered remedial. There is significant societal atrophy of some basic cognitive processes that start with the attention span and inability to contain inner and outer agitation. In our view, witnessing and engaging in lifelong visceral learning can help children, students and adults overcome sometimes debilitating effects of virtual and commercialized reality. Commitment to children and youth in extracurricular settings is one part of it and Life Long Learning is the other half.

Elements and Processes of the Partnership Model Example

A leaflet describing the school Fano Summer School reads:

The Educational Village gathered in Apulia, southern Italy. It was an experiment in living together, a learning community challenging itself with the reconstruction of everything as if from the beginning.

"Everyone teaches and everyone learns."

The energy of explorers of new or forgotten worlds, the pioneering enthusiasm of settlers, the forefounders ability to care for and understand others, all these qualities are everyone's birthright. It only needs a real situation to bring them out and a life to contain them.

"The seed is planted at Fano, but the harvest is at home."

After six weeks of concentrated effort the real test is how to implement the experience in our urban daily situations.

Masseria Fano History

Masseria Fano, in the Southern Italian province of Lecce, is an estate centered around a strong stone defense tower dating back to 1577 and re-built at various times.

A stream with the same name defines the Fano Estate. The presence of fresh running water is a reason for continuous human habitation far beyond recorded history. It is no surprise that the estate contains an important archaeological site from the Bronze Age.

In 1987 J.P. Descoeudres and E. Robinson published a report of the systematic archaeological exploration of the "Chiusa," at Masseria Fano, carried out by Australian investigators of the University of Sydney, in collaboration with the University of Lecce.

The published work was titled:

"La Chiusa alla Masseria del Fano: Un sito messapico arcaico presso Salve in Provincia di Lecce" (*"The 'Chiusa' at the Masseria Fano: A site of archaic settlement near Salve in the Province of Lecce"*)

In the ravine below the fortified tower of Masseria Fano are the traces of the Byzantine monks, "*monaci basiliani*," who fled Byzantine Iconoclast Persecution approximately 726 - 842 CE. The monks established a presence around the water stream. Some small caves dug in the cliffs are still present with elusive traces of frescoes.

The Masseria Fano has numerous and characteristic dry stone circular dwellings that are the result of a continuous construction method carried out through many different periods until mid 20th century. The circular dwellings are generally referred as *Trulli*.

Establishing the Summer School

The land of over 20 acres, Masseria Fano, and all the buildings belonged to Maria Vittoria Colona-Winspere, who lived in the fortified castell in the summer, surrounded by a loosely structured, spread thought the estate, a village of over 30 trulli. She wanted to turn parts of her agriculturally abandoned land to a different use. She read the findings of the French competition: *Ideas for a building promoting life long learning* that led to re-inhabiting the prehistoric dwellings as the summer school. The principles and organization of the school was based on a thesis by Slobodan Dan Paich called *Educational Village or Treatise on Harmony* which won First Prize in an international architectural and educational ideas competition sponsored by UNESCO and the French government in Paris in 1973.

School activities

The school improved the land and repaired the ancient dry-stone dwellings, some of which had prehistoric origins and were maintained by successive occupants over thousands of years. In addition, the local people and school participants built a small lake, an attempt to create a self-sustaining ecosystem with a poetic landscape.

Irrigation at Fano

For thousands of years people at Fano have maintained the fresh water stream and carefully diverted it into irrigation canals.

This meticulous art deeply understands water and its potential. There is some unspoken lore, which in the act of diverting water always leaves a substantial flow for neighbors downstream. When this delicate balance is observed everyone flourishes.

The understanding of the role of vegetation in preserving the flow and purity of water is crucial. Watercress, mint and cane play important roles in maintaining this balance. The keepers of the creek consciously harvest and encourage those plants. The Summer School participants engaged directly with the Fano Canal keepers and learned the irrigational craft from them. This became a basis in designing a little lake in Fano.

Bypass Channel

Essential in building the little lake was the understanding of topology, water flow and vegetation. The Fano Stream flowed for about a mile and then disappeared underground as the terrain descended towards the sea, about 8 miles away.

The lake was built at a point just before the stream disappeared underground. Most importantly a bypass channel had to be made, which allowed water to flow uninterrupted while the earth was excavated for what was to become the lake bottom and for later maintenance and cleaning.

The process of building the lake lasted three years. The core of the process was to leave selected areas to overgrow in the winter after intense work in the summer and in the following summer to take cues from nature for determining the next step in building the lake's edges.

The lake was built by volunteers consisting of the International Summer School participants who were joined by citizens from two local towns Presicce and Salve, which traditionally didn't work together or on volunteer community projects.

The Finished Lake

After all the construction, any evidence of the human hand having worked the land became invisible as the natural processes abounded.

Within the larger context of the region the Lake was camouflaged by the very planting which it encouraged. The intention of its placement and design was for the lake to be a poetic retreat away from the bustle, a place to be discovered each time.

The playfulness that sometimes emerged fed people's imaginations and their generative memory for future bodies of work.

The little lake was one of the containers of experiences expressed in the written intentions of the summer school:

"The seed is planted at Fano, but the harvest is at home. After six weeks of concentrated effort the real test is to implement the experience in our urban daily situations."

When the lake was finished Gary Cook, one of the principal co-builders of the Lake, said: *"All maps are out of date."*

This anonymity in the official representation of geography coincides with complete absorption of the *Human Made Lake* into the surrounding *Nature* as her inseparable part, as if it was always there.

5. ARTIFICES RESPONSE AND NATURAL NEEDS

a. Technology, Mechanization Critic - b. Reuse Strategies - c. Disable Access endorsement - Ben Trautman sculptures marking and creating disable assess on a re-used Ocean Liner - 2001- 2003

a. Technology, Mechanization Critic

To bring the conference theme of the *Culture vs. Nature* to contemporary issues, quandaries and realities of technological and machine dependence, we turn one more time to Lewis Mumford (1895-1960). As we mentioned earlier L. Mumford was an environmental, urbanism/architectural and art/cultural critic, his writing and prognostic thinking influenced introduction of regional planning, environmental awareness and possible causes of cultural degradations of the Machine Age.

Mumford's thoughts on a healthy relationship to technics in the chapter Cultural Integration from his book Art and Technics may contextualize the ambiguity of issues of this chapter on technology and needs:

By contrast, we overvalue the technical instrument: the machine has become our main source of magic, and it has given us a false sense of possessing godlike powers. An age that has devaluated all its symbols has turned the machine itself into a universal symbol: a god to be worshiped. Under these conditions, neither art or technics is in a healthy state. (Mumford2000)

Mumford in his book *Myth of the Machine* insightfully points to the core issue of the industrial age by pointing to the eighteenth century roots of mechanistic thinking:

Descartes could not of course foresee that this one-sided effort to "conquer nature" would bring a special danger, the closer it approached realization: that of dispossessing and displacing man himself. But though we must now confront the ultimate threat. (Mumford1970)

Mumford's quote from Art and Technics about *devise dependent* intentional and studded appropriation by the commercial media of the personal, internal ecology of metaphorical thinking and imaginative function may offer some context:

During the last two centuries there has been a vast expansion of the material means of living throughout the world. But instead of our thus producing a state of widely distributed leisure, favorable to the cultivation of the inner life and the production of enjoyments of the arts, we find ourselves more absorbed than ever in the process of mechanization. Even a large part of our fantasies are no longer self-begotten: they have no reality, no viability, until they are harnessed to the machine, and without the aid of the radio and television they would hardly have the energy to mantain their existence. (Mumford2000)

Mumford wrote this even before computer games, smart phones, reality shows and social media's invasion. Here we are addressing less-acknowledged ecology of mind, internal self, and social connection that are as threatened as the natural environment.

These concerns also permeate Mumford's critique of the one-sidedness of contemporary architecture. As a public intellectual and architecture critic of the influential magazine of his time, the New Yorker, he points in many ways to the shortcomings of the Le Corbusier's, *International Style* inspired architecture branded *Machine for Living* concept and ideology.

Mumford in his *Art and Technics* writes:

Yes: the burden of renewal lies upon us; so it behooves us to understand the forces making for renewal within our persons and within our culture, and to summon forth the plans and ideals that will impel us to purposeful action. If we awaken to our actual state, in full possession of our senses, instead of remaining drugged, sleepy, cravenly passive, as we now are, we shall reshape our life to a new pattern, aided by all the ressources that art and technics now place in our hands. (Mumford2000)

b. Reuse Strategies

One initiative that reflects this call for action was the re-definition of a historic 1940 passenger-cargo/military ship for public peacetime use and as a cultural space. The ship was (from 1999 to 2004) an exciting, ever - changing campus of cultural activities and art-making surrounding extracurricular children's activities and potential hard-core youth job training programs. *Crisis Of Perseverance*, articulated by the members of Artship educational initiatives was a response to a local need that addressed a problem, particularly among children and youth lacking role models or witnessing success through perseverance. Artists of all types are the embodiment of achievable mastery and the tangible experience of completion, hence the name 'Artship,' expresses an exciting, ever changing campus surrounding hardcore training programs. (Fulton2002)

As a response to a number of local issues such as the discrepancy in educational opportunities for urban poor and multilingual populations, the lack of accessible non-remedial job training, and the lack of access to waterfront amenities and extracurricular recreational and learning activities, a number of Oakland projects were carried out which culminated in the creation of the Artship Initiative in 1992.

Throughout 1991- 92 weekly community meetings where held. At those meetings, community members identified the need for a signature venue, at the municipal scale, capable of being a symbol for the diverse city. After many discussions, the idea of a decommissioned ship was adopted, and the future cultural facility was named 'Artship.' To manage the ship and it's programs, the Artship Foundation was established as a cultural arts and public benefit foundation.

But Artship was not just a local initiative. In 1995, Artship Initiative was chosen as the US headquarters of the International Peace University. Under the patronage of more than twelve Nobel peace laureates, the International Peace University opened in Berlin during the fall of 1995. Laureate participants, sponsors and the committee appreciated the breath of the work, community oriented spirit and cultural sensitivities of the Artship programs and initiated a partnership. This brought different, more sophisticated and academic constituents to the ship, which merged with the artists, local youth, their younger siblings and parents.

Community gathering place

On any average day on the Artship, you could find musicians recording in acoustically unusual spaces of the ship and visual artists making things. For

example, Ben Trautman created sculptures as a part of the wheelchair accessibility route throughout the ship in the core example of this chapter which we shall discuses in more detail. Schoolchildren touring the ship engaged in ship specific art and interpretive projects, and non-profits held meetings from a coalition of 30 local community-orientated groups. There were dancers, clowns, actors and musicians rehearsing, knitters knitting, poets reciting, welders welding, cameras clicking, and wood chips and plaster in unlikely places. Also quietly working or instructing were researchers, archivists, volunteers, teachers and librarians. This is a glimpse of multiple constituencies that co-existed and shared with the general public.

One experience shared by most users and visitors to the ship was imagining travelling and journeying, partially because the ship was stationary. The richness, configuration, and smell of the ship brought people to the imaginative and imagining self without having to voice it or be an artist. It was a non-verbal, spatial and associative experience that brought poetic sense regardless of age, cultural background or levels of literacy.

c. Disable Access

(Section based on Artship Foundation photo and documentary archives)

Ben Trautman sculptures marking and creating disable assess on a re-used Ocean Liner - 2001- 2003

Artship the ship as a transportation machine was an example of one of the most challenging accessibility environments. The commitment to making it accessible turned to the integration of art, engineering and architectural planning project. Contemporary disability sensibilities, legal requirements and communal care created the project. Its scope expanded the vocabulary of dealing and confronting Nature's variant that is classified as *disability condition*.

The project was a series of mechanical sculptures installed on the Artship intended to establish a dialogue between the utilitarian solutions of the ship's accessibility infrastructure and the more evocative solutions that are possible through sculptural experimentation. The sculptures established an artistic language of steel and technology that reaches beyond the utilitarian to address the critical issues of imagination, invention and considered visual poetics. The accessible infrastructure provided a frame and context. It establishes a legible and consistent accessible route through the ship. The sculptures inhabited this pathway, investing it with the sense of uniqueness, attention and esthetic care, suggesting a more holistic approach to accessibility design. The mechanical sculptures presence offered a paradigm that bridges the divide between what is necessary and what is a wish, a hope, or a cultural enrichment. Modeling the

possibilities for the *human inhabited world* that could be filled with small moments of extra effort and care.

Interweaving of artifice with natural needs of disable persons offers a particular edge to the *culture/nature dichotomy*. Humans have always grappled with it. The examples from Ancient Egyptian medical papyruses show tremendous understanding of bone restoration and fracture adjustments. The whole *Zootypes Symbolic Language* articulated by G. Massey we cited earlier is an example of dealing with the stark vulnerability of humans against elemental forces. The ancient and historic examples of devices created to deal with disease, aging and physical disabilities are a testament of cultural traditions of ingenuity and rising to the occasion of natures blows.

In our contemporary example intentions to exceed the required codes allowed for developing a language of sharing and invention benefiting people beyond issues of hindered mobility. While accessibility is the primary requirement, imagination, expression, and humanity must also have a voice. The installations, argue that there is room for experimentation and creativity, a process of making and building that brings life, dignity, cultural experience and delight for the aspects of architecture that are often afterthoughts and eyesores.

This project was collaboration. Ben Trautman was the lead artist, working with Artship's curriculum innovation team and particularly with renowned accessibility and wheelchair modifications inventor Ralf Hotchkiss in the design and development of the installations.

Art and Disability - Artifices as Responses to Natural Needs

(Section based on Artship Foundation photo and documentary archives)

Outside therapeutic or remedial context here is an example of esthetic maturity and emotional communication projected with skills and imagination integrating disability as a natural form of existence, non-segregated, equal in a performance setting.

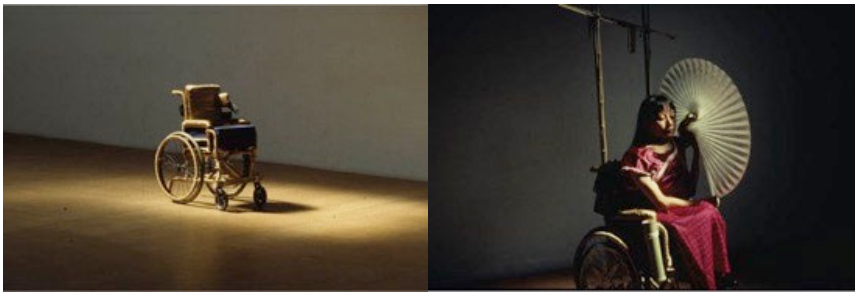

Figure 8: Grace Lin's wheelchair transformed into a performance throne (Artship Archives)

One Day Grace Lynn came to the performance in 1990 of the Artship Ensemble known at that time as Augustino Dance Theater and boldly said: " I want to dance and perform with your company". She had Polio as a baby in China before immigrating to America with her parents and was wheelchair bound. Artship Ensemble never holds auditions but works with people who responded to its atmosphere and intimate performance format. So a Partnership began. The first action was to cover metal parts of Grace's spear wheelchair with irregular ribbons made by hand torn Chines gold color silk. The wheelchair with a few minimal additions of a bamboo frame and fan holder contextualized and transported Grace into another time related to her Chinese origins.

On another occasion a box inspected by *sedan chair* that is an enclosed vehicle for one person (usually kind of royalty) carried on poles by two bearers. Once Grace was brought in the two bearers went out were removed with poles. From the elevated pedestal and cherished Grace did a sleeve dance, one of the traditional women dances where the hands are hidden. Grace wanted slits in the sleeves so that towards the end of the dance she could bring her hands out celebrating contemporary visible women. In the lobby at the end of performance the audience discovered the box and the sculptural support made to hold Grace's body.

Inspired by the box support learning experience, later in the process the in the Dance/Theater Company decided to experiment with a construction of the dance devise on whiles for the piece *Zen Waltz*. As both dancers were Asian of different ethnicity (Chinese and Filipino) grown in the west, the Japanese lullaby was played as something outside their specific origins.

Humans as species always have had a tendency in ingenious ways to lessen the toil and burden of survival with tools and procedures. The ancient dream of humanity to be in a civilization of ease and solutions available at a press of a button is the root of the Anthropocene age and exploitative Globalization. Ben Trautman’s sculptures creating disable assess on a re-used Ocean Liner and Artship Ensemble poetic devices for the performances are modest contribution to possibilities of respecting and tempering infatuation with the technology through diverse projects balancing visceral and virtual. To facilitate discussion of possibilities open questions emerged: Is there a way to approach the current imbalance with the understanding of genuine needs and educated awareness of inborn perception mechanisms and integration of experiences gathered through the senses?

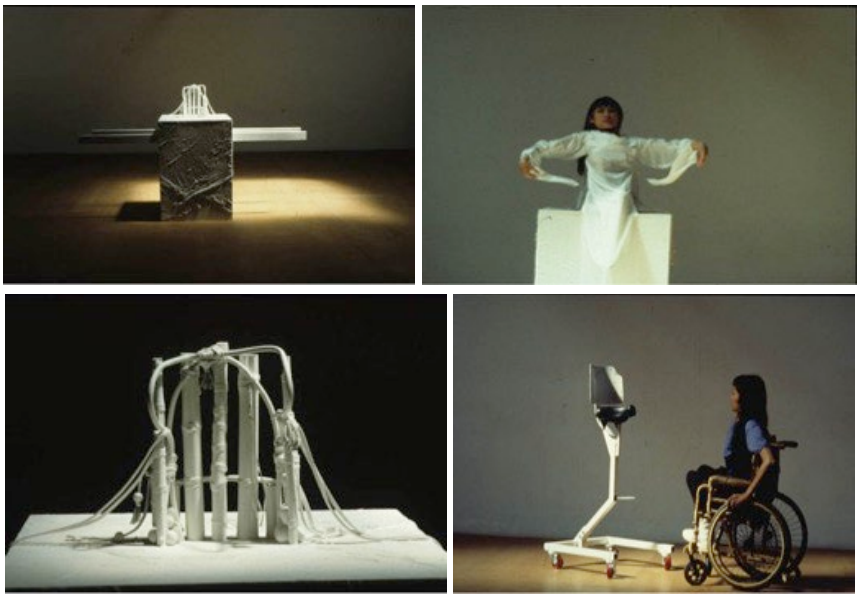

Figure 9: Element of adaptability for Grace Lin dance performances (Artship Archives)

Figure 10: Performance (Artship Archives)

Example of a role played by technology and engineering for *disable access* and *theater production* points to culturally made devises as a response to specific natural needs.
It is the other side of gratuities use of mechanization that leads to alienation and number of side effects.

CONCLUSION

Summary of intentions and issues:

1. Appeasing the Sea with Ships of Isis Festivals - Isidis Navigum

Within the sub-theme of trusting the senses and inborn perceptions the hypothetical cognitive motivation for the example of this chapter is the sense of the earth as a plane bordered by the vastness of the horizon experientially evident at or near the sea.

The chapter centered on *Appeasement* as one of the forms of *culture-nature* relationship. Appeasement was considered as a duality position of *Human versus Unknown* as being one of experiential relationship to Nature. *Isidis Navigum* celebration payed respect and reverence to the Sea as a vast, immeasurable aspect of Nature. The chapter reflected on the reinsuring communal bonding and release offered on a cultural level by *the Appeasing the Sea.* Also approached were the related ceremonial offerings, choreographed and spontaneous festivities and the blessing of boats within specific social *mores and lore.* The Isis festival brought the issues of the ancients having possible access to conceptualized subtlety and universality of *primordial causes* shared by all strata of society. Evident by wide spread worship of Isis in Ancient Egypt, Greco-Roman world and the Christianized version as *Notre-Dame - Our Lady*.

2. Human-Bird Relationship-Teamwork

The observed accuracy of timing and orientation of migratory birds was one of experiential nexuses of trusting the senses and inborn perceptions.

The intention of this chapter was to create a framework, context and sense for *Cultural* response to and coping with *Natural Phenomenon* through ancient *human-animal relationships* in general and birds in particular. In other words, to give a sense and breath of *culturally ordered* responses to *the natural phenomena*. Human-Birds interactions besides practical issues like navigational partnership are also symbolic, metaphorical ritual relationships. Traces of keen observation and practices of the ancients led us to include this inter-species partnership as one of the paradigms for approaching *Culture vs. Nature* conundrum.

3. Ise Shrine - Cultural Symbolizing and Nature

Inborn perception of Time (independent from time measuring devises) confirmed by the memories of stored information from the senses could be considered a root of History.

Inclusion in the exploration of *Culture / Nature* dichotomy was the *Shinto Ise Shrine's* twenty years cycle of rebuilding. It offered the possibility of including elements of duration and recurrence. An open question emerged: Is the contextualizing, conceptually framing of Nature a way of dealing with it? The starkness and sparseness of Shinto's simplicity and unity with Nature is one paradigm that was explored.

4. Fano Lake - Human Made and Natural - Partnership Models

Perceiving characteristics of water and channeling it for survival is a paradigm of an ancient partnership based on trusting the observations given by the senses.

Fano - Educational Village; British Summer School in Southern Italy (1975 - 1980), convened practicing and future architects, landscape architects, urban planners, established artists and art students. Building a *small lake* that involved multiple skills was the curriculum intention of this *central communal experimen*t. It gave the participants visceral experience of using ancient technics and pre-industrial methods. The learning intentions were to better value, question and understand the benefits and shortcomings of mechanization, automation, absence of toil and the consequence of indirect social communication in contemporary culture. Complete absorption of the *Human Made Lake* into the surrounding *Nature* as her inseparable part, as if it was always there was the central issue of the chapter.

5. Artifices Response for Natural Needs

The interplay of cognitive capabilities through trusting the senses and inborn perceptions could lead to transcending limitations outwardly from devices and inwardly through understanding.

To bring the discourse of the *Culture vs. Nature* to contemporary issues, quandaries and realities of technological and machine dependence we turn as introduction to Luis Mumford's critique of debilitating contemporary obsession with mechanization and his call for action. One initiative that reflects this call was the redefinition of a historic 1940 passenger-cargo/military ship for public peacetime use and as a cultural space.

The historic ship as a transportation machine was an example of one of most challenging accessibility environments. The accessibility was discussed as an example of the *artifice and human needs* relationship. The example is series of mechanical sculptures installed on the ship intended to establish a dialogue between the utilitarian solutions of the ship's accessibility infrastructure and the more evocative solutions that are possible through sculptural experimentation and cultural communication

The commitment to making the ship accessible turned to the integration of art, engineering and architectural planning for the project. Contemporary disability sensibilities, legal requirements and communal care created a project that expanded the vocabulary of dealing with and confronting Nature's variant that is expressed as disability condition.

CLOSING STATEMENT

In the anthropocene age there are many approaches to respond to the Human-Made interference with Nature. This paper's intention was in a modest way to reflect on historic, heritage and contemporary examples of overcoming imponderables and responding to survival needs with partnership models.

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Nature & Culture Dichotomy in Roland Joffe's Movie *the Scarlet Letter*

Ela İpek Gündüz

"It is very remarkable that we should be inclined to think of civilization -- houses, trees, cars, etc. -- as separating man from his origins, from what is lofty and eternal, etc. Our civilized environment, along with its trees and plants, strikes us then as though it were cheaply wrapped in cellophane and isolated from everything great, from God, as it were. That is a remarkable picture that intrudes upon us."[21]

Ludwig Wittgenstein

As Ludwig Wittgenstein speculates, since modern civilization creates a sterilized but artificial world, human beings need to turn back to their origins related directly to nature. He further remarks that "this picture," including both the modern world's natural and technological surroundings, is irritating. In our essence, we harmonize with nature, not with a "cellophane-wrapped" world. When Puritans tried to establish a civilization in colonial America, they attached importance to the sublimity of the land's natural beauty. Yet, their English cultural decency intrudes on to establish civilization. As an author who represented "dark romanticism" (that signifies evil, demonish sides, and falling of human beings), Nathaniel Hawthorne emphasizes the depiction of nature in his works. He relates the societal problems of human beings with nature. Even though society represents civilization and ration, nature and instincts become the ethical solution resting on the emotional side at some points.

Nathaniel Hawthorne embroiders his groundbreaking novel *The Scarlet Letter* as a psychological text that digs out the ethical issues related to human beings and their deeds. While doing this, the novel fluctuates between the depiction of nature-culture, uncivilized-civilized people, and the sin-redemption dilemma of human beings. To find a point of reconciliation between these edges, he also questions the strict moral codes of Puritans and the essence of nature. *The Scarlet Letter,* directed by Roland Joffe in 1995, is the "freely adapted" movie of Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel *The Scarlet Letter*. In the

[21] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value,* edited by G.H. Von Wright, translated by Peter Winch, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980, p.50e.

movie, the untouched districts of nature in colonial America symbolizes purity. As seen, the native Indians are in harmony with nature. This beauty is juxtaposed with the existing prejudices and cruelties of Puritan 'culture.' Throughout the movie, the query of the main characters is about the term 'nature' that leads them to act upon their instincts related to the core of human nature. Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale and Hester Prynne respect nature and Indians who are regarded as "uncivilized."

After the scenes of speculations of Puritans about a possible attack of native Indians to Massachusetts Bay Colony, the voice-over of Pearl introduces her mother, Hester Prynne. Hester is significant for evaluating the nature/culture dichotomy in the movie since she differentiates herself from typical Puritan women by showing her ability to read the Bible even in the beginning. Instead of fearing nature, she becomes one with it by saying that she wishes to see it "when it was wild and untouched."[22] As Joffe explains: "the Puritans feared anything that was uncontrolled... They had a deep fear of the forest, of the Indians and sexuality" (18). Thus, Hester, Arthur, and Mistress Hibbins turn out to be the ones who are closer to nature and become dangerous for Puritan civilization. This article aims to evaluate how Joffe's movie adaptation of the classic novel *The Scarlet Letter* reinforces the idea that the so-called civilization may be one of the most destructive forces for the essence of human beings.

Despite natural beauties in Western civilization, human beings are entrapped by man-made, technological, and artificial constructions. About culture and nature, Ludwig Wittgenstein's explanations may be illustrative to understand what it means to be closer to nature when being exposed to culture. For Wittgenstein, culture does not only mean civilization, which is the result of technological developments; instead, it is the sum of abstract qualities such as morality, religion, and values deciphered by language to comprehend the place of human beings in the world. Thus, it is likely that his evaluation of culture is related to the human perception of values in capturing the meaning of the continuity of life:

A culture is like a big organization which assigns each of its members a place where he can work in the spirit of the whole… the disappearance of a culture does not signify the disappearance of human value, but simply of certain means of expressing this value… (Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* 6)

The crucial point is how the individuals in the society perceive the values and how these values are represented may be decisive factors in the existence

[22] http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/s/scarlet-letter-script-transcript-hawthorne.html. Accessed 09 Dec. 2019.

of culture since Wittgenstein evaluates the culture as a unifying concept of the society.

As Wittgenstein asserts, culture is the product of humankind to maintain a meaningful unity among its members. Still, it somehow loses its aim of glorifying the abstract values which are inherently existing in nature. Roland Joffé 's movie *The Scarlet Letter* speculates the question: at which point did human beings who acquired knowledge and maintained unity by living in culture lose specific natural qualifications? Since the movie was released in 1995, the perceptions of the '90s cultural landscape have been used.

In the twentieth century, Hawthorne and The Scarlet Letter have continued to grow in esteem as literary criticism … With this kind of proven audience appeal, we should not be surprised that filmmakers have tried to translate The Scarlet Letter's popularity from print to the screen. Hawthorne always called it 'a romance' and its surface story has all the elements of a steamy soap opera-adultery and illegitimacy, heroism and cowardice, concealment and surprise revelations. (Daniels 1)

As Joffé's film, D. H. Lawrence's comments in his article "On the Scarlet Letter" about Hester seducing Dimmesdale change the novel's message. As D. H. Lawrence comments about Hawthorne's novel, "[n]o other book is so deep, so dual, so complete" (96). When Dimmesdale experiences the tragic outcomes of his act, he struggles with the pain by "torturing his body, whipping it, piercing it with thorns, macerating himself. It's a form of masturbation… he enjoys his pains. Wallows in them" (Lawrence 87). In the movie version, Gary Oldman embodies a pious and heroic Dimmesdale who enamors the '90 women.

In one way or another, different adaptations of the novel rehandle Hawthorne's characters in different ways. The director injected new social content in the movie's theme, he is critical about the social problems in the past and the present. The colony that represents civilization near the edges of the limitless natural beauty of the American land is a crucial point to pinpoint the encounter of humanity with the clash of nature and culture dichotomy in early American history. Once the love affair of Hester and Dimmesdale continues to mesmerize the audience, the encounter of the so-called civilized Puritan culture with wild nature is presented in different shots, but Indians are not shown in detail. Chief Metacomet and Dimmesdale's close relations with his community are the only instances. Since Roger Chillingworth (Hester's husband) is thought to be killed by "savage" Indians, the Algonquians are represented as wild creatures. Yet, the director does not refrain from showing the hypocritical attitudes of the Puritans about Indians, religion, and women. For the

contemporary audience, this reminds the reality that culture may mislead people to find the essence of their nature. In a way, Joffe, by directing the spectators to turn their gazes to colonial America, raises specific questions about the ethics of the civilization of modern times.

As a product of culture, Joffe's movie establishes binary oppositions even from the beginning by juxtaposing the Puritans and the native Indians, men and women, rationality and emotions, nature and culture. The Puritan society that represents culture and civilization, including rules, domination, and patriarchy, marginalizes native Indians, Quaker women, and other characters, emphasizing emotions and being true to human nature. Puritan society is afraid of the unknown and the natural, whereas Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale follow their accurate human instincts and are close to nature. Thus, they can bond with nature, as well as the native Indians. Yet, as indicated in the movie, being different is not something acceptable in Puritan society. The Puritan authorities have established a society within which strict codes of behaviors are expected to be performed. That is to say, all members of the society should preserve the notion of 'togetherness.'

From this perspective, it may be deduced that nature has a complicated function in the movie; the leading characters who are faithful to human nature and nature itself are against the harsh and artificial system of the Puritan society. The freely adapted version of the novel reinforces that true human nature conforms with nature itself. This point is in line with Hawthorne's thoughts: "Oh that I could run wild!--that is, that I could put myself into a true relation with nature, and be on friendly terms with all the congenial elements" (Hawthorne 169). For Hawthorne, beauty, innocence, and sympathy exist together in nature, providing freedom to its benefactors, opposite to the Puritan society's restrictions and punishments. The Puritan society and its mechanisms are part of the synthetic, civilized world.

Hawthorne's evaluation of nature/culture is related to the individual's function in society. Hawthorne reflects the civilized Puritan society that reinforces those moral laws should create civil order in his novel.

Man is naturally a sociable being; not formed for himself alone, but designed to bear a part in the great scheme of nature. All his pleasures are heightened, and all his griefs are lessened, by participation. It is only in society that the full energy of his mind is aroused, and all its powers drawn forth. (Hawthorne 45-6)

For Hawthorne, society's urging the individuals to get rid of their true feelings means betraying the essence of nature. The Puritan culture that

privileges rationality instead of emotions is the harmful aspect of civilized society. Yet, it is a known fact that, for Puritans, nature may lead man to a sinful life, whereas in society, individuals will have "liberty to do only what God commands" (Hiller 189). In that respect, within the protection of the Puritan society, the individuals may have a religious life that will guarantee their salvation.

Likewise, for Wittgenstein, "what is good is also divine" (Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* 3e). Yet, when talking about the values, there is no absoluteness of them if they are the right or the wrong ones. "It is only in science that we find absolute truths which are factual but since, the good is outside the space of facts" (Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* 3e), it is impossible to reach the absolute goodness or badness of the abstract values. Wittgenstein elaborates on this as: "[t]he right road is the road which leads to an arbitrarily predetermined end, and it is quite clear to us all that there is no sense in talking about the right road apart from such a predetermined goal… it is right road relative to a certain goal" (Wittgenstein, *A Lecture* 5). Thus, the strict codes of the Puritan society about the ethical qualifications are sometimes contradicting the "right road" that individuals may choose. In the movie, this betrayal of the Puritan morality of the essence of human beings is proven by Hester and Arthur's love affair, which leads the spectators to trace nature for finding meaning.

Hester is the crucial figure who questions the Puritan ethics that position the virtuous and sinful via applying strict codes of behavior in society. She represents nature in a harsh society that represents the culture and continuously questions what is right and wrong in God's eyes. Throughout the movie, it is explicitly shown that she is against the restrictive rules in society; she does not refrain from showing her preferences and bond to nature. In addition, her unique femininity via her dark eyes and hair reinforces the idea that her charm affects other people in society.

In addition to being a passionate woman, Hester is also characterized as being impulsive and unpredictable. Her emotions govern her actions; she does not plan her course of behavior before she puts it into action. She simply reacts emotionally and deeply. (Adams 45)

Hester's passionate behaviors and speeches are regarded as disobedience in the eyes of the Puritan authorities who want to purify society from sinful deeds and people. As Adams states, "Hester's silent rebellion, her unspoken demand for privacy, her refusal to bend under civil law and announce the name of her child's father, all are sinful acts and attitudes which alienate her

from the purifying effects of her society" (44). Society's and Hester's mentality and the way of perceiving the world are very different.

The red bird in the movie symbolizes lust, sin, and desire that lead Hester to reach the limitless edges of nature. Since she follows her natural desires, she excludes herself from society and the harsh rules of Puritan culture. Demi Moore, the adorable actress of the '90s, losing her hair, seeing Arthur, who swims naked in the pond, both reinforces the idea that she will be faithful to nature but at the same time foreshadows the dangerous/ sinful potential of nature's ecstatic beauty. After that scene of natural perfection, including Hester and Arthur as accurate figures to nature, they have to go to the Puritan church to show how the suppressive notion of religion in culture is emphasized. However, when Arthur (as the priest of the church) makes his passionate speech, the movie strengthens the idea that religion does not necessarily suppress the instincts of human beings. This point reinforces Wittgenstein's explanations about the indefiniteness of the value systems of humanity.

In its discussion of the liberation of the strict moral codes of human beings, the movie transgresses the boundaries of the centuries and the historical context by showing the controversial bathing mise en scène that explicitly presents Hester's naked body while she imagines of Dimmesdale. That scene is only shown to attract the interests of the '90s spectators by deciphering the famous actor Demi Moore's adorable body that may be an indicator of the demand for the sexual liberation of femininity on the side of '90s spectators.

The sex scene in the barn, played out on a bed of grain (for fertility), is sexually explicit. Against a soundscape of moans and a soaring musical score, Hester and Dimmesdale make love in soft focus, captured with the same lingering camera technique used in the bath scene. The bathing tub is featured again, this time being used by slave girl Mituba, who takes a sensual bath presided over by the red bird while her mistress is in the barn. The two scenes are suggestively intercut. (Solmes 176)

After showing this scene of sexuality, the Puritan law that prevents Hester from expressing her love to Arthur explicitly transforms the movie into a battlefield of the restrictive authority versus the instinctive individuals. It is indicated that when there is no evidence of a woman's husband's death, there is a seven-year time of mourning that is mandatory for the wife. The Puritan governors put her into prison, not because of her adultery but because she met other Puritan women. Arthur, who has positive feelings about mutual love, asks, "[w]ho are we to condemn on God's behalf?" and he declares that God

consecrates their love. He says, "[i]n God's eyes, I am her husband." As Roger Ebert explains: "It is obviously not acceptable for Dimmesdale to believe he has sinned, and so the movie cleverly transforms his big speech into a stirring cry for sexual freedom and religious tolerance."[23] In that respect, the movie deviates from the novel by transforming Arthur into a hero and Hester a heroine. The Puritan society insists on demanding Arthur's life as compensation, but he thinks his actual acts may lead the couple to liberation. In this way, the movie offers an alternative happy ending for the couple with natural desires.

The forest as the incarnational place reminding nature "is the scene of putative witches' Sabbaths; it is the domain of the native inhabitants deemed 'savages,' and the place in which Chillingworth [Hester's husband] learned some of his medical secrets" (Bloom 38). A forest is a place where marginalized people of civilized society may find their essence, and their deeds that would be regarded as sins may remain unpunished. Are these natural deeds sinful acts? The movie questions this point. After Chillingworth's killing a Puritan guy and scalping him, the Puritans declare war with the Indians (supposing the idea that Natives would do that cruel act). While Hester is about to be hanged, Chillingworth commits suicide. Then, Arthur rescues her by confessing his sin. With the help of the Indian attack, the couple leaves this Puritan city that represents culture and civilization to find happiness somewhere else. As mentioned before, the marginalized groups, the Indians and women, are seen as threats to the so-called civilization/culture of the Puritan society. Still, in essence, they are the ones who are closer to nature. They are more emotional and sensitive to the needs of human beings and have empathy and understanding towards each other. The movie first presents the difference between people adopting culture and civilization and then introduces faithful people to nature. Later on, by showing society's unjust and cruel deeds, he favors those who are faithful to nature. At the end of the movie, when the couple becomes free as a result of the Indian attack, the voice-over of Pearl asks: "Who can say what is a sin in God's eyes?"[24]

The conflict between the heart and mind of human beings appears out of the Puritan moral and social rules. For them, individuals may reach predestination for eternal salvation via their life in accordance with God's rules. Predominantly Puritan authorities interpret these rules by showing rigid attitudes about dress, decoration, and human relations; that is how Puritan culture has been established. This theme is strengthened through the embodiment of

[23] https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-scarlet-letter-1995. Accessed 16 Dec. 2019.
[24] http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/s/scarlet-letter-script-transcript-hawthorne.html. Accessed 09 Dec. 2019.

Hester as the heroine. She is a woman acting against the unreasonable Puritan codes of behaviors (culture) and struggles to find real love (in nature). Therefore, Hester's position in the movie is complicated: should the spectators blame her for her outstanding courage or praise her due to her constant essence?

Pearl as the narrator of the story, contributes to the deviation of the plot of the movie. This issue signifies the differences from the original novel, especially the representation of Hester and Arthur. It presents a love story with a happy ending for Hester and Dimmesdale, who fought for their love bravely and eventually reached a happy end. Compared to the novel, the love of the hero and heroine is emphasized more in the movie. Although for Roland Joffe, there are some resemblances between Moore and Hawthorne's Hester because they are courageous to act in patriarchal societies (Solmes 186). They both use their beauty, intellect, and sexuality to tackle the hardships they experienced in the male-dominated world. Yet for some critics, '90ies sex symbol Demi Moore embodying Hester is far from the fictitious Hester in her silent refusal to accept the Puritan authorities. In contrast, in the movie, she refuses to become a victim of society and accepts adultery. As David Ansen asserts: "She may look like a pilgrim, but she's a 1990s gal."[25]

After showing the strict moral and social codes of Puritans that praise marriage and families, Joffe uses the theme of sexuality which is presented as a path to reach liberation. Sacvan Bercovitch claims that:

In the film, the right to adultery is the cornerstone of democratic values. It signifies by extension.... the right to your own beliefs... [T]he magistrates should not have imposed their beliefs on others, and...the good Puritans [Hester, Dimmesdale, Hibbins] would not have done so. The movie's divine imperative is non-interference.[26]

In the movie, adultery turns out to be an important symbol on the way to reach liberation. The illogical rules of the Puritan culture, such as waiting for seven years for a new marriage, reinforces the idea that "the heart has its irrepressible reasons and society has its undeniable demands. In the individualist-democratic version of this stand-off, their reasons for self-fulfillment take absolute priority."[27] Demi Moore comments about this point as:

[25] Daniels, B. (1999). Bad movie/worse history: The 1995 unmaking of the scarlet letter. *Journal of Popular Culture, 32*(4), 1-11. Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/bad-movie-worse-history-1995-unmaking-scarlet/docview/195363551/se-2?accountid=15958

[26] Bercovitch, Sacvan. "The Scarlet Letter: a Twice-told Tale." *Nathaniel Hawthorne Review*, Ed. Frederick Newberry. vol.22, no:2, 1996, pp.1-20. https://www.ibiblio.org/eldritch/nh/sb1.html. Accessed 15 Dec. 2019.

[27] Bercovitch, Sacvan. "The Scarlet Letter: a Twice-told Tale." *Nathaniel Hawthorne Review*, Ed. Frederick Newberry. vol.22, no:2, 1996, pp.1-20. https://www.ibiblio.org/eldritch/nh/sb1.html. Accessed 15 Dec. 2019.

To me, one of the strongest elements that Roland took and really brought to the book is he proved she's not being branded for adultery; she's being branded because they fear the power of her voice. And what she may communicate to other women.[28]

Through Joffe's depiction of these issues in colonial times, shot from a '90s perspective, it is clear that bigotry, sexism, hypocritical moral values, and lack of empathy are still valid today. As Tony Barnstone asserts:

Joffe's movie does make for an obvious allegory for contemporary society—Puritan oppressors murdering a slave girl, labeling single mothers witches, betraying the trust of Native Americans, and repressing women in general can easily be seen as Joffe's stab The Contract With America, Dan Quayle's attack on single mothers, and conservatives both in front of and behind the political scenes.[29]

The movie shows the 'good Puritans' and the 'bad Puritans,' especially their nature. Yet, the two notable characters who defy the repressions of the Puritan mentality are admittedly closer to nature and establish a new mode of life.

Overall, Joffe's version of Hawthorne's classical novel is criticized in its handling the material as a very Hollywwodian and appealed to the tastes of the '90s audience. Still, the movie conveys the central message that the unjust repression of the Puritan society (representing culture) that turns away from nature may cause disastrous ends. Hester and Arthur's love transgresses the boundaries of societal restrictions. The natural love of the couple is presented as the source of liberation. This alternative version paves the way to a different expression of humanity to perceive themselves and the role/function of nature and culture. In this way, Joffe's '90s version of the classical novel becomes an intermediary through which the modes and expectations of the so-called virtuous society sometimes may misinterpret the authentic selves of the faithful individuals to nature.

[28] https://www.sfgate.com/entertainment/article/An-A-for-Effort-Demi-Moore-puts-her-all-into-3021703.php. Accessed 15 Dec. 2019.

[29] Barnstone, Tony. "Counterpunch Letters: Hawthorne's Classic Touch Eludes the 'Scarlet Letter.'" *Los Angeles Times,* 6 Nov. 1995. https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1995-11-06-ca-65408-story.html. Accessed 12.12.2019.

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"We have to learn to be dogs again:" Human-Animal Consciousness and the 'Joy in Language' in André Alexis' *Fifteen Dogs*

Klara Kolinska

In 2016, the International Geological Congress officially declared the commencement of the so-called Anthropocene era, confirming the far-reaching outcomes of the human presence upon the planet, affecting all areas of its existence, from animate to inanimate forms. One of such "planetary" manifestations of human activity that has had essential implications upon the human race's self-understanding is the domestication of animals – which, of course, has a long and sustained tradition. Domestication of animals has been motivated not only by practical needs of survival and improvement of the humans' living conditions, but, in equal measure, by the historically growing self-awareness, and need of self-definition and articulation of the humans' position (arguably) on top of the "great chain of being." As David Jaclin argues:

> Domestic animals have been de-territorialized and re-territorialized for centuries. The variety and scale of these territorializing activities are immense and made of multiple deviations and creative involutions – that is, of diverging and converging operations budding from two distinct, though indissociable, tendencies. One is life's ceaseless tendency to produce new forms (animals' liveliness as negentropic sources). The other has been the tendency to use animal bodies for different purposes, ranging from food to force, through fantasy-making. Primarily anthropogenic, this tendency rapidly became anthropocentric and is now reaching a new, anthropocenic, threshold. (309)

The fact that humankind has lived in dynamic interaction with animals, both wild and domesticated ones, throughout its history, has had weighty consequences not only for the animals themselves, but also for the development of the notion of self-consciousness, that is considered an exclusively human domain. Indeed: "the history of domestication reminds us that humans have not only been affecting animals but have also been significantly affected by them: animals are transformed by humans, as much as the reverse" (Jaclin 310).

In the new millennium, the somewhat self-congratulatory announcement of the Anthropocene era has, among other effects, brought about a gradual realization of the growing necessity to reconceptualize the notions of animal and

animality, especially in relation to the domesticized animals, and in the context of linguistic, cultural, and eventually literary representations of the animal imagery. Rosi Braidotti emphatically reminds us that:

Animals are no longer the signifying system that props up humans' self-projections and moral aspirations. Nor are they the keepers of the gates between species. They have, rather, started to be approached literally, as entities framed by code systems of their own . . . . The animal can no longer be metaphorized as other but needs to be taken on its own terms. (528)

One of the well-established and effective literary formats for defying the traditional understanding of the human vs. animal dichotomy is the genre of a fable, which, despite its seeming limitations, displays a wide and flexible range of expressive potentialities. In his analysis of spatial-orientational metaphors, constructed in the Western culture within structures of vertical hierarchy, Chris Danta aptly points out that:

. . . the literary genre of the animal fable portrays the human in terms of down-to-earthness. The fable… challenges the theological notion that the human subject expresses itself most truly in the act of looking up. Rather than orienting us up to the heavens, fables orient us down to the earth and its animal inhabitants. They do so by transforming humans into animals. (8)

However, it is generally understood that this literary transformation of humans into animals is rarely concerned with representing animals or the animal perspective realistically or authentically. Instead, animals in fables are typically featured as discursive instruments for a wholly human argument. As early as in the eighteenth century, Samuel Johnson famously noted in his *Life of Gay* that:

A fable, or apologue, such as is now under consideration, seems to be, in its genuine state, a narrative, in which beings irrational, and sometimes inanimate . . . are, for the purpose of moral instruction, feigned to act and speak with human interests and passions. (qtd. in Chalmers 432)

Two centuries later, a similar observation lead Jacques Derrida to eloquently challenge the genre of animal fable on predominantly ethical grounds. Derrida formulated his position in his 1997 book-length essay *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, which has since then ranked among foundational texts in Animal Studies. "We know the history of fabulization and how it remains an anthropomorphic taming, a moralizing subjection, a domestication. Always a discourse *of* man, on man, indeed on the animality of man, but for and in man" (37). In one sense, it might seem that Derrida is vehemently arguing a point that is rather obvious: after all, anthropomorphism belongs among the distinctive features of a fable, defined as:

… a succinct fictional story, in prose or verse, that features animals, legendary creatures, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature that are anthropomorphized (given human qualities, such as the ability to speak human language) and that illustrates or leads to a particular moral lesson (a "moral"), which may at the end be added explicitly as a pithy maxim or saying.[30]

"Speaking human language" is typically one of the most manifest signs of anthropomorphism in the genre of animal fable, and there is, indeed, a long history of talking animals in world literature, where they are featured with the aim to illustrate a variety of moral points, to demonstrate an important argument in a cautionary tale, or to serve as vehicles of humor, based on principles of simplification and representative of the "human vs. animal" or "animal vs. animal" contrast. And what is generally indicated and understood is that the "talking animals" in fables talk a human language– unspecified, general language of their masters and audiences.

This usual setup is originally and provocatively challenged by a contemporary Canadian author André Alexis in his novel *Fifteen Dogs*, the animal protagonists of which:

Unlike many of literature's famous talking beasts, . . . speak their own language. The Toronto-based author doesn't just add distance between the reader and the book's protagonists by making them animals: he brings out further complexity by giving the characters another language. (Mustafa)

In an interview for the CBC, Alexis was asked: "Why is it necessary for the dogs to develop their own language rather than speak some variation of English?" to which he replied:

That was important to me because I didn't wish them to be subservient in a way. Then it wouldn't be like they were us. If the game is to convince you that they're dogs, I need that to convince you. I don't need to be faithful to the world; I need to be credible. And part of what I wanted to do was to be credible. By giving them their own language, I think that makes them more credible as dogs than if I had given them a very good Hebrew or English or French. But it was also important because I think if you think of them as having their own language, that's closer to our situation. We have our own language and so when you can understand that they are translating — much of *Fifteen Dogs* is the work of a translator: translating the poems, translating the dogs' language – that sort of puts us and them at the same level.[31]

At first sight, *Fifteen Dogs*, the celebrated Canadian novel, which came out in 2015, looks like yet another, perhaps not entirely original retelling of a

[30] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fable
[31] https://www.cbc.ca/news/entertainment/andre-alexis-fifteen-dogs-q-a-ideas-1.3466154)

classical myth or animal fable.[32]: it starts with a speculative, as well as speculative wager between two gods of the Greek pantheon, Apollo and Hermes, about whether animals would be more or less happy if they were endowed with human consciousness. The gods are enjoying an evening off at the Wheat Sheaf Tavern – which happens to be the oldest, really existing pub in Toronto – and, encouraged by drink and the worship their presence inspires in the other guests, begin a "desultory conversation about the nature of humanity," which is reported as follows:

For amusement, they spoke ancient Greek, and Apollo argued that, as creatures go, humans were neither better nor worse than any other, neither better nor worse than fleas or elephants, say. Humans, said Apollo, have no special merit, though they think themselves superior. Hermes took the opposing view, arguing that, for one thing, the human way of creating and using symbols, is more interesting than, say, the complex dancing done by bees.

- Human languages are too vague, said Apollo.

- That may be, said Hermes, but it makes humans more amusing. Just listen to these people. You'd swear they understood each other, though not one of them has any idea what their words actually mean to another. How can you resist such farce? (Alexis 13-14)

As gods do, the two Olympians start an experiment with creation: they use fifteen dogs, currently kennelled at a veterinary clinic in Toronto, and bestow on them the privilege of human intelligence, which Hermes qualifies as "a difficult gift," (Alexis 14) and Apollo as a mere "occasionally useful plague" (Alexis 15). Then they observe the development of the dogs' destinies after their escape from the confinement, comment on it, and occasionally yield to the temptation to interfere in the dogs' world in order to support their points in the dispute. Apollo is of the opinion that "animals would be even more unhappy than humans if they had human intelligence" (Alexis 14), while Hermes argues the contrary, and holds the view that: "You can't know what a life has been until it is over" (Alexis 15).

The now "intelligent" dogs flee from the clinic immediately after the miraculous divine intervention, and start a new, conscious existence as a pack living in a coppice in Toronto's High Park and on the beach of Lake Ontario. The story then follows the functioning of the "Dramatis Canes'" newly formed society and their growing understanding of human values, such as individuality and personal freedom, and its impact on the "traditional" hierarchical social

[32] The novel became the winner of the 2015 *Scotiabank Giller Prize*, the 2015 *Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize*, as well as of the 2017 edition of *Canada Reads*, an annual "battle of the books" competition organized and broadcast by Canada's public broadcaster, the CBC.

order of dog packs. They struggle with establishing and redefining the concept of power structure, a desire that is informed both by their canine instincts and the new, unaccustomed consciousness. It does not take long before their micro-society is challenged by dissent coming from within its own ranks: "Their ostensibly enlightened world remains dog-eat-dog, and much bloodshed and treachery ensues, along with the invention of dog-empathy, dog-politics, dog-wonderment and dog-witticism" (Teodoro). In that regard, and in spite of this, perhaps somewhat platitudinous premise, Alexis: "savoured canine experience through *Homo sapien* senses and emerged with a novel that... commences as an inspired lark and only gradually accrues poignancy and trans-mammalian insight" (Teodoro).

One of the most intriguing moments of the story, as well as a point of contention in the "dog against dog" struggle within the pack, is the dogs' realization of their competence in a new language, bestowed on them by gods so that they can communicate abstract ideas. With that comes the fatal rift in the canine company, leading ultimately to tragedy of classical proportions, and to the heartbreaking destruction of the dogs, one by one. While some of them embrace their newly discovered quality with intellectual (in the case of Majnoun), or artistic (in the case of the dog-poet Prince) curiosity, others remain sceptical about the new ways, as is manifested in a discussion between Atticus, "an imposing Neapolitan Mastiff, with cascading jowls," (Alexis, no pagination) and the natural leader of the pack, and Majnoun, "a black poodle, briefly referred to as 'Lord Jim' or simply 'Jim,'" (Alexis, no pagination) who is the pack's intellectual, and, in a sense, the main character of the novel:

– Some of us, said Atticus, believe the best way is to ignore the new thinking and stop using the new words.

- How can you silence the words inside?

- No one can silence the words inside, but you can ignore them. We can go back to the old way of being. This new thinking leads away from the pack, but a dog is no dog if he does not belong.

- I do not agree, said Majnoun. We have this new way. It has been given to us. Why should we not use it? Maybe there is a reason for our difference.

- I remember, said Atticus, how it was to run with our kind. But you, you want to think and keep thinking and then think again. What is the good of so much thinking? I am like you. I can take pleasure in it, but it brings us no true advantage. It keeps us from being dogs and keeps us from what is right.

- We know things other dogs do not. Why can we not teach them?

- No, said Atticus. Now it is for them to teach us. We must learn to be dogs again. (Alexis 13-14)

Language, its presence or absence, and (mis)appropriation thereof, is thus intricately linked to learning about one's identity and the need for its (self)construction. This process is complicated further by the fact that, as José Teodoro puts it:

Language – both the one developed by and for the 15 to communicate among themselves, and English, which some eventually endeavour to apprehend – proves an equal source of utility and confusion. With the naming of things comes the fraught practice of transforming raw experience into something more abstract, which incites a wave of anti-intellectualism. (Teodoro)

Despite the anti-intellectualism of Atticus' followers – which is presented not without understanding and sympathy – it is precisely this interplay of utility and confusion that constitutes the attraction of Alexis' variation of the genre of the fable – the author subtitles his tale as "An Apologue," which is defined as: "a brief fable or allegorical story with pointed or exaggerated details, meant to serve as a pleasant vehicle for a moral doctrine or to convey a useful lesson without stating it explicitly. As with the parable, the apologue is a tool of rhetorical argument used to convince or persuade."[33] In other words, a fable/an apologue is, first and foremost, a rhetorical exercise in self-definition and self-understanding, performed upon the platform of language. As another reviewer of Alexis's novel noted:

When even the gods start quibbling about language, something is afoot; perhaps unsurprisingly for a novelist, Alexis has located something essential to humanity in our insistence not just on naming things, but playing with the metaphors that define our lives. The first emotion — not that a pup would call it that — a dog feels in the book is empathy, when one of his favourite dreams is disturbed by the realization that the rodents he so enjoys chasing might feel bad about being bitten. Even this simple morality is obscured in a fog of words, words growled and yipped out both in the dogs' evolving native tongue and the silent language running through each of their heads, as they try to make sense of what they've become. (Berry)

The crisis in the pack explodes when Prince, the quintessential artist among the dogs, starts composing poetry – and a rather good one at that. This provokes the alpha males in the pack to an attempt to kill him, leading to Prince's forced escape and fatal exile. When asked whether the attempt to kill

[33] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apologue

Prince is to be read as an allegory of the role and perception of the poet in human society, Alexis replied:

The poet is difficult to place in terms of power. He's not useful because he's not strong or violent. He's not going to be bearing pups. He's difficult to place in terms of how much credit and power should be given to him. And the answer to that question, for those who want to kill him, is no power. "We don't want to think about the pleasure of words or this redefinition of ourselves vis-a-vis this new language. The only solution is to kill him." Now that has a kind of analogy in Plato, where the poets are driven out of the ideal republic because – and I may be misremembering my Platonic philosophy – they are subject to the irrational when they are inspired. And therefore far less than ideal citizens of a republic that is founded on reason. And so they are kicked out because even though their work is nice and pleasurable, it is fundamentally allowing chaos in. (Mustafa)

Thanks to Hermes' intervention (who cannot resist saving a fellow artistic spirit), Prince survives the night of the long knives and lives the rest of his life in involuntary exile, deeply traumatic since it means incarceration in a no-man's land: in the eyes of his canine fellows, Prince is not a trustworthy dog anymore, and, despite his newly discovered consciousness and creative talent, he is apparently not human either. It is because identity – presumably human one – is construed concurrently from within and without, through its outward projection and its perception and interpretation by other entities. Prince formulates this contradiction in a hapless protest, when he asks Hermes: "But what am I without those who understand me?" (Alexis 37).

For Alexis, this is ultimately the question of the exile, which he knows well from his own, "human" experience, and for which he finds an apt metaphor in his dogs-turned-not-quite-human characters. At the same time, the implications of his tale seem to suggest that, in a sense, "we are all in exile" in one way or another, that exile may well be a generally human condition of life, however problematic. As David Berry observes:

The intricate ways Alexis plays with language and what it means for the dogs is generally indicative of how he teases at all humanity's threads with his canine needles. He gives the human world both a sense of nearly unbearable new-ness and the worn-in perspective of a dog's life, with each of the newly intelligent discovering thought seven as they're finding new ways to think of old ideas. (Berry)

In conclusion, there is a lot to learn from Alexis' fable about both dogs and humans; as José Teodoro acknowledges:

Despite the radical change in their way of being in the world, Alexis' 15 dogs retain a| great deal of their dogness, "running because the sheer pleasure of some great thing could not be expressed otherwise." Yet it is precisely because of this dogness and the contrast it engenders that these dogs' struggle with intelligence speaks to us so acutely of what it means to be human. The accumulation of experience tells us who we are, and the passing of those experiences haunt us with what we've lost. (Teodoro)

Or, the last word should perhaps be given to the wisdom of old, and to Horace, who, in retelling the myth of Tantalos, reminds us that: *Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur. – The name is changed, but the story is told about you.*

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Seeing Nature and the Cities in Aesthetic Narratives and Literary Forms

Tzu Allison Lin

Introduction

The way in which the reader sees Nature is very important, especially when it comes to the way of interpretation. Moreover, the way one sees Nature (for instance, a character in a literary text) can help the reader to understand, when it comes to the definition of the relation between Nature and the human beings. The questions may have different answers – for example, do we depend on Nature? Are we using Nature? Is it possible to understand Nature itself as an entity, in a way in which Nature can have a real dialectic fusion with the human beings? Or, is it possible to claim that Nature and the human beings are actually each other's reflections, exactly as the reader can see in some selected literary texts, when it comes to define the relation between Nature and so-called human nature? In this research, I aim to answer these questions through three parts of analysis, as follows.

I. Two kinds of Order: in Nature and in the Cities

In Anthony Doerr's short story, "The Hunter's Wife," in *The Shell Collector: Stories*, there is a description which shows Nature under the sharp observation of the hunter himself. Nature does exist, and yet, depending on the delicate balance between Nature itself and the human beings. As the hunter claims, the order of Nature makes the reader see the cities, because

> [t]here is no order in that world, ... But here [in Nature] there is. Here I can see things I'd never see down there, things most folks are blind to. With no great reach of imagination [the hunter's wife] could see him fifty years hence, still lacing his boots, still gathering his rifle, all the world to see and him dying happy having seen only this valley (Doerr 55).

According to the hunter's way of seeing Nature and his verbal description to his wife in this quotation, the reader can come to an understanding, which shows that there are two, at least to the hunter himself, very different worlds – "that world" as referring to the cities of the human beings, and "here" as referring to the hills and Nature. Both worlds come to represent two separate, and yet, not totally irrelevant senses of order. On the one hand, the order of

Nature can be seen, can be heard, and can be felt by the hunter, as “huge saucers of ice” comes to melt (53). On the other hand, the relation between Nature and the human beings does depend on one’s recognition and interpretation, as the “sound of water running” feels like an urge in the hunter’s “soul” (53).

Once again, through the hunter’s interpretive words, the reader can see that Nature has an order that cannot be cheated or be fooled by the human beings. In Nature, what one can see is what one can get. It is exactly like the hunter himself has experienced, as the reader can see in the literary text. When the hunter sees that “trout were rising through the chill brown water to take the first insects” (53), he feels that it is the season of Spring. Moreover, in the hunter’s dreams, he can see wolves. And yet, ironically, as no one sees any single wolf in the hills, at least for “twenty years” (65). The unbalanced ecosystem makes the wolves unseen by the human beings. For the hunter, wolves represent the primary desire of being alive and keep hunting in Nature, because wolves are not domestic animals which can be kept by the human beings in an urban space – such as in a “zoo”, waiting for their “visitors” (Berger 23). Wolves also do not need to depend on some kind of owners, as they were originally born to live in the wilderness and to adopt their own living environment. As Sigmund Freud points out in his *The Interpretation of Dreams*, as the reader can see from this point, that the hunter’s dreams are revealing his unconscious desire as a “psychological significance” (595), as the unseen wolves are visualised in the hunter’s dreams. In this respect, as Freud terms it, a dream can represent one’s unconscious desire, just as the reader can see in the case of the hunter. That is the reason why having a dream can be seen as a sort of wish-fulfilment, in a way in which the viewer is having hope.

According to the hunter, the cities, on the other hand, when comparing to the hills, have “no order” (Doerr 55). This world of cities, having “no order”, is actually referring to the world of the human beings. In this world of “no order”, in some ways, the rhythm of Nature can be used and can be manipulated by human beings, for all different kinds of purposes. For example, as the “client” (54) of the hunter comes to show the reader, the world of the cities is a combination of various human desires. The hunter needs to apply this world of no order to Nature, in order to satisfy his clients, as they “wanted to see grizzlies, track a wolverine, even shoot sandhill cranes” (Doerr 54).

Those people, as the hunter’s clients, come from the cities - they do want to conquer Nature to satisfy their own needs, and do want to keep it indoor. For example, as the hunter recalls that ‘they wanted the heads of seven-by-seven

royal bulls for their dens' (54), sometimes even just for the sake of a style of decoration. In some ways, the phrase 'no order' (55) can refer to a situation of being 'stupid' (54), when '[a] bloodthirsty New Yorker claimed only to want to photograph black bears, then pulled a pistol from his boot and fired wildly at two cubs and their mother' (54). The cities have no order – just like the human beings who are behaving in some irrational ways. When those people are in Nature, coming from the cities, their irrationality become something very 'stupid', as their behaviours are the key cause of this unbalanced situation of Nature and human habitations.

Nature and the cities are two different orders, as the reader can see from the above examples from Doerr's short story, *The hunter's Wife*. Moreover, the reader can also understand Nature and the cities in the way in which these two orders can represent – especially through narratives forms, verbal and visual arts – a sort of metaphor, which is full of 'semantic codes' (Grace 194) of the urban and the rural spaces. For example, in Edith Wharton's novel, *Summer*, the reader can see that Nature is depicted in a way in which human emotions can be released and be understood. In other words, the 'pleasure of feeling' (Wharton *Summer*, 13) does not come from cultural events in the cities, or houses and rooms, or library and books. Rather, in the 'wilderness' (Wharton *Summer*, 14), the main female character Charity Royall can feel free.

Charity Royall, although works in a library, she does not want to 'be bothered about books' (Wharton *Summer*, 13). Her attitude does set up an opposition between urban and rural codes, as if the cities and all kinds of cultural events make her feel the 'superiority' (Wharton *Summer*, 13) of male domination. As a woman, although without too much proper education, she does have her own feelings and emotions, just like a human being. However, at home, she feels like she is some kind of property of Mr. Royall's. As a woman, Charity is depending on this well-respected lawyer in the small town – no matter she likes it or not. Comparing to the wilderness, the house she lives in is only a 'sad house' (Wharton *Summer*, 15), as Mr. Royall and Charity sit face to face. With him, ironically, she does feel 'the depths of isolation', because she does not have 'no particular affection for him' (Wharton *Summer*, 15).

In Edith Wharton's another rather famous novel, *The Age of Innocence*, there are also signs of this urban / rural dualism. This time, the male main character Newland Archer is thinking about escaping from all kinds of duties in a way in which an urban space such as New York City comes to represent. The place itself is not a real kind of wilderness,

[b]ut Newport represented the escape from duty into an atmosphere of unmitigated holiday-making. Archer had tried to persuade May to spend the

summer on a remote island off the coast of Maine (called, appropriately enough, Mount Desert), where a few hardy Bostonians and Philadelphians were camping in 'native' cottages, and whence came reports of enchanting scenery and a wild, almost trapper like existence amid woods and waters (Wharton *Innocence*, 167).

Unlike any other kinds of opposition, Newland's (and also including the upper-middle class New Yorkers') sense of opposition between Nature and the cities is created by the urban dwellers. In other words, Nature is a kind of sense, which is designed and is prepared for those people to escape from the cities and all codes – culture, business, duty, so on and so forth.

The city dwellers – wealthy ones especially – particularly go to the island (the created Nature), to do camping, in order to feel free and not to be stressful. Even they do not go to the island, they can still dress up and go to the park, to have a nice day out. For example, as the viewer can see in two paintings – Maurice Brazil Prendergast's painting, *Mothers and Children in the Park* (Dwight 26), and William Merritt Chase's painting, *Lilliputian Boat Lake, Central Park* (Dwight 28) – there are quite a lot of 'social events' going on in those people's leisure time, including 'teas, picnics, dinners, and dances as well as sports like yachting, tennis, golf, and polo' (Dwight 29). Wealthy New Yorkers, if they do not go abroad to seek inspirations in Paris or in London, staying in some kind of artificial Natural-like environment in the City can also relieve them from a sort of daily routine, at some point.

II. Some Interactions of the Two Orders

In some other cases, as the reader can see in different literary texts, Nature does help the human beings to see everything in a comparative way, as both orders – Nature's and the human beings', would show an interaction. For example, when a person is feeling confused, he or she may turn to Nature for help through a form of interaction between human labour and the earth. In the Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk's recent novel, *The Red-haired Woman*, the reader can see that when the narrator comes to learn and to practice the technique of well-digging, he realises that if one can speak the language of the soil, one may have a better chance to survive. The best way to explain this is to read through the narrator, Mr. Cem's revelation,

[f]or earth was made up of many layers, just like the celestial sphere, which had seven. […]. Two meters of rich black earth might conceal a loamy, impermeable, bone-dry layer of wretched soil or sand underneath. To work out

where to dig for water as they paced the ground, the old masters had to decipher the language of the soil, of the grass, insects, and birds, and detect the signs of rock or clay underfoot (Pamuk 17).

The language of soil is symbolic enough to come to the rescue, if the human beings have sufficient 'skills' (Pamuk 17) to decode the signs which are already in Nature. This process of decoding the message of Nature requires, apart from other 'skills' of well-digging, a sort of listening skill – involving a sort of full concentration – in a way which is very much like the 'doctor putting his ear to' a sick baby's chest' (Pamuk 17). Nature, in this literary text, does come to help with desperate human conditions, in a way which the human beings look for the order of Nature and try to learn and to master it, for the sake of survival.

Also, the reader can see more other examples in different literary texts, when Nature comes to reveal human emotions. It feels so real and vivid, as if one can almost understand and can almost identify Nature as a part of human nature. This way does help the reader to see what is going on in a character's mind. For instance, in William Shakespeare's famous tragic play, *King Lear*, the old King, in M. C. Bradbrook's reading, among the scholars, comes to arouse the reader's attention. The reader pays attention to the old King's emotions, because he or she can sympathise the King when reading the literary text, when the King 'kneels to pray for the "poor naked wretches" who are out in the storm' (Bradbrook 92). In this case, the term Nature (as the storm in which the King is situated in), as Marilyn French points out, 'means *natura* and also *human nature*; at times it refers to physical, at times to psychological dimensions of a human (French 244).

And yet, the relation between Nature and the human society is indeed, the key point for the reader to notice. It is simply because this relation is not necessarily always smooth, or it is not often very easy to understand, as it may seem to be. For example, in Terry Eagleton's book chapter *'Wuthering Heights'*, he argues that

Nature, in any case, is no true 'outside' to society, since its conflicts are transposed into the social arena. In one sense the novel [*Wuthering Heights*] sharply contrasts Nature and society; in another sense it grasps civilised life as a higher distillation of ferocious natural appetite. Nature, then, is a thoroughly ambiguous category, inside and outside society simultaneously (Eagleton 58).

For Eagleton, as the reader can see in the above quotation, Nature in Emily Brontë's novel *Weathering Height* cannot be simply read or be easily reduced as a background. Rather, Nature comes to play a significant role, in a way in which human nature can be seen through the characters and the

societies where they are situated in. The society, in this novel, according to Eagleton, reveals critical issues which can be read in several 'symptomatic' (Eagleton 59) ways, as the characters Heathcliff and his lover Catherine come to show the reader in the literary text.

According to Margaret Homans, the reader can understand that 'Nature, or the literal as it is represented by nature, appears to provoke' a sort of 'attitude' and a 'strategy of writing' (Homans 18-19) in Emily Brontë's *Weathering Height*. Homans's claim comes closer to Eagleton's, showing to the reader once again, the ambiguity of the relation between Nature and the human society. For example, Cathy's repression of 'the Heathcliff-nature complex' (Homan 18) and Cathy's 'madness' (Homan 19) come to suggest and to indicate this ambiguity. Both Homans and Eagleton suggest that this 'symptomatic' (Eagleton 59) way of reading can show the reader a contrast between 'the wild energy of the Heights' (McKibben 162) and the 'true natures' (McKibben 169) of the characters – especially the young couple – Catherine and Hareton who are into books, reading, culture and education. Nature seems to be mild and welcoming, as the reader can understand, when human nature comes to bring out its best part through education. Carmen Perez Riu also points out that 'the withdrawal of the opportunity to become educated is presented as one of the most cruel forms of oppression for both Heathcliff and Hareton' (Riu 167). Nature is not rough and untamed, when the human beings are well-educated. Nature can be symbolically referred to some human conditions, especially the profound human nature in this gothic novel.

The textual world of Emily Brontë does have an implication that culture as a sort of 'refuge from or reflex of material conditions' (Eagleton 59). Comparing to Nature, culture itself does bring a different energy in the society. For example, Cathy's five weeks away from her home totally make a difference – as if she becomes a new well-educated person – not as the old wild Cathy anymore. After coming back from Thrushcross Grange, the 'reform' shows that Cathy's 'self-respect' is raised

with fine clothes and flattery, […], so that, instead of a wild, hatless little savage jumping into the house, […], there lighted from a handsome black pony a very dignified person, with brown ringlets falling from the cover of a feathered beaver, and a long cloth habit, which she was obliged to hold up wıth both hands that she might sail in (Brontë 57).

It is a true dialectical moment between Nature and Culture, when the reader can read Nature in a way in which it comes to represent a character's inner self in a symbolic way. Cultivated, losing her wild energy, and taking the

manner of language (such as 'flattery'), Cathy seems to be changed, at least through the appearance and the behaviour as the reader can see. Although in the same Nature, she is different now from her friend Heathcliff. Comparing to her, without any culture, he is only a 'dirty boy' with 'his thick, uncombed hair' (Brontë 57).

Nature has a power of healing. The reader can see this point much clearer, when the character in the literary text has confusions or troubles with human relations. For example, in Anthony Doerr's short story, *The Caretaker*, the reader can see that the main character Joseph Saleeby

spends most of his time squatting on the front step watching his mother tend her garden. Her fingers pry weeds from the soil or cull spent vines or harvest snap beans, the beans plunking regularly into a metal bowl, and he listens to her diatribes on the hardships of war, the importance of maintaining a structured lifestyle. "We cannot stop living because of conflict, Joseph," she says. "We must persevere." (Doerr 131).

Joseph's mother insists that a certain way of living is the key to keep things going. The rhythm of life may be disturbed because of difficulties in all kinds of human relations – personal, national, international, so on and so forth. And yet, this rhythm – this 'style' – as Joseph's mother terms it, has to be maintained and to be managed, so that one will not lose this culture, this way of life, as a human being.

Joseph himself cannot see or cannot understand the meaning of his mother's words – 'we must persevere' – as his mother, 'each morning', 'makes him read a column of the English dictionary, selected at random, before he is allowed to set foot outside' (Doerr 130), until later when he is forced to escape from his 'small collapsing house in the hills outside Monrovia in Liberia' (Doerr 130), to go to the United States and try to start a new way of living.

In Astoria, Oregon of the United States, Joseph is hired to tend '*Ocean Meadows, a ninety-acre estate, orchard and home'* (Doerr 137). And yet, his awakening will be coming until he tries to build up and to tend his own secret garden. It seems that working with Nature can cure him, step by step. Joseph 'chooses a plot on a hill, concealed by the forest, overlooking the western edge of the main house and a slice of the lawn' of Mr. Twyman's (Doerr 141 - 142). During the process, he can try to forgive and to forget, in order to keep living his live, as 'he is remaking an order, a structure to his hours. It feels good, tending the soil, hauling water. It feels healthy' (Doerr 152).

On the other hand, a photographic image about Nature can also have the power of healing. Even when a character does not work with Nature directly, as Joseph and his mother do, one can still feel this power of healing through a work of art. In Anthony Doerr's short story, *Mkondo*, the female main character Naima, the reader can see that she, like an artist, who can create an interactive space through the photographic image between Nature and the human beings.

Naima's first photo makes her feel alive again, in Ohio. For taking that photo, she was waiting for the clouds, when they 'parted gently, a thin ray of light nudged through, illuminating the oak, and she made her exposure' (Doerr 207). This natural sunlight seems to be a message from God, guiding her way of finding her joy of life again. Seeing the photographic image – 'oak branches bloomed over with sun, a fracture in the haze beyond' (Doerr 207) – Naima finds her own 'oldest feeling' (Doerr 207) of being alive. Taking the photo of a scene in Nature, and looking at that photo, for Naima, it feels like 'a darkness tear away from her eyes' (Doerr 207), so that she can see the world again – 'for the first time' (Doerr 207) in a very long time.

III. Searching for Hope and Meaning in Works of Art and in Civilization

Is here is a true dialectical moment between the human beings and Nature? How can the reader see this dialectical moment? The answer, in some ways, can be found especially in one of Virginia Woolf's writings – her novel *To the Lighthouse*. Woolf depicts 'a central element of the landscape and of the formal design'. This idea comes from her childhood memories of the Summer holidays in Cornwall (Fleishman 606). I would argue, in Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse*, there is a particular moment of 'intimacy' (Woolf 187), in a way in which Lily and Mrs Ramsay are sitting together in Nature – to be precise – 'on the beach' (Woolf 186).

Sitting side by side, in Nature and in silence, these two women are having a moment of communication – with each other and with Nature through observing what they see in Nature. Their observations come to reveal some significant meanings, at first, through looking at a work of art and then asking about it:

'Is it a boat? Is it a cork?' [Mrs Ramsay] would say, Lily repeated, turning back, […], to her canvas. Heaven be praised for it, the problem of space remained, she thought, taking up her brush again. It glared at her. The whole mass of the picture was poised upon that weight. Beautiful and bright it should

be on the surface, feathery and evanescent, one colour melting ınto another like the colours on a butterfly's wing; but beneath the fabric must be clamped together with bolts of iron (Woolf 186).

Giving shapes, lines, and colours, Lily's canvas (which is a work-in-progress painting) comes to show the way in which she understands what she sees in Nature. This understanding comes to show the reader the dialectical moment of the artist and Nature. In Lily's eyes, Nature is firstly internalised, and secondly externalised, through a form of fine arts.

In silence, as the canvas seems to gaze back at Lily, Mrs Ramsay also seems to try to guess what she can see in Lily's canvas (a boat, or a cork). On the surface, everything seems to be 'uncommunicative' (Woolf 187), as no one says anything verbally, or through any language. These two women are only sitting 'in silence' (Woolf 187). And yet, there is a delicate sensation of this moment, if not verbally but visually – it is something sacred which can be felt by the two characters in the literary text. They are both women – one gives birth to her children in her family, as another woman gives birth to her works of art.

For Lily, at this very moment of 'squeezing her tube of green paint' (Woolf 187), language or any kinds of verbal expression is somehow not sufficient enough. In order to express this sensation of hers, which comes from the moment sitting with Mrs Ramsay in Nature, Lily chooses to stick to her painting. This emotion and this sensation are, in a way, 'extraordinarily fertile' (Woolf 187), which makes her unconsciously do 'a little hole in the sand and covered it up' (Woolf 187). This gesture of Lily's is also having a symbolic meaning. Just like the sea turtles, after laying their eggs, they also cover up the holes, to protect their eggs. This gesture is symbolically meaningful, in order to let the reader know that Lily feels that her great idea for her artistic creation is born.

As a researcher, my concern here, of course, is not to ask how real Lily's canvas can come to represent Nature, as some people may keep asking about how real can a viewer see in her boat or in her lighthouse. Moreover, it is also not my ultimate goal to identify the content of her painting – questions such as who and what – they do not refer to the messages that Virginia Woolf is trying to give to her readers. For example, if one did that, eventually, one would be trapped into the look and the appearance of works of art and Nature. It means that we will always see works of art as a copy of Nature, in a way in which works of art can never be seen as good as Nature. In a comparative manner, both works of art and Nature have meanings – if any – it is all because of a concern of humanity. As the character Polixenes in William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* comes to remind the reader that 'in defense of art' –

Yet Nature is made better by no mean
But Nature makes that mean; so over that art
Which you say adds to Nature, is an art
That Nature makes, […].
(IV. iv. 89 – 92, qtd. Shakespeare 1566).

The point here in this quotation is, as long as Nature comes to inspire the human beings, one shall do as what the artists do, in order to try to express one's thoughts and feels in artistic creations. Works of art can be seen, in this way, as an outcome of the freedom of expression, in a way in which it is creating new artistic forms which inspire by looking at Nature and by recognising its existence, as Nature itself is a very significant element. Nature shows the reader that it is really possible to achieve an artistic vision of one's own. As the reader can see, Lily achieves her own artistic vision, in the end of *To the Lighthouse*, when her canvas externalises Nature in a form of fine arts.

Conclusion

The French Surrealist Louis Aragon, in his novel *Paris Peasant*, points out that the human beings cannot appreciate Nature as it is (for example, people always want to understand things in a more scientific way, without any human emotions, as 'light is a vibration'). Or, one cannot see the importance of Nature in one's life, because he or she comes to a point that everything has to be rational, instead of emotional, as one's 'stupid rationalism contains an unimaginably large element of materialism. This fear of error which everything recalls to me at every moment of the flight of my ideas, this mania for control, makes man prefer reason's imagination to the imagination of the senses' (Aragon 9).

If the reader considers all kinds of literary texts as a form of fine arts in verbal representations, it is not impossible for one to understand that this art of narrative – if it can be any authentic at all – can actually show the human beings the way in which it expresses this exploration of the senses of human. In terms of artistic creations, for an artist, it is important to have 'the imagination of the senses', as Aragon terms it. In order to see the profound human nature, an artist does need to have true fusions with Nature, in his or in her vision.

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The Violation of Culture, Nature and Traditional Taboos in Chigozie Obioma's *The Fishermen*

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Introduction

This study intends to explore and annotate the idea of African culture, nature and traditional taboos in confinement with Chigozie Obioma's *The Fishermen. The Fisherman* is a novel that accentuates the reality and indispensability of the African traditional belief system and the peril associated with breaking the code and semiotics that bond the human soul with its soil of nativity. Several issues that focus on culture, nature, fate, tragedy and traditional taboos are mainly treated in the novel. It also reveals the retributive justice that occurs when the taboos are violated in the African context. The features that attract severe punishment due to unwanted intrusion into the sacredness of the ritualistic phenomenon of African Yoruba culture and tradition are seriously brought under focus for literary and philosophical exploration. In this sense, the study is critically evaluated, objectively bringing into focus those elements that compel the characters aware of the repercussion of desecrating the culture and nature in particular. As the study proceeds, the aspect that evinces the despair and pang of deliberate disobedience to the established traditional institution is adequately explicated.

Theoretical Background

Culture and tradition are intertwined; they play a pervasive role in a particular society; whether to hold a people together and sustain a specific belief system or clench a social code of a people Although as we all know that people tend to put some conduct into practice, this becomes a tradition once it is practiced for a long time and passed down to the next generation. Graburn explains that "tradition was the name given to those cultural features which, in situations of change, were to be continued to be handed on, thought about, preserved and not lost" (Graburn, 6). In this respect, from the primeval standpoint, the tradition of a people becomes an integral part of their identity. They would have their don'ts and dos; these rules are, therefore, set to curtail certain excesses of human activities to maintain propriety in society. Norridge remarks that some "contemporary critics are acutely aware that 'culture' is not homogenous and monolithic, but specific, varied and changing" (Norridge, 132).

In African gregarious settings, culture and tradition are taken very important; and the observation of social code and traditional taboos is not trivial. Thus, breaking these rules result in grave punishment, whether by the deities or from nature. Although the emergence of modernity has made this practice decline to a certain extent, in some remote milieu harsh tradition of the people is still very in the limelight. However, Graburn postulates, that “Tradition is usually seen as the opposite to modernity, yet it is much loved by modernity. Traditions are continually being created, not in some past time immemorial, but during modernity” (Graburn, 8).

Furthermore, looking into the phenomenon of rain in the African context, no one is expected to rest his/her back on the wall while it is raining because it would attract the thunder strike to the person concerned. Also, it is conjectured that pregnant women are not permitted to walk around between 12.00 pm to 4.00 pm. The assumption is that this period is the most precarious period for pregnant women. The evil spirits are believed to make use of this period to wander about, and sometimes when a pregnant woman has encounters with them, they attempt to chase out the child in her womb and occupy the womb space. As a result, when the woman delivers a child, she delivers a very bewildering offspring. Lugira recounts that:

African people consider a pregnant woman to be chosen for a duty—motherhood—that is a sacred calling. She is therefore subject to a variety of taboos. A taboo is a custom of putting someone or something under prohibition. The pregnant woman is encouraged and sometimes instructed to refrain from various activities. (Lugira,68)

Another example is a sacred river—the people tend to ascribe the existence of the river to a specific goddess, so they give a stern warning to the people of the community to desist from fishing in that river; the fish are considered to be the offspring of the goddess. In this view, African society creates certain traditional rules, customs and conducts to negate people from getting into danger. However, as the harsh punishment is identified yet, some other people tend to violate the reality of these taboos, since, probably they have been influenced by the modern environment—and they consider this practice as mere superstition. Thus, they become less sensitive to danger—that is, they are less concerned about the outcome of their violation, or they have no belief in its existence at all. In this respect, the cultural rules "represent the notion of taboo…which encompasses both restraints on behavior and those things to which access is restricted” (Lynn Holden, 3).

Therefore, African society tries to instill fear in people by making them understand the grave consequence of violating certain rules, which they call

taboos. For this reason, the threat of being attacked by a strange epidemic or death is always used to prevent people from breaking social ethics. Idang postulates that "Culture, as it is usually understood, entails a totality of traits and characters that are peculiar to a people to the extent that it marks them out from other peoples or societies. These peculiar traits go on to include the people's language, dressing, music, work, arts, religion, dancing and so on" (Idang, 98).

In this study,Obioma's text's characters that violate culture, nature and traditional taboos in are mainly brought under critical annotation. The cause of their violation and its aftermath are accentuated. The central leitmotif is looking at this study from the anthropological and intellectual viewpoints, the essence of the African Yoruba worldview in line with culture, nature, and traditional taboo. As the writer portrays his characters—making them commit some deliberate errors and transgressions, certain questions are answered: (1) what is the socio-cultural efficacy of the Yoruba in Obioma's novel? (2) What role do culture, nature, and traditional taboos play in the text? (3) How does the consequence of violation affect the entire family members of the characters concerned in Obioma's novel? (4) How are culture, nature, and traditional taboos used in shaping human behaviors in Obioma's novel?

Moreover, establishing these three components in African society as explored in this study is meant to regulate human behavior and social order. As the case may be, the concept of ritual is inculcated into the belief system of Africans to establish some restrictions that will prevent people from indulging in any antisocial function. Veit–Wild & Naguschewski suggest that "African cultures, as interpreted by women, inscribe ways in which women reach forms of self-fulfillment in interaction with, or self-aware contradistinction to, the experience of other closely related women" (Veit–Wild & Naguschewski,141).

Thus, the functions of culture, nature and traditional taboos are components that restrict people from committing a forced error. Hence, it is believed that culture and tradition have functional nexus, so is nature also communicates traditional, cultural, and mystical meanings to the people. In this sense, when nature is violated, it gives retribution to the guilty. For example, when the sacred river is desecrated the river strikes back in anger by making some of the community drown in the river or overflowing itself to the detriment of the people in the society. This is where retributive justice begins to function in its real sense—and the reality of nature fighting back to punish the offender is crystalized. Fanilusi postulates that "culture has been variously defined; it is understood as a way of life of a people. Thus, culture is made up the customs, traditions, beliefs, behaviour, dress, language, works of art and craft, attitude to life among others…" (Familusi, 299).

Moreover, African cultural values are not the same, but most of them have similar elements. However, “in African cultures, a ‘person’ consists of two bodies, one visible and the other invisible yet having corporeal needs” (Veit–Wild & Dirk Naguschewski,142). Culture and tradition are components that distinguish one set of people from another, and this accentuates their cordiality with nature and milieu. Every human society has a particular culture and tradition that especially makes it unique. In other words, the tradition comes with certain codes that are expected to be adhered to. Graburn explains that “Originally the concept of tradition, literally from the Latin meaning “something handed over, in slowly changing societies was almost equivalent to inheritance” (Graburn, 6). Oni and Ayeni point out that “Culture is germane regarding the identification of people. It is the major attribute resulting in the behavioral characteristic of different groups. It is consequently exhibited by the different members of the group” (Oni and Ayeni, 28).

In the nuance, culture is always believed to possess the holistic components and qualities that belong to a people. This differentiates them from another set of people in their social order. The peculiarities of these people involve their socio-political order, sociolinguistic situation, code of dress, religion, food, and art. It also comprises their custom, social system, taboos, and norms. Notwithstanding, it is believed that "some taboos have been understood as a way of enforcing patriarchal dominance"(Falumisi,303). Regarding the use of tradition for socio-cultural development, they try as much as possible to regulate their traditional values and customary functions. In this sense, to evaluate this crucial subject, one needs to have adequate intelligibility of this "trinity of order" and how they affect human society.

Annotating the Concept and Conundrum of African Culture, Nature and Traditional Taboos in Obioma’s *The Fishermen*

In *The Fishermen*, Obioma tells the story of a family that lives in Akure. In this family, there are four brothers whose story takes the center stage in the whole narrative. Their father Agwu works in the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), but the branch is far away in Yola, in the Northern part of Nigeria. Hence, the text reveals that "Mr. Agwu,” was a rich man who worked in the Central Bank of Nigeria” (3). As the four brothers grow, it becomes very challenging for their mother to handle them alone. As they begin to grow, they learn new things and develop new personality traits. However, their father has always made them channel their focus on becoming great men in the future, so he encourages them to focus their attention on their studies. Hence, the four brothers have

secretly developed a new fishing profession and this journey is the beginning of their woe. As they venture into fishing in a sacred river, their destinies begin to revolve around the tragedy of necessity—that is, in as much as they have broken the code of nature, culture, and traditional taboo, their tragedy becomes inevitable.

Looking into the mystery surrounding the situation of *The Fishermen,* it is evident that Chigozi Obioma brings his environment under focus by creatively accentuating the enigma of a fraternal bond of four brothers who engage in the precarious venture of fishing in a river considered sacred. Fishing in Omi-Ala, Obioma explicates the bravery, the peril and the plight of the four brothers who fish from a forbidden river: "From the following day onwards, for a whole week, they rushed off every day after school and trekked the long tortuous path to the Omi-Ala River at the end of our district to fish" (6). Omi-Ala is considered a river ultimately sacred; thus, fishing in it is tantamount to sacrilegious disposition. The river is located in Akure, a capital city of Ondo State in the Southwestern region of Nigeria.

Considering a critical postulation of this circumstance from the natural, cultural, traditional and anthropological tenet, Akure is a Yoruba city. The culture of the Yoruba entails several social, religious and ritualistic nonpareils. Yoruba is a society that has its origin rooted in culture and ritual. When modernity, Christianity, and Islam emerged, the ancient tradition gave way for the new ones on a gradual process but not absolutely. Notwithstanding, as far as the tradition of the Yoruba is concerned, it never completely goes into extinction. There is still some part of the region where the observation of tradition is not taken with levity.

The four brothers: Ikenna, Boja, Obembe, and Benjamin, begin to venture into a very perilous path which eventually leads them into a tragic denouement. Omi-Ala is a sacred river; it is forbidden for anyone to catch fish from it. It is a river where it is believed that the custodians of tradition visit to offer sacrifices to the river deity. In African Yoruba society, the river deity is worshipped and revered as one of the indispensable deities of the land; the people try as much as possible never to intrude into what can be considered taboo. They do not break the rules because they all know that the consequence is grave. Nevertheless, in the case of these four brothers, they never consider the consequence; instead, they become less sensitive to danger. It has been their common habit to visit this river daily; yet, while doing this, they make sure that the secret is kept and no one knows about it until after six weeks that it is brought to their mother's attention;

When Mother came home that afternoon, much earlier than her usual closing time, we saw at once that the neighbour had reported us. Mother was deeply shaken by the weight of her ignorance despite living with us in the same house. True, we'd concealed our trade for so long, hiding the fish and tadpoles under the bunk bed in Ikenna and Boja's shared room because we knew about the mysteries that surrounded Omi-Ala. (10)

Their father, Agwu, who works in the Yola branch of Central Bank of Nigeria, only visits home once in a while. Therefore, the mother alone becomes incapable of looking after the rapidly growing children and creating a strong fraternal bond among themselves. As they grow, secrecy is one of the key components of their strength. Their adventure has become the secret of conflict they use to put their mother in a discrepant awareness. However, before the catastrophe, there have been warnings; when the four brothers start their fishing escapade, they are given stern cautions by the prophet of the Celestial Church, whose church building is located beside the river overseeing the lake. Despite the prophet's warnings, the 'fishermen' never give an ear to his instruction. He makes it known to them how precarious it is to fish from the river considered sacred.

Also, another warning is given to them by a woman (Iya Iyabo), who is their neighbor; she eventually reports them to their mother. Instead of them listening to the warning, they take a pound of flesh by stealing her hen. Hence, the brothers already violated nature (river), the culture, and the traditional taboo. Thus, we can refer to their collective disobedience as a deliberate violation of traditional taboo and culture. The error is a forced one; at the riverside, they encounter several things capable of scaring the children of their age away from the river—but they are never bothered. Although the debris of the dead human bodies at the bank of the river could have infused fear in them, they remain dangerously lackadaisical.

At the river milieu, there is a particular man called Abulu. He is a madman but with a visionary impulse. He sees the future and has a prophetic adroitness to tell what will happen in the future. Unfortunately, most of his predictions are always negative and blighting. People always avoid him because they do not want him to predict a bad future for them. The four brothers and their friend Solomon are at the river when they see Abulu, the madman and their encounter with him turns the whole journey of their lives around—it is the beginning of doom.

The last statement we heard him make, "Ikena, you will swim in a river of red but shall never rise from it again. Your life—" was barely audible… Abulu

cast a frenzied gaze upwards in confusion. Then, as if in a fury, he continued in a louder voice… As the noise tapered off, we all heard him say "Ikena, you shall die as a cock dies. (Obioma 43)

Solomon warns them to keep a distance from him because he knows he always predicts and pronounces misery on people. The four brothers still did not listen because there is a fate that strengthens their hubristic propensity. Then Abulu speaks out his prophecy of misery; his serpentine tongue unleashes its venom and this marks the beginning of the family's catalyst situation. As this begins, Inkenna who is the first child begins to behave strangely, placing himself in solitary confinement and he refuses to communicate with anyone.

With every day that passed, Ikenna became more distant from us. I hardly saw him in those days. His existence was reduced to these minimal movements around the house, the noise of his often exaggerated coughing and of the transistor radio whose volume he'd often raise so high Mother would ask him to turn it down if she was at home. (Obioma 30)

The sharp animosity between him and his brothers rises to an irrational level, and his suspicion for his brothers becomes highly exceptionable. He never trusts any family members since he has heard the prophecy that a fisherman would slaughter him and he will swim in the red river. Despite that the madman speaks in Delphic of metaphor, Ikenna understands it properly and tries to avoid it. The reality here is that the more he avoids the misfortune, everything he does and every step he takes leads him to fulfill the unfortunate prophecy. Critically, as stated earlier, the four brothers agree in fraternal disobedience and transgression—they deliberately profane the traditional sacred institution, so a tragedy begins to evolve. We can consider this as the repercussion of their negative actions.

Negative action will bring a negative result—there are a cause and effect here. Fishing in the Omi-Ala, the sacred river, is an insulting and sacrilegious behavior to the tradition of the land. Therefore, the river is nature, can fight back in anger; the fish they catch cannot be considered as mundane but the offspring of the river deity. Let us assume that the four brothers are not aware of the danger of intruding into the sacredness of the river, but they could have been scared when they saw the dead bodies littered the environment of the river. However, Bloom and Hobby recount the different categories of taboo:

1.the taboo against the unrestrained sociopathic speech of madness and irrationality; 2. the taboo against sex outside of marriage and other moral constraints; and, chiefly, 3. the taboo against mocking and destabilizing the traditional partition between the sacred and the profane. (Bloom and Hobby,39)

Their bravery leads them to a higher tragedy as Abulu, the madman, has prophesied the end of Ikenna, and for this reason, Ikenna wanders around the verge of his fate. Looking into this discourse following Aristotle's concept of tragedy, Ikenna has become a tragic hero guilty of an error—leading his younger brothers into a sacred river for the fishing venture; hence he must pay dearly for it. For instance, when the prophecy is given about the Sophocles' Oedipus of classical Greece his existence is full of mystery, it attracts catastrophe. That is, when he grows, he will kill his father and marry his mother. The parents attempt to prevent this unfortunate event, but the more they try to prevent it, the closer the prophecy becomes. He eventually grows somewhere in Corinth—he fulfills the reality of fate. He eventually (unknowingly) kills his father and marries his mother. Ikenna has become very sensitive to danger; he has been suspecting his fellow fishermen to be vulnerable to become the instruments of the fulfillment of the negative prophecy. Eventually, the prophecy from the madman finds its way of wandering around the life of Ikenna to fulfill itself.

Therefore, as he has become very pugnacious to every member of his family and claims to have become the empirical positivist—denying the existence of God, his mental order can be assumed to have been affected by what he hears—that is, the prophecy. But the truth here is that his fate has projected him for misfortune—he cannot escape it. Thus, an intense feud between him and his immediate younger brother Boja; and this leads to his irreversible silence; his brother uses a knife on him and kills him. He has finally fulfilled the destiny he tries to escape—as a tragic hero, his fate completely brings him down to his knees, and he irredeemably goes down without rising again. Thus, a happy family experiences a nightmare at noon, and the whole thing falls apart.

Identifying Culture, Nature and Traditional Taboos in The Fishermen

As said earlier that the river is nature, it has become a taboo to fish in there. We can say nature has fought back in revenge by making Abulu the mouthpiece of the gods, bringing down unimaginable misery on the violators. Omi-Ala is a traditional river; simultaneously, it symbolizes the people's cultural identity in the community. Delving into the sacredness of the river is a sign of profanity. Nature—that is, the river is symbolically a personality, a deity figure who has the supernatural ability to bring misery on whoever desecrates her. However, "African tradition and thought consider spirits to be elements of

power, force, authority, and vital energy underlying all existence. Invisible though this power may be, Africans perceive it directly" (Lugira,48).

This is the juncture the four brothers become oblivious of the efficacy of nature, culture, and tradition. In the Yoruba religious sphere and belief system, nature plays pervasive roles in sustaining human life. For instance, the Yoruba credo reveals that leaves have human nature and emotion; they can feel, hear and communicate meaning to people, so humans are expected to treat them as sacred. In this sense, when it is night, it is expected that no one should pluck the leaves for medical or magical reasons; at night, it is believed that all the leaves fall asleep as humans do. Thus, if they are plucked at night, they will be rendered ineffective. For this reason, African Yoruba religious and ritual observations influence how the people live their lives, and this is because the ancient tradition has not gone into extinction.

Looking into the depth of Yoruba culture and tradition, the taboo is imperative to which everyone in the society is adhered to. Therefore, most Yoruba tradition is not without some ritualistic attachment which makes it more relevant and effective. So, accentuating the African Yoruba religious belief system—nature, culture, and tradition are an integral part of the people and an attempt to break the rules may eventually lead to tragedy. Hence, "… indigenous African religions have had a greater influence on" (Omatseye & Osevwiyo, 10) the people's tradition.

In every taboo and tradition, deities are attached to them that serve as the gods of retributive justice. Thus, "Increasingly today culture is being recognized as an indispensable aspect of authentic development. This recent tendency is reflected, in many countries throughout the world, in the emergence of institutions designed to promote culture" (Sow et al., 10). Therefore, when Ikenna and his brothers intrude into this mystery, they experience tragedy, bringing the entire family into a nightmare at noon. The Yoruba ritual emphasizes respect for the established cultural rules to prevent catastrophe.

In this sense, when men tend to transgress, nature and the deity respond tragically. However, some people might presume that the four brothers are still very young; Ikenna, the eldest among them, is just fifteen years old; so, the punishment should not have been very severe as it has been, or there should not be any punishment at all. The truth is that the jurisprudence of retributive justice does not identify the innocent or the ignorant. Once you are guilty, you should be ready to face the consequence of your action or inaction. Furthermore, Oti and Ayeni explicate that "Different cultural groups think, feel, and act differently. There are no scientific standards for considering one group

as intrinsically superior or inferior to another. Culture is considered to be the tradition of that people and is transmitted from generation to generation" (Oti and Ayeni,23). In African society, culture and tradition go coherently, and the custodians of tradition tend to defend it to prevent profanity. Ogude explains that "Frantz Fanon hinted at a more multivalent and nuanced approach to African conceptualization of the people's culture" (Ogude,158).

In ancient times, some social and cultural rules were established to prevent extremism; these rules metamorphosed to what is now termed taboos—as the fishermen have refused to identify the pang of breaking these taboos, their fate is to suffer. Bloom and Hobby maintain that "The fundamental taboo in Freud's scheme involves the vengeful spirit...Freud maintains that taboos develop within animistic cultures and he traces animism itself to primitive observations of the dead and to the experience of dreaming" (Bloom and Hobby, 67).

Conclusion

To sum up, Chigozi Obama's text reflects the tragedy of necessity caused by the slightest error of the four brothers; in the novel, the whole tragedy unfolds, and every member of the family experiences its pang. Boja, eventually murders Ikenna. Boja finds it difficult to stand the shame and despair of his action; he runs away. Upon his disappearance, they look for him, but his body is already decayed inside the well when he is found. He commits suicide because he finds it hard to stand the stigma of being called his elder brother's killer. After this, Obembe, the third born, grows the passion to revenge his brothers' death. He eventually carries Benjamin, the narrator of the story, and they eventually kill Abulu, the madman who utters evil into their destinies. Obembe escapes and goes on a voluntary exile in Benin, Edo State. Benjamin, the youngest brother, bears the consequence of all the transgressions; he is taken to court and then sentenced to prison. Their parents are devastated; the mother now has a psychological disorder. Their whole world falls apart. This transgression of the children affects every one of them. Their lives entirely are submerged into the abyss of fate. In this sense, the study evaluates the peril of intruding into the traditional sacred domain and how African Yoruba culture, nature, and tradition are interwoven in responding to this event. However, this "tends to presume the virtuous innocence of […] African culture and society. This is by implication makes the African" (Asante-Darko, 4) world an ethereal entity. As this is critically reflected we must understand that "the position of the divinities and spirits in African religious metaphysics stressing that their belief in

these other beings does not in any way contradict their belief in the Supreme Being" (Ekeke andEkeopara,1). The African belief system in the spirits and deities shows the nexus between the physical and metaphysical. Thus, the deities in African terms serve as the intermediaries between them and the Supreme Being.

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PART II:

FUNDAMENTAL DEPICTIONS OF NATURE

The Representation of Nature as a Symbol of National Identity in Folk Literature. The Case of *The Norwegian Folktales*

Mette Rudvin

Introduction

'Oral narrative' is the term we use for stories that are passed down in spoken form from generation to generation. Since time immemorial, human society has created, presented and transmitted stories through speaking, chanting and singing. Stories find form and purpose in mythology, religious texts, poetry, didactic fables, sagas, ballads, and much more. There is another, more specific, use of the term 'oral narrative', however, that pertains more specifically to a discourse genre that has traditionally been studied in anthropology/ ethnography and literature, but above all in folklore studies. Perhaps the best known collection of tales in the Western canon is that of the two German philologist brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, known as the *Kinder- und Haurmarchen* published in 1812 (see e.g. McGlathery 1988)[34]. Closely related to anthropology and ethnology, folklore studies have examined how narratives have been structured and transmitted in different parts of the world and in different historical periods. Folklorists have found many similarities between these narratives across time and space, and many theories have been put forward arguing for ontogenetic or polygenetic creation, i.e. whether similar tales evolve independently of each other, or migrate across borders. Examining

[34] 1927Vladimir Propp vised a classification of motifs in folktales, showing how narratives across time periods and geographical space, have similar motifs. Propp 1968. The most complete fairytale classification however is the ATU system (Aarne-Thompson-Uther index) initially put together by the Finnish folklorist Antti Aarne in 1910, revised and translated by the American folklorist Stith Thompson in 1928 and 1955-58 and subsequently by the German folklorist Hans-Jörg Uther in 2004. See Thompson 1955-58. For ease of reference see https://sites.ualberta.ca/~urban/Projects/English/Motif_Index.htm and https://libraryguides.missouri.edu/c.php?g=651166

the rich content of oral narratives, scholars have shown us how they reflect many key aspects of human life, psyche and emotions (see Bettelheim 1976 and Von Franz 1995), beliefs and customs, aesthetic preferences, social-, familial- and workplace organization, and how they have served to admonish, instruct, reassure, guide - and entertain.

Broadly speaking, oral narrative originated in pre- or semi-literate periods of history among those groups of society, mainly in rural areas, that had limited access to writing-based narrative and where vernaculars and dialects were commonly used, explaining why this form of artistic expression was often closely bound to and contextualized in nature. Thus, the prominence of 'Nature' as a central trope and an integral character or setting is unsurprising. In the tales examined in this paper, the centrality of Nature is a result of a complex set of contextual features: geographical, historical, political, cultural, linguistic and aesthetic.

In this paper, I will not be referring to Nature in the philosophical existential sense of 'natural', but rather in two distinct ways: firstly, as the physical, non-mediated landscape and immanent substance that surrounds human beings. This corresponds roughly to the idea of 'wilderness', albeit a wilderness constantly open to negotiation and manipulation by cultural/human actions and practices. Secondly, Nature is referred to in the sense of a trope[35] symbolically representing that landscape as if it had an intrinsic bond to the people populating it and to their virtues and/or characteristics[36]. Clearly, in the first sense, deliberating where nature ends and culture begins is impossible; it is fluid, not least because the natural landscape has evolved through time as a result of human intervention. Because the physical landscape wholly dominated the lives and thoughts, fears, aspirations, hopes and ambitions of pre-modern rural populations, it was perfectly 'natural' that this played a hugely important part in the narratives of their lives, with narrative representations of weather and the elements, symbolizing and informing their social, psychological and emotional lives through storytelling.

The darker side of n(N)ature. Nature and the pre-moderns

During the first weeks the Covid-19 pandemic when the world – still united around this unexpected calamity and still in the novelty of shock – the less benign role of nature in the lives of human beings emerged in the media as

[35] Nature will be capitalized when referring to the trope, or concept of Nature, and lower case when referring to a natural habitat or landscape.

[3636] It might be best expressed as a continuum: even in farmed landscapes devoid of human presence or technology practically everything is the result of agriculture (farmed lands, manipulated plants and seeds, husbandry, even the shape of the land).

theories of how the virus had made the leap from nature to humans. Many discussions centred around climate change and the pace of industrial globalization and how humans were encroaching upon natural spaces and animal habitat, giving rise to a toxic proximity that seriously endangered human life. No longer was nature simply postcard-beautiful, but a major threat to human organization, if not existence. The debate has changed significantly since the early days of the pandemic, not least the theories around the first transmissions and origins of the virus; the unity that seemed to be creating a common platform – perhaps prompted by a sense of imminent danger and shock – seems to have waned. It did introduce, nonetheless, a sense of the darker side of nature into a globally shared debating forum. Concomitantly, the debate on climate change and the preservation of the planet continued and, it seems, may have taken a positive turn in triggering national and international policies. This is not the place to discuss either of these issues, but what is relevant to the present discussion is a growing sense of the active and hazardous role of nature in our lives – through the spread of disease and the possible consequences of climate change on human existence. The planet's robustness is not in question, it is the robustness of human physical and social organization that is cause for concern. The last few years have thus brought into the international public eye a more comprehensive but more threatening perspective on the darker side' of nature.

The darker side of nature was a feature that the pre-moderns had to contend with in every aspect of their lives; not protected by the technology we enjoy today, life was a struggle (and still is in large parts of the world) to both curb and entreat nature in order to provide for one's daily needs. Storytelling reflected this precariousness and the struggle for existence in concrete narrative passages (provision of food, the circumstances of farming, seeking employment beyond one's home village, etc.) but also in the prominence of the elements as key protagonists in the plot and as emissary of human fate. The birth of ancient myths and mythologies and later more organized religion played a hugely important part in combatting the precarious angst of human existence as being at the mercy of n(N)ature's whims. The personification of the elements (the Norse god of thunder, for example) offset that angst by giving the elements, and nature, an identity that is relatable (and also giving an identity to abstract features of human organization such as justice, knowledge, etc.). This identity also confers meaning on the arbitrariness of events that are life-giving but at the same time wreak such damage on human life. Not only did myth give meaning to senselessness, but it allowed human beings to believe that they could actively participate in the event and prevent the wrath and destruction of the

gods through various forms of worship and rituals. This empowerment, albeit imagined, has an important psychological as well as social function.

The earth-shattering changes that we are experiencing may bring new narratives and stories to the fore, new ways of (re-)telling ourselves and our experiences, but also a nostalgic interest in previous generations' methods of organizing their collective lives, be it food production, transport, consumerism, redistribution and prioritizing of resources, or artistic products. Former generations' profound knowledge of nature's benefits and dangers, the seasons, the weather, the soil, the harvest, the yield, the storage and processing of nature's resources, may become a valuable commodity, for example in agriculture or heat management.

In the world-views, lives and stories of our ancestors Nature/nature was feared, respected, loved and obeyed as life-giving, as sublime beauty, but also as Nemesis. An unchangeable, essential and solid force of human destiny that is not subordinated to or dominated by human culture, gave stories a sense of authority and permanence. I would like to suggest that, especially in the present crisis, there are valuable lessons to be learned in re-discovering narratives of the past and by exploring the centrality of Nature/nature by re-framing the well-being and care of the planet. Indeed, oral narrative can still function as a positive model for artistic expression representing a positive balance and constructive relationship between Culture and Nature where the former does not aim to subjugate, dominate or instrumentalize the natural world, nor need it be reductivist and naïve by presenting (n)Nature as an exclusively benign force.

I. The *Norwegian Folktales* as a Nation-Building Symbol

Oral narratives have developed over millennia around the world, and clearly represent a vast range of narration and narrated experience. This makes it even more extraordinary to realize that oral narrative presents similar tropes across large parts of the world and across centuries, if not millennia. For all the reasons mentioned above, nature plays a key role in traditional oral narrative (both natural habitat and anthropomorphized animals or metaphysical half-nature/animal and half human). In oral narrative the (n)Nature-trope is often an integral part of the story, be it as plot, characters or setting. It may be represented through the personification of Nature at plot level – the Wind, the River, the Mountain –, as obstacles to be overcome or as core props representing help or adversity. Nature is simultaneously challenging, dangerous, protective, omnipotent, compassionate, rule-setting. It is respected, feared, revered, accepted as a part of an inescapable human destiny. In the tale

that we will be analyzing later in this paper, we see how the elements (especially a bear and the Winds) take on an almost animistic role as the conveyors of wisdom through whom the protaginsts' destiny is fulfilled. The need to respect and obey them is a crucial part of the plot in order to prevent calamity and not stand in the way of destiny.

This paper describes how a collection of folktales profoundly influenced the shaping of national identity in 19th century Norway and explores how the portrayal of nature played an essential part in their presentation, both in text and illustration, strengthening the bond that Norwegians perceived between themselves and Nature/nature. The intense artistic promotion of (n)Nature from the mid 19th century onwards –A. Tidemand and H. Gude, E. Munch, Ole Bull, Grieg, to name a few – has persisted to the present day in cinema, theatre, architecture, advertising and merchandising (see e.g. Brown 1997 and Bennan 1997). Two Norwegian Nobel prize winners, H. Ibsen and S. Undset, drew actively on folklore, the former most famously in *Peer Gynt*, and the latter in a dramatised version for children of the tale *East of the Sun and West of the Moon* (1960).

The *Norwegian Folktales* (hereafter NF) were jointly collected, transcribed and re-written by the zoologist Per Christian Asbjørnsen and the theologian Jørgen Moe (hereafter A&M), and first published in 1841. As a part of the on-going nation-building project, after a centuries long 'union' with Denmark and Sweden from 1397-1814 until full independence in 1905, the NF contributed to shape an independent cultural and linguistic identity in the emerging nation-state[37]. The folktales embodied important symbolical, cultural and linguistic characteristics from the rural environment that were adopted and re-created to inspire a new, independent Norwegian cultural identity, forging a symbolic link between an imagined Norse Golden Age and the present[38]. At the peak of the Romantic Nationalist movement, deeply inspired by the work of the

[37] The ideas in the first half of this paper were previously explored at *Nordic Experiences. Exploration of Scandinavian Cultures*, in NY, USA, 1993 (published 1997); at the *3rd International Gulnar Scientific and Cultural Events. International Gulnar Science & Development Symposium*" in Gulnar, Turkey, 2018 (published 2019); in "A Polysystemic Study of Folk Literature in Nineteenth-Century Norway" (1999), and in the author's 1996 PhD thesis *The Role of Norms in Text Production: A Case Study of a Nineteenth Century Norwegian Folktale Collection and its Role in the Shaping of National Identity* and its partial 2000 publication as *The Role The Role of Oral Narrative in Shaping National Identity. The Case of Norway*. Other ideas, more specifically on the role of Nature in folk literature, were presented at the 17th International Cultural Studies Symposium Nature Vs Culture at Ege University, Izmir, in 2019 and at the international conference "*Influence from Fairytales and other Folklore Genres on European Poetic, Novelistic and Dramatic Productions* Folklore in Music, Ballads and Dance 16th, 17th- and 18th-Century Comedies: Affinities and Contrasts" in Rimini, Italy in 2019.

[38] For information on the development of Norway, historically, nationally, culturally and linguistically, see Elviken 1931; Haugen 1966; Hodne 1979 and 1994; Larsen 1950; Rudvin 1997; Skard 1973; Bø 1972; Hvam Hult. 2003. The historical and linguistic information on the folktale collectors and collections are based on primary and secondary sources, primarily in Norwegian: Hodne 1979; Hovstad 1933; Liestøl 1955; Lisetøl 1979; Popp 1977; Øyslebø 1971.

Grimms, the tales thus came to symbolize core features believed to be specific to Norway and distinct from the colonial powers of Denmark and Sweden, from which Norway was attempting to differentiate itself politically, culturally and linguistically. Inspired by the pan-European Romantic Nationalist movement and the French Revolution[39], the Romantic project was strengthened by the memory of an assumed pre-Union political entity, a pre-cursor to a modern nation-state; a nation was 'willed into existence', as it were (the wordplay is from Anderson 1983). Language-wise, Danish predominated in all official and urban communication. Although Danish, Swedish and Norwegian (and their internal dialects) are easily mutually comprehensible, significant differences existed and exist, in vocabulary and pronunciation.

In times of struggle for independence, it is not unusual that some re-construction of a prestigious past becomes a platform from which to launch a new (or renewed) cultural identity. A prestigious Past became an icon of a new, independent identity, poignantly expressed in the Norwegian *Gullalderlensgel* ('longing for the Golden Age'). They were perceived to be embodied in a social group that had maintained, unchanged, the essence of that Past – namely the *Folk*[40]. The idolization of a pre-colonial Norse history gave the project more gravitas. The power of this paradigm lay in its evoking prestige, strength, status and a purity of spirit, an Ur-essence bound to the land and soil. It was all the stronger because it was hard to 'de-bunk'; any imagined concrete manifestation was lost in the mist of time. The quest was to find a direct link between the past and the emerging nation-state – expressed in a narrative and linguistic form specific to that past and its content. It was believed (as did the Grimm brothers) that the nexus containing and maintaining this historical and symbolic continuity were the oral tales, passed down from generation to generation in the rural villages, since the time of the Norsemen. Narrated in dialect form, distinct from the urbanized colonial Danish, they contained stories that embodied perceived Ur-Norwegian values and traits. Erroneously (but that is another story), the Grimm brothers – who had encouraged A&M's work – saw German oral narratives as the heritage of the *Volk* and an ancient Germanic Golden Age. In the same way, A&M believed the tales to contain the 'essence', the 'germ' of their nation's character, captured in the Norwegian *Folkesjel,* 'the people's soul'.

[39] See Fürst 1969 on the Romantic movement and Andersen 1983 and Kohn 1946 on nation-building during this period.

[40] On the connection between oral narrative, language, identity and nation building the following sources have been referred to Alver 1989; O'Giollain 1990; Tedlock 1990.

Figure 1: Asbjørnsen and Moe depicted on a postage stamp, attesting to how highly regarded they were and still are

Unlike the Grimms, A&M were active and keen field workers, travelling around the country to collect original material, aiming to 'restore' the unpolished vernacular form to its (perceived) artistic unity. Another factor that contributed to the success of the national-romantic project was the genre through which the NF were promoted: a combination of oral narrative and children's literature. As a genre, children's literature has a powerful socializing function. This feature helped to weld the NF in the collective consciousness even more powerfully by reinforcing children's self-perceived cultural identity and the continuity that this represented as one generation of children grew into adults and passed on the knowledge of the tales to their own children. Serendipitously, the NF thus turned out to be a perfect icon for the (re-)presentation of the *Folk* in the national-romantic fervor of the time. In this self-reiterating narrative and literary process, what A&M promoted as essentially Norwegian, thus *became* a defining parameter of Norwegian-ness in the decades to come. It was a conscious, deliberate 'Norwegianization' process.

An independent Norwegian language variety develops

A&M heard the tales in the vernaculars of the countryside and incorporated vernacular features into their written versions of the tales, in NF. Thus, the NF contributed to the creation of a new language form, distinct from Danish (and to a lesser extent Swedish) that gradually took root also in the urban areas. A&M were in the unique position of committing to written form these rural dialects so that the urban bourgeois readers could celebrate their rural and Ur-Norwegian, Old Norse, authenticity, and at the same time would be able to understand them. A form of compromise – or translation – had to be reached on the continuum dialect-standard form and oral-written. Thus, the NF strongly contributed to the emergence of new, independent, Norwegian language varieties as well as a distinct (perceived) cultural identity. Thus, many

rural vernacular expressions[41], proverbs, adages and individual words came into everyday spoken and written language through the NF. It is interesting to note that A&M collaborated with the renowned linguist Ivar Aasen, the founder of the emerging language variety that came to be known as *nynorsk*.

Narrative style, the framing technique

Asbjørnsen's narrative frames to his own collection of tales – more discursive than the tales they collected together and more descriptive of rural life on the outskirts of Oslo. The frame was the recollections of an imaginary narrator from the city visiting rural families and describing the events that unfolded, underscored the difference between folk and urban through the stylistic differences in the narrator's recollections and the dialogue played out in the framed stories. The frames thus represented the urban Dano-Norwegian language form (more complex grammar constructions, very descriptive) and the tales themselves the rural more 'Norwegian' vernacular (short main clauses, fewer adjectives). The framing technique created a 'safe' demarcation between rural and urban linguistic traditions (see Rudvin 2000). A&M's use of free indirect speech was also innovative and set a precedent in the emerging Norwegian language form. The use of free indirect speech together with reported speech allowed the narrators to highlight particular character traits. In the tale analyzed below in Part III, free indirect speech is used to emphasize the heroine's submission to nature (represented by the winds).

Form and function of oral narrative

The oral mode must be economical in form because to tell a story that is to endure through time is far more cognitively demanding than to write one, and by the same token to listen and to remember. The mnemonic aspects of the oral narrative (simplicity, repetition, groupings of three or seven) is therefore crucial, and at the same time the story must be aesthetically satisfactory, providing a story that entertains and comes alive through plot and dialogue. A tale must also span all age-groups of listeners. The somewhat romanticized way of describing folktales as 'the distilled wisdom of the elders' used to describe folktales actually has some merit. In order to be viable, information contained in and passed through generations must take a form that is economical but sufficiently robust to maintain its form over time and it must be information that is worth passing on. For an oral narrative to pass through generations and 'bear

[41] Examples of folk tales that came to embody and symbolize behaviours *Per og Pål* "Per and Pal", *Soria Moria* "Soria Moria", *Kjerringa mot strømmen* "The old woman against the stream", *God dag mann, økseskaft* "Good Day Sir, Axe-handle", *Sjuende far i huset* "Seventh Father in the House".

the wisdom of the Volk/and or the elders) it must be more than 'just' a story, it must contain something that is worth all the effort that has gone into its repeated narration. The function of that effort could be normative/didactic/admonishing (Greek epics) or it could be the metaphorization of processes deep in the human psyche (it is telling that Jung and Bettelheim, among many others, saw an important psychological/ psychic function in oral narrative). Where narratives today are often read literally, in preliterate times the effectiveness of oral narrative of various genres was (also) in the ability to distill human experience into a short, repetitive (for mnenomic reasons) form that could be passed on not just from person to person but from generation to generation and across large geographical distances. To represent cultural values, but also deep and ethereal human psychological experience. The tales are therefore quintessentially metaphorical, the 'messiness' of human life distilled into a strict – repeated and repeatable – narrative form that embodies in a handful of characters and plot features the bigger picture of human experience and organization.

II. Nature in The NF

The Nature trope was constitutive of the narratives themselves and at the same time it was a representation of the distinctiveness of Norway vs Denmark and Sweden. A&M's own experience of nature deeply informed the style of the tales: Asbjørnsen's detailed narrative frames (those written individually, not with Moe) are replete with meticulous descriptions of the landscape, both winter and summer, during his wanderings in the forest area near Christiania (now Oslo). Their joint tales also reflect the landscape of their field trips to rural Norway. Thus, the new nation-state came to be symbolized by nature as the embodiment of national character as well as certain behaviours in the stories (hardiness, stoicism, silence) that fitted in well with the Nature trope[42]. These aspects reflected, of course, Romantic ideals that were being held up as ideal virtues in other European countries. Thus, not only was Nature powerfully evocative and iconic as a national symbol, it was part and parcel of the tales themselves. The sense of Nature as an unchangeable, essential and solid force of human destiny that is not subordinated to or dominated by human culture gave the narratives a sense of authority and permanence.

Nature is a constant frame in the NF: the deep dark forests, the narrow valleys, high mountains and waterfalls, the sea, the winds, fire, the marshes and

[42] For more information on Norwegian 'egalitarianism' see Aase 2005; Avant and Knutsen 1993; Gullestad 2002; Maagerø and Simonsen 2005.

mountain lakes create a perfectly intertwined and complex tableau for the plot, representing fate/destiny, authority, life's journey, distance, adversity, psychological states and life-phases. An in-between place, almost a 'limbo' between Man and Nature is represented by the supernatural creatures that people the tales (*troll, nisse, hulder*). Anthropomorphic representations (the bear, the horse, the fox, the crow, etc.) reflect archetypal motifs in folktales across the world and across time-periods – familiar to us through the Kalevala epic, the Perrault stories and Grimm tales –, the characters embodying universal psychological and familial/ societal figures: the youngest sibling, the cruel step-mother, etc.

The dark side of Nature

Reflecting a pre-technological past, Nature is presented in the NF as frightening, reassuring and authoritative. It is simultaneously challenging, dangerous, protective, omnipotent, compassionate, and rule-setting. Respected, feared, revered, nature is accepted as a part of an inescapable human destiny. The protagonists are simultaneously in thrall to her, wary of her and participate in her. Nature, in these tales, is neither terrifying, nor a pastoral idyll – or rather, it is both. Nature encompasses and embraces that which is dangerous and that which is reassuring, creating an arc of continuity in the narrative landscape of the tales.

Violating the taboos and limitations in the Man-Nature divide is dangerous, and leads to grief and punishment. This is exemplified in the tale *Østenfor Sol og Vestefor Måne* (East of the Sun and West of the Moon) when the heroine is punished for disobeying the bear-prince. Authoritative, Nature is the embodiment of fate and destiny, dangerous, but also protecting and life-giving. The recurrent (anti)hero-figure *Askeladden* (Boots) engages with the physical landscape, as does the heroine: the cold and wet of winds and sea, the impassable mountains and the impenetrable forest, the swampy marshes lead to a dark underworld of the psyche, or to a magic realm of opportunity. Like Alice's dreamland – down the rabbit hole and through the little door – Gaia's mysterious underbelly is perfectly choreographed as the hero(ine)'s existential search for understanding and wisdom.

Against the same natural landscape, Boots reflects and epitomizes proto-Scandinavian egalitarian values: the maverick, the down-and-out, the weakest and youngest, the smallest in size, the out-of-luck, challenging the hubris of established power relations, be they familial (siblings and parents) or societal (the king, the landowner), anthropomorphic/animal (fox, wolf, bear, horse), or

supra-natural (the troll, the giant). Boots' courage and free spirit of adventure – or alternately his lack of initiative and idleness – challenge and conquer the dominant norm-setting figures (elder brother, father, king).

Nature vs. Culture

Nature vs. Culture is a divide that we have come to see as 'natural', and yet it is arguably an artificial divide, of the modern era. Essentially, culture could be seen as nothing but a mediation, a re-working of nature's resources. The modern Nature-Culture divide is transcended in pre-modern narratives, blended either as a seamless continuity, or as opposing forces, as the canvas for the hero(ine)'s maturation story into adolescence and adulthood. As Boots ventures into the forest, he ventures into the reign and realm of Nature, into its rule of law stipulating the tests and trials he must sustain: the obstacles, helpers, objects and prizes (Propp 1968) that must be mastered and gained to reach adulthood and the ultimate prize, symbolized by marriage/family – his own autonomous micro-cosmos.

Illustrations

The Romantic-nationalist narrative project was exponentially strengthened through the works of illustrators such as E. Werenskiold and O. Sinding, but especially by Th. Kittelsen (1857-1914) who immortalized the tales through his haunting visual portrayals[43]. In Kittelsen's poignant but humorous images we find constant negotiation of Man with the elements and an almost metaphysical space/time dimension, a borderline space creating a metaphysical interface where the physical demarcation man-nature is often unclear – the face of a bearded troll blending into the background so that it looks like both a troll and the mountain it stands in front of. The dreamlike soft colours portray transitions of seasons and light, of grey misty dawn, and the fuzzy edges of a snow-covered forest blending into each other. Trees suggest living creatures (trolls) and marshes come alive[44]. Kittelsen's semi-ironic but also awe-inspiring reading of the confines between Nature-Culture represents a limbo or an

[43] The celebrated Norwegian photographer Morten Krogsvold also speaks of Kittelsen as a major inspiration to Norwegian cultural life; he narrates how Astrid Lindgren – when he was photographing her – tells how Kittelsen was an inspiration to her as she wrote *Ronja Røverdatter* (Ronja the Robbers' Daughter). https://www.mortenkrogvold.no/blogg/23/12/2019/maleren-theodor-kittelsen. See also Skre 2015.

[44] Kittelsen's illustrations are available on http://www.theodorkittelsen.no/en/; on the website of the Norwegian National Library https://www.nb.no/eventyr/?page_id=38, the Norwegian National Gallery https://www.nasjonalmuseet.no/en/collection/articles/fairytale, and on many other websites that witness his position and iconicity in the Norwegian canon, e.g. https://snohetta.com/projects/348-the-national-center-for-theodor-kittelsen; https://www.blaa.no/en/attractions/th-kittelsen-museet-2/#.

interface rather than a divide. Nature is tamed, but not too much: the limitations of dominating and taming nature are recognized.

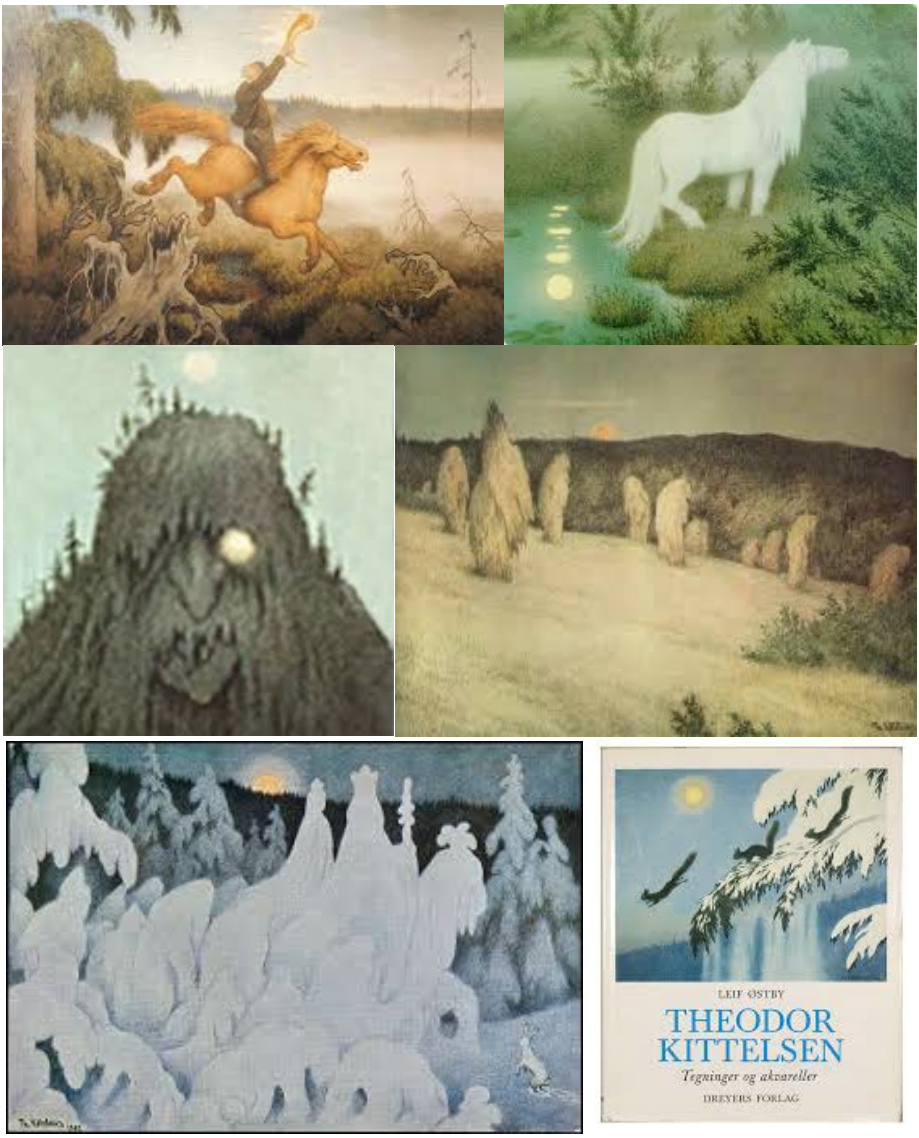

Figure 2: Kittelsen's illustrations of the NF

The combination of text with illustrations became hugely popular in Norway; the Nature-Narrative nexus further strengthened the popularity of the tales, and, importantly, solidified the perceived 'Norwegian-ness' of the

narratives. Just as A&M (re)created the Nature-Volk-stories nexus, so did the illustrators. Without their input and work, this connection might never have come to be so strongly enshrined in the collective consciousness of the coming generations as a representation of the national.

Kittelsen's warm softness is very different from the clarity of outline in the iconic scenery of the 'new romantics' such as A. Tordenskjold, H. Dahl, but especially Tidemand and Gude. The majestic landscape and rurally clad protagonists in *Brudeferden i Hardanger* (The Hardanger Bridal Party) was a powerful tribute to the nation-building process. Here, *Volk* finds expression in a pristine natural setting of great visual beauty showcased through the dramatic West-coast mountain scenery. The representation of traditional clothing captures the Golden Age-longing. The stave church as background as well as object of the protagonists' wedding procession brings together landscape and religion, Nature and Culture. A Golden Age, and not the 'dark period' of Danish colonial rule.

Figure 3: Tidemand and Gude 'Brudeferd i Hardanger', 1848

It is indeed hard to over-estimate how much the illustrations reinforced the profound connection to (n)Nature. These illustrations became a part of the artistic heritage for the coming generations, and we still see this enacted – in a lighter and more humorous spirit – in Christmas traditions. The little troll figure – *nisse* – is no longer a frightening, controlling harbinger of bad luck, but cute and friendly, family-oriented and child-friendly in its ubiquitous representations at Christmas, in decorations and Christmas cards (an excellent example is the Oslo-born artist Trygve Davidsen).

Figure 4: Trygve Daviden's illustration of 'nisser' for a Christmas card

That same, intense, promotion of nature through literature and other artistic expressions that began in the late 19th century has persisted to the present day, for example in music – from Grieg to modern music; in visual art from Christmas cards to national painters such as Tordensjkold, Dahl, Tidemand and Gude; theatre – from Ibsen to modern experimental playwrights; in cinema – for example in the first Lapp film; in advertising and merchandising of all sorts. This underpins, it could be argued, a sense of Nature having pride of place in modern-day Norway.

This has become even more wide-spread now that Ikea sells Christmas decorations and Christmas tree ornaments all over the world, strengthening the perceived Nature-Scandinavia bond. These same visual traditions are part and parcel of a new, emerging, multicultural identity in modern Norway, blending Norwegian icons of flag, traditional costume, log cabins, folk tale figures with representations of Norwegians of Asian or African heritage. The folktales and their represenation of Nature are thus a constitutive part of the hybrid identity of modern Norway.

Figure 5: Pictures of children in traditional costume with Norwegian flags, possibly celebrating the Norwegian national day and the NF translated into urdu

III. *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*

Finally, to illustrate the centrality of n(N)ature in the NF with a concrete example, I would like to conclude with a description of the much-loved fairytale *Østenfor Sol og Vestenfor Måne*. (Den Norske Bokklubben edition 230-242). It is a long story; A&M probably edited various versions of it into this very complete and 'finished' version. It is a classic fairytale, 452A in the Antti-Thompson-Uther index[45], of the Roman/Greek Eros/Cupid-Psyche, with many similarities to *Beauty and the Beast, The Golden Ass* and the tale *Kvitebjørn og Kong Valemo*n. The Scottish folktale collector Andrew Lang included it in his *Blue Book of Fairy Tales*.

The plot is as follows:

The beautiful youngest daughter in a poor family living in the forest is pledged to a white bear who comes to ther house during a violent storm; the father is promised riches in return. The daughter rides on the back of the bear 'a long long way', 'a long long time' to his castle. The bear visits her every night in the form of a handsome young man, admonishing her to not: «look at me». Her life with the bear is untroubled, but after a while she pines for her family and the bear brings her home for a visit with another injunction: «don't follow your mother's advice». The journey to and from the bear's castle is laready part of a prominent journey-motif. When they return to the bear's castle the girl is consumed with curiosity, and follows her mother's advice, instead of her husband's injunction: she holds a candle to his sleeping face so that she can see his true – human – visage. His beauty prompts her to kiss him, the hot wax from the candle drips onto him and wakes him; they are doomed: he must return to the wicked troll who bewitched him and who lives in a distant castle 'east of the sun and west of the moon'. The geographical non-location of the castle is referenced in the evocative title, already suggesting distance, unkowability and fate. The girl wakes up in a dreamlike state with her meagre belongings in the middle of a dark forest. These black and white illustrations by Otto Sinding (in many of the main editions, also the Den Norske Bokklubben edition which has been used for reference in this paper) the storyline is vividly portrayed, and the uneasy interface between human agency and n(N)ature comes to the fore. The black and white gives a slightly dark, uneasy edge to the story, a dream-like quality where black becomes grey in the forest, grass, waves. Humans and nature merge but n(N)ature dominates.

[45] Thompson 1955-58 and https://sites.ualberta.ca/~urban/Projects/English/Motif_Index.htm. See endnote 1.

Figure 6: illustrations of Kvitebjørn Kong Valemon (Kittelsen, image 1) and Østenfor Sol og Vestenfor Måne (Sinding images 2, 3, 4, 5)[46]

Here, as shown in the illustrations, starts the real journey, to reach her lost bear-prince husband. The first part of the journey involves the classic fairy/magic tale 'helpers' (three old women as well as a horse for transport) and 'objects' – a golden apple, a golden yarn spool, a golden spinning wheel; always three of each, as described in Propp 1968. The first old woman doesn't know where the castle is, but 'maybe her friend will know', and so it continues. The third old woman doesn't know either and takes her to her friend the East Wind, who might know becasue he is 'so well-travelled', and 'he can blow you

[46] Available at https://www.nasjonalmuseet.no/en/collection/object/NG.K_H.B.07987

[to the castle] on his back'. She then starts the last and most arduous leg of her journey on the back of the four winds. The East-, West- and South Winds do not know where the castle is, but 'the North Wind will know because he is stronger and has blown (travelled) further', the South Wind suggests. Finally, they reach the North Wind – wild, savage and frightening, but stronger and more powerful than all the others. In this narrative time-space dimension, each of the four mighty winds has travelled across the world. On the strength of experience gained through their travels across the world, each wind is able to give the girl advice; the experience and strength of each wind increases from the first to the last – East, West, South and finally North. The North Wind is the oldest and the wisest, but especially the most well-travelled and experienced.

Distance as time, the time-space dimension

Already here, the repetitive, ritualistic nature of the storyline and the long arduous journey drives home the element of distance in space and time. The storytelling is sparse, rendering the time-space element even more prominent. The girl's first journeys on the horse were slow and tame compared to when she was carried on the back of a powerful wind, and the first three winds were tame compared to the last, mighty North Wind: authoritative, paternal, stern. On this last and final leg of the journey the great North Wind himself is exhausted 'beyond measure' because the distance is so great; but the girl is safe and secure on his back. «I've never even blown an asp-leaf as far as this», the Wind says, «and even then I was so exhausted I couldn't get up for many days». This unmistakeable emphasis on the exhaustion of the wind – again the time-space dimenion – underscores the nature of the journey's end: the elusive, mysterious castle 'beyond sun and moon'; the Unkown, the Future.

Figure 7: Illustration to Østenfor Sol og Vestenfor Måne, by Otto Sinding

Although it is frightening, the girl feels confident, reassured by her helpers the Winds and the old women; she is anxious to reach the bear prince, but trusts fate and destiny: «Is she the one?»; «Were you the one who was meant to have him?» the old women ask. «Yes, it is I»; «Yes, she *wanted* to go and she felt compelled to go»; «She wasn't afraid, even if it were to end badly» (translated from the Norwegian by the author as closely as possible to render A&M's narrative style as evidently as possible).

Having reached the castle, we are almost at journey's end: the last hurdle is to outwit the troll-princess who is about to marry the bear-prince-husband. With the help of the three magic objects, they manage to outwit the troll, just in time, in a poignant final episode.

Concluding remarks

A pivotal point of the tale is the narrative interaction between the heroine – a young girl at the beginning of her journey into adulthood, if this is read as a maturation story – and nature (the Winds, an enchanted bear). This interaction both accentuates her agency in the active construction of her own life trajectory and her need to obey nature (rather than her own family, i.e. her own childhood bonds in psychological terms) and thus create a life-giving and life-asserting balance between human agency and acceptance of nature's authority in the human experience. It is only by obeying (the enchanted bear-prince-husband's injunctions – he himself is in a limbo between metaphysical bewitched nature and human form) that she can fulfill her own destiny. Her refusal to do this and the following need to repair the damage is the story of the fulfillment of her destiny. To modern readers, especially the young, a traditional maturation story such as this one (a variant of some of the most widespread Indo-European folktales of the 'Beauty and the Beast' variant) may seem very strange or even disturbing, as the heroine seemingly encapsulates traditional female values of obedience; the resolution of her difficulties lies in marriage to a prince. And yet we must remember that there are many tales with male equivalents to the hero (or anti-hero) struggling through his own youth towards adulthood and subjected to the injunctions of elders, animals, the elements, etc. The *raison d'être* of the narrative is the hero(ine)'s negotiation, through her own agency.

In this beautiful maturation tale we find, thus, a powerful symbiosis between Nature and Culture. The journey is enacted against the backdrop of a vast, timeless, endless landscape. Omnipotent, unkowable and dangerous, Nature is the metaphysical core of life's journey. Through their actions, travelling across this vastness, the hero(ine)s mediate what n(N)ature has provided them with. Along with the helpers – the bewitched bear, the old women, the horse, the objects, the winds themselves – they work towards that one goal: negotiating challenges and vicissitudes in the complex life of a human being being, life's journey.

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The Dream of Nature Awareness in Mary Oliver's Poetry

Naghmeh Varghaiyan[47] / Karam Nayebpour[48]

"All important ideas must include the trees,

the mountains, and the rivers." (Mary Oliver, "Leaves and Blossoms Along the Way")

"… After all

what is Nature, it isn't

kindness, it isn't unkindness." (Mary Oliver, "Early Snow")

Introduction

No biography can describe Mary Oliver's life better than this: she was born, praised nature, and died. She was born in 1935 in Maple Heights, Ohio, a semi-rural suburb of Cleveland. She was a long-time resident of Cape Cod and Vermont as a teacher at Bennington College. Oliver began writing poetry at the age of 14. In addition to her prose works, she published about thirty books of poetry. Her first book, *No Voyage and Other Poems*, was published in 1963, when she was 28. Her fifth poetry book, *American Primitive* (1983), won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1984 for its observation of the natural world. In 1992, she was awarded the National Book Award for her work *New and Selected Poems, Volume Two*.

Oliver is a nature poet and a teacher of nature poetry as well. Nature appears as a constant subject and theme in her poetry constructed throughout her five decades of professional writing. She is a keen observer of the different aspects of nature, and in her poetry, as highlighted by Harrison Smith, she "combine[s] a precise, unfussy style with an almost religious devotion to examining nature." According to critics, Oliver's poetry shows the effect of American nature writing and 19th-century Transcendentalism besides sharing the British tradition of late 18th-century Romanticism. Her poetry shares the perspective of Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller, Wordsworth, and Shelley towards nature. Oliver, however, presents her own unique romanticism in her poetry. As Rachel Syme observes, Oliver:

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worked in the Romantic tradition of Wordsworth or Keats, but she also infused a distinctly American loneliness into her words—the solitary reflections of Thoreau gazing over a lake, or of Whitman peering from the Brooklyn Ferry at the shuffling tides below his feet. Hers were not poems about isolation, though, but about pushing beyond your own sense of emotional quarantine, even when you feel fear. Everywhere you look, in Oliver's verse, you find threads of connectivity.

In terms of the represented perspective towards nature, Oliver's poetry is also considered distinct from the nature poetry practiced by the British romantic poets such as Keats and Wordsworth. Nature in her poetry is self-contained and does not stand for something beyond itself. As Janet McNew points out, Oliver prefers to reside in nature itself:

The best modern criticism has shown that most male romantic nature poetry is about achieving an identity that transcends nature. Unlike Keats, who famously characterized subsumption in natural cycles as becoming 'a sod,' Oliver finds comfort and joy in her dreams of dissolving into the forest floor. Unlike Wordsworth, who resigns himself to 'the philosophic mind' when he becomes powerless to achieve the child's blissful absorption in nature, Oliver finds herself still able to enter a natural communion lost to the adult male. (75)

Therefore, as rightly pointed out by McNew, Oliver's "poetry is neither a replication of romantic accomplishment nor is it, to use [Harold] Bloom's term, a 'belated' modern version of visionary romanticism" (61). Rather, her poetry presents an unmatched philosophy of life which is based on human beings' absorption in and reunification with the natural environment. Based on her own acknowledgement at the beginning of her book *Long Life: Essays and other Writings* (2004), for Oliver "writing poems […] is a way of offering praise to the world" (xiv).

Passion of Reunion and Oneness with Nature

In Oliver's practice of poetry, there is no nature/culture dichotomy, as they are not considered independent from each other. To put it in Sarah Pilgrim's and Jules Pretty's words, as they argue in the introduction to *Nature and Culture: Rebuilding Lost Connections* (2010), Oliver calls on us to be aware of "a mutual feedback between cultural systems and the environment" (1). The relationship between human beings and nature, as revealed in Oliver's poetry, is not a subject/object or an active/passive relationship. Rather, the subjectivity of the subject is entangled with the objectivity of the object, or, as McNew observes, "Oliver's visionary goal … involves constructing a subjectivity that

does not depend on separation from a world of objects. Instead, she respectfully confers subjecthood on nature, thereby modelling a kind of identity that does not depend on opposition for definition" (72). Oliver's poetry reminds us of the indispensable part of the natural surroundings inherent within our conventionalized culture.

Oliver encourages us to live in tune with nature through replacing our egocentrism with ecocentrism. This can save and protect humans and nature at the same time. Oliver's construction of poetry is an attempt to encourage us to accept the earth's biodiversity and the fact that, instead of seeking dominance over nature, we should recognize it through establishing a meaningful interaction with it. Recognizing the emergency of the situation, the speaking voice in Oliver's poetry complains about the role and function of human society in the destruction of nature and its non-human elements. For example, by remembering how the fields and woods were home to rare bird species in her childhood, the speaker in "Meadowlark," from *Felicity*, mourns the bird's tragic extinction, which occurred as a result of the destruction of its habitat by human beings:

Has anyone seen meadowlark?

[lines 2-4 …]

He used to live in the field

I crossed many a morning

heading to the woods,

truant again from school.

There were no meadowlarks in the school.

Which was a good enough reason for me

not to want to be there.

But now it's more serious.

There is no field, neither have the woods survived.

So, where is meadowlark? (21, lines 1-15)

The speaker in this poem is so entangled with natural elements that she does not want to be where animals are absent. Thus, Oliver's "abiding interest in the natural world" (Harrison Smith) is a significant aspect of her poetic imagination. As a true representation of Oliver, the speaker in "When Death Comes," from *New and Selected Poems, Volume One* (1992), defines herself as a "bride married to amazement. / I was the bridegroom, taking the world into my arms" (10, lines 24-25). Nature in Oliver's poetry is the centre of life and

being, and connectivity of the different natural elements is her main, recurring theme. She presents the natural world or wildlife as the only available shelter for the isolated human beings of our modern, highly industrialized society.

Nature in Oliver's poetry is shown as a relaxing resort for the uncomfortable modern mind. Since urban life has alienated human beings from reality, she calls on us to recognize the already familiarized natural world so that, by noticing our connection to the plants and the animals, we might imitate the natural order. This is the only way for us, as reiterated in Oliver's poetry, to enjoy and understand our life. It can also enable us to get rid of the absurd side of modern life and to return the lost or threatened beauty back to nature. In "The Summer Day," from *House of Light* (1992), the speaker presents alignment with the natural world as the only purpose of life, and finds it absurd to ask theological and philosophical questions about the meaning of life. The speaker thus ponders about the universal purpose of life by presenting some rhetorical questions to the implied reader(s):

Who made the world?

Who made the swan, and the black bear?

Who made the grasshopper?

[lines 4-10 …]

I don't know exactly what a prayer is.

I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down

into the grass, how to kneel in the grass,

how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,

which is what I have been doing all day.

Tell me, what else should I have done?

Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?

Tell me, what is it you plan to do

With your one wild and precious life? (60, lines 1-19)

Oliver perceives human life an inseparable part of "one wild and precious life." Being curious about wildlife, and caring for it should be the ruling power of our life. Similarly, the speaker in "Mindful," from *Why I Wake Early*: *New Poems* (2005), defines observing nature as the only mission of her life and being:

Every day

I see or hear

something

that more or less
kills me
with delight,
that leaves me
like a needle
in the haystack
of light.
It was what I was born for –
to look, to listen,
to lose myself
inside this soft world –
to instruct myself
over and over
in joy,
and acclamation. (58, lines 1-18)

Thus, as is it true about Oliver's other nature poems, the poetic voice in "Mindful" criticises our complete attitude of indifference towards nature. Similarly, the speaker in "Have You Ever Tried to Enter the Long Black Branches," from *West Wind: Poems and Prose Poems* (1998), criticises the way nature is neglected in our life. She argues that if there is something which makes our life meaningful, it is our connection with different aspects of life which are present in nature as a whole. Human beings have already forgotten such an original mission in their lives. Thus, the speaker encourages us to "leave" our "desks" so that we can find our "soul" by being involved with the true nature of life:

Have you ever tried to enter the long black branches of other lives –
tried to imagine what the crisp fringes, full of honey, hanging
from the branches of the young locust trees, in early morning, feel like?
Do you think this world was only an entertainment for you?
Never to enter the sea and notice how the water divides
with perfect courtesy, to let you in!
Never to lie down on the grass, as though you were the grass!
Never to leap to the air as you open your wings over the dark acorn of your heart!

No wonder we hear, in your mournful voice, the complaint
that something is missing from your life!
Who can open the door who does not reach for the latch?
Who can travel the miles who does not put one foot
in front of the other, all attentive to what presents itself
continually?
Who will behold the inner chamber who has not observed
with admiration, even with rapture, the outer stone? (61, lines 1-16)

By reminding us of the immediate nature of wilderness and natural beauty to our life, the speaker motivates us to take a decisive action in order to reverse the course of our life. In other words, she optimistically pursues a universal change in the conventionalised and industrialised nature of the relationship between human society and nature:

Well, there is time left –
fields everywhere invite you into them.
And who will care, who will chide you if you wander away
from wherever you are, to look for your soul?
Quickly, then, get up, put on your coat, leave your desk!
To put one's foot into the door of the grass, which is
the mystery, which is death as well as life, and
not be afraid!
To set one's foot in the door of death, and be overcome
with amazement!
To sit down in front of the weeds, and imagine
god the ten-fingered, sailing out of his house of straw,
nodding this way and that way, to the flowers of the
present hour,
to the song falling out of the mockingbird's pink mouth,
to the tippets of the honeysuckle, that have opened
in the night
To sit down, like a weed among weeds, and rustle in the wind!
Listen, are you breathing just a little, and calling it a life?
While the soul, after all, is only a window,

and the opening of the window no more difficult

than the wakening from a little sleep. (61, lines 17-38)

Thus, the speaker invites us to share her perspective regarding the interconnected nature of wildlife. She calls our life a "little sleep" from which we should wake up so that to experience the true sense of life. As emphasized by Anne Becher and Joseph Richey, Oliver's "poems are couched in a deep awareness of nature that seeks not to romanticize the natural world but rather to find understanding and universal wisdom within its cycles and predator/prey relationship" (605).

Oliver's poetry presents a non-hierarchical philosophy of Being and Existence. Earth seems to her like a womb—relaxing, peaceful, and self-contained. She believes that human soul is nowhere more at peace than when it is in nature. The speaker in "Sleeping in the Forest," the first poem in *Twelve Moons* (1979), replicates Oliver's experience of spending one night in the forest by telling us how nature has the potential to transform our ordinary life drastically. Nature turns the speaker into "something better": "… By the Morning / I had vanished at least a dozen times / into something better" (3, lines 16-18).

According to Oliver, reconnecting with our true reality—wildness—can save us from our anxious and isolated life. In "Gannet," from *New and Selected Poems Volume One* (1992), the speaker recounts to us a reawakening moment she had while observing the way a gannet dived into the sea to hunt a fish. Bewildered by such an experience, the speaker desperately tries to understand this event. Finally, she has a startling revelation, since she finds out that as a human being she has gone far away from her origins:

… if I could be what once I was,

like the wolf or the bear

standing on the cold shore,

I would still see it –

how the fish simply escape, this time,

or how they slide down into a black fire

for a moment,

then rise from the water inseparable

from the gannets' wings. (28, lines 28-36)

As a result of forgetting their innate bond with nature, human beings are estranged from the wildlife in a way that they do not understand the language of nature. As plainly recounted in her poem "A Dream of Trees," from *No Voyage*

and Other Poems (1965), desiring nature is an unfulfilled dream in human beings. Held captivated in their "troubling town," they desperately want to take refuge in nature:

There is a thing in me that dreamed of trees,
A quiet house, some green and modest acres
A little way from every troubling town,
A little way from factories, schools, laments.
I would have time, I thought, and time to spare,
With only streams and birds for company,
To build out of my life a few wild stanzas.
And then it came to me, that so was death,
A little way away from everywhere. (17, lines 1-9)

The speaker in this poem compares the quietness and safety found in nature to the ultimate peace present in death. While experiencing death means abandoning the mundane life, experiencing nature requires the abandoning of habitual life. With this comparison, the speaker implies the difficulty of moving away from the known cultural milieu to the unknown and unexperienced natural environment. However, as it is implied in Oliver's poetry, meaningful awareness can bring about the desired perspectival changes in human being's life. According to the philosophy revealed through Oliver's poetry, a human being is a wild animal, an element of the wilderness, or—as stated in her "Morning Poem," from *Dream Work* (1986)—"a beast shouting that the earth / is exactly what it wanted" (6, lines 27-28). Without acknowledging this, we cannot be happy.

Oliver understands life as a group effort, or a collective experience. Her poem "One," from *Why I Wake Early* (2005), outlines some of the reasons that the speaker brings forth to show why she cares for nature:

The mosquito is so small
it takes almost nothing to ruin it.
Each leaf, the same.
And the black ant, hurrying.
So many lives, so many fortunes!
Every morning, I walk softly and with forward glances
down to the ponds and through the pinewoods.
Mushrooms, even, have but a brief hour

before the slug creeps to the feast,
before the pine needles hustle down
under the bundles of harsh, beneficent rain.
How many, how many, how many
make up a world!
And then I think of that old idea: the singular
and the eternal.
One cup, in which everything is swirled
back to the color of the sea and sky.
Imagine it! (66, lines 1-18)

The world is made up of many different, and equally important, elements. It is a "cup" in which all the existing elements in nature come together to give birth to true life and living. Oliver tries to make us aware of the equal contribution of other animals and plants to the flow of life on earth. The universe belongs to all plants and animals, each of them busy with their own unique way of life. Thus, her poetry addresses nearly all animals and plants. In a different way, she invites us to be actively involved with nature. In "Wild Geese," from *Dream Work* (1986), she calls on us to find our place "in the family of things":

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things. (14, lines 14-18)

Reporting to us her close observations of the natural world, the speaker in Oliver's poetry interprets everything in the world as a constituent part of a universal family called life. In her philosophy, all plants and animals belong to an all-inclusive kingdom. Oliver looks at human being only as a member of this huge kingdom. By highlighting her own theory of connectivity, in "The Other Kingdoms," from *The Truro Bear and Other Adventures* (2008), the speaker calls on us to enrich our lives by being aware of the other kingdoms and recognizing their significance in the great chain of being:

Consider the other kingdoms. The
trees, for example, with their mellow-sounding
titles: oak, aspen, willow.

Or the snow, for which the peoples of the north
have dozens of words to describe its
different arrivals. Or the creatures, with their
thick fur, their shy and wordless gaze. Their
infallible sense of what their lives
are meant to be. Thus the world
grows rich, grows wild, and you too,
grow rich, grow sweetly wild, as you too
were born to be. (26, lines 1-12)

The quite richness of human life depends on the degree we are aware of the entire wildlife. Oliver shows how seemingly unimportant natural elements are in fact the most significant factors in our lives, and she empathises with such natural elements. In “Song of the Builders,” from *Why I Wake Early* (2005), the speaker narrates to us an awakening experience she had while observing a cricket:

On a summer morning
I sat down
on a hillside
to think about God -
a worthy pastime.
Near me, I saw
a single cricket;
it was moving the grains of the hillside
this way and that way.
How great was its energy,
how humble its effort.
Let us hope
it will always be like this,
each of us going on
in our inexplicable ways
building the universe. (60, lines 1-16)

Thus, the desire to reunify with nature, in order to play our part in “building the universe,” runs through Oliver’s entire poetic corpus. The poetic voice holds a sublime perspective towards nature and desires to (re)connect us

with it as the only source of our well-being and meaning. This feature is the most important aspect of Oliver's most recently published book of poetry.

Grouped in three parts, the poems in *Felicity* (2015) are mostly about plants, animals, and human beings—the three repeated themes throughout Oliver's poetry. For example, in "This Morning," the speaker finds the first moments of the recently-hatched redbird chicks, a remarkable example of existence. Not knowing anything about both themselves and the world around them, the chicks behave only based on their own instinctive needs. The recounting voice in this poem, however, finds a "miracle" in this simple and primitive form of life:

They [the chicks] don't even know they have wings.

And just like that, like a simple

neighborhood event, a miracle is

taking place. (*Felicity* 39, lines 11-14)

The unsaid message in this poem carries even more significance than the stated one. Human beings are possibly the only meaning-minded animals. As a result of adopting a utilitarian approach to life, they look for meaning and purpose in whatever they do in their lives. However, such a habitual and unavoidable tendency stops them from experiencing a miracle in their own lives. Accordingly, Oliver encourages us to learn how to live like the other natural elements—like the swans. In "Whistling Swans," the speaker talks about the universal language of praying, possibly in order to persuade us not to waste our lives through fighting over personal/religious conflicts:

Take your choice, prayers fly from all directions.

And don't worry about what language you use,

God no doubt understands them all.

[lines 6-14 …]

… don't you imagine (I just suggest it)

that the swans know as much as we do about

the whole business?

So listen to them and watch them, singing as they fly.

Take from it what you can. (*Felicity* 29, lines 2-19)

Hence, by giving various examples from wildlife, Oliver tries to defamiliarize our relation with nature. The voice in "Storage" questions human

beings' bond with consumerism, which is in Oliver's reading the main obstacle for loving nature:

> … things!
>
> burn them, burn them! make a beautiful
>
> fire! more room in your heart for love,
>
> for the trees! for the birds who own
>
> nothing –the reason they can fly. (*Felicity* 31, lines 14-18)

Unlike her criticism of the modern human being's pathetic condition, Oliver praises the self-referential nature of wildlife where there is no purpose other than the core event of living. For example, in "Roses" from *Felicity*, the speaker presents a wide emotional/cognitive capacity by imagining the fact that the roses are not able to understand her ontological questions concerning the existence of God and the nature of death about which "everyone now and again wonders" without having "ready answers" (7, lines 1-3). The roses' indifference to the speaker's important questions—"'Forgive us,' / they said. 'But as you can see, we are / just now entirely busy being roses'" (7, lines 11-13)—portrays the degree to which human beings, compared to other natural elements, are concerned with absurd issues which stop them from living their real lives in the moment. This idea is a repeated theme in Oliver's poetry. For example, in the first poem in *A Thousand Mornings* (2012) entitled "I Go Down to the Shore," when the voice asks the sea what she should do in her "miserable" state, the sea says "in its lovely voice: / Excuse me, I have work to do" (1). Similarly, the dialogue between the speaker and a fox in "Good-bye, Fox," another poem from *A Thousand Mornings*, shows the two opposing modes of life. Rather than living a carefree life, in the fox's words, human beings are busy with defining and describing life:

> [Fox:] You fuss over life with your clever
>
> words, mulling and chewing on its meaning, while
>
> we just live it.
>
> [lines 18-19 …]
>
> why spend so much time trying. You fuss, we live. (13, lines 15-20)

The desire for a carefree, though satisfactorily fulfilled, life is also the main point in "Lilies," a poem from *House of Light* (1992). The speaker in this poem envies the lilies for the genuine manner of their life:

> I have been thinking
>
> about living

like the lilies

that blow in the fields.

They rise and fall

in the edge of the wind,

and have no shelter

from the tongues of the cattle,

and have no closets or cupboards,

and have no legs. (12, lines 1-10)

Oliver strongly recommends us to imitate nature in our moral issues, since nature appropriately teaches us about the proper or meaningful manner of living. The speaker in "Crows," from *New and Selected Poems, Volume One*, praises crows for their self-centred and carpe diem way of life:

They don't envy anyone or anything—

[lines 9-10 …]

Why should they?

The wind is their friend, the least tree is home.

Nor is melody, they have discovered, necessary.

The birds, "as cheerful as saints, or thieves of the small job / who have been, one more night, successful," lead the speaker to self-reflection:

Should I have led a more simple life?

Have my ambitions been worthy?

Has the wind, for years, been talking to me as well? (220, lines 8-27)

Although Oliver's poetry presents a wide difference between a human being's self-centred expectations of the other natural elements and the true way of life found in nature, there is a consistently assiduous effort in her entire body of work to find a way of conversation with the other natural elements such as wild animals. Animals play a significant role in Oliver's poetry. As pointed out by McNew, "the embrace of animals" in Oliver's poetry acts "as a dreamlike regaining of original wholeness" (64). In her poem "Toad" (1992), from *White Pine: Poems and Prose Poems* (1994), the speaker narrates her imaginary conversation with a toad. As highlighted in her narration, even the thought of such an animal awakens her empathetic feelings:

I was walking by. He was sitting there.

It was full morning, so the heat was heavy on his sand-colored

head and his webbed feet. I squatted beside him, at the edge
of the path. He didn't move.
I began to talk. I talked about summer, and about time. The
pleasures of eating, the terrors of the night. About this cup
we call a life. About happiness. And how good it feels, the
heat of the sun between the shoulder blades.
He looked neither up nor down, which didn't necessarily
mean he was either afraid or asleep. I felt his energy, stored
under his tongue perhaps, and behind his bulging eyes.
I talked about how the world seems to me, five feet tall, the
blue sky all around my head. I said, I wondered how it seemed
to him, down there, intimate with the dust.
He might have been Buddha—did not move, blink, or frown,
not a tear fell from those gold-rimmed eyes as the refined
anguish of language passed over him. (38, lines 1-17)

While the speaker imagines the toad's possible reaction to her human questions, the toad naturally does not pay any attention either to the speaker's ontological questions or even to her presence, mainly because of its engagement with living life rather than philosophising it. In poems like "Toad", Oliver draws our attention towards the educational function of nature in human life by showing how disconnection from wildlife has led human beings into a realm of anxiety and a chain of regret.

Regret is a direct consequence of this trait in human behaviour. Being constantly busy with recollecting our past deeds and thinking about the teleological value of our life and actions, we have been living unaware of the immediate pleasure in our natural surroundings. The speaker recounts to us the life story of a cricket in "Nothing Is Too Small Not to Be Wondered About," from *Felicity*. She adores the cricket's built-in adaptation ability:

The cricket doesn't wonder
if there's a heaven
or, if there is, if there's room for him.
It's fall. Romance is over. Still, he sings.
If he can, he enters a house
through the tiniest crack under the door.
Then the house grows colder.

He sings slower and slower.

Then, nothing.

This must mean something; I don't know what.

But certainly it doesn't mean

he hasn't been an excellent cricket

all his life. (27, lines 1-13)

Oliver's poetry constantly motivates us to "hear" wildlife. In "Do the Trees Speak?" from *Felicity*, it is implied that the reason we are deaf to the whining of the trees while they are being slaughtered is the fact that we are not usually used to hearing their voices in our daily life because of their entire absence from our life: "If you can hear the trees in their easy hours / of course you can also hear them later, / crying out at the sawmill" (13).

Conclusion

Human beings' false perspective towards their natural surroundings is a recurring nostalgic theme which binds all of Oliver's poems together. Oliver's poetry is an effort against the classical dichotomy of nature and culture. By triggering our awareness, Oliver endeavours to bring nature back into our life through arguing about the unique and equal share of all non-human elements in the construction and continuation of life in universe. Plants and animals in Oliver's poetry are presented as the most essential constructive parts of the universal family. Oliver represents the complex network of nature as an ultimate realm of harmony. Unlike human beings, who mostly pursue a goal-based, unnatural life, animals and plants experience a life in which the only defining force is abiding with the necessities of the present moment. Thus, Oliver consistently advises us to spend more time decoding the underlying meaning present in nature. Oliver's poetry portrays nature as a reliable source of knowledge and experience. Human beings can improve their lives by imitating natural surroundings. In our highly modernized life, nature in Oliver's poetry is shown as the only source through which we can generate peace, tranquillity, and meaning in our lives. By presenting us with the true nature of the animals and plants, Oliver motivates us to reconcile our culture with nature. Through raising our awareness about the equal importance of all natural elements in the universal family, Oliver's nature poetry makes us rethink the way we have been treating nature.

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The Supremacy of Nature over Culture in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*

Sedef Güzelyurt

"A Virginia promotional tract stated that it was "not the nature of men, but the education of men" that made them "barbarous and uncivil."" (qtd in Takaki, R. p.900). This paper analyzes the supremacy of nature over culture in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* with a focus on Post-Colonial reading and Transcendental point of view. As mentioned above, men are naturally not wicked; rather, he is taught to be wicked with the education which comes with the culture.

Caliban living in harmony with the island and the nature makes the reader think of him as a Transcendentalist, as he finds comfort and tranquillity in nature. Furthermore, he is inherently good, showing the effects of Transcendentalism as well. His being inherently good can clearly be seen in his remarks below;

Be not afeard, the Isle is full of noises, sounds, sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not. Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments will hum about mine ears, and sometimes voices that, if I then had waked after long sleep, will make me sleep again; and then, in dreaming, the clouds methought would open, and show riches ready to drop upon me, that when I waked I cried to dream again. (3.2.12)

This both shows his finding solitude and comfort in nature; in addition, his conciliation shows how he is inherently good. Caliban can be portrayed as a transcendentalist, which can be interpreted as embracing the idealism and focusing on nature as well as opposing any view coming from the materialist world. What is meant with transcendentalism here is that the inner goodness in the nature of a person is above everything. Caliban, in fact, have this inner goodness, as stated in the above quotation, Caliban tries to introduce the island to them as he is much more experienced than the others about it. There is the idea that nature is unequalled, and the efforts to make the nature civilized is futile and it is obvious that there is no need for it. Furthermore, that the nature is divine and unequalled shows that the play has some Transcendentalist effects as well.

As is stated above, everything that comes from the nature will delight and it will not hurt, showing how the natural world itself is divine, thus intensifying the notion that the play has transcendental effects. Having been brought up by a witch mother, Sycorax, “Caliban is described as “naturally evil”. Despite any efforts, his nature cannot be changed. His natural evil in *The Tempest* will always triumph any attempts to change him” (Bloom 128). As opposed what Bloom states, Caliban is naturally good, not evil. “I loved thee, and showed thee all the qualities o’ th’ isle, the fresh springs, brine pits, barren place and fertile” (1.2.35). His predisposition is better than all the characters in the play, the characters in the play try to change him; however, they won’t succeed in it. As opposed to Bloom, Deborah Willis states that

As a ‘wild man’ he is also a composite, possessing qualities of the ‘noble savage’ as well as the monster. He is capable of learning language, of forming warm attachments; he is sensitive to beauty and music; he speaks- like aristocratic characters in the rhythms of verse, in contrast to the prose of Stephano and Trinculo; he can follow a plan and reason. (284)

In fact, that he has a basic optimism and goodwill towards human nature unlike the villains acknowledged as having morals and ethics in their civilized life. Her usage of “wild man” in quotes can be interpreted as he is not wild in fact, especially when he is considered in comparison with the others in the play. Unlike them, he is aware of the beauties around the nature and his song about freedom shows his sensitivity to music. Thanks to his inner goodness, Caliban shows Stephano and Trinculo the island when they arrive in it.

I’ll show thee the best springs. I’ll pluck thee berries.

I’ll fish for thee and get thee wood enough.

A plague upon the tyrant that I serve!

I’ll bear him no more sticks, but follow thee,

Thou wondrous man. (2.2.7-10)

Those lines above prove the naivety of Caliban who does the same favor to Prospero and Miranda as well. He offers to show the island with all its characteristics to those strangers. Though he does this before and gets nothing but slavery and cruelty in return, he can be interpreted as having innate goodness, which clearly shows the Transcendental inclination in his character.

Thinking about the play intertextually, in the film made by Julie Taymor, Caliban seems strong and statuesque; however, when they are face to face with Prospero, he has nothing in hand symbolizing his goodness, a characteristic of Transcendentalism, while Prospero has a stick or a baton, the

symbol of fight or evil. Instead of having the evilness in his mind, in fact he is directed by his urges of living and can be delineated as sturdy to deal with the natural world around him. Whatever Caliban does that may be regarded as unacceptable in the society is not his guilt, it is just the nature of all the living beings not affected by the crumbs of culture. It can be clearly seen when Prospero addresses him, he refers to him as follows; "Thou earth, thou! Speak" (2.2:39). The character grows out of soil, out of nature where he is rooted or out of earth in Shakespeare's words. The reality is that the natural world of him may not be and should not be suitable for everyone due to the fact that Shakespeare wants the nature to be kept out of man's reach. Although not a Transcendentalist, particularly as it did not develop until the l9th century, Shakespeare explores some transcendental ideas in The Tempest. These include finding solitude and comfort in nature, depicting nature as divine and the inner goodness of Caliban despite his upbringing.

Considering the ties Caliban has with the natural world and his own nature, it can obviously be perceived that nature, as the title of the play suggests, is multi-layered. On the one hand, tempest meaning storm draws the attention to the physical forces of nature, such as the storms which cause the shipwreck in Act One and the shipwreck experienced by Miranda and Prospero years ago. On the other hand, the abstract form of nature can be observed in the attributes of the characters both emotionally and rationally. In addition, the natural world in the island is also the other side of the play. This can be seen distinctly in Boatswain's utterance at the beginning of Act One. "If you can command these elements to silence and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more" (1.1.19-20). Boatswain in this quotation mentions Caliban and Ariel and the need to silence and to impose power on them. This proves the human being's unending desire to exercise power over the existing elements in nature. In fact, the nature of men does not have the instinct of controlling everything in life, it is the nurture, that is, the education they get and the things learnt from the societal imposition. It has been clearly emphasized that the rules, regulations, traditions and precepts that have already existed in society pave the way for people to be unkind and to have the tendency to be brutal. That is why, nature and instinct seem to be valued by William Shakespeare in his play more than the cruel society and its teachings. That Caliban is lacking in civilized influence is of great significance in the play as he was born into nature and he integrates himself with the nature and he becomes what he is with the nature itself.

Caliban is symbol of natural instinct and his representation in the play is to show how he and his beliefs collide with the society. He was born in nature brought up there and his image is just here to enhance his character and to justify the seemingly impossible compromise between nature and culture. He tries to learn the language from Miranda; however, most of the time he uses the language to curse them.

As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed

With raven's feature from unwholesome fen

Drop on you both! A southwest blow on ye

And blister you all o'er! (1.2. 22-24)

Caliban as seen in his nature is given by Shakespeare to give the message that however hard the people try, they cannot unlearn the things that become their own nature, what a person is cannot be changed. As Caliban does, everything reverts back to nature and his character is the best example to show the clash between civilization vs savagery.

While Caliban symbolizes the nature and the colonized, Prospero and Miranda can be considered as the symbols of degenerated colonization culture and the colonizers who are aware of all the social values, morals and education. Culture can be defined as philosophy, it, in fact, features the idea of information within its pronunciation, it evokes the reality of language and it brings to mind the term of language which is all artificial and human made. As seen from the characters created by Shakespeare and by Taymor nature requires nothing but survival; however, civilization is guided by mental skills of men. Innocence belongs to nature and it is lost when integrated with the culture. What is vital to society is not necessarily significant in nature and vice versa. That's why in contrast to what Bloom states, Caliban is not evil but he does whatever vital to his surrounding and his own living; however, his natural predisposition does not correspond with the other characters in the play. The word 'obey' is widespread in the play, Caliban is always controlled and is made to obey to Prospero, he is seen as a slave, which rouses Caliban's temper which proves that nature would not be nature if human beings try to domesticate it. However; Prospero tries which can be interpreted symbolically as the human nature yearning for governing the human nature to gain some advantages. Thus, trying to tame the nature can be interpreted as futile considering the play as there is an attempt of rape in the play. Rape, known as the most vicious attempt that can be done, is not made the reader to think about Caliban as a vicious man, instead, he treats according to what his inborn qualities require.

Thou most lying slave, Whom stripes may move, not kindness! I have used thee, Filth as thou art, with human care and lodged thee. In mine own cell till thou didst seek to violate…Thou didst seek to violate the honor of my child. Then Caliban answers as "O ho, O ho! Wouldn't have been done! Thou didst prevent me. I had peopled else this isle with Calibans. (1.2. 20-25)

On the one hand, Calibans sees the attempted rape of Miranda as a natural behaviour, the issue is that reproduction is a natural instinct; in other words, reproductive urges are a natural function of animals; however, humans modify their desires with reason and through social restraints. Considering the morals, ethics in the society, Caliban commits a crime that deserves a severe punishment; nevertheless, he does not know what he does is wrong, he doesn't know any further. In other words, he just does what he feels, he doesn't know the difference between right and the wrong as he is not a member of society. Taking this aspect into consideration, a sympathy develops towards Caliban due to the fact that he cannot control what he wants to do. Prospero comments on it saying that "A devil a born devil, on whose nature. Nurture can never stick" (4.1.6-7). As is stated, Caliban reacts instinctively despite the teachings of anyone coming from the civilization. What can be deduced from here is that Caliban as a man integrated with nature that much is not less honourable than any character coming from civilized world. Nevertheless, his upbringing and the environment he lives in confirm all of his actions. It can be deduced that Shakespeare uses the character of Caliban to represent nature and to demonstrate readers that nature is not as bad as it seems. Having this awareness makes readers feel sympathy for him. Caliban doesn't know anything about morals and ethics, he is unaware of the social conventions, he is ignorant. What Caliban does is not interpreted as wrong as he is depicted as oblivious of the unethical deed he's done. It should be kept in mind what makes the reader think that it is immoral is the social values they hold; nonetheless, the thing that is always disregarded is that Caliban does not hold the values that of society. What can be deduced is that Prospero trespasses to Caliban's land and rights and he wants to get what he owns in this way.

On the other hand, as Dean Ebner states "Caliban has been justly confined for his attempt on Miranda's honour, an attempt which contained a rebellious desire to regain his unworthy domination of the island" (Ebner 163). From what he stated, it can be clearly inferred that when he tries to people the island in a way he wants to dominate the place in which he lives by having more people resembling to him. With the word 'people' he wants to predominate Prospero. By using the word 'people', Shakespeare does not prefer to use the

word ‘rape’ for such an attempt; he also does not state that what is done is a rape that is thought as evil by the people coming from the culture. In fact, as Jessica Slights mentions;

This attempt to rape Miranda should be understood as some kind of a revolutionary accomplishment rather than as a morally repugnant act. Ironically, even as they attempt to reclaim Caliban as an oppressed revolutionary, these contemporary critics repeat the primitivization of Caliban initiated by their predecessors and thereby deny him the moral agency upon which the political rights they are rightly so eager to grant him must necessarily be predicated. (375)

It is, in fact, not a morally terrible act as Caliban does not know what is ethical; however, the critics sarcastically both accept the primitivism of him inherited by his ancestors especially his witch mother and they at the same time interpret him by taking the moral agency that is imposed upon them into consideration. In fact; being unaware of the word “rape” and its social connotations, Caliban only wants to have children and he sees the rape not in the meaning that all the civilized people know, thus, it can be seen that the lexicon Shakespeare chooses to depict this event is to show the real intention of Caliban.

Which any print of goodness wilt not take,
Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,
Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
One thing or other. When thou didst not, savage,
Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes
With words that made them known. But thy vild race
(Though thou didst learn) had that in't which good
natures
Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou
Deservedly confin'd into this rock,
Who hadst deserv'd more than a prison. (2.2. 22).

Miranda’s utterance after the attempted rape is of great importance showing the unswerving predisposition of Caliban. Unlike many critics, she is aware of the character of Caliban, who cannot learn anything, cannot understand anything related to culture. Her timely reprimand is ignored by many

critics, in fact, she perceives Caliban's problems and thinks that he should be kept in this cave prison, which makes the reader think that she is just like her father and the other subsequent residents of the island. This can also be interpreted as the human nature gratuitously commanding over the ones seen as other. Another interpretation for this is Caliban's wish to "people" the island is natural. As Singh states, "Neither Prospero nor Miranda allow Caliban an identity as a desiring subject who wishes to gain sexual access to Miranda for the legitimate aim of "'peopl[ing]. This isle with Calibans". (Singh, 198). As Slights states,

Singh does not mean to propose rape as an accept- able means of asserting national identity in the face of oppression. Nevertheless, like so many of her predecessors in both the distant and the more recent past of Tempest criticism, she understands Miranda as a counter in a power game dominated by the male characters in the play. It is this objectification of Miranda that, in turn, legitimates Caliban's attempted rape as the self- actualizing act of a "desiring subject. (374)

As stated it is natural for Caliban because he is colonized and the aim here is to have more people resembling to him to be more in number and to outnumber the ones coming out of the island. Namely, Caliban is trying to actualize himself by having more of him. What can be concluded is that rape is totally bad and unacceptable from the perspective of a civilized human. Though there is a lot to say about their being "civilized" or not, Prospero, Miranda are aware that rape is a bad thing while Caliban does not. In brief, what Prospero and Miranda do is to blame him for something that he does not know how evil and bad it is.

Considering Slights' quotation above, the play clearly deals with colonialism through Caliban, by alluding to physical and social otherness of him. Caliban is the focus of most post-colonial critics as he is seen as the other. How Caliban is seen as other can clearly be seen from the address of the invaders to him. Trinculo refers to Caliban as "a man or a fish" (2.2.20) while Stephano refers to him as a "servant monster" (2.2.25). He is made "other" with the address of the people coming to the island. "For Prospero, this colonial discourse is a way to bring his characters under control" (Willis 278). In addition to that, Prospero with cruelty and merciless attitude, he wants to insure his place. According to Deborah Willis "The threatening "other" is used by colonial power to display its own godliness, to insure aristocratic class solidarity, to justify the colonial project morally" (277). Prospero to insure his own place, he regards Caliban as slave and there are always these orders directed to Caliban

by Prospero. Caliban tries to overcome the colonization upon him by being more in number; that's how he is taught to deal with the environment surrounding him, as he supposes that the island is left to him by his mother. The following statements of Caliban prove that he is colonized and is most quoted one among post-colonial critics.

I must eat my dinner
This island's mine by Sycorax my mother,
Which thou tak'st from me: when thou cam'st first
Thou strok'st me, and made much of me. Wouldst give me
Water with berries in't. And teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less
That burn by day, and night. And then I loved thee,
And showed thee all the qualities o' th' isle,
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place, and fertile.
Cursed be I that did so! […]
Which first was mine own King. And here you sty me
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
The rest o' th' island. (1.2.32)

The quote above shows the colonialist invasion through the statements of Caliban, while he is addressing to Prospero. It can be interpreted that Prospero sees himself as the superior race and sees himself as divine. This idea is approved in Ronald Takaki's *The Racialization of Savagery*, as stated above when men become civilized, he/she becomes cruel. Prospero becomes cruel because of acquiring the moral values of civilization. Accordingly, Caliban can be seen as the representative of European men and also the colonized when they are in a lower scale in terms civilization, the situation of which is better. Prospero and Miranda represent the cruelty of civilized European people and they are the colonizers. Like all the colonizers, Prospero and Miranda think that they have the right to civilize the colonized. As Prospero stated "I have used thee, (Filth as thou art) with human care, and lodg'd thee" (1.2.20). It is clear that they try to humanize or civilize him. Miranda also confirms that they try to civilize him in the following statements.

Abhorred slave,
Which any print of goodness wilt not take,
Being capable of all ill: I pitied thee,

Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
One thing or the other: when thou didst not (savage)
Know thine own meaning; but wouldst gabble, like
A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes
With words that made them known: but thy vile race
(though thou didst learn) had that in't, which good
Natures
Could abide to be with; therefore wast thou
Deservedly confin'd into this rock,
Who hadst deserv'd more than a prison. (1.2. 26-37)

Miranda and Prospero's justifications of Caliban is a savage and he needs to be educated is not accepted by the Post-colonial critics. The exploitation of Caliban is also artistically portrayed by Shakespeare.

Fetch us in fuel, and be quick, thou'rt best
To answer other business: shrug'st thou, malice
If thou neglect'st, or dost unwillingly
What I command, I'll rack thee with old cramps,
Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar,
That beasts shall tremble at thy din. (1.2. 11-16)

This quotation above shows how Caliban is treated like a slave and how he is threatened with some pains, aches and Prospero tries to impose his power on him. In fact, Miranda and Prospero are trying to impose their power and civilize not only Caliban but also Ariel.

Ariel: I prithee, remember I have done thee worthy service, told thee no lies, made no mistakings, served without or grudge or grumblings. Thou did promise to bate me a full year.

Prospero: Dost thou forget the torments that I did free thee? If thou more murmur'st, I will rend an oak and peg thee in his knotty entrails till thou hast howled away twelve winters..After two days I will discharge thee (1.2.34)

As clearly seen, Ariel does whatever Prospero asks for in order to be set free. Freedom in this sense is ironic as Ariel is not set free as long as Prospero lives in the island, as there is still threat and cruelty in Prospero's statements. Ariel can be seen as the symbol of all the colonized states in the world which

have the dream of being set free without having any opposition or disobedience against the colonizer.

Another important example of this imposition is that Miranda tries to teach the language to Caliban; in fact, language is an important tool used by Shakespeare to show how colonizers impose or usually encourage the use of their native language. In other words; it is the first thing that passes from colonizer to the colonized. Language is artificial, it is not natural so it is impossible to say that Caliban can speak the language like civilized man. Because Caliban was "a thing of darkness" whose "nature nurture [could] never stick." In other words, he had natural qualities that precluded the possibility of becoming civilized through "nurture," or education" (Takaki 904). Caliban is not created to be civilized, he is created to be natural and left as natural. Takaki using Prospero's statements is certain that civilization cannot be applied in the natural world. That's why, while Miranda thinks that she does a great favour to him by teaching him the language, Caliban thinks just the opposite, telling that, "You taught me language; and my profit on't is I know how to curse" and he goes on further to wish the red plague rid you for teaching me your language" (1.2.39). That language makes Caliban unnatural and teaches him to curse like the people coming from the civilized world. He thinks that by teaching him the language, she doesn't do him a great service rather to him, she teaches him how to curse. Teaching the language is a way all the colonizers and the English people uses to enhance their strength. "A Virginia tract stated that the colonists should take Indian children and "train them up with gentleness, teach them our English tongue. "(Takaki, 901). This quote clearly shows how English people impose their own language when they colonize India. Letting his daughter teach Caliban the language "Prospero demonstrates that to "civilize" means to control Caliban, the Italians, and himself" (Erlich 49). Thus, from quotes above one can clearly see that language is a tool to colonize and to control the colonized.

What's more, the imposition can be observed with the name choice of Shakespeare. Caliban whose name is fascinating as 'Carib' is a term used for the savage inhabitants of the New World. His natural part can be interpreted as wild enough to deal with his surroundings. In Turkish his name refers to 'garip', which can be translated as strange. This weirdness can be interpreted as the obscurity of nature. Along with the lexicon he uses, Shakespeare intentionally uses this name to enhance the relationship of Caliban with nature; however, it is still not something to be condemned or to be found weird by readers. Prospero which evokes the word 'prosperous' also refers to the money and power oriented world he comes from. The first and the foremost aim of him is to have

power wherever he is; that's why he colonizes some other places when his dukedom is usurped by his brother. It can be portrayed that the names are chosen according to the precepts, environment and the geography they embody.

As well as his otherization in both address and name, the island can also be interpreted as an ideal place in order to be colonized. As Estok argues "[i]t is a space whose Otherness, difference, exoticism, and promise of wealth make it very fertile ground for the seeds of colonialist ambitions and fantasies" (114). It is a good place for colonialism with all its characteristics, which is supposed to be a Mediterranean island, most supposedly along the Italian coast. As learnt from Caliban, the island is a fertile land; and that's why at the end it does not become the colonized place as nature should be left intact according to Shakespeare. "Caliban and his claim to the island is strong enough to (partly) undermine Prospero as a just ruler" (Willis 284). Caliban is more powerful in terms of nature compared to Prospero; Prospero tries to attain everything through cruelty and imposition. That is clearly the perspective of Prospero as Willis states "While Prospero clearly views Caliban as a threatening "other," the audience does not; the play invites us to sympathize with and to laugh at Caliban, but not to perceive him as a real threat (279). However; as the reader is invited to empathize with right at the beginning of the play, he is pitied and he is seen and interpreted as the one in the disadvantaged position because of being enforced to have some cultural values.

Despite the fact that he seems the powerful at the play, in fact, Prospero is not. Though he seems that he has got the power and he has got the freedom, he is entrapped in the island and he states it in a conversation with Miranda "Canst thou remember a time before we came unto this cell?" (1.2.6-7). This shows how he is locked down in the island, he is sole authority in the island but he is stuck in his own cage. He also fears Sycorax, though she is not even there when he is in the island. As Blystone argues, "Prospero claims that Sycorax could never defeat his magic, and, to his convenience, she is not there to prove him wrong. Since Sycorax is absent, she becomes the platform for Prospero's ideas of gender, and she highlights both his desire for power and his fear of losing that power." (6) As is stated, Prospero is not as powerful as he seems, he even fears the mother of Caliban who is not even in the island.

Prospero at the end leaves the island wishing an applause from the audience; however, readers and audience do not feel any remorse for him because of the evil he's done. His quit can be interpreted as the naivety and superiority of the natural state over the degenerated state of civilization. Caliban

can be identified as an innocent, more child-like who is innocent of the world and its code of behaviour. *The Tempest* markedly opposes to the idea that nature must be made "civilized," arguing that a wild, natural world is superior to the cultural world. It can be interpreted that his slavery and burden he has within himself will go on with this state of mind and though he set Ariel and Caliban free by leaving the island, he will never free himself from his own degenerated state of mind.

As known, the play is a satirical comment on Montaigne's "Of Cannibals". Montaigne assumes that "the New World offers an example of naturally virtuous life uncorrupted by civilization, whereas Shakespeare obviously does not" (11). New World does not offer any optimistic point of view as it is degenerated. Taking all the issues discussed in the play and having a close look to the environment and the surrounding around, how human beings destroy their nature and the natural world and how the rape news is prevalent despite the fact that everyone knows that it is immoral and unacceptable, how the innocent animals killed and tortured designate that Montaigne might have been mistaken about the virtue of the civilized World. Thus, it can be told that at the end Prospero's leaving and his own inner slavery and fear exist and will continue to exist. Thus, the play by portraying the exploitation of the colonized by the colonizer, attempts to emphasize and unravel the prevalent ideologies of colonization. It can be deduced that here is the defeat of Colonialist point of view and the victory of nature and the Transcendental over the degenerated colonized culture.

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Reflections of Culture Within Nature/Nature Within Culture: American Indian Poetry

Demet Satılmış

Introduction

Nature has been an inalienable part of Native American tribal life for thousands of years. Nature, including land, plant and animal life, and natural phenomena, has been home and family to Native American tribes. This is because they had seemingly simple tribal lives in the natural environment and because of the common inherent philosophy in approaching and understanding nature. References to those could easily be seen in traditional stories, songs, myths, and all types of ceremonies and ceremonial literature. Similarly, even though today's poets primarily reside in cities, have college degrees, and mainly write in English, their works' traditional perception and representation of nature can still be observed as their connection to nature is not broken[49].

The following poems of 20th and 21st centuries Indian culture should be accepted as only a couple of examples to glimpse this connection. The wide variety of Native American cultures and languages, and traditions may not possibly be represented as a whole here. Therefore, it should be kept in mind that when making suggestions such as ‘Native American tribes’ or ‘stories,’ only a handful of well-known tribes (such as the Sioux, Navajo, and Cherokee) or a common notion/idea among many tribes are being referred to. It should also be remembered that when it comes to American Indian nations, trying to make sense of their literatures through generalizations diminishing them to a singular culture is always doomed to fail in reaching a fair understanding of American Indian cultures.

With that consciousness in mind, while referring to original Native tribes and nations until the 20th century, this study uses the term ‘Native American’ tribes/nations; while referring to modern-day Native American tribes/nations, the term ‘American Indian’ will be employed. The Native literatures- as we name them- are referred to in the plural sense due to the variety mentioned above in languages and tribal cultures. However, American Indian literature today is

[49] **Notes**
(1) Turcotte, Mark. Email to the author. June 27, 2006.
*Sections from an unpublished PhD dissertation (*Word Senders: American Indian Poets Re-Locating Indian Identity*)-by the author of this article- are occasionally used in this study.

mentioned in the singular because contemporary advancements in communication technologies bring many tribal cultures together faster than ever, most authors and poets use a single language- English- in writing, and although diversity continues in the tribal and ceremonial sense, American Indian nations have fought and struggled against white supremacy over the centuries; and these have created somewhat a unity in Indian philosophies. Then again, no Indian poet or author should be seen as a representative of all American Indian peoples or ideologies today.

With these realizations in mind, this study hopes to provide a brief understanding of some of the contemporary literary works of American Indian cultures. For this purpose, the place of nature in Native American lives and cultures or vice versa will be discussed in the first section. In the second part, American Indian lives and cultures today concerning their connection to nature as represented in the 20th and 21st century poetry will be evaluated. Finally, it should be noted that the American Indian bond to nature from past to present would also be representative of their continuance in culture and philosophy as tribes and as individual storytellers.

II. Native American Tribes and Nature

Before the European encounter, there were thousands of Native American tribes both in North and South America. Although their lifeways differed due to the conditions of the natural environment they lived in, they all pursued a lifestyle in complete harmony with nature. For instance, while Seminole Indians in Florida lived in huts and relied on fishing and farming, the Cheyenne Indians in Dakota lived in teepees and lodges, wore moccasins, and relied on hunting and gathering. However, these lifeways should not be taken lightly as an expected outcome of a somewhat primitive lifestyle. On the contrary, these were conscious and logical choices along with what nature had to offer them. In other words, Native American tribes had complex cultures, histories, and philosophies, the reflections of which can be observed in their relationship with nature over the centuries.

1. Connection with Nature

Although Native Americans had diverse tribal, religious, and linguistic structures, they had common notions in how they treated nature. All Native tribes had the utmost respect for nature and earth and were aware that their well-being was strictly dependent on nature. Instead of confronting nature or overcoming its phenomena, Native American tribes developed a symbiotic relationship with it. The appreciation and respect they showed for nature in all

their practices, from hunting to farming, from building houses/shelters to social gatherings, and educating the young to traveling, are conspicuous. They "practiced a form of reciprocity with nature, giving something back, for something taken" (Olson and Wilson 3). This democratic approach to nature is observable in Simon Ortiz's (Acoma) poem, which acknowledges the interdependency between red earth and Indian people:

> The land. The People.
>
> They are in relation to each other.
>
> We are in a family with each other.
>
> The land has worked with us.
>
> And the people have worked with it.
>
> . . .
>
> We are not alone in our life;
>
> we cannot expect to be.
>
> The land has given us our life,
>
> and we must give life back to it.
>
> ("We Have Been Told Many Things but We Know This to Be True" 324-25).

Before the arrival of Europeans, Native Americans had built cities and burial places as big as pyramids, advanced in math, built irrigation canals and made cloth out of cotton (Zinn 19). They had established political systems, made treaties with other tribes, and made overseas trade. They managed all these with what nature had offered them; without single destruction or exploitation of natural resources, animals, or land in return. Also, due to this relationship, nature in both continents was protected and thrived with Native American tribal life. Through farming and trade activities among tribes, Native Americans caused many seeds to travel across the Americas and naturally diversify. Some examples would be the different strains of potatoes, corn, and sunflower seeds in the Americas. Thus, we can state that Native American lives and cultures thrived within nature, and nature thrived along with Native American tribes due to this symbiotic relationship. A traditional healer and a lecturer Bobby Lake-Thom elaborates on to what extent Native American lives are interconnected with and bound to nature,

> The traditional Native American believes that each living thing in Nature has a spirit of his own, in addition to being connected to and part of the Great Spirit. That is why we pray and give thanks to the Sun, Moon, Stars, Rain,

Wind, Waters, and all those that walk, crawl, fly, and swim, both seen and unseen. We realize that we cannot survive without our ‘relations.’ We also realize that they cannot live without us; hence there is a reciprocal relationship.

Evidence of this belief system can be found in Native myths, legends, and stories. Here one can find reference to the animals and birds as ‘people.’ The Bear is our grandfather, Rattlesnake our aunt, Beaver our cousin, Eagle our uncle, Deer our sister, and Buffalo our brother. But in a deeper sense of ideology, they are not only our ‘relations’ but are also considered our teachers, protectors, guardians, supernatural aids, and sources of power and knowledge. This is not romanticism, it is reality (Lake-Thom 8).

Nature did not only provide them with shelter, food, and companionship of animals but also taught them how to survive and thrive as communities. Native American cultures are also included in this symbiotic interconnectedness as Kimberly M. Blaeser (Anishinabe) agrees:

II.

I used to think we told these stories
to learn to survive winter
but now I know that winter comes
so that we tell stories
and learn to survive life.

(“Surviving Winter or Old Stories We Tell Ourselves When a Blizzard is Coming” 42)

Therefore, nature, in this case winter, is not an obstacle to overcome. On the contrary, it is an opportunity to learn from. With the help of nature people have and develop their surviving skills. Since winter is the time they stay indoors and tell stories most, nature also appears as a cause to bring communities together and let them thrive culturally, too. Hence, nature is there to support humans, as long as the connection is not broken. The keep this connection alive, Native American tribes have been communicating with nature for generations.

2. Communication with Nature

The innate bond between Native American tribes and nature itself also takes power from the tribes' communication with nature. When nature ‘spoke,’ they listened, and took note of it, and expressed gratitude. Native American

peoples paid attention to every change, challenge, and reward in nature and formed their lives accordingly. That is why, before the European contact, tribes lived in different areas of the continent in harmony with all types of natural conditions for generations on end. For instance, while Inuits were living under harsh climate conditions, the Acoma lived in Arizona near the desert, and the Sioux lived in Montana by the mountains. They were listening to the wind, following the Sun's movement, watching animals and their actions, and winter counting in the forest; therefore, learning and taking messages.

That is why Native American myths, legends, stories, and ceremonial songs, disregarding its origins, almost always refer to nature and natural phenomena and animals having varying purposes such as explaining the origins of life and earth, warning against the dangers of natural phenomena, and disasters, organizing tribal life and ceremonies, educating the young, and showing the way for lost people or souls among many others. For instance, a creation story from the Tuskegee tribe refers to the council of animals for the creation of land before humans set foot on earth while a Cheyenne legend explains how and why eagle feathers were to be used by the warriors (Edmonds 284, 185-86). Yet, a legendary love in a Passamaquoddy story is expressed through a song referring to winds, mountains, rivers, and leaves; and in Ute tribe a marital lesson can be taken from a story of a cheating wife, a Puma husband, and a Bear lover (Edmonds 230-32, 320-22). In short, for the American Indian, nature always communicates, and shows the way. From time to time, it literally interferes with the way when one is going towards the wrong direction:

A hawk touches down
the humming earth before Miami,
Oklahoma.
You old Shawnee, I think
of your rugged ways
the slick-floored bars and whiskey
sour nights when the softer heart
comes apart.
The Spokane you roam isn't City of the Angels
but another kind of wilderness.
You speed in a Ford truck and it's five
in the morning, the sun and dogs

only ones up
and you go home to red earth
when you see a hawk
crossing wires
touching down.
(Harjo, “Connection” 32)

According to the poem, when one feels lost and does wrong or does not know what to do in frustration, nature leads the way. This time it is an animal carrying the message. The poet becomes aware, and quickly gets the message when a hawk touches down the road in front of her car at 5 a.m. in the morning. It is time to go back to her tribe. Direct communication is also possible as can be observed at Kimberly Blaeser’s poem, “Haiku Seasons:”

V. INFINITY
Many times I glimpse
feeding bird or clump of earth
one returns my look. (Blaeser 43)

Nature does acknowledge human existence and returns the look of a human; therefore, dismissing a spoken language in communication.

Native American tribes did not only acknowledge nature’s messages due to respect, love, and appreciation for nature and animals in general but also formed means of communication to ‘talk back.’ Lake-Thom says, “We communicate through praying, talking, singing, dancing, meditating, touching, smelling, and/or offering tobacco, herbal smoke, food, or some other gift to one of our relations” (8). Religious ceremonies, songs, chants, and the like addressed nature and the natural phenomena forming a connection between Native American tribes and nature itself. For instance, a common practice of showing appreciation for the crops at the time of harvest is the Shawnee Green Corn Festival which marks the corn as ready to be eaten for the Spring season (Edmonds 299-300). The earlier Shawnee Corn Feast in Fall, including chants and dancing asking for the blessing of the Great Spirit for “bountiful crop,” is also a religious ceremony (Edmonds 300). Another appreciation dance for the Mandan tribe marks the buffalo return pointing at the beginning of the hunting

season (Edmonds 205-206). The infamous tribal prayer and dance for rain are common to many tribes and a religious ceremony and practice addressing and connecting to nature.

Kenneth Lincoln states that the daily rites of praying, chanting, singing, and carrying out ceremonies "align with the passage of sun, moon, stars, planets, animals, winds, seasons, visions, winter counts, peoples, and timeless generations of spirits, passed on, passing on. Such voices make up tribal cultures, past and present. . ." (1-2). Therefore, it can be inferred that American Indian lives have been directly linked to nature; and as a result, the cultures are inseparable from nature. This relationship is observed in contemporary American Indian poetry as well as Native American stories and songs.

III. American Indian Cultures and Literature With-in Nature

Although lifeways have changed dramatically, and Indian cultures have been considerably altered with Western politics and culture in the United States, the interconnectedness and the symbiotic relationship between American Indians and nature can still be widely observed in American Indian literature today. The following are some of the common points that would be expressive of this relationship. In addition, the selected poems would also reveal a glimpse of American Indian cultures within nature, continuing from past to present.

1. Existence and Unity with Nature

All Native stories and myths explaining the emergence of a tribe or humankind on the planet refer to nature, which acts as insurance for their continuance. The notion of dependence on nature for survival might come as a natural outcome of a body of traditions born to live within nature. However, behind this notion is the native philosophy of the first appearance on earth and the continuation struggles. This philosophy of respect and gratitude for every living thing and the consciousness of humanity's place on the planet, arguably, is yet to be presented in Western literature on a similar scale. Ray Young Bear's (Meskwaki) poem "The Significance of Water Animal" exemplifies how nature and animals are intrinsically a part of Indian origins and existence.

A certain voice of
Reassurance
tells me a story of water
animal

diving to make land
available.
Next, from the Creator's
own heart and flesh
  O ki ma was made:
  the progeny of divine
  leaders. And then
  from the Red Earth
came the rest of us.

'To believe otherwise,"
As my grandmother tells
me,
'or to be simply ignorant,
Belief and what we were
given
to take care of,
is on the verge
of ending . . . (Young Bear 3-4)

The grandmother passing the story about the emergence and insuring continuance is repeated and reminded by the poet. Moreover, it is restated that the only way for humankind to continue is by connecting with and respecting nature. Humans do not have the option of not taking care of what was given to them by nature. It also refers to the land with all the animals and plants on it. This is the philosophy that prevented Native American tribes from overconsumption of natural resources. Luci Tapahonso (Navajo) also retells a Navajo creation story adopting the discourse of Navajo storytellers and mentioning the Navajo belief and connection to the environment:

1

Before this world existed, the holy people made themselves visible

by becoming the clouds, sun, moon, trees, bodies of water, thunder,

rain, snow, and other aspects of this world we live in. That way,

they said, we would never be alone. So it is possible to talk to them

and pray, no matter where we are and how we feel. Biyazhi daniidli,

we are their little ones. (“Shaa Ako Dahjinileh Remember the Things They Told Us” 19)

The first appearance of humankind, including Native American tribes, was due to nature and natural phenomena. Contemporary American Indian poets make sure that these stories survive by either using them directly or referring to them. However, they also show that humankind's survival and continuance are also due to nature itself. Duane Big Eagle (Osage) acknowledges this in her poem "New York Times in the Supermarket" and warns humankind:

The way our fate is connected

to the birds, animals, and fish.

The way the exhaust pipes of our cars

are connected to the air

going into our great-granddaughters’ mouths.

It makes you think

about what you do

and how you do it. (33)

As also seen in this poem, gratitude for what nature and animals give humans, the unbreakable bond between human lives and that of animals and plants, and the acknowledgment of nature's power and love can all be observed in the 20th 21st century American Indian poetry. N. Scott Momaday expresses this love and gratitude as well as connection to nature in his story-poem “Bote-talee’s Shield:”

Bote-talee found the Spider Woman. In the early morning he went

swimming. When he reached the bank he looked directly up into the sun.

There, just before his eyes, was a spider’s web. It was a luminous,

glistening shield. Bote-talee looked at it for a long time. It was so
beautiful that he wanted to cry. He wondered if it were strong as well as
beautiful. He flung water upon it, heavy water, again and again, but it
remained whole and glistened all the more.
Then a spider entered upon the web. “Spider Woman,” Bote-talee
said, “Will you give me this perfect shield?”
“Bote-talee,” said Spider Woman, “This is your shield.” (83)

Nature is depicted as wise, welcoming, and generous. The protection, the perfect shield, may only come from it. The human also expresses appreciation and gratitude. Therefore, a respectful connection with nature is confirmed. Humans talking to animals and understanding animal talk is common in Native American stories; the same is observable here. The relationship between nature and natural phenomena takes many forms in American Indian poetry. Friendship is one of them. This can be seen in Joy Harjo’s (Muscogee) poem as well. While “Fishing” on the Illinois River, Harjo remembers her old friend acknowledging his connection to the fish as a friend:

They smell me as I walk the banks with fishing pole, night crawlers and
a promise I made to that old friend Louis to fish with him this summer.
This is the only place I can keep that promise, inside a poem as familiar
to him as the banks of his favorite fishing place. I try not to let the fish
see me see them as they look for his tracks on the soft earth made of
fossils and ashes. I hear the burble of fish talk: *When is that old Creek*
coming back? He was the one we loved to tease most, we liked his songs
and once in a while he gave us a good run. (60)

In addition, although fishing is an act of killing animals, the way nature and animals handle it makes it an opportunity to meet with an old friend The love and appreciation of nature and animals are expressed in this poem through personification of animals and reporting their talk. Yet another example-experience similar to this is presented in Ortiz's poem "Many Farms Notes:"

10
After I got out of the back
of a red pickup truck,
I walked for about a mile
and met three goats, two sheep and a lamb
by the side of the road.
I was wearing a bright red wool cap
pulled over my ears,
and I suppose they thought I was maybe weird
because they were all ears and eyes.
I said, "Yaahteh, my friends.
I'm from Acoma, just passing through."
The goat with the bell jingled it
in greeting a couple of times.
I could almost hear the elder sheep
telling the younger, "You don't see many
Acoma poets passing through here." (67-68)

Poet's greeting the animal while passing by is not a simplistic story made subject matter as a reaction to the grand narratives of the past decades, effort looking for alternative forms of expression, or an altered reality created by the poet. Instead, it is a demonstration of Indian respect and appreciation of nature and animals as part of life and art.

2. Natural Kinship with Nature

Along with friendship, American Indian poetry also reflects the common culture of natural kinship with nature including earth, natural phenomena, plants, and animals. Depending on the tribe, spider, corn, wind, bear, and coyote are a few examples of naturally accepted grandmothers, sisters,

cousins, and uncles. Here, Carol Lee Sanchez (Laguna) talks about her wind brothers in her “wind song:”

my four wind brothers
tease me;
chase me through
nearby cities and
laugh when they
frighten me. (253)

The personification of wind coming from four different directions as family members is one of the many examples of acceptance of natural kinship with nature. Here, nature is not used as a background theme revealing the poem’s mood or the poet. On the contrary, it is the subject matter reflective of both tribal and personal issues. The wind is a natural phenomenon but significant since it comes from four directions: east, west, north, and south, making a complete circle, referring to a widespread act of greeting the four directions in many Native ceremonies. On the personal level, remembering the tribal identity and connection to nature would help the poet content that she is being taken care of even the wind blowing from all four directions bringing anxiety and fear first. After all, they are just brothers teasing her.

The Navajo are taken care of by the four mountain peaks in four directions. However, another example of natural kinship is observable in Luci Tapahonso’s poem as the Navajos are addressed as “my children.”

I

. . .

Blanca Peak is adorned with morning light.
She watches us rise at dawn.
Nidoohjeeh sha’alchini, nii leh.
Get up my children, she says.

IV

. . .

From the north, darkness arrives- Hesperus Peak-
urges us to rest. “Go to sleep, my children,” she says.
She is adorned with jet.

She is our renewal, our rejuvenation. (“This is How They Were Placed for Us” 39-41)

There is a peak watching over the tribe for each direction, keeping them safe and showing them the right direction when they need it. Nature is presented as a protector, provider, and teacher in this poem. Each mountain top serves a different purpose, and from all four directions, the Navajos are kept safe.

Nature is not consistently referred to through tribal stories and ceremonies. Nevertheless, even on a simple occasion for humans, it is recognized in Sherman Alexie’s (Spokane and Coeur d’alene) poem “Naked and Damp, with a Towel around My Head, I Noticed Movement on the Basement Carpet.” Following an ant invasion of his home, the poet terminates the ants he considers as his cousins to save his home. However, he acknowledges them as valuable and feels sorry for using power on the weak just like the rich does on the poor. Remembering his days of poverty at the reservation, the poet addresses the social injustices by bowing to nature’s representatives at his home.

. . . Tell me, what’s worth fighting for?
I killed and killed and killed and killed my ant cousins.
I protected my home, my walls, ceilings, and floors,
Because the rich must always make war on the poor. (94)

The Indian connection to nature also takes a form of unity as well as natural kinship. N. Scott Momaday enjoys this kinship and unity altogether in his “The Delight Song of Tsoai-talee:”

I am a feather on the bright sky
I am the blue horse that runs in the plain
I am the fish that rolls, shining, in the water
I am the shadow that follows a child
I am the evening light, the lustre of meadows
I am an eagle playing with the wind
. . .
You see I am alive, I am alive. I am alive. (16)

The reassurance of life is achieved through uniting with nature and everything in it. Humankind is indeed inseparable from nature itself, and at his/her best while enjoying this bond.

3. Traditions and Ceremonies

This special bond between nature and Native Americans has been formed and blessed through many cultural traditions and ceremonies that were either for nature, derived from nature or carried out in nature with its recognition. These ceremonies have served several purposes: birth and naming of a baby, funeral, marking harvest time, sending warriors to a battle or greeting them coming back, and sun and rain dances and prayers. Such ceremonies and celebrations still find place in contemporary American Indian poetry.

An example would be a birth in the Acoma tribe. They take the baby out at sunrise on the fourth day after the birth to present him/her to the Sun god. The baby is then named, uniting with the surrounding nature. The continuing tradition to this day finds its place in Ortiz's poem "To Insure Survival" celebrating the birth of his daughter, Rainy Dawn.

You come forth
the color of a stone cliff
at dawn,
changing colors, blue to red
to all the colors of the earth.

Grandmother Spider speaks
laughter and growing
and weaving things
and threading them
together to make life
to wear;
all these, all these.

You come out child
naked as that cliff at sunrise,
. . .

In five more days,
they will come,
singing, dancing,
bringing gifts,
the stones with voices,
the plants with bells.
They will come.

Child, they will come. (48-49)

When the child is introduced to the Sun and nature, nature will greet and welcome the baby with gifts, songs, and dances. In this way, the happy event, the birth, becomes a part of the natural phenomena. Thus, making a tribal member a part of nature from birth.

Another ceremonial tradition, powwow, a gathering usually for entertainment purposes only, is mentioned in Alexie's poem "Crow Testament." Taking part in many occasions, from biblical stories to facing the white man in the form of a falcon, crow visits a powwow at his last stop.

2.
The White man, disguised
as a falcon, swoops in
and yet again steals a salmon
from Crow's talons.

Damn, says Crow, if I could swim
I would have fled this country years ago.
. . .
7.
Crow rides a pale horse
into a crowded powwow
but none of the Indians panic.

Damn, says Crow, I guess
they already live near the end of the world. (26-27)

Powwows are a continuing tradition, also carried out as intertribal celebrations and gatherings. While passing criticism on the political and social situation of Indians today, Alexie both personifies and uses nature as the protagonist of his poem. For example, the Crow tries to warn and wake up the American Indian by rushing its horse onto them. Therefore, nature is presented as a caretaker and a whistleblower who is a significant character in religious and cultural events, including powwows. At another modern-day traditional dance ceremony Ray Young Bear reports a similar situation of Indians regarding nature:

> There was this dance procession
> I was a part of, and we were all males
> following one another, demonstrating
> our place in Black Eagle Child society
> with flexed chest muscles and clenched fists.
> (I later thought this image a cultural
> paradox when some of us were supported
> on income made by women. We were still
> warlike but perennially unemployed.)
> We were singing an energetic, non-
> religious song, but we gave it
> reverence as if it were one,
> . . .
> The leader started the loud
> repetitive verse and we quickly
> joined in with voices amplified
> by mountainous terrain. “Always
> is he criticized, always is he
> criticized- in the manner of a pig
> I dance.” (81)

The poem is both humorous and reflective of the modern-day hardships of American Indian men. While making a social criticism, the tradition of a dance ceremony and inclusion of an animal image as a reference is present.

4. Folk Figures and Heroes

A considerable part of Native American cultures has been the storytelling tradition that served to different purposes such as teaching a survival technique, reducing political tension, educating the young, and entertaining the crowd. The widely common Coyote stories have also served some of these purposes. American Indian poetry has also continued the tradition. Trickster Coyote figure who has many personalities among which he is sometimes a wise man/animal giving lessons, sometimes a joker making fun of human weaknesses, a savor of a tribe, or a lost Indian in the city. Valoyce-Sanchez(Chumash and O'odham) has Coyote leading the dance in her poem “The Fox Paw and Coyote Blessing:”

Well
Fox and Coyote
led the dance
hopping and twirling around
like fancy dancers
. . .
all my family and friends
behind me
dancing around the drum
in the wrong direction

Gramma I said later
Gramma how could you
Let me go the wrong direction?
. . .
Never forget
Coyote helped to form the world
For all his trickster ways
Coyote helped to form the world
The world was made with Fox Paw
and all the seeming backward things
that make the world go forward (304-305)

Coyote leads the way backward and causes embarrassment for the poet who follows him through the dance, but this is how he does things according to the poet's grandmother, who reminds her how valuable Coyote is for the tribe; and because he moves backward the world goes forward. Thus, Coyote is both a historical, cultural, and tribal figure whose deviant acts appear to be his blessings for the tribe. Therefore, although he tricks the dancers, there is a good reason behind it. In Mark Turcotte's (Chippewa) poem, Coyote leads the way, too:

I send you
the wild compass coyote,
who wanders beside you,
leads you to water leads you to water,
("Leads You to Water" 30)

Although he is depicted as a "wild compass," he is a trusted figure to show one the right way when in need; therefore helping Indians. He is so trusted that the poet sends him to the beloved to lead her "to water," which can be considered a source of survival, purification, life, and renewal. However, in another poem by E. K. Caldwell (Tsalagi Cherokee and Creek and Shawnee), Coyote is a lost Indian in the city:

coyote wears designer clothes
and struts around
surrounding himself with fancy words
knows all the catch phrases
sounds radical enough
in word
. . .
coyote only prays in public
In private the spirits are too close
still fears what might be real.
("You Know Who You Are" 73)

The story of an Indian losing his identity is told through the personification of a coyote. This time, he is the one losing his way, his identity, for being apart from his tribe; therefore, implying that every Indian might be a coyote lose

his/her way in city life. The poem here also teaches a lesson and maybe even shows the way to nature for lost Indians in the city.

Just as folk figures, heroes also find their places in American Indian poetry with references to nature. One of the most well-known public figures of Native American tribes has been Crazy Horse- the skilled Sioux warrior. Crazy Horse and his tribal army were among the Native American forces to beat General George Custer in 1879, leading the infamous seventh cavalry in the Battle of Little Big Horn. Overboasting General Custer was killed in the battle. Turcotte's poem tells the battle from an Indian perspective, and nature is there to act with the Indian.

We dream
the pony of Crazy Horse
dancing in a filed
of greasy grass,
polishing its anxious hooves
upon the buttons
of Custer’s coat,
    stomp
    step step
    stomp.

We dream
the pony of Crazy Horse
leaping
in a field
of horses grazing,
riderless,
deaf to the istant wail of a widow
crying,
why my Georgie, why my Georgie why,
    stomp.
We dream
the pony of Crazy Horse

rising
in a field
of bloodied flowers,
where the horn
of her husband's empty saddle
is still decorated
with the flesh of Lakota women,
that is *why my Georgie why,*

stomp
step step
step step . . .
("Horse Dance" 20-21)

Custer is well known by Indians for his mean attitude towards the Sioux and his brutal attacks and killings of Indian men, women, and children with his seventh cavalry. The pony here represents the support from nature and the collaboration between nature and Indians fighting against the common enemy.

The legendary Apache warrior and chief Geronimo is remembered and praised by Kimberly Blaeser while retelling his famous story. He explains how he disappeared in front of the eyes of the cavalry that came to take him and his men for peace talks- the reason Geronimo did not believe:

That's where I was that day
I watched you from the arbor
never blinking
while you looked all about for me
and then turned back home
thinking to find me in another place
when I was there everywhere you looked
I knew than the stories about Geronimo were true
and that he did turn to stone
while the cavalries passed him by
mistook him for just a part of the mountain
when he had really become the whole mountain

and all the air they breathed
and even the dust beneath their horse's hooves
("Where I Was That Day" 20)

The idea of fusing into nature to the degree that makes one invisible, inseparable from it, is a relationship beyond symbiosis. Mutual understanding, support, and appreciation are cherished. Such a level of acceptance and respect is also idealized as it turns out to save Geronimo's life. Hence, nature protects humankind even under such impossible circumstances as long as that unity is achieved.

IV. Conclusion

Native American lives, traditions, politics, religions, ceremonies, and literature were all interwoven with nature for thousands of years, making Native American tribal lives complete with and in nature. American Indian literature today has its roots going back to this understanding. Though American Indian poetry varied and was transformed in form and language, its communal character and recognition of nature have not changed significantly. Native Americans believed and experienced some form of communication with nature over thousands of years. What we call literature or poetry today, their stories and songs, have been tools or representations of this communication. Bobby Lake-Thom says, "Nature can and does communicate to us humans" (1). This kind of certainty is hardly adaptable by Western cultures, but for Native American tribes, it could be said that it was an everyday reality. As poet Mark Turcotte (Chippewa) puts it, what is real in one culture can be called magical in another (1).

When nature and American Indians are concerned, there have been connection, communication, respect, appreciation, understanding, and love, which are also present in American Indian poetry as in traditional stories and songs. The relationship between American Indian culture(s) and nature as reflected in American Indian literature is very different from Western cultures. The American Indian and nature have been family, whereas the Westerner and nature have been separate entities and even rivals. For centuries, Western literature commonly used nature, sometimes a background decor to express different emotions and human conditions, sometimes as a hiding place for the protagonist, or sometimes just a subject of allegory. Although it may not be fair to generalize, it could be inferred that within the general tendency in Western literature, nature was a subordinate for centuries, and humankind either

dominated nature or appeared to pursue that domination. The realization of nature's actual existence, so to speak, happened in Western literature within the late 20th century. In 1996, Cheryll Glotfelty in the introduction of the book *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* says,

If your knowledge of the outside world were limited to what you could infer from the major publications of the literary profession, you would quickly discern that race, class, and gender were hot topics of the late twentieth century, but you would never suspect that the earth's life support systems were under stress. Indeed, you might never know that there was an earth at all. (xvi)

Thus, American Indian perception of nature has been the opposite of the Western mind. The Western mind has been dismissive of nature as a whole until the 20th century. In that sense, American Indian poetry is inarguably appreciative of nature's existence and influences on human life. A fine example would be Harjo's poem "Remember" which reminds humans' place in nature and poetry.

Remember the sky that you were born under,
know each of the star's stories.
. . .
Remember the earth whose skin you are:
red earth, black earth, yellow earth, white earth
brown earth, we are earth.
Remember the plants, trees, animal life who all have their
Tribes, their families, their histories, too. Talk to them,
listen to them. They are alive poems.
. . .
Remember you are this universe and this
universe is you.
Remember all is in motion, is growing, is you.
Remember language comes from this.
Remember the dance language is, that life is.
Remember.
(40)

All in all, the American Indian perception of life as reflected in contemporary poetry still regards nature, humans, and art as a whole, as a

unified entity with earth. The unity and completeness experienced by the Native tribes on Turtle Island might be approximated with similar awareness and appreciation today.

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PART III:

ESSENTIAL DEPICTIONS OF CULTURE

David Greig's *Outlying Islands*: A Blend of Poetic Sensibility and Scientific Discovery

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The Scottish playwright David Greig's work for stage and screen involve environmental and ecological phenomena. "Suspect Culture's Futurology: A Global Review" (Greig and Rebellato 2007) and Greig's Kyoto identify issues related with the environmental politics. In *The Architect*, too, the playwright deals with violence in urban environments and the architect's duty in constructing the environment. Likewise, his adaptation for the screen, Local Hero deals with environmental issues – a musical which portrays a billionaire who has bought a portion of Scotland for oil resources.

Nature and the landscape have been fundamental features of Scottish drama. Since *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black Black Oil* (1973) Scottish drama has been inspired by nature and landscapes. The topography of the Highlands and Islands provides a diversity of perspectives from the romantic Arcadian representations to a contemporary feeling of emptiness. David Greig is a great practitioner in representing despair and void in relation with landscape, environment and habitat, advocating a sense of urgency in creating awareness through his plays.

Janelle Reinelt has emphasized the connections between the environment and globalisation in Greig's work: "[w]hat is recognised and criticised throughout Greig's work is the damage to the environment, local economies and equality of everyday lives in the wake of neoliberalism and late capitalist expansion into globalisation" (217). Greig's *Outlying Islands* observe the environmental damage, particularly including animal life which is also the

issue in other works by the playwright and Suspect Culture. Indeed Clare Wallace labels *Outlying Islands* and *Victoria* as “ecological drama” (80).

Outlying Islands (2002) takes place on a desolate Hebridean island in Scotland at the outbreak of the World War II. The Ministry of Defence has appointed the two ornithologists on the uninhabited island to do the first in-depth investigation on the island’s wildlife and observe the breeding of rare species of birds. However, the ornithologists are horrified to realize that the Ministry uses the island for military purposes and the authorities have actually sent them to the wilderness of the outer island to determine the fatal effects of an explosion of anthrax spores onto a field of sheep.

Hebridean islands maintain a natural habitat for biodiversity and seals and seabirds. They improve economy due to the islands’ oil resources, fishing, tourism and renewable energy sources. In Holdsworth’s words, “an island setting can offer a contained space to explore the challenges of globalization, environmental issues and the breakdown of civil society” (128).

As the title of the play suggests this remote Scottish outlying island becomes a laboratory to discuss issues of the natural world controlled by the central governmental authorities. As Greig romanticizes the beautiful uninhabited island off the west coast of Scotland, the truth about the military experiment in germ warfare is revealed. Appalled with the idea that all the natural beauty and wildlife may be lost forever, the ornithologists realize that an explosion would make a city uninhabitable for generations. The play explores the intricate relationships between the natural world and human social order in which the nature is dominated and subordinated by culture, politics, and authorities.

The playwright evokes interest in environmental protection by depicting a project of destruction of nature, animals, and non-humans. By portraying ecological imperatives, the play reminds the audiences of ethical obligations in their relationship to nature in which the well-being of non-human entities or of nature itself is mostly sacrificed for the human advancement. Greig blends elements of poetic sensibility with the ornithologists’ genuine scientific interest. However, the ornithologists’ project deepens the scientific orientation and questions the ways in which eco-political applications of science lead civilization. Greig employs a lyrical, pastoral, and romantic nature writing with the characters’ monologues but on the other hand contemporary politics on non-human, animal and human are on the playwright’s agenda.

The nature-culture dichotomy has received considerable critical attention. French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss defines the division as “the plane of

nature" and "the cultural plane" (124). According to Levi-Strauss, "the symmetry postulated between nature and culture involves the assimilation of natural species on the cultural plane" (124-125). Sherry Ortner makes a similar argument regarding the relationship between nature and culture. She examines culture as an entity that has the ability to act upon and transform nature. What makes culture distinct, according to Ortner, is that it has the power to transcend the natural and manipulate it for its own purpose (80). Culture is not only clearly distinct from nature in Ortner's view but its ability to transform nature makes it superior.

Outlying Islands, which won the Critics Award (Best New Play) for Theatre in Scotland in 2002, a Fringe First Award and a Herald Angel following its debut at the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh, explores Scotland's topography and its wild nature in relation to the country's political history with England. Scotland is renowned for its 790 islands which include the Northern Isles and the Hebrides. The outlying islands of Scotland are also internationally known for their being the nesting lands for a variation of seabirds including the Gannets. The play's rich subject matters, such as ornithology, anthropology and chemical weapons demonstrate Greig's concern for the nature vs culture debate. The two young colleagues who work as ornithologists at Cambridge reach the isolated, desolate Scottish island in the summer of 1939, just before the outburst of World War II. They are taken care of by Kirk, the strict occupier of the island, and his niece Ellen, a free-spirited young woman. The ornithologists are sent by 'the Ministry' to do "The first comprehensive survey of the island's wildlife" (Greig 33). As Robert, the lead ornithologist, romanticizes the beautiful uninhabited island off the west coast of Scotland, the truth about the military experiment in germ warfare is revealed when Kirk mentions about a confidential letter that he has received from the ministry. At that moment Robert and John understand the real purpose of the mission that the ministry wants the island for military purposes and to test the germ to see how many living beings (in this case sheep and birds) will be killed.

The playwright gives a detailed description of the wildlife and landscape of the Hebridean island. He portrays particular facts about the urban and the rural as the play is a mixture of the islanders and the metropolitan characters. The playwright explains to the critic Fiona Mountford how World War II changed the two cultures greatly, namely the British upper-class Establishment and the island culture. Indeed, the play revolves around an epiphany moment when the ornithologists discover in horror that they are a part of an experiment conducted by the British Ministry of Defence on a remote and uninhabited land, to

determine the effect of an explosion of anthrax spores onto a field of sheep. Their conclusion was that such an explosion would make a city uninhabitable for generations. On one hand the play informs the audiences of typical outlier island life as the characters experience several "personal journeys" (Miner) and on the other it outlines the political strategies of Great Britain during wartime. Robert is appalled with the idea that the natural beauty and wildlife may be lost for ever. The play's setting symbolizes the human desire to escape into the nature away from the culture that is political and technological.

The remote island, filled only with the sound of thousands of birds and the sea crashing against rocks, is far away from civilization, technology, politics and culture. Robert and John have not hesitated even for a moment to accept the ministry's offer to go to the outlying island for a month's research. The island's wilderness and distance from civilization draw the British scientists, however, eventually it becomes clear that the ministry wants the island for military purposes. The "top secret" project begins to reveal itself as Kirk talks about a germ which may kill the sheep and birds. The letter from Porton Down clarifies and demystifies certain ambiguous issues as Porton Down is associated with the UK government and military science park, which conducted the biological and chemical warfare, programmed during the cold war years. Robert and John are traumatised by the ministry's intentions to "bomb the island with anthrax in order to see how many living things will be wiped out" (Greig 45). Here an example for how nature is threatened by culture is underlined. Along with British politics and natural sciences, the play offers some lighter moments and explores emotional remoteness in a geographically secluded setting. As the title of the play suggests a Scottish outlying island becomes a laboratory to discuss issues of the natural world controlled by the central governmental authorities. The play evokes the playwright's fascination with nature through ornithology.

In writing the play, David Greig blends elements of poetic sensibility with the ornithologist's genuine scientific interest. The characters' utterances suggest rustic vocabulary in the romantic and pastoral mode. Robert's monologue at the start of the play emphasizes the attraction to the outlying islands "the more outlying the island . . . the stronger the force that pulls us towards it" (Greig 9). Here the topographical pull of nature is emphasized in a poetic way, to portray how culture (civilization/technology/political constitution/science) is attracted towards the nature and the primitive. John's claim "When we're on the mainland. You'll see things more clearly then" (Greig 63), compares the outlying island to the mainland where the latter symbolizes

progress, clarity and civilization and the remote island symbolizes blur, astonishment and backwardness. While Robert feels at home with the remote island, John feels himself in a daze feeling lost on the island not favouring the idea of being a long way from London and Edinburgh.

The characters' individual identities and their relationships with each other are psychologically compelling. Kirk is the lease holder of the island and his name has a religious connotation: the Church of Scotland is also known as The Kirk. He is a stiff-backed, moralistic old man who is obsessed with the financial compensation he will get from the ministry. He is a conventional man who has worries about his native land: He believes that London is a decadent city "a place of howling and squawking" (Greig 36). He praises Edinburgh but is also concerned that Scotland will eventually be damaged like London. He is preoccupied with the idea that the island was home to pagan people who had become godless through isolation, and who had fallen to blasphemous practices. Life is hard for Kirk on the island; he disapproves the island's pagan past and its tough physical conditions related to the weather and soil to graze sheep and the seasonal harvest of cliff-top birds. Therefore, Kirk sees his lifetime's opportunity for compensation and escape in the Ministry's plans.

Ellen reveals her unconventional ideas in her monologue when she narrates her feeling of affection to Robert, in a stream of consciousness manner: a dreamlike moment when she sees him vanishing over the cliff top as he jumps and swims naked in the sea. She tells John that she "dreamed a bird. A gull sat in the hearth. Amongst the embers. Watching me. Black eyes on me. Seeing into me" (Greig 61). There are times of sexual awakening for Ellen. She feels affection both for Robert and John. Similarly, Rodosthenous suggests a voyeuristic exchange between the performers and the audience where the audience witnesses and takes pleasure in watching the intimacy amongst the characters (217).

Robert is impulsive and full of passion for his job. He has great enthusiasm and energy for nature, but as he is disappointed and disgusted by the military's real aims, his eagerness turns into anger and despair. He does not accept societal restrictions; instead, he admires the freedom in the lives of the birds. Like Ellen, he is unpredictable and unconventional, and he lives his life like a free bird. He is excited and passionate to be the first scientist to photograph these birds; he sees it as their "chance to experience the blinking limit" (Greig 25). Robert is fascinated with the lives of birds, and he wants to enter their world where there is no notion of time, because "time belongs to the land. Not to the sea and air…No beginnings and no endings. Limitless." (Greig

109). At the play's end Robert literally sacrifices his life to enter the birds' world. On a stormy night he wants to watch how the birds fly in a storm and he falls off the cliff. Similarly, at the end of the play, before they get into the boat Ellen pays a last visit to her uncle's burial site and to the cliff top where Robert has fallen from: "He ran at the cliff edge and spread his arms out…And flew…Away, away. Far out to sea" (Greig 113). Because "Cliffs. Always a gamble" (Greig 113) and there are various incidents in the play to show that Robert is a 'gambler'.

Joyce McMillan describes Robert as "a breezy scientific hyper-rationalist, who scorns conventional morality" (McMillan). She also observes Robert's pitiless unethical nature-worship as "frightening and inhuman" (McMillan). After Kirk's death, Ellen feels happy and relieved from her uncle who wants to marry her off to a fisherman. She feels guilty for being 'happy' at her uncle's death. Robert alleviates her by giving an example from nature: "Nature does not require that you weep for the old. Birds on the cliff top clear the corpses without pity" (Greig 74). He wants to console her by explaining that her feelings are perfectly natural. He emphasizes that in the natural environment "death means exactly what it should. More room for the young" (Greig 75).

On the contrary, John, Robert's assistant and colleague, is naïve and more conservative than Robert. He lives according to the social customs. He is not devoted to the island as Robert is. He complains about the place. He controls his feelings of affection for Ellen for the sake of "limits of decency" (Greig 100). Nevertheless, he is jealous of Robert's free spirit. Robert and John are divided by conflict of ideas: while Robert worships nature with all its beauty and brutality, John embraces an instinctive sense of society in which morality and decency are a prerequisite. The nature vs culture theme is also reproduced through the characters of Robert and John.

In their conversations, the scientists describe the island with such adjectives as pristine, unspoiled, barely touched by humans, sanctuary, unobserved, unsullied, and pure. Contrarily, Kirk sees the island as a commodity which he can sell to the ministry. The island is a "useless lump of rock. A pagan place" for Kirk (Greig 46). Manipulation of nature by culture is depicted graphically. Kirk moans about the broken door for which he would ask for compensation because "it was a door serving its purpose" until the ornithologists' arrival (Greig 11). He complains that his sheep will be disrupted by the unfamiliar human presence of John and Robert. The chapel stinks and in John's words it is "dark as the buggering grave" which may presage Kirk's death in the middle of the play and Robert's death at the end. Robert, on the other hand is completely fascinated with the cliffs, the chapel, the stink and with the

primitivism of the unoccupied nature. He likes to swim at the cliff bottom in the 'burning cold' water which hits one 'like a whip'.

Robert's philosophy of life derives from natural laws. He identifies life's facts as natural and unnatural. He lectures Kirk that war is something definitely unnatural. He expresses his hatred of war, emphasizing that it is a human invention: "Two men fight, two birds fight, that's natural enough. But do you ever see a thousand or a million birds flock together to attack a million others? Birds kill, but you never see them massacre" (Greig 37). Awkwardly, however, Kirk is only interested in estimating his losses for which he will ask compensation from the ministry. Robert is disillusioned and appalled by the fact that apparently, he has been used by the government who wants to make a 'laboratory' of the island and to "enculturate it with their bloodless germ" (Greig 47). For Robert the true aim of their mission is uncovered: "They don't want us to observe, Johnny. They want us to take a census of the living dead" (Greig 47). Because Robert is immensely worried about the birds on the island, he threatens to murder Kirk if the old man sells the island to the ministry. Frantically Robert warns John against an even more fatal danger. If they do not stop Kirk, "the old man will sell the lease to the ministry and the island will die. Worse than that it will propagate death. It will become a killer itself" (Greig 51). Robert batters the old man whereas John tries to persuade Kirk in a more civilized manner. However, just after the struggle between Kirk and Robert in which the old man's authority is challenged, Kirk dies of heart attack. Robert believes that Kirk's dying is a lucky accident for the birds and the island. He depicts Kirk's corpse as beautiful, "His is the beauty of absence. The way an outlying island is more beautiful than the mainland" (Greig 69).

A great number of critics evaluate the play in different modes. Rosenberg reviews the plot along two gripping paths: political and sexual (Rosenberg). He claims that the play is also a depiction of more contemporary politics such as "The current politics around weapons of mass destruction and the projected war on Iraq" (Rosenberg). Similarly, Halliburton summarizes the play as "a curious combination of ornithology, sexual awakening and political conspiracy" (Halliburton). Mark Fisher reads the play as "the struggle between order and chaos, the head and the heart" (Fisher). And in terms of ecocritical associations, this remote, uninhabited Scottish island surrounded by the Atlantic becomes a site for laboratory test for anthrax. The ornithologists are appalled to understand that all the wildlife may be lost.

On this remote island nothing is quite like it seems. Robert's sacrifice of himself is symbolic of his desire to unite with the nature, as he prefers to

become like one of the birds and to cease to live. He exceeds the limits of being human and prefers to be non-human by throwing himself into the stormy sky. While the playwright discovers man's relationship to his environment, he draws stark differences between the rural and the urban.

There are several examples of poetic and lyric language as such:

John: I feel myself to be falling.

I must remember – there is a boat coming.

I must remember – there is a war coming.

I must remember – there are other people to consider. (Greig 92)

The lyric quality is reinforced by visual and auditory imagery: "the sound of water on the shore" (p. 9), "the crash of the sea on rocks" (Greig 9), "the noise of the birds such as kittiwakes, guillemots, razorbills, puffins, fulmars, shags, … on the cliffs" (Greig 16), "the sound of a flame" (Greig 17), "a blast of wind outside" (Greig 26), and "sudden sounds of thumping and bird calls from outside" (Greig 54), all contribute to the onomatopoeic quality of the play.

The play depicts several incidents in which culture dominates over nature. The playwright redefines our constructed attitudes towards nature and culture in a lyrical play discussing issues related with politics, science, technology, nature, and environmental ethics. By suggesting how nature is manipulated by culture, science and technology, the playwright urges the possibility of a green political theory and shows that there must be natural limits to social and political life.

David Greig delivers the hostile atmosphere of the coming war to the audience/reader vividly by setting the play on an isolated island under the threat of chemical testing and using visual, auditory and tactile imagery. Lyrical monologues and passionate dialogues describe issues related to the natural world and human social order. The narratives emphasize that scientific power and political power subjugate nature. As it is observed in the secret chemical weapon test, culture, in other words, political constitution, exercises control over the natural environment and manipulates it to their own advantage. By writing a plot about rare species' breeding, the anthrax plot and its destruction to nature and the living organisms and animals, Greig arouses general interest in the ecological system and the play underlines an imperative towards environmental protection through which humans need to organize their relationship with nature. The play reminds us of our ethical obligations to animals and other living and non-living organisms such as animals, plants including rocks, stones, and sand. The play is an example of how nature is subordinated by culture. While

the uninhabited island in Scotland, the birds, Ellen, Robert, the cliffs represent nature, John, the ministry as a political constitution, war, the experiment represent culture. The play depicts the entire modern paradox as a division between nature (science) and culture (politics). Theatre has an effective role in raising awareness about environmental problems. Playwrights continue to represent their concern about environmental issues. Along with David Greig's plays, Caryl Churchill's 1971 play *Not Not Not Not Not Enough Oxygen*, Clare Pollard's 2004 play *The Weather*, Steve Waters' 2009 play *The Contingency Plan*, Mike Bartlett's 2010 play *Earthquakes in London*, Richard Bean's 2011 play *The Heretic* include such topics as environmental apocalypse and climate change. In addition, theatre as a performance art also produces new theatre movements such as "environmental theatre" in order to perform environmental productions in which a flexibility of interaction between the audience and performers and immediacy of experience is created. Scholars also produce inspiring research such as Carl Lavery's *Performance and Ecology: What Can Theatre Do?* (2018) and Dillon Slagle's "The Aesthetic Evolution of Eco Theater" (2013) to define the political agenda of ecotheatre combining texts and performance.

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Ned Ludd Lives: A Re-interpretation of Luddism in Charlotte Bronte's *Shirley*

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On the last year of 2010s which will undoubtedly be remembered as a remarkable decade for the velocity of technologies in our daily lives, the omnipresence of technology from smart home appliances to smartphones and to many other portable gadgets render an increasing anxiety in the minds of many users. While feeling more and more dependent on the technology as it makes our daily lives and professional areas more comfortable, we also have concerns about the direction of this technology dependence. The urge of the tech users mainly centres around the internet, particularly the social media. A major reason for the ever-increasing interest in the social media is the sense of guilt and abandonment which arouses when people intentionally or unintentionally stay away from the flood of news and interactions. The trouble concerning the dominant role of the technology in our lives may even extend to apophenia which is defined as "the tendency to perceive a connection or meaningful pattern between unrelated or random things such as objects or ideas" in Merriam-Webster dictionary. This condition manifests itself when there is a blackout (not necessarily on an election day) and some frequently used smartphone applications stop working simultaneously. While the former may not have any link with the latter, people tend to have some question marks in their minds possibly related to security and surveillance issues even if the blackout is just local in their hometown or neighbourhood.

While stance against the ubiquitousness of technology is labelled and even stigmatized as technophobia by many people, some prefer the word 'Luddite' which is originally a word used for the early 19th century uprisings which was mainly against the employers who brought in new shearing frames to cut down the cost of highly skilled artisans operating the gig-mills.

Luddism is used to refer to assaults by these craftsmen in the textile industry of the northern England area on new machines which enabled the mill owners to reduce the number of skilled labourers. The new production line with the new machinery posed an enormous threat for the survival of many workers and as a result they used some ways to make the employers step back. The revolt included some food riots and sending letters to the mill owners and the magistrates with the signature of presumed commander Ned Ludd or General

Ludd. The period between March 1811 to 1813 witnessed the most intense clashes between the protesters and the government corps. Some further conflicts were also observed until 1817. The act of machine-breaking which took place mainly within the triangle of Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, and Lancashire should not be regarded as the archetype of such movements. Thomis states,

In the campaigns of the Spitalsfields weavers, for instance, in the late 1760s, assaults on looms served a double purpose of hitting out at a wage-cutting employers and bringing into line those workmen who were not cooperating with the rest. (13)

Furthermore, the breakout of the uprisings needs to be examined as an extension of the atmosphere stirred by the Napoleonic Wars rather than an autonomous working-class revolt. The economic crisis of the period due to exhaustive Napoleonic Wars should also be considered as the setback. The unrest was especially more complex and visible around the Pennine Mountains compared to Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire. The structure of the movement varied between the regions, as Kevin Binfield argues,

In Lancashire, for example, and especially the Manchester region, Ludd was a kind of out-of-towner, an imported symbol who functioned more artificially as a device to unite the diverse interests of spinners, colliers, and other workers with those of Jacobins and radical reformers already active in the area. In Nottingham, by contrast, where Ned Ludd was “born,” a customary labor culture was already in place, a local subculture out of which he arose “organically” as a name for the movement. In Manchester, however, Ned Ludd functioned more like a “metonym,” an imported figure that the local Luddites, mostly cotton weavers, used to unify their cause. (46–47)

The diversity about the role of Ned Ludd makes it impossible to interpret General Ludd in a single way. His figure should rather be considered a collective idea giving a unity to the movement. Diversified by their working conditions and loose mechanism determining their wages and working-hours, each group of the workers had a different vision about their protests, and thus attributed a wide array of different meanings to Ned Ludd. The difference among the participants related to what Ludd represented also paralleled the difference between the starting point of the movement and what followed as tension reached its climax. As Thomis mentions “Luddism was all the time changing, that men started out with one idea, that something happened, one thing led to another; Luddism acquired a momentum of its own and it was genuinely difficult to see its ultimate outcome.” (79).

Eventually, Ned Ludd had become a persona to which every Luddite contributed a new meaning and from which every Luddite produced another story as a motivation and he has turned into a myth not only throughout the period of 200 years since the events, but even while they took place. This mythification served the agenda in positive direction. The signature of Ned Ludd was on many letters from different locations which were sent on the same day. So, the metaphysical presence of Ned Ludd did not alienate any protester by being a real personality who would not have made such a legendary omnipresence. Despite the fact that Luddism was not original in its attack on the machines, the creation of Ned Ludd as a legendary figure was innovative and strengthened the diverse structure of the movement as Navickas asserts, "Luddism was more a movement of proaction rather than re-reaction. Tropes common to all participants and their supporters created the panregional identity of Luddism. They therefore provide a means of viewing the movement with a different historiographical focus" (243).

Ned Ludd, which was now a fiction, is believed to be an apprentice around 1890s in Leicester. Not certain if it was Ludd or Ludham, he worked at a stocking frame, he was mistreated by his master for being careless in his knitting and told to "square his needles," which made him take a sledgehammer and smashed the mechanism. The story evolving around the region for years and the protesters recognise Ned Ludd as their spiritual frontsman.

At this point, in addition to the transformation of Ned Ludd into a myth, there was now a new myth emerging with the phenomena of Luddite uprisings. The region where the legend of Robin Hood was immense also made it easier for Ned Ludd to turn into a myth as an anonymous song declares it;

Chant no more your old rhymes about bold Robin Hood,

His feats I but little admire,

I will sing the Achievements of General Ludd

Now the Hero of Nottinghamshire'

What started as basic demand for better attitude and money for their qualified labour came to be recognised as a sheer brutal anti-technological protest. Among the multiple reasons most of which lie in the 20th century, an early example is the Romantic reflection of Ned Ludd. Major Romantic poets; Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley shared their support for the movement in their public addresses, yet it was Lord Byron who made the most remarkable argument for the Luddites when he made his maiden speech in the House of Lords to oppose the bill of capital punishment for frame-breaking activity.

Although the bill was accepted, Byron did not cease his support by writing poems about the movement one of which was ‘Song for the Luddites’;

As the Liberty lads over the sea
Brought their freedom, and cheaply, with blood
So we, boys, we
Will die fighting, or live free,
And down with all kings but King Ludd.
When the web that we weave is complete,
And the shuttle exchanged for the sword,
We will fling the winding sheet
O'er the despot at our feet,
And dye it deep in the gore he has poured.
Though black as his heart its hue,
Since his veins are corrupted to mud,
Yet this is the dew
Which the tree shall renew
Of liberty, planted by Ludd!

The uncontrollable structure of the movement made it impossible for many then to observe the major emphasis of the croppers who were the leading group among the protesters. The advancement brought about by the stocking frames was not the direct target since they already realized "advantages which mechanization would bring […] their machine-wrecking was an attempt to show the owners of the new textile mills that they were a force to be reckoned with, that they had a 'nuisance value'. […] main objective was to gain concessions from the employers." (Boudon, 86). Luddism, which was carried out under the leadership of a mythic figure, was itself now on the way to become a myth in this way.

Nowadays, Luddism finds its echo in the attitudes of Neo-Luddites, which might be loosely labelled as technoskeptic rather than technophobic. The textual origins of Neo-Luddism can be traced back to the turn of the 1990s when Chellis Glendinning’s “Notes Toward a Neo-Luddite manifesto” was published. The short text was centred on the assertion that nuclear technologies, chemical technologies, genetic engineering technologies, television, electromagnetic technologies and computer technologies were “destructive technologies” (Glendinning 9). The text ended with four basic

demands the third and the fourth of which were for "creation of technologies in which politics, morality, ecology, and technics are merged for the benefit of life on Earth […] the development of a life-enhancing worldview in Western technological societies" (Glendinning 10-11). Through its rejection of the establishment, the manifesto rose hand in hand with other influential movements of the period such as anti-globalization, deep ecology, and radical environmentalism. As Steven Jones notes, "the most active promoters of the name itself and the myth of continuity with Luddism were part of the larger antiglobalization movement that reached its peak at the same moment in the mid-to-late 1990s" (24).

The same decade witnessed protests by European farmers who blocked the roads with their trucks since their labours were threatened by increasingly dominant agricultural corporations. Such protests by farmers and consumers still continue against certain prominent figures such as Monsanto (which is now owned by Bayer) in food industry regarding the excessive use of pesticides and herbicides which are claimed to be major causes of the increase in the number of people with cancer, low fertility, cognitive disorders, etc.

Yet with the 21st century, there are now new platforms as the major sites of almost paranoid attitude towards technology; social media and artificial intelligence. The lawsuits against Facebook regarding the use of personal data for the US elections by Cambridge Analytics is symbolic about the growing fear/hate on behalf of users. The irresistibility of internet in the role of our lives gives way to an ambivalent attitude (a sort of love-hate relationship) towards technology especially for "knowledge-workers" like us who generate and disseminate their questions regarding the pervasiveness of technology on our wirelessly connected laptops or tablets. Although smashing our personal technological devices is getting more common nowadays, our behaviour is definitely not the same with Kirkpatrick Sale, the renowned environmentalist, who shocked the audience at the conferences by smashing a laptop computer around 5-6 times around the mid-1990s.

As a leading figure for the Neo-Luddites, Sale defines the movement as "surprisingly broad and far more multifarious and interesting than one might have been led to think. […] contains multitudes of those who have in common an awakening from the technophilic dream and resistance to one aspect or other of the industrial monoculture" (258). In his seminal book *Rebels Against the Future*, Sale attempts to draw lessons from the writings and the experiences of "naysayers-to-technology" from the Amish to Earth-Firsters, from bio-

regionalists to deep ecologists. Consequently, Sale lists down his demand of a new approach for the role of technology and nature as;

1. Technologies are never neutral, and some are hurtful.

2. Industrialism is always a cataclysmic process, destroying the past, roiling the present, making the future uncertain.

3. Only a people serving an "apprenticeship to nature" can be trusted with machines.

4. The nation-state, synergistically intertwined with industrialism, will always come to its aid and defense, making revolt futile and reform ineffectual.

5. But resistance to the industrial system, based on some grasp of moral principles and rooted in some sense of moral revulsion, is not only possible but necessary.

6. Politically, resistance to industrialism must force not only "the machine question" but the viability of industrial society into public consciousness debate.

7. Philosophically, resistance to industrialism must be embedded in an analysis- an ideology, perhaps- that is morally informed, carefully articulated, and widely shared.

8. If the edifice of industrial civilization does not eventually crumble as a result of a determined resistance within its very walls, it seems certain to crumble of its own accumulated excesses and instabilities within not more than a few decades, perhaps sooner, after which there may be space for alternative societies to rise. (261-79)

While the reliability of the technology firms declines after data scandals, the fear among today's tech users also demand such an open and questionable status for the platforms and applications we are a part of. As Andrew Feenberg puts it,

Fear usually does not kill new technology; for the most part, it simply changes the regulatory environment and the orientation of development. Automotive safety and emissions is a good example. Regulation gradually effected changes that were well within the technical capabilities of manufacturers. The results are much safer and less polluting vehicles, not the disaster foreseen by the foes of government "interference." (93)

The fact that technology cannot be dismissed totally from our lives entails a re-evaluation of techno-optimism of the 1990s. On the brink of 2020s, when even leading figures of technology like Bill Gates, Zuckerberg, and Elon Musk are accused of being 'Luddite' since they declared their cautiousness against

artificial intelligence as a greater threat than nuclear technologies, it is necessary to put forward a balanced approach towards the pervasiveness of new technologies.

Among the many literary examples which employed Luddite risings as the background, Charlotte Bronte's *Shirley* stands out as a novel which recognizes the upcoming dominance of industrialization while foregrounding the natural landscape it was distorting. As the daughter of a family who was in the middle of Luddite protests, the memories were fresh to be gathered for Charlotte Bronte. The reflection of the removal of pastoral settings in the novel is regarded as a tribute to her sister Emily as DeCuir points out "Charlotte concedes in *Shirley* that Robert Moore's mill-property threatens to destroy what her sister loved best, the 'wild workshop'" (6). The novel emphasizes the contrast between the socio-economic turbulence caused by the human and the serenity of the landscape detailed by Charlotte Bronte through a long list of non-human species and sceneries.

At the beginning of the novel, Charlotte Bronte reflects her deep lamentation for the latter as "resentment ...at the disfigurement of a beautiful landscape and the abolition of a centuries-old way of life" (Bronte 38). While such a nostalgic outlook could have easily been used in the last sections of the novel, it is placed in an early part as it indicates the acceptance. In the following parts, we find the central characters Shirley and Caroline stand side by side in harmony with the nature. As Coriale mentions,

Shirley represents a community bustling with naturalist activity, illustrating both the natural world and the characters who take solace in studying it. By incorporating a vibrant network of amateur naturalists into the novel, Brontë does more than textually preserve a world altered by enclosure and industrialized expansion; she illustrates the human relationships that form through the mutual study of the living World. (123)

Through this 'mutual study', Bronte sets out for an alternative reading of the period from a female perspective and grasps multitude to the historical realities of the period. The multiplicity of motivation among the Luddite protestors finds an equivalence in the pages of the novel in this way. While the central conflict is sustained through protestors' fight for the maintenance of survival bondage between their labour and the product, Shirley and Caroline hold on to the abundance of livelihoods surrounding them as they "stand alone with the friendly night, its mute stars, and these whispering trees, whose report our friends will not come to gather" (334). The unity among the Luddites parallel the growing connection between the two characters. As Plotz points out,

“Throughout the novel, there is a conscious effort to distinguish the sort of observation that Shirley and Caroline acquire from the sort of unruly solidarity that is the undesirable property of crowd-members who intend to destroy and then to restructure the factory world” (171).

The assaults on Moore’s mill by the Luddites stands pivotal to the plot as Bronte prefers an alternative pastoral imagery for the reflection of the historical event. Describing “the wide field where a thousand children were playing, and now nearly a thousand adult spectators walking about” (294), what is sacrificed for the sake of a new industrial land is pictured vividly in the mind of the reader. Through the relationship between Caroline Helstone and Robert Moore, the diverging paths become more visible although the two characters paradoxically get emotionally closer to each other;

The long sprays of the hawthorns, shooting out before them, served as a screen; they saw him before he observed them. At a glance Caroline perceived that his social hilarity was gone: he had left it behind him in the joy-echoing fields round the school; what remained now was his dark, quiet, business countenance. (296)

At the end of the novel, Caroline’s confrontation with Moore for turning “our blue hill-country air into the Stilbro' smoke atmosphere” (598) is repeated with Martha’s mourn for the field as she says “A lonesome spot it was — and a bonnie spot — full of oak trees and nut trees. It is altered now” (612). The mourn for what is lost from the countryside is replaced by Moore’s mill which is “ambitious as the tower of Babel” (Bronte 6). As Zlotnick puts it, “Shirley's double endings both literalize and amplify the duality that lies at the center of Bronte's response to the industrial world: her text both heralds and celebrates world-transforming changes and laments the slow speed with which those changes are occurring” (15). Rather than a distorted image of Luddites which only serve a popular image in the minds of the reader, a minimal approach should be used to disseminate the actual mindset of the Luddites. The bondage between the manufacturer and the product should be what anyone interested in this subject needs to focus on. In this regard Luddism should be considered

as a respect for and a confidence in those things that make us human, with a concomitant rejection of the mechanistic approach to being that devalues our humanity, […] a philosophy that respects tradition, intuition, spirituality, the senses, human relationships, the work of the hand, and the disorderly and unpredictable nature of reality, as opposed to a mechanistic or reductionist construct of the world. It questions the domination of science and the elevation of efficiency to a superior value. It rejects materiality. (Fox, xii)

Shirley thus serves as a convenient medium between the era of Luddites and today's search for an alternative to omnipresence of technology. The novel sets a pluralist tone with an equal stress on each social segment regardless of their sects, classes, religions, and ethnicities as well as non-human species. As Bratlinger notes, "The industrial aspect of Bronte's novel offers a plot of class reconciliation and social progress based on technological advancement and free trade" (113). The coexistence of the human and the non-human becomes the underlying theme throughout the text while the plot rests on the class distinction stirred by the Industrial Revolution that endangers the livelihood of o certain group of working classes. The nostalgic reflection of the rural beauties in the words of Martha and Caroline juxtapose the distorted land full of dead bodies in transitional period. The imagery of the landscape fades away as,

readers are encouraged to welcome this moment of peace and prosperity regardless of the environmental losses that attend it. Ultimately, then, the novel poses social responsibility against natural preservation. Far from an ecotopia, Shirley concedes the devastating environmental losses in its final pages and offers only itself - the novel - as an enduring consolation. (Coriale 130).

Bronte describes an ambivalent settlement with the new environment shaped by industrialization just as today's technology users are mostly unable to define a fixed role for the internet and the technology.

Over the 200 years human life has been in an ongoing endeavour to deny mechanization against dehumanization while Moore's innovative frames have been structurally replaced by subsequently first by radios, then by TVs, and nowadays by smartphones. An uncompromising rejection of these technologies has just rendered the word 'Luddite' a mere form of technophobia, let alone alarming the society against unexpected threats by the industrial and cyber technologies. The distracting emphasis on the blurred line between love and hate for technology should be replaced by an approach towards an organisation of the space tech gadgets are located in our daily lives along with the insistence on the visibility of the environment embedded in Charlotte Bronte's *Shirley.*

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Rediscovering Humanimality in Margaret Atwood's *The MaddAddam Triology*

Sinem Türkel

Though there is deep interconnectedness between human and animal species as kin and kind, the blurry line between the two has become very distinct as a result of anthropocentric beliefs and ways of life and the belief in human exceptionalism. The concepts of man and animal are redefined and transformed through the ages and the cosmic balance is destroyed at the expense of the well-being of man. At present, nature with its non-human living beings is regarded as "inferior, passive and mindless, whose only value and meaning is derived from the imposition of human ends and is simply replaceable by anything else which can serve those ends equally well. It can be reduced and regimented" (Schmeink 83). Such a drastic change in the attitude of man towards animals has drawn the attention of many contemporary writers through whose works we understand the importance of the natural bond between humans and animals. One of these writers is Margaret Atwood, the most influential Canadian author of contemporary fiction. Through her science-fiction MaddAddam trilogy, Atwood reminds the reader of the significance of embracing the archaic natural bond between animals and humans through the story of a dystopian future. This paper aims at analyzing the importance of rediscovering the interconnectedness of human and animal relationship in Margaret Atwood's most celebrated novel series, the *MaddAddam* trilogy by focusing on its genetically modified animals, its eco-friendly people vs. egoistic and self-centered humans, and its projections for a better version of human species in the creation of a more balanced world.

Atwood tries to address the rupture in her trilogy. She equates man's separation from non-human nature as his fall, and this fall is a result of many practices that humans adopted from choosing carnivorous consumption over vegetarianism, reason over instinct, symbolic language and grammar over unmediated body signals, fire and weaponry over "firelessness," and excessive sexual mating over seasonal mating. She demonstrates these choices and the possibilities of reversing them in her trilogy.

All these choices that prepared the downfall of man depend on objectification and the ensuing exploitation of non-human nature. As Glover states, "Man's presumption of his own apartness from nature has been blamed

for the objectification of nature—thus leading to the use of nature as instrument or object" (52). The novels in the MaddAddam trilogy center on the direct consequences of such objectification of nature as a result of the excessive power of biotechnology. Through the pages of the first novel of the trilogy, *Oryx and Crake*, the reader encounters the hybrid animals produced by big corporations. Such corporations regard animal life as completely unimportant and try to benefit from them as much as possible in every aspect of life. The sole purpose of these genetically modified and/or engineered bodies lies outside themselves; in other words, they have no intrinsic value. For instance, scientists generate pigs that are genetically altered with human DNA only for medical purposes. The organs of these pigs named pigoons are used in organ transplantation. As such, even in the remote future of Atwood's dystopia, one can observe the reverberations of Descartes' infamous verdict of animals as automata, beings with no souls to be saved, which "are reduced to the model of a machine" easing or saving the lives of humans (Gökçen 36). Thus, Atwood shows how the organs of animals turn into replaceable machine parts that can be removed and placed into other bodies without regard to their wholeness.

Some genetically engineered animals are not produced for dissection, but their natural behavioral codes are tampered with so as to fit human needs. Wolvogs are, for example, violent animals that look like dogs. They are engineered for security purposes. Though wolvogs appear as domestic animals, their appearance is deceptive since they are actually violent. The scientists in these corporations determine the function of the animals, and they separate animals from their natural feelings. Thus, through scientists, Atwood portrays a world where nature is totally destroyed and natural or biological is replaced with the artificial.

Bioengineered creatures, differing in their creation purposes, not only help big corporations in the health sector earn huge amounts of money, but also help big food chains and their investors develop financially. The increase in the profits of these gigantic corporations comes at the expense of not only non-human animals but also the majority of human population. By creating headless chickens— ChickieNobs—that can grow up to twelve breasts, biotech companies, such as Helthwyzer and OrganicInc Farms, boost their profits while threatening the lives of people. Hence, such companies threaten the lives of both humans and animals. Atwood calls attention to the unequal share of the profits that come from exploitation in whatever kind it emerges, for the very idea of exploitation is based on the devaluation of some, for the well-being of a powerful minority.

Seeing the devastating and catastrophic consequences of technology, Glenn, a brilliant and radical geneticist known as Crake, wipes out most of the human population together with his girlfriend nicknamed as Oryx. Everyone, except for Crakers—human-like creatures with the combination of human and animal DNA created by Crake—and a few survivors, dies in this global apocalypse. One of these survivors is an eco-cult group named God's Gardeners. In her novel, Atwood also shows that before the global apocalypse, there were groups of people, though fewer in number when compared to the entire world's population before the global destruction, who praised nature and treated animals as their equals just as in primitive times. Since such people witnessed the damage caused by big corporations, they sought salvation in returning to nature. They believed in the sacredness of Magna Mater and claimed that humans are interconnected to every other living and non-living being in the world, as each is part of a whole. In an era when almost all humanity exploited animals cruelly and altered their biological characteristics by playing God, such a minority group named God's Gardeners, acknowledged the sacredness of nature as a whole. God's Gardeners "embody a retreat from the industrialization of everyday life, a return to a Rousseauesque natural human indicative of the Romantics and perhaps the ever-growing ecology movement" (Narkunas 2). According to God's Gardeners, the body is similar to a tool that serves to consumerism and monetization. In an attempt to put a stop to all the wrongdoings of such a materialistic world in which humans have lost their dignities and only have a marketing value, God's Gardeners feel obliged to take some measures. Firstly, the leaders of the group forget their former lives and are reborn with the names of Adam and Eve. Since they make a fresh start, they adopt "a notion of ecological worldview that can see immortality in nature and the soul, while the body is stuck within the limits of time and space, its material thingness" (Narkunas 18).

As they are self-sufficient vegetarians that respect animals as soul possessing beings, they avoid eating animal meat. To them, the consumption of animal meat is the reason for the fall of men: "According to Adam One, the Fall of Man was multidimensional. The ancestral primates fell out of trees; then they fell from vegetarianism into meat-eating. Then they fell from instinct into reason, and thus into technology; from simple signals into complex grammar, and thus into humanity; from firelessness into fire, and thence into weaponry; and from seasonal mating into incessant sexual twitching" (Atwood 224). Adam One, the founder and leader of God's Gardeners, lists the interrelated reasons that led to the loss of interconnectedness between humans and animals. Thus, under the leadership of Adam One, God's Gardeners believed that by disobeying the

commandment to live the Animal life with all its simplicity and by attaching importance to technology, which eventually resulted in ignoring all living species except humans, humans led to global destruction.

In a world that is ruthlessly exploited as such, Crake sees no choice but create a new species lacking all the negative traits of humans. Crakers, the new men, have both human-like and animal-like traits. While Crackers can speak like humans through language, Crake designs them in a way that they do not "go in for fancy language 'as' they hadn't been thought evasion 'or' euphemism" (Atwood 348). Though Crake wants to eliminate human-like features in the design of Crackers as much as possible, Crackers end up showing some characteristics. For instance, one of the Crackers, named Blackbeard learns to read and write and even takes over the duty of story-telling from Toby over time, and thus shows similarities to humankind. Similar to humans', Crackers also have religious thoughts and rituals, which show the fact that they seek meaning in their existence like human beings. In an attempt to attribute a meaning to their existence, Crackers start to practice a religion in which Crake, their creator, is the God and Snowman is the prophet. Hence, Atwood suggests that "the case of the Cracker's provocatively stipulates that a proclivity to believe in something bigger than ourselves, to trust in a grand narrative of how the world works, to have 'faith', is almost the default position of humankind—even if humanity in the form of the Crackers is a filtered version of our current selves" (Bahrawi 256). Moreover, like most animals, they have shorter life spans and their sexual intercourse is very similar to that of animals. Both animals and Crackers' physical characteristics are also alike. Both can endure severe weather conditions without feeling the need to cover their bodies with any sort of clothing. In terms of self-sufficiency, Crackers have healing power similar to that of animals. That is to say, they can heal their wounds by purring like cats, a characteristic which was placed in their genes by Crake after years of observing the cat family. In their adaptation to their habitats also, they are like animals that do not exert changes but harmonize themselves to their environments. Unlike humans, they are peaceful and playful for they lack the discriminating features of socially constructed concepts like racism, hierarchy or any institution of the symbolic world. The idea behind Crake's creation of such human-animal hybrids seems to coincide with Berger's: "Animals are born, sentient and are mortal. In these things they resemble man. In their superficial anatomy—less in their deep anatomy—in their habits, in their time, in their physical capacities, they differ from man. They are both like and unlike" (Berger, 1991: 4). With his new species, Crake gathers all the positive features of both mankind and animals in an attempt to avoid the recurrence of the fall of man as a result of forgetting his

eternal bond with nature and its beings. By bringing into being a human-animal hybrid species, Crake emphasizes the essential hybridity of human and non-human animals and human's inseparable bond with non-human animals. For it is the latter's diminishing presence and significance in human life that has caused the fall of humans and the emergence of this apocalyptic world. Thus, Atwood illustrates that the existence of Crakers emphasizes the need to embrace our animal-like qualities and the everlasting tie between humans and animals.

God's Gardeners are not the only human survivors from the old days. There is a group named Painballers that stands in stark contrast to God's Gardeners; they continue their habits that have caused the catastrophe, such as harming animals and nature for their own good. In contrast to God's Gardeners and in direct opposition to animals, even including some genetically altered ones, these dreadful survivors destroy any living being standing in their way for their survival and pleasure. While the pigeons, the intelligent new pig species, can communicate, form alliances with humans and feel grief—which are mainly human features—Painballers choose to thrust aside these and turn a blind eye to such human characteristic. Though Pigeons know how to use weapons, they avoid using them the same way Painballers do, yet interestingly "despite their monstrousness, Painballers are still seen as 'human' as opposed to the pigs who are conceptualized as 'animal' in a persistent anthropocentrism" (Bone 633). By explicitly showing the striking contrast between these men and God's Gardeners, Atwood seems to suggest that humans may actually choose to live ethically, harmoniously and peacefully in nature or continue their harmful, destructive and egotistic habits.

In the second book of the trilogy *The Year of the Flood,* one of Atwood's topics is language and ability for speech. As Adam One suggested, human language is one of the reasons behind the fall of mankind. In direct opposition to Judeo-Christian and Enlightenment thinking, specific human language does not show human's superiority. On the contrary, human language can express only a small fraction of reality, and as such it points towards a narrowing of human mind and a loss of an earlier wholeness. Even though orthodox religious views accept human superiority, some streaks from ancient beliefs existing in them exalt figures like St. Francis who can communicate with animals. God's Gardeners likewise try to remember the language through which they can communicate with animals. For instance, Old Pilar and Toby can communicate precisely with bees. As a master, Old Pilar, teaches Toby, an apprentice, how to communicate with bees. This language is not symbolic and mediated; it is direct

and spoken with all the bodily capacities. When Pilar takes Toby to visit the beehives, she introduces her to the bees by name and gives her some advice on bees. Pilar says: “They need to know you’re a friend. They can smell you. If they do sting, don’t slap them. Just brush the sting off. But they won’t sting unless they’re frightened, because stinging kills them” (Atwood 118). Though bees do not understand human language, they can figure out the intention of the communicator either from his or her smell or from the intonation in his or her speech.

This episode also undermines some of human notions such as wildness of animals and civilized manners of humans. As we observe here, bees do not harm humans unless they pose a threat to them. Unlike some humans, who constantly threaten the lives of animals for various reasons, animals only attack to defend themselves and their territories when they are in danger. Pilar also advises Toby to talk to bees to ask permission to take their honey. Though Toby feels like a fool in her first try, she later awakens to the truth in Pilar’s piece of advice; unless bees give their consent to humans, no action should be taken against their will. After all, humans and animals are sharing a world, and mutual understanding is a necessity in order to live in harmony. Humans seem to learn a great deal from animals. Only if they lent an ear to animals and try to learn from them, instead of always assuming the role of master, life could be so much more peaceful and the world a livable place for all.

Though most Gardeners have a deep understanding of showing respect to every living being, only a few members of such a distinguished and enlightened group can succeed in comprehending the language of animals. In order to be able to perceive the world of animals via their non-verbal language, humans need to normalize their relationship with animals by embracing the archaic human perception, which praise all forms of nature. Only by doing this can they escape from “the prison-house of language” (qtd. in Gökçen 21) and accept that “there are beings and objects with ways of knowing and being that resist our flawed systems of language and who may know us and themselves in ways we can never discern” (Gökçen 21). By putting this archaic communicative ability in Crakers’ systems and inserting genes from both humans and animals in their organisms, Crake wants to prevent the future generations from severing their ties precisely with animals.

In the last book of trilogy, *MaddAddam,* Crakers function as a medium between pigoons and Toby. After three men kill pig babies, pigoons want help from Gardeners to stop these men by the help of their tools, and in return pigs promise not to enter their garden and eat their crops again. However, since a

non-verbal communication takes place and it is one of the Crakers that translate the pigoons' offer to Toby, Toby asks: "Then why aren't they talking to us? Why are they talking to you?" But then she thinks: "Of course. We are too stupid, we don't understand their languages. So there has to be a translator." However, one of the Crakers replies: "It is easier for them to talk to us" (Atwood 270). Since Crakers are not engulfed by the symbolic system yet, the communication between them and animals is easier. However, as implied by Crakers, it is not impossible for humans to communicate with animals. It is just harder for humans as they have already severed their ties with animals.

Atwood's usage of extinct animal names as the nicknames of the main characters is also very symbolic. Oryx and Crake are the names that are adopted by Glenn and her girlfriend in an online game named Extinctathon. By constantly recalling the names of the extinct animals throughout the trilogy, Atwood sheds light on the harsh reality that the extinction of most animal species is not the outcome of nature but it is rather the direct result of a man-made world where there is no room for animals as equals. Humans' one-sided perspective about the superiority of their life before other living entities has destroyed the balance of nature irreversibly.

Though animals can survive in a world without humans, humans cannot since they are constantly in need of animals. Apart from needing them for their products, humans need animals for their company, as significant others. As Gökçen states, "With their parallel lives, animals offer man a companionship which is different from any offered by human exchange. Different because it is a companionship offered to the loneliness of man as species" (35). Atwood sheds light on the friendship between humans and animals by presenting the strong and close relationship between Jimmy, aka Snowman, and his genetically modified pet rakunk, given to him on his tenth birthday. Produced as a mixture of raccoon and skunk genes, the rakunk named Killer by Snowman serves as his best friend. While Snowman is in charge of looking after the Killer in its literal sense, the Killer accompanies Snowman and comforts him by easing his loneliness. The rakunk listens to Snowman's secrets and confessions and they communicate with one another through a spiritual channel where mutual understanding prevails. That's why, the loss of a dependable and understanding companion is a huge burden on Snowman when he learns that his mother freed the Killer as she abandoned her family. He finds it extremely difficult to be alone and unaccompanied. Atwood implies that humans hide behind constructed realities, such as human rationality, or animals' lacking the ability to communicate. While some people in the novel try to benefit from either the

flesh or the product of animals even after the global destruction, others like Old Pilar and Toby show that it is not impossible to understand one another as humans and animals are our kin and kind after all.

All in all, as a direct consequence of the commonly held belief that humans are placed at the top of the food chain and evolutionary scale, people remain blind to the rights and lives of the other creatures with whom they share the world. Through her presentation of such a traumatic and shocking future, Atwood points out the dangerous path humanity has already taken as a result of severing its ties with nature and its entities. As Bone argues, "The attraction of the dystopia is that it has roots in the everyday, whereas utopia seems to be forever out of reach" (628). Hence, by opening the eyes of the reader to the significance of possible future dangers mankind can face, Atwood invites the readers to embrace animistic culture and respond to the unjust and unnatural separation between human and animals which is often promoted and regarded as normality.

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Nature and Performance as Resistance in *Feeding the Ghosts* and *Cambridge*

Hilal Şengenç

For the Western culture, the European conquest of America was the beginning of "modern world history" and the "symbol" of "human progress" because, after 1492, European civilization became the global "center" with its political, cultural, financial, and technical power. However, from a postcolonial perspective, the colonial encounter, which led to the institution of slavery, is interpreted as the subjugation, loss, and marginalization of its non-Western participants. It is also as an experience of resistance and declaration of identity (Stern 1-6). This requires the "rewriting of the European historical and fictional record" from a marginalized point of view (Ashcroft *et al.* 196). Accordingly, Guyanese-British Fred D'Aguiar and Caribbean-British Caryl Phillips are two contemporary Black-Atlantic[1] writers using a post-colonial strategy and retelling the history of slavery to subvert the Eurocentric discourse which has otherized Africans. D'Aguiar retells the disaster of the *Zong*, the slave ship that became a tomb for Africans forced into the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Phillips narrates how the colonial encounter between the whites and the blacks resulted in either death or loss of identity. *Feeding the Ghosts* and *Cambridge* are neo-archival[2] novels that represent and decolonize slavery through the blacks' "agency" (Visser 276). Therefore, like a historical document, they mirror the abominable conditions Africans had to undergo when the Americas were colonized, and they were subjugated due to being viewed by Westerners as their uncivilized other. This study focuses on two black female protagonists, Mintah and Christiania, who represent nature against the hegemony of white culture. Although the blacks' attributed inferiority and heathenness are used for justifying their enslavement, they are the very resources of Mintah and Christiania's challenges against the whites viewing themselves as the epitome of civilization. These slave women are victimized and silenced; however, they reclaim Africanness through their performances of traditional religions, which becomes a motive for their survival of slavery.

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[1]For the black-atlantic treatment of slavery, see David Lambert, "Black-Atlantic counterfactualism: speculating about slavery and its aftermath", *Journal of Historical Geography* 36 (2010), pp: 286-296.

[2]For a detailed comparison of the "archive", the "neo-archive", and the formation of the neo-archive through literature see Erica L. Johnson, "Building the Neo-Archive: *Dionne Brand's* A Map to the Door of No Return", *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism* 12.1 (2014), pp: 152-153.

An essential determinant of Africans' enslavement and institutionalization of slavery in colonial America by the English, the monopoly over the slave trade by the mid-17th century (Franklin 53), was the idea of "Englishness." It depended on a hierarchal structure of "difference" and "servitude" that had already existed and predestined one's status as irreversible within the English society. "[R]acial awareness" and "prejudice," which separated the English from Africans as us vs. "outsiders" or "strangers," combined with financial interests, and social and religious forces to make the most profit from the slave trade. Africans lacked "Englishness," which meant that they were ethnically different and would still be deprived of it even if they converted to Christianity. Accordingly, they were resolved to be the fittest of the "foreigners" for the bottom layer of the colonial settlement, and the best solution to long-term labor in the New World. "Englishness," which was the source of "freedom" and the opposite of "permanent" servitude, thus, created the system of chattel slavery in "English America" (Wood 5-19).

Africans' position as slaves was vindicated on many grounds ranging from biblical sources to travelogues produced by English travelers (Wood 22-23). The representation of Africans by the English depended on actual or ascribed "differences" between the Self and the Other, who were each other's "dialectic" counterparts (Miles 11). Africans were contrasted with the English in terms of their divergence in skin color, religion, social institutions, and traditions. "Blackness" was the primary indicator of Africans' "difference," and it was associated with the idea of "divine punishment" and slavery. They were depicted as "inferior" for many reasons. Their superstitions, faith in magic, and religious practice indicated an absence of Christian principles in their living, which were "heathenism" to the English eye (Wood 23, 24). Travel accounts highlighted the differences between "social structures and practices" and determined "civilized behaviour" measures. For instance, marriage, family relationships, architecture, and clothing were the significant points of departure from "civilization," which were epitomized in the English standards of living (Wood 20, 24). The practice of evaluating Africans through physical differences like skin color, hair type, and nakedness, and differences in belief systems ended up comparing them with "animals" untouched by any traces of civilization (Wood 25, Miles 22).

Like other Europeans, the English conceived the Americas as "yet unformed," and Africans and the natives, who lacked a culture and religion of their own, as "unknowing". They were a "*tabula rasa*" during colonization, which needed to absorb the European culture to recover from their supposed inherent

bestiality (Greenblatt 23). As a result, the "representations" of Africans produced a "discourse of primitivism" (Loomba 108) that portrayed them as the "beastly Iyvynge", that is, the wild barbaric other of the civilized English (Wood 25). This was a racist "discourse of civilization" (Miles 20) as well that promoted the racial, cultural, and economic superiority of the English through a constant emphasis to Africans' difference, lack of humanity, and incorrigible nature. By contrast with the English who have a "material culture" of their own with their excessive food, clothing, and immense estates, Africans were considered the "property" of the English that was managed via slave codes (Wood 52, 54-55). In short, the discourse of civilization served in the justification of African slavery, for "the English" understanding of enslavement required a forfeiture of "humanity" that rendered a person neither "a woman" nor "a man" yet "an animal" (Wood 9-10).

Feeding and *Cambridge* are post-colonial black novels as they dismantle the discourse of civilization and bear witness to Africans', the "subjugated race['s]," "ordinary day" misery (Magona qtd. in Craps 61). This was the result of "colonial and Enlightenment" policies that brought devastation "in the name of progress and civilisation" (Henri and Grunebaum qtd. in Craps 59). They are also examples of transatlantic literature that intends to build the neo-archive through an "imaginative engagement with history," as Gunning suggests. In other words, they revisit slavery, black people's shared "experience," which has been ignored but influenced them even today (203-204). The integration of slavery into "a literary and historical archive" (Gunning 204) enables them to address the white culture alternatively through "the politics of ethnicity" depending on the idea of "difference," which is represented positively contrary to its marginalization by the concept of "Englishness" (Hall 446-447). Therefore, they offer a "counterhegemonic" representation of slavery (Dawson qtd. in Sommer 245) where "traditional notions of Englishness" is counteracted by the idea of "blackness" (Sommer 245, 241). Slavery becomes a symptom of trauma rather than an indication of progress in these novels.

Feeding and *Cambridge* employ various textual strategies that highlight "blackness" not only as a social and political reality but also as a "discursive" tool (Sommer 245) to undermine the authority of western culture. "Blackness" provides the protagonists Mintah and Christiania with "subjectivity" so that they speak up on behalf of the black community who have been repudiated and silenced by colonialism, racism, and slavery (Kennedy qtd. in Craps and Buelens 7). Mintah and Christiania are the witness of the traumatic slave trade and chattel slavery, and they respond to the idea of "Englishness" via their

"performativity." "Performativity" is a means of utilizing history politically. New "possibilities," which are unavailable in archival history yet are significant outcomes of race and history, emerge in a transatlantic novel when "the historical" material is questioned, opposed, and supplied via characters' performances. In other words, in the neo-archive, which is obtained by "fictionalization of the archive," the characters participate "directly" in a historical environment from which they are excluded by "the historical texts" (Gunning 209). Thus, "performance" becomes a mode of representation and expression of "identity" that helps replace the negative representation of "blackness," which was the product of a "fixed" account of history (209, 211, 212). Within a neo-archival work, characters have "agency," that is, they can govern "their own fates" against their previous imprisonment and muteness (208, 213).

Accordingly, *Feeding* and *Cambridge* supplement racist historiography by the previously absent African female voice heard only in the fictive world. Their existence is a performance that is contrary to the "actual" experience of enslavement provided by "the colonial perspective and voice" (Johnson 154, 155), for their performances compensate for the missing perspective of the blacks and undermine "archival memory" (Sharpe 106). Although they are despised and enslaved because of their difference, namely, being identified with nature, Mintah and Christiania draw their strength from nature and cling to their African roots against the impositions of the white culture. They survive the wretchedness of enslavement employing African manners of "belief, ritual, and understanding" (Whitehead qtd. in Craps and Buelens 5), which are the sources of these female protagonists' "lasting agency" and the "centralized voice" (Craps and Buelens 6).

Mintah stands for the single slave assumed to have survived the *Zong massacre*. She is among the 133 Africans who were allegedly sick, thus are discarded alive into the sea by the white crew of the slave ship *Zong*, whose intention is to make the most profit out of slave trade, by claiming "for the loss" on the insurance (*Zong*, *1781*). As the numbers of weeks spent on the *Zong* increases, forgetting the past becomes the blacks' only way of coping with the torture and death they experience. During this forced immigration, Africans desperately witness: "victims" are chosen among family members; women, men, and children are picked up for the disposal; the mothers and children's "deafening shrieks," and the men's banging "their chains" and crying "in Yoruba, Ewe, Ibo, Fanti, Ashanti, Mandigo, Fetu, Foulah" (D'Aguiar 39), their native languages, are heard. However, the victims' imploring the crew to stop grabbing them become pointless. They can neither defeat the crew nor prevent the cruel

jettisoning; therefore, most Africans struggle to "bury inside" the "images" (93) of familiar faces, their homes, and beliefs, for what they have previously taken shelter in to endure cripples them now. Africans' struggle of expelling the past "from their minds except" during sleep (121) happens to be self-destructive as it leads to the loss of identity.

Nevertheless, Mintah, who manages to climb back onto the ship after being jettisoned, challenges the crew, and fences off this danger by performing the fertility dance. It is an essential part of her religious belief despite being converted and educated. She is fluent in the English language, so she addresses Kelsal, the first mate, whom she knows from "a Christian mission" (29), in English. Her denouncing inquiry about the slaves taken from belowdecks unsurprisingly irritates the English addressee viewing a literate converted African as a threat to the whites' authority with her possibility of provoking "rebellion in other slaves" (30). Despite being a menace, Mintah raises the curiosity of the English crew, consequently, is treated as an object to be watched and played with. She is immediately questioned, made fun of, and lashed to dance by Cunningham, the captain. This insulting attitude is a tactic for hiding their anxiety of being confronted by a woman they consider an inferior heathen. While beholding Mintah dance, which happens to be their response to her challenge and way of suppressing their fear of being defeated by a slave, the crew echoes the con-abolitionist argument about the education of Africans. It was a much disputed issue whether to emancipate and educate slaves between abolitionist and their opponents, who believed that educating them in the name of civilization would only breed rebels lacking even the slightest improvement in their nature:

The missionaries' civilising zeal did not stop at saving the heathen soul. She would have gained an education, would be able to read and write, when most of them could barely sign their names. She would have learned about the kind of world they came from. All of which took the place of the usual fear of whites and resulted in a slave who was difficult to subjugate. (31)

Following his con-abolitionist view, Cunningham camouflages his resolution of the jettisoning by a mixed sauce of Christian belief, "English law" (72), and civilization, respectively. He argues that the law considers slaves "as stock" (72) and gives him, as a captain representing slave owners, the right to act as he chooses. When the "place" (73) of Africans among humans is questioned, it is evident, he claims, that they are placed far beneath the superior races who are privileged by the potentials of "language" (72) and of managing "the world's resources" (72) for humanity's improvement. Since

Africans lack these essential qualities of the white culture, namely, they are "not fully formed *Homo sapiens*" (73), even their conversion into Christianity does not compensate for their lack of humanity. Therefore, he alleges that Africans deserve to be slaves; so, mind at peace, he undertakes the job of discarding the slaves alive. Accordingly, the captain's consent to Kelsal's offer of disposing Mintah, who disagrees with their conception of the should-be slave due to her wild nature rejecting subordination, reflects Europeans' racist view concerning the African's status. Though she will cost pretty much in Jamaican slave markets, this precaution should be taken against a mutiny under her leadership. Consequently, her disposal is settled as a "punishment" (109) deterring other slaves from possible uprising attempts.

Mintah's dance is a performance of "blackness" that subverts the Eurocentric discourse, which Stuart Hall suggests, either fetishizes and represents negatively, or negates the blacks and their experience (442). Throughout her performance of "fertility's temporary death and eventual rebirth" (D'Aguiar 31), the revivification of Africans' religious traditions in Mintah's dance and memory, which are considered either nonexistent or heathenism by the idea of "Englishness," provides, in Jenny Sharpe's words, a confrontation of "modernity's narrative of progress" (101). While she is sure that the crew will take her dance as an expression of her conforming to the superior and a vehicle of insulting Africans, she deliberately chooses the fertility dance, which is the practice of worshipping the god of fertility. She believes that the placation of "the fertility god" (31) will help her people overcome their desperation among "these alien men" (32). She visualizes the figures "in her mind's eye" (31) in detail, listens to the crew's applause as if it was the "drums" (32), and tries to dance as meticulously as possible. In order not to forget and against the danger of losing her identity, she remembers and dances, in which her African roots emerge. The fertility dance enables Mintah to destabilize Englishness and reclaim blackness. Thus, it furnishes her with the power to stop the crew in their deed. This foreshadows her role of supplementing the African voice performed through her short-term death due to being dumped into the sea, and her resurrection by climbing back onto the *Zong*.

The whites representing the idea of "Englishness" in *Cambridge* consist of Emily, the daughter of an English absentee landowner, Mr. Rogers, the clergyman, Mr. McDonald, the physician, and Mr. Brown, the overseer of the plantation the Great House in the Caribbean. During Emily's sojourn on the island, they exchange ideas with one another about the institution of slavery. While comparing the whites to Africans, as in *Feeding*, such points as color,

speech, clothes, characteristics, family relationships, morals, and religion are referred to for a picture the former as the only "correct measure" (Phillips 177) for civilization, and the latter as the inferior counterpart. From the perspective of a typical Englishman of the 1800s, when the Transatlantic Slave Trade was forbidden, and the enslavement of the African continued through the system of "creolization" (38), African's blackness was still considered the main reason for his barbarism. His speech, which is composed of various "native tongues" (39) and English, sounds incomprehensible and coarse like "animal chatter" (119) to the English ear. While his tendency for "pilfering" (39) and deceiving is viewed as the sign of "the looseness of negro morals" (36), it also indicates a slave's excessive laziness leading him to apply to the plantation doctor with some feigned illnesses to skip field-work (34). For the heavily dressed English, even under the tropical sun, the sight of female and male Africans working "naked down to the waist" (41) is undoubtedly disturbing. Seeing "poorly clothed" and "horribly dirty" domestic servants is equally intolerable (26). As they are considered deficient in "common cleanliness," they cannot be trusted in food preparation or laundry unless they are taught about house chores appropriately (22). It is assumed that "the negro" family, in contrast to "the civilized ways of" the English, is built upon the satisfaction of bestial desire. Because negro parents have neither responsibility nor affection for their children, there are no familial bonds between the members of a negro family except for "breeding, bearing and suckling" (39-40). Obeah, Africans' religious belief, is despised and dreaded by Christians in whose eyes this "primitive belief in witchcraft" is equal to heathenism when compared to the "heavenly goals" (96-97) of the "paragons of virtue" (135). The supposed inferiority of the "West Indian negro" is a threat even against the "white man," for the continuous connection between the two, that is, between nature and culture, corrupts the latter's morals, which "will" inevitably lower his superiority. Therefore, to regulate the encounter between the civilized self and the other, white man should be guided by "the whip" in his dealing with the members of the "incorrigible" race, for whom it is claimed that "mental instruction" is pointless and only "corporal punishment" is intimidating (52). As a result, in the Caribbean of the 1800s, when absentee landlords owned properties, overseers, who held the highest authority for organizing plantation life, provided discipline among slaves and maintained the labour system via "the omnipotent lash" (111).

In addition to these points of departure, it is the same belief as in *Feeding*, namely, Africans' supposed innate tendency towards bondage that the company of the whites in *Cambridge* harbor for justifying plantation slavery. From their point of view, although using blacks as a labor force is morally

problematic, maintaining the “institution” is regarded as an “economic” obligation. The inevitable exploitation of black slaves is explained to be the outcome of “the white man’s unfitness,” who have superior missions as the representatives of white culture, other than long hours of hard work in the extreme heat of the West Indies. On the other hand, “[T]he negro” is thought to be “better” than animals since they are more durable for plantation work. Africans’ physical suitability, added to their overall “base condition,” renders them the optimum “mode of profit.” This is the argument that Emily puts forward against the abolitionists. Their view of slavery just as “an abominable evil,” but not as necessary employment based on a system of “sale and purchase” seems illogical according to her. She resolves to turn her journal of observations into a pamphlet defending the institution. Because she is persuaded to the necessity of slavery, which is the only solution to the problem of labor in the colony, she sees no harm in creolization, in other words, the system of “inter-breeding” among the members of different African tribes. African’s “unChristian soul” will be washed away from his former savagery by creolization when he is no more imported from Africa, yet brought into contact “with whites from his birth.” Thus, Emily considers her pamphlet a good response to the increasing “untravelled *thinkers*” in England who recognize neither “economic facts” nor “the helplessness of the white man”, as they always preach about, just for the sake of “moral decency” (63-64, 85-86).

On the other hand, *Cambridge*’s chorus of civilization, like that of *Feeding*, perceives educating African slaves and their conversion into Christianity as the biggest hindrance to the institution’s preservation. It is echoed in Mr. Rogers’s perspective, similar to the captain’s of *Feeding*. Being aware of the negro’s physical strength, the clergyman argues that the white man’s authority can only be maintained if the former’s corporal superiority is overpowered. An important way of providing this is to preclude his spiritual education, for the spiritually knowledgeable negro threatens slavery. Moreover, when the converted or educated negro is named after a Christian, he will possibly gain the habit of perceiving himself “as equal with the white man in the eyes of the Lord.” More importantly, this allows him to question his “natural” place and rebel against his master. Although depriving Africans of the power of education contradicts the white man’s notion of ownership, the fright of the uprising outweighs his responsibility of caring for the welfare of the ones under his rule. As a result, the argument of pro-slavery groups is again uttered by the clergyman who accuses the “missionary preachers” of jeopardizing the institution. Their intervention enfeebles “the proper bond between the master

and slave" because slaves are awakened from their subjugation after their conversion into Methodism (Phillips 59, 97-98, 103).

The Guinean slave Olumide, who is renamed as Thomas, David Henderson, and Cambridge, respectively, is the character who conforms, unlike Mintah and Christiania, to the discourse of civilization. He adopts "Englishness" with its impositions of clothing, language, education, and religion, and thus, is alienated from his African roots with each English name he is given. He views being introduced by his master to the missionary Miss Spencer as a "magical" chance to go up the steps of acculturation by learning "[r]eading, writing, common arithmetic, and the first elements of mathematic" (143). Moreover, his conversion leads him to "imbibe the spirit and imitate the manners of Christian men" (143). His admiration of English civilization increases as he gets further in his "Christian education." However, he is estranged from his African nature, for Spencer convinces him that Christianity is the key not only to overcome the racial bias arising from "[his] colour" but also to gain access to heaven, which is otherwise impossible for one such as him as one of the members of "the black and cursed Africans" (144).

Contrary to the clergyman's warning of an African's education, which may encourage a possible demand of justice from western culture, Olumide's transformation, which he considers an improvement, ends in disclaiming himself as a black Guinean becoming a missionary for the colonization of Africa. His new self-perception, a lettered, Christened, and thus civilized black conflicts with the former one. He is "now" a true "Englishman, albeit a little smudgy of complexion," and a specimen of "salvation," whose task, he believes wholeheartedly, is to wash away his previous fellow citizens' heathenness through "persuading them to embrace" Christianity. He feels lucky for having fled Africa which becomes equal only to "a barbarity" in his eyes (143). Therefore, he forgets everything that reminds him of savage Africa turning into "a history [he] had cast aside" (147).

Unlike Cambridge, his wife Christiania preserves her African nature by not complying with "the laws of civilization" and adopting "Christian religion" (149). Her voice is not heard much throughout the novel, and "her story," which is "a sad one", is transmitted by her husband. Nevertheless, she is interestingly tolerated in the Great House and secures a place at dinner table even in Emily's presence. Christiania is significant, for she is the embodiment of black agency with a capacity to resist the authority of English culture, which she performs mainly through her pagan belief. Her performance has a double effect. While she is ostracized by other slaves due to claiming to be "a possessor of the skills

of obeah" (159), which is believed to operate "upon the negroes to produce death" (98), it enables her to preserve nature untouched by the culture of the English. Furthermore, her influence on the white community is similar to Mintah's on the English crew. Besides despising Christiania, the whites observe her practicing the "primitive belief in witchcraft" (98) inquisitorially and feel threatened; so, they do not want "to incur the anger of" the black woman:

> Squatting down on her hams, she appeared to be scratching at the dirt [. . . .] uttering sinister sounds [. . . .] throughout the night. [They] thought it best not to approach the half-witted creature directly.

This dark practice was brought by the negroes from Africa, where open and devoted worship of the devil is still encouraged, and temples erected in his honour. The doctors and professors of this obeah are known to have entered into a league with Satan, and with his aid are able to seal the doom of all those who offend them. A fear of the sudden afflictions that this obeah is irrationally believed to call forth strikes terror in the woolly negro head piece. The symptoms include the loss of appetite, day-long fretting and brooding, a perverse desire to consume what is patently indigestible, a heavy listlessness, gross swelling of the extremities, and in due course, an inexplicable death. (89-90)

Nevertheless, Christiania manages to catch the white overseer Brown's attention like Cambridge, who is attracted to the "exceedingly strange, yet spiritually powerful" (158) slave woman from the very moment of their encounter. However, this turns into an affair of abuse even after her marriage with Cambridge. The impending outcome of Brown's harassment forces Cambridge to deter her from the uncivilized practice and wash away her "sinful existence" by infusing "Christian values into her soul" (160). This, he considers, might remediate the African's estrangement, solitude, and aberrant behavior that has increased with Emily's arrival at the Great House (159). Cambridge is proud to have exceeded Brown in "the grasp of the English language" (161), respected by his "slave-peers" (158) thanks to his "Christian learning and knowledge of the world" (160), and in despair about their "continued adherence to crude African religions" (160). Yet, his adherence to the idea of "Englishness" along with his nickname, "the black Christian" (161), he has adopted so proudly does not spare him from neither torture nor death. He is sentenced to death because of killing the overseer, which is inevitable in his "extraordinary circumstances" (133). On the other hand, Christiania's unwavering rejection of the whites' culture, ideals, and religion supplies her with the necessary space to perform "blackness" against falling into oblivion and being alienated from her

African nature. As a slave woman scorned, feared, and sexually harassed, she survives by sticking to her roots and reclaiming her African identity.

In conclusion, an analysis of Fred D'Aguiar's *Feeding the Ghosts* and Caryl Phillips's *Cambridge* in the light of "performativity" has shown that nature becomes a powerful site of resistance in these neo-archival novels. Their purpose is to replace the negative image of blacks, which is portrayed from a racist European perspective, with a positive one employing the idea of "blackness." As the reflection of "blackness," which is a post-colonial subversive strategy and contrasted to the idea of "Englishness," the protagonists Mintah and Christiania's performances of traditional African religious beliefs encourage them to raise voice against the English culture, unlike Cambridge, their black acculturated counterpart. African slavery has not taken place as a traumatic experience in western accounts of history; however, Mintah and Christiania, the fictional representatives of enslaved Africans, reject, through their performances of "blackness," the authority and disclose the hypocrisy of the English culture which created the iniquitous institution of slavery in the name of civilization.

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NATURE V/S CULTURE

EDITORS

Özlem GÜMÜŞÇUBUK
Ufuk ÖZDAĞ
Cian DUFFY

In this volume, we present a selection of articles that aim to reconsider and hence redefine our constructed attitudes toward nature and culture. More specifically, the articles reveal the vital and mutual significance of nature and culture. It is obvious that themes of nature, ecology, Anthropocene are subject matters that are receiving more and more attention each day both because young people are learning ecological consciousness at an early stage of their lives, such topics are also becoming one of the most debated topics from politics to social sciences and of course literature. As the subject of nature and ecological concerns have caught more attention, many anthologies that have contributed to the development of this field have been published. With this volume of articles, we hope to enhance the interest in this topic and increase the interaction among the academics that are working in this field and those that would like to contribute to this field.

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