

**T.C. KOCAELİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ**  
**SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ**  
**BATI DİLLERİ VE EDEBİYATLARI ANABİLİM DALI**  
**İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI BİLİM DALI**

**ECOCRITICISM, ECOPHOBIA AND ROMANTIC ECOLOGY:  
COLERIDGE AND AN ECOPHOBIC READING OF “THE RIME OF THE  
ANCIENT MARINER”**

**YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ**

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**KOCAELİ 2021**

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## ÖZET

Günümüzde çevre sorunları o kadar ciddi bir hal almıştır ki edebiyatta da bu sorunların tasviri kaçınılmaz hale gelmiştir. Ekoeleştirici, çevre konularını edebiyatta beşeri bilimlerin diğer alanlarıyla ilişkili olarak temsil etme gerekliliğinden doğmuştur. Ekoeleştirici çalışmalar, çevresel krizin ve olası çözümlerinin ortaya çıkarılmasına katkıda bulunmak için ekofobi, çevre etiği, derin ekoloji, ekofeminizm, ekofobi ve sosyal ekoloji gibi çeşitli alt alanların da oluşmasında doğal rol oynamıştır. Ekofobi, insan-doğa ilişkisini tasvir etmede ekoeleştiricinin ayrılmaz bir bileşenidir. Doğaya yönelik mantıksız ve dayanaktan yoksun korku ve nefret anlamına gelen ekofobi, aynı zamanda insanın doğaya hükmetme ve doğanın kaynaklarını haksız ve bilinçsizce sömürme eylemlerini gerekçelendirmesi anlamına gelmektedir. İnsanların doğaya karşı takındığı ekofobik tutumun altında yatan temel sebep insanın doğayı istediği gibi kullanma ve müdahale etme dürtüsüdür. Ekoeleştirici edebiyatın ilk örneklerinden sayılabilecek Romantik eserler de insan kültürüne hükmeden doğa korkusunu, ekolojik kriz ve çevre sorunlarını yansıtmada oldukça başarılı bir bakış açısı sunar. Romantik yazarların çoğu, Sanayi Devrimi sebebiyle doğal kaynakların sömürülmesine, su ve hava kirliliğine, teknoloji ve makinelerin zararlı yönlerine tanık olmuştur. Bu nedenle Romantik Ekoloji, insanlar için doğaya saygı duymanın ve doğadaki diğer canlılarla uyumlu bir şekilde yaşamının gerekliliğini savunur. Doğaya ve canlılara kendi içsel değerleri için önem veren ve biyolojik çeşitliliğin ve doğadaki tüm canlıların karşılıklı ortakyaşam bağlantılılığının farkında olan Romantik şairlerden S. T. Coleridge, bu ilişki bağlamında öncü bir ekoeleştirici olarak görülebilir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, ekoeleştirici yaklaşımını ele almakla birlikte ekofobi kavramına odaklanmak; Romantik dönem yazınına nüfuz eden ekolojik bilinci tartışmak; Coleridge'in çevreye bakışı hakkında tespitlerde bulunarak "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" adlı şiirde yer alan ekofobik tutumu tartışmaktır. Çalışmanın sonunda ekoeleştirici yaklaşımında ekofobik tutumun üzerinde durulması gereken ana kavramlardan biri olduğu ve Coleridge'in öncü bir çevreci olarak "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" şiiri ile doğayı bir sömürü aracı olarak görmeyi yanlışlığı ve doğa-insan birlikteliğini vurgulayan bir asır öncesinden çevrebilimsel bir uyarı sunduğu sonucuna varılır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ekoeleştirici, Ekofobi, Çevre Çalışmaları, Romantik Ekoloji, Ekolojik Şiir, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner".

## ABSTRACT

Environmental problems have become so serious that their representation in literature has also become unavoidable. Ecocriticism was born out of this necessity of representing environmental issues in literature in relation to other fields of humanities. Ecocritical studies have developed various subfields such as ecophobia, environmental ethics, deep ecology, ecofeminism and social ecology in order to contribute to the visibility of the environmental crisis and its possible solutions in public. Ecophobia is an inseparable component of Ecocriticism in depicting the human-nature relationship. Ecophobia, which is defined as the irrational and groundless fear and hatred towards nature, can also be considered as the justification of human dominion over nature and of the unfair exploitation of the natural world. The underlying motivation for the ecophobic manner is the urge of changing and controlling nature according to human will. Creating ecological awareness and uncovering the ecophobic attitudes, Romantic canon as the early ecocritical literature displays environmental problems, ecological crisis and fear of nature within the culture. Most of the Romantic writers witnessed over exploitation of the natural resources, water and air pollution, and detrimental sides of technology and machinery due to the Industrial Revolution. That is why Romantic Ecology displays the necessity of respecting nature and living harmoniously for human beings with other creatures in nature. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, one of the well-known Romantic poets, can be regarded as an early ecocritic in that he values nature and its inhabitants for their own sake, and he sympathises biodiversity and symbiotic interconnectedness of all creatures in nature. The aim of this study is to handle the ecocritical approach by focusing especially on the notion of ecophobia; discuss the ecophobic consciousness infused in the Romantic literature; describe Coleridge's views towards the environment and discuss the ecophobic attitude in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner". At the end of the study, it is concluded that ecophobia has a prominent role in ecocritical discussions and the poem is an ecological foreshadowing from a century ago by an early ecologist about the incorrectness of the materialisation of nature and necessity of human-nature relationship.

**Keywords:** Ecocriticism, Ecophobia, Environmental studies, Romantic Ecology, Ecologic poetry, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner".

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to say a special thanks to my supervisor, Murat Kadirođlu for his meaningful assistance, tireless guidance and patience. I would also like to thank my parents, my brother for their moral support and teaching me to love, respect and care nature and animals. Finally, I would like to make mention of our beloved dog Cookie for its unconditional love and precious companion that intensify our relationship with natural environment and its inhabitants.



## INTRODUCTION

Ecocriticism uncovers the unfair treatment of nature by human beings who shape the future of the environment through cultural and social constructions. Contemporary literature is perfectly suited to the aim of creating ecological awareness while the early literature also includes traces of ecocriticism. The Romantic literary period includes several works that present nature within delighted landscapes in rural areas; however, its perspective can be broadened by emphasising environmental problems, environmental pollution and animal lives in the literary works so that pastoral literary tradition might become a strong ecological criticism. Most Romantic writers reflect the daily struggles concerning both individuals and nature in their works either directly or indirectly by depicting their environment and its inhabitants in depth. On witnessing the negative sides of industrialisation, the Romantics realised that human beings were part of the order in nature. That is why Romantic poetry displays the necessity of respecting nature and the need of living in a harmonious way with other creatures in nature. Apart from the inevitability of human participation in nature in the positive sense, Romantics also dealt with the dark side of nature which is clothed in a kind of fear towards nature. In ecocritical terms, this is called 'ecophobia'. Ecophobia is the depiction of nature as a fierce force whose actions are unpredictable for human beings. Romantic literature is abundant with ecophobic representations that limit human action and present powerful environmental forces. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, one of the main figures of Romantic canon, notably reflects in his writings such a relation between nature and human beings. For Coleridge, all living and non-living life forms are connected in that they form a unity in nature. He appreciates the natural world as a whole because he understands the necessary relation between organic and inorganic entities to sustain life on Earth. Thus, Coleridge's Romantic conception of nature becomes ecological apprehension of the natural environment which requires seeing human beings as part of the natural world and creating a symbiotic relationship between them. As an emblematic example, Coleridge reflects the ecophobic attitude of society against nature in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner".



The first chapter of this study, “Ecocriticism and Environmental Studies”, focuses on the historical background and emergence of ecocriticism as a discipline in relation to ecological criticism and theory. Ecocriticism analyses natural contexts through the lens of literary criticism; in other words, it is the identification of nature and its entities in literary works by examining the relationship between literature and the environment. Ecocriticism puts humans and nature in the same equation and shows an equal interest in social and biological systems. Literature has the potential to create awareness in environmental matters. It reveals environmental problems and their possible solutions and points up the importance of the collaboration of the human world and physical environment. The aim of this relation is to show the necessity of a harmonious living for humans and nonhuman entities because there is only one earth which could be shared. Ecocriticism consults scientific analyses to define the ecologic problems and to develop applicable solutions for them. The requirement of defining nature within its own discourses includes evaluation of environmental ethics, deep ecology, ecofeminism, ecophobia and social ecology that contribute to the interdisciplinarity of ecocriticism by creating a relation between history, culture and society. Then, the Romantic pastoral tradition is introduced to show that nature writing emerged long before ecocritical literary studies for it presents the clash between nature and culture. Romantic pastoral literary tradition might be the early inspiration for the studies of ecological criticism because it emerged as a poetic reaction to the Industrial Revolution that parallels a serious criticism of its contemporary environmental crisis. Later on, the Darwinian theory of evolution is examined by the ecocritical perspective in that it positions humans at the top of all entities for human beings are the most evolved species in nature. In addition, this chapter questions the place of animals in holy books that justify the supremacy of humans as the one and only rational, self-conscious and independent being.

The second chapter, “Ecophobia”, deals with the main consideration of this study which is the theorisation of ecophobia. First of all, ecophobia is defined as irrational and groundless fear and hatred towards nature in the most explanatory terms. It is regarded in the same equation with racism, speciesism, homophobia and misogyny that are also in conflict with ecocriticism’s ideals. Ecophobia can be encountered in every sphere of life: commercials, media, literature, movies all of which assume an ecophobic attitude to portray nature as an opponent that wants to overcome the human

race through natural events presented as deliberate cruel treatment by nature. Later in this chapter, other definitions of ecophobia are given such as a fear of ecological problems and gaeaphobia which is the extreme destructive behaviour towards the natural environment. Anthropocentrism is another negative approach that culturally, historically and politically reinforces ecophobia in human's relation with nature by promoting nature's unpredictability and its unconscious state towards humans' helplessness.

The third chapter, "Romantic Movement and Environmentalism", traces Romantic Ecology by showing the constant interest in Romantic philosophy's relation between human beings and nature. Romantic poets are quite distinguishable for their awareness and concern for the effects of political, social, cultural and economic changes in the natural environment, the life forms on Earth and ecological issues. Considering the works of William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, John Clare, William Blake, Mary Shelley and Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, it is observed that they reflect social conditions and natural catastrophes in their works. What is more, they are aware of potential environmental disasters that the Industrial Revolution would cause through environmental pollution and exploitation of the natural sources. Thus, the English Romantic period shows that both Romantic writers and ecocritics have serious worries about the natural world, and they all comprehend the necessity between a symbiotic coexistence on Earth and the continuousness of life on planet Earth.

The fourth chapter and last chapter, "Coleridge and An Ecophobic Analysis of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"", will concentrate on Coleridge's life and include a brief analysis of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner". There are numerous details about Coleridge's life affecting his literary aesthetic. Regarding his family and marriage relationships, Coleridge sustained an unhappy life that eventually led him to opium addiction and depressed state of mind. However, with his fascination with the exploration of new places and the search for a peaceful state of mind during these voyages, traveling became Coleridge's essential habit for his poetry and medical condition. Accordingly, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" is the outcome of Coleridge's interest in travel literature. Both of his poetry and philosophy deal with the unity of human beings with their natural and abstract environment and divine power in their consciousness. Coleridge was highly interested in the scientific analyses

by scientists and he could establish a connection between mind and natural process. In addition, for Coleridge, science stood for the source of infinite knowledge, an ongoing study of nature. He did not hesitate to benefit from science in his poetry. As a Romantic poet, Coleridge could predict the destructive consequences of the Industrial Revolution in terms of ecological crisis, and he used his poetry to spread environmental awareness. Coleridge was among the earliest thinkers caring about inanimate entities such as rocks and mountains in addition to animals and plants. He admitted that human beings were biologically dependent on all other beings in nature. He is an early ecocritical Romantic writer who demonstrates the terrifying consequences of harming nature and having mean-spirited intentions against nature. In "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", Coleridge associates the act of killing the albatross with inconsiderate anti-environmental practices by human beings towards nature. He presents the Mariner's anthropocentric attitude as a danger to nature for his act of killing an innocent bird can only be explained within ecophobic world view. Coleridge finds the fellow-mariners equally guilty with the Mariner for their indifferent attitude towards the Mariner's crime even though they do not get involved in the crime physically. This incident is quite symbolic of contemporary ecological incidents towards which people remain insensitive. In addition, his portrayal of the destruction of natural environment of the poem resembles contemporary ecological reports of marine pollution. Coleridge associates the presence of albatross with nature itself so that the mariner's crime is against all entities in nature. He values all living entities of nature and realises the beauty of their soul and existence. Thereby, the most outstanding ecocritical criticism of the poem is Mariner's ecophobic attitude towards nature, especially to the albatross.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.ECOCRITICISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

#### 1.1. ECOCRITICISM, ASLE AND ISLE

Ecocriticism is defined as “an interdisciplinary field of study that analyses how the natural world is portrayed in literature, typically in relation to modern environmental concerns” in the Oxford English Dictionary (*lexico.com*). The first professor of literature and environment in the United States Cheryll Glotfelty mentions in her work “Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis” that the 20th century was the period of awareness and taking action in terms of gender, race and class consciousness while environmental concerns were not resounding enough even though serious environmental problems such as global warming, oil spills, toxic waste contamination, ozone layer depletion, acid rains, geological erosions, droughts, floods and hurricanes, sea- level rise, glacier melting and human population explosion rose the occasion (1996: xvi). Literary studies of the time gave place to social movements; however, they failed to create an awareness concerning the environment (Glotfelty, 1996: xvi). The primary reason for this lack of preoccupation with environmental issues was the absence of any “organised” (Glotfelty, 1996: xvi) institution for the scholars who had been dealing with ecological criticism and theory since the seventies. In addition to gender, race and class consciousness studies, there was a necessity of earth-centred literary criticism; ecocriticism since it was impossible to deal with environmental problems without taking action through literary criticism and theory. Socio-critical movements have always been deeply interested in their subjects concerning human world, culture and society. In a similar vein, it has been a necessity for ecocriticism to deal seriously with the nonhuman world and the relation between nature and human beings.

According to the historical process of ecocritical studies, some English departments started environmental studies in their literature courses at the beginning of the nineties; by doing so, they sowed the seeds of early environmental literary

studies. Finally, the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) was founded in 1992. The aim of this association was to connect literary scholars who were studying nature and culture relations as part of the literature, to give support environmental studies in relation to other humanities disciplines and to spread ideas concerning the relationship between human beings and nature. Another journal, *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, was founded by Patrick Murphy in 1993 to create an area for environmental critical studies. Those organizations have become quite influential in the field of ecological study's becoming a critical school because those assemblies gathered young graduates and scholars who wanted to make ecological studies known and accepted in academia and rendered their studies accessible (Glotfelty, 1996: xviii). This literary collaboration is very efficient in terms of taking important resolutions regarding environmental policies because literature is quite useful tool to create awareness of ecological issues. Especially the increase of classes in which the relationship between nature and literature is issued in universities helps younger ecocritics to contribute environmental crisis. Three years later of its foundation, ASLE held its first conference and in time it gained several members from all over the world, England, Japan, Korea, Australia. As Glen A. Love properly puts it, all of these efforts provide environmental literature with an umbrella position that embodies nature writing, deep ecology, ecofeminism, environmental justice, the lives of animals, interdisciplinarity and eco-theory (2003:5). So, ecocriticism analyses literary texts through an environmental and social perspective. In addition, it brings related English practices, ecological awareness and environmental consciousness (Love, 1990:203). With the expansion of ecocritical criticism and theory, several people from different fields of study found the opportunity to exchange their ideas and to reinterpret the previous works in the light of environmental considerations thanks to international conferences.

Apart from contemporary environmental issues, ecocriticism may be examined through a wider ecological perspective by including the study previous literary works. Greg Garrard, one of the best-known environmental critics worldwide, attributes ecocriticism another function which is to re-examine the concept of nature in the early works of literature: Even though most of the early works of literature belong to Romantic tradition, ecocriticism's field of study is not limited to fiction, poetry, sonnets, tales, novels and mythology. At this juncture, what ASLE has provided to

environmental criticism is a widened area of research such as, science fiction, TV, art products and popular and cultural areas like theme parks, zoos and shopping malls (2004: 4). This reinterpretation is filtering the ideas from a “biocentric” (Love, 2003: 34) approach instead of a human centred point of view which throws off the balance between nature, nonhuman and human by positioning human in a superior position. On the other hand, the biocentric approach provides equal importance for all entities in nature, in other words, contemporary and former literary works are examined with an environmentalist humanism which attaches equal importance to human and nonhuman. So that ecocriticism becomes a synthesis of critical approaches from past and present while the division between literature and environmental issues is blurred. According to well-known Turkish Professor of Environmental Humanities Serpil Oppermann, ecocriticism analyses nature related context within the literary criticism (2006:107). The bio-centric point of view becomes well known among the other critical fields and universal with interdisciplinary studies. Ecocritical literature has the capacity to announce environmental problems worldwide and show the importance of the natural environment for all life forms and non-living entities. As Oppermann puts forward, ecocriticism examines the relationship between literature and environment (1999: 31). This relation aims to show the possibility and necessity of a harmonious living for humans and nonhuman entities because there is only one earth that could be shared. Literature has the potential to create mindfulness about environmental matters and natural phenomena which sets a pessimistic future for the biosphere. Professor Glen Love emphasises the importance of representations of nature in literature as “Teaching and studying literature without reference to the natural conditions of the world and the basic ecological principles that underlie all life seems increasingly short-sighted, incongruous” (2003:16). If literature is a way of communication which has the ability to convey the awareness of environmental crises among individuals, it becomes the responsibility of literature to become an interdisciplinary field of ecologically focused criticism.

### **1.1.1. Deep Ecology, Social Ecology, Ecofeminism**

In *The Ecocriticism Reader*, Professor Glotfelty defines ecocriticism as “the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (1996: xviii). In the light of this definition, it may be assumed that ecocriticism deals with the

representation of nature in various literary genres by analysing the symbols of physical environment elements within the literary works, the effect of literature on defining human and nature relationship, the power of language in conveying ecological concerns and giving nature an authority, and to what extent literature is useful to give out a sound environmental crisis. To summarise what Glotfelty highlights in this relation, ecocriticism has to come to an interdisciplinary study dealing with environmental issues in relation to history, philosophy, psychology, science, climatology, physics, biology and chemistry (1996: xix). Consulting the branches of science differentiates ecocriticism from other contemporary critical theories because unlike its contemporaries, ecocritical issues are related to science in terms of both problems and their solutions. In other words, ecocriticism needs to refer scientific analyses to define the ecologic problems and to develop applicable solutions for them. As an active member of ASLE, Oppermann argues ecocriticism analyses the literary works in the light of literary realism because nature is real and natural problems are urgent (2006:106). Consulting natural sciences makes the ecological theory more convincing because it creates scientific support. Environmental literary criticism needs mentioned support in that not every individual has reached the same level of ecological consciousness to understand its importance, yet. As the co-founder of ASLE, Glotfelty emphasises the existence of an undeniable relationship between the culture of human beings and the natural world because they are both affecting each other and being affected by each other (1996: xix). Ecocriticism displays the relation between culture and nature, and influence of culture over nature. It tries to vanish humanist dominance over the participants of nature by working in collaboration with science and reflecting the outcomes of its readings (Howarth, 1996: 77). The author and editor of the works in the field of ecocriticism and environmental literature, Scot Slovic gives point to the fact that nature writers have responsibilities to search for environmental issues in the light of scientific studies so that they may imbue their readers with environmental consciousness and create awareness (1996: 355). Even though writing about environmental problems may not provide an instant solution to any environmental trouble, creating awareness may motivate someone else to make a move about it and eventually it may create a big change which may be the solution. In order to provide a healing and alternative solution to the current situation of earth and to make humans' peace with the only planet on which human beings may survive, various subfields are

developed as Glotfelty remarks; environmental ethics, deep ecology, ecofeminism, ecophobia and social ecology (1996: xxi). Social ecology connects environments and societies in terms of their social and biological relations. As Lawrence Buell, Professor of American Literature Emeritus at Harvard University noted, social ecology rejects industrial practices for they serve for capitalist intentions; however, it supports science and technology because they have potential to come up with ecocritical solutions for environmental problems (2005:146). Social ecology is related to deep ecology, as well because both of them question the human-centred world views and remind human beings of their position on earth which is in the same equation with other members of nature. Deep ecology defends the unity of all participants of nature and as Oppermann contends it deeply criticises the othering and degrading of nature by humans and exploiting nature like a source of raw material which is created for the sake of humans (1999:31). It is the self-realisation for humans of being part of the universe. So human beings understand the unifying power of nature on all living and non-living entities that are contained in itself (Buell, 2005: 137). This realisation provides a neutral approach for humans towards all other beings because a human-centred attitude unavoidably creates a hierarchical order in which humans are positioned at the top of other entities. By means of deep ecology evaluations, humans admit to being part of nature and equality among all beings. Ecocriticism is basically writing about nature and deep ecology in nature writing proposes writing in a new language which is free from human dominance and subjection. As indicated by Christopher Manes, who is a former environmental activist, nature should be defined within its own discourses. Nature writing should be the voice of nature which is silenced and speaking for all life forms in nature (1996: 25). There is a utilitarian relationship between human and nature which means nature is valued in accordance with the benevolence it provides to humans (Garrard, 2004: 18). Deep ecologists criticise dissociating tendency of humanism between humans and others because it necessarily affects the interconnection between culture and nature. Discrimination is a way of justifying exploitation: any creature which is in an inferior position that humans are treated unfairly in moral aspects because it has less importance when compared to the value of humans. When the unjust behaviours towards nature are reflected in society, social ecology gets involved because it is about being against all kind of discrimination. Italian professor and cultural and literary theorist Serenella Iovino similarly indicates



that ecofeminism steps in when gender discrimination and inequality come into question (2010: 36). Ecological feminism creates a relation between nature and women in that both of them are subject to hegemony. So, ecofeminism is an anti-anthropocentric critical movement that claims equality among all genders and in a similar way all entities in nature. As the pioneer of ecocriticism, Buell indicates ecofeminists' relating nature and gender, class and social issues in their studies (2005:139). Social ecologists and ecofeminists see ecological issues as the core of the problems because nature is seen as an inferior position which makes it open to exploitation. Just as ecocriticism connects nature and society within the concept of culture, what social ecology and ecofeminism do is creating a relationship between history, culture and society. In other words, they are after "social justice" (Iovino, 2010: 37) for everything and ecological concerns are included, as well. So, environmental studies bring along new values in which humans are not at the centre and eco-theory serves every being in the ecosphere. When the posthuman approach substitutes the humanist perspective, there is no more hierarchy or class difference among any being. The aim of ecology is not to spirit away cultural praxis, rather, it tries to construct an agreeable ground on which nature and culture could coexist. Sezgin Toska clarifies that ecological studies strive for removing the influence of former anthropocentric ideas upon culture so that environmental cognizance could take place within the custom and values (2010:130). At this point, literature is an important tool in creating "ethical awareness" (Iovino, 2010: 40) concerning human nature and human's relation with the environment because literature takes on the duty of representing ethical values. Literature is not a mere device of amusement, but it can be quite informative by directing human actions towards the nonhuman world. It reveals environmental problems and their possible solutions and points up the importance of the collaboration of the human world and the physical environment. When appropriate, it is the history itself in that it mirrors the contemporary issues of its time. Also, it witnesses ecological evolution in terms of new norms and values. With the improvements of ecological terms, ecocriticism rebuilds cultural elements within the concept of equality and unity. For example, language becomes neutral, it does not canonise one side, culture comprises all of the creatures in nature.

In order to survive, human beings need to use natural sources. The more the human population grows, the more human beings become dependent on nature. In

other words, with the uncontrolled rise in population, natural sources have been exploited to a large extent. Deep ecology proposes some uncommon solutions to prevent the unfair exploitation of nature. Garrard quotes some principles of deep ecology by Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess: The first principle indicates that both human and nonhuman world are valuable in their own right. Especially, the value of the nonhuman world should not be measured in regard to the interests of the human world. The fourth principle sets forward that human civilisation may improve under the condition of a decrease in the human population (qtd. in Garrard, 2004: 21). In other words, human beings are dependent on nature for their basic needs and the natural world is no longer sufficient to feed this hunger. Naess brings a realist point of view to environmental studies: He emphasises that creating ecological awareness and doing environmental research are important; however, they are not efficient as long as the human population is not controlled according to natural sources (1994:146). In order to protect nature's sustainability, some precautions should be taken, in point of fact, it is time for solutions because the world is struggling to be sufficient for humanitarian needs. Humans should abandon the anthropocentric approach in their actions which is valuing nonhuman entities according to their contribution to human life. The idea that nonhuman beings exist independently from humans should be perceived through ecological studies. As an important intellectual figure in the environmental movement, Naess mentions humans as equally important participants of the ecosystem; however, the ecosystem of the earth is a self-sufficient and autonomous organism (1994:146). It deserves to be protected and valued for its own esteem. Deep ecologists see the benefit of population reduction in terms of environmental problems which are directly related to overpopulation. According to the deep ecologists and Garrard who is one of them, the increase of population causes poverty in the developing countries and the measurements taken to prevent economic blockade cause environmental problems such as deforestation and greenhouse gas emission (2004:21). It has to be accepted that humans are not the central creature of nature and nature was not created for the sake of human beings. Correspondingly, it needs to be understood that natural sources are limited, and humans have no right to exploit them however they like. Nature has its own value for its own sake and there is no place for an anthropocentric approach in nature which means humanitarian needs are not the major concern of nature. Arnold Tonybee resolves in his research that earth

is the only planet on which human beings have a chance to survive and inhabit (1976:9). However, humans dig their own grave by not depopulating the flow of population and keeping pollution and victimisation of the planet. In addition, as Michael Fisher has put it humanity is destroying its own kind through destroying the environmental quality by creating wars and industrial pollution and by harming environmental quality and natural habitats which provide natural balance and habitable ecosystem for human beings (2017(a): 9). Ecocriticism aims to teach humans their place in nature, shows the necessity of living consistently with nature and the alternative ways of doing it.

### **1.1.2. Phases of Ecocriticism and Post-humanism**

Pastoral literature and Romantic poetry are the early examples of ecocriticism in English Literature, and they mainly focus on natural depictions in literary works. As President of EASLCE (European Association for the Study of Literature, Culture and Environment) Oppermann points out they analyse the way nature is reflected, semantic and symbolic construction of nature (2012:18). Nature has been always echoed in the literature through the works of Romantic tradition; however, environmental consciousness was not the issue. With the flourish of ecocritical studies, literary forms with environmental concerns have been created, and protecting nature and demanding rights for the participants of nature have become main interests in time (Buell, 2005: 7). For the development of this critical movement, three stages might be analysed. In the first wave of ecocritical studies, scientific research and findings are quite significant in determining the running of the natural world and its conventions. When the main concern is conserving the earth, human beings are regarded as the main source of the environmental problems and culture is drawn in conflict with nature (Buell, 2005: 18). In the second wave of ecocriticism, the concept of environment is diversified with the concepts of social issues, ethics, justice and injustice within the environment and human and non-human societies. Especially with the concept of cultural environment, ecocriticism creates a relation between environmental problems and social justice (Oppermann, 2012: 22). Ecocriticism aims to create a global social movement to change the anthropocentric point of view with an earth centred approach. It has the potential to deconstruct to anthropocentric approach in cultural artefacts which problematise culture and nature relations. It shows the power of language in

creating a consciousness which Oppermann finds highly influential for the human sided attitude to nonhuman world (2006:117). Actually, this makes it explicit that there is a real natural world beyond the construction of language and culture. It is important to perceive the true existence of nature in its own term so that perception of humans would not be limited with what anthropocentric view presents. Lawrence Buell defines anthropocentrism as “the assumption or view that the interests of humans are of higher priority than those of nonhumans” (2005:134). So, it is impossible not to mention a hierarchical system for nonhuman beings in attaining their needs. When it comes to using natural sources, humans have precedence over the others in nature in anthropocentric conditions. If nature is depicted in an inferior position in which the mission of nature is to serve humanitarian needs, human domination would be culturally and literary constructed. Just as history and politics, the destiny of nature is written by human beings. Apart from being active participants in their habitats, humans have been a crucial determinant for the future of the earth. Ecological problems have increased in the areas in which humans inhabit and interact with nature, however; the effects of humans have been changing the nature of the world permanently. When looking at the historical background of the ecological influence of humans, erosion and deforestation started in the early fourteenth century by climbing up to the mountains for sulphur, charcoal and iron. Even the interaction of humans with each other had a lasting impression on the earth, for example, dropping hydrogen bombs during the wars created irremediable problems in the genetics of all human, nonhuman and inanimate life forms. The author of “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis” Lynn White argues environmental problems of the present-day continue in the shape of population explosion and unplanned urbanisation (1996: 5). History witnessed the ill-treatment of humans on the planet and, unfortunately, it keeps taking accounts of ecological problems today. However, nature predominates over ideological construction and makes its own presence felt by communicating with human beings. Environmental problems such as climate change and glacier melting are ways of nature’s means of communication. At this point, literature plays a crucial role because it can actually affect people by creating awareness and showing the natural disasters caused by human beings. Even if one individual feels responsible for global warming, extinction of the species, air, water and soil pollution by chemicals, decrease in water sources, sea-level rise and glacier melting, ecocriticism succeeds as a social and

cultural environmental movement. The third phase of ecocriticism is regarded as “postcolonial ecocriticism” (Oppermann, 2017:27) which centres on nature, environment and power relations within the literary texts. As an example, the reflection of the complex relationship between biological diversity of an area and human community to the literary texts is one of the outstanding examples. In this phase, ecocriticism values cultural differences, interiorises social and environmental justice, includes class, gender, nationality, geographical issues into the literary studies. As Oppermann states the postmodern condition of ecocriticism is inevitable while other social, political and cultural theories are interrupted, altered and fragmented by creative and unfamiliar ideas (2006:124). Postmodern ecocritics believe that all living entities including human beings have internal value in nature. It categorises all the living entities, human or non-human, as part of ecological matters and it does not separate human beings and the physical environment from each other by claiming them as inseparable parts of a whole entity. Dominating nature under the cover of humanism is no longer acceptable because human beings are dethroned from the top of all other beings by posthumanism which Opperman theorises in terms of erasing the strict borders between human and non-human (199: 37). So, it is important to regard human beings as equal members of the ecosystem just like other living entities in nature to understand the principle of ecocriticism. The environmental ethic of posthumanism claims the interconnectedness of everything in nature and denies the superiority of human beings (Oppermann, 1999:43). This approach questions the hierarchical order in which humans dominate the rest. It defends that nature should no longer be othered; rather, all members of nature should gather under the same roof of nature. The postmodern path to ecological understanding denies the Renaissance superiority of *Homo sapiens* over other beings than human. It requires the evaluation of nature free from human subjection and humanist claims. Rather, as Manes specifies, let alone humans, no animal is superior to any other animal in nature (1996: 22). Human beings might seem the most powerful and competent creatures on earth due to their ability to think, respond, comprehend and speak; however, even seemingly the least important creature has an enormous impact on the running of the earth. Christopher Manes argues this approach as “If fungus, one of the ‘lowliest’ of forms on a humanistic scale of values, were to go extinct tomorrow, the effect on the rest of the biosphere would be catastrophic; in contrast, if *Homo sapiens* disappeared, the event would go virtually

unnoticed by the vast majority of Earth's life" (Manes, 1996:16). It is a mistake for humans to position themselves at the top of all beings because any so-called unessential creature has the ability to bring the end of humankind if the natural order is broken. On the contrary, the absence of humans is not felt in nature because it existed before humankind and it will be so.

Ecocriticism is a harmony of a literary text with environmental approaches that show the social and cultural outcomes of the disturbed balance of nature. It gives human beings a chance to correct their mistakes to prevent the destruction of the earth. Ecocriticism puts humans and nature in the same equation and shows an equal interest in social and biological systems. It is quite wrong to value the members of nature in accordance with their benevolence to human beings. Nature does not exist for the sake of human's needs because human beings are not the centre of nature. According to the ecocritical approach as Oppermann asserts, even the slightest harm done to nature may lead to great problems because every creature is a member of the nature-society in which everything is linked to each other, and they form a wholeness and order in nature. In this regard, ecocriticism has a post-humanist attitude to deconstruct the anthropocentric system of thought and to demand equal treatment for all living entities (Oppermann, 2012:15). Ecocriticism has a non-human centric point of view in which human beings are not at the centre of ecological treatment and nature is valued equally. While ecocriticism regards nature as a whole unity with each living participants that deserves to be respected, posthumanism denies the boundaries and priorities of human beings over nonhuman creatures in nature. When posthumanism removes humans from the centre of the system and provides an equal position with the other creatures, it is no longer acceptable for human beings to exploit and pollute natural sources and harm nonhuman beings. So, different from the other literary criticism forms, ecocriticism includes both humans and nonhuman accounts and ecocritical literature encompasses both culture and nature. As maintained by Oppermann, while analysing the relationship between human and nonhuman entities, the effects of culture are undeniable because culture is an artefactual construction that includes language, ethics, customs, etc. (1999: 32). If ecocriticism studies nature in relation to literature, it should deeply analyse the concept of culture to create ecological consciousness among people and to show humans' role in the ecologic movement. How humans perceive nature and how they conduct themselves to nature are observed in the representations of nature

through the ecologically focused literature. Oppermann's example of building a partial ecological concept is nature's wild and inhospitable description in literary genres (1999:33). This projection promotes the idea of domesticating nature; otherwise, it could defeat humans. Ecocriticism may show unfair treatment of nature and its participants and how the future of the environment is shaped by cultural and social constructions. An ecocritical evaluation of literary criticism may show human and nonhuman entities coexist peacefully.

### **1.1.3. Environmental Problems and Scientific solutions**

Ecocriticism is a great contribution to today's environmental ethics because it has the power to create a change. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle claims that History tells people what happened while Literature tells people what happens; "Poetry, therefore, is more philosophical and more significant than history, for poetry is more concerned with the universal, and history more with the individual" (1987: IX, 17). Here, literature takes the responsibility of presenting the environmental realities of the time to the citizens of the earth and spread what might be done henceforward. Literature assumes an important role in affecting people and the way they think because literary criticism is always interconnected with its contemporary social and political issues. So, poetry is no longer a source of pleasure and enjoyment; rather, it carries a social mission. Ecocritics develop a new approach and mission to literature in which the main idea is that the end of the world is about to come due to human beings' thoughtless actions and exploitation of natural sources and using them to the end. It is a necessary concern of ecocritics to care about nature and make a move for it through literature because existing environmental problems are the product of human culture. Lawrence Buell indicates that culture is composed of human activities which affect the lives of nonhuman beings. Culture is regarded as the socially constructed product of humans and referred to as opposed to nature which continues to exist independently from human beings. The other reason why culture is limited within humans is the concept of culture includes institutions that concern only humans, as Buell lists; economy, politics, customs, values, art, religious axioms (2005:136). The reason for the increase in ecocritical activities in literature is related to the rise of ecological disasters, such as; uncontrolled growth of world population, global warming, radiation poisoning, ozone layer depletion, deforestation, extinction of plant and animal species, water, air

and land contamination (Love, 2003:15). At this point, connecting the texts and environmental problems is an urgent necessity to teach and write about environmentalism. Just like the Ouroboros serpent which eats its own tail, humans are headed for a fall by consuming sources of the natural world because there is no alternative for natural resources which are finite. When taken into account, human life on earth is completely dependent on what nature presents, and the way natural sources are presumed carelessly, the continuous attitude of humankind might be regarded as suicidal behaviour. In his essay, "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism" William Rueckert explains that ecocritics try to develop is a system in which human, non-human, living or inanimate organisms can inhabit a compatible environment (1996:108). They are after creating ways to experience human culture in the natural environment without destroying it. The inevitability of benefiting from sources of nature in order to survive is acceptable. However, there has to be limit for humans to avoid exploitation. When natural sources are used for arbitrary desires without any control instead of biological requirements, unfair treatment towards nature commences. Eco-literary criticism proposes humans being more sensible and careful while benefiting from natural sources. According to Buell, this new approach may provide sustainability of resources and more valuable living standards for both humans and other beings in the natural environment (2005:85). The final judgement of the 1991 First National People of Colour Environmental Leadership Summit concludes in "Principles of Environmental Justice" that people need to reconsider their regular practices of consuming natural sources and have to create as little waste as possible (Buell, 2005: 114). Making eco-friendly changes in the manner of life may create a huge difference for the future generations and the current condition of the earth.

Ecocriticism provides individuals with a broadened common sense through ecological awareness. Studying literature without environmental principles would be limited and deficient because what earth experiences are real and should not be avoided. Producing environmentally concerned literary forms may help to create environmental sentience in human minds and change in their actions according to ecological concerns. Love argues nature has been manipulated by the hands of humanity for ages: It is controlled, changed and used up (2003:21). Today, human beings have started to experience the negative outcomes of environmental problems; however, they have not met the worst scenarios, yet. Even though people might not



witness melting all of the icebergs today, the icebergs will be totally melted in the following centuries and future generations will be affected the worst if environmental precautions would not be taken. It is the moral and ethical responsibility of taking action upon environmental issues for future generations so that they will have an earth to live on. Instead of trying to change the earth according to human needs and suitability, Love points out the necessity for humans to change their attitude, regular practices and ways of life in accordance with nature (1990:209). In the present day and with the present conditions, humans have a responsibility towards the environment in which they have lived and used up (Iovino, 2010:29). Culture needs to be analysed in the environmental aspect because it is quite influential in both constructions of ecocritical attitude and determining ecological based problems (Garrard, 2004: 14). In the first place, it is the culture which involves anti-ecological instincts such as invasion and exploitation of nature and again nature may enhance ecological manners and emplace an eco-consciousness among the society.

#### **1.1.4. Pastoral Tradition**

It has to be understood that nature is an independent entity from human beings which means nature and its inhabitants existed long before the presence of human beings and they will continue to be in existence without human beings. It is quite cruel to treat nature and its sources as if they existed for the comfort and wellbeing of human beings. As Love points out this ego-centric point of view should give place to “eco-consciousness” (Love, 2003:25). On the other hand, it is very normal to adapt nature in accordance with the concept of culture; on condition that, human beings should find a midway for human and nonhuman and to avoid exploitation of the natural sources. In this regard, nature consciousness literature provides the necessary protection and devotion for the nonhuman. Nature writing emerged long before ecocritical literary studies. Buell traces the footprints of nature writing which might be found in oral tradition up to Homer’s *Iliad* in which nature is celebrated (2005:145). In the same manner, pastoral tradition has always presented rural regions as opposed to urban areas which are criticised for the hardships of city life. The works of the Romantic Era reflected delighted landscapes in rural areas with the aim of present nature as the source of joy and pleasure. While writing about nature, subjects might unavoidably stick within the traditional topics such as, rural and wildlife; however, Love asserts

that ecocritical perspective should be able to broaden the vision of literature by bringing new approaches such as, urban life, which is the starting point of the environmental problems, environmental pollution and animal lives (2003:29). These topics affect human beings' perception and relation with nature and its nonhuman members. In return, nature is affected by human activities. Pastoral tradition is not merely projecting the natural scenes, but it might be used as a strong criticism of real life in that it can show the clash between nature and culture. Actually, pastoral literary tradition might be the early inspiration for the studies of ecological criticism because pastoral literature emerged as a poetic reaction to the Industrial Revolution which is the starting point of contemporary environmental problems. Consistent with Garrard's clarification, pastoral literature may be defined within the escape from urban life to the countryside due to the harsh living conditions of city life (2004:33). Nature is always glorified in the pastoral context and depicted in contrast to the culture which is a human construction because it brings pollution, exploitation and invasion (Love, 2003:66). So, pastoral literature is not a bare celebration of nature, instead, there is a serious criticism of its contemporary environmental crisis. When historical roots of pastoral literature are traced, it dates back to the Hellenistic period in which the clash between urban and city life is the dominant subject due to dense urbanisation. Garrard states the concept of the city is depicted as corrupted, savage and superficial in terms of human intimacy, while urban life is presented as idyllic, fruitful and vivacious (2004:35). The ongoing improvements in science and technology have provided facilities and convenience for human beings; however, their effect has grown rapidly day by day by harming nature and human health. That is why there is a common sense of nostalgia in the pastoral tradition: scientific and technological innovations take human beings from the old peaceful environment by replacing it with chaos. As another example by Garrard, Virgil in his *Eclogues* shows the primary source of environmental catastrophes as Roman civilization which causes deforestation (2004:36). Ecocriticism also brings a new approach to the interpretation of the pastoral because it brings a nature-based point of view which puts human and nonhuman in the same equitation. In the pastoral tradition, rural people with simple lives are idealised because it has a minimalist treatment towards nature by both giving and taking. From this standing point pastoral and ecocriticism have common points in that they both criticise and restrain from the same things and they both care for nature for the sake of

nature. Ecocriticism might seem to be one move ahead of pastoral ideas because it cares about nature, brings up environmental problems and endeavours for possible solutions. In this regard, ecocriticism is the contemporary practice of the pastoral with additional and innovative offers. The word, Pastor is derived from the Latin word “pastor” (Love, 2003: 80) which stands for shepherds and animal breeding. As its name signifies, pastoral tradition harmonises nature and human together; however, the effects of the culture are incontrovertible. Nonhuman entities of nature should be embraced by culture because they simply provide humans with whatever is needed for their survival, including accommodation, food, water and oxygen. In return, humans should protect, respect and elevate nature just like in the pastoral tradition. So, pastoral is the reconciliation of nature and culture. In Love’s comparison with ecocentric nature writing, Pastoral literature has a softer approach to nature which may be a Romantic gaze of nature because ecocritical literature includes wilderness of nature, too by issuing tropical rain forests, polar regions, deserts, ocean, polar bears, mountain lions, wolves and whales (2003:86). With these topics, ecocriticism clearly shows that humans are not the dominant creatures in nature and humans should not try to control the wilderness of nature which is exactly the opposite statement to the anthropocentric approach positioning humans at the top of the world. Environmental issues might be treated more explicitly in the diversity of ecocriticism which talks about the realities of nature, instead of smooth pastoral tradition.

## **1.2. Darwinian Theory and Animals in Holy Scriptures**

Ecocriticism studies the natural world by consulting humanities and social sciences such as genetics, neurobiology, physiology, psychology. As part of the natural world, the nature of human beings is an important topic because ecocriticism puts forward a controversial approach to the Darwinian theory of evolution which positions humans at the top of all other entities for human beings are the most evolved species in nature (Love, 2003: 50). At this point, ecocriticism questions the place of the human in nature and dissents humans’ othering themselves from animals and other nonhuman entities. Even though scientific studies and findings prove that humans and chimpanzees share a genetic makeup, humans have always inclination to draw boundaries against other species than humans neglecting the transition between biological communities (Love, 2003: 33). Traditional concept of animal otherness is

challenged by an ecological re-reading of the twentieth century's scientific studies regarding evolutionary theory. Human conception of evolution lights the way humans perceive their physical environment. The practices of the adapted beings are crucial to the ecocriticism within the Evolution theory. When human beings are regarded as the most adapted organism, their artifacts and cultural and literary productions become the dominant and determinant representations for all beings other than humans (Easterlin, 2004: 2). This survival skill of humans unavoidably creates a hierarchy between humans and nonhuman beings. At this point, ecocriticism seeks for the equality of species just as it stands for the equality between all races and ethnic identities. For Nancy Easterlin, evolutionary theory is crucial to ecocriticism's theoretical foundation in that it can reveal the relationship between humans and the non-human environment. Regarding humans as "adapted species" (qtd. in Easterlin), Neil Evernden claims that writing about nature is in fact presenting how humans observe nature (2004: 5). What Evernden means is human perception is the dominant angle of perceiving nature because they are the dominant species of nature as the most evolved and adapted one. In a similar vein, Love emphasises that Darwinian thinking is central theme for understanding human culture (2003: 19). Thus, the evolutionary theory creates a binary opposition between nature and humans who are cultural beings. For Jay Appleton, "Environmental perception is the key to environmental adaptation which is in turn the basis of the survival of individual organisms and a central theme in the Darwinian theory of evolution by natural selection" (qtd. in Love, 2003: 89). Thus, this theory presents a superior human place in nature especially for human rationality that is unique in nature and casts a lower position to animals. This higher position in terms of evolutionary theory causes an abusive attitude of humans towards natural environment. Darwin summarised his theory in the first edition of the *Origin of Species*: "This preservation of favourable individual differences and variations, and the destruction of those which are injurious, I have called Natural Selection, or the Survival of the Fittest" (qtd. in Paul, 1988: 411). In other words, only the organisms who can adjust themselves to their surrounding environment, have chance to survive. On the other hand, Alexander Alland, Jr., asserts that Darwin borrowed the term "the survival of the fittest" from Herbert Spencer, whose phrase is referred to "competition both in human economics and in animal life. The notion that economic and social progress were the result of struggle and competition - with some individuals winning

and others losing” (qtd in Paul, 1998: 413). When these two explanations are analysed, humans can be regarded the powerful species who want to survive in nature so that they protect themselves while harming the nature for their struggle of survival. Their survival competition with non-human species is never fair because they are more fitted out. The fact that humans have more developed brain and body features due to evolutionary period places them physically, mentally and psychologically advantageous position over other species; however, they can never sever all ties with other species to which they are biologically connected. Darwinian theory of evolution contrastingly affects human-nature relationship by introducing positive discrimination for human beings. On the contrary, all human beings and species constitute a unity in nature and they are never independent from nature for their survival. In this context, Darwin’s evolution theory might be questioned because it claims the superiority and uniqueness of humans over animals and other life forms.

Ecocriticism uses early references of pastoral literary genres; however, Genesis and the Bible might be the earliest source for critical nature writing (Garrard, 2004:2). John Milton shows the clash between nature and culture in his *Paradise Lost* by underlying God’s will and permitting the exploitation of nature by human beings to honour God’s existence and power (Garrard, 2004:38). It may be said that canonical orders have to be abandoned first, to vanish unlimited human dominance and exploitation over nature and to abandon the idea that nature exists to serve human needs. Religious narratives pave the way for the destruction of the earth which may sound harsh but true. In the first place, the Creation story in the Christian mythologies is contradictory to evolution theory and ecological evolvement. With all due respect to olden tropes, they are quite valuable in cultural terms; however, they cannot keep up with contemporary environmental discussions. What makes them incompatible with ecological discourse is the “intrinsic value” (Garrard, 2004:176) of all participants of nature, which make nonhuman entities as worthy as human beings. At this point, ecocriticism determines the boundaries between nature and culture, created by cultural products such as the Creation story; immediately after, it deconstructs these limitations because it fundamentally aims for reconciliation between human nature and environmental nature. Here the aim is not to vanish cultural artefacts; rather, ecocriticism is after including cultural products into nature. Humans’ approach to nature is highly shaped by religion which tells them that they are the master of all. This

behaviour of positioning themselves at the top of all entities is culturally constructed, learnt and passed down. According to the Christian creation story, God creates the earth, animals and plants, then Adam and Eve. French philosopher Jacques Derrida indicates that humans are charged with the mission of domesticating, training and ruling nature (2008:3). When humans are the dominant creature on earth, animals are described within the frame of whatever they are deprived of humanistic features such as culture, reason, intelligence, history, spoken communication, language, self-consciousness and separating the grain from the chaff (Mallet, 2008: x). When everything in nature is defined within the language of humans, nature remains silent. Language has the ability to make anything known or hold something back, the language of ecocriticism then should be free from humanist discourses to make nature more visible and apparent (Manes, 1996:17). Especially, the lack of proper language among the animals creates one of the biggest problems because animals are treated like a mute. God lets human beings name the animals even though animals descend to the earth before humans (Derrida, 2008:17). Humans use their power of naming others as creating the notion of “animal” to distinguish themselves from the rest of the ecosystem (Goodbody, 2013: 72). Thus, othering animals begins with naming, then interlaying human characteristics that animals do not possess. It is intriguing to see that human beings become the master of the animals while animals are the previous residents of the earth. When animals are given names by humans, they lose the chance of speaking for themselves (Derrida, 2008: 19). It is a way of dominance over the animals because naming is a way of dominating. When humans speak on behalf of nature and animals as their master, everything on earth becomes the human subject. Humans decide on behalf of the animals while doing so, they write their history for animals. This definition creates culturally and traditionally constructed dualism between humans and animals.

According to the creation story, this planet is created for the sake and use of humans so that they can rule everything below them. The purpose of the existence of any being apart from human beings is to serve them. According to the text of Genesis 1:26, God orders as: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have the dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (Genesis 1:26-28). Here, God basically commands humans to govern all living entities other than humans. So, the idea behind

the creation of animals is to create an occasion for humans to experience their authority and power upon the animals which degrade to animals nothing but the subject of the human. Domesticating and ruling nature and animals as ordered, are happening in different ways such as hunting, fishing, animal transport and vivisection in addition to commandments of animal sacrifices from the Bible. The materialisation of the living animals into objects changes shapes and increases with the improvements in technology. Derrida especially emphasises animals' decrease of products to exploit and consume in the meat industry and trade through the manipulation of the genes of animals with hormones, cloning, etc. (2008:25). The idea of satisfying humanitarian needs has given its place to act of violence in the treatment of animals. They are exposed to industrial, chemical, genetic and hormonal violence through artificial insemination, vivisection, incarceration in the dairy, farming and fishing industries (Derrida, 2008: 26). The extension of this slaughter and exploitation should not be proceeded in both ethical terms and for the future of the planet. When the issue is about suffering, one should not think about whether animals have the capacity to think in a reasonable way. Rather, as Derrida lays stress "The first and decisive question would rather be to know whether animals can suffer" (2008:27). Regardless of the order of importance, one of the common points that both humans and animals share is the ability to suffer. So, it should be easy for humans to create empathy with animals so that they may stick up for animal rights. Protecting animal rights is a necessity for humans because they are in need of animals and their running of the universe. The tradition of sacrificing animals is inherited from the Bible with God's permission to Adam to name animals. By doing so the main dualisms between human nature and its environment are created: First, by both valuing humans above all entities in nature, the story is alienating humans from the rest of nature. Secondly, Lynn White emphasises that it is God's order for humans to rule and exploit nature (1996:10). When humans are positioned at the centre of the earth, every other living form and non-living entity are to become the subject of the dominant traits. Also, in scientific terms, it is not quite proper to separate the human race from the rest of the animal kingdom while they share the same family tree lining up from the "animot" to the "homo faber" and "homo sapiens" (Derrida,2008: 47). In other words, humans distinguish themselves from the animals so acutely that the concept of nonhuman almost stands for what is opposite to humans. Naturally, animals are deprived of most of the humanitarian abilities and they

cannot be evaluated in the same equation. However, they should be harmonised within nature because they are complimentary participants of nature. So, the relationship between humans and nature is an important determinant of the human actions of humans towards nature and what goes on between humans and the environment. White shows the alternative approach to Christian axioms of the purpose of existence: Instead of admitting the idea that nature and its participants exist to serve human needs, a reconciler attitude is possible which is valuing human and nonhuman beings equally (1996:14). Just as postmodernism denies the idea of universal and de facto truth, posthuman ecocritical theory rejects meta-narratives which justifies the supremacy of humans as the one and only rational, self-conscious and independent being (Iovino,2010: 34). It reminds humans of the existence and equal right to life of nonhuman beings such as animals, plants, rivers, mountains, trees. Humans cannot simply stake out a claim for the lives of other beings just because they are incapable of humanitarian attributions. In questioning established anthropocentrism, Ioviono presents the equal value of ecocriticism in nature, human and nonhuman beings in moral terms (2010:35). This approach notices the existence of all creatures in nature by dislocating humans from the centre of the ecosphere.

In the Middle Ages, nature dealing was highly influenced by church sermons which were depicting nature as in the perfect order because it was the reflection of God. The source of this approach was the idea of “the Great Chain of Being” which positions humans higher than beasts and lower than angels. Renaissance uses the same model under the name of humanism which justifies the highest position of humans than any other creature in nature (Manes, 1996:20). Humanist idea rationalises human sovereignty over other life forms because humans are the only creatures having rational faculty so that they can think, speak and act on behalf of the nonhumans. On the contrary, one of the main environmental philosophers of Italy, Ioviono proposes a concept of “non-anthropocentric humanism” which provides both nature and humans freedom and respect to each other’s boundaries (2010:32). Ecocritical evaluation of humanism does not limit the autonomy of humans; instead, it raises the awareness of the interconnectedness of all creatures in nature. Rueckert makes a resemblance between modern human actions and the tragic flaw of a protagonist from a Greek tragedy. Just as a tragic hero brings his own end through hamartia which is caused by ignorance or acting-out, humans are at the edge of bringing the end of the civilisation



and world (Rueckert, 1996:113). The anthropocentric approach towards the ecosphere will be the tragic flaw of humankind unless they redress the environmental crisis which is built up over years and start to move for squaring accounts for the ecological issues. Humans are after building a richer environment for themselves, consuming all the sources by ruining the natural environment. Nature writing is an important tool to connect human nature and the environment; otherwise, it is hard to act in unison. It is crucial to realise the importance of nature for all entities in nature and for nature's own sake. William Rueckert remarks on the first law of ecology as "Everything is connected to everything else" (1996:108). His remark is important to grasp the unity in all beings in the entire biosphere from the smallest creature to the strongest one. Ecocritics emphasise the necessity of respecting all participants of the natural world in accordance with this awareness. Humans have to understand they are not alone in the ecosphere and they have to consider the rights of other beings. The symbiotic relationship in nature between all beings has to be recognised by humans so that they may stop interrupting natural balance which functions well without humans, too. Buell explains earth's self-supporting system in which every being from insects to rivers, has a role to contribute to the running of the natural order (2005:91). At the present, Rueckert's idea of protecting the rights of nature by lawyers might sound unrealistic; however, it makes sense humans are a faulty party and nature is unable to speak for itself and defend itself (1996:108). To pay back to nature for what humans have been taking for centuries, first, they have to respect and protect; then, they have to learn to be a part of nature by participating in production in nature. Instead of being a parasite on an organism, it is important to be productive and beneficial mutually.

### **1.3. Animals**

Ecocriticism pays attention to the rights of each participant of nature, including animals. It is very important how animals are represented in literature in terms of protecting animal rights. For example, cruel treatment of animals should be condemned in equal consideration for slavery. Animals generally are not held in esteem because they cannot logically express themselves; however, the lack of reason for possession should not justify moral connivance. The higher importance of suffering of a human is not acceptable because the suffering of an animal is not less important considering they are both living creatures that can feel pain. In cultural understanding,

the suffering of a human matters because it means something while the suffering of an animal means anything as long as someone explains how much they suffer on behalf of animals. Apart from these ideas which are behind the times, Garrard expresses that environmental ethics bring an all-embracing approach which is a moral account for inanimate members of nature such as rivers, trees, mountains in addition to animals (2004:141). First, the inability to suffer like living creatures is not an obstacle to consider inanimate creatures. Secondly, all nonhuman entities are in need of human protection because the human species are more equipped in nature against other life forms; however, this priority does not require any precedence over nature and its inhabitants. Here, ecocriticism issues the problems between nonhuman entities and humans and how they can co-exist. Ecocritics are always after jumping ahead of continuous studies with the aim of doing more for nature. In the exploration of literary ecology, Jonathan Bate uses German zoologist Ernst Haeckel's definition of ecology which is "the investigation of the total relations of the animal both to its inorganic and to its organic environment; including above all, its friendly and inimical relations with those animals and plants with which it comes directly or indirectly into contact". (36) So, ecology is the study of the relations of all living and inanimate entities and their interdependence with the environment. Ecology consults science in analysing the relation of entities according to Darwin's concept of natural selection and adaptation to the environment (Bate,1991:37). According to quantum physics, there is unity and interconnectedness in the universe. Also, there is an act of interchange between all living and non-living beings in all terms (Oppermann, 1990, 37). This dependent order in nature affects all of its participants and provides a wholeness. In the light of Darwinian theories, ecology concludes that all living entities, animals and plants are interconnected with each other and they affect each other's existence out of necessity. Even the smallest bug which might seem unimportant has a great influence on other life forms in nature in which all nonhuman forms constitute a unity. In this equation, the effects of humans are undeniable because they, unfortunately, break the chains of the natural order in the struggle of controlling and directing nature. One of the primary focuses of ecological studies is to find out a way for human beings to coexist in nature peacefully with other members. Intrinsically, it is not a choice for human beings to live according to the rules of nature, but it is necessary to obey them because nature is the only critical component of their survival. In other words, Nature can survive without

humans in its ecosystem; however, human beings are highly dependent on nature in terms of their vital activities. That is why ecological studies are after finding ways for humans to live in nature compatibility because present-day environmental problems are the consequence of inconsiderate human actions of consuming, changing and exploiting sources of the earth. Bate explains the necessity of starting any move immediately: “For if 'the nonhuman' is to do something for us, we must do something for it - not least give it space, allow it to continue to exist. (Bate, 56) It is important to become serious in understanding that the humans and non-human entities are in the same boat which is nature, and they should act compatible to keep nature alive.



## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. ECOPHOBIA

#### 2.1. INTRODUCTION TO ECOPHOBIA AND ITS THEORISATION

In “Theorizing in a Space of Ambivalent Openness: Ecocriticism and Ecophobia”, Professor Simon Estok who is fairly well known with ecocriticism and activism related theory, argues that ecocriticism needs to specify its methods, organization, purposes and borders through a proper methodology to define nature and theorise ecophobia (2009: 204). This may improve the studies regarding the theory of ecophobia instead of creating confusion among the theorists. Estok mentions ecocriticism’s activist side which causes it to produce direct, earnest and compelling ecocritical contents (205). There are two main problems in the process of ecocriticism: First, the theory is unable to define itself properly. Secondly, it cannot catch up on activist missions that are previously undertaken (206). These deficiencies may create a negative impression in the public eye. If ecocriticism cannot put into practice what it theorises, it loses its reliability in going through constructive changes. To create sustainability for ecocritical theory, ecophobia needs to be theorised at the centre of ecocriticism just as feminist theory needs to theorise sexism and misogyny. Long involved with the analyses of this topic through respectable number of articles, Professor Estok defines ecophobia as “Ecophobia is an irrational and groundless hatred of the natural world” (208). Regarding his definition, a connection between ecophobia and racism, speciesism, and homophobia may be created because they essentially have the same motives. Ecophobia is also a common attitude towards nature in daily life as other negative social tendencies. So, ecocriticism cannot be theorised without referring to ecophobia, sexism, homophobia and misogyny. Oppermann claims ecocriticism needs to present certainty in systematizing its discourses and practices. Thus, making proper connections with natural and environmental representations will lead to a successful finale which is a part of the solution for the ecological crisis (2011:165). Any sexist or homophobic discourse cannot be mentioned within ecocritical understanding because they conflict with ecocriticism’s principles and perspective. In

the same way, any ecocritical treatment cannot include any sexist, homophobic or racist statement; otherwise, it contradicts its own principles by doing so. Thus, ecocriticism cannot be expected to promote any kind of fear against environmental capriciousness and natural events in its compositions. Dealing with other ethical issues such as gender and race provides ecocritical studies with rich content and the ability to create connections with other social theories. In addition, bearing against ecophobia along with sexism, misogyny and homophobia contributes to ecocriticism's activist aspect. Estok suggests four points for ecocriticism's activist stance: First, ecophobia should be defined clearly within ecocriticism so that it can create awareness. Second, ecocriticism should make extensive changes for theorising ecophobia. Thirdly, ecocriticism needs to have a direct relation with green activists to cope with industrial and capitalist organizations. Lastly, ecocriticism should not underestimate the effect of the anthropocentric point of view on daily life and choices (2009: 217). Today, social and environmental issues are interwoven. Therefore, in order to correspond the social issues such as misogyny, racism, inequality, terrorism, etc ecocriticism needs to deepen its theory and research techniques. One may infer from Estok's statements that making ecophobia one of the main concerns of ecocriticism is a crucial step to broaden ecocritical theory. As Oppermann contributes significantly to Estok's theorisation of ecophobia, the meaning of reading ecophobia is the ability to read what text actually means by questioning and thinking about the representations of nature (2011:164). So, what Estok proposes is discussing how to theorise ecophobia within the ecocritical theory. To be able to restrain the unnecessary fear concerning nature and the environment, first, the fear has to be detected, then recognised and theorised. A proper theorisation of ecophobia within ecocriticism also enables ecocriticism's improvement in future. As Oppermann and Estok have put, it is necessary to theorise this relation for the future of ecocriticism; otherwise, it will lose its effectiveness. There is one more point in which ecophobia may make use of ecocritical theorisation: other social theories take human behaviours and social attitudes seriously. Similarly, ecophobia is in need of taking the natural world seriously so that it can be familiar with what it sticks up for. Today, literary works are sensitive and careful about gender, class and social issues because they are fortunately no longer taboos. However, this precision is not valid equally for ecophobia. Estok grounds this fact for legal reasons. He proposes the necessity for constitutional protections for ecophobic action

(2010:158). In this way, crimes against nature and its normalization through ecophobic narrations would be put under the category of hate crimes just like sexism, racism and homophobia cases. However, let alone ecophobic representations on media, harmful actions towards nature are not subject to the law because they are not taken seriously as other social issues. Even though ecocriticism is known as environmental philosophy and movement, its requirements are not known by society; that is why measurements cannot be taken within laws.

In his influential essay “Narrativizing Science: The Ecocritical Imagination and Ecophobia”, Estok touches on the importance of narrating science appropriately within ecocritical studies because science contributes to ecocriticism’s activist part and provides the necessary support for its reasonability via objective judgements and research (2010:141). Narration is an important tool to create awareness in the mind of individuals by transferring information and what ecocriticism narrates is crucial. Science is quite influential for making a proper explanation of ecophobia and the relation between ecophobia and nature. At this point, ecocriticism is in need of scientific support because scientific narration may affect the perceptions of a person, community and societies. Estok believes that narrating science is really going to change things in the ecocritical field because narration has the power to show the seriousness of environmental problems (2010:150). Scientific narration bridges the gap between scientific and non-scientific issues to convey environmental problems. What is more, an ecophobic point of view may be prevented by changing the way people perceive and treat nature. A tiny change in an individual choice may create a butterfly effect in the treatment of communities towards nature. Eventually, raising awareness may lead to profound changes in the direction of environmental problems and natural disasters. Ecocriticism narrates science and this affects ecocriticism’s position as an activist movement. It gives ecocriticism a real place in real life to realize its missions. Ecocritical scholars need the outcomes of science; however, not all of them have enough scientific background to create their own scientific discoveries. Thus, narrating science has an important task to convey scientific information and findings to scholars without scientific abilities.

## **2.2. ECOPHOBIA IN DAILY LIFE AND MEDIA**

One may come across ecophobia in every sphere of life. Estok gives hygiene and the cosmetic sector as the example shows how they create a perception that displays a tendency to diminish natural organisms in daily life (2009:208). For instance, wrinkles, blemishes and acne are natural forms for the human body; however, the idea of recovering these natural creations is quite widespread. As another example, pests in houses are a great problem and there is a business sector to keep them out. Being more powerful than other beings offers humans control. Here, Estok creates a relation between ecophobia and capitalism, which feeds ecophobia to protect its sustainability (2016:136). For example, capitalism needs the promotion of insectophobia in order to continue the marketing of pest control. In a similar way, the obsession with smooth skin is to be maintained for the expansion of the cosmetic industry. In “Ecophobia, the Agony of Water and Misogyny”, Estok explains that “We deploy our antibiotics and hand sanitisers and deodorants and boiling water and ‘pasteurization’ and federal regulations to hold off the rot and mold and bacteria and so, we hope, hold off disease and death” (2019(a): 474). Taking extra measures against nature and its elements is an ecophobic attitude because it is in a way humankind’s belonging to nature. Avoiding a black widow is plausible; however, disgusting from all the spiders is an ecophobic stance. Human beings have learnt how to survive and avoid illnesses and wild animals that may eventually kill them. When they attack for no obvious reason to whole nature and its inhabitants without seeing any life-critical reason, their actions become ecophobic. Nature is expected to be good and kind towards human beings and their institutions; however, nature cannot undertake this mission because it does not have consciousness. Besides, positive and negative concepts are the creation of the human mind. When nature disorganizes artefacts, it is not because nature shows hostility but because it functions according to its own orders. For example, when people build lakefront houses and their houses are destroyed in a flood, it is not nature’s fault. Hence, it is unreasonable to regard nature as an enemy to overcome. In addition, it is an ecophobic manner to portray nature as an opponent that wants to destroy the human race and as a threat to artefacts by placing its natural running aside. Media is another platform in which smear camping is conducted against nature through ecophobia. Estok understands why Shakespeare depicted nature as more powerful than humans and humans as victimized by natural events because his

audience was living in an age in which nature was unpredictable with grain shortages, cold weather, storms, etc. (2009:209). However, he finds the attitude of media as multifaced for depicting nature hostile which needs to be controlled, dominated and defeated. His statement is comprehensible because natural disasters such as glacier melting, global warming and hurricanes are the outcomes of thoughtless human actions and presenting them as nature's deliberate reaction is not well-intentioned at all. Nature cannot be charged with environmental problems while the underlying reason for these problems is the inconsiderate actions of humans. The nature concept is a favoured topic for media, film industries and publishing houses because nature related products sell well due to their popularity and authenticity. The audience and readers enjoy encountering environmental issues which they face in daily life. These mass products regarding nature and the environment might be useful in spreading ecological awareness. However, Estok explains in "Ecomedia and Ecophobia" when nature is shown as an opponent to be feared, protected and conquered in nature related products, they spread ecophobic opinions against nature so that the target audience gets the impression of overcoming nature with human intelligence (2016:131). Ecophobia is not always explicitly portrayed; instead, it may require reading between the lines to grasp its impact.

In his influential essay "Terror and Ecophobia", Estok creates a relation between ecophobia and terror in that natural events are presented in a hostile and negative way by the media (2013:87). Environmental problems are real, urgent and they have increased higher than ever before; nevertheless, presenting these problems in an inhospitable tone does not help to improve the current condition of the earth. In addition to inimical representations of natural events, the realities concerning environmental problems are distorted which makes it difficult for humans to recognise true and false news. Twisted news about environmental issues causes humans to assume a hostile attitude towards nature and prevent them from understanding their responsibility in creating environmental problems. Apart from the news, imaginative productions such as movies and books including environmental problems may help to create awareness; however, their producers worry about sales rate, so they generally incline to show what sells best. This concern causes exaggerated or deficient productions which misguide the public about the environmental process. As Oppermann claims, portraying nature as a competitor to fight serves anthropocentric



ideology which rationalises unfair use of natural sources (2018: 326). Therefore, people do not react to environmental issues and do anything to prevent environmental problems when they think nature deserves to be exploited. What media tools should do is creating objective productions which reflect the truth about the environmental situation. In this way, people may be aware of their liability in the creation of environmental problems and they may be a volunteer for being part of the solutions. Finally, they may stop feeling anger-hostility towards nature and its inhabitants. It is an undeniable fact that human beings retain primary responsibility for the worsening situation of the earth. Besides, environmentally concerned publications and productions do not focus on what they actually should emphasize so that the real threat for both nature and humans stays unnoticed. When the publications regarding environmental problems become human construction, an ecophobic point of view is inevitable. If natural events are presented as deliberate cruel treatment of nature against human beings, human communities unavoidably strike an antagonistic attitude towards nature in order to survive. One of the important points Estok makes about this topic is portraying nature as terror ultimately creates a binary opposition between human and non-human (2013:95). The main problem between humans and non-human beings is nature's unstable position in creating environmental events. People are afraid of what they cannot comprehend and identify so nature is presented with fear and terror.

Changing and controlling nature according to human will is not possible and the attempts cause natural problems. Estok claims the failure of dominating nature is one of the most popular subject themes in films and literature; however, they are unfortunately quite influential in developing ecophobic perception. The topic of climate change and its consequences are surely popular contents; however, it is nothing but the portrait of nature as an antagonist to conquer the world. Humans need to realize that they are not in competition with nature in the world. They cannot claim the rights of nature and the world. He lists the mistreatment of nature displayed in various genres as imagining nature as an opponent to be conquered, subdued, raped, ploughed and regulated (2016:133). This ecophobic manner lays hands on eventually homophobia, sexism, speciesism. For example, nature is always associated with the concept of Mother Earth, for it produces and nurtures; however, this statement sounds quite sexist and discriminative by all measures. Creating this kind of content as environmental

products neither creates and ethical awareness nor helps to stop environmental problems. What is more, they contribute to other social problems. The more ecophobic contents are presented in the movies, the more the audience will encounter sexist, homophobic, racist contexts. Placing these problematic issues among the products of daily life may eventually cause the normalization of these problematic cliches. In other words, in the appreciation of the audience, violence against women, othering people and harming nature will become conventional and common. Thus, the media plays a grand role in turning away these notions from the public mind. However, as Estok has put it, people do not want to face what they gave rise to concerning the environmental crisis (2016:135). If a media product aims to do a roaring trade, it would not choose to issue the realities behind environmental crises because people do not want to face that they are responsible for environmental problems and they have to make changes in the way they live from now onward. In the matter of individual dedication to environmental problems, Oppermann exhibits Estok's suggestion on rethinking industrial meat production and exploitation of animals (2018: 327). Meat production and consumption are serious issues that require reconsideration in both ethical and environmental terms in that the meat industry is simply a violation of animal rights and a great contributor to global warming. If human beings are sincere about making a change to prevent natural disasters and acting in accordance with creating any change, Estok reasons sustaining a vegan lifestyle is a quite convenient solution to control environmental problems and create an ethical approach for nonhuman beings (qtd. in Oppermann, 2018: 327). So, searching for solutions to environmental problems is starting from somewhere; however, practising these solutions by changing daily habits are a real game-changer.

Environmental contents in the movie industry and literature may work in two different ways: When the audience face environmental disasters, they may develop a hostile attitude against nature which may sound like a death knell for the human race or environmental products may create an awareness to take action for saving the nature. Estok emphasizes the necessity of great changes in several things for environmental narratives' suggesting action and engagement (2016:137). Spreading knowledge via environmental narratives and media products is not enough to create a change. People need to understand that they have ethical and social responsibilities towards nature as an individual. They need to take action by taking into consideration

environmental requirements. Here, the core of the problem is based on an anthropocentric idea that inherited from religious sources which posit human beings at the top of all other things. When human beings are faced with any tiny change they feel as if their personal rights are violated because they are afraid to restrain and to make any sacrifice to protect their status quo which is comfortable for them but harmful for the earth and its inhabitants except humans. In other words, individual responsibility is crucial in changing the present condition of ecophobia within the media. Most of the ecophobic actions are performed unwittingly because these actions are settled among people's daily habits that is why it is hard to create a big change in terms of environmental ethics. Primarily, humans need to recognise the potential of their actions; and then they can take a step for a change. Estok notes that analysing ecophobia within ecocriticism brings the theory an explanatory side which is important in creating change because analysing ecophobia develops a wider point of view about nature (2016:141). Plus, the way of representation of the natural environment and humans' inevitable relation with nature is very decisive in determining ecophobic manners. Media has the power of determining popular topics in society and the ability to reach mass communities so that it can disseminate any information to anyone. Thence, it is a moral duty for the media to condemn ecophobic discourses and actions in front of the public eye.

### **2.3. OTHER DEFINITIONS OF ECOPHOBIA**

Apart from his definition of ecophobia as irrational and groundless hatred of the natural world, Estok explains other uses of the term. He clarifies David Sobel's use of *ecophobia* as quite different from the way Estok uses it. Sobel employs ecophobia a fear of ecological problems to which the natural world faces such as oil spills, acid rain, whale hunting, ozone hole etc. (Estok, 2010: 144). Secondly, Estok presents another different term from Robin van Tine which is "gaeaphobia". He quotes his definition as "a form of insanity characterized by extreme destructive behaviour towards the natural environment and a pathological denial of the effects of that destructive behaviour" (qtd. in Estok, 2010: 144) which is similar to his use of ecophobia. In addition to the definition of an irrational fear of natural world, American journalist George F. Will's refers to another definition of ecophobia as "the fear that the planet is increasingly inhospitable" (qtd. in Estok, 2016:132). Here, human beings

need to recognise that actions of nature of which they are afraid are actually human construction. They act in a particular manner of controlling and changing nature with rainforest destruction, whale hunting, oil spills etc. The core of the triggering factors of treating nature as an opponent is ecophobia and acid rain and the ozone hole are the products of ecophobic manners. Unfortunately, humans get into a vicious circle of fearing nature, endangering nature and its inhabitants and fearing the consequences, again. In a way, ecophobia becomes the justification of the unfair treatment of humans towards nature. On the contrary, ecophobia is the outcome of that groundless fear. It is worth noting Michael Fisher's researches concerning the definition of ecophobia: Ecophobia is the combination of Greek words, *oikos* meaning house and *phóbos* meaning fear. In addition to fear of one's home, he adds the meaning of the word as an explanation, "a feeling of powerlessness to prevent cataclysmic environmental change, apocalypse" (2017(b):9). Fear is a serious concept in terms of reflecting nature in the media and its capacity should not be underestimated. Fisher also gives place to David Sobel's definition of ecophobia in relation to the psychology of the individuals: "ecophobia—a state of mind in which the student is fearful of the looming environmental problems" (qtd. in Fisher, 2017(b):13). When these two definitions are compared, Estok's definition is more extensive because Sobel analyses the psychological aspect of ecophobia while Estok examines the term in cultural, social and political terms. Hence, Estok's ecophobia cannot be reduced to psychological considerations in that the concept of fear is fed with a general public opinion that is systematically, culturally and ideologically constructed. Even though Sobel's definition is different from Estok's definition, they both emphasize the necessity of applicable wording for ecocriticism so that it can theorise ecophobia clearly. Simply fearing the collapse of the earth and its consequences are not enough motivation to take action to prevent the course of the environmental disasters. That is why ecocriticism needs a serious and profound study to create real changes. What Fisher suggests upon this subject is ecocriticism needs to associate natural representations on media and human-nature relationships (2017(b):21). Then, ecocriticism should have the ability to recognise ecophobic narratives and representations in nature-related contents. Long involved with the analysis of Estok's *The Ecophobia Hypothesis*, Professor Brian Deyo deduces that environmental studies should include the root causes of ecophobia which are historical, social, political and cultural so that necessary

changes in environmental ethics and consciousness in society can take place (2019: 442). In other words, ecocritical analysis cannot ignore ecophobia which is a cultural construction, otherwise, it cannot catch up on contemporary issues.

#### **2.4. ANTHROPOCENE AND ANTHROPOCENTRISM**

Humankind has misbehaved nature by exploiting, overusing and availing themselves of it even though nature has been only and one residence for them. Estok argues that human beings have unsettled the balances of the earth system and they induce an age which is called Anthropocene (2019(b): 380). In this age, one of the main aims of human beings is to avoid severe consequences of the environmental problems which are the creation of humankind. Due to the fact that even science remains incapable of producing solutions looking up for the Ecosphere, environmental problems are out of human control in the Anthropocene era. Considering environmental problems are originating from ecophobic approaches towards nature and creating relations with nature in accordance with fear and hatred, as Estok has put it, theorising ecophobia is a crucial method in creating a change in environmental crisis (2019(b):380). Ecocriticism can contribute to the theorising of ecophobia by analysing fear and hostility concepts in relation to eco-literary texts so that ecocritical scholars may create an awareness determining ecophobia within the literature. In addition, to take action against ecophobia, one needs to be able to identify it. If studying ecophobia becomes a widespread branch just as studying racism, homophobia, sexism, misogyny and speciesism, it would be easier to identify it in every sphere of life alongside academia. What is more, to provide ecophobia with a more solid base to theorise, it may be compared to misogyny because both of them have similar enforcements. For example, women are subject to commoditization, trivialization and othering, in a similar vein, ecophobia reduces nature and its sources to disposable products which are created for the benefit of humankind. Thus, ecophobia needs to be theorised properly and exhaustively so that anyone may get acquainted with ecophobic perceptions and be careful not to practice them. Estok offers that ecocriticism should be performed as feminism shows misogyny and sexism about how ecophobia is embedded in the cultural artefacts (2010: 25). Just like feminism, ecocriticism undertakes a challenging responsibility which is basically convincing society for the

opposite point of view historically developed for ages. Estok emphasizes the importance of recognising that ecophobia, racism, misogyny, homophobia, and speciesism are thoroughly interwoven with each other and must eventually be looked at together (2010:75). Ecocriticism needs to tell people that they have been under the influence of ecophobic tendencies because ecophobia serves the purpose of politicians and economists which intentionally shape culture and traditions with the anxiety of nature. Efforts of feminism end up condemning sexist discourses in still-continuing patriarchal societies, so ecocriticism can achieve dissolving ecophobic ideologies in the Anthropocene. While theorising ecophobia, self-questioning is an important move because an individual is the tiniest entity of society and every ideology starts in an individual's mind. Then, one should question biases and superstitions, concerning ecophobia, which are acknowledged through traditions and customs. Lastly, one should inquire about the representations of nature in art and literary works that they encounter in terms of ethical values so that they may realize the ecophobic manifestation and create a change. In addition to the effective function of ecophobia-free studies, Estok conceives that theorising ecophobia leads to confluent theorising and thus toward the kinds of methodological and structural definition for ecocriticism (2010:77). For S.K. Robisch, theorising ecophobia means following the fashion of the day and politicising such inaction as action is to right the course of ecocriticism (2009:698). In other words, ecocriticism needs to theorise ecophobia, first, to capture the order of the day. Secondly, theorising ecophobia is a significant contribution to ecocriticism's activist aspect. To borrow the words of Robisch, ecocriticism remains undefined and lacks definition or methodology without a proper theorisation of ecophobia (2009: 704). Ecocriticism is a comprehensive theory that studies ecofeminism, social ecology and deep ecology movement which includes ecophobia as its dominant sub-discipline. Nature and its inhabitants' way of living in their own order provide a biotope for human beings. In return, humankind is responsible for being compatible and living harmoniously with this order. In other words, making an end to ecophobia is humankind's power because it is a socially and culturally constructed concept.

The main motives for the Anthropocene are nature's unpredictability and its unconscious state towards humans' helplessness so that human beings feel anxious and insecure about their lives. Estok notes modern societies find themselves stuck in

an increasing ecological panic due to the Earth's changing conditions in the Anthropocene (2019(b):383). This fear creates alienation between nature and culture more than ever because the Anthropocene culturally, historically and politically reinforces ecophobia in human's relation with nature. Estok finds worth quoting from Judith Butler at this point: "the construction of the human is a differential operation that produces the more and the less 'human,' the inhuman, the humanly unthinkable" (qtd. in Estok, 2019(a): 479). Ecophobia depicts nature like a fierce monster whose actions are unpredictable; in return, it casts humankind a protective and attacking role against nature which is to be controlled in order not to overcome humankind. From the human perspective, ecophobia is a about power struggle against nature. When natural disasters have a vital influence on the way humans live and conflict with their interests, anything other than humans has the potential to be a danger to human life, and they are to be fought. A utilitarian approach to entities of nature places more developed ones at higher positions regarding them more powerful. However, disregarding the ability of suffering is problematic in ethical terms. To understand the motives of ecophobia, Biblical orders may be traced first in historical terms because as mentioned previously, they basically order human beings on everything beneath them. The God-given right of controlling everything is one of the main triggers of ecophobic thoughts. Estok adds imperialism to the origins of ecophobia. He argues imperialism is related to controlling nature because what imperialism does is diminishing varieties in both nature and culture so that they become more predictable and easier to abuse and control (Estok, 2009:210). Human beings changed the way the world and natural order functions to be able to control it effortlessly. Industrial Revolution is the last straw of the process of controlling nature. It created an image for nature that Estok notes as nature and its sources can be used immeasurably to use products for the capitalist economy (211). By doing so, people forget that they are part of nature and they should live in harmony with nature and should not change and control it so that all life forms can coexist. Human beings have a nondeliberate sense of survival which is the dominant characteristic in acting and behaving towards nature. When humans have to make a choice between saving nature and themselves, they always chose themselves first because they have an instinct to survive. This gut instinct is an important determinant in humans' relationship with nature and how humans behave nature. Even presenting climate change without touching on human contribution is an ecophobic

attitude because it is the implication of the world's ruthlessness towards human beings. Fisher defines Anthropocene as "a new geological era when human activity has changed geological and climatological features more potently than any other time in recorded history" (2017(b):9). Even though human beings are the cleverest being on earth, unfortunately, most of the harm is given by them through pollution, exploitation and plunder of natural sources. For Deyo, ecophobia is the product of humans' primitive drive which reminds them of their mortality and vulnerability (2019(b):443). That is to say, nature is so unpredictable and uncontrollable that the more people are au fait with the situation, the more they feel anxious and they want to defeat nature through infesting and destroying its balance. These feelings are so primitive as the instinct to survive and directly associated with fear of death or get hurt because people interpret nature's indifference from their vulnerability as a hostile attitude which is impossible because nature and its inhabitants do not have the consciousness to revenge human beings. When fear of death is associated with fear of nature, ecophobic thoughts emerge within individuals and start to have an impact on their behaviours towards nature. Humans' previous ideas regarding nature, like in Deyo's words, "primary awesomeness of the external world" have given their place to the anxiety of death and vulnerability in the Anthropocene (2019:448). Hence, the concept of nature starts to import a threat by contributing ecophobic approaches.

According to Deyo, Anthropocene positions humans at a superior position than nature and implies that nature is unknowable and threatening (2019:444). Unfortunately, these ideas are dominant within the culture and they affect the way people think and act towards nature. According to the way it functions within daily life and social institutions, the Anthropocene may resemble a stream of Anthropocentric thought because Anthropocene tends to make connections between human actions and their environmental consequences. Deyo explains Anthropocene as "a singularly advantageous tool for describing, explaining, and diagnosing the tragedy of the contemporary condition" (2019:445). Regarding the contemporary condition filled with environmental problems, Anthropocene may have changed the way people think about and act upon nature by creating an ecophobic attitude. Ecophobia, Anthropocene and Anthropocentric world views are quite correlated because all three concepts trigger each other. Simply put, the fear of nature makes humans harm nature to defeat it, due to anthropocentric ideas, humans feel justified to damage nature and



consequences of ecophobic actions are presented in the Anthropocene so that they constitute a vicious cycle. Because of anthropocentrism, people otherize nonhuman beings and enhance their own existence. As an expected consequence of their thoughtless actions, Anthropocene develops a fear of death among humans after human beings face climate change, drought, famine, etc. That is how Anthropocene places ecophobia in daily life and culture. Due to anthropocentric idea, humans see themselves as the most important create in nature, and they cannot bear the idea that nature has the ability to defeat human beings. Hence, they develop hostile behaviour towards nature which eventually develop ecophobic actions. As Deyo notes, ecophobia is “a driving force of culture” (2019: 449). Just as anthropocentric ideas are socially constructed and traditionally learnt, fear of nature is the production of the human ego and passed down within the culture. To clarify the individual significance concept among the humans, Deyo cites the Aristotelian idea of “divine intellect, of which each man has a potential share and which distinguishes man from other animals” and consults Descartes for his description of “the divine faculty of reason” (qtd. in Deyo, 2019: 451) which is gifted by God. These definitions justify the ontological and theological superiority of humans over nonhuman beings in nature. In the light of these explanations, it is inevitable for humans not to be the most important being on earth while they are the reflection of God and their intellect honours the existence of God. At this point ecocriticism plays a crucial role by showing the effects of ecophobia on human actions towards nature to prevent the promotion of ecophobic public relations. To create influential and comprehensible theorising of ecophobia, Deyo suggests that ecocriticism need an interdisciplinary collaboration with science and humanities because ecophobia is related to biological, social, psychological, political, environmental, historical and cultural forces (2019:447). Therewith, theorising ecophobia requires studying interdisciplinary areas together and bringing connection with different disciplines that is why ecocriticism needs a wider scope for ecophobic theory. Today, ecophobic attitudes are hard to distinguish because they are settled in daily activities in time. Regarding ecophobia’s social condition, Deyo quotes from Estok, “Ecophobia exists globally on both macro and micro levels, and its manifestation is at times directly apparent and obvious but is also often deeply obscured by the clutter of habit and ignorance” (qtd. in Deyo, 2019:454). The primary reason for the inability of recognising ecophobic inclinations in daily habits comes

from the Anthropocentric thinking tradition which hinders seeing intrinsic value in all beings and the animal side of human beings.

## **2.5. ECOPHOBIA AND FEAR IN CULTURE**

In the matter of ecophobia's relation with social, ethical and cultural forces, Oppermann quotes one of Estok's definition of ecophobia in her review of *The Ecophobia Hypothesis*: "a uniquely human psychological condition that prompts antipathy toward nature" (qtd. in Oppermann, 2018: 325). This quotation suggests that fear is conditioned in the mind. Humans feel frightened when nature reacts in conflict with humans' interests because they are unable to recognise that they are responsible for environmental problems. What creates fear in relation to nature is ignorance about the crux of environmental problems and solutions. Humans assume an indifferent tone towards the collapse of natural order because they are oblivious of why and what actually happens on earth in terms of natural disasters. So, they are inevitably afraid of what is unknown to them. However, their frightened state of mind cannot be regarded as harmless especially when their irrational fear of nature bores through everyday life all over the world. Oppermann argues that human beings' groundless hatred towards nature is a serious issue in that ecophobic manner becomes a justification of the unfair exploitation of the natural world. In avoidance from ecophobia from social, economic and political systems, Opperman reasons Estok's suggestion of social investigation for ecophobia (2018: 325). When looked at social terms, the emotion of fear from nature is socially constructed and learnt from the ancestors because ecophobia has always served economic, political and ideological purposes. People are taught to be afraid of nature intentionally or unintentionally from their childhood. As an example, children may be afraid of insects depending on their parents' experience with insects because children are the mirrors of the society in which they are grown up. If children witness polluting the sea that they visit with their parents or cutting the tree in their garden for no obvious reason, harming nature pointlessly will be their normal frame of mind when they become adults. The way individuals are conditioned with ecophobic perspectives contributes to the Anthropocentric era. Regarding ecophobic condition, Oppermann emphasizes Estok's

claim that the Anthropocene is the result of ecophobia (2018: 326). Estok does not underestimate the effects of ecophobia in daily life which creates a dangerous understanding of nature. The idea of fear of nature is not the product of modern life. Even though it is not given a name, ecophobia has always been a matter of attitude for human beings in their relations with nature at different rates. However, the fear concept is the underlying cause of the unfair treatment of nature. It is a stubborn fact that ecological disasters such as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, volcano eruptions and contaminants of global warming intensify ecophobic approaches towards nature because these incidents cause human beings to be afraid of unpredictable natural patterns. In his view of Estok's *The Ecophobia Hypothesis*, Fisher details that deep fear of nature has always existed in human history, it is especially accompanied by a civilisation that determines how humans behave in nature (2017(a): 7). Especially, the reason and outcomes of global warming are quite related to the ordonnance of civilized modern life. Regarding the period of the industrial revolution as planting the seed of modern life, it may be said that harming nature has increased incrementally since the industrial revolution which is a huge contribution to global warming. The more modern people develop their life standards to the detriment of nature, the more they come up against natural disasters which eventually cause them to make nature their enemy. Particularly, the media's presentation of human beings in conflict with nature due to environmental problems adds spice to ecophobic cognizance of nature within modern societies. Fisher suggests that overall technological innovations improved the quality of life; however, these inventions paradoxically have endangered sustainable natural sources and brought into many species threatened with extinction (2017(a): 8). Humankind may need technological innovations and social improvements in their lives to lead a better life; however, it should not be forgotten that ecological life on earth is not a choice for them and there is no alternative for nature.

For another discussion, Fisher questions whether the concept of fearing nature is the construction of modern human nature or it dates back to ancient times. From an indigenous point of view, fearing nature brings along the better treatment of nature and its inhabitants in moral, religious, cultural, traditional and spiritual terms ( 2017(a): 10). In "Ecophobia, Reverential Eco-fear, and Indigenous Worldviews", Dr. Rayson K. Alex and Assistant Professor S. Susan Deborah explain the notion of "eco-fear" in indigenous communities to analyse the roots of ecophobia. When they look at the

relationship between indigenous communities and their lands, they find out that they treat cultural and natural elements as if they were divine creatures. For them, the idea of fear within nature might be interpreted as awe or showing respect to nature. They emphasise ecofear's unifying position for nature and human beings out of fear and reverence (2019: 422). At this point, eco-fear differs from ecophobia in that ecophobia creates a diversity between humans and nature due to hostile and prejudiced thoughts regarding nature. Fear brings respect and regression from nature while ecophobia requires self-defence and attack on nature. In one respect, fear is a way of accepting the superiority of nature in acting on its own behalf to sustain natural order and incapability of human nature in ruling and controlling nature and its inhabitants. On the other hand, Alex and Deborah present a different vision of eco-fear from Michel Fisher who regards eco-fear as a "deep fear of nature" caused by catastrophic events in nature such as hurricanes, floods, global warming, earthquakes and tsunami (2019: 422). Fisher's interpretation of eco-fear might be correct to a certain extent because environmental disasters can really create distance between nature and human beings who may develop hostile attitudes towards nature due to horrific experiences caused in nature. Alex and Deborah pick up the concept of "rational fear" by Fisher and explain how indigenous people experience it: For instance, indigenous people believe that Amazonian banyan trees get angry towards humans when they damage the habitats of other life forms in nature. They hold the Mudugar community from the Western Ghats in India up as another example for the concept of rational fear because the Mudugar community believes that honeybees are the protector of their burial sites and they attack human beings who treat with contempt to the burial sites (2019: 423). On the basis of these examples, one may infer from the lives and cultures of indigenous people that fearing, loving and respecting nature is possible at the same time for human nature. They witness nature might be harmful; however, they believe that honeybees have a good reason to attack people. Whether or not these beliefs have a scientific background, exemplary indigenous people have a positive attitude towards the environment in which they live. Even when they face unfavourable natural incidents, they do not develop inhospitable attitudes towards nature which shows that environmental problems do not necessarily bring fear along with human communities; in other words, a different approach to environmental incidents is plausible.

As Alex and Deborah point out, the concept of eco-fear might be used as a cultural agency to create a connection between the natural world and human beings (2019: 423). Their traditional, cultural and ethical ethos teaches indigenous people both respecting (out of fear) and loving nature. Just as loathing and fearing nature are culturally learnt in modern societies, respecting and loving nature might be culturally and traditionally taught, as well. So, in the concept of eco-fear, fear is reverential unlike ecophobia in which fear is the fountainhead for showing hostility to nature. In the case of indigenous people, they both fear and respect nature which shows their interdependence on nature and its elements. When people worry about unfavourable weather conditions, unpredictable natural reactions or drought and floods, their state of mind might be comprehensible because environmental issues have a direct effect on the lives of people. However, it is quite impenetrable when people develop hatred towards nature and aim to overcome it due to natural disasters which have been eventuated by the hand of humans. Within the concept of eco-fear, nature is feared because it is respected, and its entity and inevitability are accepted by human beings. Fearing honeybees by respecting their protector role in nature is sincere, pure and conceivable for indigenous people. On the other hand, fearing honeybees in a picnic area of their inclination to sting and trying to kill them is seriously ecophobic and irrational. While eco-fear creates a connection between human beings, the natural world and its entities, ecophobia creates strict boundaries between nature and humans by preventing them from coexisting in a harmonious way. Alex and Deborah explain that their lifestyle and cultural behaviours towards nature have unfortunately disappeared through tribalization, colonialism and cultural assimilation (2019: 426). So, they also become part of modern society and they can no longer maintain the concept of eco-fear in their relationship with nature. When indigenous people are separated from their environment, they can no longer live according to their traditions and practice their respecting manners towards nature. At this stage, it is inevitable for their cultures and ethics to be part of dominant attitude which is ecophobia. The colonialism of indigenous people by separating them from their lands and destroying their traditional bounds with nature are also outcomes of the Anthropocene era which is harmful to both nature and human beings. When the indigenous concept of eco-fear faces ecophobia, it loses against ecophobia which is the dominant attitude of modern societies. Indigenous can no longer practice their traditional attitudes when their

connection with nature is deliberately cut in the Anthropocene era. In this regard, the indigenous point of view may be issued in contrast with modern natural approach which is the dominant perspective of today.

Steven Hartman and Patrick Degeorges maintain that ecophobia is a human-specific notion that is socially and culturally constructed and reinforced by social institutions to contribute to human domination over nature under the name of civilization (2019:456). It may be considered that ecophobia is the dominant trait of the civilised world because modernity and civilisation have created most of the fear related to human civilization which heads up in the Anthropocene era. It does not make any sense to go to war against nature in order to upgrade conditions of social and economic life. In a war between humankind and nature, humankind can never overcome nature while humans are actually part of nature. Ecophobia is related to every sphere of social life because anything may trigger fear of nature. For Hartman and Degeorges, ecofeminist critique, postcolonial, environmental justice and animal studies show, as they quoted from Estok, how “ecophobia, racism, misogyny, homophobia, speciesism [...] are thoroughly interwoven with each other” (2019: 458). Modern civilisation has created a system in which natural sources and inhabitants of nature may be used carelessly to provide better conditions for the lives of humankind. However, humans experience the worst consequences of environmental problems during the Anthropocene as the result of inconsiderate exploitation of the sources of earth. That is how ecophobia becomes endemic in modern societies. Historical ideologies that prompt ecophobia are always after denying the dependence of humans on nature and the animalistic side of humankind. Estok presupposes that awareness of animality reminds human beings of their inescapably vulnerable, mortal and finitude nature (2019(b):383). Thus, the organic unity between animals and human beings unavoidably makes ecophobia a current issue for their affiliation. That may be why civilization requires breaking humans’ connection with nature through depicting rural people as savage and in contrast to civilized people. Hartman and Degeorges argue that ecophobic ideologies have been supported by imperialist interests under the cover of civilization which roots out indigenous societies and diversity in the biosphere (2019: 458). By providing nature with an antagonistic role, ecophobia has become a misdiagnosed tactic in humans’ war with nature. Ecophobia is used as a screen for ideological purposes in justification of violence against nature. Just as imperialism

continues to exploit under the cover of bringing civilization to so-called undeveloped countries, ecophobia is the cloak for exploitation of nature and its sources. Indigenous people are torn apart from their lands to be part of modern civilization because living in nature is regarded as dangerous. To borrow the words of Hartman and Degeorges, an intentional separation between outside nature and civilized inside is created by associating nature with terrifying implications of the forest, the wilderness, the open sea and civilized inside with protective security, food and shelter (2019: 461). They provide nature with a very unpopular reputation so that human beings may easily hate, avoid and be afraid of nature. Separating humans from nature stands capitalist and imperialist ideologies in good stead because they regard natural sources and inhabitants of nature as free and raw material to process.

After all these negative attributions regarding nature and its systems, Hartman and Degeorges assert that ecophobia is deliberately transformed to panphobia which is “an epidemic madness flowing from the unmistakable ecological awareness underlying the Anthropocentric principle of coexistence” (2019: 463). To put it in a different way, people are anxious about the consequences of the exploitation of nature knocking at their door. They finally grasp that they are part of the ecosystem which they do harm and the devastation of natural systems affects them adversely because everything is connected in nature. Human beings run scared because they are now aware that their system of exploitation of earth systems may bring their own end, as well. Panphobia is also a threat to historically, socially, culturally and politically constructed contradictions between nature and culture because humans come to understand that nature is not essentially dangerous but the consequences of human actions within the plunder of nature are hazardous. Humans at present blame the social, economic and political institutions instead of nature itself because they understand the principles of these institutions are the main reason for environmental disasters which will bring end the of the biosphere. In addition, the current situation of the biosphere has reactions against the establishment of civilization which creates the boundaries between the natural environment and human nature out of the starting gate. People may readily find fault with the concept of civilization in that it is the reason for both ends of the world and humankind. Hartman and Degeorges suggest that overall: “We now appreciate that every externalization returns like a boomerang and impacts the Earth system that is our only home” (2019: 465). Environmental problems such as

global warming and their effects on daily life and human health create awareness in terms of human and nature relations. While being highly affected by the results of natural disasters, humans can no longer disassociate themselves from the Ecosphere. Hence, realising the very underlying cause of the natural tragedy gives rise to come under review relations of humanity with the Earth. Being dependent on nature and its systems should not stand for a negative purview, instead, it suggests being part of nature just like other inhabitants of nature and the necessity of co-existing on Earth harmoniously with other entities of nature. Human beings do not need to hide behind the civilisation institution to escape from nature because there is actually no need to restrain from natural systems. This awareness may create a different way of living for humankind as Hartman and Degeorges describe, “not just on the Earth like parasites or opportunists exploiting the planet as a standing reserve, but as eco-mimetic symbionts, partners in a mutually beneficial relationship with the Earth” (2019: 468). Similar to Rueckert’s idea of asserting the rights of nonhuman beings by lawyers, Hartman and Degeorges touch on including all entities of nature as legal respondents entitled to the same rights as human beings (2019: 468). However, it is not possible to attain de jure recognition for nonhuman beings while nature is still defined in conflict with human nature. Their suggestion may sound unusual when it is about equal representation and rights under the law for all beings; however, it is free-flowing inference when thought twice. Ecophobia is a diseased thought of human beings and all beings of nature should be regarded and treated equally in social, economic, political and ethical terms to eliminate ecophobic perspectives. One way of putting equality in all areas for all beings of nature into practice may be the legal recognition of all beings under the law. This transformation has the capacity to provide profound effects and permanent deletion of the concept of fear on the relation between the Ecosphere and humankind.



## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. ROMANTIC MOVEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTALISM

#### 3.1. ROMANTIC ECOLOGY

Romantic Movement is generally placed between the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries in terms of time span. Many historians agree that the publication of *Lyrical Ballads* by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge signifies the beginning of English Romantic literature. The romantic word has always been associated with chivalric stories from Medieval times and Renaissance, or wild and Gothic descriptions (Rigby, 2014: 60-61). Apart from these subjects, Romantic philosophy has always been interested in the relation between human beings and nature. Valuing nature and its entities is one the most favourite topics for Romantic writers who do not neglect to treat nature as a subject within a broader social, economic and political perspective. Ecocritics of the modern-day are quite equipped with the environmentally conscious because they have been living in an age in which they have personal experience of global environmental disasters and unfortunately foresee much more. That is why they have the ability to appreciate what nature provides for humanity. In a similar vein, English Romantic writers such as; William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and John Keats lived in the industrial epoch of London and nature was their runoff area to find peace and happiness. They felt the absence of green fields and forests around them especially when their daily life in London was composed of air and noise pollution caused by machinery and fuliginous streets filled with crowd. Industrialisation was what Romantics face as their contemporary environmental crises, and they reacted against it. Just as contemporary ecocritics have a crucial role in terms of spreading ecocritical understanding, English Romantic writers conducted a similar significance in raising awareness for their natural

environment. As professor James McKusick specifies, English Romantic poets especially Wordsworth and Coleridge were inclined to create associations for beauty in their accustomed nature in their poetic style. Particularly, a common language comprehensible to everyone was used in the poems of the *Lyrical Ballads* along with the descriptions of natural beauty, imagery and ethos (McKusick: 2005: 10). Assuming a limited perception of Romantic tradition only within a simple love of nature and Pastoral concept would be unfair treatment in terms of its history because Romantic Literary tradition includes serious and diverse concerns for nature. They question the traditional treatment of natural sources according to their ethical terms. The ideas of Romantic poets have created great contributions to modern-day ecocriticism and their values may stand for the building stones for environmental studies. Analysing English Romanticism through an environmental perspective may sound a different thought; however, it is a necessary step in providing historical background for environmental studies. McKusick supports this claim by quoting Karl Kroeber who asserts “English Romantic poetry was the first literature to anticipate contemporary biological conceptions” (qtd. in McKusick, 2000: 15). When looking at the works of Romantic writers, one may not find a direct reference to modern environmental criticism, on the other hand, one may easily catch related ecological understanding with the contemporary environmental theory in the Romantic works. Even though the Romantic poets did not have contemporary scientific opportunities and knowledge, they could conclude the necessity of peaceful coexistence between humans and the non-human world in nature by observing the natural world, exchanging ideas and following their up-to-date scientific improvements. It may be claimed that Romantic writers highly contributed to modern environmental studies. According to McKusick, Romantic writers may authentically be entitled as early ecological writers because for the first time they spread environmentally concerning ideas in the Western literary tradition (2000:19). Thus, the ecological ideas of the Romantics may be inherited from the modern environmental consciousness.

In tracing the tradition of Green writing, which is paying regard to nature in literary works, Kevin Hutchings explains the word “ecology” in its modern sense used in ecocritical studies with German naturalist Ernst Haeckel’s definition of ecology: “branch of biology which deals with the relations of living organisms to their surroundings” (qtd. in Hutchings, 2007: 176). It is also “ecological science” that has

come up with the idea that submits symbiotic relations of all entities in the natural environment (Hutchings, 2007: 176). According to ecological findings, human beings understand that their existence is related to other beings and their human-centred actions seriously affect the natural process and cause permanent damage to the ecosystem. Even though the concept of ecology is popular among ecocritical studies, it was actually coined in the mid-eighteenth century. Early examples of environmental concern for the future of ecological balance date back even before the Romantic period. Hutchings displays that the naturalist John Evelyn informs English society about the seriousness of deforestation in his book *A Discourse of Forest-Tree* in the late seventeenth century and he supports the necessity of laws protecting forests. As a prominent social critic, John Ruskin published *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* in 1884 to draw attention to air quality polluted by toxins in London while there was no awareness concerning air pollution until the late Victorian period at all (Hutchings, 2007: 175). The increasing urgency of environmental awareness towards social, economic and political changes in the industrialised English society in the Romantic period was not a coincidence. Hutchings mentions English chemist and natural philosopher Joseph Priestley's experiments in the chemistry of air, making it evident that "animals needed oxygen but exhaled carbon, while plants needed carbon and gave out oxygen" (qtd. in Hutchings, 2007: 177). Priestley's demonstration plays a complementary role in ecological thought which supports the interdependence of all beings in nature. In other words, the idea that all living and non-living entities are dependent on each other is asserted by scientific experiments in both Romantic and Ecocritical works. When the relation between Romantic works and scientific improvements of the Romantic age is examined, it may be claimed that Romantic works resemble early examples of ecocritical studies which always walk arm in arm with current scientific developments. What is more, the scientific claim of the interconnectedness of all entities creates contradiction against the Cartesian thought which defends the superiority of human beings over non-human beings due to their ability of dialectics. Patrick Zambianchi explains that the eighteenth-century perception of nature shows parallelism with Cartesian grasp of nature which separates human beings from their environment. With this approach, nature is reduced to a physical object from which human beings fulfil their needs in the human mind's eye (2014:1). The romantic movement has always been associated with rejection of

scientific thoughts which promote the higher position of human beings over nature and its elements. Defending human superiority by grounding scientific findings is what detracts Romantics from the eighteenth-century science because they observe that human beings are part of nature in which all creatures are interdependent.

### **3.1.1. Ecological Evaluation of the Romantics**

When McKusick traces the historical roots of the environmental writing, he demonstrates the first example from the Garden of Eden which is described within the pastoral poetry as a pleasant place. Then, he gives the pastoral eclogues of Theocritus and Virgil that show the unfavourable consequences resulting from the complexity in the natural environment (2000:20). In these contexts, pastoral expressions are quite effective in creating an environmental point of view because they present a peaceful state of mind of the individuals in nature. Pastoral descriptions always provide an escape to nature that is safe, peaceful and unspoiled. By emphasising the Renaissance as the rebirth of the empirical science, McKusick finds its huge effect on the improvement in observing and investigating nature. In addition, Renaissance takes the lead in rediscovering the world and emerging the genres of natural history writing and travel writing (2000:22). Thus, pastoral poetry cannot be grasped only within the idyllic descriptions of nature, but its contribution to empirical and scientific studies needs to be counted as well. The role of the poet in pastoral poetry should not be undervalued in that pastoral poets need to know extended knowledge about the natural habitat in which they dwell in order to depict the environment in great detail. This requirement is valid for contemporary ecocritics in that they need to know thoroughly the natural habitat for which they stand up and be familiar with the entities of both the human and non-human world. In this sense, McKusick regards Wordsworth as a crucial figure in the development of ecological thinking in that he was the inhabitant of the Lake Districts which is the central place of his poems and had detailed knowledge about his local environment (2000:24). At this point, Wordsworth's active participation as the poetic voice to his poems through detailed descriptions of places and events is a great contribution to *Lyrical Ballads*. McKusick analyses "Tintern Abbey" in *Lyrical Ballads* and his review explicitly demonstrates that Wordsworth questions the possibility of harmonious coexistence between human and non-human

world. Wordsworth presents local farmers' struggle of preserving the natural life in contrast to dangerous activities of charcoal-burners to the natural environment (McKusick, 2000: 68). At this point, local farmers' effort of protecting their land may stand for early environmental awareness. The reason why Wordsworth issues the clash between the natural world and humankind maybe his personal concern for Lake Districts which is exposed to industrialised, over-populated and urban alteration. Just like the local farmers of the poem, he may want to preserve the original, traditional and wild nature of the Lake District. In the manner of claiming Wordsworth as one of the early environmentalists, McKusick reveals his arguments in his letters against railway for fearing that commercialisation of railway can cause tourism boom that is seen as damage and intervention to the village life by the foreigners (2000: 74). Wordsworth's anxiety about Lake District's becoming accessible to more people may come from the risk of negative change in the urban nature of Lake District due to commercialisation. His worry can resemble the contemporary Ecocritics' fear of the deforestation of the Amazon rainforests for commercial purposes.

Erum Sultana establishes a connection between the notion of ecology, discussing the relation between human beings and nature with Wordsworth's nature poetry that is composed of deep ecocritical analysis (2016: 7). Wordsworth is both admirers of nature and a defender of nature in that he is capable of both appreciating what nature provides human beings and is worried about the future of nature under exploitative circumstances. Sultana suggests that Wordsworth's poems might be read in ecocritical context: In the analyses of "The Simplon Pass", Sultana, quoting the poet's lines "The immeasurable height / Of woods decaying, never to be decayed" concludes that Wordsworth is very worried about worsening natural circumstances due to deforestation and warns the readers about the consequences of permanent damages caused by human beings to nature (qtd. in Sultana, 2016: 9). Here, Wordsworth points that human beings disturb the balance of nature by harming the trees which eventually affects the future of human beings. His call for protecting and respecting the natural environment through his poetry distinguishes Wordsworth as an ecologically concerned poet from his contemporaries. For Wordsworth, enjoying the beauty of nature and finding peace in nature are essential requirements for the nutrition of the soul apart from the physical dependence and reliance on nature to sustain human life. In this connection, Zambianchi conceives that the poems of the *Lyrical Ballads* include

moral instructions related to the human-nature connection which can decently affect the rest of the society. Considering the moral purpose of the *Lyrical Ballads*, it may be claimed for Wordsworth that he was quite aware of the socio-political problems in his society, and he wanted to create a change through literature (2014: 179-180). As an ecologically aware writer, he uses literature as an instrument of conveying social messages. Thus, his poetry should not be reduced to pastoral descriptions and celebration of the natural world while he sees the moral corruption among society and relates this degeneracy with contemporary social, political, economic institutions and their decisions. Just because Wordsworth does not use direct references to social problems in his poetry does not mean he is unaware of the political, economic and social situation of his society. Zambianchi suggests that literature as a way of artistic device has great a contribution in spreading environmental awareness in the Romantic period by showing the inseparable nature of human and non-human beings on Earth (2014: 207). According to contemporary environmentalists, educating individuals about how to treat nature and how to coexist within nature are among the main solutions for protecting nature. By taking Wordsworth's environmentally moral works into account, Wordsworth may resemble contemporary environmentalists in his insistence and support for educating people and advising them about their own environment so that they would be more respectful and caring individuals towards nature, and they can have empathy with nature and all of its entities. Just as human life is literally dependent on the plant life cycle which provides necessary oxygen for human beings, Romantic poets assume that plants are also an indispensable part of the human soul (Bate, 1991: 40) Thus, Romantic ecology addresses both to the human spirit and environmental solutions via literature. In this way, Romantic literature is quite functional for ecological awareness and spreading environmental principles among the society. Even though Romantic writers do not have the same motives as the modern ecocritics, their major concern meets at the common point: human beings need to be in nature both physically and mentally.

Romantic writers do not turn their back on contemporary social and environmental problems. Most of them reflect the daily struggles concerning both individuals and nature in their works either in a direct or indirect way. They are quite successful in depicting their environment and its inhabitants in-depth because they are hand in glove with their local territory. What distinguishes some Romantic poets from

the rest is their awareness and concern with the effects of political, social, cultural and economic changes in the natural environment, the life forms on Earth and ecological issues. For instance, for McKusick the English poet John Clare has a very distinguished ecological vision in that he is the defender of the local environment as he has “a deep sensitivity for natural phenomena with forceful environmental advocacy” (2000:78). Clare turns over a new leaf in Romantic Nature Writing through his awareness of ecological conflict and the importance of interrelatedness of all life-forms. He struggles against the destruction of the natural environment apart from advocating the rights of the poor and residents and depicting changes in society and agriculture. That is why McKusick regards Clare as the first “deep” ecological writer in the English Romantic tradition (2000: 78). Clare is differentiated from his contemporaries as a pioneer deep ecologist in that he actually believes that nature, its non-human inhabitants and natural sources do not exist to meet human needs. He admits that he has equal importance with other life forms on Earth. While he can appreciate the beauty of nature, he truly respects the running of the natural world and believes in the interdependence of all creatures on Earth. That is why Dr. Rabia Mukhtar speaks of John Clare as a revolutionary poet and differentiates him from his contemporaries as he is also a labourer working on the land. Due to his social condition, his controversial stance against the industrialisation process has plenty of contribution to his ecological poetry (Mukhtar, 2017: 317). In tracing Clare’s ecological vision, McKusick analyses his poem, “Shadows of Taste” which issues the symbiotic relationship of all species in nature and values the beings in accordance with their participation and contribution to the natural ecosystem (2000: 83). Clare’s awareness of the mutual interrelatedness of all beings is a highly unprecedented approach for Romantic literary tradition. He is distinctive and radical in terms of ecocritical concepts because his ideas evoke the Green politics of Arne Naess in that he values each member of the ecosystem not because they are helpful to maintain human life but because they all have intrinsic value. He speaks for the Earth, advocates the right existence for animals and plants and struggles against ecological injustice caused by human exploitation of the natural environment. Clare’s ecological awareness brings up another unusual concept to Romantic writing: his aim of creating an ecological language that is proper to his vision. McKusick explains that Clare tries to create a particular dialect to convey his ecological understanding through the term

“ecolect” which is based on preserving locality and regarding the Earth as the ultimate home for all beings. In stylistic terms, Clare’s ecolect refuses to obey limited standards of diction, grammar and spelling (McKusick, 2000: 91). To put it differently, Clare’s unusual ecocritical vision is reflected in his language which is particular and distinctive from his contemporaries. Just as he rejects conventional human-centred approaches towards nature, he sets aside traditional patterns in his way of expressing the natural environment and its inhabitants. His eco-poetic vision and green language may serve as the basis for the present-day environmental vision. Taken together, admiring nature and respecting the natural balance of the ecosystem are not new concepts of the modern ecocritical theory. Indeed, it may be regarded that ecocritical theory has inherited a protective motive for nature from the Romantic ideals. Even though Clare did not regard himself among the Ecocritics, he respects the symbiotic relationship in nature for the whole time.

Contemporary ecocritical studies show that the general situation of the Earth is getting worse as long as human beings do not change the way they treat nature and exploit its sources. Ecocritics proclaim environmental catastrophes in their writings to support their ecocritical claims by means of the most apparent evidence. However, issuing natural catastrophes and environmental disasters is not specific to environmental studies. When the English Romantic period is viewed through ecocritical lenses, the catastrophic theme is felt in relation to human beings’ act of destructing nature for their own benefits. It may be argued that there has always been disunion between the concepts of city and nature; however, this dualism has reached its peak during the Romantic period due to the Industrial Revolution. Romantic writers actually show that natural catastrophes are the product of new technologies to produce more which is human action. For McKusick, English poet William Blake has also his share of the congestion, noise, pollution, overpopulation and contagious diseases within the city of London. What Blake experiences in the urban area is an accumulation of unplanned houses and factories, the absence of potable water and adequate sanitation and filthy streets (2000: 96). It is no surprise that Blake’s depiction of London is full of catastrophic descriptions considering his witnessing cutting forests in London for industrial purposes. Blake’s criticism of the industrialisation in England is explicit in his “The Chimney Sweeper” which portrays cruel results of the industrialisation through abuse of child labour. The poem introduces innocent children



exposed to dangerous and harsh working conditions at factories. As McKusick points Blake is fully aware of the detrimental potential of the coal-fired industries for environmental damage while nineteenth-century scientists regard environmental pollution as a local and minor problem (2000: 102). However, Blake is quite critical about the dangerous effects of industrial pollution in changing the chemistry of the atmosphere of the world. Blake can recognise that the industrialisation of London's natural environment via machines, factories and coal mines are real threats for the future of England. This is why Blake's depiction of England is of dark smoke, silent birds, dead flocks, bad harvest, scorching heat and devastating storms which are the environmental catastrophes caused by the process of industrialisation (McKusick, 2000: 103). English novelist Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley is another exemplary character of Romantic tradition, who has concerns about the destruction of Earth and natural sources due to industrialisation. She is critical about humans' changing the natural order in the ecosystem by assuming Earth has infinite sources and act according to it. By observing the negative changes in the industrial cities of England, she makes a wider association for the capacity of human activities for disrupting the balance of the world. In addition, Hutchings portrays Wollstonecraft as a Romantic feminist in that she argues in her manifesto *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* that burdens of being a female are the construction of patriarchal society, instead of natural and biological proceeds (2007: 183). As for her feminist attitude, she demands equal social rights with men. In addition, she questions the biological nature of women; domestic and nurturing roles that are conditioned and cast by society in order to prevent women's self-liberation. She is especially against the social conditioning of women by way of biological discrimination. Her feminist stance may be associated with the eco-feminist viewpoint in that she is aware that both women and nature are labelled and exploited according to the benefits of a patriarchal society. If women are left without education, basic rights and liberties, it would be easier to make them subordinated for the use of humanity. In a similar way, nature is classified as mother nature which is to nurture society and under the service of human needs by the same patriarchal system that regards both women and nature equally inferior.

McKusick draws attention to another feminist approach by Mary Shelley. Due to her marking awareness of gender issues, she may be regarded as ecofeminist in that she concludes the environmental problems with patriarchal institutions that make

capital of scientific, technological, political and economic institutions (2000: 109). Shelley's building a bridge between gender issues and environmental problems can easily be located among contemporary environmental cognizance. Hutchings takes attention at one point in *Frankenstein*. As a male scientist, Victor Frankenstein frequently uses metaphors including mastery and sexual penetration related to his actions (2007: 185). It is easily understood from Frankenstein's attitude towards nature that he wants to overcome nature by creating a creature that does not exist in nature. The monster is a symbolic creature for Frankenstein's war against nature. What is more, it is nature and women that are damaged as a consequence of Frankenstein's unnatural ambitions. According to Hutchings's eco-feminist reading of *Frankenstein*, women around Frankenstein are the victims of his arrogance on science (2007: 185). Thus, there is a parallelism between his desire to dominate nature and the unfair treatment of women by means of his excessive scientific passion. At this point, it is worth quoting from ecofeminist writer Susan Griffin's ideas deducting Frankenstein's actions from "a profound connection between the social construction of nature and the social construction of woman" (qtd. in Hutchings, 2007: 186). In addition, Shelley is aware of the importance of the harmonious unity of all beings in nature. Naturalist Ashton Nichols explains the reason why Victor Frankenstein creates a monster is his desire of providing benefit for the human race out of a "new species" (2011: 21). Shelley's statement shows her consciousness for the connectedness of all living entities on Earth because she knows a new creature has the power to affect every other entity in nature. What is more, the monster created by Frankenstein becomes evil due to the way society treats it in contrast to its evil instincts. This storyline may find correspondence in the relation between nature and human beings. Nature is said to be crucial towards human beings due to environmental disasters; however, they are actually the consequence of the human exploitation of nature. Looking at the Romantic works it can be clearly observed that Romantic works can be analysed within ecocritical concepts and traces of Romantic impacts may easily be detected in contemporary ecocritical works. Concerning the future of Earth due to environmental pollution is a common theme which can be found both in the Romantic period and the twenty-first century. While Romantic writings go beyond a simple celebration of nature, it is an unfair treatment of Romantic tradition to attribute limited concerns. As professor Hubert Zapf has put it, Romantic poetry may be categorised as imaginative

literature; however, it has the capacity to present the contents of the industrialised and corrupted social institutions in contrast with constructive human-nature relation within the culture. The notion of interconnectedness of all beings can be found in oral narratives, legends, fairy-tales, comic and gothic narratives and pastoral and nature poetry because both humans and non-human beings' symbiotic relation in the natural environment has always been one of the main subjects of the literature (Zapf, 2002: 140). Thus, Romanticism and modern ecocritical studies meet on the common ground of interdependence of all entities in nature. Observing the environmental concerns in the English Romantic period shows that both Romantic writers and Ecocritics have serious worries about the natural world, and they all comprehend the necessity between a symbiotic coexistence on Earth to continuousness of life on planet Earth. Romanticism and Ecocriticism mutually increase the value of each other. When Romantic works are read and criticised within an ecocritical perspective, new meanings and unexplored representations are revealed. On the other side, Romantic writers such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Blake incontrovertibly contribute to creating environmental awareness and improvement of future ecocritical studies.

In addition to their contributions to empirical and scientific studies, Romantic poets have contributed to environmental studies with their stances in the non-human world. As an example, McKusick finds in the expressions of William Cowper who is one of the predecessors of Romantic poetry, concerns for animal rights and traces of ecological awareness (2000: 23). Cowper finds intrinsic value in all beings regardless of their benefit to human interests: "They are all—the meanest things that are— / As free to live, and to enjoy that life, / As God was free to form them at the first" (qtd. in McKusick, 2000: 23). Considering environmental awareness flourished around the Eighteenth century, Cowper's minding the existence of animals is unconventional to his contemporaries. Besides, his stance for animal rights is quite challenging to the dominating Cartesian view which attributes the existence of animals to the serving of human needs. McKusick describes the development of ecological awareness among English Romantic writers through the quotation of Gilbert White who is a pioneering English naturalist, ecologist and ornithologist:

The most insignificant insects and reptiles are of much more consequence and have much more influence in the economy of Nature, than the incurious are aware of; and are mighty in their effect, from their minuteness, which renders them less an object of attention; and from their numbers and fecundity. Earth-worms, though in appearance

a small and despicable link in the chain of Nature, yet, if lost, would make a lamentable chasm (qtd. in McKusick, 200:26).

White's world view explains that he is aware of the interconnectedness of each creature in nature in terms of their contribution to the natural order. Each entity has a role in this natural system and even the absence of the tiniest creature may cause great troubles in the cycling of nature. Recognising the significance of all organisms in the natural community is a notable view for White's time and great contribution for ecological thought becoming widespread in the Romantic tradition. Through his statements, a connection might be created readily between English Romantic poets and twenty-first-century environmentalists. According to Professor of Environmental Humanities Kate Rigby, White's *The Natural History of Selborne* which issues uneasiness of killing animals for food through presenting slaughter-houses is an important development for the changing attitude towards nature and animals in England between 1500 and 1800 (2002:151). In addition, White indicates in his book that excessive hunting has unbalanced partridge and red deer populations, and it has caused "heat-cock and grouse" to become extinct (Hutchings, 2007: 175). Apart from the concern for animal lives, White's work is also a study of the relationship between human beings and their surrounding environment. "The ecological approach is certainly the true centre of [White's] contribution to natural history. It combines his stress on direct observation, his study of individual species against the background of the area they inhabit" (Hall, 2014: 31). Hall means what White does through his studies and publications is a great contribution to modern environmental studies even though most of his studies are based on his observations in nature.

Yang Ying presents another distinctive Romantic approach to animals by English Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley who promotes a vegetarian diet for human beings because he believes that humans are born as vegetarian animals and eating animals increase cruelty and violence in the human soul: "No claws used to capture prey, and no living thing can be used to tear flesh sharp teeth" (qtd. in Ying, 2014: 333). Shelley's attitude towards the consumption of meat sounds familiar to the current contradictions against the meat industry among Ecocritics. Even though Shelley's ideas do not totally correspond with the preservation of animal rights, his vegetarian theory essentially tells that it is wrong to massacre animals for the use of human beings. Ecocriticism and Romanticism have different approaches to animal

rights; it cannot be expected from Romanticism to stick up for animal liberation in the same way Ecocriticism handles the issue. However, one needs to realise that the determinant motives of their actions are corresponding. In this context, it may be said that Romantic writers have a contribution to the promotion of animal rights and re-evaluation of human-animal relations within the frame of basic environmentalism. Apart from his concern for animal lives, Shelley is aware that all of the living entities of nature are interconnected in some way and their actions affect each other. In the analysis “Ode to the West Wind”, Nichols displays the idea of Romantic interaction between wind and plants on the lands and aquatic plants (2011:25). Shelley’s point of view shows that he is aware of the interrelatedness of wind and plants and how they affect each other both on land and under the sea. In other words, he observes the harmonious unity between all living and non-living entities in nature. Nichols maintains that scientific research also proves that Shelley has a point about environmental occurrences on the land directly affecting natural events under the sea even though he is specifically correct in his observations (2011: 26). Thus, Shelley is aware that environmental pollution created by human beings has potential to be dangerous for the rest of the ecosystem. Analysing one of the leading figures in English Romantic poetry Lord Byron’s poem “Darkness”, Bate encounters direct references to the global climate change of the Romantic time (2000: 102): “Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth/

Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air”. What Byron concludes through his poem is a foregone conclusion of humanity in the event of ecological collapse (Bate, 2000: 102). By taking into consideration that Byron writes his poem “Darkness” after volcanic eruptions in a row in the Dutch West Indies, he witnesses the temporary disappearance of the sun due to the black smoke covering the whole of northern Europe (Zambianchi, 2014: 212). Byron presents in his poem geological changes that he experiences and uses his poetry as a means of spreading environmental consciousness. Bate’s interpretation of the poem shows that the climate change concept is not specific to ecocritical studies; human actions have always affected the climate of the Earth. Plus, ecological awareness has a long history that dates from the Romantic movement.

### 3.2. INDUSTRIAL CHANGE

In 1750-1760, the Industrial Revolution began in England. It created huge changes in society and economy by replacing human and animal labour with machinery causing an increase in production and consumption. Apart from technological improvements, with the rise of the Industrial Revolution, the English society was exposed to population growth, unhealthy and dangerous working conditions, increase in women and child labour (Mohajan, 2019: 377). Apart from developments in science, education, manufacturing and technological innovations, what Industrial Revolution has brought to England is overexploitation of the natural sources, water and air pollution, abuse of the urban environment, social division and slavery of technology and machinery. Air pollution was one of the most serious effects of Industrial Revolution in Britain. Analysing the records of the atmospheric pollution in Britain, Brian William Clapp expresses that London barely reached to the winter sunshine towards the end of the nineteenth century (1994: 14). The researches show that industrialised areas of Britain were exposed to air pollution due to coal smokes. As an example, London was dealing with the problem of thin fog due to overconsumption of coal (Clapp, 1994: 43). Industrialised towns offered people employment opportunities which causes overpopulation of the cities and pollution of the water sources. What is more, as Clapp lays stress on, water power was crucial for the industries for their manufacturing process: for brewing and distilling, washing coal, wool and the rags used in paper-making, cooling the steam engines (1994: 74). When refined water with poisonous metals and industrial waste return to rivers and seas, they cause water pollution and lower the water quality. After witnessing the beginning of environmental disasters, English Romantic writers observe that the harmony between human beings and nature is decaying so that they find salvation for society in the unity of nature (Ying, 2014: 332). When they are exposed to the negative sides of industrialisation, they realise that human beings are actually part of the order in nature. Romantic poetry displays the necessity of respecting nature and the need of living in a harmonious way with other creatures in nature. Professor Sandip Kumar Mishra claims that “the great Romantic Movement was a reaction to the large scale of deforestation and environmental depletion of the Age of Reason” (2017: 440). That is to say, Romantic writers were not content with the changes in their environment that were all about crowd, dirt, corruption and mess. In this case, nature becomes the shelter of the

Romantics to escape from degenerated institutions of urban life. Their reaction to save forests of their local environment is quite similar to Ecocritics' struggle for protecting the natural balance of the Earth. Elmira Bazregarzadeh points out that Wordsworth regards the Industrial Revolution in the same connotation with the destruction of the simplicity of the rural lifestyle which is the reason for Wordsworth's "anti-Enlightenment" tone in the poems (2015: 17). The Industrial Revolution drives a wedge between nature and human beings and breaks the harmonious way of living in nature. Regarding Wordsworth's serious concern for nature, his opposition against the industrialisation process is an estimative response. A re-reading of Wordsworth's anti-industrial writings through ecocritical projection gives a new socially, historically and environmentally concerned meaning to Romantic literature. Accordingly, Wordsworth makes an effort to re-build the relation between nature and the human world which were damaged in the industrial era. One of the important points Rigby makes in her article "Romanticism and Ecocriticism" is the idea that the romantic pastoral idea is a sort of resistance against the exploitation of natural sources by way of industrialisation (2014: 69). This may be related to the reason for marking early Eco-Romantics such as Wordsworth and Coleridge as politically concerned writers for they were able to recognise the consequences of political decisions on nature, climate, the weather and earth. They handily make the connections between the political decisions and their consequences because they are quite acquainted with nature. Thus, when they stand against political decisions to the detriment of nature, they become politically outstanding writers. However, their reaction should not be limited to the political context of their time. As Bate asserts Romanticism is a social and cultural movement that confronts the distinction between culture and nature (2000: 38). Professor Terry Gifford proposes that Romantic literature successfully reads its society and concludes that human beings belong to nature. The Romantic writers ideally appreciate the importance of nature for human beings after facing what the industrial revolution brings up as problems in their daily life (Gifford, 2017: 160).

### **3.3. OPPOSING VIEWS AGAINST ECO-ROMANTICISM**

Even though most of the Romantic works include some traces of early environmentalism, there are still opposing views that reject the relation between Romantic works and environmental studies. Professor Dewey W. Hall states that

Romantic writers may seem more related to cultural issues of their time; however, it is obvious that they are highly affected by naturalist Gilbert White in shaping their perceptions about meteorology, ornithology, and botany (2014: 1). Connecting modern ecological works with Romantic literature does not reduce its philosophical and academic value by means of romanticising ecological scientific studies. However, the struggle of Romantic writers should not be neglected: they notice the environmental damages caused by industrialisation and warn society about the future of human beings in relation to the natural environment. For Hall, the value of Romantic works can be measured within ecocritical studies in terms of the awareness that Romantic writers create about humans' part in environmental problems and indicating humans' interdependence with other living and non-living entities. (2014: 2). As stated earlier, both Romantic writers and Environmentalists need to be evaluated according to their own period's conditions. Romantic works exhibit environmental concerns in their own rights. For example, Wordsworth's raising concern against the railway, his warning about deforestation and his efforts of protecting lakes in his writings is his way of creating environmental sensitivity. Historian William Cronon states that "the modern environmental movement is itself a grandchild of romanticism and post-frontier ideology which is why it is no accident that so much environmentalist discourse takes its bearings from the wilderness these intellectual movements helped create" (qtd. in Hall, 2014: 19). Among these contradictions that do not accept the Romantic movement among the early environmentalism, poetry is another troublesome point in defending the environment. Poetry's functioning in creating ecocritical points is questioned; however, as Hall remarks "poetry appeals to a sensibility in readers valuing the network of interrelationships existing among human and nonhuman entities in a biotic community" (2014: 27). By taking into periodical consideration of Wordsworth's time, verse and prose are proper writing style for Wordsworth in spreading ecological consciousness in relation to natural sciences among the Victorian society. Both White and Wordsworth's natural deductions depend on their outside observations. As an example, Hall asserts that, in his *A Description of the Scenery of the Lakes*, Wordsworth is quite interested in nature and exhibits the effects of weather on the topography in the Lake District (2014:30). In addition to his poet of pastoral poetry identity, Wordsworth is a naturalist and observer whose studies considerably contribute to human and non-human relations in their natural habitat.



Thus, Romantic writers and naturalists affect each other in their studies; then Romantic productions are never solely a celebration of the outside world. To borrow the words of Hall, “The common ground is that of the Romantic-becomes-naturalist as the naturalist- becomes-Romantic, each representing unique angles of the Romantic naturalist” (2014: 33). This is all to say Romantic and naturalist perceptions of nature are interwoven concepts which are mutual contribution for them in creating nature-related works. Wordsworth’s extraordinary knowledge about his own habitat advances his career as a Romantic naturalist. Above all, Wordsworth has a deep interest and love for nature and these sentiments may lead to consciousness for nature and its inhabitants. At this point, it is worth remarking Hall’s argument on Wordsworth’s “transition from being a Romantic naturalist toward becoming a proto-environmentalist: Affection for nature that motivates desire to protect it arises from genuine concern to safeguard its beauty from blight” (2014: 88). To put it in a different way, loving nature is not an obstacle against protecting nature. Wordsworth has a great capacity of both composing Romantic sonnets concerning nature and writing letters for his railway objection. His deep admiration for nature does not make Wordsworth less ecologically concerned, on the contrary, it expands his ecological awareness. That is why Wordsworth may be regarded as one of the early romantic environmentalists because he cared for nature, defended its inhabitants and his struggle was distinguished. One should not expect from Romantic works one-to-one correspondence with the context of ecocritical works because this attitude veils the rich content of the Romantic works. For instance, Paige Tovey touches on the fact that Wordsworth’s natural observations are more than simply indicating interdependence of all entities in nature; in addition, what Wordsworth exhibits is the sense of fulfillment thanks to this unification: “And ’tis my faith that every flower / Enjoys the air it breathes” (qtd. in Tovey, 2013, 32).

### **3.4. ROMANTICISM AND DEEP ECOLOGY**

As mentioned previously, Arne Naess claims ecocritics should physically and actively be engaged with nature and set foot into the nature to be well aware of their environment so that they can stick up for nature more properly. In this context, Wordsworth finds his inspiration directly from nature by nature walks instead of closing himself down to the library. McKusick’s remarks that when Wordsworth’s

servant is asked to show Wordsworth's study, she answers "Here is his library, but his study is out of doors" (qtd. in McKusick, 2000: 5). He is also quite concerned with the Lake District and he struggles to preserve its wild nature. He is also well aware of the Lake District as his local environment. In a way, Wordsworth performs Naess's claim for active and physical connection with nature to deal with environmental issues. According to Ying, his familiar phrase of "returning to nature" means that people should be closely involved with nature in order to completely appreciate its value and to respect it (2014: 333). Thus, returning to nature requires being a member or part of nature for human beings who are naturally part of the organic unity in nature. Mishra argues that both ecocritics and Romantics believe that nature does not betray human beings as long as humans do not harm nature (2017: 437). What Mishra means is there is a mutual relation between human beings and nature and the core of this relationship is humans' ability to live in nature harmoniously. Ecocritics respect each living creature in nature including animals. In a similar attitude, Romantics value animals and they attribute the existence of animals in nature in most of their poems. Returning to Naess's deep ecology concept, it cannot be fully applied to Romantic perception of nature because two points of views have a quite different approach to nature at the point of deep ecology. It may be claimed that Romantics are aware of the value of nature and each inhabitant of nature; however, the way Romantics appraise nature may sometimes contradict Naess's concept of deep ecology. As mentioned earlier, the philosophy of deep ecology advocates that nature and its entities should be valued in accordance with their intrinsic value. That is to say, their value cannot be measured according to their usefulness and benefit to the subsistence of human life. Zambianchi touches on Naess's idea of "ecological self" that Naess assumes today human beings have this consciousness. They are mature enough to comprehend they are equal to the members of the natural environment surrounding them and they are in need of them (2014:1). Romantic writers understand the interconnectedness of all beings in nature including human beings as a new scientific and literary discussion. If they value nature for the sake of the benefits it provides to the human race, their value still remains as anthropocentric value and "chauvinistic speciesism" as Hutchings labels (2007: 182). However, there are examples of Romantic writers such as Wordsworth and Coleridge who value nature for the sake of its beauty and the peace of mind it provides. Within an environmental consciousness, Romantic viewpoint of natural value may contradict

with deep ecological philosophy in that Romantics are affected by the Enlightenment science which promotes caring for nature because human beings are in need of what nature provides.

Valuing Romantic works in accordance with their time-related conditions, the aesthetic elements of Romantic works as Zambianchi lists are lyrical style, tone and diction, making Romantic works suitable to issue natural theory. Romantic tradition's ethical and value system is the most appropriate concept for its environmental purposes (Zambianchi, 2014:1). To put it another way, Romantic literature is a proper and functional way of spreading environmental awareness and the idea of interconnectedness for his age. The central motivation for Romantic writings to become environmentally concerned works is industrialism which creates apparent changes in the natural environment. That is how Romanticism issues the relation between the human and non-human world. In addition to the reflections of social, cultural, economic and political occurrences to the literary works, consideration of the physical environment in literary forms is a new evolution of Romantic literature. As the expert of the British Romantic writing and Ecological criticism and theory, Dr Jeremy Davies indicates that the 1980s was the turning point for the history of environmental writing in Romantic studies in terms of the presence of animal labour and violence towards animals within Romantic poetry (2018: 3). As Romantic period intersects with the Industrial era, the Romantics can appreciate the intrinsic value of every being and the necessity of harmonious living for human beings with the natural environment. Reading ecocriticism only within the non-fictional works is a limited perception for ecocritical studies. However, including Romantic and pastoral texts in environmental analysis provides a new appreciation for nature writings. Rigby argues that the nature of Romantic poetry is not definite with certain rules of environmental criticism; however, Romantic poetry and Pastoral writing are quite valuable for examination of human relations with the Earth (2002: 161). To put it differently, Romantic literary productions may not quintessentially suit the nature of ecocritical criticism but both of them have the collateral purpose which is laying emphasis on nature and its inhabitants. In any case, environmental studies and Romantic works cannot be expected to have a total correspondence in terms of targets and practices because they are the products of two different ages whose requirements are equally diverse. Ecocriticism can trace Romantic tradition as its historical heritage by taking

worldviews of Romantics as their references. As Davies has put it, Romantic texts foreshadow the modern concept of ecology via Coleridge's depiction of killing the albatross as the crime against in "The Rime of The Ancient Mariner", Wordsworth's love of countryside reflected in *the Lyrical Ballads* and Blake who is regarded as the first ecological writer in Eco-Romantic literary tradition (2018: 4). Even though there are some contrasting arguments against the connection between Romantic and Ecocritical studies, the Romantic influence on Ecocriticism is undeniable. As Davies notes, modern ecocritical studies reap the benefit of Romantic sciences such as natural history, botany, geology, climatology, biogeography, chemistry, population theory, comparative anatomy and environmental medicine for analysis and understanding of the physical nature (2018: 8). Thus, English Romanticism plays a crucial role in determining the future of Ecocritical studies. Just as contemporary environmental studies follow the developments and changes across the world that affect the planet Earth, English Romantics keep up with cultural and environmental changes of eighteenth century and they reflect these alterations to their works. That is why Eco-Romantic studies are very important in exhibiting the relations between the human and non-human world in the industrial era which enhances the historical and cultural significance of Romantic poetry.

Contrary to the ideas claiming incompatibility between human beings and nature, Professor of English Language and Literature Ashton Nichols introduces *urbanature* which is a new word he has come up with to suggest the interrelatedness of human and nonhuman entities and all animate and inanimate beings accompanying them (2011: xiv). His term supports the necessity of defining the natural world "eco-centrally" and leaving anthropocentric terms to separate the nonhuman world (2011: xv). In Nichols's *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism Toward Urbanatural Roosting* it is argued that existing environmental awareness is not only the outcome of contemporary ecocritical understanding, but the Romantic sense of perceiving nature and its inhabitants as unity has respectably contributed coexistent ecological sense (2011: xvi). A link between the Romantic writers and Ecocritics may be undoubtedly created in that they all meet on the common ground that is having environmental consciousness, sense of natural occasion and reflecting natural disasters and environmental problems in their works. Both of the groups have concerns about the future of the Earth, human beings and non-human entities. Even though the Romantic

movement does not include as a wide sense of ecological awareness as contemporary Ecological activity, the Romantic approach to environmental issues also supports the unification of human beings with nature and its entities. When Romantic works are analysed, it is observed that Romantic poets care for nature, find peace in nature and suggest their audience to be in nature to where human beings allegedly belong. Romantic values suggest human beings live harmoniously with nature rather than fighting against nature because they witness the consequences of controlling and harming nature along with industrialisation. In this sense, Nichols maintains that ecological studies are unavoidably affected by Romantic history, then have improved themselves in accordance with scientific developments (2011: 17). Romantic writers are not necessarily scientists, nor they easily reach scientific information. Most of their knowledge concerning nature and relations in nature are based on their personal observations, experiences and readings. The idea that all beings are connected, as Nichols notes, is close to Darwinian ideas regarding evolution that asserts all organic beings have biological bond due to a group of genetic markers (2011: 176).

Nichols proposes that Erasmus Darwin is quite influential in shaping environmentally concerning ideas in Romantic literature as he is referred in the works of many Romantics: He is mentioned in the introduction part of *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelly and also honoured by Coleridge as “a greater range of knowledge than any man in Europe” (qtd. in Nichols: 2011: 50) and seen in many of Wordsworth’s poems (2011: 50). Eventually, Romantic writers believe in the interconnectedness of every living and non-living entity on Earth, from birds, plants, human beings to mountains and rivers. Their environmental remarks take place at the environmental studies supported by scientific studies.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE AND AN ECOPHOBIC ANALYSIS OF “THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER”

#### 4.1. COLERIDGE’S LIFE

Even though every writer has a unique character and their own principles, their family background is quite influential in shaping their early personality and ideas. When the roots of the Coleridge family are traced, Coleridge’s father, John Coleridge was a distinguished scholar of the Classics and wrote several literary works. In addition, he was the headmaster of the King Henry VIII Grammar School. The literary career of John Coleridge might be a determinant for Coleridge’s future occupation as a poet. Apart from his literary career, Frederick Burwick points out what Coleridge experiences during his childhood and adolescence such as painful losses and being torn apart his family occupies some of the pessimist themes of his poetry (2009:61). Coleridge always runs into difficulty at every stage of his life. John David Lopez points out that financial stability was one of the challenging details of Coleridge’s life. He was generally dependent on his friends’ money because he was spending his income on his opium addiction (2009:133). What is more the concept of patronage was inconsistent with Republican Coleridge’s philosophy of life. In other words, selling his poetic talent for money did not seem an honourable action to Coleridge. When his friendships with patrons and publishers came to a bad end, his growing financial problems started to affect his personal confidence, creativity and poetry (2009:153). As Lopez indicates, Coleridge’s relationship with his readers positively changed dimension after his failed relationship with the patrons and publishers. Coleridge became more attached to his readers. He even travelled the country so that he could personally be in touch with his readers (2009:156). Coleridge could not spend a happy life at all because he witnessed the deaths of his beloved ones, he had to deal with loneliness, financial problems, psychological diseases such as depression and addiction. This severe anxiety and depression caused him to lose his health for good. Apart from the physical and mental health problems, these depressions were affecting his relations with his immediate circle, especially his relationship with his wife Sara.

At first, his marriage with Sara and their children Hartley and Berkeley were providing him with the stability that Coleridge had been looking for. Coleridge published his first volume of verse during this period. However, they had problems in their relationship especially with Coleridge's financial stability and income. Thus, Coleridge started to experience his anxieties and worries about the struggle of living again when his marriage could no longer provide him comfort due to debts and financial problems. As Neil Vickers states, apart from the economic strains, Coleridge's depressed state of mind was another huge difficulty in their marriage (2009:183). The financial difficulty that Coleridge experienced must have been more stressed when Coleridge was overwhelmed by the burden of taking care of his children and his wife.

Coleridge was fascinated by the idea of exploring new places and found peace in his voyages which was the way of moving away from his family that is the main source of his anxieties. Then, travelling became Coleridge's essential habit for his poetry and medical condition. Tilar J. Mazzeo indicates that Coleridge travelled Wales, Scottish Highlands, Germany, Sicily, Malta whose pastoral scenes highly contributed to his letters, journals and travel writings (2009:215). In 1794, Coleridge's adventure of travel writing started on a tour of Wales with his classmates from Cambridge (2009: 218). These tours became an opportunity to write pastoral poems for Coleridge. Even though neither of the Lake poets knew each other at those years, Wordsworth was sharing his interest in travel writing with Coleridge. Wordsworth was more interested in writing about the native lands of England while Coleridge was fond of the exotic lands. In addition to his interest in travel writing, Coleridge's readings of travel literature have been a great contribution in shaping his literary aesthetic. As Mazzeo remarks, "Kubla Khan" and "The Rime of the Ancient" are great products inspired by this genre. Even "Kubla Khan" was composed during Coleridge's tour along the coast of Lynton and Coleridge was highly inspired by travel literature sources during the poem's composition process (Maezzo, 2009: 227). When Coleridge and Wordsworth finally met in Bristol in 1795, they substantially influenced each other's poetic vision especially during their long country walks. Professor Kelvin Everest particularly remarks that Coleridge has an undeniable influence on Wordsworth through his literary criticism and fresh perspective of understated style in lyric and blank verse writing (2002: 22). Their poetic vision flourished arm in arm when Coleridge decided

to study philosophy in Germany and Wordsworth joined him to improve his intellectual sight regarding contemporary literature, history and philosophy.

#### **4.1.1. Political Career**

Coleridge lived his life in the fast lane due to his various radical experiences, such as being engaged with politics, science for his poetry and joining the army. In addition to his career as a Romantic poet, Coleridge was also a lecturer, philosopher, theologian, journalist, commentator of religious and political issues. That is why Coleridge's literary criticism and theories are meant more than his contemporaries for their relation to science, Metaphysics, policy and epistemology. Any of the mentioned titles cannot separately be assigned to Coleridge who is known for his versatility in these intellectual areas by his contemporaries especially because he personally witnessed serious political and social changes in Britain and Europe, and he closely kept up with these events. In addition, his political thoughts have theoretically contributed to his writings about social, economic and moral issues. Pamela Edwards who is an assistant professor of modern British history clarifies Coleridge's political career by dividing it into three political stages: Jacobin radicalism, apostasy that is deserting Jacobin cause and Tory conservatism, defending hierarchy, nobility and chivalric tradition (2004: 14). When his early writings are analysed in relation to his first stage of political stance, it is observed that Coleridge embraces the ideas of the French Revolution, and he dissents against governmental actions of terror and politicians' unreliable policies (Edwards, 2004: 20). Even though his political ideas change in time, Coleridge has always been a politically independent and autonomous voice that criticises ordinary political ideas, groups and politicians. His opposition to traditional politics and searching for political independence gives rise to Coleridge to impersonate "the language of the outsider", as Edwards describes, in his politics (2004: 26). That is why Coleridge has always been charged with being impetuous and controversial by his contemporaries in terms of his political principles. On the other hand, his opposing policies in politics are another way of constructing a unity between politics, history, culture, law, morals and human nature. Edwards defines Coleridge's mature political concept as a "persistent and complex argument for the centrality of individual agency and free will in political and social life while at the same time arguing cogently for duty and community" (2004: 32). Thus, Coleridge frequently issues constitutional principles and individual liberty in his political writings because,



for Coleridge, society is the reflection of the physical environment and political institutions are contributory elements within the natural order. In other words, each institution is interrelated with social and natural life and Coleridge reflects this interdependency in his works by writing about history, science, policy and economy. His political opinions may vary as his social, moral, religious, cultural views develop in time; however, he has always had one common principle for each political stage that is the importance of individual freedom within the political area. Coleridge tries to locate the idea of freedom in physical and moral institutions to provide proper functioning. His commitment to freedom should not stigmatise Coleridge as a perturbator in political and social life. On the contrary, his political ideas are based on a social thought system that is after providing moral liberty in all social, political and economic areas.

Coleridge has always been actively engaged with politics as being a political lecturer, by writing to the political leaders, writing political essays for the editorials and journals and composing politically suggestive sonnets in order to spread his political comments. His political thoughts were triggered at Jesus College by a Unitarian teacher, William Frend who published a pamphlet radically attacking the church institution and Coleridge was attending his lectures. Coleridge was highly affected by his thoughts because he could relate his radical ideals with Frend's. According to Burwick, French Revolution was really effective in Coleridge's ideas about politics, freedom of religion, reformist thoughts and civil rights (2009:68). Coleridge, already known for his radical political stance, had an affinity for the ideologies about French Revolution and he was not supporting Britain's going war against France especially because he was discontent with the British government and French Revolution was the source of freedom and democracy that Coleridge was looking for. France's declaration of war on Britain was a historical inducing for Coleridge's ideas concerning liberty while he was struggling with existing social problems such as the Industrial Revolution and class conflict among his society. When Coleridge came to Bristol to give political, religious and historical lectures, his political stance was, as Peter J. Kitson describes, democrat, republican and dissenter (2009:292). As a faithful radical, Coleridge was also criticising the Church which supported the war because he thought that supporting the war contravenes against the Christian religion. Coleridge's intellectual development on his political theory is

reflected in his final political work, *Church and State* in which Coleridge displays the relation between morality and politics in relation to education, law and constitutional theory. The affiliation between morals and politics is directly related to the relationship between the church and state on which Coleridge suggests an agency between moral and political freedom (Edwards, 2004: 217). In other words, Coleridge turns all of the social, political, economic scales to the idea of freedom which is the complementary determinant for both the state and morals. Coleridge's lectures have always been radical and unusual for their time. As another example, Coleridge was against the slave trade in Africa, and he clearly urged upon his anti-slavery remarks in his lectures. Kitson argues that Coleridge touches upon the destructive points and uselessness of slavery in his "Lecture on the Slave Trade" in which he criticised British imperialism (2009:316). He refused to depict Africans as barbaric and uncivilised, on the contrary, he appreciated their pastoral value. His career in journalism was important to Coleridge because he was seeing journal writing as a means of expressing his political ideas. Following his political lectures, he intended to publish a political journal, *The Watchman* so that he could address a wider audience for his political ideas. In addition, he worked as a political journalist and commentator in *the Morning Post* in which he dealt with local issues and socio-political affairs (Everest, 2002: 24). It was inevitable for Coleridge not to be affected by the contemporary political and national issues so that he notably gave place to the political events in his poetry. For example, "The Recantation" and "Fears in Solitude" are the products of contemporary national and political issues such as the French invasion of Switzerland and the European war that Coleridge personally witnessed. In his book *Organising Poetry The Coleridge Circle, 1790-1798*, Professor David Fairer develops valuable insights about Coleridge's idea of freedom in his poetry in 1798: Coleridge uses the freedom concept as an inspiration for his political contexts in which he tries to separate the idea of liberty and war in order to show the necessity of loving everything within the spiritual context (2009: 291). In his criticism of "Fears in Solitude", Fairer shows Coleridge's national commitment via the poem's local voice that projects both ideas of affiliation and emotion of fear due to the invasion threat (2009: 295). The poem depicts the horrors of the war and establishes an anti-war political stance by Coleridge. The poem consists of historical events and specific themes such as warfare and patriotism, however; the personal experiences of the readers are what actually reinforce the poem.

#### **4.1.2. Literary Style**

Imagination, fancy, intuition, wit, genius, discursivity, illusion, delusion, reverie, exotic are the words that can be associated with Coleridge's poetry. Language becomes a vehicle for the interpretation of the symbols by way of Coleridge's pen. Coleridge uses symbols from Nature that are claimed to be familiar to everyone because the reflections of nature are universal. In his approach to Coleridge's symbolist theory, Nicholas Halmi remarks that Coleridge claims the symbolic language to be real, meaningful and expressive (2009: 763). Even though he struggles to find the proper way of writing for his ideal poetic form in his early poetry, he becomes quite influential while conveying his ideas through nature poetry after he discovers his true poetic self and related genres. Coleridge may have an unusual treatment of poetry with exceptional settings and complex situations; however, the effects of his ideas are still observed in the English literary tradition as an innovative literary influence. Coleridge's unconventional poetic tradition comprises using unrhyming stanzas and avoiding unity and harmony in his poetry. In his rejecting traditional poetic rules, Matthew Scott resembles Coleridge's choices to the footsteps of Shakespeare and Milton who use blank verse for their literary works (2009: 1150). Just as his predecessors, Coleridge believed in blank verse's strong ability to convey different thoughts and emotions. Standing in a rebellious position in politics, Coleridge exhibits a radical attitude as well in his poetry by refusing the eighteenth-century poetic conventions and inventing his own poetic manner. As Professor David Vallins emphasises, Coleridge is distinguished from the other contemporary Romantic poets in that his poetic manner is comprised of various genres and distinctive plots that successfully issue human psychology, introspection, states of the emotions, the functioning of the consciousness and religious contexts (2000:1). These facilities of his poems convert reading process into a personal experience for his readers. In a similar vein, Coleridge's poetic philosophy asserts that there is more than what the physical world offers, waiting to be discovered by imagination and intellectual activity. The subjective experience of Coleridge's poetry requires soul's alienation from the physical environment and unification with the inner world. Here, Coleridge's transcendency corresponds with Romantic dissatisfaction with the physical world. The

feeling of sublime is highly valuable, as Vallins indicates, because Coleridge believes that it enables the readers to perceive the truth which can be discovered by the efforts of intellect and emotions (2000:4). Coleridge's dealing with human consciousness and transcendency makes him a Romantic poet while analysing psychological patterns within mental functioning in his writings contributes his philosophical side. His poetry and philosophy can meet on the common ground in that both of them deal with the unity of human beings with their natural and abstract environment and divine power in their consciousness. Coleridge defines imagination in *Biographia* as "the power par excellence which bridges the gap between the sensuous and the intellectual, being in one form the origin of the perceptual world, and in another that of works of art or philosophy" (qtd. in Vallins, 2000:14). According to Coleridge's point of view, imagination is quite useful for mental functioning in both poetry and philosophy. Vallins points out emotions are essential for Coleridge's poetry and philosophy because emotions provide the connection of ideas and knowing right from wrong (2000:67). What is more, for Coleridge reaching the truth is important in moral terms from the point of view the pursuit of truth meets individuals with their genuine potential (Vallins, 2000: 79). Considering Coleridge's idea of the pursuit of knowledge and truth, his poetry and philosophy serve for the moral enhancement of the individuals.

When Coleridge's poetical apprehension is analysed, the eighteenth-century in which he was raised and educated, should be taken in consideration in terms of the power of imagination and mystery in poetry. Professor William Christie accounts for the relation between the Romantic Period and French Revolution with imagination which is "imposed by the powerful on a global scale for the first time in the modern era" (2007: 89). In other words, Coleridge believes that poetry and its imaginative power may provide an escapeway for individuals to protect faith during an age of fragmentations. Accordingly, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and "The Christabel" are known as spiritual and supernatural poems and Christie interprets the first one as a suggestive poem, telling the meaning of being a human (2007: 107). In other respects, Coleridge uses his poetry in order to express the senses of loneliness, isolation and alienation which are the negative bringing of his age. Apart from its content, Coleridge's poetry is unique and creative in terms of its form, style and technique. Just as Coleridge prefers to use instinctive expressions for his emotions in

his poems, he also favours creating the frame of his poetry spontaneously. His unusual poetic style may be comprehended as complex because Coleridge also valued literary works according to their complicity for readers. As Vallins notes, Coleridge claims that the more a text challenges its reader, the more valuable it becomes in intellectual terms and a text that can easily be understood has the capacity to be forgotten quickly (2000: 152). In this regard, Coleridge's poetic style resembles the syntactic structures of Greek and Latin literature which is another feature that distinguishes Coleridge from his contemporary writers. Vallins argues that Coleridge finds classical languages more intellectual than modern languages because classical languages are more complex in their syntax which requires a greater level of thinking to use them (2000: 153). When Coleridge compares modern English language and Classical Greek and Latin languages, he finds English easier to understand while Greek and Latin require a thought system to decode the syntactic complexity. Coleridge is after creating more compound prose for he aims to convey the sense of sublime to his readers, and he argues highly intellectual expressions are the only way of achieving it. Similar to his contradiction to modern language in his poetic principles, Coleridge opposes modern thought and modern prose-writing in his philosophical ideals for the reason Vallins explain, they are so simple and clear that they prevent the readers from thinking deeply and intellectually (2000: 156). Therefore, for Coleridge, the value of writing is measured with its conveying the sublime which cannot be reached with effortless writing, easily comprehensible language and simple structure. Coleridge wants his readers to think profoundly while they read his writings, and he wants his sentences to be interpreted and affect their targets. While comparing the modern English and French prose style, Coleridge associates their lower intellectuality with their contextual structure consisting of "random incoherent thoughts thrown out upon the subject of morals or politics, without any real knowledge of human nature, and the various steps of its progression" (qtd. in Vallins, 2015: 43). Coleridge reacts in a harsh way because he believes the capacity of prose writing for creating the sublime in the minds of individuals and grasping the realities are beyond human consciousness. In response to his unique prose style, Coleridge was severely criticised due to his textual obscurity, as Vallins defines, and his expressions were claimed to limit human intellect (2015: 53). However, Coleridge stands behind his confusing prose style claiming that the truth may be over the understanding of human consciousness; however, the aim of

Coleridge is not to create confusion in his readers' mind but to present the cognitive process of trying to understand the truth that he names sublime. In other words, Coleridge asserts that human intellect is not capable of comprehending all the knowledge around their physical environment; however, enjoying his poetry does not stand for realising the whole picture; it is the effort of experiencing this process and finding the pleasure in it. While doing so, Coleridge prompts his readers to think mopingly and to look at a broader intellectual perspective of the experiences.

Coleridge is attentive to use the concept of organic unity in his poetry just as other twentieth-century Romantic writers used organic form as a Romantic reaction against the eighteenth-century mechanical thought system. Fairer exemplifies Coleridge's finding perfection in the organic unity as Coleridge categorises shaping clay as a form of mechanical art because clay is shaped by human fingers in a planned way while growing a tree is an unforeseen but successful process for Coleridge even though it is not guided by anyone (2009: 21). In the light of this comparison, it may be said that individual experiences and personal values are significant for Coleridge in creating an organic meaning within his poetry. As a critic, Coleridge admires Shakespeare's faculty of judgement, sense of form and literary genius. Even William Christie asserts that Shakespeare was his ideal subject in shaping his practical criticism of human nature and its activity (2007:173). Thus, Coleridge uses Shakespearean theories in his poetry and shapes the idea of imagination by taking Shakespeare as a literary model. For Coleridge, poetry is a form of art that is "representing external nature and human Thoughts & Affections" (qtd. in Esterhammer, 2002: 145). In other words, the poetry reflects the incidents in nature and while doing so it does not necessarily present the exact same realities, but it may process as an artistic presentation of realities in the physical world and implications from human consciousness. Coleridge assumes poetry is the production of human mind activities to appeal human senses and nourish the human soul. When Angela Esterhammer analyses Coleridge's practical criticism, a resemblance may be observed to Shakespearean linguistic characteristics which Esterhammer calls a system of representation and a set of principles for appreciating art in a different way from a systematic faculty of intellection (2002: 146). Thus, poetry is a way of interpreting natural signs from a personal perception which makes it a form of art. It is the outcome of the human effort of creating individual meanings out of nature. This characteristic

of Coleridge's poetry requires a collaborative involvement of both the poet and the reader in the process of interpreting the poetry in that the readers are expected to interpret the poet's appreciation of nature from their own insight. Coleridge analyses Shakespearean drama and his characters from his plays and he concludes that poetry is an imitation and not a copy of nature as Esterhammer defines "it is the expression of an authorial mind and bears everywhere the traces of that author's philosophy and imagination" (2002: 149). To put it differently, Coleridge does not differentiate the poet's mentality from the reader's intellect in that they actively make the common cause which is interpreting the imitated physical reality within the poetry.

Coleridge's poetry is related to his philosophical discernment which is another element contributing to the obscurity of his poetry. That is why every word from any of his works has its own unique meaning and correspondence in readers' minds. Coleridge names this engagement of individuals with their physical world "translucent" as David Ward remarks, believing that human beings are capable of creating representations between words and their knowledge (2013: 3). What is more, most of Coleridge's works have several different versions which make them more complex for interpretation. Contrary to the traditional way of publishing a single text with a single author, Coleridge makes revisions on several occasions on the alleged final text. As Professor Jack Stillinger remarks even though "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" belongs to his late poetical period, it has 1828, 1829, or 1834 versions in which Coleridge modernises the language of the poem while he adds the Latin epigraph and the prose marginal glosses to *the Lyrical Ballads* fifteen years after its first edition (1992: 130). When there are several editions of a single text, it is unlikely to protect the text's stability which makes it harder for the reader to read, analyse and interpret the text. Stillinger suggests that Coleridge may have created the textual fluctuations in order to make his poems more elusive (1992: 138). Revising his works by adding prefaces and notes, Coleridge believes that he creates a union between all of his works. According to Stillinger's comment on "The Rime of The Ancient Mariner", the poem becomes more complicated due to additional religious voices that contribute to the logic of the story and enlarge the moral meaning; however, these revisions highly contribute to the unity of the poem (1992: 145). Thus, Coleridge poems are his journey of writing rather than a final destination in that he is always chasing the better of the final versions.

### **4.1.3. Coleridge and Science, Philosophy and Metaphysics**

Coleridge's literary concept cannot be limited within the Romantic literary tradition because he is always interested in the unusual concepts such as Metaphysical poetry, mythical subjects and scientific areas. Coleridge's contextual scheme is constituted of comprehending the reality and value of physical nature, the importance of moral faculty, the decisiveness of free will among human beings and the existence of god. As Professor Trevor Levere indicates, Coleridge creates a connection between the reality of inherent morality in human beings and the reality of external nature which means interfering with religion and philosophy in Coleridge's case (1981:2). Science is a very important foundation for Coleridge because it is based on facts, de facto ideas and laws which provide the necessary connection between the human mind and physical nature. Science helps read the messages of nature and create a relation between the natural occasions. According to Levere, Coleridge was aware of the necessities for writing an epic poem: possessing the knowledge of ages, environment, history and identifying the nature of the human beings. Coleridge was regarded as a poet, philosopher and scientist because he was able to observe nature, identify the laws and details within nature and intellectualised this knowledge with his imaginative power (1981: 3). In other words, Coleridge interprets the unity in nature and makes this information public and comprehensible for his readers. In this sense, Coleridge was highly interested in the scientific analyses by scientists so that he could establish a connection between mind and natural process. In addition, science was an ongoing study of nature that always included the possibility of finding new ideas and different facts. The Illimitable state of science constitutes an infinite source for Coleridge's poetry and a major contribution to his thought system. "Coleridge believed that mind was active in nature, which was itself organic, alive and developing, and intelligible" (Levere, 1981: 7). In other words, human beings become aware of what is happening around them by broadening the activity of their mind with the help of natural philosophy and science. Coleridge finds parallelism between scientific and poetic talent which is to be supported by imagination. When Levere analyses Coleridge's scientific and poetic account, it is understood that Coleridge compares poetry to science in that both of the branches require sympathy and respect towards nature;



otherwise, it is not possible for any poet to reflect true nature in their works or any scientist to acquire a consistent analyse of nature (1981: 42). In other words, for Coleridge, science stood for the source of infinite knowledge and he did not hesitate to benefit from science in his poetry. Metaphysical elements and philosophical reflections have always been situated in Coleridge's writings. H. R. Rookmaaker explains Coleridge's philosophical understanding: For Coleridge, the matter is passive, but life endows the matter which resolves the objectivity and questions the existence of the matter (1984:4). Indeed, Coleridge saw philosophy as the complementary element of poetry in transmitting feelings and thoughts to the reader. While doing so, Coleridge does not abandon the principles of poetry by demonstrating partial philosophical contents. As Rookmaaker asserts, for Coleridge, the thoughts that poetry presents should be felt instead of submitting abstract thoughts and philosophy is a beneficial tool to catch experiences from life (1984: 7). As Fairer notes, especially during February 1801 when his opium addiction increases and he experiences "wild dreams" and "long long wakeful nights", Coleridge becomes more indulged with the metaphysical constructions and world of Idea (2009: 309). In a parallel way, his poem "Frost at Midnight" gets around in a similar unrestful atmosphere of sleeplessness, emptiness and mysterious thoughts and experiences. Coleridge in general assumes poetry as supernatural, mysterious, and full of emotions which make the poetry a personal experience.

#### **4.2. COLERIDGE AS AN EARLY ECOLOGICAL POET**

The Romantic Period created undeniable changes in individuals' daily life and the way they perceived their environment. The relation between nature and human beings is one of the most altered topics that Coleridge notably reflects in his writings. As H. R. Rookmaaker indicates the observable change in the eighteenth-century concept of nature is nature' becoming a source of inspiration for imagination and reflection of the poet's inner world (1984: 2). In his early poetry, Coleridge's treatment of nature is conventional as it may resemble a confidential area to be immersed in thoughts, to find joy and meaning, and to be connected with divine power. Rookmaaker affirms that Coleridge finds the intrinsic value of landscape as it is the reflection of God (1984: 29). While his poetry develops in the meantime, his perspective towards nature evolves to ascribe a more profound meaning which is

independent of its ability to define human nature. As Rookmaaker notes, Coleridge started to change his attitude towards nature in 1795 and 1796 by realising nature's independent autonomy from its relation to human beings (1984:33). To be more obvious, "The Eolian Harp" is the continuing proof of Coleridge's development of a new natural theory through which Coleridge gradually experiences "that harmonious movement" by climbing hills and experiencing nature "on his pulses" (Rookmaaker, 1984: 38). In other words, Coleridge recognises the value of nature for its own sake instead of pursuing its relation to human beings. That is why "The Eolian Harp" is regarded as the milestone of Coleridge's ecocritical sense of nature which brings a new perspective on human beings' relation to nature and God. Rookmaaker analyse of the poem shows that Coleridge emphasises the passivity of human beings in the natural cycle even though human beings are the only rational and conscious beings in nature (1984: 39). Taking into account Coleridge's Christianity, his developing ideas about nature may sound contrasting with the Christian thought system as Coleridge believes in the divinity of both nature and God; however, it may also stand for seeing nature as the reflection of the divinity of God. Even "The Eolian Harp" was written between 1795 and 1817, and it shows Coleridge's interest in nature genuinely increased as he experienced an ongoing process of development in terms of rationalising his ideas about nature. His struggle ended up creating a natural philosophy that was comprised of the consolidation of God and nature. One of the reasons why Coleridge finds consolation in religion is he wants to escape from the worldly-minded society which destroys his romantic ideals. Thus, searching for God provides him with the need of running away from the chaotic physical world. Li Shumin further explains Coleridge's spiritual consolation by creating a connection between worshipping God and reaching the ultimate reality, order and unity in heart and mind (2018: 26). That is how nature becomes the reflection of God on earth and Coleridge expects human beings to treat nature fairly in order to protect its sacredness. Even Coleridge proposes that a poem should be "the medium and reconciliation between man and nature" (qtd. in Shumin, 2018: 26). His statement shows that Coleridge uses his poetry as a poetic tool providing the necessary affiliation between human beings and nature.

In the meantime, Coleridge believes that all living and non-living life forms are connected in that they form a unity in the nature. Vallins indicates that Coleridge was among the earliest thinkers in England, caring for inanimate entities such as rocks and

mountains in addition to animals and plants (2000:133). Coleridge obviously appreciated the natural world as a whole because he could understand how serious the relation between organic and inorganic entities to sustain life on Earth. In addition, he did not separate human beings' participation from the natural order. He was aware that human beings had differences from other entities and most of these differences provided human beings with a physical superiority from the rest; however, Coleridge also admitted that human beings were biologically dependent on all other beings in nature. Coleridge's philosophical thinking in relation with ecocritical vantage point is clearly observed in a letter to William Sotheby:

Never to see or describe any interesting appearance in nature, without connecting it by dim analogies with the moral world, proves faintness of Impression. Nature has her proper interest; & he will know what it is, who believes & feels, that every Thing has a Life of it's own, & that we are all one *Life* (qtd. in Heymans, 2007: 17).

Coleridge cannot be expected to have a modern ecological sense about the hierarchy of all beings because Coleridge was also a faithful Christian. In regard to this fact, Vallins explains that Coleridge finds the reflection of God in nature because he admits God as the creator of all (2000: 140). Thus, Coleridge never separates the divine intervention of God from nature and the human soul. Even though Coleridge is close to interpret his surroundings through scientific discoveries and natural philosophy, he consults the Bible to explain the structure of universal order at some point. According to Levere's interpretation of his religious philosophy, Coleridge finds a unity in God, nature and the human mind and self and he explains the natural order through the biblical foundation (1981: 7). Coleridge's interest in astronomy, physics and natural history is combined with his readings in science, and studies in philosophy and religion so that his unique approach to the natural process is constructed out of this unity. Along the same line, ecocriticism always goes hand in hand with science. As a supposed early Ecocritic, Coleridge also has always been in the scientific area and interested in scientific discoveries for his studies which is a great contribution to formulate new ideas for his poetry. Coleridge inclines to explain the creation of Earth and natural order from an integrated point of view which is supported by both Genesis and life sciences such as geology, zoology and chemistry.

In Bate's wordings, Coleridge was a "walking poet" who was nourished with imagination and components of the open-air (1991: 49). It is known that Coleridge

enjoyed composing his poems in the open air, walking in the Lake District, being physically in nature, touching and feeling the branches, leaves and wood. So, while writing about nature, it was important for Coleridge to be active. It might be said that he was in a way practising the escape to nature. Coleridge is another important figure for the growth of Eco-Romantic works in the Romantic period and his contribution in creating awareness among individuals in terms of ecological union is an undeniable point. Indeed, as Tovey notes, Coleridge is entitled as “cosmic ecologist” for his intimate relations with nature and his ultimate concern for the preservation of the universe (2013: 36). Through the cosmic approach to the ecological notion, Coleridge establishes a unique viewpoint to human nature and environmental nature which are not necessarily the same, but they can concertedly coexist. American literary critic M. H. Abrams surveys:

“The passage makes it evident that Coleridge’s myth of concern envisions all existing things, from the inorganic through the human, as participants in a single system of cosmic ecology. Man, whatever more he may be, is consubstantial, interdependent, and in communication with the nature of which he is the product. By having achieved self-consciousness, Coleridge says, man “has the whole world in counter-point to him, but he contains an entire world within himself” (qtd. in Tovey, 2013: 36).

Re-evaluating Coleridge’s poems in the light of ecological point of view enables the reader to decode the hidden meanings behind his poetic form. *Lyrical Ballads* is the collaborative work of Wordsworth and Coleridge whose contribution is equally matters in environmental terms. In his reading *Green Writing: Romanticism and Ecology* by James C. McKusick, Adam Neikirk presents McKusick’s identification of *Lyrical Ballads* with Coleridge and Wordsworth’s illustration of the connection between the natural world and human beings living in the natural environment rather than seeing the natural environment simply as a pleasant scenery posing threat to human concerns (2016: 111). They present a harmonious living between human beings and living and non-living entities of nature by creating a connection through language, habits and beliefs. Thus, Romantic conception of nature becomes Ecological apprehension of the natural environment which requires seeing human beings as part of the natural world and creating a symbiotic relationship between them. Due to these early ecological approaches, even critic Karl Kroeber calls the Romantic writers “proto-ecological” writers (qtd. in Neikirk, 2016: 19). Kroeber’s definition means that

the works of Romantic poets echo the contemporary environmental concerns, ecological worries and measures taken to protect the natural world. In a similar vein, Coleridge's poetic stance is parallel to studies of the time ecocritics. It needs to be clarified that the Romantic works do not solely consist of a simple love of Nature, praising idyllic life and depicting the beauty of the natural environment, but they also carry an ecological sense of complaining about the alienation of human beings from nature due to the material civilisation. As a Romantic Poet, Coleridge could predict the destructive consequences of the Industrial Revolution in terms of the ecological crisis that is why he used his poetry to spread environmental awareness. Coleridge sees the Industrial Revolution as the main occasion that is responsible for the estrangement between human beings and nature both physically and spiritually in that technology and scientific improvements present a threat for the ecological balance in the cause of development of the society. As Shumin indicates that Coleridge's eco-poetical approach towards nature is an objective understanding which means human beings are responsible for natural reactions according to their natural treatment (2018: 26). To put it differently, Ecocritical understanding regards nature as an objective being that does not do any deliberate harm to human beings such as earthquakes, hurricanes and landslides that are the expected consequences of exploiting the treatment of nature. Coleridge's works display that unfair treatment of nature drives a wedge between human beings and nature that is why human beings should value nature and protect natural harmony.

Animal rights and the way animals are treated have always been one of the main subjects of Romantic works. As mentioned recently, some Romantic writers go beyond writing about animals by even protesting on behalf of them for protective laws and pursuing vegetarian life. Whether or not their main aim was to defend animal rights, they created awareness for animal treatment within the society. Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" is one of the most outstanding examples of concern for animal lives and revealing the consequences of mistreatment of nature and its inhabitants. In terms of ecological ethics, what Coleridge does in the poem is a call for respecting Nature by presenting the story of the mariner as an exemplary experience for human beings. Simply, shooting the albatross is a crime against nature and symbolic of all other natural crimes committed by human beings. Coleridge suggests that nature always gets even with the unfair treatment by human beings as Engels says,

“We must not over-indulge in our victory over nature because for every such victory, nature has revenged us” (qtd. in Shumin, 2018: 27). As a result of all his sufferings, the mariner reaches the reduction by realising his crime against nature that is killing the albatross. By doing so, Coleridge aims to show the helplessness of human beings in front of nature unless human beings do coexist in a harmonious way with nature. As Shumin indicates, Mariner’s killing the albatross stands for human beings’ act of ignoring the existence of nature, the desire to override it and following their anthropocentric tendencies (2018: 28). The harmonious relationship between nature and human beings is broken by the act of killing the bird and Coleridge punishes the mariner to display how destructive the consequences can be for human beings if they do not coexist within nature. The poem is an obvious criticism by Coleridge for human beings’ ignorant and selfish actions in their relation to Earth. In addition, the poem warns people about their harmful actions affecting the future of human beings and other entities of nature by showing the reader the punishment of the mariner that is why Shumin regards Coleridge as “the great ecological prophet” (2018: 28). At present time human beings experience the consequences of their previous anti-ecological behaviours just as the mariner faces his punishment after breaking the harmony in the natural world.

### **4.3. “THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER”**

#### **4.3.1 Introduction to the Poem**

Coleridge and Wordsworth shared a mutual ecological concern for the ecosystem and inhabitants of nature. Coleridge’s concern for the protection of the natural world is reflected in *Lyrical Ballads*. “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” is one of the five poems that Coleridge contributed to the *Lyrical Ballads*, and it is situated at the head of the collection due to its suggestive and attractive themes. Dr Seamus Perry indicates that Coleridge acquired the inspiration for the poem during walking tours across the Quantock Hills towards the sea with Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy. There are some suggestions for certain parts by Wordsworth especially concerning Shelvocke’s *A Voyage Round the World, by Way of the Great South Sea* which is the story providing the main idea for the poem. This story also includes a sea voyage and a sailor’s shooting an albatross (Perry, 2019). Considered as an important

and early example of British Romantic poetry, the poem was published in 1798 in *the Lyrical Ballads*. The poem recounts the story of eventful and didactic voyage of the mariners and their return to home. The story is narrated by the Mariner to a wedding guest on his way to a wedding ceremony. The Mariner's story begins with departure from his homeland with his fellow mariners. When their ship is driven south by a storm, they reach to Antarctic and the ship is stuck in the icy waters. They are freed from the ice with the under the guidance of the albatross. Even though the mariners feed, praise and play with the bird, the Mariner shoots the albatross wantonly. At first, his fellow mariners condemn the Mariner for his act of killing the bird. However, they change their mind and support the Mariner when mist and snow disappear and weather condition gets milder. Then, the mariners encounter with the anger of the spirits when their ship is driven to the north. The mariners change their opinions again towards the act of killing the innocent bird and start to blame the Mariner for their thirst as a punishment for all mariners due to his guilt. Out of their anger, his fellow mariners hang the dead body of albatross around the Mariner's neck. Then, Death and Life-in-death throw dice upon the lives of the mariners and Death wins. Life-in-death wins the life of the Mariner and this incident becomes his punishment for killing the bird. The curse continues for seven days and nights until the Mariner appreciates the beauty of water snakes which he is disgusted by calling them as "slimy things" in the beginning of the poem. The mariner is released from the curse when he is able to pray again and the dead body of albatross falls from his neck. The Mariner's penance for killing the albatross is telling his story once and again so that his story becomes a didactic sermon for the listeners. Concordantly, the wedding guest becomes "a sadder and a wiser man" after listening the Mariner's story. In addition to the poem's moral connotation in relation to respecting nature, the poem is a reflection of Coleridge's growing concern for the relation between nature and humans. As Rookmaaker points out, the poem shows Coleridge's shifting concern from regarding nature as a distinct presence from human beings to assuming human beings and nature as a unified concept (1984: 85). The mariner realises the importance of every creature in nature through the existence of the albatross that is a foreshadowing approach to the contemporary ecocritical appreciation of all beings equally important. Even McKusick regards the poem as "parable of ecological transgression" (2000: 44).

Coleridge's use of language is an important determinant for the poem's ecological themes. As McKusick points out Coleridge's combining three different archaic usages creates a "lexical diversity" (2000: 48) that contributes to the poem's ecological vision. The poem is diversified from the classical examples in terms of Coleridge's use of archaic spelling, diction and wording that do not follow particular rules. Even the first version of the poem was entitled as "The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere" that included many archaic spellings. Upon Wordsworth's suggestion, Coleridge changed the spelling of the poem and even modernised the title. Coleridge's language concept makes new ways of different understandings of eighteenth-century themes and natural views. This development in his poetic language is utterly related to the improvement in his natural, social, historical and geographical perception and aesthetic principles. The poem is in the ballad form whose story is told by the Ancient Mariner to a young wedding guest. In addition, the setting of the poem is comprised of diverse historical periods, geographical space and social stratum unlike the classical settings that are unified under a single time and place (McKusick, 2000: 48). By doing so, Coleridge creates a poem that has its unique language and stylistic features and sustains archaic words in contemporary poetry. While composing *Lyrical Ballads*, Coleridge and Wordsworth aimed to create a poetic platform in which different poetic styles could dwell. Coleridge's *The Rime* is a coherent sample for this poetic diversity with its unique conception of language. McKusick explains Coleridge's language concept as a living organic system that can be reproduced many times to achieve diversity by inventing new words or modernising the archaic ones (2000: 50). For Coleridge, the development of language is conditioned with its environment just as the meaning of a poem depends on the literary community in which it is read (2000:50). Coleridge attributes language to a living form that evolves in time in accordance with different perceptions. Thus, both *The Rime* and its language have an organic structure that can be shaped according to the time and place in which it is read due to its archaic terminology, semantic diversity and spatial differentiation in historical and geographical terms. Its structure includes constant repetitions to emphasise the seriousness and danger of the mariners' situation as shown in the following lines, "The ice was here, the ice was there, / The ice was all around" (lines 59-60), "Alone, alone, all, all alone, / Alone on a wide, wide sea!" (lines 233-234). All these repetitions in the poem underline the desperate and isolated state of mind that mariners experience.



Apart from its semantic contribution, the repetitions provide rhythmical synchronization to the poem. In the poem, the familiar concepts to the Mariner are the kirk, lighthouse and wedding ceremony, contrasting with imaginary icebergs, luminous water snakes and game of dice between Death and Life-in-Death on the Mariner's soul. The mariner had to experience all these terrifying and ominous incidents in order to appreciate the value of natural life and restore the natural order.

According to Rookmaaker's reading "A Poem of Pure Imagination: an Experiment in Reading" which is an influential essay to comprehend the poem in ethical terms by R.P. Warren, the poem portrays the process of Mariner's crime, punishment, repentance stages and reconciliation stages (1984: 65). In this connection, Mariner's crime is wantonly shooting the albatross for which he is punished; however, his realisation of the value of life and the lives of other beings also serves as a gift for him. Warren interprets Mariner's reconciliation with nature as "In the end, he accepts the sacramental view of the universe, and his will is released from its state of "utmost abstraction" and gains the state of "immanence" in wisdom and love" (qtd. in Rookmaaker, 1984: 65). In order to comprehend the value of nature, humans need to widen their perception via reason and intellect so that they can realise the functioning of the natural world and their role in it. In this context, Coleridge undertakes the mission of guiding humans to grasp nature from the right perspective as he emphasises "Man has to be taught to look at nature in the right way" (qtd. in Rookmaaker, 1984: 88). However, Mariner's realisation has become a dark and fearful lesson. Warren presents a different approach to Mariner's sin by Coleridge that explains the sin is free from heredity which means his action is motiveless in practical sense because the Mariner has no obvious reason to kill the bird (1946: 396). What actually matters in Mariner's action is the Aristotelian doctrine of hamartia that symbolises the fall of the Mariner, as Coleridge says, "It is the result of no single human motive" (qtd. in Warren, 1946: 396). Put it differently, the consequences of Mariner's action are significant in addition to the reason for it because what happens to the Mariner contributes to the moralisation of the poem. That is how the act of killing the bird symbolically echoes a cosmic crime for all beings on Earth. Coleridge identifies harming the albatross with harming a human being: "As if it had been a Christian soul, /We hailed it in God's name" (*The Rime*, lines 65-66). An ecocritical reading of these lines creates a relation among all beings in nature because disturbing the natural balance by harming the bird

lays hands on the future of human beings. When the albatross comes around the ship through the snow-fog, it moves into the civilisation from nature. Then the Mariner and his crew are at the back of the black stump; in other words far from civilisation, they come closer to nature. The boundaries between humankind and the natural world become imperceptible when they leave behind human-specific notions such as religion and reason. They even recognise the desolate landscape on the ice layer as possessing a self-represented presence as understood from Mariner's description of the ice that "crack'd and growl'd and rosr'd and howl'd" (25). Then, a mutual companionship occurs between the albatross and mariners. Even the mariners nourish the albatross while the bird provides them guidance and play: "The Albatross did follow/ And every day, for food or play" (72-73). This relationship between the bird and mariners is a "symbiotic exchange between man and beast" which means nature and civilisation are intertwined for the hard times of human beings (McKusick, 2000: 45). The previous lines display the scene just before the mariner kills the bird in which the mariners and the albatross travel together and coexist in a harmonious way. Upon this companionship and symbiotic relationship between the mariners and the bird, the Mariner's act of killing the albatross is quite counterintuitive. Besides, his action of killing an innocent creature is symbolic of the interference of the civilisation to nature through technology. The mariner stands for the civilisation while the albatross symbolises all of the innocent creatures of the Antarctic and the Mariner's killing the bird with a crossbow is representative of the technological intrusion of the civilisation to the natural life. The destruction of the bird causes the disruption of the whole economy of nature presented in the poem as the Mariner's witness of the death of his fellow marines and decay of life around him. The death of his crew intensifies the Mariner's isolation and alienation now that he is torn away from both his friends and Nature. Upon the bird's death, the Mariner observes "slimy things did crawl with legs/ Upon the slimy sea" (*The Rime*, lines 126-127). Here, a chaotic and unfamiliar side of nature is presented; however, this image is the outcome of the way the Mariner treats nature. The unfortunate incidents following the death of the bird start with the stopping of the wind: "For all averred, I had killed the bird / That made the breeze to blow" (93-94). Here, Coleridge associates the albatross with the wind as wind vanishes with the disappearance of the bird. Thus, the lines evoke the unity of everything in nature and show their harmonious functioning in unity.

### **4.3.2. The Mariner and The Albatross**

The tale of the poem may be applied to anytime, anywhere and anyone in that the characters are not specific people as they are merely called the mariners, helmsman, pilot, pilot's boy and hermit. Even the setting of the plot is not definite as the name of the ship is not known and the harbour from which they sail, and return is just known as their home (Mays, 2016: 28). In this regard, as the central character of the poem, the Mariner may stand for any ordinary human being in society while the albatross represents all other harmless and innocent creatures in nature. In this way, the act of killing the albatross symbolises inconsiderate anti-environmental practices in nature by human beings. At the beginning of the poem, the mariner is indifferent and ignorant towards his environment and living entities. Peter Heymans defines the Mariner's alienated encounter with nature as an antagonistic and repulsive tendency that creates a kinship between humans and non-human beings, especially animals (2007:17). That is why the Mariner is not capable of grasping the interdependence and unity in nature. The Mariner's main hamartia is his delusive state of mind that makes him think independent and superior over nature. His anthropocentric attitude constitutes a danger to nature for he may justify his act of killing an innocent bird out of this ecophobic world view. When he embarks on his journey, he lacks empathy and fails to recognise the fact that he is part of his surrounding environment. The mariner experiences his native land for the sake of an expedition of exploration that ends up a self-discovery of himself. Then his ecologic humbleness becomes his emancipation. One of the Mariner's main mistakes is his unawareness of "nature's life-giving activity" and "man's passive receptivity" (Rookmaaker, 1984: 69). At the beginning of the poem, he cannot foresee the consequences of inconsiderate actions within the natural cycle to which the mariner is subject to maintain his life. After the punishment, the mariner reaches the level of awareness that displays shooting the albatross as an act of breaking the natural order, and he is open to being affected by this disruption equally. He realises his punishment is not merely for shooting a bird, but his action stands for a wider crime within the nature when the albatross is regarded as symbolic of nature. In the matter of passive receptivity of human beings, Carlisle Huntington

interprets ship's driven to inhospitable regions by a great storm signifies humankind's lack of agency in the universe (2017:9). The ship and its crew are both physically and mentally drifted and forsaken by falling into the hands of nature. Nature's revenge for killing the albatross is taking the ability of speech and having a conversation with the mariners. The Mariner is especially dehumanised in the punishment process.

One of the important crimes that the Mariner is guilty of is his pride against Nature. Even though he appreciates the love for water snakes, in part IV he still pursues his pride against Nature in the following stanza:

The many men so beautiful!  
And they all dead did lie:  
And a thousand thousand slimy things  
Lived on; and so did I. (*The Rime*, lines 237-241)

Here, the mariner protests the fact that his fellow mariners are dead while slimy things are alive because he grows the value of the mariners over the slimy creatures' right to life. His unwillingness of comprehending the value of non-human beings is one of the severe problems that contemporary ecocritical studies issue in relation to ecophobia. Out of his ignorance towards the right to live of all beings, the Mariner is alienated from the slimy things. The existence of slimy things gives the pips to the Mariner and terrifies him. In his influential article "The Environmental Imagination in the Slime of the Ancient Mariner", Estok evokes a resemblance between the narrator and the slime which erases the distinction between them and horrifies the Mariner when they are the only creatures staying alive (2019(c):2). The depiction of the slimy things might be advisedly nauseous and threatening in that it contributes to the vindicative setting of the poem's natural world. What is more, appreciation of a scorned and detested creature is much more challenging than acknowledging the value of an appealing entity. On the other hand, the crime cannot be solely put on the Mariner because the fellow-mariners are also accomplices in the crime for they first appreciate Mariner's act when the fog is cleared off. To Assistant Professor Dr. Turan Özgür Güngör's words, the mariners regard the bird just as a vehicle that they do not need after the bird saves their lives so that they do not see the Mariner's error of shooting the albatross (2020(b): 367). Even they first celebrate the Mariner for his act of killing the bird whom they think bringing the fog and mist: "Then all averred, I had killed the bird/That brought the fog and mist." (*The Rime*, lines 99-100). Their mistaken judgement of holding the bird responsible for the fog and mist shows the mariners believe they can

overcome nature. As German philosopher Friedrich Engels remarks “We must not over-indulge in our victory over nature because for every such victory, nature has revenged us” (qtd. in Shumin, 2018: 27). The perception of the mariners is obfuscated out of their self-centred worldview. They interrupt the functioning of the universe and assume it as a victory with which they can get away. However, nature avenges by leaving them deprived of nature and its entities. Nature’s punishment for the fellow mariners is experiencing a lingering death which is also a punishment for the Mariner for he is left alone. The Mariner’s breaking the harmony puts the mariners into the despair; however, he continues to live so that he experiences a spiritual rebirth that teaches him the helplessness of humans in confrontation with nature. Güngör emphatically regards the message of Coleridge through the punishment of the fellow mariners as people who keep silent towards ecological crimes are equally guilty as people who commit the main crime (2020(b): 368). To put it differently, the fellow mariners are as guilty as the Mariner even though they do not get involved in the crime physically. Their guilt is staying indifferent while the Mariner is intervening in the natural balance by killing the bird. Eventually both the Mariner and the fellow mariners are equally affected by his thoughtless and aimless action. Associating this scene with contemporary ecological incidents, people who remain insensitive towards the exploitation of natural sources, deforestation, water contamination, air pollution, etc. are evenly responsible for the main crimes because everyone invariably experiences the detrimental consequences. One of the central images of the poem is the albatross whose existence is quite crucial in that the presence of nature is personified in the bird. In addition, the albatross is the only alive creature that accompanies the mariners within the ice. The bird is actually their saviour in that their ship gets out of the block of ice when the albatross comes out of the fog. Pyeaaam Abbasi defines the Mariner’s motiveless act of shooting the albatross as a betrayal of nature in that the bird is part of Nature (2014:6). By shooting the albatross, the Mariner separates his tie from nature because the bird symbolises the oneness of all creatures. Then nature stops helping the mariners by falling into the silence which is the severest punishment for the mariners. When the albatross vanishes from the ecosystem that is shared by the mariners, they are seriously affected by its absence. This incident implies that humans are the members of the ecosystem as much as the other beings in nature and they have no other choice but to live in a harmonious way to survive. For Güngör, the albatross

symbolises links between both natural and spiritual worlds (2020(a):19). The presence of albatross shows human beings should respect all beings in nature and try to find harmonious ways of living all together. One way of acquiring this compatibility is developing natural and spiritual connections through the protection and appreciation of natural ecology.

### **4.3.3. Symbols**

The poem invokes certain images that refer to several symbols. First, the symbol of light is very important determinant for the course of events in the poem. As Warren indicates there is a constant contrast between the sunlight and moonlight that determine the type of the event in accordance with the kinds of light (1946: 402). The running of the light is important to distinguish the events from each other. This tendency may be recognised when good events take place under the moon while the bad events happen under the sun. For Güngör, the sun is a symbol of authority and influence in that it is associated with God's power while the moon stands for God's forgiveness and fairness (2020(b):367). That may be why revengeful incidents take place under the sun. Coleridge's reverse association of good incidents to the night and bad incidents to daytime is a controversial approach to the conventional sense of light and dark and good and bad. Apart from the symbolic appointments of the moon and sun, they frequently take place in the poem within the natural concept. Wind and storm are other strong images that have strong symbolic significance. Above all, the storm is the main reason why the ship is driven to the south and gets out of its line. It takes human beings out of their comfort and reliable zone towards the unknown. Even though the storm has a hostile attitude at the beginning of the poem, it is also observed that the storm is depicted as the symbol of vitality and creative force as Warren describes (1946: 406). Warren's description of the storm as a life-giving force is right because the storm brings him "the life-giving rain" after the Mariner's redemption (1946: 406). Here, the storm has an ambivalent presentation between destructive and constructive images. At the beginning of the poem, nature seems to have an indifferent attitude towards human beings for it does not interfere while the mariner and his fellows are driven by the wind. As Fangpeng GAI describes, the mariners take shelter in nature when they face unpleasant weather (2014:117). Actually, nature protects the mariners against bad weather conditions by sending them the albatross which the

mariners fail to read as a sign. On the other hand, the wind is also presented as a creative motif that rebuilds the relation between the Mariner and his fellows. Then, the albatross is sent to the mariners as a good omen. Warren regards the albatross as the sacramental bird and associates its existence in collaboration with the moon; even calls it “moon-bird” (Warren, 1946: 407). The moon’s first appearance in the poem takes place with the albatross that is not coincide when the moon is associated with vital principles and the friendly bird. When the Mariner announces his crime with the following lines, “With my crossbow I shot the Albatross”, Coleridge succeeds in conjuring up an association with crime and sun as the following line of the crime is “The Sun now rose up on the right” (*The Rime*, lines 81-82-83). In other words, Mariner’s crime brings along the sun changing both the direction of the ship and the life of the mariners. The Mariner kills the bird out of his arrogance, in a similar way, his fellow mariners condemn his action for the wrong reason: They cannot interpret the rise of the sun as a bad omen related to the death of the bird, instead, they accept the crime when fog and mist are brought.

Contrasting the vital description of the moon, the Mariner experiences loneliness and fixedness, and he yearns for his previous life and joy under the moon and stars. However, this process causes him to appreciate the value of all creatures and beauty in nature. Even though the process that Mariner experiences is sorrowful, the consequence of this process emerges him into the daylight. Water snakes are also quite important as being the main inhabitant of nature around the ship as McKusick calls them “vital participants in the ship's local ecosystem” (1996:387). In addition, they are a great contribution to the ecotone of the habitat by supporting the richness of marine life (1996:387). In addition, they are accepted to the cycle in the universe when the Mariner blesses their existence and recognises their beauty:

O happy living things! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare:  
A spring of love gushed from my heart  
And I blessed them unaware: (*The Rime*, lines 283-286)

Realising the beauty of the water snakes grows up “a spring of love” in the Mariner’s heart. According to Estok, The Mariner’s feeling of “spring of love” is “a shift in environmental ethics from a position of exceptionalism and ecophobic antagonism to biophilic engagement and belonging” (2019(c): 2). That is to say, the Mariner’s appreciation of every creature in nature echoes his participation in the natural cycle.

By doing so, the Mariner breaks the shell of alienation towards nature and its inhabitants. Eventually, the Mariner realises that blessing the existence of the water snakes is the only way of their survival. When the Mariner blesses the water-snakes from his heart, he is released from the spell and his fellow mariners come to life again. Put it differently, the Mariner's recognition of the value of natural life re-establishes a connection between nature and his fellow mariners. When the lines are analysed from an ecocritical perspective, it is invoked that human beings can coexist in nature only when they cooperate with other beings in nature. This cooperation requires a sincere appreciation of the value of natural entities and a genuine realisation of the unity of all beings. In other words, the Mariner needs love for other beings whom he previously underestimates in order to stay alive in nature. The poem might be analysed from several different perspectives due to multi-dimensional symbols. The Mariner's imperfect vision of nature and inability to understand natural order, as Rookmaaker associates, is reflected through the imagery of fog (1984: 75). When the albatross comes through the fog, it meets the Mariner's lack of empathy for the value of natural beings. Warren approaches the poem like a fable with a story of crime, punishment, repentance and reconciliation (1946: 391). When the Mariner kills the albatross, he severely suffers from loneliness and spiritual anguish. Then he experiences love for water snakes after realising their beauty. Returning to his home, he finds God in the unity of human community, and he gives tongue to the moral of the poem:

He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small;  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all (*The Rime*, lines 615-618).

The mariner witnesses the destructive consequences of his deliberate and thoughtless actions towards nature, and he expresses his remorse by valuing all creatures in nature regardless of their size. That is why the Mariner is depicted as "a sadder and a wiser man" at the end of the poem (*The Rime*, line 625). In a similar manner, the young wedding guest becomes a more serious man after listening to the Mariner's story. When the ship reaches the harbour, the Mariner meets Hermit who maintains good relations with nature. As Warren indicates the Hermit is both priest of nature and society and priest of God (1946: 417). Hermit helps the redemption of the Mariner by illuminating him about the necessary divine bond between human beings and the



natural world in order to survive. The Mariner assumes the Hermit as a saviour whom he relies on for “He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away /The Albatross's blood.” (*The Rime*, line 514-515). Even though the Mariner reconciles with nature after he is freed from the dead body of the albatross around his neck, he knows that he is not ransomed yet. The Mariner has to live with the penance of his guilt that is telling his story wherever he wanders. The aim of this redemption is to illuminate and warn other humans about the harsh consequences of his guilt. Thus, the story of the mariner becomes a universal experience that can be applied to all beings so that his story will be passed down through generations.

Nature is crucial for the poem in that it is the setting, one of the main characters and the most symbolic entity of the poem. It is the source of inspiration for Coleridge, home for human beings, animals and supernatural incidents and moral guide in the poem. In addition, Nature is at the determinant position for the fate of the mariners due to Mariner's crime. *The Rime* may be regarded as a nature poem for its abundant natural descriptions; however, from an ecocritical perspective, the poem includes a more complicated sense of nature that includes two different inner and outer worlds. Coleridge personifies nature as an entity that responds to unfair treatment and interruptions of human beings in its own way. As a living entity, nature grieves for the death of the albatross. Apart from its lament, nature revenges the death of an innocent bird through the anguish of the Mariner. In this case, nature may seem cruel; however, it is also unvengeful especially in that it allows the Mariner to participate in nature again by letting him feel the wind again when he appreciates the beauty in nature: “But soon there breathed a wind on me, . . . /It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek” (*The Rime*, lines 454-458). Accordingly, one may find punishment, absolution and recompense in nature. When applied to the poem, the mariner witnesses the dialogue of the spirits that represent the mercifulness of nature. Güngör observes nature's sadness in the poem as the colours of the sky are changed by the colours reminding hell, death and revenge (2020(b): 268). In return, human beings are highly affected by nature's reaction that is separation from the natural community because they are inescapably part of nature. The Mariner's act of killing the innocent bird affects the inner world of the Mariner and stops the life around the Mariner. As being an early ecocritic, Coleridge values all living entities of nature as much as he appreciates nature as he can realise the beauty of their soul and existence. For Coleridge, “everything has

a life of its own, and that we are all One Life” (qtd. in Abbasi, 2014: 9). In other words, the lives of each creature are valuable and unified under the natural order. His idea of the interconnectedness of all beings in nature makes room for the unity of mind and nature. When the Mariner is estranged from nature due to his irrecoverable crime, he cannot find consolation for his anguish from nature so that he is both physically and spiritually desolated:

Alone, alone, all, all alone,  
Alone on a wide wide sea!  
And never a saint took pity on  
My soul in agony. (*The Rime*, lines 233-236)

After realising his helplessness in his fight against nature, the Mariner’s egotism gives place to a notion of uniting with the other organism in nature. That is to say, the Mariner positions himself at the centre of the poem’s universe out of his anthropocentric ethos. His recognition of animals’ genuine value dethrones the Mariner from the centre of the cosmos and unifies him with other organisms.

Heymans describes the Coleridgean sublime as connecting the human consciousness and nature to bring order to the chaotic world by quoting him: “Where neither whole nor parts, but unity, as boundless or endless allness – the Sublime” (2007: 19). In this connection, the Mariner’s ecological illumination echoes Coleridge’s idea of the sublime that eventually unites the Mariner with this environment. Apart from its contribution to ecological criticism of the poem, the idea of the sublime serves the aesthetic appreciation of the natural world. What is more, the Mariner’s apprehension of nature changes after he feels natural alienation and loneliness in his bones. When he first encounters slimy things, he describes his environment like an apocalyptic scene out of his despair. However, his encounter with water snakes becomes an utterly different experience for the mariner because he is woken to the necessity of union in nature. After his perception is changed, the Mariner becomes enraptured by the presence of the water snakes and starts to sense nature through an aesthetic point of view:

I watched their rich attire:  
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,  
They coiled and swam; and every track  
Was a flash of golden fire. (*The Rime*, lines 279-282)

The lines express the Mariner's taking pleasure in the biological richness of marine life. Here, Coleridgean sense of sublime enables the Mariner to respect and appreciate the existence of the creatures against which he formerly carries a grudge. Abbasi discovers the activating power of imagination that is created by a meaningful link between human beings and nature (2014: 10). In other words, Coleridge's affection for nature and its entities provides him with an imaginative power that enables him to realise the beauty beyond the senses. The poem has a dreamy atmosphere that motivates the reader to use their imagination to grasp the symbols. For example, Coleridge attributes the albatross in the poem as a sign of a good omen and divinity. The bird's significance sounds meaningful only within the context of the poem. Abbasi's emphasis on the significance of the senses within the nature falls on the idea that nature provides a sense of sight and hearing and enables one to feel the God that is why the Mariner's punishment is being devoid of seeing and hearing after he harms nature (2014: 10). His punishment for breaking the organic unity in nature is quite symbolic especially when his senses are violated too. When he makes peace with nature by appreciating the unity of all creatures in nature, nature rewards the Mariner by sending rain and wind that enable the mariners to go back to their home. Rain is one of the determinant images in the poem especially within the Mariner's process of punishment and being forgiven. Even though the crew is surrounded by the sea, they are dying of thirst because God deprives the mariners of the rain as part of their punishment.

Water, water, every where,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, every where,  
Nor any drop to drink. (*The Rime*, lines 119-122)

Dr Deepa Mary Francis creates a resemblance between suffering from lack of water in the ship surrounded by the sea and the present crisis of water famine even though all continents are bordered by oceans (2015: 314). Climate change, which is the aftermath of natural exploitation, has been the main determinant in the depletion of water just as the harmony in the nature of the poem is disturbed by the Mariner's mistake. By polluting the water sources, a significant amount of people cannot obtain fresh water at the present time. As an ecocritical reflection from the poem, the Mariner is devoid of drinking water as a result of the serious damage caused by him to the nature.

When the Mariner is forgiven, it rains as a sign of God's mercy. (Güngör , 2020(b): 369). Even though nature is personified in the poem, an ecocritical perception can still be deducted through the principle of as a man sows, so shall he reap. Ecocritical studies always underlie the neutral stance of nature towards human activities; however, the unfavourable natural reactions that affect human beings negatively are organic consequences of thoughtless actions by human beings. Human beings mistreat their environment in return they face serious environmental problems; in a similar vein, the Mariner harms the nature by killing an innocent bird and he faces hell on Earth as a consequence. For LI Shumin, the lines "I looked upon the rotting sea" (*The Rime*, line 241) and "The charmed water burnt always/ A still and awful red." (271-272) evidently portray an ecological crisis with the description of "the rotting sea" that represents the death of numerous marine organisms (2018: 27). Along the same line, the burning red light refers to the marine pollution for it looks like burning flame from a distance (2018: 27). Coleridge's portrayal of the destruction of the natural environment of the poem resembles to contemporary ecological reports of marine pollution. Though the reason why the Mariner kills the bird is never explicitly revealed, his motivation might be fed with anthropocentric ideas and ecophobic causes. Even the fact that Mariner does not have a solid reason to kill the bird illustrates how he does not care about the surrounding creatures. Estok maintains that "the apparently senseless and unwarranted killing of the albatross– and it is precisely this imagining of a hostile, antagonistic, and vengeful nature that situates the poem firmly within a long tradition of ecophobic environmental ethics" (2019(c): 2). What Estok means is the underlying reason for the act of killing is an inhospitable attitude towards nature even though it seems to be motiveless that turns the Mariner's act into an ecophobic crime. Thereby, the most outstanding ecocritical criticism of the poem is Mariner's ecophobic attitude towards nature specific to the albatross. His attitude constructs boundaries between the inner world of the Mariner and outside nature while this approach eventually causes him to kill the bird wantonly. Heyman has a distinguishable approach to Mariner's egocentric cosmivision that is on the basis of subjugating nature by humanising its entities with human influence. To exemplify his argument through the agency of the albatross, Heyman foregrounds the line 67, "It ate the food it ne'er had eat" which portrays preternatural dependence of human ascendancy (2007: 21). His argument can be related to Mariner's ecophobic

apprehension of the universe in that the mariners impose their way of nutrition on the albatross by offering human food to a bird. Even though their act of feeding the bird may not include intentional harm, offering the albatross human food is quite symbolic for interfering with its wildlife. From another angle, their action might be similar to imperial motives of imposing their culture on the native people, or abuse of women through social enforcements and inequalities in that ecocritical criticism is related to all kinds of imposition for all beings and species. Returning to the subject of offering human food to a bird, their unwitting act can actually be classified as an ecophobic influence because the mariners dive into the to the natural world of albatross with human criterions instead of trying to adjust themselves to the surrounding environment. Positioning themselves at the highest position above all other creatures puts the mariners in a conflicting situation with nature.

#### **4.3.4. Imperialism and Industrialism**

Abbasi expresses Coleridge's sense of colonisation and cross-cultural interactions through the poem's "transatlantic ideological voyage" (2014: 1). As pointed earlier, voyages to Oriental lands with Western imperialist intentions are threats to both local inhabitants of the land and the untouched nature of these areas. McKusick indicates that Coleridge learnt a lot about the marine life around the ship from marine explorations of tropical regions just as other contemporary British explorers did (2000: 46). Even though the poem is part of nineteenth century British literature that is highly dominated by themes of imperialism and wars between France and England, an ecocritical analysis of the poem shows that Coleridge finds these explorations harmful for nature. When the mariners are likened to the British naval forces that are regarded as heroes for serving their country, their journey is considered a threat to the natural world. Abbasi's emphasis on the Mariner's in-between condition falls on the idea that personifies the Mariner as both the colonised and coloniser in that he loses his homeland and is defeated by the native culture (2014: 3). According to this comparison, nature becomes the invincible power that determines the fate of the mariners and inflicts punishment when they become a threat for the native land and its inhabitants. Even though the reason why the Mariner kills the albatross is not definite, his act might have resembled colonial purposes of harming the native people for dominating and controlling their land in that the Mariner is also an intruder to the

albatross's natural environment. Gai's approach to the self-confidence of human beings is related to the Industrial Revolution (2014:118). When humans experienced successful improvements in social, economic and industrial areas, they started to see themselves as superior to non-human beings and nature. They got the impression that they could defeat nature so that they no longer respected and needed to protect nature. Today, the wilderness and forests are colonised by profit-oriented nature exploiters. Most of the people cannot reach the green fields and are stuck in the urban areas.

#### **4.3.5. Moral and Religious Details**

Other than an ecocritical reading of the poem, *The Rime* is generally attributed to moral significance for it issues spiritual struggle and soul's finding peace. Approached from a moral point of view, Coleridge presents a world that provides justice and punishment in return for the Mariner's crime. The poem bluntly declares if you sin you are punished, if you repent sincerely you are rewarded by a divine power that may be interpreted as God in a moral sense or as Nature in ecocritical exposition. Coleridge evokes a divine sense of nature in which God dwells. Finding God in both human beings and nature creates harmony between them. As Gai indicates humans and nature can be regarded as equal because they are both creations of God according to the Creation story (2014:118). In the Creation story, God creates everything equally; however, it is human beings that create hierarchy and difference between humans and nonhuman beings. That is why humans entitle themselves as the possessor of nature and cannot identify the soul of nature. Rookmaaker expresses Coleridge's sense of divine intervention as "nature is the language God speaks to man, but it is up to man whether he is willing to listen to it or not" (1984: 68). If humans fail to read natural signs sent by divine power, they are doomed to experience anguish. In the simplest terms, the Mariner is not supposed to harm an innocent creature; however, he does by misreading the divine interference and he falls into despair out of his own actions. A careful reading of the poem shows what the Mariner lives through provides Christian concepts of crime, punishment and reconciliation. Nature is attributed to a divine position, in a similar vein, the albatross is defined by the Mariner "As if it had been a Christian Soul, / We hail'd it in God's name" (*The Rime*, lines 65-66). Apart from its association with nature, the albatross might be related to supernatural power in that it is sent by God to save the mariners as the lines indicate. Thus, the Mariner's crime is

not only against nature but also against the God by whom the bird is sent to rescue the mariners. For Coleridge, loving and respecting nature is equal to love and respect for God in that nature is found in God just as other beings. Thus, the Mariner's troubled relationship with nature stands for his failed relationship with God. When he is alienated from nature, he is also estranged from God. The Mariner cannot pray during his punishment because his heart and soul are not innocent enough to pray due to his crime. When he reconciles with nature after he appreciates the beauty of the water snakes, he can start praying again: "And I blessed them unaware. /The self-same moment I could pray" (288-289). For Shumin, the appearance of the water-snakes is symbolic of the resurrection of the Holy Spirit while the Mariner's transformation from a cruel shooting of an innocent bird to a pious prayer for the water snakes is tantamount to a twisted journey from original sin to repentance and rebirth (2018: 28). Here, Coleridge employs religious terms to integrate his ecological philosophy into the poem and to show the consequences of humans' irresponsible actions towards nature. Ward suggests that the symbolic significance of hanging the dead albatross around the Mariner's neck is explicitly developed in lines, "Instead of the Cross the Albatross / About my neck was hung" (lines 141-142) in which the albatross may be regarded as the substitute for the cross and symbol of Christ (2013:111). By hanging the bird, the main aim of the mariners is constantly reminding the Mariner of his guilt; however, their action's religious association is non-negligible. In this connection, the Mariner may resemble Christ in that he also carries the guilt of all humanity that exploits nature and causes environmental problems. However, unlike Christ, the Mariner is genuinely guilty for wantonly killing the bird and he cannot grasp the reason why he is being punished. Even after the Mariner makes peace with nature as part of God and reunites with his fellows, he keeps carrying the agony of his crime. The following lines portray Mariner's fear of being forsaken by God which means being alienated to nature and his men: "So lonely 'twas, that God himself/ Scarce seemed there to be." (601-602). God's presence gives him relief and strengthens his connection with nature and fellow-mariners. Out of his lamentable experience, the Mariner becomes a devout person and finds peace in religion.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,  
To walk together to the kirk  
With a goodly company!--  
To walk together to the kirk,  
And all together pray, (*The Rime*, lines 602-606).

As Özlem Yılmaz remarks Coleridge connects everything in nature with the presence of God as a consequence of that any disrespectfulness towards nature causes the anger of God (2014: 63). This unity also contributes to Coleridgean idea of the sublime which alludes to uniting with God while referring to the wholeness in the universe. Accordingly for Coleridge, “natural sublimity begins with a species of emphatic response to a great, complex, or otherwise inspiring object and culminates in an intuition of the mystery and greatness of the absolute one and all, of the Christian God” (Yılmaz, 2014: 65). Coleridge’s religious philosophy is reflected in the poem in which the running of the universe is never independent of the intervention of God. Besides, one of the reasons why Coleridge values nature is in its relationship with divine power. Thus, valuing nature equals respect for God. He even presents supernatural elements and incidents in relation to nature that is another perspective conforming to the influence of nature on his religious philosophy. All supernatural and mysterious events are in some way related to natural concepts that attribute more symbolic and intense meaning in connection with God. This is why the Mariner’s killing of an innocent bird both stands for the crime against nature and God.



## CONCLUSION

Ecocriticism meets the requirement of questioning an anthropocentric point of view in all fields of real life. Nature writing shows people that it is unfair for nature while impossible and incorrect for people to try to dominate and control nature. In a hurry of exploitation of the natural sources, humans fail to recognise they are actually blown up by their own bomb while they are bringing the end of the world. With the increasing deterioration of the natural environment, the ecological worries come from the most frequent problem of the society. Today, the relationship between nature and human beings should be urgently reviewed and profound changes should take place immediately in that the situation of the Ecosphere deteriorates day by day. Aforesaid ecological anxiety becomes a fundamental concern of the writers who have a sense of responsibility for their natural environment. From past to present, literature has had different missions, such as entertaining, teaching, directing, etc; however, today, literature's most useful function is to create environmental awareness and place earth-centred consciousness within human beings. While doing so, it is in need of consulting science to present environmental problems in a realistic and objective way and receiving the support of other literary disciplines to spread ecological concerns within the interdisciplinary fields of study. Nature writing is a necessary subject field for the recent conditions regarding environmental problems and it should become widespread especially in English literary criticism and theory and among the other crucial studies regarding social concerns. Literature is a very important tool in creating social awareness about environmental concerns in society. It has the power to change moral values and approaches to nature and nonhuman entities in accordance with eco-conscious cognisance. With the help of ecocritical studies, it settles an environmental culture among the society in which all human, nonhuman, living and non-living beings are treated equally according to their own coequal inherent value.

Romantic ecocriticism analyses how Romantic writers issue nature in their works and how they approach human and non-human world relations. Reading Romantic works through an ecological lens shows how indeed Romantics create the basis of environmental studies and scientific analysis of the environment. It can be claimed that some of the Romantic poets are the early activists who try to protect and defend nature against environmental corruption. That is why an environmental parallelism may easily be found between Ecocritical and Romantic studies. Even

though Romantic studies did not announce themselves as green studies or ecocritical studies, they have always been involved with the problems that the ecosphere faced throughout the Romantic period and what humans and the industrial revolution brought. Romantic writers reflected these social, economic, political problems that they experienced in their poetry. The traces of the way they issue environmental problems can still be found in contemporary environmental literature. The romantic to approach of nature is definitely a positive contribution to the modern sense of ecological understanding. Even though their warnings about the future of the Earth are not direct but artistic and insinuating, they still play a crucial role in understanding humans' part in environmental disasters. After all, classifying Romantic literature as a poetry of escapism and imagination is a mischaracterisation for Romanticism which is actually an environmentalist literary philosophical system supported by natural sciences. Romantic literature deeply issues the relation between human and non-human world that is still one of the main concerns of ecocritical studies.

As a Romantic poet, Coleridge's poetical manifestation is quite related to contemporary environmental concerns. He values each entity for their own sake, regardless of the benefit they provide for human life, and he pays sufficient attention to the connectedness of each creature in nature. Accordingly, the early implication of biodiversity and biological unity is clearly observed in Coleridge's works. The poem develops many valuable insights about Coleridge's environmental advocacy and ecological vision especially in that it is the presentation of denunciation of ecophobia and anthropocentric point of view. In this sense, Coleridge may take an equal stand with contemporary ecocritics in that he argues that human beings should leave their anthropocentric ethos and acquire an ecocentric attitude. That is why Coleridge's poem is more than a standard late-eighteenth century of Romantic poetry: Coleridge evokes the sense of equality between natural entities and human beings by emphasising the fact that nature is not created for the service and use of human beings. For Coleridge, dominating creatures other than humans is not humans' given right by God. However, it would be unfair to regard *The Rime* as a psychological reflection of Coleridge's mind because Coleridge's perception of nature gives rise to different thoughts in each person about the capacity of nature in affecting human life. Coleridge introduces a language between nature and human beings that need to listen and realise the environmental reactions to their actions because nature always responds to its treatment. For example,

in the poem, the Mariner is forgiven when he sincerely blesses the water snakes, in other words, he realises the value of each entity in nature. Out of the experiences of the Mariner, it can be concluded that natural crimes can be absolved from guilt on the condition that human beings accept themselves just as any other member of the natural community and respect other lives. Humans should not separate themselves from rest of the nature and they should look for ways of living in harmonious ways with all beings in the ecosystem. Otherwise, nonhuman beings would not be the only creatures that would be affected by harmful acts of humans in that exploitation of the natural world is a reciprocal punishment for all. As long as humans assume the attitude of the Mariner who regards himself superior to an innocent bird, they will correlatively get harmed. Ecophobic approach to nature and its entities is one of the most inevitable causes of the environmental problems in that humans justify themselves for harming the Ecosphere by hiding behind the negative effects of nature. What they fail to recognise is these negativities such as environmental catastrophes are the backlash of nature struggling against human intervention. Ecocentric approaches towards nature should replace anthropocentric views so that praxis regarding human beings' relation to nature may change in daily life. Coleridge gives the message of abandoning ecophobic habits by simply implying love and respect for all beings in nature are the only way of reconciliation of human beings with their environment. He also warns his audience against the eventuality of permanent disasters due to their disrespectful attitude towards the environment. In addition, Coleridge eloquently evokes that crimes against nature can be forgiven as long as humans repent even though nature always takes its revenge. Coleridge presents an alternative and happier life in which humans coexist harmoniously with nature and its inhabitants instead of struggling against nature through exploitations and massacres.

Taken together, 'ecocriticism', 'ecophobia' in relation to the 'deep ecology' and Romantic poetry can be brought together under the same roof within the analysis of *The Rime* that is an impelling masterpiece calling for ecological ethics. What Coleridge puts emphasises on about the effects of human behaviours on nature can still find an echo in today's ecocritical works. Coleridge's ultimate message of the poem echoes contemporary ecocritical concern that regards today's environmental problems, which are the product of anthropocentric habits and ecophobic tendencies of human beings. Anthropocentric point of view towards nature enables humans to act selfishly

and to harm other beings easily while ecophobic inclinations become a vehicle of justification for these behaviours. An ecocritical reading of the poem lays emphasis on the relationship between human beings and nature that is used as a vehicle for the betterment of human lives. Coleridge invites his readers to respect and treat with tenderness and affection towards nature via his poem. His keen interest in science, specific to biology, enables Coleridge to foresee the ecological problems that Industrial Revolution can cause to the natural environment. That is why Coleridge is known as 'the great ecological prophet' who envisages the potential consequences of manipulating, enslaving, alienating, conquering and abusing nature. In this manner, *The Rime* might be taken into account as an ecological warning for human beings to realise the consequences of industrial development. The poem is an ecological foreshadowing from a century ago by an early ecologist about the incorrectness of the materialisation of nature. It is very important and valuable especially in the age of serious climate change and ecophobic ideologies in that it offers environmentalist solutions for this anthropocentric era. In addition to the moral aspect of the poem, it includes some aesthetic values in relation to the poetry. What Coleridge does in the poem is not merely depicting the physical environment, but he appreciates the value of the natural landscape. While doing so, he successfully touches on the environmental disaster caused by the Mariner and proposes the ultimate solution that is the reconciliation of humans and the nonhuman world. To indicate an influential approach to the poem, human beings are the main target that is supposed to be affected by their own inconsiderate actions in addition to other members of the natural environment. Nature will keep taking its revenge as long as humans do not attempt to stop environmental problems such as water and air pollution and deforestation. Thus, Coleridge raises awareness of ecological crises and natural protection among his readers.

The importance of nature for human beings and its own sake should be accepted in the first place. While taking a step with the environmental concerns, one should not follow the steps of the ancestors which is a humanist approach to the universe, instead the future of children should be thought of by taking non-anthropocentric steps for the survival of the universe. Ecocentric philosophy of life should be acquired so that human beings can regard themselves as equal to other entities of the Ecosphere. It has to be realised that anthropocentrism is situated at the

centre of environmental and global catastrophes. For this cause, ecocritical studies play a crucial role in informing and educating society about ecological issues. These studies aim to explain that humans and nature are inseparable members of the Ecosphere. Caring for nature also means looking after the benefits of human beings because humans need a natural process in order to survive. Even if not, nature should be respected as being an individual entity that has soul, order and balance. Even Coleridge goes on to argue that nature is not merely a physical object to be exploited in his poem. What humans should do is to keep pace with this order and try to find a place in this ecologic equilibrium that Coleridge already realised the necessity of fair treatment of nature in the eighteenth century and warned people about the unavoidability of a coexistent living.

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### 3. ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

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