

AN ECOCRITICAL STUDY OF TED HUGHES'S LATER POETRY

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ÖZET

Hughes'ün ekolojik fikirleri özellikle son dönem şiirlerini oluşturan *Remains of Elmet* (*Elmet'in Kalıntıları*) (1979), *River* (*Nehir*) (1983) ve *Wolfwatching* (*Kurt Gözetleme*) (1989) kitaplarında açık bir şekilde ortaya çıkmaktadır. İnsanların doğaya karşı bakış açılarını değiştirerek, ekosistemin korunmasını sağlamak Hughes'ün bu şiirlerinde üzerinde önemle durduğu bir konudur. Doğayı insanın temel ihtiyaçlarını karşılayan bir araç olarak gören insan merkezci düşünceye karşı çıkan Hughes şiirlerinde doğa merkezli düşünceyi ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu konu çerçevesi içerisinde, Hughes'ün son dönem şiirlerinin henüz yeni ortaya çıkan bir edebi teori olan ekoeleştirici açısından incelenmesi bu tezin temel amacını oluşturmaktadır.

Ekoeleştirin kökleri çevre krizinin geniş kitlelerce tanındığı 1960'lı ve 1970'li yıllara kadar uzanmaktadır. Henüz yeni ortaya çıkan bir yazınsal kuram olan ekoeleştirin temel savını edebi yapıtlarda insan öznesine tanınan yegane ilgi odağı olma imtiyazını kaldırma fikri oluşturmuştur. Disiplinlerarası bir yazınsal çalışma alanı olan ekoeleştirici doğanın yok olmasını önlemek amacıyla bilimsel ve ekolojik doğa anlayışını benimser. Ekoeleştirin temel kurallarını belirledikten sonra, Hughes'ün ormanların ve türlerin yok olması, nehirlerin kirlenmesi ve kimyasal gübre kullanımı gibi temel ekolojik problemleri şiirlerinde konu ettiği açıkça görülebilir. Doğal kaynakların yağmalanması, çevre merkezli bir bakış açısıyla incelenerek, şairin ekolojik felaketlere duyarlılığını ve bu konuda bir bilinçlenme oluşturma çabası açıkça gösterilmiştir. Hughes şiirlerinde bütünsel evren kavramını yerleştirerek ekosisteme verilen her bir zararın bu sistemin bir parçası olan insanı da etkileyeceğini açıkça göstermiştir. Hughes'ün son dönem şiirlerinin ekoeleştirel incelemesi, ekosistemi tehdit eden tehlikelere karşı şairin okurlarında ekoloji bilinci yaratmayı ve onları çevre sorunlarına karşı sorumlu davranış geliştirmeye yönlendirdiğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Hughes şiirlerinde

sadece bütün canlılar için hayat kaynağı olan ekolojik doğa kavramını yansıtmakla kalmamış şiirlerini doğanın ve aynı zamanda insanın da bir parçası olduğu ekosistemin korunmasına adanarak ekoeleştirel kuramın bir uygulayıcısı olmuştur.



ABSTRACT

Hughes's ecological concerns are most explicitly enacted in his later period of writing which consist of *Remains of Elmet* (1979), *River* (1983) and *Wolfwatching* (1989). The protection of the natural ecosystem through the strategy of changing people's perception of nature is the major concern of these poems. Reacting against the anthropocentric thought which puts the satisfaction of human desires over nature, Hughes, in his poems, tries to establish the ecocentric thought which emphasises the inherent value of nature. Within the structure of this argument, the aim of this thesis is to analyse Hughes later poetry from the perspective of recently developed literary theory, that is, ecocriticism which will provide an ecological insight into his poetry.

The roots of ecocriticism go back to the widespread acknowledgment of the environmental crisis during the 1960s and the 1970s. Ecocriticism as a new critical theory, bases its argument on de-privileging human subject as the center of attention. In its pursuit of literary representation of nature, ecocriticism analyses the human relationship with the natural environment. As an interdisciplinary field of literary study, ecocriticism maintains the scientific and ecological understanding of nature with the aim of protecting nature from destruction. After the establishment of the principles of ecocritical literary theory, it can be clearly observed that Ted Hughes pinpoints the major ecological issues in his poetry like the problem of deforestation, extinction of species, pollution of rivers, and the use of chemicals as fertilisers. Exploitation of the natural resources is evaluated from the ecocentric perspective in order to demonstrate the poet's sensitivity to the problems of ecological disaster, and to show the poet's endeavor to create a public awareness of these problems. Hughes establishes a holistic

conception of the universe and imposes the idea that any damage done to the ecosystem will inevitably influence human beings as they are inseparable components of the ecosystem. The result of the ecocritical analysis of Ted Hughes's later poetry demonstrates that the ecological consciousness of the poet to the increasing perils threatening the ecosystem is deployed in his poems which evoke responsible behavior to nature. Hughes's poetry is not only dominated by the ecological conception of nature as a sustaining power of life for all the inhabitants of the earth, but it is the enaction of the ecocritical paradigm in its emphasis on the preservation of the earth and the integrity of the ecosystem where man is only a part of it.



CONTENTS

KNOWLEDMENTS.....	i
ET.....	ii
STRACT.....	iv
TRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER I: Anthropocentrism And The Destruction of Nature.....	32
CHAPTER II: The Ecological Principle of Interconnectedness.....	76
ONCLUSION.....	116
AD NOTES.....	120
ORKS CITED.....	123

INTRODUCTION

Ted Hughes as an outstanding poet of the twentieth century, who was appointed as the Poet Laureate of Britain in 1984, occupies an undeniably important place in the development of contemporary British poetry (Sen 414). Having been characterised as a poet whose poetry is predominantly concerned with violence, in R. P. Draper's words "aggressive violence" and "destructive energy" (Draper 130) inherent in nature, Ted Hughes has come to be a controversial poet who is mostly criticised and thus, underestimated for his unusual representation of nature. Nature is presented in Hughes's poetry not as a source of aesthetic appreciation, but as a source of uncontrollable power of destruction and at the same time regeneration. The existence of violence in nature determines Hughes's perception of life itself. Hughes's philosophy of life according to which "violence is necessary requirement for survival" (Bedient 101), is enacted in his poetry, which evokes a total submission to the elemental forces of nature as a place of harmony where the distinction between man and nature is blurred.

Moulded by the writers who are considered to be significant figures in the continuation of the tradition of nature poetry coming from Romantic writers through Dylan Thomas, Ted Hughes is accepted as the great writer who "as part of the tradition, changes the tradition" (Sagar 1994: xv) challenging all that has gone before. The challenge of Ted Hughes emerges from his eminently different representation of nature from an ecocentric point of view, and his adoption of the principles of ecology as the primary law of nature. Therefore, in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of Hughes's conception of nature, it is beneficial to explore his poetry from an ecocritical approach which will shed a new light on his poetry.

Remarkably, an ecocritical reading of Ted Hughes's poetry will illuminate his indulgence in violence and struggle for survival in his depiction of the natural world, and also reveal his ecologically oriented inclinations to preserve the environment from destruction as well. In addition to this, Hughes's concentration on nature as the

nurturing power of all living beings will provide an opportunity to explore the theoretical principles of ecocritical literary theory, applied to his poetry of the later period.

Ecocriticism, as a new field of literary study, was first, defined by William Rueckert in 1978 (McKusick 12). Rueckert defines ecocriticism as the application of ecology and ecological principles to the study of literature (105). For him, ecology as a science bears utmost importance in providing people with the necessary knowledge for their perception of the outside world. Similar to Rueckert who pinpoints the necessity of ecology for literary studies, Cheryll Glotfelty defines ecocriticism as the “study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (20). Significant among the ecocritics, who confirm the statements of Glotfelty and Rueckert is Lawrence Buell, who defines ecocriticism as the study of the relation between literature and the environment in a “spiritual commitment to environmentalist praxis” (1995: 430). The primary tenet of all these definitions is that ecocriticism inexorably appropriates the science of ecology¹ into its monopoly, and thus, necessitates the investigation of the basic ecological principles which constitute an indispensable framework for the ecocritical literary theory.

As an inevitable outcome of ever-increasing dangers threatening the natural environment such as “global warming, deforestation, acid rain, extinction of the species, ozone depletion, pesticide poisoning”, ecology as a science has come to occupy a relatively important place in the social and political sphere of contemporary society with the restless endeavours of the auspicious ecophilosophers like George Sessions, Bill Devall, Arne Naess (Martell 1). Challenging the traditionally established conceptions about the legitimacy of human exploitation of nature, they have concentrated upon the construction of a new ecological perception which evokes the urgent need to preserve the ecosystem².

Ecology takes as its subject of scrutiny, “the relations of organisms, species and communities of species to each other” (Sessions 1995A: 265). The assumption that the natural world exists merely to be possessed by humans for their unlimited advantage is confronted by ecology, which supports a notion of “community” in

which human beings are only a part of this community (Berry 1995: 13). Within the framework of this community, each individual as an inseparable part of the ecosystem, is supported and completed by the other beings on earth. However, human beings instead of contributing to the well-being of other members of the ecosystem have come to be pernicious to their survival which inevitably results in the disruption of the ecosystem. The primary cause of this disruption, according to ecologists, is “modern technology” (Low 57).

With the publication of *Silent Spring* which is considered to be “the ecological revolution” in 1962, Rachel Carson challenged the strongly established notion of technology as a means of progress, and achieved to create social distress in the public (Drengson 2001: 39). Upon his detailed elaboration on the book, Colin Tudge even declares that *Silent Spring* “changed the course of history as surely as *Das Kapital* or the *Origin of Species*” (36). The primary reason for such kind of social repercussion is that, Carson proved, for the first time, that the chemicals used to enhance agricultural fertility, in fact, were poisoning the living organisms as well as endangering human life. Hence, *Silent Spring* has become a landmark in the development of the modern environmental movement by warning people against the widespread perils of the use of chemicals. Mary G. Henry explains the revolutionary impact of Carson’s book as follows:

During her 17 years as a government biologist, Rachel Carson became familiar with studies on fish and wildlife and the environmental impacts of pesticides on animal population. At the time, little of this type of information had filtered into the popular press... The public debate that ensued was huge, with pesticide industry on one side and Carson (along with like-minded environmentalists and scientists) on the other. (24)

It is found out that the chemicals like DDT, sprayed on farmland to protect the crops from the pests like beetles and worms were not as beneficial as it was generally thought. On the contrary, these chemicals which Carson describes as “the sinister and little recognized patterns of radiation in changing the very nature of the world” (15), destroy all the living organisms by entering into their food chains. She alerted people to the seriousness of the danger by showing the consequences of pesticide usage and proved that the danger was not ephemeral, and once it entered into the natural system

of living organisms, it is almost impossible to get rid of the ill effects of the pesticides. Rachel Carson explains the circulation of the pesticides with these words:

In the less than two decades of their use, the synthetic pesticides have been so thoroughly distributed throughout the animate and inanimate world that, they occur virtually everywhere... They have entered and lodged in the bodies of fish, birds, reptiles, and domestic and wild animals so universally that scientists carrying on animal experiments find it almost impossible to locate subjects free from such contamination. They have been found in fish in remote mountain lakes, in earthworms burrowing in soil, in the eggs of birds- and in man himself. For these chemicals are now stored in the bodies of the vast majority of human beings, regardless of age. They occur in mother's milk, and probably in the tissues of the unborn child. (22)

Rachel Carson created a new kind of awareness in public by demonstrating that technology, which seems harmless and beneficial for the progress of humanity, might also mean total destruction of nature as well as a kind of self-destruction for man himself. In this way, she contributed to the enlightenment of the public by warning people about the consequences of the global environmental crisis. Additionally, the banishment of the commercial use of DDT in 1971 was the political repercussion of Carson's book (Scheese 32). However, she failed to recognise the fact that technology, which she harshly accused of causing the ecological crisis, was also the only means to solve these problems. Ecocentrism, in Michael Bennett's words is never "antitechnological but only promotes the low impact technology" (307). Her enthusiasm to convince people to take the necessary precautionary attitudes against environmental pollution gave inspiration to the Norwegian ecologist and environmental philosopher Arne Naess who developed the theory of "deep ecology" which presents a new ecological worldview, suggesting a "holistic perception of the universe" (Capra 20), which emphasises the whole rather than the parts.

Naess's theory of deep ecology presents an intimate relationship between man and the environment in promoting the assumption that human beings must protect nature not for their own benefit, but for the sake of the planet itself. Therefore, deep ecology offers a radical change in the human perception of the world, according to which man also is an inseparable part of the natural world. For this reason, any damage done to the planet, eventually threatens human existence.

Naess explains deep ecology with reference to its dichotomy “shallow ecology” (1995A: 68). While shallow ecology is “anthropocentric in its pursuit of human interest” (68), he states, deep ecology is concerned with the interests of all species on earth. In other words, shallow ecology advocates the protection of nature in order to leave a better environment for the future human generations. However, deep ecology supports the rights of all living and non-living organisms without prioritising the interests of human beings.

In order to determine a comprehensive outline of deep ecology principles, Naess formulated a set of principles which are primarily based on the recognition of the “inherent value of all living beings and of the inherent worth of diversity of all species on earth” (Devall 2001:19). The principle of the “intrinsic value” of nature constitutes the core of deep ecology, which supports the view that humans have no right to assign value to nature, because it has its own value in itself (Naess 1995A: 68). What characterises the intrinsic value is its objectivity, that is, nature possesses value independent of “the valuation of its valuers” (Dobson 45). In an interview with Stephan Bodian, Naess gives the primary principle of deep ecology and states that:

One of the basic norms of deep ecology is that every life form has in principle a right to live and blossom. As the world is made, of course, we have to kill in order to eat, but there is a basic intuition in deep ecology that we have no right to destroy other living beings without sufficient reason...In our civilization, we have vast means of destruction at our disposal but extremely little maturity in our feelings. (28-29)

The underlying premise of the principle of intrinsic value which advocates the notion of equal rights of all species to flourish on the planet is the need to prevent the exploitation and destruction of life forms purely for human profit. It is a reaction against the extinction of species and a movement toward celebrating the diversity, which is named by George Sessions as “ecocentric egalitarianism” (1992: 5). Ecocentric egalitarianism requires a new vision of respect for nature and transformation of a society’s system of values from the anthropocentric to the ecocentric one. It supports the idea that all the organisms living on the earth have right

to exist and sustain their life. Because they are perceived as unique individuals having their own distinguishing characteristics, they all have equal rights and values.

Anthropocentrism, on the other hand, is a view that puts human beings in the centre and fails to recognise the fact that the human self cannot distinguish himself from the earth from which he has evolved. According to the anthropocentric viewpoint, there is a clear and morally relevant dividing line between human species and the rest of nature. Man is the only principal source of value and meaning in the world, and nonhuman nature exists there for no other purpose except for serving to human beings.

Anthropocentric thought which fails to perceive man as the plain member of the biotic community, does not grasp the fact that other species have also rights to manifest themselves and flourish in their natural habitat. This kind of thinking not only sets man apart from the rest of nature but also causes the extinction of species (Watson 115). The nonhuman world for the anthropocentric view is “exclusively instrumentalist” (Barry 61) in the way that its ideology is based upon a false assumption according to which nature as an infinite stock of resource, exists solely for human utility and enjoyment.

In opposition to the anthropocentric perspective which views human beings as the highest and the most advanced species on the planet, ecocentrism presents the idea that humans are part of nature and not apart from it. Ecocentric thought reacts against the anthropocentric ideology that nature is simple, while the human community is complex and sophisticated. Ecocentrism implies the recognition that the ecosystem upon which all life is dependent, is beyond human comprehension. Since the ecosystem includes and integrates the “diverse components of air, water, earth, and the organisms on it” (Rowe 2003: 71), it proves itself to be a higher level of organisation than its organisms and thus, confirms the Gaia³ theory of James Lovelock. Patricia Michaels points out that:

An ecocentric philosophy can be defined as a philosophy that reverses the hierarchy in the man-nature relationship and makes nature the dominant or predominant actor. Adherents of ecocentric philosophies might argue that even if environmental protection is good for nothing

as far as its value to man, environmental policies promoting wilderness areas, for example, can be justified. (1)

In its attempt to break down the established hierarchy and the binary opposition between man and nature, ecocentric philosophy and deep ecology do not aim at pushing man, totally out of the system, but tries rather to initiate the beginning of the process of the relationship between human and the rest of the universe. What makes it revolutionary is fact that ecocentricism causes the disintegration of the pattern of domination, and redistributes value and more egalitarian form of authority among all the components of the system. Human beings and their cultures are integral and crucial parts of that system. Hence, the appropriate continuation of this organic system depends on the harmonious and mutually nurturing relationships among its components.

Within the framework of the principle of interdependency of all life forms, suggesting a “holistic” view of the universe, deep ecology offers a new perspective of technology as the most important part of the solution to the problems, not as the source of environmental destruction. Modern science and technology are, no longer, perceived as the enemy of nature, but as forces which contribute to the revival of environmental concerns (Merchant 77). Therefore, deep ecology derives its most important established paradigms from science itself like the quantum physics developed by David Bohm.⁴

It is certainly true that the environmental problems like ozone depletion, climate changes, and acid rain are the pernicious results of technology, however, deep ecologist do not deny the fact that technology is an indispensable part of human life. Therefore, they claim that the use of technology should not transcend the satisfaction of vital needs to preserve the diversity in the universe. As Naess also indicates: “the ecosophical basis for an appraisal of technique is the satisfaction of vital needs in the diverse local communities” (1989: 102). Instead of seeing technology as an enemy which brings the universe into destruction by depleting the natural resources, deep ecology tries to solve the environmental problems through technology. It is due to the advanced technological and scientific researches that people who are illuminated about the dangerous results of the industrial activity, learn to use technology to

develop new methods of producing recyclable materials as well as solving the problem of the waste disposal.

While determining the main principles of deep ecology which offers a new perspective of life, Naess does not exclude the political and ideological aspects of the ecological problems. Naess's formulation of the philosophy brings forth a very harsh criticism of contemporary capitalist economies based on creating new demands to provide the circulation of products and the rapid consumption of them. Naess recognises the importance of politics for a green society and states that:

Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between bigness and greatness. (1995A: 68)

Green political thought repudiates the assumption that earth serves as an unlimited source of raw material to be used by the capitalist economies to provide their policy of "production, circulation of production and consumption", which constructs endless desires whose satisfaction requires more and more consumption (Drengson 1997: 6). Consequently, the policy of profit through the satisfaction of ever increasing desires causes the depletion of resources and the pollution of the environment. To prevent the tragic outcome of environmental destruction through the pursuit of wrong economic policies, Andrew Dobson emphasises the necessity of developing new environmental policies:

Practical considerations of limits to growth and ethical concerns about the nonhuman natural world combine to produce, in ecologism, a political ideology in its own right. We can call it ideology, because it has a description of the political and social world which helps us to find our way around it. It has a programme for political change, and crucially, it has a picture of a kind of society that ecologists think we ought to inhabit. (201-202)

Economies, the political ecology argues, should be focused on vital needs; consumer societies in which products are produced, consumed and finally disposed of into the environment as waste, should give way to the green societies where the products are more durable and recyclable. Acknowledging the role of politics in determining the acceptable pattern of behaviour in the public, deep ecologists persist in the development of new environmental policies and economic legacies in favour of the environmental protection not the exploitation of it. The precautionary attitudes against the devastation of nature are embedded in the concept of “sustainable development” which is described by a commission in Brundtland, called the Brundtland Commission (Orr 23). According to this commission it is an ultimate necessity to develop new strategies for economic growth which should be based not upon the exploitation of natural resources, but the careful and the limited use of these resources. This kind of economical management of natural resources, called the sustainable development requires “meeting the needs of present day generation without compromising the needs of future generations” (23).

Sustainable development advocates a precautionary attitude to the present-day natural resources in order to prevent an environmental crisis in the future. Environmentalists have argued that only through radical changes in economies can societies develop life-sustaining processes which will prevent the destruction of the ecosystem. Additionally, David Orr claims that sustainability requires an “ecological literacy” through which man can understand better the disastrous effects of his urge to dominate nature (92). Ecological literacy as David Orr argues, involves a comprehensive knowledge of how people and societies, and societies and nature are interrelated according to a complex natural system. It evokes an awareness that an injury inflicted on nature with the aim of controlling it, will be inflicted on man himself. He comments on the causes of the crisis of sustainability and points out that:

The crisis is unique in its range and scope including energy resource use, climate, waste management, technology, cities, agriculture, water, biological resilience, international security, politics, and human values. Above all else, it is a crisis of spirit and spiritual resources. We have it on high authority that without vision people perish. We need a new vision, a new story, as theologian Thomas Berry puts it that links us to the planet in more life- centred ways. (4)

Through political, social and ideological changes in the society, deep ecologists try to initiate the process of the developing environmental ethical systems. Within the framework of this ethical system “the appropriation of human interactions with the environment” is adopted as the acceptable pattern of behaviour (Blackmore 1). In this way deep ecology overthrows the traditional Western philosophy determined by the Cartesian view of reality defining the self in opposition to other selves, a dualistic perception which creates an “ongoing division, fragmentation and disorientation in human consciousness” (Oppermann 2003: 8).

Such kind of division and polarisation in human mind create a separation between man and nature, which inevitably legitimises man’s domination of nature. Instead of behaving in accordance with a set of values which will destroy life on the planet, deep ecologists advocate the idea that societies must develop new sets of belief systems and behaviours harmonious with the survival of the planet. The American nature writer, Aldo Leopold whose ideas constitute the source of inspiration for Arne Naess, calls this new set of ethical systems as the “land ethic” which, he thinks, should bring a limitation of action to the individuals (215). The only way to prevent the disastrous separation of human beings from the land, for him, is the development of emotional, intellectual and moral values for the environment. Aldo Leopold explains the broadened scope of land ethic as follows:

All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of interdependent parts. The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants and animals, or collectively the land. In short, a land ethic changes the role of *Homo sapiens* from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow-members, also respect for the community as such. (216)

The tendency to judge the value of the environment solely in economic terms is replaced by the land ethic which enforces the preservation of the integrity and stability of the ecosystem. The land is not merely soil but a “fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants and animals” (Leopold 216). The circulation of the flow of energy for Leopold depends on the working of the complex structure of the plant and the animal community in the ecosystem. For Leopold the structure of the

ecosystem depends on the “preservation of wilderness” (188). The notion of wilderness as part of a predator and prey relationship between the inhabitants of nature is a necessary requirement for the “diversity of life” in nature (188), and thus, for the construction of the balance of the ecosystem.

Similar to Leopold’s insistence on the development of a land ethic which privileges the community over the individual, Arne Naess also, recognises the necessity of developing new ethical systems which encompass both the living and the non-living environment and introduces his own personal philosophy of “ecosophy T” which he describes as a philosophy of ecological harmony and equilibrium (Naess 1995C: 155).

Naess, first of all, traces back the roots of the word “ecosophy” to the Greek word “sophia” which means “wisdom”, and establishes nature as the place of wisdom, and then, formulates the ultimate norm of ecosophy-T as “Self-realisation” (1995C: 155). Naess’s notion of Self-realisation⁵ implies the interrelatedness of all living and the nonliving creatures on earth, and fosters human identification with nature by reinforcing the development of a sense of oneness of man with his environment. George Sessions comments on the term Self-realisation and points out that:

Following the insights of Gandhi and Spinoza, human individuals attain personal Self-realisation, and psychological/emotional maturity when they progress from an identification with narrow ego, through identification with other humans, to a more all-encompassing identification of their ‘self’ with nonhuman individuals, species, ecosystems and with ecosphere itself. (1995B: 189)

The interrelatedness of all the living and the nonliving creatures can be considered as the prerequisite for human identification with nature. Naess’s concept of Self-realisation distinguishes itself from the “egoistical Western philosophical understanding of the self which tends to accept the self as an isolated concept and define it in opposition to the other selves” (Humphrey 1). Naess and Session assume that it is necessary to develop Self-realisation, because only through identification with nature can man transcend his own ego, and develop a larger sense of selfless

identity, which Naess calls as “ecological self” (1995B: 226). Ecological self incorporates the idea of Self-realisation, and is explained by Stan Rowe as follows:

Self-realisation is the belief that the route to an ecological worldview begins with individuals surmounting their little egos by sympathetically extending the boundaries of their identities, wider and wider, through the intuition and ecological knowledge that each is embedded in and supported by a network of relationships to the human community, to animals, and plants, to the world. The enlarged consciousness that experiences identity with Nature and desires the same happiness for all beings is described as the ‘Self’ (also known as ecological self or universal self) as opposed to the little egoistic, skin-bounded ‘self’. (2001: 328)

The ecological self or the universal self, in Stan Rowe’s words, implies the reconstruction of a personal identity which will enable people to perceive how their values and behaviours are framed according to their perceptions of nature. The acquisition of the ecological self, for Naess, is possible only through extending human conception of the self to a broader sense of self which embodies all the other selves in nature. Within the framework of this ecological self, man views the world with “sufficient comprehensive maturity” identifying himself with all other living beings and beginning to see himself in them (Naess 1995B:225). Naess argues that a person is part of nature to the extent that he is a “relational juncture” within the total field, which enables the “self” to grow towards the “Self” (1989: 56).

Within the structure of the ecological understanding of the world, there is a network of relationships depending on the continual interaction of the interdependent parts. Therefore, Naess perceives the whole universe as a single unified organism consisting of distinguishable parts, stressing the uniqueness of each species. Naess proposes an incorporation of “gestalts” implicating a holistic perception of the world, by claiming that the “whole is more than the sum of its parts” (1989: 58). He demonstrates that an individual’s understanding of complete structures and interrelations are such that he cannot achieve the same level of understanding through an analysis of its component parts. Matthew Humphrey comments on Naess’s view of gestalt ontology and states that:

Naess envisages hierarchy of gestalts, and in our development as human beings we move toward holding ever larger gestalts encompassing all the relationships that constitute lesser gestalts, the lesser being what he calls 'fragments' of the former... our gestalts of our environmental surroundings are of a very complex character, and these are easily destroyed by attempts to analyse fragments of them consciously. Gestalt understandings bind the 'I and not-I together in a whole', but the glorification of conventional scientific thought leads to the ridicule of such creations. It tears gestalts asunder. (599)

Consequently, the scientists of deep ecology with their theories of the intrinsic value of nature, Self-realisation, ecocentricism as opposed to anthropocentricism, sustainable development and gestalt ontology, offer outstanding changes not only in the morals and the values of a society, which shape its perception of the world, but they also demand fundamental changes in the political and economic policies of the governments in favour of the environmental protection, not the exploitation of nature. In order to achieve these changes, deep ecologists adhere to a new holistic perspective of the universe, which emphasises the interrelatedness of everything on earth and man's situatedness in nature rather than setting himself apart from it. This new vision of ecology sees earth as a single living community bound together with internal relationships, and hence, each component of the earth community needs the existence of the other components for its own survival.

Deriving their ideas from this holistic vision of the world, deep ecologists strive to implement an ecological responsibility claiming that the environmental degradation and the ecological crisis are the problems of all humanity. Hence, the responsibility to provide the sustainability of life in the universe should be the concern of all people from all the other disciplines; not only ecology. Additionally, Neil Evernden emphasises the fact that the deep ecological movement which is concerned with the underlying reasons of the environmental crisis rather than its physical manifestations, encourages the "involvement of arts and humanities" to create a kind of public consciousness (102).

As an inevitable outcome of the ever-increasing dangers threatening the ecosystem, and the growing social interest towards the environmental problems occupying a relatively important place in the social and the political sphere of

contemporary society, literary studies also have come to reflect an awareness of the environmental issues by developing ecological visions. The subsequent development of ecocriticism, as a new field of literary study, begins to play a major role in the establishment of the ecological vision by studying the literary text from an ecocentric perspective, and thus, reconciling the literary discourse with the scientific discourse of nature.

In addition to the reconciliation of science and literature, ecocriticism, in the interpretation of literary texts, provides also a basis for the synthesis between the text, the author and the reader. One of the theorists of the ecocriticism, Jonathan Bate, argues for the interaction between the diverse viewpoints of the author and the reader in order to solve the problem of homogenous representation which reflects one ultimate viewpoint as the only truth. He points out that:

We are equally in error when we moor a text solely to its author (that is to neglect its semantic autonomy) and when we cast it adrift utterly from its author (that is to neglect its human origin). Bad interpretation is either that which insists on always checking back with the author (to do so is to deprive writing of the peculiarity that makes it different from speech) or that which claims we can say anything we like about a text (to do so is to hypostasise the text as an authorless entity, which is not the condition of any text. Good interpretation is a synthesis of the two parts of the dialectic constituted by author and reader. (249)

This kind of reconciliation between science and literature, and the author and the reader are, first, achieved by William Rueckert who tries to construct an ecological vision in literature to prevent “the human community from destroying the natural community” (107). Relying heavily on the primary tenet of ecology that everything is connected to everything else, he asserts that man’s tendency to destroy nature is a “suicidal motive” (107). Rueckert further claims that just like the natural energy resources in the biosphere, literature is the site where natural energy is stored, and poetry is the “energy pathways which sustain life” whose revelation is provided by the reading of the text itself (110). He explains the flow of natural energy from the writer to the text and then to the reader in the following words:

Reading is clearly an energy transfer as the energy stored in the poem is released and flows back into the language centers and creative

imaginations of the readers. . . . Reading, teaching, and critical discourse are enactments of the poem which release the stored energy so that it can flow into the reader sometimes with such intensity that one is conscious of an actual inflow. (110)

Ruekert internalises the ecological principle of interconnectedness of everything to the study of literature by stating that there is a network of interrelationships between the author, the text and the reader. Similar to the ecosystem, the existence of which depends on the interaction of the different species as the constituent parts of the universe as a whole, the existence of a literary text depends on the diversity of the approaches and the interpretations made by the author and the readers. Jonathan Bate, who builds an analogy between poetry and the ecosystem as the sources of energy, declares that:

The idea is that poetry-perhaps because of its rhythmic and mnemonic intensity-is an especially efficient system for recycling the richest thoughts and feelings of a community. Every time we read or discuss a poem, we are recycling its energy back into our cultural environment. That is how the process of survival and modification functions in the realm of art. (247)

As it is already stated by Jonathan Bate, ecocritical understanding of the principle of the interrelatedness depends upon the view that there is an internal relationship between the author, the text and the reader, and further, all these three elements are related to the outside physical world so that poetry acts as a medium to convey the energy stored in nature to the readers. Thus, it can be claimed that ecocriticism appropriates an “organic conception of intertextuality”, viewing any given text as a complex community of “intrinsic and extrinsic relationships” (Cooley 252).

The intrinsic and the extrinsic conception of a text imply that the meaning is constructed not only through its own intrinsic relation between the author, the text and the reader, but also through a system of relationships between the text and the outside world (Phillips 580). Hence, the disjunction between the literary text and the outside physical world, namely the distinction between the two realms, nature and culture is overthrown. In addition to the appropriation of the ecological principles into the study

of a literary text, and taking ecological issues as its subject of inquiry, ecocriticism also borrows its theoretical assumptions from postmodern and postcolonial studies:

The Green movement in general is predicated on a typically postmodernist deprivileging of the human subject. In postcolonial studies this decentring of the subject is a relative matter, where the coloniser and his discourses are decentred in relation to the colonised (now no longer marginalized). (Head 1998: 29)

Similar to the postmodern view which opposes the idea that “poetic text is self contained, that it has an ascertainable meaning or meanings without reference to other poetic texts” to defend the idea that a text gains its meaning in its intertextual relation to other texts (Bloom 332), ecocriticism also favours the intertextual relationships as Michael Branch points out that:

A literary text might actually be likened to an ecosystem: it is a functional whole whose purposes are accomplished through integration of constituent elements; its remarkable complexity has no single purpose, but may be said to exist to a variety of ends simultaneously; it is to some extent defined by its *interactions* with *other texts* and *contexts*. (43 *italics are mine*)

What Michael Branch endeavours to achieve is to amalgamate the holistic perception of ecology and its principle of the interrelatedness of everything, with the postmodern principle of intertextuality. Thus, for ecocriticism, the literary appreciation of a text is determined by the variety of approaches such as scientific, ecological, philosophical, and different critical theories like postmodernism and postcolonialism. Jacques Derrida who also adopts the multiplicity of approaches states that:

This motif of *totality* circulates in a singular way between literature and philosophy. . . the space of literature is not only that of an instituted fiction but also a fictive institution which in principle allows one to say everything. To say everything is no doubt to gather, by translating, all figures into one another, to totalise by formalising, but to say everything is also to break out of prohibitions. (36)

Ecocriticism incorporates the ecological concerns and the relation between the organisms and their natural environment as its contextual ground, and tries to analyse literary texts from the ecological perspective. As a result of this bridge between scientific and literary studies, the issues like global warming, deforestation, acid rain, extinction of species, ozone depletion, pesticide poisoning, consumption of genetically modified food, which at first sight seem to be highly irrelevant, become the subject of literature and the main emphasis of ecocriticism. Thus, ecocriticism takes as its subject of inquiry “the representation of nature in a literary text” (Glotsfelty, xix), with a view toward celebrating nature, “berating its despoilers, and reversing their harm through political action” (Howarth 69).

Since ecocriticism or in Kroeber’s words “ecological literary criticism” aims at internalising different disciplines to its monopoly, it is characterised as an interdisciplinary field of study, founding a bridge between literary, scientific and cultural studies (1). Similar to the science of ecology, ecocriticism also, incorporates a “wholistic view of universe which fosters the idea that environmental crises are the result of man’s disconnection from the natural world (Dean 1). This holistic view of the universe appreciates the interconnectedness of all living beings and thus, invites all perspectives from different disciplines to understand the human relationship to the universe. Within the framework of this premise of interconnection, no individual element can be understood in isolation from the “generative and defining context of the systemic whole” (Branch 3). Therefore, ecocriticism inexorably appropriates other disciplines into its monopoly, and hence, it demonstrates a mutual interaction between contemporary literary studies and scientific studies. Glen Love claims that:

Ecocriticism urges its practitioners into interdisciplinarity, into science. Literature involves interrelationships, and ecological awareness enhances and expands our sense of interrelationships to encompass nonhuman as well as human contexts. Ecological thinking about literature requires us to take the nonhuman world as seriously as previous modes of criticism have taken the human realm of society and culture. That, it seems to me, is ecocriticism’s greatest challenge and its greatest opportunity. (561)

Since it has not yet, firmly established textual theory, ecocriticism takes inspiration from postmodern theories and begins its study first by criticising the

dominant structures of Western culture which is based on the dualistic thought (Carroll 295). Ecocriticism tries to deconstruct the binary opposition between nature and culture by confronting the human-centred view that since nature is wild and needs to be tamed, culture as a site of intellect and sophistication will always master nature which is perceived as simple and untamed.

Ecocriticism, then, finds a close relationship between culture and nature, and claims that culture and nature are not opposing concepts, instead they constantly interact, in William Howarth's term, they mingle like "water and soil in a flowing stream" (69). Having deconstructed the dichotomy between nature and culture, ecocritics argue that human beings construct their culture out of the interaction with their physical and biological environment. Thus, human culture does not exist in "elitist isolation" but is moulded out of man's interaction with his physical environment (Kroeber 61). Terry Gifford comments on the constructedness of nature and points out that:

The social construction of nature represents the view that there can be no 'innocent' referent to nature in a poem. Any reference will implicitly or explicitly express a notion of nature that is related to culturally developed assumptions about aesthetics, politics, and other different ideologies. And what ecocritics most vehemently challenge is this kind of representation of nature which is used metaphorically rather than for the sake of nature itself. (173-176)

Cheryll Glotfelty who is a prominent ecocritic, contributed to the development of ecocriticism and defined three stages of ecocriticism. The first stage is concerned with "representations" of nature in literary texts (xxiii). Glotfelty then, enumerates the questions that an ecocritic should, first, ask during the analysis of the text: "How is nature represented in this sonnet? What role does the physical setting play in the plot of this novel? Are the values expressed in this play consistent with ecological wisdom? How do our metaphors of the land influence the way we treat it?" (xix).

The underlying purpose of all these questions is to bring the stereotypes created for nature under close scrutiny. Since the Western mind is based on the dualistic thought which defines the self in opposition to the other selves, ecocriticism

borrowes the terms “the self and the other” (Sarver 1), from the postcolonial discourse, focuses its attention on the othering of nature. For ecocriticism, literature has an important function in creating stereotypes. Producing stereotypes through representation of nature, the Western mind translates what is unfamiliar into the familiar with the aim of reducing the otherness of nature. In this way, literature tries to lessen the distance between nature and man. However, it can also be argued that these stereotypes also function contradictorily by alienating man from nature since representation creates a certain type of nature which cannot stand for the outside physical world. This shows the ambivalent nature of representation and the stereotypes it creates. The process of alienation of man from nature stems from the false assumption that nature is “untamed and wild which needs to be controlled” (McKusick 4).

The shaky grounds on which the stereotypes are built, is emphasised by Brook Libby as “an ambivalence with regard to the natural world, a simultaneous recognition that we are similar and different, accountable and therefore conflicted” (258). This kind of ambivalence demonstrates the fact that an individual’s relation to the natural world is never a simple one but highly complicated. The establishment of the stereotypes causing nature to be pushed into the periphery while emphasising the centrality of the human subject can be shattered only by the ecological conceptualisation of nature as an extended self, not as a distinct identity. Jonathan Bate explains the peripheral position of nature as follows:

Twenty-first-century *Homo sapiens* is unique among species not only in its knowledge of evolution but also in the degree and the speed with which it is able to alter the course of evolution. Indeed, these two powers are closely inter-related: the human claim to understand nature has led to Western human-kind’s understanding of itself as apart from nature and therefore able to use and reshape nature at will. All species influence their ecosystems; only our species has a conception of ecosystems and that conception brings the capacity to destroy whole ecosystems. (229)

Ecocriticism, then, by deconstructing the dichotomy between nature and culture according to which nature is different from the human subject and should be seen as the other, recenters nature as the main emphasis of literature which was thought to belong to the sophisticated realm of culture. In this way ecocriticism

undermines the binary opposition between nature and culture. Therefore, ecocriticism as a literary theory attempts to give voice to the nonhuman subject which is suppressed as the other.

Disjunctions between nature and culture as James McKusick states, stems from the premise that the social production of human behaviour distinguishes itself clearly, from the means by which “the ‘lower animals’ learn to hunt, hide, play and fight” (16). However, as the science of ecology has proved, human beings are only one sort of species among others and therefore, “subject to the same laws and patterns of development as any other organism like the Darwinian principle of evolution and struggle for survival” (Barry 61). Scott Slovic concentrates on this aspect of humanity’s integrity to the natural world and declares that:

No matter how urban our experience, no matter how oblivious we may be toward nature, we are nonetheless animals, two-legged sacks of meat and blood and bone dependent on the whole living planet for our survival. Our outbreathings still flow through the pores of trees, our food still grows in dirt, our bodies decay. . . The gospel of ecology has become an intellectual commonplace. (8)

Representations of nature in literature, as Robert Kern argues, have been occupied not with the images of “literal or factual reality” of nature but with the “formal or symbolic or ideological” representations which create an assumption that nature is important in a literary text not for its physical existence, but for its metaphoric meaning (258). This leads into the assumption that nature exists in a literary text not as its inherent value, but as its anthropocentric value, since metaphoric representation implies that nature serves human ends. As a result, not only does literature isolate itself from the physical world but also the readers are estranged from the outside world they live in. Further, H. Lewis Ulman, who also shares the same view of natural representation of nature, points out that:

Our experience of the natural world –whether touring the Canadian Rockies, watching an animal show on TV, or working in our gardens– is always mediated. It is always shaped by rhetorical constructs like photography, industry, advertising, and aesthetics as well as by institutions like religion, tourism, and education. . . What do these constructed environments have to do with what is now everywhere

called the environment—the nonhuman world of rocks and water, plants and animals, that seems both to precede and envelop our many cultures? (348)

After analysing the representation of nature and challenging the stereotypes that it creates, Glotfelty defines the second stage in the ecocritical study that is to bring forth the tradition of nature writing in order to establish an environmental consciousness (xxiii). Thus, ecocriticism gives special importance to the analysis of nature-oriented literary texts. In the light of the second stage of ecocriticism, formulated by Glotfelty, it can be clearly seen that the American theorists like Lawrence Buell, Scott Slovic, and Gary Snyder begin their analysis of the works of the transcendentalists in America, while the British theorists like Jonathan Bate, Terry Gifford, James McKusick, and Karl Kroeber begin their study with the works of the romantic writers to explore the representation of nature.

Once the writers whose works exhibit ecological consciousness are identified, and the representation of nature in their works are brought into the foreground, Glotfelty argues, ecocriticism, at the third stage, examines the relationship between human beings and the other living organisms within the structure of holistic conception of nature as an interconnected system (xxiv). Drawing from deep ecology's assumption that human beings are also one of the species among the millions of others in this organic system of the universe, ecocriticism analyses the relationship between man and nature not as being distinct from each other but as interconnections, where neither side dominates or oppresses the other. Similarly, Joseph Meeker who advocates the representation of nature in literature as a component of a holistic system in which human beings find their proper place, points out that:

If the creation of literature is an important characteristic of the human species, it should be examined carefully and honestly to discover its influence upon human behavior and the natural environment, and to determine what role, if any, it plays in the welfare and survival of humanity, and what insight it offers into human relationships with other species and with the world around us. Is it an activity that adapts us better to life on earth or one that sometimes estranges us from life?
(4)

Having articulated the ecological view of the interconnectedness of species in the universe with the aim of “bringing ecological consciousness to the practice of literary criticism”, ecocriticism questions how the human species is constructed in literary texts either in isolation or in relation to other species (Oppermann 1999: 31). In addition to the analysis of the textual representations of the physical world in literature within the structure of the ecological principles, ecocriticism challenges the “anthropocentric thought” which privileges human dominance over the natural world, legitimising the exploitation of the natural resources and the inhabitants of nature (Buell 1999: 704). Lynn White traces the origins of anthropocentric thought back to the appearance of religion. Christianity, he argues, made it possible to exploit nature and indicates that:

Especially in its Western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion, the world has seen. . . Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia's religions (except perhaps, Zoroastrianism), not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends. (10)

Since man is the only rational subject of the universe, God bestows upon man the only power of sovereignty over nature which solely exists to serve the needs of man. In opposition to the discourse of religion which perceives human species as the only species worthy of concern and attention, the discourse of ecology brings an entirely different argument by claiming that this kind of non-egalitarian distribution of authority does not bring order into universe but only destruction. Moreover, the ecological view assumes that only after rejecting the Christian dogma, which legitimises any kind of arrogance toward nature, could the ecological crisis be prevented. The philosophy of ecology as an alternative to Christian dogma, offers a sacred view of nature encouraging man's identification and Self-realisation with nature.

It is not only the religious discourse but also “humanism” which was perpetuated in the Renaissance period, as Christopher Manes puts it, that fostered the separation between man and nature, with its man-centred attitude which privileges

man for his intellect and rationality, leaving nature “voiceless” and, “subjectless” (26). He later states that:

The Great Chain of Being, exegesis, literacy, and complex skein of institutional and intellectual developments have, in fact, created a fictionalised, or more accurately put, fraudulent version of the species *Homo sapiens*: the character ‘man’, what Muir calls ‘Lord Man’. And this ‘Man’ has become the sole subject, speaker, and rational sovereign of the natural order of the story told by humanism since the Renaissance. (21)

Confronting the biblical story of the creation of man, and adopting the Darwinian evolution theory according to which man came into being as a result of complex mutations just like other organisms, Manes reveals his ideas by juxtaposing the modern societies with the primitive societies. He associates the modern societies with the “humanistic societies” in opposition to the “animistic societies” that is primitive societies (15). While in humanistic societies, the privilege of being the speaking subject is attributed to human beings only, in animistic societies, all the organic and inorganic creatures of nature; plants, animals, stones, rivers are perceived as intelligible subjects having the capacity to “communicate with each other and with humanity” (15). Hence he appropriates the ecological lifestyle of animistic societies and supports the idea that “*Homo sapiens* is only one species among other fascinating life forms” (15). In the light of Christopher Manes’s contrasting of the two different societies, it would not be wrong to claim that ecocritical viewpoint celebrates the multiplicity of voices in its analysis of literary texts, giving voice to human and nonhuman equally. Andrew Brennan comments on the necessity of building a pluralistic view for an ecological understanding of the world to achieve reconciliation. He points out that:

In environmental arguments, there are often interesting alignments of parties, testifying the plurality of views that can range over the different sides of a contested issue. A shallow analysis deems that a situation can best be described in terms of just one worldview. The language of economics, for example, with its tally of costs and benefits, may be put forward as providing a privileged description of all that matters. Such simplistic reductionism is resisted by a deeper analysis. There are many different perspectives on the same situation, some of which can be reconciled in some respects. (179)

The profound awareness of preserving the diversity of the attitudes for ecocritical studies implies that pluralism provides the intersection of different discourses which leads to a kind of reconciliation rather than ambiguity and complexity. Similar to ecocriticism's insistence on plurality, ecology as a science also argues for the diversity. "It is one of the central tasks of environmental philosophers" says Arne Naess "to study different positions, but not to try to reduce the ultimate differences" (1992: 1). Owing to the fact that the survival of an ecosystem depends upon the preservation of the diversity of the organisms living on it, ecology also strives to ensure the principle of biodiversity. The continuation of life on the planet, which depends on the interaction of the different species in a system of network, is explained by Edward Wilson as follows:

When we scan a lake, our macroscopic eye sees only the relatively big organisms- eelgrass, pondweeds, fishes, water birds, dragonflies, whirligig beetles, and other things big enough to splash and go bump in the night. But all around them, in vastly greater numbers and variety, are the invisible bacteria, protists, planktonic single-celled algae, aquatic fungi, and other micro-organisms. These seething myriads are the *true foundation* of the lake *ecosystem* and the hidden agents of its *stability*. (Wilson 109 italics are mine).

Appropriating ecology's insistence on the celebration of diversity to postmodern theory's fundamental principle of the multiplicity of voices, with a special interest in the interaction of contradictory voices, ecocriticism finds an appropriate ground to analyse the "interplay of different languages of characters and elements of landscape that have been so far marginalized" (McDowell 374). Multiplicity of languages enables ecocriticism to view the representation of nature in literary texts not as voiceless object, but as the subject who is "assigned an active role, a power to resist, question, or even evade the meanings" as well as perceiving the literary text as a site where nature and natural phenomena are integrated to the human life as an essential part of it (Raglon 256). Stuart Hall comments on the ambivalent nature of representation and points out that:

Representation is a process by which members of a culture use language to produce meaning. Already, this definition carries the

important premise that things- objects, people, events in the world- do not in themselves have any fixed, final or true meaning. It is us- in society, within human cultures- who make things mean, who signify. Meanings, consequently, will always change from one culture or period to another. (61)

Within the structure of Hall's argument, which stresses the role of the cultural codes of each society in producing meanings through language, it would be appropriate to claim that the representation of nature in a literary text can never reflect outside physical nature completely, but it can only reflect the imaginings and desires, and subjective perceptions of the author whose ideas are shaped by the culture of the society in which he lives. Therefore, it would not be wrong to speak about the varieties of nature presented in a text. There are multiple views and conceptions of nature which contribute to the richness and diversity of perspectives. Thus, the physical existence of nature is the major preoccupation of the ecocritics who strive to emphasise in their analyses of the literary texts, excavating and exploring different views and approaches to nature.

In addition to the ambivalent nature of representation, some major ecocritics also challenge the validity of representation proclaiming that "what is produced by representation is by definition something other than the thing-in-itself" (Bate 247). Rebecca Raglon also, comments on the idea that nature does not exist out of language, indicates that "literature, language, and culture have much to answer when faced with an environmental catastrophe and human misery" (248). For, literature and the cultural codes shape the perceptions of a society; they are the guilty participants in the destruction of the environment.

Nevertheless, elaborating on the view of Rebecca Raglon who blames literature, language and culture for the environmental destruction, one can easily challenge her assumption by referring to the essential characteristics of ecocriticism which appropriates literary text as embedded in the natural context and "attends to the sense of membership which the artist attempts to establish within the natural community and takes seriously both the spiritual consequences of nature and the moral consequences of its violation" (Branch 6). In other words, language can be used to create environmental consciousness which is considered as the primary requirement

of the literature for ecocriticism. It should be taken into account that ecocriticism does not look for the single absolute true representation of the world. Ecocriticism as an interdisciplinary study depends on the “diversity of viewpoints and perspectives just as a healthy ecosystem depends on the diversity of plant and animal life” (Tag 1).

In opposition to the argument about the incapability of language to represent the world, it can be claimed that within the structure of the holistic perspective appropriated by ecocriticism, language cannot be entirely separated from the natural world as some critics suggest. Accordingly, human beings develop their language through evolutionary processes of mutual interaction with the natural world, and thus, language reflects the individual’s experience of the world rather than distancing him from the world. It may also be argued that the relationship between the language and the outside world depends on the interrelationships since each is interconnected to the other.

It should be clarified that ecocriticism does not challenge the assumption that human beings make sense of the outside world through language, but what it strictly opposes and tries to deconstruct is the assumption that nature is nothing more than a linguistic construct. Lawrence Coupe calls this false assumption of linguistic constructedness of nature as the “referential fallacy” which he thinks most of the literary critics fall into (2).

The common assumption has been that what we call ‘nature’ exists primarily as a term within a cultural discourse, apart from which it has no being or meaning. That is to say, it is a sign within a signifying system, and the question of reference must always be placed in emphatic parentheses. To declare that there is ‘no such thing as nature’ has become almost obligatory within literary and cultural studies. The great fear has been to be discovered committing what might be called ‘referential fallacy’. (2)

In order to prevent any kind of disjunction between nature and culture as a result of the representational use of language, ecocritics offer the “referential” use of language (Murphy 72). William Howarth describes the referential use of language by

introducing the word “deixis”, which he explains in opposition to the representational use of language, and points out that:

Ecocriticism instead of taxing science for its use of language to represent (mimesis), examines its ability to point (deixis). . . Through deixis, meaning develops from what is said or signed relative to physical space: I-you, here-there, this-that. In learning to read the land, one can't just name the objects but point to what they do. (80)

Mimesis implies alienation and objectification by fostering the establishment of dualistic thought between nature and culture, whereas deixis “familiarises by teaching how to live in the world” (Dunckel 212). Along with Lawrence Buell who notes that it is one of the central projects of ecocriticism to restore the “referential dimension” to the study of literary criticism by insisting that place has an important function in the text not as a metaphor but as an active force (1995: 86), Patrick D. Murphy, another prominent theorist of ecocriticism, declares that:

The possibility of referentiality functions as a key to such selection. Literature can only affect the mind of the readers if it has the ability to orient their thinking not only toward the world in the text but also the world in which the text materially and ideationally exists at the moment of reading. Throughout ecocritical theory, the return to referentiality has been addressed both in opposition to postmodernism and post-structuralist theories and as a complement or corrective to them. (72)

The reason for ecocriticism's insistence on the necessity of the referentiality, or as Howarth calls it as deixis of a literary text, lies in ecocriticism's inclination to emphasise the existence of the outside physical world in a literary text as a determining factor. Focusing on the power of a literary text in projecting the place of man in nature and his situatedness on earth, ecocriticism attributes man's existence to his presence, or in other words, dwelling on earth (Bate 252). The issue of place and dwelling also occupies a major place in the field of ecocritical literary theory which adopts the ecological assumption that man belongs to earth as one of the interdependent parts of the ecosystem, whose survival depends on the continual interaction between its component parts. Furthermore, Jonathan Bate declares that:

“The poem is the clearing in that it is an opening to the nature of being, a making clear of the nature of dwelling” (280).

Consequently, the appearance of ecocriticism after the 1990s, as a new field of literary criticism can be considered as the literary impact of the widespread changes in the arena of social and political awareness of the dangers of the distortion of the ecosystem. Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* published in 1962 was the first book to initiate the process of change, which resulted in environmentally conscious literature dealing with the hazardous effects of ecological destruction. Therefore, ecocriticism as the last chain of these developmental stages contributed to expansion of the field of literary criticism by pushing nature from the periphery to the centre of public attention. Above all, due to its interdisciplinary posture ecocriticism incorporates different fields like science of ecology, and philosophy and postmodernism in its analysis of the representation of nature in a literary text.

The period beginning from the 1960s and continuing through the 1970s, bears an utmost importance for the gradual development of environmental consciousness due to the *Silent Spring* (Kerrige 7). In parallel to this, ecology as a science gradually began to receive widespread recognition by the literary environments which have fostered recognition of ecology and its warnings against ecological catastrophe by the ordinary people outside the circle of scientists. The ultimate premise of this consciousness is that there really exists a serious problem of global ecological crisis threatening all the nations without exception. The recognition of the pernicious influence of this crisis is explained by Jonathan Bate as follows:

The state of nature is parlous. The litany of the present and impending catastrophes is all too familiar. Carbon dioxide produced by the burning of fossil fuels is trapping the heat of the sun, causing the planet to become warmer. Glaciers and permafrost are melting, sea levels rising, rainfall patterns changing, winds growing stronger. Meanwhile, the oceans are overfished, deserts are spreading, forests shrinking, fresh water becoming scarcer. (24)

During the 1960s when the first stirrings of the environmental dangers raised the public consciousness, Ted Hughes published his first volume of poetry *The Hawk*

in the Rain in 1957, and his second book *Lupercal* in 1960 (Scammell ix). Influenced by the Romantic writers, like, especially William Blake, Ted Hughes was preoccupied with nature and the destructive forces of nature in his poetry (Walder 48). Yet, when the circumstances of these social upheavals in the conception of nature at peril are taken into consideration, it can be claimed that Ted Hughes's poetry presents an outstanding change in the literary representation of nature with its divergence from the celebration of nature for its aesthetic value towards a more serious concern for the ecosystem itself. Leonard Scigaj also comments on the influence of ecology on Hughes's poetry and states that Hughes initiates an ecologically responsible literature where "nature was our second skin" (1991: 3). No matter how much influenced by the Romantic writers he may be, Ted Hughes's representation of nature as an uncontrollable source of destructive power is unique to him. Notably, Hughes's place of birth, Mytholmroyd in West Yorkshire, which is characterised as a rocky area with its high moors and stormy weather, can be seen as an important impact upon his perception of nature in his poems (Feinstein 5). It even provides the setting of some of his poems. Destruction of the natural landscape in Mytholmroyd by factory buildings as a result of the rapid process of industrialisation becomes a major preoccupation of *Remains of Elmet* (1979).

Landscape has a strong influence on Ted Hughes, not simply as a source of inspiration but as a determining force which shapes his way of looking at life. Instead of celebrating nature for its aesthetic beauty, Hughes's poetry calls for an awesome respect for nature, for its restless power of violence and as a place where the predator and prey relationship prevails. As John Kinsella also indicates, there is "a lot of screaming in Hughes's poetry" (1). Terry Gifford comments on concept of nature in contemporary poetry and points out that:

In our time, nature poetry has become a pejorative term. I reserve the term 'green poetry' for those recent nature poems which engage directly with environmental issues. In a more general sense one might use the term 'green voices' to include the diversity of nature poetry being written today. Indeed, it is important that nature poetry of all kinds can be addressed in current literary discussion, for it needs to be critically confronted in the poetry of writers as culturally diverse as Sorley MacLean, Ted Hughes, Gillian Clarke, Seamus Heaney, Grace Nichols. (3)

Whatever name may be given to it, Ted Hughes's poetry does include controversial aspects of nature which embrace the life giving energy of nature as well as the devouring power of it. When Hughes's poetic development is taken into account, it can be clearly observed that Hughes's writing career which begins with the commitment to the exploration of man's relationship with nature in *The Hawk in the Rain* (1957), and *Lupercal* (1960), gradually fits into a new pattern of mythology in *Wodwo* (1967), *Crow* (1970), *Cave Birds* (1975), and *Gaudete* (1976). The determining characteristics of Hughes's mythic pattern in his second period of writing, is the application of mythology to everyday experience of contemporary life, confronting "Christian dogma", and questioning the validity of its principles in shaping the thoughts and the ethical systems of contemporary society (Brandes 519).

Additionally, under the influence of his anthropology education in Cambridge, and studies in Jung's ideas, Hughes explored world mythology and used it in his poems to reveal human nature (Scigaj 1991: 2). During his studies in anthropology, Hughes was attracted to the world of mythology and folklore developed in the "oral poetry of the tribal societies" (Scigaj 1991: 3). He is fascinated by the magical function of the tribal songs in healing the human psyche and releasing the natural energy in human beings. Therefore, believing in the therapeutic power of poetry, Hughes establishes a new perspective in his animal poems which employ mythology to convey a psychological function which forces an individual to get into contact with primitive suppressed energies so that "the sterile personality created by society is destroyed and the instinctual suppressed self can emerge liberated" (Hirschberg 12).

In his later period of writing, Hughes moves on a different plane of writing poetry which develops and combines the use of nature and mythology of his earlier works toward a construction of social responsibility, and establishment of a new vision of an ecological understanding of the world. Hence, Hughes's use of mythology to reflect human nature changes its form in his later period of writing and canalise itself to the creation of environmental consciousness by depicting a picture of the world where nature regains the sanctity that is lost under the technological developments and mechanical understanding of nature.

Subsequently, Hughes's representation of nature as a force of destruction in his first period, and his mythically-oriented poems in his second period culminated in the construction of the awareness of the protection of the ecosystem in his third period of writing. Ted Hughes's last period of writing, which consists of *Remains of Elmet* (1979), *River* (1983) and *Wolfwatching* (1989) offers a good opportunity for an ecocritical analysis. For this reason, the exploration of Hughes's later poetry from an ecocritical perspective will be the main concern of this thesis which will contribute to the understanding of Ted Hughes by expanding the scope of approaches to his poetry.



CHAPTER I

Anthropocentrism and the Destruction of Nature

In the face of the rapidly increasing problems in the late 20th century such as “ozone depletion, global warming, acid rain, waste disposal” (Martell 2) and other forms of pollution, which stimulate the disruption of the integrity of the ecosystem, dragging it into total destruction, contemporary society has gradually developed a profound awareness of these problems in order to take a precautionary attitude to prevent the harm caused by these factors. Man for the first time, has acknowledged the fact that nature presented as a commodity continues to be violated and contaminated by the human species who acts in total ignorance without thinking about the consequences of their action.

The science of ecology as the major influence in publicising the environmental problems also advocates outstanding changes in people’s materialistic perception of nature. In addition to compelling man to re-evaluate his relationship to his physical surrounding, ecology articulates a new system of thought, which evokes respect for the earth and the all living creatures on it for their intrinsic value. For the achievement of such revolutionary changes in the public consciousness, literature is seen as a significant influence in shaping people’s understanding of nature. Keeping with this attitude, William Rueckert draws attention to the separation of literature from the outside world, as well as to the role of poetry in the construction of environmental consciousness:

If we continue to teach, write, and write about poetry without acknowledging and trying to act upon the fact that-to cite an example-all the oceans of our home are slowly being contaminated by all the pollutants disposed of in modern communities-even what we try to send up in smoke-then we will soon lose the environment in which we write and teach. All the creative process of the biosphere, including the human ones, may well come to an end if we cannot find a way to determine the limits of human destruction and intrusion which the biosphere can tolerate, and learn how to creatively manage the biosphere. (112)

Therefore, ecocriticism, which has appeared as a new field of literary criticism, brings the science of ecology into the foreground in its analysis of the literary representation of nature. Hence, it takes as its primary concern the construction of ecological awareness in a literary text. Since the awakening of social consciousness bears an utmost importance, ecocriticism focuses on the close examination of a literary text in the “context of our current ecological crisis”(Feder 42). Thus, in its pursuit of the investigation of environmentally-oriented literature, ecocriticism gives a special importance to the evaluation of texts in terms of their response to the recent ecological crisis.

In relation to the ultimate paradigm of ecocriticism, that is, the social function of literature, the later poetry of Ted Hughes includes the material which enables the application of the ecocritical theory by posing fundamental questions about ecological issues, and generating green ideas in his poetry. As the Poet Laureate of contemporary Britain, Ted Hughes was not negligent of the seriousness of the ecological issues which have been considered as the major problem of the social and the political arena. After reading the works of significant writers; such as Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* and Max Nicholson’s *The Environmental Revolution*, Ted Hughes developed a new consciousness of environmental issues and shared the basic premise of ecology that in order to prevent the destruction of the ecosystem, it is imperative to change people’s perception of nature (Scigaj 1994: 160). Hughes believes that, as the knowledge of the biosphere increases, human beings will develop a new awareness about what is prudent and important for them. In his review of Nicholson’s *The Environmental Revolution*, Hughes expresses his concern about the violence wrought by man upon nature, and states his deep sensitivity to the problem of pollution:

We have biologically inbuilt amnesia against the fears of extinction. And hunger and greed will sacrifice almost anything. And most people have already more than enough to worry about. The failure of Conservationists to publicise their anxieties, nevertheless, is not so easy to understand. To most of the world, Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* came as an absolute shock. (1994 A: 129)

As he himself clearly states, Hughes laments the public ignorance of the basic environmental issues as well as accusing the social movements for their ineffectuality

in arousing public consciousness about these problems. The underlying reason of the ecological catastrophe for Hughes is “man’s alienation from nature”, the basic assumption which is embraced by ecocritical thought (Underhill 275). He argues that human beings have refrained so much from an intimate relationship with nature that they live in exile, isolated from their own true home, that is, nature. Stressing man’s situatedness in nature, Hughes conceives nature as the essence of man, and believes that the separation of man from his essence leaves him in an absolute meaninglessness. He explains this as follows:

The inner world, separated from the outer world is a place of demons. The outer world, separated from the inner world, is a place of meaningless objects and machines. The faculty that makes the human being out of these two worlds is called divine. (151)

Moreover, he asserts that the outer world that is associated with nature, and the inner world that is associated with human beings are interdependent parts of a complete whole. The protection of the integrity of this whole is ultimately necessary for the health and well-being of both parts. He further blames religion for causing the alienation of man from nature. Hughes’ s critical approach to the influence of Christianity in shaping the basic structure of Western thought is reminiscent of the American ecocritic Lynn White, who traces the origins of anti-environmental thought to the biblical account of creation (Wallace 9). White argues that medieval and Renaissance thought was dominated by the concept of the Great Chain of Being which places man in a middle position in the hierarchal order, and provokes man to gain superiority over nonhuman nature. He later points out that:

By gradual stages a loving and all-powerful God had created light and darkness, the heavenly bodies, the earth and all its plants, animals, birds, and fishes. Finally, God had created Adam, and as an afterthought, Eve to keep man from being lonely. Man named all animals, thus establishing his dominance over them. God planned all of this explicitly for man’s benefit and rule: no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man’s purposes. And, although man’s body is made of clay, he is not simply part of nature: he is made in God’s image. (White 9)

Therefore, “the animal instinctual” energy inherent in nature is considered by Hughes as an essential part of human personality (Levi 29). Hughes believes that the

denial of these animal instincts leave man in a psychological trauma. Thus, Hughes undermines the traditional anthropocentric view that man is designated by God as the only rational creature to have the privilege of dominating nature. Hughes concentrates on the origins of anthropocentric thought which views nature as the other, and presents an anti-anthropocentric view by stating that however developed technology is, human beings are incapable of dominating nature as well as understanding it. The widespread repercussion of the anthropocentric thought is the rejection of nature and then, the exploitation of it which is explained by Hughes as follows:

The fundamental guiding ideas of our Western civilisation are against conservation. They derive from Reformed Christianity and from Old Testament Puritanism. This is generally accepted. They are based on the assumption that the earth is a heap of raw materials given to man by God for his exclusive profit and use. (129)

For Hughes, it is “human rationality”, considered as the primary feature privileged by Christianity, which causes man to see himself as a distinguished creature and to separate himself from the rest of the universe (Faas 31). Furthermore, when religion celebrated rationality while suppressing man’s instincts and desires, it has caused the collapse of the wholeness of man which is described by Hughes as the interdependence of the inner and the outer nature. The rational domination of the outer nature necessitates a similar domination of the inner nature by means of the repression of the instinctual and expressive aspects of the essence of human personality.

Ted Hughes, in his poetry, emphasises the ineffectuality of human rationality against the elemental power of nature. His preoccupation with the themes of “violence, death, and brutality” residing in nature manifests his motive to reveal the primitive, instinctual experience of man suppressed by his rationality (Hirschberg 12). Furthermore, the violence vested in nature is juxtaposed by Hughes with the violence of humanity employed on nature which is submerged under his rationality. The underlying reason for Hughes’s contesting the hegemony of human rationality is that, it is the faculty of thinking and consciousness that causes man to keep himself aloof from the rest of the universe.

Distancing himself from nature and defining his identity in opposition to nature, man sees himself as the only authority to dominate nature and control the elements of it. This awareness of human consciousness which causes the formation of a dichotomy between nature and man is overthrown by Ted Hughes with his commitment to the exploration of the relationship between man and nature by demonstrating that what is larger and older than human consciousness is nature which reigns over man.

For Hughes, the ultimate unsayable resides in nature, not in the structure of language itself: our logocentrism is what alienates us from nature, it already too much demystifies. Though in a sense, as a materialist, deconstructing idealist myths, Hughes wishes to *remystify*, to re-invest in the mystery of nature and being. (Underhill 278)

In order to prevent “total desacralisation of nature” as Keith Sagar argues, Hughes devotes himself to the excavation of the ancient ecocentric vision that is preserved in myth, and then, he recreates it in his poetry (2000: 9). In opposition to Christianity’s anti-environmental provocation leading the planet into irreparable destruction, Hughes offers myths and legends as a medium of reconciliation between the inner and the outer nature, because it is mythology which consolidates the inner world whose suppression leads man into a world of meaninglessness, and connects it to the outer world. During the process of re-mystification of nature, Hughes attempts to save the universe from human destruction and at the same time offers his poetry as a “healing power” for man’s spiritual illness (Warner 88). Ted Hughes, with the use of mythology in his poetry, deploys the primitive tribes’ perception of nature which is seen as sacred.

Due to his fascination with mythology, centered on his skepticism towards “the materialism and rationality of modern age” (Ingelbien 629), Hughes gained a reputation as a “shaman” who used natural energy to heal people in primitive societies (Bentley 7). Hughes offers shamanism not as an alternative religion to Christianity, but as a fundamental poetic technique. He establishes an analogy between shamanism and poetry, and points out that:

... the initiation dreams, the general schema of the shamanic flight, and the figures and adventures they encounter, are not a shaman monopoly:

they are, in fact, the basic experience of the poetic temperament we call romantic. In a shamanising society, *Venus and Adonis*, some of Keats longer poems, *The Wanderings of Oisin*, *Ash Wednesday*, would all qualify their authors for the magic drum. (56)

After identifying shamanism with poetry, Hughes states that both the poet and the shaman have the power to release natural energy which can “revitalise and empower” the individual (Sweeting 72). The purpose of the poet’s shamanistic operation is to prevent the destructive influence of this energy, and provide the individuals with the psychological and the physical refreshment. While a shaman heals the illness through releasing energy in a state of ecstasy during rituals, the poet performs the same rite in his verse (Sweeting 73). The prevailing emphasis on the energy and the release of energy can be taken as evidence which explains Hughes’s fascination with violence in nature which embodies the duality of life-giving and devouring power of natural energy. Furthermore, Hughes’s conception of the natural energy stored in a poem brings him closer to William Ruekert who, as a pioneer of ecocriticism, defines poetry as “part of energy pathway that sustains life” (Ruekert 108).

In continuation to this argument, it can be stated that Hughes perceives poetry as an inexhaustible source of stored energy coming from nature, and the poet functions as a negotiator between the natural world and human beings, and strives to provide the sustainability of life by transferring the natural energy to human beings. Moreover, the circulation of this energy is possible only through an interactive operation of the author, the text and the reader. The interaction is not limited merely with these three factors; the author, the text and the reader, but they all together are connected to the outside world. Thus, every time the activity of reading takes place, the energy stored in the poem flows into the reader, and in this way the energy transfer becomes possible.

The notion of a poem as a source of stored energy reveals the poet’s desire to bring nature and culture together, and to perceive all as parts of a complete wholeness of the ecosystem. Hence, Hughes’s idea of a poet who embodies the shamanistic role in the modern society with the aim of bringing man to intimate negotiation with nature, demonstrates the validity of the first principle of ecology, that is, everything

being connected with everything else. Hughes's poetry invites its readers into a spiritual journey to the world of myths and legends, where they discover the natural energy and the sacred wholeness of nature and then, to learn to identify themselves with the creatures of natural habitat. In this way, they can clarify their vision of the universe and gain a new "ecological vision" (Sagar 2000: 30). Only after acquiring this ecological vision can the change in people's perception of nature be achieved. Considering the fact that, the change in people's perception of nature, and the creation of an environmental consciousness constitute the most important part of the problem of environmental destruction, Hughes, successfully, achieves to underline the roots the ecological problems and deal with the core of the reasons of deterioration of the health of the ecosystem.

The ecological devastation in Mytholmryod, caused by rapid industrialisation, especially after the nineteenth century becomes the main subject of *Remains of Elmet* (Scigaj 1991: 5). Mytholmryod as a town located in the Calder Valley, near West Yorkshire, is the birthplace of Hughes, and therefore, it provided the poet with firsthand experience to witness the environmental destruction in that area. After the building of textile mills in the Calder Valley during the nineteenth century, the natural resources of the land was exploited for the operation of the textile machines (Haberstroh 138). Almost all of the poems in *Remains of Elmet* are dedicated to the celebration of the natural beauty of his place of birth. At the same time, these poems are involved in the lamentation for the death of nature and its subordination by technology.

Hughes chooses the ancient name of Calder Valley as the title of his book. His choice of Elmet is significant in that Hughes draws a parallel between the past and the present history of the Calder Valley by using the ancient name of the place, the last Celtic kingdom to fall to the Angles who destroyed the land with their invasion during the sixth century (Skea 117). Concentrating on the abuse of the natural landscape of the area, the poet demonstrates the fact that throughout history, Calder Valley has been exposed to destruction and exploitation by human hand.

The disastrous effect of technological progress on the natural world is the recurring image of the poems in *Remains of Elmet*. The gradual decline of the

landscape of the Calder Valley, in opposition to the rapid increase of industrialisation is the primary focus of "First, Mills", one of the poems which conveys the major preoccupation of *Remains of Elmet*. Technology, which symbolises progress, also functions contradictorily by putting a barrier between man and nature, preventing any kind of direct relationship. The result of such alienation of man from nature is the desire of man to dominate nature and to exert his control over it. The poet draws attention to the fact that in the name of progress and development, human beings are destroying nature, and turning it into a grave:

First, Mills
And steep wet cobbles
Then cenotaphs.

First, football pitches, crown greens
Then the bottomless wound of the railway station
That bled this valley to death. (1-6)

The poem is involved in a list of cultural elements which demonstrate the gradual development of human civilisation. The construction of the mills contributes to the economic well-being of a country and provides "the continuation of the textile industry" (Scigaj 1986: 234). The operation of the textile mills inevitably requires the construction of railways to provide the transportation of the products. Similarly, the football game is also considered as an integral part of modern culture. What the poem tries to emphasise is the other side of the medallion, namely, the construction of mills, football pitches and the railway stations all require the clearing of the area of the trees. That can be interpreted as a human intrusion to the natural life in the valley. The poem powerfully describes the human factor as the fatal wound in the natural landscape. The word "cenotaph" connotes the idea that the construction of the mills becomes the monuments of the death of nature, since they are built upon the grave of nature:

The town and villages were sacked.
Everything fell wetly to bits
In the memory
And along the sides of the streets. (12-15)

Captivation of the towns and villages by the rapid process of industrialisation is emphasised in the poem. The image of the natural world falling into pieces and

disappearing from the memories of people is significant in demonstrating the dangerous results of the industrialisation. Modern technology and its culture is conceived as a means by which man can exert his control over nature and in this way he can draw what he wants from the earth and then return what he does not want to the earth again. What is severely criticised by the poet is the instrumental relationship between man and nature which depends on the exploitation and consummation of nature that brings the inevitable death of nature. Nature in "First, Mills" is described as a living organism under threat as a result of human exploitation. In addition to the abuse of nature, the poem also makes a reference to the concept of nature seen as the enemy by human beings:

Over this trench
A sky like an empty helmet
With a hole in it. (16-18)

The poem creates an image of war in which the world is seen as a battlefield where nature and man are in a perpetual struggle to dominate each other. Considering the sky as a protective helmet which preserves nature, the poem makes a significant remark about the overthrowing of nature by human beings. The war between man and nature ends with the death of nature. In this poem Hughes portrays a natural world which is dragged into total destruction by human beings. After the captivity of nature by man, the earth, perceived by man as a battleground whereupon he can restlessly continue to suppress and silence nature, turns into a grave where death prevails. The idea of decay and change of the natural landscape continues to be Hughes's preoccupation in another poem, "Hill-Stone was Content" which concentrates upon the changing structure of the stones and the rocks in Calder Valley. The title of the poem makes a striking remark about the contentment of the stones with being enslaved by industrialisation, and thus, deludes the readers:

To be cut, to be carted
And fixed in its new place
It let itself be conscripted
Into mills. And it stayed in position
Defending this slavery against all.

It forgot its wild roots
Its earth-song

In cement and the drum-song of looms. (1-8)

The building of the mills necessitates the breaking of the rocks and stones and putting them into a new shape. The choice of stone as the predominant idea of the poem might be also significant in that the stones are naturally known as rigid and tough elements of nature, which is difficult to mould into a shape. However, the stones, as the poem indicate, are hypnotised, and forgot their own roots, so that they even defend their own slavery. The poem illustrates the fact that even the strongest element of nature is pacified and subordinated by the mills. The poem also reveals the result of this slavery in the eighth line. The existence of the mills turns the natural environment into a cemetery for its inhabitants. The voice of the noisy looms is the song of death in this cemetery, which takes the place of earth song of nature. The poem, "Hill-Stone was Content" attracts the attention of its readers not only to the slavery of the stones but also of human beings:

And inside the mills mankind
With bodies that came and went
Stayed in position
Trembling in the song of the looms. (9-12)

The "mesmerising song of the looms" is extended beyond the outside nature to include human beings also (Scigal 1991: 111). The powerful description of man's adopting his body to the movements of the loom can be interpreted to imply that it is not man who operates and dominates the machines but the machines have the power and control over man. Therefore, the poem reveals the idea that both man and the stones are compelled to forget their own true nature, and thus have become the slaves of industrialisation without acknowledging their slavery. Similar to "Hill-Stone was Content", the clash between the industrial activity and the natural world is revealed in another poem, "Wild Rock" which concentrates on the changing circumstances of lifestyle of the stones as parts of natural life:

Tamed rock.
Millstone-grit-a soul-grinding sandstone.

Roof-of-the-world-ridge wind
And rain, and rain. (1-4)

The first line of the poem constitutes a paradox in the title through the emphasis that the original rigid structure of the rock is distorted and put into a new form. The rock, in the poem, is broken down into small pebbles and thus, its core of existence is destroyed with the aim of building mills. The poem personifies the rock and perceives the destruction of the rock as the grinding of its soul. The second couplet of the poem shows the results of the disruption of the integrity of the natural world. The poet associates the disruption of the natural ecosystem with a house the roof of which is destroyed and therefore vulnerable to the cold and rain. Furthermore, the multiplicity of the hyphens used between almost all of the words might be significant in its contribution to the theme of the disintegration of the ecosystem. The harsh weather conditions leave man vulnerable to the cold and the rain:

A people fixed
 Staring fleeces, blown like blown flames.
 A people converting their stony ideas
 To woollen weave, thick worsted, dense fustians
 Between their bones and the four trembling quarters. (10-14)

To protect themselves from the wind, people try to use a thickly woven woollen fabric which is the production of the textile industry. Although this fabric is considered to be strong enough to protect them from the wind, they cannot protect themselves from the harsh weather. The poem symbolically can be interpreted as a war between man and nature, and man uses technology as a weapon against the natural forces:

Wind. Cold. A permanent weight
 To be braced under. And rain. (8-9)

As the poem emphasises, the power of nature surpasses technology, as man's artificial source of power. Consequently, the paradox of the first line is clarified at the end of the poem. Man's desire to dominate nature results in his own destruction as well as the total disruption of the balance of the ecosystem. The poem gives an ecological message about the disastrous consequences of the human exploitation of

nature and warns people that they should not give harm to nature not only for the sake of ecosystem but also for their own survival in this ecosystem.

Human existence as the only menace to the continuity of the other life forms in nature, and the destructive influence of technology on the natural environment is also dealt with in "The Sheep Went on Being Dead". In this poem, similar to the previous one, the poet tries to create an ecological awareness by directing the attention of his readers to the fact that the contemporary society, lulled by the power machines can no longer hear the voice of nature and thus, blinds himself to the death of the land. The poet expresses his grief upon seeing nature in such a tragic situation:

It was a headache
To see earth such a fierce magnet
Of death. And how the sheep's baggage
Flattened and tried to scatter, getting flatter
Deepening into that power
And indrag of wet stony death. (9-14)

The poem describes an invisible power which draws everything in nature into itself like a magnet. It is a sinister power bringing death and destruction to the inhabitants of nature. The sheep as animals, fed by the grass in the natural area are influenced by this sinister power which brings death. The flattening of sheep's baggage refers to their malnutrition and losing weight. They become thinner and thinner. The reason of their death and the mystery of this sinister power are revealed in the following lines as:

The throb of the mills and the crying of lambs
Like shouting in Flanders
Muffled away
In white curls. (21-24)

It is again the mills which cause the destruction of natural life. The poet juxtaposes the voices coming from the mills with the bleating of the sheep to analyse the relationship between technology and nature. While the voices of the machines are described as the heart of the mills beating strongly, the bleating of the sheep is

perceived as the crying of nature which is silenced and dragged into death. As the two voices intermingle with each other, the voice coming from the mills suppresses the voice of nature. From the very beginning of the poem, the poet creates an image of nature which is at the moment of its death:

Under the Heights road, under crucified oaks
Among slovenly bracken
In the broken spine of a fallen land. (1-3)

In the first line of the poem, the image of “crucified oaks” emphasises the idea of nature which is sacrificed for the benefit of human beings (1). Although the poet creates a bleak image of nature at the edge of its death, he achieves to reflect the seriousness of the ecological disaster from an ecocentric perspective by looking into the events from the viewpoint of nature itself and thus, manages to give expression to nature. Nature’s suffering and its reduction into a set of means of human ends can be witnessed and felt in this poem.

Hughes’s critical approach to technology and its devastating effect on nature continues in the poem titled “The Canal’s Drowning Black” which concentrates upon the fishing experience. The poem dwells upon an important problem of the pollution of rivers, and the widespread threat of acid rain on the natural environment. The primary reason for acid rain is the industrial activity. The burning of coal and oil to provide energy for heating or the production of electric power, releases “sulphur dioxide and nitrogen to the atmosphere” (Riggs 141) and reaches the earth in the form of acid rain. Once these acid gases enter into the chain of the natural cycle, they inevitably cause damage to the forests and lakes, as well as causing air pollution. The impact of acid rain on the environment is firstly recognised in the lakes and rivers as David Kemp points out:

Damage to the eggs during spawning and the inability of the young fry to survive the higher acidity, particularly during the spring flush, ensured that the older fish were not replaced as they died. As a result, fish populations in many rivers and lakes in eastern North America, Britain and Scandinavia have declined noticeably in the last two to three decades and hundreds of lakes are now completely devoid of fish.
(2)

The acid rain which is a by-product of technological and industrial development constitutes the most dangerous factor in the destruction of natural environment. Hence, the poem "The Canal's Drowning Black" which begins with a simple fishing experience turns out to be a social debate, where the major reasons of the environmental pollution are put forward. After confining the fish, the persona begins to concentrate on the fish itself and bestows upon it a special dignity and value:

Loach. Torpid, ginger-bearded, secret
 Prehistory of the canal's masonry,
 With little cupid mouths.
 Five inches huge!
 On the slime-brink, over bridge reflections,
 I teetered. Then a ringing, skull-jolt stamp
 And their beards flowered sudden anemones. (2-8)

Loach is the name given to an old salmon, and its dignity and value for the persona, stems from its old age. During its long life in the canal, the loach has become the witness of history. The persona is attracted by the charming mystery of the loach and describes it as a sacred creature. The little cupid mouth of the loach evokes love and affection in the persona's mind. His admiration and respect for the fish increases when he thinks of its difficult life conditions, and its gradual destruction by human beings. In other words, the fishing experience gives the persona of "The Canal's Drowning Black" the opportunity to explore the relationship between man and the natural world, and analyse the underlying reasons of the reduction of the fish population and the pollution of rivers. Upon his realisation of the survival struggle of the fish in the extremely polluted rivers he points out that:

Then flopped out of their ocean-shifting aeons
 Into a two-pound jam-jar
 On a windowsill
 Blackened with acid rain fall-out
 From Manchester's rotten lung (21-24).

The poem associates the life of the fish in the canal with the life of a fish which is taken out of the ocean and forced to live in a jam-jar with a little water and air to breath. Moreover, the fish in the jar which is put on a windowsill, blackened with the acid rain, draws attention to another important problem of air pollution. The

Manchester city is personified and resembled to a man whose lungs are rotten because of smoking. The industrial activity in the city creates an important problem of pollution which poisons its inhabitants who have to inhale the smoke of the factories.

In this poem, Hughes demonstrates that environmental pollution has become an integral part of everyday life, and illustrates how the development of technology, which seems to ensure the well-being of human species, requires the destruction and extinction of the other species preventing the diversity of life on earth. The poet's sceptical approach to the technological mastery of man over nature determines the general atmosphere of the poem which takes a particular fish, which is loach, as the embodiment of nature itself. The persona gains an ecological consciousness, which enables him first, to see the fish as an integral part of the natural environment, and then to realise its perpetual destruction by human hand. Hence, the persona is not merely an outside observer of natural phenomena, but an active participant in it as an inhabitant of the natural world. The persona of the poem goes through a process of change, and achieves to acquire deep ecology's principle of Self-realisation which is emphasised by Arne Naess as the necessary requirement for the preservation of the ecosystem and the prevention of environmental problems (Naess 1989: 155). His perspective of the universe is enhanced after he develops respect for nature. He experiences a kind of recognition so that he manages to see the intrinsic value of nature. This kind of environmental consciousness is seen as a necessary requirement of man's identifying himself with the natural universe and gaining an ecological identity through which he no longer sets himself apart from nature. The ecological consciousness enables the persona to appreciate and admire the fish's struggle to survive in a habitat polluted by human beings.

In addition to the problem of the pollution of rivers in "The Canal's Drowning Black", "Rhododendrons" deals with another important ecological problem that is the extinction of rhododendrons. The poem challenges the human motive to build national parks to rescue the species from extinction. Contradictorily enough, human beings try to preserve the wild life after destroying the natural environment. Once the species of the rhododendrons are vanished almost entirely from the earth, human beings force these plants to live in the national parks constructed in the name of protecting the species which are exposed to extinction. However, these plants which are pulled out of

their roots, and compelled to live in a different and artificial environment away from their own natural habitat:

Detestable ever green sterility!
Over dead acid gardens
Where blue widows, shrined in Sunday, shrank... (8-10)

The plantation in the garden under human control presents a disturbing picture for the poet who perceives garden as an image of sterility rather than fertility. Because the national parks are constructed at the centre of cities with the aim of bringing wild life closer to human beings, and everything planted in these parks are artificially grown among the industrial activities, and thus, bear the marks of this industrialisation. Therefore, the national park which is called as the “graveyard park” becomes a cemetery for the rhododendrons which cannot adapt themselves to the new conditions of living (19). It is pointed out in “Rhododendrons” that:

Rubberized prison-wear of suppression
Guarding and guarded by
The Council’s black
Forbidding forbidden stones

The policeman’s protected leaf! (3-7)

The poem creates an image of prison to describe the life of rhododendrons in the national park. Human beings are considered as policemen who apply violence and force to keep the prisoners under control. The Council stands for the authorities and law makers who decide on the construction of the national parks to preserve wild life. Yet, the poem ironically shows that the relationship between human beings and nature is similar to a regime of dictatorship which depends on the oppression and subordination of the other species. The poem again looks into the events from the point of view of nature and gives voice to the suffering of rhododendrons which are being eradicated from the earth by the coloniser species of human beings:

Evergloom of official titivation
Uniform at the reservoir, and the chapel
And the graveyard park

Ugly as a brass-band in India. (17-20)

Ugly as a brass-band in India. (17-20)

The idea of taming nature which is forced to fit into an acceptable pattern of appearance is revealed in these lines. The life of the rhododendrons is resembled to a person who wears a perfect uniform, representing his official position. Similarly, the rhododendrons, which are distanced from their natural habitat, eventually lose their own unique identity and distinguishing characteristics which make them rhododendrons and become something different from themselves. Man's exploitation of nature is juxtaposed with the colonisation of India by the British rule. The last line of the poem makes a reference to the brass-band in India which reflects the assimilation of the natives to the British rule. The brass-band is considered as ugly and artificial by the persona of the poem since it shows the Indian's the loss of identity and submission to the power of the colonisers.

In order to liberate nature from its prison and put an end to its captivation, the poem, "The Long Tunnel Ceiling" aims to connect human beings with nature. Rather than focusing on the fishing experience itself, Hughes in this poem draws particular attention to the living conditions of the fish through a detailed analysis of the surrounding environment of the fish. The place is surrounded by the textile factories, described by the poet as follows:

At the far end, the Moderna blanket factory
And the bushy mask of Hatherself above it
Peered in through the cell-window.

Lorries from Bradford, baled with plump and towering
Wools and cottons met, above my head,
Lorries from Rochdale, and ground past each other
Making that cavern of air and water tremble- (4-10)

"The Long Tunnel Ceiling" illustrates the lorries passing over the canal bridge and "carrying the wool and cotton to the factories" (Haberstroh 146). The poet creates an image of the natural environment which is completely disturbed and threatened by the existence of lorries and factories. The passing of the lorries over the canal bridge causes a piece of brick to dislodge from the bridge and fall into the water. The splash

of the water and the rumbling of the lorries is interpreted by the poet as the trembling of the earth and the water which frightens its inhabitants:

But the canal swallowed its scare,
The heavy mirror reglassed itself
And the black arch gazed up at the black arch (16-18).

The canal's swallowing its scare emphasises the ability of nature to restore itself after its destruction. The water immediately takes its previous form after the fall of the brick, but on the other hand, the water's reflecting the image of black arch like a mirror can be interpreted as the permanency of the injury made by technology upon nature. In other words, although nature manages to renew its life, its destruction can never be recovered totally as long as the shadow of black arch as an emblem of technology is seen in the water. The image of nature threatened by the lorries demonstrates that man's colonising nature leaves to its other inhabitants little space to live, and further proves that it is the technological power of human beings which causes the environmental destruction. The poet argues that the recognition of nature which offers benefits to human beings gives way to its destruction whenever man has failed to find any value in it. Through the end of "The Long Tunnel Ceiling", the persona's attention is attracted to fish which appeared in the water after the collapse of the brick:

An ingot!
Holy of holies! A treasure!
A trout
Nearly as long as my arm, solid
Molten pig of many a bronze loach! (22-27)

Similar to the other poems, the fish again gains holiness in this poem. The trout is treated as a sacred being since the persona admires its life struggle. The limited space of the canal water makes it impossible for the trout to survive. It is also seen as a treasure because, the fish, at the edge of its extinction becomes one of the last survivors of its own species. For these reasons, it becomes an ingot, a treasure, as well as gaining sacredness. In this poem, the poet reminds his readers that there are also other inhabitants of nature, who have the right to exist but whose existence is jeopardised by the technological dominance of human beings who perceive

themselves as the possessors of nature. The poet proves that the centre of the universe is not limited to the human circle, but includes all the physical nature, which is perceived as sacred by the persona of the poem.

The use of religious terminology for nature can be interpreted as the response to the mechanistic view of nature, reducing it into a raw material to be consumed. The persona's respect for nature and its holiness enables him to experience a sense of intimation and participation with nature which also provides refreshment in his perception of the universe. In opposition to the domineering power of technology, the poem generates a vital energy which leaves the persona with a sense of astonishment and admiration at the power and beauty of nature and its struggle to survive. Therefore, for the persona of "The Long Tunnel Ceiling" the trout becomes a lily whose seeds are sent by a god, and which is flowering and struggling to survive with resolution:

A seed
Of the wild god now flowering for me
Such a tigerish, dark, breathing lily
Between the tyres, under the tortured axles. (36-39)

The persona's admiration of the trout leads him to imagine the life struggle of the trout as the life of a delicate but at the same time powerful flower which is squeezed and stuck between the tyres or cut by the axles. However, it still achieves to remain alive under the threat of death. The lily, with its godly power, is described as a tigerish, and dark flower having the characteristics of a predatory animal. It still has the power to defend itself and to live in spite of the dangers waiting for it. Hughes's representation of the small fish entrapped in the mechanical world brings forth an acute criticism of the anthropocentric thought which approaches nature as an infinite stock of raw material, offered to the benefit of industrial process. Hence, the poem becomes a site where the instrumental value of nature, subservient to the industrial development is confronted by the notion of nature as sublime upon which all the life forms are dependent. The mystification of nature which is depicted as holy and sacred, also suggests the idea that human control over nature is a false presumption, since nature is beyond human comprehension, operating through a complex system of interrelationships between different organisms. Therefore, the poem offers a shift in

value of judgements for nature from an anthropocentric view which legitimises the exploitation of nature to the ecocentric view which offers a reciprocal relationship between nature and human beings. In other words, it can be claimed that Ted Hughes establishes a new ethical system which is proposed by ecocriticism as the necessary requirement to prevent environmental destruction. It is explained by Christopher Manes as follows:

As a consequence, we require a viable environmental ethics to confront the silence of nature in our contemporary regime of thought, for it is within this vast, eerie silence that surrounds our garrulous human subjectivity that an ethics of exploitation regarding nature has taken shape and flourished, producing the ecological crisis that now requires the search for an environmental counterethic. (16)

In an effort to establish an ethical basis through which nature is restored to its inherent dignity, Hughes undermines the traditional assumptions about nature which needs to be subordinated. Thus, celebrating the vital and elemental forces of nature, Hughes's poems do not provoke the idea of nature as subservient to human beings, but envision nature as "red in tooth and claw" in Ian Currie's words (95).

Unlike the previous poems which present nature's otherness, "Football at Slack" depicts man's vulnerable position in his battle with nature. At first glance, the poem seems to be the deployment of a few men who struggle to play football in extremely bad weather:

The rubbery men bounced after it.
The ball jumped up and out and hung on the wind
Over a gulf of treetops.
Then, they all shouted together, and the ball blew back (7-10).

The significance of the poem lies in the fact that as the men exert extra power and energy to play against the wind, the wind also increases its influence on them. In this way, the football game turns into a match between man and nature to overthrow each other. Through the personification of the wind, the poet presents the idea that the wind increases its influence in order to frighten them and prevent their game:

Winds from fiery holes in heaven

Piled the hills darkening around them
 To awe them. The glare light
 Mixed its mad oils and threw the glooms (10-14).

The symbolic representation of the football game implies that nature liberates itself from the oppression of man and regains its devouring power over the mechanistic culture which is an invention of human beings. The footballers who are depicted like cartoon-like characters, are about to be blown up, and they become the ball in the hands of the wind: "But the wingers leapt, they bicycled in air/ And the goalie flew horizontal" (22-23). While enacting a vision of nature which has control over human beings, the poem views human beings as insignificant creatures who are at the mercy of nature. As an all-encompassing living organism, nature has a direct influence over all inhabitants of the earth including human beings and gives them as a sense of being watched: "And once again a golden holocaust/Lifted the cloud's edge, to watch them" (24-35).

From an ecocritical perspective, the poem demonstrates a picture of the natural world ascertained through the view of nature itself, not that of human beings. The establishment of the biocentric view distinguishes itself from the anthropocentric one in that, human being's assumptions about the domination of nature is only a misconception since nature itself is the source of power which enfolds all the other living beings.

While "Football at Slack" celebrates the natural energy which is impossible to be tamed and has the capacity to destroy everything, "Abel Cross, Crimsworth Dene" is a poem which celebrates the life giving energy of nature as the source of life on earth. Each element of nature is presented with feminine characteristics which emphasise the fertility of the earth as the only power to provide the continuation of life:

Where the Mothers
 Gallop their souls

Where the howlings of heaven
 Pour down on to earth
 Looking for bodies

Of birds, animals, people (1-6).

The poem analyses the natural events, and introduces rain as the manifestation of earth's sole purpose of distributing life and energy to its dwellers. It is also significant that in this particular poem both human and non-human are fused together, which initiates a reciprocal relationship with each other. This is presented as a necessary requirement for the sustaining of life. As it is revealed in the poem, the elemental forces of nature stimulate the regeneration of life on earth by nurturing its inhabitants and transforming its natural energy to animals and human beings in the form of joy of life. After the distribution of natural energy, it is pointed out that:

A happiness starts up, secret and wild
Like a lark-song just out of hearing
Hidden in the wind. (7-9)

Similar to the other poems in *Remains of Elmet*, "Abel Cross, Crimsworth Dene" is an important poem which provides the circulation of natural energy to the readers. The poet tries to convey the energy inherent in nature to his readers via poetry confirms the ecocritical assumption of William Ruekert's claim that poetry is stored energy and the reading is an activity which releases the natural energy and power stored in poetry so that "it may flow through human community" (109).

The perception of earth as a creative source of energy and Hughes's use of language which emphasises the presence of outside physical nature and its life giving energy in a literary text can be seen as the breaking of the boundaries between nature and culture, and the establishment of mutual integration between human beings and the natural environment. As Ruekert points out "literature and biosphere" are reconciled in Hughes's poetry to promote an ecological vision which should penetrate into "economic, political, social and technological visions of our time" since the ecological problem is a global one (114).

Hughes's attack on environmental destruction in favour of the preservation of the ecosystem perpetuates its influence in the *River* (1983) which is particularly preoccupied with river pollution and the reduction of the fish population in the rivers due to chemical poisoning. *River* occupies an important place in Hughes's literary

career. It distinguishes itself from the other poems in its concentration of the salmon fish and their life in the river. The volume consists of forty-seven poems and forty-three of them are about the river, the remaining four poems are about the water birds and their preying on the fish. For the ecologically indulged ideas in the *River* which ensures the establishment of the holistic view of universe, Leonard Scigaj claims that *River* will "one day be recognised as one of the central literary masterpieces of the world" (1991: 133). The controversial notions of the necessity of death and nature's potential for rebirth are elaborated all throughout the *River*.

The foreboding of death can be felt from the very beginning of the volume. The promulgation of the inner dynamics of nature to create and destroy its elements is revealed in the first poem "Salmon Eggs" which deals with the death of the salmon fish:

The salmon were just down there-
Shivering together, touching at each other,
Shedding themselves for each other-
Now beneath flood-murmur
They peel away deathwards. (1-5)

The natural event pointed out in the poem is the spawning of the salmon fish. However, the persona achieves to reveal the delicate and charming value of this natural event, and interprets the spawning as a lovemaking of two lovers. The words, "shivering, touching, and shedding" carry the mutual love, care and affection of these two fish which are unified in their lovemaking. The persona's realisation of the destiny of the salmon fish intensifies his feelings of admiration and sensitivity towards the fish. The atmosphere of pessimism as the consequence of the prevailing idea of death is gradually dispersed through the end of the poem:

The river goes on
Sliding through its place, undergoing itself
In its wheel.
I make out the sunk foundations
Of dislocated crypts, a bedrock
Time-hewn, time-riven altar. And this is the liturgy
Of earth's coming-harrowing, crowned-a travail
Of raptures and rendings. Perpetual mass of waters

Wells from the cleft.(28-37)

The turning of the river's wheel signifies the continuation of life in nature and the necessity of death for the renewal of life. The salmon's struggle to produce eggs and its death afterwards, makes the poem a celebration of life rather than a lament for the death of the fish. Death seems to be insignificant compared to the nature's power to reproduce and renew itself. The religious terminology in these lines demonstrates the idea that the death of the salmon fish after its spawning is considered as a religious sacrifice. The words; "liturgy", "altar", "harrowing", "raptures" and "rending" creates a religious image so that the power of the waves to scatter the eggs in the river is conceived as a religious ceremony of nature's worshipping and sacrificing its own element to provide the continuation of life. Thus, the previous concentration of the poem on the death of the salmon seems only an insignificant occurrence as it is indicated in the poem "*Only birth matters*" (44). The persona's exploration of the cycle of death and re-birth in nature leads him to develop a feeling of respect for nature's power to renew itself. In addition to the "Salmon Eggs" which celebrates the vitality of the natural elements, the "Caddis" is a poem which diverts the concentration away from the spawning of the salmon to the egg itself. The persona directly addresses the unborn salmon in its egg and states that:

Struggle-drudge-with the ideas of a crocodile
And the physique of a foetus.

Absurd mudlark-living hovel's life
Yourself your own obstacle. (1-4)

In these lines it is expressed that from the very beginning of its life the salmon should learn to strive hard in order to remain alive, because life is full of dangers for the salmon egg and its chance of survival is very low. To overcome these dangers, the salmon egg is advised to be very careful and act with insidiousness like a crocodile although it is still too young to behave accordingly. The warning of the salmon against the dangers that it will come across in its life continues in the following lines:

Wasp-face, orphaned and a waif too early
Improvising- with inaudible war cries- (11-12)

The poem creates a sympathetic identification with the salmon egg in its personification of the salmon. The salmon egg is treated like a new born baby who

has lost his family and home. Similar to a baby, the salmon egg loses its parents and is scattered in the water immediately after its birth. The poem conceives its fight for life as a war cry which cannot be heard since it has not come to life yet.

Hughes in this volume, not only argues for the establishment of the sacred view of nature, and the necessity of a change in the perception of people, but also calls for active participation in taking the necessary precautions to prevent environmental destruction. This sense of activism in terms of decisions and action is enacted in “1984 on ‘The Tarka Trail’”, a poem from the *River*. Tarka Trail is the name of a small town situated in the southwest of England in the area of Devon (Gifford 130). The place is famous for its charming natural beauty, and thus attracts the attention of tourists. While one part of the town faces the river, the railway station stands at the other part of the town (Balding 1). For this reason, natural landscape of the town and river are under the threat of industrialisation which causes the problem of pollution in the area. The prevailing idea of the poem is the crime committed by human beings against nature which also can be taken as evidence of human violence inflicted on nature which results in its destruction:

The river's floor is a fleece _
Tresses of some vile stuff _
That disintegrates to a slime as you touch it
Leaving your fingers fouled with a stink of diesel. (4-7)

In this particular poem, by pointing to the deep-green colour of the river, the poet conveys his sense of anxiety at the indifference of people in the face of the death of the river which is used as a place to dispose the chemical substances and fuel-oil. The persona cannot identify the reason for the river's pollution at first sight, but later he realises that the accumulation of the oil in the river has created a slimy layer of filth. This illustrates the excess of pollution of the river. In the note that Hughes wrote for the poems in *River*, he expresses his sensitivity towards river pollution. He says:

One day (1940s) I saw all the fish in this lake bobbing their mouths at the surface: the beginning of the end, as it turned out. That same day I noticed a strange ruddy vein in the ditch water that drained from the farm buildings, two or three hundred yards away. And I registered a new smell. I traced the vein to a big stone shed, packed with sodden,

dark-stained grass-reeking the new smell. It was the first silage.
(Hughes 1993: 184)

The importance of the poem for the ecocritical analysis stems not only from its preoccupation with the problem of pollution but also its use of “toxic discourse”, that is, the language borrowed from the disciplines of chemistry and biology, and their employment in the poetic language (Buell 1998: 639). Toxic discourse enables the poet to merge the scientific discourse with the poetic discourse, and prepares the ground to discuss the environmental issues with scientific evidence:

The river's gluttoned-a boom of plenty for algae.
A festering olla podrida, poured slowly.
Surfactants, ammonia, phosphates- the whole banquet
Flushed in by sporadic thunderbursts
But never a flood enough to scour a sewer,
Never enough to resurrect a river. (8-13)

After the pollution of rivers, human beings strive to clean the river water by using chemicals which are pointed out in the poem as podrida, surfactants, ammonia, and phosphates. The river is overfed and gluttoned by these chemicals, however the poem emphasises that it is a futile attempt to struggle to clear the river which is filled by chemicals. The resurrection of the river is impossible since all these chemicals are known to be dangerous toxins for living organisms (Carson 38). What causes the persona to fall into such kind of pessimism, which causes him to disbelieve in the recoverability of the river, is his awareness of the threat of the toxicity of rivers. Once the chemicals penetrate into the natural system, they are guaranteed to be lodged in the bodies of the living organisms, both on earth and the river which in turn enter into the soil in the form of rain, and thus causing the creation of a long chain of poisoning passing from animals to human beings (Carson 39). Through his personal experience of the death of a small mussel, the persona of “1984 on ‘Tarka Trail’”, laments the death of nature. He expresses his shock and astonishment in these lines:

God! The river's dead! Oh God!
Even the mussels are finished!

The tale of a dying river
Does not end where you stand with the visitors
At the sickbed, feeling the usual

Nothing more than mangled helplessness. (32-37)

The mussels are known as the strong animals which can survive in difficult living conditions. However, the death of the mussels in the poem reveals the seriousness of the problem, and calls for an immediate action. The river is personified as a dying person with the visitors near him, waiting helplessly for his death. The persona reacts against the neglect and insensitivity of people who remain as mere watchers of the death of the river. The poem depicts the picture of the river not as a source of energy, which can be transformed into human beings in the form of joy of life, but as a patient at his deathbed as a result of economically motivated technology which approaches nature as a commodity. Hughes in his call for environmental justice restores to each individual of the natural environment, both human and non-human, the right to exist and survive.

Furthermore, the poet in the "1984 on 'Tarka Trail'", brings into the argument another important reason for environmental degradation; the agricultural policy which depends on financially profitable production. Increasingly, mechanised agriculture offers new methods of farming which are easier and more profitable that also requires the use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers. Hughes traces the roots of environmental destruction and brings into discussion the uninhibited use of chemical pesticides and agricultural fertilisers which cause the destruction of living organisms, and loss of minerals in the soil. As Hughes argues in the poem, the use of chemicals not only shatters the balance of the ecosphere, but also influence human beings when they enter into the food chain. Therefore, the environmental destruction in the "1984 on 'Tarka Trail'" is perceived as the self-suicidal action which drags the entire universe into destruction without the exclusion of human beings:

Three hundredweight of 20-10-10 to the acre,
A hundredweight and a half straight Nitram.
Pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, the grand slam-
Each time twenty gallons to the acre
Into your dish, with top-ups. And slug-pellets
A bonus, with the rest, into your cup
(Via the lifeless ditch-meaning your tap).
Now you are as loaded with the data
That cultivate his hopes, in this brief gamble
As this river is. . . (60-69)

The tone of the poem is ironic; all these chemicals used in agricultural activity with the aim of increasing the crop will turn as a bonus to human beings. The poet makes fun of the selfish desire of the farmers who seek the means of gaining more money. The poem humorously gives voice to the thoughts of a farmer who makes the calculations of how much chemicals he should use in order to increase the product. The wide-spreading danger posed by the synthetic fertilisers, used in agricultural activity, is presented by the poet in a witty way so that these pesticides which are believed to have an important role in cultivating better quality and quantity of crops will eventually return to human body as bonus which connotes the idea of human desire to gain extra money. Through his ironic representation of the extent of the hazardous results of environmental destruction, the poet tries to create an awakening by startling his readers, so that the environment becomes much more important to their understanding of life which is exposed to the pernicious effects of toxicity. The poet demonstrates a little recognised fact that the use of chemical pesticides in farming not only causes the destruction of the soil, but also has long term influence in the pollution of the waters, the retrieval of which is almost impossible. The wide-ranging impact of the chemicals on the environment has been the major concern of an environmental scientist Rachel Carson, who points out that:

Chemicals sprayed on croplands or forests or gardens lie long in soil, entering into living organisms, passing from one to another in a chain of poisoning and death. They pass mysteriously by underground streams until; they emerge and through the alchemy of air and sunlight, combine into new forms that kill vegetation, sicken cattle, and work unknown harm on those who drink from once pure wells. (15)

Hughes, with his use of toxic discourse elicited from modern environmental science, strives to persuade his readers about the seriousness of the problem by encouraging his readers to contemplate on the results of their actions on the ecological and ethical planes. Considering the ecological implications of the poem, it can be seen that the poem works for activating and creating a deep sense of awareness of physical nature which is brought into a textual debate as a real social problem.

The poem offers a long-term solution for the environmental problems by challenging readers to form a sustainable relationship with their environment. The pursuit of a strategy of analysing how human beings conceptualise nature leads the poet to foster the evolution of ecological understanding of the outside world and the need to develop environmental consciousness. He forces his readers to change their worldviews for a more socially and ecologically responsible behaviour towards their environment. Providing his readers with scientific understanding of their place in the biosphere, and expanding their scope of thinking to external nature, Hughes confirms the fundamental requirement of ecocriticism which is explained by Glen Love as such:

My point is simply that a line of biological thinking has been a constant and indispensable accompaniment to the rise of ecocriticism and the study of literature and environment. Biologically verified evidence of environmental destruction, made known largely by Carson's *Silent Spring*, brought the obscure biological subfield of ecology out of the science lab and into public consciousness, acting eventually upon the academy as a catalyst for new and interdisciplinary thinking. (565)

However, the scientific understanding of nature is not the only concern of Ted Hughes. Nature's sacredness and its spiritual value occupy an important place in Hughes's conception of the outside world. Similarly, the poem "1984 on 'The Tarka Trail'" consisting of two parts, deals with the spiritual value of the river which is inhabited by the fairies and the nymphs in the second part. Corresponding to the ecocritical principle of man's kinship with the natural world, Hughes's poem articulates the idea of man's spiritual connectedness to the natural world. The second part of the poem "1984 on 'Tarka Trail'", titled "Nymet", tries to find a correlation between a mythological understanding of the world and the contemporary reality of river pollution.

Nymet originally comes from the Celtic word "nemeton" which means sacred place (Morpurgu 2). Waters, rivers, springs and the wells have an important place in Celtic mythology. The mythical importance of the water stems from the idea that gods and goddesses are believed to live in the waters and thus, waters are considered as an ultimate bond which connects the physical universe with that of the spiritual. Considered as a place where people can get in touch with the sacred mysteries of

nature, water is symbolically associated with the source of life (Cowan 127). Beginning with a mythological allusion which focuses on the sacredness of the river, Hughes draws attention to the present day position of the river which is explained as follows:

A fairy

Drowned in the radioactive Irish Sea.
Blood-donor
To the South West Water Authority.
Her womb's being requisitioned... (16-20)

Fairies as dwellers of the waters are usually considered to be immortals. The poem's concentration on the drowning of the fairy can be explained with two interrelated ideas; the first one is the demystification of nature and the loss of its sacredness and inherent value, and the second one is the pollution and destruction of nature. The poem pinpoints the specific issue of the factories disposing their waste into the sea and causing the radioactive pollution of the Irish Sea as a result of industrial activity. As it is seen in the other poems, Hughes again describes the fairy as a sacrificial victim of modern technology. The blood-donor is used metaphorically to support the idea of the fairy's sacrificing herself for the sake of human beings. However, instead of blood-donor, the fairy's womb is demanded. The womb, being an important feminine organ of generation, connotes the continuation of life. Interestingly enough, the fairy's womb, being requisitioned by the authorities conveys the idea of the entire destruction and the eradication of the roots of natural life. The idea of the bloodthirstiness of the authorities conveys the poet's criticism of the wrong economic policies which legitimise the exploitation and destruction of nature. With the death of the fairy, an element of nature, what is sacred in relation to nature is destroyed, reducing it into a mere object to be used by human beings. The mythological event that Hughes refers to is the story of the nymph in the shape of a woman, who washes the bloody clothes of the warriors at the bank of a river, and for this reason she is called "The Washer at the Ford" (Littleton 265). According to Celtic mythology, The Washer at the Ford is a bad omen, associated with death. Therefore, when a warrior sees The Washer at the Ford, he may expect his own death (Littleton 265). The significance of the mythological story for the poem lies in its implication that contemporary society prepares its own annihilation by polluting the environment.

Relating the mythological story to the contemporary events, Hughes comments on the function of the nymph and indicates that she still washes the bloody clothes, however not the clothes of the ancient warriors, but ours:

Now she truly can be called: Sewer.
 (More truly: The Washer at the Ford.
 As in the old story.
 The death-rags that she washes and washes are ours.) (37-40)

What he is trying to emphasise is that human beings by polluting nature not only cause the diminishing of the sacredness of nature, but also cause the destruction of the whole universe and human beings themselves as an inseparable part of it will be destroyed inevitably. Hughes in this poem reflects his ecological awareness and states that human beings are a part of the chain in the ecosystem, and any kind of injury done to the ecosystem, will eventually influence and injure human beings as the other organisms in this system.

Furthermore, the role of technology, as an inseparable part of human civilisation, in the diminishing of natural life is introduced in another poem, "Stealing Trout on a May Morning". The persona's apprehension of the spiritual significance of nature creates a desire in him to enter in a deeper involvement in nature. The poem constructs a powerful image of interpenetration of nature and culture:

I park the car half in the ditch and switch off and sit.
 The hot astonishment of my engine's arrival
 Sinks through 5 a.m. silence frost.
 At the end of a long gash
 An atrocity through the lace of first light
 I sit with the reeking instrument.
 I am on delicate business.
 I want the steel to be cold instantly
 And myself secreted three fields away
 And the farms, back under their blankets, supposing a plane
 passed. (1-11)

As it is clearly understood from these lines, the persona's escape from civilisation and his desire to listen to the soothing voice of nature can never be realised. With its long and detailed description of the motor which disturbs the silence of nature, the poem creates an image of human civilisation, completely destructive for

natural life. Regardless of their desire to reconstruct their lost bond with nature, human beings can never ever get in a direct and unmediated negotiation with nature. The existence of technology will always makes itself felt as the poem indicates with the passing of the planes over the farms in the tenth line. The intervention of technology continues in the following lines of the "Stealing Trout on a May Morning":

I listen for the eyes jerked open on pillows,
 Their dreams washed with sudden ugly petroleum.
 They need only look out at a sheep.
 Every sheep within two miles
 Is nailing me accurately down
 With its hellishly shaven starved-priest expression. (21-26)

The persona's close observation of nature extends his understanding of the gradual annihilation of nature, and the reasons for this annihilation. He comes to the recognition that it is the pollution of natural environment by human beings which causes the destruction of life on earth. The washing of the people's dream with petroleum conveys a deep ecological message about the problem of pollution. The poem's allusion to the dying sheep is reminiscent of another poem "Sheep Went on Being Dead" in the *Remains of Elmet*. The persona points out that the consequences of this pollution can very explicitly be observed in the unhealthy appearance of the sheep which are thinned and suffer from starvation. The poem also creates a very striking image in its comparison between the sheep and a priest. The pale appearance of the sheep and the scarcity of the wool on its coat remind the persona of the ghostly face of a priest who fasts and shaves his head. The poem's reflection of the environmental pollution is not limited with the death of the sheep. After a particular emphasis on the sheep and the natural landscape in the "Stealing Trout on a May Morning", the persona's concentration slides into the pollution of rivers:

Soon I deepen. And now I meet the piling mob
 Of voices and hurriers coming towards me
 And tumbling past me. I press through a panic-
 This headlong river is a rout
 Of tumbrils and gun-carriages, rags and metal,
 All the funeral woe-drag of some overnight disaster . . . (79-84)

Interestingly enough, the existence of human beings in nature is described in the poem as an interference of man to the peaceful life of nature. Disturbance caused by the noisiness of a group of people gives way to the persona's contemplation on the relationship of human beings with their natural environment. He creates an image of war to explore the relationship between man and nature. Nature is defeated in this war by the human beings who fight with the help of technology, and the pollution of rivers is the most explicit evidence of this defeat. The idea of war is conveyed in the poem with the words, "tumbrils and gun-carriages" which are used to carry guns as well as the bodies of the people who died in the war. Yet in this case the, the corpse carried in the tumbril is not a human being but the river. Consequently, the persona's desire to embrace nature and find consolation in it turns into a lamentation of the death of nature at the end of "Stealing Trout on a May Morning".

Similar to the other poems in the *River*, dedicated to the creation of an awareness for the prevention of the pollution of rivers and the preservation of the endangered species, "October Salmon" is a poem which conveys the poet's admiration for the survival struggle of the salmon fish. The passivity and acceptance of the salmon waiting for his death is approached with delicacy and sympathetic understanding by the poet who bestows upon the salmon heroic attributes:

About six pounds weight,
Four years old most, and hardly a winter at sea-
But already a veteran,
Already a death-patched hero. So quickly it's over! (7-10)

The poem comments on the short living period of the salmon fish which are doomed to die in a few years of their birth. The persona's spiritual identification with the fish makes him feel respect for the resolution of the fish to survive even for such a short period of time. The struggle of the fish to remain alive in its war with death astonishes the persona who observes and tries to understand the natural cycle of the fish's life. Although the fish seems to be too young to have the power enough to overcome the dangers in life, its determination to live makes it a war hero, a veteran in the eyes of the persona.

The poet's preoccupation with the rivers and the life of the fish in rivers can be explained in ecocritical terms. The imposition of the sacred view of nature against the commercial value of nature in Hughes's poetry can be interpreted as the poet's criticism of the anthropocentric society which perceives nature as a physical property. The consumption of the natural resources leads Hughes to develop an ecological perspective which enables him to see the inherent worth of nature. Furthermore, Hughes's activist propaganda against the extinction of the salmon fish and his interest in ecological conservation issues which shape his way of looking at the world is explained by Terry Gifford as follows:

In fact as early as 1978 Olwyn Hughes, the poet's sister and agent, informed me that Hughes had written letters to *The Times* anonymously on fish stocks and on injecting cattle with steroids. Hughes signed two letters about the threat to salmon in *The Times* and *Trout and Salmon*. . . *The Guardian* of 16 April 1992 carried a photograph of Hughes together with the owner of a stretch of Devon River outside the courthouse in Plymouth after winning a battle against river pollution. (130)

With the aim of confronting his readers with the reality of human arrogance to nature, Hughes brings into the foreground the splendid beauty of the fish together with its vulnerability and fragility. Thus, the natural beauty of the salmon described in "October Salmon" as: "So briefly he roamed the gallery of marvels/Such sweet months, so richly embroidered into earth's beauty dress" (11-12), is contradicted with the violence of the human species:

He was probably hatched in this very pool.
And this was the only mother he ever had, this uneasy channel
of minnows
Under the milk-wall, with bicycle wheels, car-tyres, bottles
And sunk sheets of corrugated iron.
People walking their dogs trail their evening shadows across
him.
If boys see him they will try to kill him. (52-59)

The persona contemplates on the simplicity and innocence of the small fish which was born and will die in a pool. Yet, the pool which is the home of the fish is polluted by human beings, and turned into a garbage can. The purity and the elegance

of the fish and its life in the small pool are confronted by the arrogance and the vulgarity of the human species. Children's impulse to kill the fish reveals the violence inherent in human nature.

Once the economic servitude of the river is completed after the consumption of its power and energy, the river turns into a waste disposal area, and in the end the river can no longer sustain its wildlife habitat and becomes a grave for its inhabitants. Through the carefully chosen words, such as "bicycle-wheels, car-tyres, mill-wall, bottles, sheets of corrugated iron", Hughes reveals his sceptical attitude towards global capitalist economy and its policy of production and consumption which depends on creating new demands. Appropriation of the earth as a property to be used in the name of improving people's life standards and their economic well-being requires the total destruction of nature in the way that the wastes from industry and human consumption accumulate in the environment, changing its natural structure and causing the death of many species. For this reason, Hughes's foreboding of the fate of the salmon is described as death-in-life to emphasise its difficult living conditions: "What a death-in-life to be his own spectre! / His living body become death's puppet," (34-35).

The salmon's dignity and loftiness accelerates with the resistance of the salmon to the exploitation of human beings whose existence constitutes a threat to the survival of the salmon. Hughes's admiration for the salmon derives not only from its restless war to remain alive in a river polluted by human beings, but also arises from the fact that the salmon fish die just after spawning, so that in the eyes of Hughes, the fish becomes a sacrificial victim, a dignified creature in the cyclic order of the universe, by contributing to the continuation of life with its own death. Hughes draws particular attention to the life of the salmon in the notes that he wrote to the book:

After spawning, all male fish die, as do some of the females –of exhaustion. The baby fish hatch in March, or thereabouts, and stay in the river, feeding on tiny organisms, for two, three, or even four years, depending on the feed and the individuality of the fish. . . Each fish is programmed to return to the river, to the tributary, and even to the very pool, perhaps to the very gravel patch, of its birth. (Hughes 1993: 184-185)

The death of the salmon immediately after its spawning is the major preoccupation of another poem, that is, "An August Salmon", which conveys the poet's fascination with the salmon fish who is elevated on a pedestal. With the aim of expressing his sympathetic identification with the salmon, the poet attributes human characteristics like the concept of love to the salmon's instinctive motive for spawning which is described with the imagery of wedding ceremony:

Alone, in a cellar of ash-roots,
The bridegroom, mortally wounded
By love and destiny,
Features deforming with deferment

His beauty bleeding invisibly
From every lift of his gills. (9-14)

The compassionate depiction of the salmon fish with a capacity for love undermines the false assumption about the feelings of love and affection to be the feature which distinguishes human beings from animals. The deification of the salmon culminates in their gaining divine power of creation, and further to be called god. The reason for this is the fact that the salmon achieve the godly power of giving birth by sacrificing themselves after spawning for the sake of producing eggs. Although the salmon die, they enable the birth of many fish, and in this way contribute to the continuation of life on earth. Through his contemplation of the physical state of the dying salmon, the persona experiences a kind of recognition of the creative and destructive universe:

He gulps, awkward in his ponderous regalia,
But his eye stays rapt,
Elephantine, Arctic-
A god, on earth for the first time,
With the clock of love and death in his body. (15-19)

The poem provides an insight into the dynamic process of nature where the birth and death, the predatory and prey relationship predominantly exist. Even at the moment of its death, decline and decay, nature has the capacity to regenerate itself, and therefore, the poem promotes the idea that both death and birth are necessary for the continuation of the organic universe. Hence, in order to replace the established

hierarchy and dominance of anthropocentric thought with the equality of the ecocentric thought, Hughes, in this poem, first attributes human qualities to nature, and then shows the universal principle of the cyclic pattern of birth and death. In this manner, Hughes strives for reuniting human beings with their natural environment by forming an interdependent relationship between all the living creatures of the universe. Hughes's treatment of the river as a living being can most explicitly be seen in "Low Water" where the river is personified, and perceived as a beautiful woman:

She lolls on her deep couch. And a long thigh
Lifts from the flash of her silks.

Adoring trees, kneeling, ogreish eunuchs
Comb out her spread hair, massage her fingers. (6-9)

In these lines the flowing of the river in its bed is considered as the lying of a woman on her couch. The sensual description of the river and its movements is associated with the temptation of a beautiful woman. The trees at the bank of the river are described as castrated men who try to please the woman. Since the trees can never unify with the river, the relationship between them is depicted as titillation between a beautiful woman and a castrated man who tries to please and satisfy the woman. However, this unity is not a generative one but sterile. The poem's significance lies in its celebration of the vitality of the river through a sensual depiction of a beautiful woman calling for the physical unification. While the poem, "Low Water" creates an image of a beautiful woman, another poem "Last Night" depicts a picture of a river which is haunted by evil spirits:

The river under hangings of hemlock and nettle, and alder and
oak,
Lay dark and grew darker. An evil mood
Darkened in it. Evil came up
Out of its stillest holes, and uncoiled
In the sick river, the drought river of slimes-
Like a sick man lying in the dark with his death. (8-14)

The poem concentrates on the withdrawal of the river's water which is again personified as a sick man at his deathbed awaiting his death. The evil spirits forebode death, create a gloomy and sinister atmosphere in the poem which repetitively emphasises the prevailing idea of darkness. The powerful description of the river

losing its water conveys the speaker's deep sense of identification sympathy with the river in his perception of the river as a living organism who is at the moment of his death. This image enables the persona to develop a spiritual intimation with the river and he learns to see nature not merely as an object but as a living being. Therefore, nature's death is not conceived as the end of life but the beginning of life as it is seen in "September Salmon".

The notion of the veneration of the salmon is depicted with great emphasis in "September Salmon", where the poet is enchanted by the spiritual significance of the mating of the salmon and its death afterwards, so that it sacrifices itself for the continuation of life in the natural order. Each time the poet observes nature, he discovers new experiences and new adventures which lead him to acquire a spiritual perception of nature. As a result, even a simple movement of the salmon is seen as the act of a divinity:

Mid-morning,
At the right angle of sun
You can see the floor of his chapel.
There he sways at the altar-
A soul
Hovering in the incantation and the incense. (15-20)

The strong rays of the sun make it possible for the persona to see the bottom of the river. The poem creates an atmosphere of mysticism in the river which is perceived as a chapel where the soul of a god is evoked with charms, incantation and incense. The salmon in the poem is described as the soul of a god who hovers in the chapel. The domineering characteristic of most of the salmon poems in *River* is the glorification of the salmon through religious symbolism and the ennobling of the salmon for its yielding to the natural order. The poet's endeavour to grasp the sacred wholeness of nature derives from the primitive societies' nature-oriented religion which "articulates a sacred sense of nature according to which each element of nature has a symbolic and religious significance" (Lansing 7). Since, the religion of the primitive tribes accelerates the mutual interaction between human beings and the natural environment, the elimination of the dualism between man and nature becomes possible. Therefore, it can be proclaimed that myths and rituals reflect the "ecological

and social realities” (Bowie 129) of the primitive tribes, and thus should be used to encourage human identification with nature and open up the ecological vision of contemporary society.

In opposition to consumer culture’s exploitative approach to nature, Hughes adopts a mythic perception of nature by way of investigating a holistic vision of the universe, preserved in the religions of the primitive tribes, and recreates them in his poetry. Thus, Hughes attempts to develop a “new holistic, biocentric vision” by incorporating the mythic conception of the environment to construct a spiritual bond with it (Sagar 2000: 5). It is not only Hughes who is attracted to the idea of kinship with nature in the primitive tribes, but also ecology as a science concentrates on the evolution of the ecocentric perspective of the primitive tribes. The primitive tribes’ achievement to develop the sustainable relationship with nature constitutes a model for the construction of the spiritual bond with nature in contemporary societies. It is pointed out that:

Ritual is essential because it is truly the pattern that connects. It provides communication at all levels-among all the systems within the individual human organism; between people within groups; between one group and another in a city; and throughout all these levels between the human and the nonhuman in the natural environment. Ritual provides us with a tool for learning to think logically, analogically, and ecologically as we move toward sustainable culture. Most important of all, perhaps, is that during rituals we have the experience, unique in our culture, of neither opposing nature or trying to be in communion with nature; but of finding ourselves within nature that is key to sustainable culture. (LaChapelle 62)

Ted Hughes’s use of the myths as a textual strategy of undermining the dualism between man and nature facilitates two important paradigms of ecocriticism; recognition of interdependence and the necessity of natural diversity. These two paradigms of ecocriticism are accommodated in Hughes’s poetry in the form of a reaction against the extinction, and reinforcement of the main principle of ecology that the natural differences should be preserved in order that each species develops and maintains its life through a mutual interaction with the other species. Similar to the poet’s celebration of the salmon fish and its survival struggle in spite of the threat

constituted by human beings, “The Black Rhino” from *Wolfwatching*, is specifically preoccupied with the extinction of the rhinoceros as a result of their slaughter.

“The Black Rhino” is a long, narrative poem, and described by Scigaj as the most “ecologically activist poem in *Wolfwatching*” (1994: 178), which is ecologically indulged in the criticism of contemporary society and its endless desire to consume nature. Stimulation of critical remarks in the poem demonstrates the fact that the poet’s active responsibility toward nature moves beyond mere spiritual identification with nature to encourage the public to take necessary precautions to prevent the total destruction of nature. The first issue that is brought into discussion is the slaughter of the rhinos for their horns to be used as raw material for ornaments:

For this is the Black Rhino, who vanishes as he approaches
Every second there is less and less of him
By the time he reaches you nothing will remain, maybe,
But the horn-an ornament for a lady’s lap. (11-14)

The black rhino in these lines is described like a ghost who seems to fade as he comes near. The poem’s ironic remark that nothing will remain of the rhino except its horn to be used as a lady’s ornament conveys the poet’s deep sense of involvement in the economic and capitalist perception of the outside world. For the capitalist economies, the life of a rhino has no value when it is compared to the needs of human beings. The significant point is that nature is seen as a commodity to be completed and used to provide human beings with a luxurious lifestyle. Concentrating on the capturing and murdering of the rhinos, the poem employs the confrontation between man and nature by revealing the subconscious thoughts of the man in his dream in the second part of the poem: “this vision came/To a man asleep” (34-35). This part includes the dialogues between man and the murdered rhino, a dream image which explicitly reveals the torturing mind of the man, haunted by the rhino. The rhino crying in the man’s dreams accuses man of his crime:

Already dead
The Rhino cried
From the puddle of blood
Almost dried
In the African dust:
‘What can you know

Of wrong or right
 Of evil or good?
 You are the crime'. (90-98)

The poem's representation of the nightmare of the man proves that the man will always continue to be overwhelmed by nature, no matter how much he may try to destroy it. The environmental justice achieved by Hughes by giving expression to nature, enables the black rhino to fight for his own right to survive and question the legitimacy of destruction of the natural environment by human hand. Screaming the crime committed against itself to the face of human beings, the rhino draws attention to the catastrophic effects of human intervention in the natural systems. The dream image used by Hughes to confront man with tragic result of his careless action can also be interpreted as an implication of man's guilty conscience which agitates him in his dreams. Furthermore, Hughes's personal concerns about the murder of the rhinos and his way of addressing the problem are based on scientific fact which is explained by the deep ecologist, Micheal Zimmerman as follows:

The case of the black rhino is particularly sad because, unlike that of so many endangered or extinct animal and plant species, the major threat to its continued existence is not habitat destruction by humans. Rather, this protected animal, like the elephant hunted for its ivory, is hunted solely for its horns. These horns are put to a wide variety of odd uses. In the Middle East, the horns are valued as a material for fashioning of handles on traditional daggers. (1995: 103)

Hughes, in this poem, brings an ecological approach to the cultural conventions which favour the slaughter of the rhino to give man an opportunity to prove his courage, and thus tries to figure out the reasons of these traditions similar to Zimmerman who emphasises the oddity of them:

Waves of nausea ripples of mirage
 A sensation about the mouth of oiled euphoria, while
 fifty thousand North Yemenite warrior youths come of
 age in the camera (the same number as next year)

The symptoms far-fetched but exact
 Each gripping a dagger by the hilt of rhino horn at eight
 or nine thousand dollars a handful. (158-164)

The poet makes a reference to a specific cultural event which he considers as a sickening scene. To prove their manliness, the youth in Yemen have to kill rhinos to make daggers out of their horns. The ecstasy and happiness of these people who turn the murdering of animals into a cultural ceremony as well as a material gain is interpreted in the poem as a mirage which creates delusions. As the poet truly shows the discernible consequences of the human mind's lack of ecological vision which requires that all human beings acquire profound awareness and responsibilities towards the nonhuman inhabitants of the environment. Penetrating into the depths of the problem, Hughes, in his poem, offers the negation of the traditional understanding of nature, according to which nature solely exists for human use.

The elimination of the ecological problems is not possible only through shattering the conventions of people, because as Hughes indicates in the poem, exploitation of nature is embedded in the capitalist culture which turns every element of nature into a commodity. In this way, Hughes's representation of the ecological problems includes some implications which not only evoke personal awareness and the development of new ethical concerns but also includes the political issues which require major changes in economic policies.

Hughes's criticism of capitalism continues in another poem "Wolfwatching" which depicts the view of a wolf who is separated from his natural habitat and put in a zoo in London. Similar to the previous poem, Hughes penetrates into the mind of the wolf who fails in understanding the world around him. The wolf, usually known as a predatory animal, is presented in an entirely different way in the poem. When it is separated from its natural environment, and put in a cage in the city, it loses its hunting skills and becomes a prey to human beings:

Floored with glaze. Eyes
Have worn him away. Children's gazings
Have tattered him to a lumpish
Comfort of woolly play-wolf. He is weary.
He curls on the cooling stone
That gets heavier. Then again the burden
Of a new curiosity, new testing
Of new noises, new people with new colours
Are coming in at the gate. (12-20)

The reason for the wolf's weariness does not stem from its spending too much energy and power. On the contrary, the monotonous lifestyle in the very limited space of the cage is what fatigues the wolf. Furthermore, it is turned into an object put on display to please the people who come to see it. It gradually loses its energy of life and is conceived as a teddy for the children to play with. It loses its identity as a living being and becomes a focus of the curious eyes of the visitors. The poem demonstrates a reflection of an old wolf, struggling to maintain his existence in an entirely different living condition. The explosive, destructive power and energy that the wolf once possessed, is now taken under control by suppressing it within the cage. People's curiosity to see the wolf also indicates another ecological fact that human beings have become so distanced from nature that they feel a sense of estrangement from nature.

In order to satisfy his need to negotiate with nature, man, after destroying the wild habitat, creates a simulacrum of the wilderness in the form of a zoo where different species of wild animals that are turned into a commodity live. This is the reason which makes Hughes call the wolf a "product" in the poem (66). The zoo is the most apparent evidence which shows man's need to overcome the feelings of nostalgia for the lost unity with nature. However, the existence of the zoo which makes human beings come closer to nature, inevitably functions in the opposite direction, as the cages imply a barrier between human beings and nature, and will always prevent a total unification.

Within the framework of the ecological perspective, Hughes in the poem proves that human beings by destroying the wilderness which is necessary for the survival of the ecosystem, violate the rights of nonhuman individuals to exist and flourish in their natural environment. He stresses the importance of the place in the continuation of life of an individual in that earth is a nurturing power of its inhabitants by conveying it energy and life giving power to all living beings; plants, animals and human beings:

Keep telling him all this is real
And that he's a wolf-of all things
To be in the middle of London, of all
Futile, hopeless things. Do Arctics
Whisper on their wave-lengths-fantasy-draughts
Of escape and freedom? His feet

The power-tools, lie in front of him-
He doesn't know how to use them. (85-92)

As the poem indicates the wolf is stupefied by its new environment, and seems to be in a complete sense of meaninglessness, trying to understand his existence. Likewise, the poem explicates that once the wolf is deprived of its natural habitat, it loses the wild energy that is unique to itself, and its existence and survival is endangered. As the poem clearly reveals, dwelling does not simply mean living somewhere but it is the place which shapes the natural characteristics of an organism and further gives life to it. From this perspective, the poem confirms Heidegger's fundamental presumption which associates dwelling with being: "Dwelling however, is the basic character of Being in keeping with which mortals exist" (160). Therefore, the destruction of the natural habitat which is necessary as life-sustaining system of all living being, is associated with the death of the wolf.

After a close examination of Hughes's poetry of the later period from an ecocritical perspective, it can be clearly observed that the poet juxtaposes his celebration of the elemental natural powers which distributes life into the whole universe with the image of nature which is rapidly being destroyed as a result of the anthropocentric thought, privileging the domination and suppression of nature. Beginning with the *Remains of Elmet* which brings technology under close scrutiny to depict its destructive effects on nature, Hughes concentrates on the specific ecological problems like the pollution of rivers and reduction of fish population in the rivers in the *River*. The poet's insistence on the acquisition of the ecological perception by creating awareness in the public consciousness towards the environmental problems moves in his last volume of poetry, *Wolfwatching*, towards an evocation for political changes in his criticism of capitalist culture's materialistic approach to nature which is turned into a commodity.

CHAPTER II

The Ecological Principle of Interconnectedness

The ecocritical analysis of the poems reveals that Ted Hughes, by drawing attention to the ecological problems of environmental destruction, pollution and extinction of species, tries to build a public awareness of these issues. The poet internalises the ecological view of the world and uses his poetry as a place where man and nature are brought into a closer communion with each other. Hence, Hughes undermines the strictly drawn boundaries between the human and the nonhuman world and, in this way, develops a deep understanding of physical nature, discovering the inherent value of it. After establishing the ecological problems, Hughes is concerned with the maintenance of the ecocritical principle of the interconnectedness of everything in his poetry.

Questioning the strongly established ideology that human beings are created with attributes that distinguish them from nonhuman beings, an assumption that views humans as “the origin of all value, purpose, and meaning” (Zimmerman 2002: 41), the ecologically oriented viewpoint developed a tendency to see man as the component of the environment and not as something distinct from it. Ecocritical theory, beginning its studies with the analysis of man’s relationship to the outside environment, points out that the environmental problems stem from the estrangement of man from nature. The underlying reason of this estrangement for both ecocriticism and ecology is the “Christian exegesis” which marginalizes nature with its instrumental representation of nature (Manes 18). After discovering the roots of the problem, deep ecologists attempt to solve it by establishing an ecological vision according to which human beings are perceived not as distinct creatures from other beings but as biological organisms. Remarkably, an individual’s identification with physical nature is explained with the term, Self-realisation, “the adoption of holistic, relational, total-field image” (Brennan 175) which constitutes the determining principle of deep ecology.

The principle of Self-realisation which necessitates the widening of one’s scope of identification to involve the whole universe imposes the idea that human

beings are not separate autonomous entities but they share a common dependence on the other species living on earth. The system of interrelationships requires duties, interests, and rights that human beings have to show to the other beings. An individual who at first identifies himself with self, family, friends and nation, is motivated by ecological perspective to expand his measure of identification to encompass the nonhuman beings as well. Since the personality of an individual is moulded through his interaction with the environment, there can be no distinct self as apart from the other selves. This identification with all of the creatures of the universe is also called by Naess as the ecological self which is achieved through different levels of identification:

Traditionally, the maturity of the self has been considered to develop through three stages: from ego to social self (compromising the ego), and from social self to a metaphysical self (compromising the social self). But in this conception of the maturity of the self, Nature is largely left out. Our immediate environment, our home (where we belong as children), and the identification with nonhuman living beings, are largely ignored. Therefore, I tentatively introduce, perhaps for the first time, the concept of ecological self. (1995B: 226)

As illustrated above by Naess, the Self-realisation principle notably encourages an individual to acquire the ecological self out of the developmental stages in his personality toward maturity. The central idea of deep ecology entails the view that there is no distinctive line that separates human beings from the rest of nature, so deep ecologists ascribe value to the internal relatedness of all things including human beings, interwoven with the rest of the ecosystem. It is this ecological relationship that determines the nature of organisms, in other words, it is the ecosystem as a whole which shapes and forms its component parts.

Nevertheless, the profound awareness of the holistic view of the universe, occupying an imperative position in the deep ecology movement, should not be interpreted as absolutism which ignores the component parts for the sake of the whole. The overall impact of the Self-realisation principle is the manifestation of reciprocal and mutual respect, and the celebration of “diversity and plurality” (Brennan 176). In other words, the practical commitment of deep ecology to the principle of interconnectedness is based upon the appreciation of the holistic view accomplished

through complexity and diversity of its component parts rather than subjugation and domination of these components. The maintenance of the Self is only possible through the multiplicity of the selves which will form the complex interrelationships with each other. Naess explains this kind of interrelated relationship as follows:

Viewed systematically, not individually, maximum Self-realisation implies maximizing the manifestation of all life. So next I derive the second term, 'Maximize (long-range, universal) diversity!' A corollary is that the higher the levels of Self-realisation attained by any person, the more any further increase depends upon the Self-realisation of others. Increased self-identity involves increased identification with others. (1995A: 80)

While acknowledging the need for acquiring the ecological self, deep ecologists warn against the anthropocentric system of thinking and its destructive practice of killing and injuring nonhuman beings. Destroying the ecosystem can be interpreted as a suicide with regard to the principle of interconnectedness; in Thomas Berry's words, "a degraded habitat will produce degraded humans" (165). To maintain an adequate understanding of the fact that the extermination of natural life will inevitably lead to the extermination of human life, deep ecologists particularly emphasise both physical and spiritual connectedness of human beings to the earth community. The subversion of this both external and internal relationship of life communities fosters the total disruption of the ecosystem itself. Hence, the only solution to prevent this disruption, for human beings, is to join the earth community as participating members.

In their appraisal of human identification with nature, deep ecology and its practitioners strive to create a new conception of man's embeddedness in nature, and thus, provide both physical and spiritual basis for the construction of a sense of man's rootedness on earth. Meanwhile, with its unavoidable emphasis on the development of identification with earth without the conception of the political, geographic, and national boundaries, the notion of Self-realisation offers relatively important solutions to the environmental problems by motivating people to take a conservative attitude to environmental protection. Inspired by the idea of the conception of the earth as a single community, Thomas Berry calls for a responsible action from all the people living on earth:

First, the earth is a single organic reality that must survive in its integrity if it is to support any nation on the earth. To save the earth is a necessity for every nation. No part of the earth in its essential functioning can be the exclusive possession or concern of any nation. The air cannot be nationalized or privatized; it must circulate everywhere on the planet to fulfil its life-giving function anywhere on the planet. (1988: 220)

Subsequently, deep ecologists acknowledge the fact that major ecological disasters can be obliterated only if human beings abandon the anthropocentric thought which pursues a strategy of promoting human ends at the expense of the death of nonhuman beings. Deep ecology encourages the adoption of a lifestyle in harmonious relationship with nature, achieved through a process of identification, and the perception of nature as a part of the human self. This kind of lifestyle requires the establishment of a “nondualistic, nondomineering, appreciative, and respectful attitude toward the complex and internally related whole of the ecosphere” (Zimmerman 2002: 42). Rather than posing human beings against nature, deep ecology fosters an egalitarian perspective which is consistent with the well being of all species living on earth.

Considering the allegiance of the ecocritical studies to form a union with the science of ecology, deep ecology’s principle of interconnectedness substantially, occupies an important place in ecocriticism which reflects upon the literary texts within the context of ecology. The fundamental assumption implicated by the ecocritical studies is the repudiation of dualisms which cause the human mind to divorce itself from the rest of nature. Therefore, ecocriticism endeavours to overthrow this disintegration by articulating the ecological idea of the interrelatedness of everything.

Deep ecology’s commitment to the maintenance of the interdependent relationship between human beings and their environment, is internalised by ecocritical studies at three different levels; (a) contextual analysis of a literary text to

explore the perpetual relationship between human and nonhuman beings and their participation with their natural environment (Buell 1999: 699), (b) providing a synthesis between scientific and literary studies by evaluating a literary text under close scrutiny of the science of ecology, and thus, breaking the boundaries between science and humanities (Love 561), (c) bringing a literary text into closer interaction with the outside physical world, and in this way, providing a coalescence of nature and text so that the dichotomies between nature and culture, and nature and man are undermined (Phillips 577).

Within the framework of the ecological understanding of the world in terms of interdependent relationships, ecocriticism sheds light on Ted Hughes's poetry which generates the consolidation of human beings with their natural environment. Similar to the aim of ecocriticism to restore man to nature which sustains him as his source of life, Ted Hughes also, acknowledging that man and nature have the potential to interact in a positive way, tries to investigate the reasons of human exploitation of nature. He is concerned with finding new ways for the possibility of constructing a "negotiation between man and Nature as his own Creator" (Dyson 130). With the aim of revealing that potential, Hughes in his poems, deploys human beings in a constant flow of interaction which implies that a bond between man and nature has been broken, yet, this bond "blindly, violently, ineluctably is always trying to re-establish itself" as Hugh Underhill points out (276).

Although characterised by Ben Howard as a poet who has a special gift "for making poems into battlegrounds" (252), where human beings are perpetually in a restless struggle with nature trying to overcome it, Hughes generally adopts the holistic vision of the universe of which human beings are only a part. As Charlie Bell also argues, Hughes develops a "vision of oneness" with nature with the aim of motivating people to acquire an ecological consciousness (77). In other words, Hughes's intellectual plunging into the depths of the problem of the disintegration of human beings from the rest of nature is manifested in his poems, which convey an organic view of the earth, the existence of which depends on the mutual interaction of its living inhabitants.

Man's incapability of understanding the earth as a single living organism is enacted continually in *Remains of Elmet* in which the poet tries to recover the bond that seems to be lost between man and nature. Thus, the recognition of man as an integral part of the ecosystem is the recurring idea of the poems in the *Remains of Elmet* through which the poet implements the idea of nature as man's "ecological self" (Scigaj 1991: 109). The retrieval of this ecological self is accomplished through an amalgamation of all the seemingly separate parts of the universe and implantation of man in the natural order, so that he could not refrain from indulging and participating in nature's dynamic process of evolution. "The Dark River" is the first poem in the *Remains of Elmet* which illustrates the fusion of man and his environment. The poem begins with the childhood memories of the persona who expresses his nostalgia for the past:

Six years into her posthumous life
 My uncle raises my mother's face. He says
 Yes, he would love a cup of tea.
 ...
 Keeping their last eighty years alive and attached to me.
 Keeping their strange depths alive and attached to me. (1-3, 8-9)

The persona's imagination brings him closer to the happy days of his childhood. With a portrayal of his family members, the persona achieves to reconstruct the connection that seems to be lost with the death of his father and mother. The persona's recalling his father and mother drinking tea might seem an insignificant event. However, this simple event, which the persona remembers vividly, conveys the idea of establishing a strong sense of spiritual bond with the dead family members. It is due to this spiritual bond that the persona can keep the memory of his parents alive in his mind and thus, preserve his connection with them. The persona's meditations on his family gradually slide into the outside physical environment:

And the smoky valley never closes,
 The womb that bore him, chimney behind chimney,
 Horizons herded-behind encircling horizons,
 A happy hell, the arguing, immortal dead,
 The hymns rising past farms. (15-19)

A disturbing sense of menace caused by the industrial activity creates an image of ruined nature the persona's mind. The earth is conceived as a womb which gives birth to the smoky valley which is occupied by the factories which turn the natural environment into hell surrounded by smoke. The density of the smoke covers the air and it becomes the horizon itself. The covering of the horizon with the smoke of the factories can be interpreted as the darkening of the future of the natural environment because of the destructive influence of industrial activity. The antithesis created by the use of "happy hell" to describe the valley carries the persona's childhood conception of the valley. Although the valley is turned into a hell as a result of industrialisation, as a child, he can still enjoy the landscape. Similarly, "the immortal dead" signifies the persona's power of imagination to keep the memory of the disappearing valley alive in his mind. The most important part of his childhood memory is emphasised at the end of the poem:

Fluff, breath-frail, from under the looms of Egypt.
Funeral treasures that crumble at the touch of day-
The huge fish, the prize of a lifetime. . . (22-24)

These lines indicate the persona's first encounter with a fish and his developing a sense of identification and kinship with nature. The poem records the fish as a treasure found in the ruins of a funeral. The Egyptian funerals are significant in that the corpses are buried with their precious belongings. Therefore, the existence of the fish in the ruins of an industrial society is perceived by the persona as a treasure found in the Egyptian graves. At this moment he manages to grasp the physical and spiritual energy in nature to reproduce itself. Consequently, the poem, which begins with the persona's desire to find a reconnection with his parents, concludes with the expansion of this connection to include the natural landscape also. The delineation of the family bonds in relation to the outside physical world fosters the idea that the human history is strongly implanted in natural history. It is also a significant fact that the persona has to use the power of his imagination to find a connection with his dead parents. Furthermore, he has to use his imagination to form a new connection with physical nature which seems to be lost in the present.

The presence of nature as a determining element of human life is revealed in another poem, "Stanbury Moor" which conveys the idea that the physical existence of

nature is vitally important for the survival of human beings. After introducing the elements of nature like water, air, light, stone, wind which comprise the ecosystem, Hughes puts forth several important assumptions about the distancing of nature from the life of human beings. The poem presents the elements of the physical world not as separate entities, but as integral parts of human life:

Are not
 A poor family huddled at a poor gleam
 Or words in any phrase
 Or wolf-beings in a hungry waiting
 Or neighbours in a constellation

They are
 The armour of bric-a-brac
 To which your soul's caddis
 Clings with all its courage. (9-17)

In each line, the poem introduces a different conception of nature and undermines the false assumptions about the distinction between nature and man. The notion of nature as a "poor family huddled at a poor gleam" refers to the construction of the dichotomy between the physical nature and the human society. It states that nature is strongly implanted in human life in opposition to human struggle to keep nature at a distance. Similarly, the poem also ignores the concept of nature as a construction of language and states that they are not the words in any phrase. The image of nature as a wolf waiting hungrily to consume man reveals the anxiety of human beings to keep nature under control since it constitutes a kind of threat to human existence.

After overthrowing all the false assumptions, the poem explicates the importance of nature in human life in the second part of the poem. In accordance with the holistic view of universe, the poem combines all these seemingly separate entities of nature; light, darkness, wind, water are all together like an armour which preserves the integrity of the universe. Nature is conceived as "bric-a-brac" that is a precious ornament which should be protected. Presenting the natural environment as bric-a-brac which the soul of man strongly clings to, the poem constructs both a physical and

spiritual bond between man and nature. Furthermore, the inherent value of nature stems from its ability to sustain all the organisms living on earth, providing the fusion of its component parts. Therefore, the poem invites its readers to cling to the nurturing power of nature urging them to participate in the harmonious relationship with nature.

Similarly, the perception of the natural world from the biocentric perspective is dwelled upon in “Bridestones” which begins with a personal observation of the persona to convey the gradual development in his personality after his interaction with the landscape. The poem captures a moment of intimate experience of the persona who demonstrates the possibility of grasping the sacred wholeness of nature through direct interaction with nature. Through his observation of the rocks situated at the top of a hill, the persona of the poem discovers that even the most insignificant and passive elements of nature, as they seem so, have in fact important duties in the preservation of the integrity of the whole universe. For this reason, the poem begins with a stone imagery through which the stones on the hill are undertaking a religious duty in combining separate entities of the universe, in this case, the earth and the sky:

Scorched-looking, unhewn -a hill-top chapel.
Actually a crown of outcrop rock-
Earth's heart-bone laid bare.

Crowding congregation of skies.
Tense congregation of hills.
You do nothing casual here.

The wedding stones
Are electrified with whispers. (1-8)

The religious ceremony that the poet describes with the words “chapel” and congregation” is arranged by nature for the marriage between heaven and earth. The stones which absorb nature’s energy from the sun, transform it to the earth and in this way the dynamic interaction between the elements of nature is achieved. Upon testifying to the reunion of the earth and the sky, the persona experiences a deep sense of engagement with the landscape and thus, manages to see a commonplace natural event with a ceremonious appreciation. The poem depicts the picture of “how Nature encloses humans in a sacred marriage with its protective and nourishing second skin” (Scigaj 1994: 173). From an ecocritical perspective, it can be claimed that the persona

succeeds in realising the inherent value of the stones independent of any practical or commercial use of them. The attitude of respect for nature stems from the persona's recognition of the inherent worth of each element of nature, which can be explained as follows:

To have the attitude of respect for nature is to regard the wild plants and animals of the Earth's natural ecosystems as possessing inherent worth. That such creatures have inherent worth may be considered the fundamental value presupposition of the attitude of respect. (Taylor 71)

The recognition of the inherent value of the stones in the poem entails a morally committed behaviour toward all the elements of nature regardless of their anthropocentric value. Thereupon, the persona begins to feel himself as a part of the organic nature and surrenders himself to the enjoyment of his unification with nature. Once he redeems the existence of each component of nature as an inseparable member of the earth community, the persona recognises his connection and his dependence on the earth community and then he plunges into an intimate relationship with the earth community as a member of it to provide the flow of natural energy:

And you go
With the wreath of the weather
The wreath of the horizons
The wreath of the constellations
Over your shoulders. (13-17)

The persona's personal experience with nature is depicted in the poem as a natural carnival where the sky and the earth are unified in a symbolic marriage. Witnessing this marriage ceremony of the sky and the earth, the persona experiences a feeling of attachment to the natural elements that he cannot reach and touch. For this reason, the poem's stress on the weather, horizons, and the constellations are considered as the wreath which embellishes the life of the persona. He develops a new ecological insight to the natural world, and thus can form a spiritual identification with it. Nature which gives energy to the earth does not hesitate to give its source of life to human beings. It enfolds and embraces all its inhabitants into this sacred ritual where the animals, human beings and heaven and earth enter into a participative relationship. As a result, the persona who is crowned "with the wreath of the weather"

and “constellations” gains a new and greater identity, that is, his ecological self which enables him to identify with all the elements of nature, widening his scope of understanding of the world and his place in that world.

In addition to the “Bridgestones” which incorporates all the elements of nature in interconnected system of universe, “Curlews Lift” is a poem which celebrates the power of nature to sustain all its inhabitants. However the poem’s emphasis on the unification with nature is rather different from the ones that are seen in the previous poems. It praises the predatory nature of the curlews which have to kill in order to survive. The curlews are water birds which feed on the fish in the sea. The poem depicts a picture of the flock of curlews flying over the sky:

Out of the maternal watery blue lines
Stripped of all but their cry
Some twists of near-inedible sinew... (1-3)

Nature, in these lines, is depicted with maternal qualities which emphasise the idea that nature nourishes its own elements like a mother who feeds her child. For this reason, the curlew’s hunting of the fish can not be considered as an infliction of injury on nature. The crying of the curlew is similar to the cry of a hungry baby who is in need of food. The poem is an evocation of the working of the natural ecosystems. The balance of the ecosystem depends on complex interconnections and interrelationships between the parts of this system. For this reason, the curlew’s preying on the fish can be interpreted in ecological terms and seen as a revelation of the working of the interconnections in the ecosystem.

The wholeness of the persona’s vision helps him to recognise the uniqueness of this experience, and thus, he manages to put them on a higher plane of existence in their interaction with the other elements of nature. In connection to the idea of kinship with all the elements of nature, the separation between humans and nonhuman beings seems to be evaded as in “Heptonstall Cemetery”. The poem demonstrates the poet’s reconciliation with the pattern of death and birth in nature. The poem contains both the spiritual and the ecological implications in its analysis of the idea of death. Upon his visit to the family cemetery, the poet begins to think about them. What is

interesting in the poet's thinking of his family is that there is not any sense of loss or sadness in his feelings. Instead, his power of imagination leads him to identify his family with the animals living in nature:

And Thomas, and Walter and Edith
Are living feathers

Esther and Sylvia
Living feathers

Where all the horizons lift wings
A family of dark swans. . . (5-10)

Envisioning the members of his family as a flock of dark swans can be explained in ecological terms in that the poet recognises human beings as biological organisms having their life processes similar to the nonhuman beings in the universe. The poet's conception of death as a necessary requirement for the continuation of life, leads him to identify his family with the other living beings in nature, which means that he begins to see his family in nonhuman beings. The poet's conception of oneness of human beings and the other living entities proves an ecological assumption that there is no deep and fundamental separation between humans and animals. He achieves to understand the power of nature to take life as well as give life, for this reason he beholds the death of his family as a spiritual rebirth which he could observe in other natural creatures, and the renewal of life on earth. Since he manages to see the dead members of his family in the living creatures of nature, he insistently calls them as "living feathers", a family of dark swans, beating their wings against the waves in the sea.

In its portrayal of the biocentric world which requires the co-operative workings of its members, the *Remains of Elmet* recommends a comprehensive view of a unified vision of the universe in a participative relationship with its components. After drawing the structure of this biocentric world rooted in a pattern of relationship between organisms and their environments, *Remains of Elmet* enables its readers to grasp the internal coherence of that world, and further invites them to situate themselves in nature. Additionally, the collection is an evocation of an engagement in responsible behaviour to preserve the natural ecosystem by positioning human beings

in the environment in order to renew their connection with the other life inhabitants of the earth.

The *Remains of Elmet* encourages human integration with the natural environment which is offered as an alternative to the utilitarian practices of industrialisation that transforms nature into a material substance in need of being dominated and controlled. Similar to the *Remains of Elmet*, *River* which is described as the “most closely unified collection of poems” (Bishop 239), serves the same purpose of imposing the ecological principle of interconnectedness and thus, creating an environmental consciousness. The poems in *River* continue to convey the poet’s attempt to reconcile man and nature with a further emphasis on the “sacred wholeness of Nature”, a premise which is seen as the only way to prevent ecological catastrophe (Hughes 1995A: 131).

For instance, “Stump Pool in April” from *River*, is a poem which reveals the poet’s aspiration to understand the sacredness of nature by examining the natural phenomena from the perspective of nature itself. The renewal of life with the coming of spring, and nature’s ability to resurrect itself is the prevailing concept of the poem. However, what is quite significant about the poem is its presentation of the rise of the river by using sensual imagery which sublimates this simple natural event. While the foaming river is too excited to overflow and achieve unification with the earth, the earth and the vegetation, thirsty for water, are impatient and ready to embrace the river:

Crack willows in their first pale eclosion
Of emerald. The long pool
Is seething with oily lights. Deep labour
Embodied under flimsy spanglings. Oxygen
Boils in its throat, and the new limbs
Flex and loosen. It keeps
Making the effort to burst its glistenings
With sinewy bulgings, gluey splittings
All down its living length. (1-9)

The unification of the earth and the river, and their mutual dependence on each other, is presented not only as a biological occurrence, but also as a spiritual re-union

of the members of the sacred earth. The other members of nature also participate in the maintenance of this unification. So the wind tries to help the river to rise and embrace his lover. To complete the picture of the sensual intercourse of the earth and the river, the poem ends with the marriage imagery which presents the earth as a bride and the plants as the bridal veil:

The soft strokings
Of south wind keep touching all its membranes
Into spasming torments. It knows
The time has come for it to alter
And to fly, and to fasten-in wedlock-
With the hill-wood waiting high there
In her bridal veil of haze violet. (16-22)

What underlies this elevated presentation of the natural environment is a scientific and ecological principle which Hughes tries to emphasise. In their close examination of the natural organisms, the poems in the *River* reveal that the existence of one living creature depends on its relationship with its physical circumstances and other living members of the community of the earth. After contemplating the significance of this natural event, the persona of the "Stump Pool in April" discovers that every agent of the natural ecosystem carries a special duty to preserve the well-being of the other agents, and in this way, they contribute to the functioning of the ecosystem. The essential aspect of the persona's moral consideration of nature lies in its stimulation of the idea that each form of nonhuman being in nature deserves moral consideration and admiration. Hughes's way of presenting and describing the natural organisms within the structure of their relationship with the other living beings in nature is underlined by Keith Sagar as follows:

The language Hughes reinvents in *River* is bright, fresh and green, as if it has just shed a skin, sharp, tangy as snow-melt. The language of all these poems is a rich weave of relationships with other creatures, with weather and season and landscape. (2000: 164)

What Hughes is apparently trying to achieve with his presentation of nature as a living organism, whose existence depends on the internal functioning of its constituent parts, is to urge his readers to acquire an ecological perception of nature as

a complex system of interdependent relationships by shattering the anthropocentric assumption that “nature exists merely as an object”, simply to be dominated and controlled (Phillips 577). In its exploration of the complexity of the interrelationships of the natural organisms, Hughes’s poetry serves the ecocritical allegation of speaking on behalf of nature, analysing natural events from “the perspective of nature itself” (Bishop 241).

Significantly, the personas in Hughes’s poems perpetually discover something about the complexity of nature through their communion with nature. Their admiration for nature inevitably increases in accordance with their exploration of nature. Therefore, Hughes’s poetry gives access to the ecological presumption that human beings are subject to the forces of natural power, and their desire to subordinate nature is in vain, because, it is an indisputable fact accepted by ecocentric thought that man’s right to live and fulfil his life practices is equal with the rights of other nonhuman beings to flourish and manifest themselves on earth. In relation to this argument, “Earth-Numb”, a poem included in the *River*, demonstrates the unsuccessful attempts of human beings to capture nature:

Hunting salmon. And hunted
And haunted by apparitions from tombs
Under the smoothing tons of dead element
In the river’s black canyons. (7-10)

The poem is ironically preoccupied with this ecological idea of nature as an organic whole which is beyond human control. It displays the fishing experience of a person who is hunted by nature while trying to catch fish. No matter what the circumstances of the fishing experience may be, the poem directly expresses the consequences of the exploitative attitude toward nature. After falling into the river, the persona goes through an instant of direct experience with nature. Following the first moment of astonishment, he delights in participating in nature which provides refreshment in his perception of the natural environment. Only after this moment, the persona manages to enter into direct communion with the river and becomes aware of

his own limitations as a human being. This realisation eventually leads him to feel a sense of admiration for the survival struggle of nature:

And bang! The river grabs at me
A mouth-flash, an electrocuting malice
Like a trap, trying to rip life off me-
And the river stiffens alive,
The black pit thumps, the whole river hauls. . . (16-20)

When the simple fishing experience turns into a life struggle for the persona, he recognises the wider dimension of the whole of the natural environment which depends on the complex system of working of the natural cosmos. The significance of the operation of the natural ecosystem is characterised by the creative and destructive forces of nature which have the ability to transform a victim into a victimiser. Upon his awareness of the survival struggle of the salmon fish in the river, the persona breaks the boundaries between himself and nature, and participates in a mutual interaction with his prey. In this way, the poem depicts a natural world where both the victim and victimiser are unified in a whole.

The poem ironically tries to re-establish the union that seems to be broken between man and nature. The ironic fusion of man and nature which is accomplished through the man's falling into the river conveys a more serious implication about the ecological idea that nature can never be simplified to serve human ends; on the contrary human beings are only a single constitutive part of this complex ecosystem. Thus, it can be declared that the poem manifests the ecocentric perspective according to which "nature is larger and older than human consciousness, reigns over man, not man over it" (Underhill 272-273).

Unlike the poem "Earth Numb", which includes the struggle for survival between man and nature, "River Barrow" is a poem which dwells upon the maternal power of nature to embrace all its inhabitants. The persona of the poem benefits from the healing power of nature when he surrenders himself both physically and spiritually to the natural environment. Listening to the voice of nature and observing the diversity of creatures living in nature, he gradually begins to forget his daily anxieties:

... We sprawl
 Rods out, giant grasshopper antennae, listening
 For the bream-shoal to engage us. (5-7)

The fishing experience, in this poem is seen as an activity which connects human beings with the natural environment. The fishing rods are resembled to the grasshopper antennae which enable the persona to listen attentively to the voice of nature. He is totally concentrating on listening to nature in its own terms. In order to understand and perceive nature he adopts grasshopper antennae which make him one of the natural creatures. Having embodied the ecological view of nature, the persona seeks to encounter a beam-shoal to get into mutual communion. Persona's joining together with the beam-shoal, which implies a flock of fish swimming together, emphasises his becoming one of the members of this flock, and thus, he will achieve identification with the natural elements.

The persona has an impression of nature as living organism functioning as an ecosystem, sustaining a great variety of species in its own structure. He is not an external observer of the natural world, but an active participant in its pattern of life and death. Unified with nature, the persona sees himself as a member of this interrelated system of nature, and in this way he gets rid of the problems which occupy his mind, finding consolation and therapy in nature:

All evil suspended. Flies
 Teem over my hands, twanging their codes
 In and out of my ear's beam. Future, past.
 Reading each other in the water mirror
 Barely tremble the thick nerve.
 Heavy belly
 Of river, solid mystery
 With a living vein. (24-30)

The persona's ecological insight into nature enables him to see everything in nature in its perfection, so that even the disturbing elements of nature seem to be, innocent and faultless. His perception is refreshed with a new sense of eloquence in nature. As a result, he lets the flies settle on his hand, and their buzzing no longer

irritates him. Furthermore, when he looks into the water, he can see that his past and future is connected by his momentary experience with nature. Personified as a heavy belly of the river, the water flowing in the river incorporates man's history of past and future and reflects it like a mirror. The idea of nature embodying human history is significant in its revealing the interconnectedness of man and nature. Man's life, his past and future, is rooted in nature so that what the human life signifies is the life of the natural environment.

The persona's ecological way of thinking which emphasises an organic, holistic and evolutionary view of nature in a continual process of development and change, helps him to overcome the dualistic thought which creates a fragmentation in his mind and causes him to set himself apart from the natural environment. The poem's emphasis on the persona's acquiring the grasshopper antennae, joining in the bream-shoal, and letting flies settle on his hands are the ecological ideas which convey the persona's desire to be united with nature. Hence, he begins to think from nature's perspective and see himself as an integral part of nature. He is so satisfied in being in the bosom of nature that, he succeeds in gaining a new identity which helps him to regain his lost ecological self.

The persona's gaining of the ecological identity is in accordance with the ideas of Arne Naess, who describes the ecological self as a process of Self-realisation, that is, the growth of a person's ego-self toward a broader self identity which encompasses all the living creatures in the universe (1995B: 226). He succeeds in arriving at a level of understanding the universe through a structure of wholes which depends on the interrelationships between the living organisms in the universe. The persona's deeper involvement in the river leads him to feel a sense of reverence for nature as a source of life. As a result, it can be claimed that the poem includes more than a simple celebration of natural beauty; its' main pursuit is the building of an ecological consciousness in its readers by encouraging them to recognise their organic interconnectedness with nature. The poem demonstrates that while nature restores man into his proper place, that is nature, man's alienating himself from nature is nothing but self-denial. It is nature which makes possible the survival of man on earth, offering both physical and spiritual refreshment to him. Thus, the poem confirms

ecocriticism's concept of human relatedness to the natural world so that, denying nature or refraining from it can be interpreted as denying human existence.

The presence of the natural ecosystem and the circulation of the energy throughout all the parts of this ecosystem can be witnessed in another poem; "Flesh of Light". The poem bears utmost importance in its delineation of the sunlight as source of the spiritual energy which penetrates into the depths of the earth spreading life and happiness. As the title also indicates, the poem enlivens light and conceives it as an individual with its flesh and bones:

From a core-flash, from a thunder-silence
In the sun-something has fallen
It crawls in glair, among heather-topped stones.
...
Something new-born crawls, a phosphorescence
Illuminates the underleaves of stolid
Oak and the quivering iris. Eyes of ova (1-3, 7-8)

The persona's holistic perception of nature enables him to see the reflection of the sun rays on earth as the birth of a supernatural creature who has fallen from the core of the sun to the earth. In the lines above, the gradual appearance of this creature crawling like a new born baby is described. The idea which reveals a sense of fertility and renewal of life is enacted in the eighth line. The eyes of the light are resembled to ova, a female cell fertilised by the male sperm. The light is a living cell fertilised by the sun. Therefore, with a sacred power life which it takes from the sun, the light illuminates everything by injecting its life energy to the dead leaves of the trees. However, it is not only the trees where the influence of this supernatural creature can be felt, but also all the other parts of nature as it is indicated in the "Flesh of Light":

The medicinal, mercury creature
Sheathed with the grab, in all its rainbow scales,
That it shed
And refreshes, spasming, and whispering.
Spinal cord of the prone, adoring land,
Rapt
To the roots of the sea,
To the blossoming

Of the sea. (16-24)

The depiction of the light as a mysterious creature, protected by some invisible forces, continues throughout the poem. In these lines, the light is shown as a deity wearing a magical garment which functions as his protective sheath while spreading remedy and cure with its heating and warming rays into the depths of the sea. The light imagery in the “Flesh of Light” is significant for the ecological understanding of the natural world. The light coming from the sun is considered as a godly power of nature establishing an interdependent relationship between all the elements of nature. The sun’s power of life sustaining energy is distributed to the earth to provide the transfer of this sacred energy and the soul to the stones, the trees, and the sea. The personification of the light emphasises the existence of a secret force which embodies a power to connect everything with a mystical and spiritual bond. In addition to the “Flesh of Light” which demonstrates the existence of the participative relationship between the organisms living in nature with the personification of the natural elements, “Fairy Flood” is a poem which proves the ecological idea of the “Flesh of Light” in a similar manner:

Escaping daughter
Her whole glass castle melting about her
In full magic
Some mask of crumbling woe disfigures
Her deep liberation, which is actually jubilant,
As she brings down earth and sky blamelessly
In this headlong elopement without finery,
Weeps past-a freed out-heaping
On accusative love and abandon. (6-14)

The natural event described in this poem is the flooding of the river in the spring time and its merging with the sea. The poem’s powerful description of a simple natural event reveals the ecological significance of the poem which enriches and embellishes the natural events with a sense of magical and mysterious beauty. As a consequence, the image of the river flowing towards the sea is personified and conceived as a young girl who elopes with her lover. After a long struggle with her father landscape, the river as a young girl manages to break the glass castle built around her to gain her liberation. The struggle of the river to gain its liberation is

considered as jubilant where the river achieves to bring down the earth and the sky with an ambition to integrate with the sea. The poem's imagery of the merging of the river and the sea as the unification of two lovers conveys the existence of an important element in the occurrences of the natural events. The concept of love is a determining factor in the operation of the ecosystem. The poem emphasises the idea that the interconnectedness between the natural elements is a necessary requirement and can never be prevented, similar to the resolution of the lovers to get unified.

Complementary to the concept of nature enfolding all its organisms within its complex working of the ecosystem, "Go Fishing" is a poem which presents nature as the only medium for man to find his natural self. The poems "Flesh of Light" and "Fairy Flood" concentrate on the demonstration of the existence of a spiritual and holistic power of the natural ecosystem which can be observed in every part of nature. In a similar manner, the poem "Go Fishing" positions man in this natural ecosystem, showing the integral relationship between man and nature as his true home. The poem invites its readers to have close contact with the physical environment in order to benefit from the therapeutic power of nature. "Go Fishing" requires a total submission of man to the power of nature by getting rid of his worries:

Join water, wade in underbeing
 Let brain mist into moist earth
 Ghost loosen away downstream
 Gulp river and gravity
 Lose words. (1-5)

The poem demonstrates the necessary requirements for gaining a new ecological identity. The idea of wading in underbeing implies that human identity consists of two distinct layers; one layer is determined by the mind and the language which separate man from nature, while the sub-layer of the human identity which is the ecological self, connects him to nature. The persona's letting his brain fade away and losing the words as representative features of the first layer of his identity, leads him to find the real core of his natural identity which connects him with the outside physical world. The brain is associated in the poem with the ghost which haunts the human mind. Thus, it is only through his interaction with nature that the persona can eliminate the ghost and enliven his ecological self while joining the water.

What is essentially significant in the poem is that it introduces human rationality and language as a barrier to complete integration with the natural environment. The poet expresses the urgent need to withdraw from these two peculiar elements of human culture which distinguishes human beings from the rest of the universe. Further, it claims that the gravity and dignity can be achieved when human beings, disregarding rationality, participate in an intimate interaction with nature.

Self-consciousness of human behaviour, contrary to the instinctual behaviours of the animals, is what causes human beings to see nature as inferior while privileging themselves. Therefore, the problem of human rationality constitutes particular emphasis of the debates of the ecocritical studies which question the legitimacy of human rationality to exploit nature. Considering the roots of environmental crisis, ecocritics are of the opinion that it is the “mentality of specialisation that fails to recognise the interconnectedness of everything” (Tag 1). In other words, the rationality which is considered as a special feature of human species is what causes human beings to see themselves as distinct and special among the other species. However, “the activity of human brain”, Joseph Meeker claims “has brought about the extinction of many animal species and the wholesale disruption of the ecosystems on a worldwide scale” (5).

Continually, language is seen in the poem, “Go Fishing”, as a second barrier to interaction with nature. The poem enacts the ecological view that it is necessary for man to transcend the cultural constructions of nature, created by language in order to achieve oneness with nature. Ecocritical reaction to the idea that “nature is nothing more than a linguistic construct” (Coupe 3) coincides with Hughes’s idea of language as a barrier to the interaction with nature. Hughes repudiates language as a cultural element which creates an unbridgeable gulf between man and nature. However, ecocritics do not totally refuse language and they emphasise the function of language in creating ecological awareness. Similarly, with the aim of encouraging people to develop their own personal experiences of nature, William Howarth prefers the referential use of language which he calls as “deixis” that is, the function of a language to refer to the outside world (80).

Notwithstanding, Hughes in his poem still uses language to motivate his readers to develop close communion with nature, although the idea of losing words in “Go Fishing” indicates language as an obstacle to nature. Instead of creating a fixed idea and a specific conception of nature in this poem, Hughes forces his readers to have a personal relationship with physical nature. Therefore when he emphasises human integration with the natural environment, Hughes enables his readers to liberate their minds from the stereotypical representation of nature:

Be supplanted by mud and leaves and pebbles
By sudden rainbow monster-structures
That materialise in suspension gulping
And dematerialise under pressure of the eye. (10-13)

As it is clearly understood from these lines, the poem evokes an unmediated experience of nature so that man can grasp the essence of his existence and can better understand the natural world and his place in that world. Moreover, it can be claimed that Hughes with his use of language to form a union between man and nature, incorporates the referential aspect of language which is advocated by the ecocritics. To elaborate this assumption about the referential aspect of Hughes’s poetry, Joanny Moulin celebrates Hughes’s poetry as being “extraordinarily referential” (1), while Paul Bentley brings a wider evaluation of Hughes’s use of language:

Hughes’s poems are all too often read for their referential content: the word is taken to be transparent, a window onto what is being described or depicted (the word of nature for example)... In this sense Hughes’s poems body forth not only animals and objects but also, more crucially, the materiality of their own medium. (1)

Presenting his poems as passages opening to the outside world, Hughes refrains from creating a single set of notion of nature and thus opens new possibilities of approaches to nature. This is accomplished through the referential use of language which does not try to construct ideas about nature, but instead encourages readers to form their own personal and subjective perceptions of nature. This is most explicitly shown in the “Stanbury Moor” from the *Remains of Elmet*, a poem which tries to deconstruct the stereotypes built on nature. Hughes succeeds to shift the readers’ attention away from the text to the outside world. In this manner the poet uses

language to form an environmental awareness by emphasising the human interconnection with the natural environment. Subsequently, the poet challenges the textual construction of nature compelling human beings to enter into direct interaction with nature.

Hughes concentrates on the physical existence of the natural world which must be experienced by all the people. In this way, Hughes brings literary text and nature together by rejoining the literary discourse to the natural world. Liberating himself from the limitations of the representation of nature based upon the imaginings of its author, Hughes in his poem invites his readers to experience the world beyond the text itself. Hence, Hughes succeeds in achieving the ecocritical premise of interconnectedness not only on the contextual level but also on the textual level by blurring the distinction between text and the outside physical world. This notion of “bridging world and text” (Head 238) implies that the natural environment has its presence in human culture, since human culture emerges out of human interaction with physical nature. This inevitably eliminates the otherness of nature through a depiction of culture implicated in nature. Therefore, the poem’s responsiveness to the environment proves that it is impossible to separate these two interdependent notions of nature and culture as they are merged together to form a whole.

In continuation to the argument about a text’s orientation to the outside world, “If” is another poem in the *River*, which involves the evocation of the environmentally responsive behaviour from its readers. The poem approaches the ecological principle of interconnectedness from a different perspective in its demonstration of the results of the heedless depletion of natural resources and the pollution of the environment which, inevitably, lead to the irrecoverable damage in the total system of the universe:

If the sky is infected
The river has to drink it

If earth has a disease which could be fatal
The river has to drink it

If you have infected the sky and the earth
Caught its disease off you-you are the virus. (1-6)

In an immediate and direct style, the poem argues that the infection of one part of the universe will contingently penetrate into all the other parts of the ecosystem, and will cause a total disruption of the universe. The accelerated deterioration of the natural environment which will eventually lead into the breakdown of the whole system of the universe is the prevailing idea, predicated in the poem to build an environmentally responsive action. However, the poem, which begins in the form of advice to human beings to show the probable results of environmental pollution, takes the form of an accusation directed against human beings. The poet's attitude becomes harsher in the sixth line which addresses man as a virus infected on the natural world. At this moment, man becomes a culprit who is accused of murdering nature. The poem shows the validity of the principle of interconnectedness in all circumstances by explicitly demonstrating that human beings share the same destiny with nature, and the other organisms living in nature. The necessity of the fundamental changes in human perception of nature is illustrated by the poet who demonstrates the working of the interdependent system between different components of nature, and the position of man in this system. The poem "If" gives priority to the need to stimulate an environmental consciousness and thus provide an awakening in people's conception of nature by shaking them to the awareness of the hazardous consequences of their exploitative attitude toward nature:

Where will you get a pure drink now?
 Already-the drop has returned to the cup
 Already you are your ditch, and there you drink. (14-16)

With its accusing manner, the poem is an interrogation of human beings who are blamed for the poisoning of nature. The idea of man becoming his own ditch indicates the fact that poisoning nature, man, in fact, prepares his own end. The poem creates an image of a cup of poisonous drink which is prepared by the human hand to kill nature. However, the poem makes a significant remark in its demonstration of the fact that man himself, has to drink the poison that he has prepared for nature. The poetic language of the poem connotes the ecological idea of the interconnectedness of everything in nature.

Hughes's commitment to the evolution of ecologically responsible behaviour by delineating man as being directly exposed to the danger of destruction cannot be considered as an exaggeration of the situation, because it has the scientific evidence. Significantly enough, Hughes's preoccupation with the analysis of the relationship of man with his environment and poisoning of the interdependent components of nature are reminiscent of the ideas of Rachel Carson who calls this relationship as "the chain of evil" (15):

The history of life on earth has been a history of interaction between living things and their surroundings... The most alarming of all man's assaults upon the environment is the contamination of air, earth, river, and sea with dangerous and even lethal materials. This pollution is for the most part irrecoverable; the chain of evil it initiates not only in the world that must support life but in living tissues is for the most part irreversible. (15)

Hughes as a poet contributes to the development of environmental awareness with his comprehensive analysis of the ecological issues and helps his readers to grasp the ultimate necessity of sustainable human relationship with nature which is essential for the survival of the planet and human beings as well. Nevertheless, he is not entirely pessimistic about the future of the universe and struggles to prevent this ongoing poisoning of the earth and its natural resources. The poet's sincere dedication to bridge the gap between man and nature is more specifically understood in his poem, "In the Dark Violin of the Valley". The poem illuminates an ecocritical assertion that everything has a spirit and voice and invites the readers to listen to the rhythm of nature by demonstrating the possibility of articulation of the language of earth, water, and animals. The poem celebrates the ecological vision of nature where the harmonious relationship between its living components is predominated. The poem, "In the Dark Violin of the Valley" introduces the flowing movement of the river as the sound of a music functioning like a needle binding all the parts of nature:

All night a music
Like a needle sewing body
And soul together and sky and earth
Together and sewing the river to the sea. (1-4)

The poem manifests its ecological paradigm of construction of the interconnected relationship between all the living organisms of nature in the metaphor of sewing. Similar to a needle which connects the different parts of a fabric to constitute a garment, the music of the river connects all the different parts of nature by attracting them with its lulling voice. This voice of nature, first of all, binds the human soul to his physical body, and then connects him to the natural phenomena to form the intimate union with all the inhabitants of nature.

In his poetic celebration of the ecological assumption of interdependence of everything in the universe, Hughes, emphasises constantly, the urgency of human unification with nature to promote the sustainability of life on earth for the sake of all its inhabitants including human beings. He brings forth the idea that biocentric vision of wholeness and connectedness may be considered as a solution not only for the problems of environmental degradation but also as a healing power for the fragmentation in human identity which is seen as the inevitable result of alienation from nature, being the primary root of human existence.

With a longing to fuse human beings with their natural environment, and motivate them to join dynamic interaction with nature's vital energy, Hughes illustrates the tribal people's reciprocal relationship with their environment which depends on love, care and respect as revealed in a long narrative poem "Gulkana" in the *River*. The poem depicts a tribal culture's connection with nature as a source of life in contrast to a civilised culture's exploitative attitude toward nature which is subjugated under human domination. The poem includes, as the other *River* poems, a fishing experience and narrates the persona's visit to a Native American village situated near the Gulkana River in southeastern Alaska (Scigaj 1986: 309). The poem opens with a detailed description of the location of the river Gulkana:

The Gulkana, where it meets the Copper
Swung, jade, out of the black spruce forest,
And disappeared into it. (1-3)

Hughes's attraction to this village derives from Native American tribe's maintenance of an ecologically affirmed relationship with the earth which they conceive as "a living being in same sense that a human being is alive" (Allen 256). The Native American's relationship with nature is dependent on the preservation of the biological integrity of the ecosystem. Each member of the tribe engages in a reciprocal relationship with the natural environment which depends on mutual respect, care and love. Hence, Native American people are considered to have developed nature-oriented beliefs and values confirming the presumptions of modern scientific ecology which aims to build ecological awareness in individuals:

This interconnection between person and land is not merely a thing of historical significance. Present-day Native Americans continue to acknowledge their ties to their land... Recognising that they were part of the land meant that many Native American cultures did not intellectually isolate themselves from the land and her other inhabitants as did European-derived cultures. The idea which appears over and over is 'kinship' with other living beings. (Booth 522)

The Native American conception of nature as a self-conscious being which is quite significant for the ecological understanding of the world is articulated by the poet who tries to express his admiration for the charming beauty of the Gulkana River which is perceived as sacred: " And this was the Gulkana /Biblical, a deranging cry" (26-27). The persona's comprehension of the natural ecosystem increases parallel to his developing participation with the creatures of nature. Significantly enough, the persona's penetration into the depths of nature leads him to recognise his oneness with the natural creatures. Similar to the other poems in *River*, Gulkana offers a soothing experience to the persona who discovers a new natural identity as an outcome of the clarification of his mind:

Word by word
The voice of the river moved in me.
It was like a lovesickness. Like a mourning
Numbness, a secret bleeding, a deeper
Waking in my body. (128-131)

These lines record the developmental stage of the persona's integration with nature. The soothing flow of the river in tune with the rhythm of nature leads to the

awakening of new thoughts in the persona's mind. In a momentary state of numbness caused by the mesmerising voice of the river, the persona feels in his body the arousal of a new consciousness and recognition of the interconnectedness of everything. However, this recognition also leads him to acknowledge the fact that human beings prefer to keep themselves outside this system of interconnections which immediately causes the persona to feel a sense of secret bleeding in his body. Namely, at the moment of discovering the interconnectedness of everything, the persona begins to feel the pain for the man's denial of this connection with nature.

What precedes the persona's discovery of the interconnectedness of everything in nature is his deep sense of resentment of the modern society's heedless consummation of the natural resources. In order to emphasise the technological intrusion of human beings into nature, the poet inverts the words which characterise the capitalist consumer culture in his description of the Indian village:

A scrapyard of boxy shacks
 And supermarket refuse, dogs, wrecked pick-ups
 The Indian village where we bought our pass
 Was comatose-on the stagnation toxins
 Of a cultural vasectomy. They were relapsing
 To Cloud-like -a -Boulder, Mica, Bear, Magpie. (16-21)

Nature-oriented primitive culture of the Indian village is defeated by the exploitative attitude of modern cultures which the poet describes as the toxin of a sterile culture which gradually poisons the natural environment and prevents the flourishing of the primitive cultures. Vasectomy is a medical operation performed on males as one of the techniques of birth control to the ejaculation of the sperm which provides reproductivity. The poem symbolically associates the contemporary culture's polluting nature with cultural vasectomy which destroys and prevents nature's power of reproducing and renewing its life. The poet deliberately applies the words "supermarket, wrecked pick-ups, and toxins" to emphasise the destruction of technology and its culture. The word "supermarket" can be interpreted as an implication of the consumer culture which continually creates new desires and needs to motivate people to buy and consume. In a similar manner, the wrecked pick-ups illustrate the destiny of consumed products which are returned to nature as waste which pollute the environment. As the poem emphasises, the pollution of the

environment by waste disposal is not the only danger awaiting nature. The toxins, used in the production of some materials like the cars, are directly permeated to nature when these material turn back to nature as waste. The result is the poisoning of nature, and the living inhabitants of it.

The persona's exploration of the natural environment continues with his intimate communion with the living creatures of nature. Although the poem does not refer to a specific mythological story in its description of the River Gulkana, it emphasises the mythical value of the area which reveals the sacredness of it. What is interesting is that the persona contemplates on the mythical aspect of the river, and tries to understand the ecological perception of the tribal society. Thus, he sees the sacred wholeness of nature and puts it into a sublimated position:

The flutes, the drumming. And they rose and sank
Like voices, like singers themselves
In its volume. We watched them, deepening away.
They looked like what they were-somnambulists,
Drugged, ritual victims-melting from us
Toward a sacrament
A consummation
That could only be death. (89-96)

The quoted lines depict a picture of a ritual where the inhabitants of the river prepare a ceremony to sacrifice the salmon fish. The idea of drumming and singing songs complete this image of the tribal ritual. The yearly death cycle of the salmon fish is illustrated as a ritual ceremony of a tribal society. However, the persona feels sympathy and admiration for the salmon fish and calls it a ritual victim. Although the persona, as an alien to the tribal cultures, still has difficulty in understanding the death of the salmon fish as a sacrament, and considers it as a consummation, the idea of sacrificing the salmon fish to provide fertility in nature is a prevalent religious belief of the tribal cultures. Stephan Lansing draws attention to the salmon rituals of the American Indian tribes as follows:

The leaders of the tribes organised the 'First Salmon' rituals in which the bones of the first salmon caught were ceremoniously sent downriver to ensure the return of the souls of the Salmon People to their villages across the western ocean. Similarly, the entire community

bore the responsibility to enforce the rules against polluting the river which might harm the Salmon People in their journey upstream. (7)

The traditions of the Native American people, as it can be understood from this quotation, are determined by their view of the natural world as an interconnected whole. The basic assumption of this wholeness and unity of the universe are embedded in every aspect of the life of the Indian tribes who identify themselves with nature, and assume that all the elements of nature are intelligent subjects as human beings. Consequently, this kind of identification with nature eventually leads to dissolve the duality between human subject and nature as object. In this manner these primitive tribes who engage in an intimate relationship with nature, affirm the ecological presumption of the necessity of the development of "Self-realisation" as a sense of human identification with the natural creatures (Naess 1995C: 155). A primitive tribes' oneness with the natural environment is explained by Paula Gunn Allen as follows:

... the primary assumptions tribespeople make can be seen as static only in that these people acknowledge the essential harmony of all things and see all things as being of equal value in the scheme of things, denying the opposition, dualism, and isolation (separateness) that characterise non-Indian thought. (243)

While the mind of the persona oscillates between the two different cultures' diverse perceptions of the natural environment, the power of nature seems to enfold him to refresh his mind, reminding his connectedness to other living beings in nature. His visit to the River Gulkana and his observation of the Native American village called as comatose enables him to comprehend the sense of community which constitutes the basic structure of the roots of tribal life.

Consequently, the long narrative poem "Gulkana" enacts a variety of ecological themes which are illustrated in the cultural practices of a Native American tribe which adopts the holistic view of universe and view themselves as an inseparable part of the natural ecosystem. In this manner, the poem forces its readers to reconsider their codes of behaviour and their dualistic perceptions of nature, confronted by the primitive peoples' physical and spiritual connectedness to the earth which sustains their life.

Beginning with poems elaborating the natural cycle of life in the ecosystem which is reflected through the seasonal changes in the river and the detailed observation of the fish living in these rivers, the poems in the *River* gradually come to depict a picture of a natural world “which encompasses human beings along with the other members of the natural ecosystem” (McClatchy 39). The book includes a progressive change from an objective, detached knowledge of nature towards man’s recognition of the individuality of each member of the universe, observed through an ecocentric perspective, and thus it demonstrates a process of heightening the ecological consciousness. Hughes’s observation of animals, plants and rivers, both living and nonliving elements of nature as components of a whole continue to be a major preoccupation of his last volume *Wolfwatching* which encourages its readers to question the anthropocentric assumptions concerning animals and their environment.

Hughes’s observation of the animals proceeds with an increased intensification in *Wolfwatching*, in which he redirects the reader’s attention to the hunting of animals and causing their extinction. A systematic study of the poems “A Sparrow Hawk”, “A Dove” and “The Little Whale Song” reveal that Hughes deliberately focuses on the delineation of each animal as a unique individual and the relatedness of animal self to its own natural environment. Although Hughes’s preoccupation with animals in *Wolfwatching* led to the interpretation that Hughes “prefers animals to people on moral grounds” (Dilulio 38), the book includes poems about human beings as well. However, these are not the poems which are dominated with the human relationship with their natural environment; on the contrary they are war poems which depict the psychological injuries of war on the human mind. The volume consists of twenty-one poems, twelve of which are war poems. When the book as a whole is taken into consideration, one may argue that the reason for Hughes’s inclusion of war poems among the poems about animals and natural environment can be derived from the fact that Hughes tries not only to show an alternative life-style which depend on man’s reciprocal relationship with his natural environment but he also tries to demonstrate the dangerous outcome of man’s disconnection from nature.

The sterility of technological culture, the rapid process of industrialisation and the long-lasting influence of war on the lives of people are the prevailing emphases of “Walt”, a poem which narrates the “wounding of Hughes’s uncle in the First World War” (Scigaj 1991: 150). The title of the poem is the name of Hughes’s uncle. Different from Hughes’s other poems which endeavour to prevent human violence to persecute animals as it is clearly observed in “The Black Rhino”, the violence of man exerted over man is the dominating idea of “Walt”. The poem opens with the memories of Walt who is wounded by a German soldier in the Great War. The poem shows that although he has recovered from the bullet wound physically, it left irrecoverable injuries in his mind. For this reason, nature is offered as the healing power for the human psyche to activate natural energies, and to liberate the human mind from disturbing preoccupations:

All the day he lay. He went walks
 Along the Heights Road, from Peckett to Midgley,
 Down to Mytholmroyd (past Ewood
 Of his ancestors, past the high-perched *factory*
 Of his future life). Up the canal bank,
 Up Redacre, along and down into Hebden,
 Then up into Crimsworth Dene, to their old
Campground (13-20 italics are mine).

When the ill-effects of the war are followed by the mechanical industrial culture which developed after the war, a new mechanical way of life, supported by technology, appeared. Complementary to these changes in the life-style of the people, man’s visualising himself as separated from the other living inhabitants of nature caused him to live a rural life away from nature. Industrialisation has also led to the break down of natural harmony, sterilising human life, turning them into working machines. Once human beings break their bonds with their environment, nature can no longer offer a healing power for people who fall into a psychological dejection, and a sense of meaninglessness. Similarly, the persona of this poem, whose mind oscillates between the present day situation of the valley occupied with the factories and the memory of war, finds help for his psychological break down in the “tranquillizers and steroids” which can only offer a momentary escape from his problem (59). On the basis of ecocritical understanding of the poem, one may argue that the disruption of the ecological system caused by war not only leads to

environmental disasters but also destroys the stability of the human mind. Only through his personal encounter with the natural world can Walt perceive the fact that:

Nothing will connect
He peers down past his shoes
Into a tangle of horizons-

Black, tilted bedrock struggling up,
Mouthing disintegration

Every weedy breath of the sea
Is another swell of overwhelming
Meaningless. And a sigh. Meaningless. (91-98)

The distorted psychology of Walt, conveyed in these lines, causes him to see the outside world in its dissolution. When he looks into the horizon he cannot feel any hope for the future, and the only thing that he sees is a bland view of future, and a sense of disconnection. Similarly, the endless vision of the sea also increases his pessimism and fills him with meaninglessness.

In connection to Walt's feeling a sense of meaninglessness and his lament for man's disconnection from the natural world, the poem endorses the ecological assumption that an individual's well-being depends on the well-being of the ecosystem which supports and sustains the flourishing of human life on earth. Walt comes to the realisation that technology's privileging of human rationality which is considered as the only merit, distinguishing human beings from the rest of nature is what causes the suppression of the emotional needs of human beings and leads them into "the vast absence, the emptiness, the sterility, the meaninglessness, the loneliness" (Hughes 149). Hence, the result of technology's separating man from nature legitimises any form of violence exerted by man upon man, as well as upon nature. Technology's legitimacy of violence reveals itself in the form of wars and the human exploitation of nature. For this reason the war leaves irrecoverable injuries in the life of Walt who loses his energy of life.

Within the broad holistic perspective of ecocriticism, human beings as integral parts of nature are natural creatures and they inevitably share the same instincts and emotions with the rest of the species. Therefore, the denial or the suppression of the

instincts and emotions under rationality can be interpreted as the radical repudiation of human connectedness to the natural environment and this repudiation leads them to have a moral superiority over the animals. The stability of the natural ecosystem and integrity of human personality depend on this realisation of humanity as being the part of the natural ecosystem sharing the same instinctual derives and moral and rationality with the animals. For this reason the animals in Hughes's poetry have the capacity to think and feel while the human beings are depicted as natural creatures with their instincts and emotions.

It is not only the technology and the industrial culture that Hughes blames for human disconnection from nature, but also he sees religion as one of the most important threats to the construction of the harmonious relationship with the natural environment. Similar to "Walt", the dissolution of human identity is the major preoccupation of another poem "Take What You Want But Pay For It" which parodies the fall of Adam and Eve from the Eden. The poem engages in God's struggle to captivate the body of Adam in order to glorify his soul since God believes that the body will destroy the soul if Adam follows the desires of his body. Hughes dramatises the scene of the separation of Adam's soul and body in his poem as follows:

God spoke to the Soul of Adam
Saying: 'Give me your body'
Took Adam's body and nailed it
To a stake saying: 'This great beast
Shall destroy your peace no more.' (2-6)

The concept of the Fall which constitutes the dominant discourse of Christianity, is based on the creation of a duality between soul and body, claiming that human beings should suppress their instinctual bodily desires to achieve perfection. Questioning the dominant ideology of religion, the poem challenges the traditional Christian formulation of human ecology and asserts that human identity is a complete whole with its body and soul, and the subordination of one part results in the disintegration of the human identity. Hence, in the second part of the poem it is the soul of Adam which is suffering while his body is being tortured:

Cries his body could no longer cry
 A single flagellant thong
 With which he drove his ghostly being shuddering
 Back into the body and
 And in that sudden *inrush of renewal*
 The nailed feet and the hands
 Tore free of the nails and he fell
 From the emptied gigged to earth. (33-40)

The poem creates an image of the crucifixion of Adam's body to punish him for his pursuing the needs of his bodily desires. The idea of crucifixion recalls Christ who is crucified because of his belief in God. The poem overthrows the traditional conception of Christian religion and presents it as the condemner of human beings, not as their saviour. Christianity is represented in the poem as the torturer of human beings, and instead of promising peace and happiness, it makes life hell for man. Thus, man's fall from paradise becomes a victory for man, not a punishment. The poem depicts the picture of the struggle between man and God, who tries to force man to deny the existence of his bodily desires as well as his soul. The war between God and Adam ends with the victory of Adam who regains his happiness and peace after he recovers his body from suppression:

Exhaling from the black pits
 Of each nail hole and from each gouged
 Inscription of blood an ectoplasm
 Bluish, and from the blackest pit of all
 That issued the despair and its noise
 A misty enfoldment which materialised
 As a musing woman, who lifted the body
 As a child's, effortless, and walked
 Out of the prison with it, singing gently. (48-56)

The quoted lines create a powerful image of the creation of woman out of the bleeding body of Adam. When Adam rescues himself from the cross, an ectoplasm flows from the hole of his crucified hands and gradually gains a material existence in the form of a woman. The original genesis story is overthrown in the poem which presents woman not as the tempter of man but as his friend who shares the suffering and the pain of Adam. She heals the wound of Adam and they walk happily out of the prison of religion at the end of the poem.

In addition to the major ecologists who claim that “Christianity is at the roots of our ecological crisis” (White 14), since it fosters a conception of man as distinct from the other creatures on earth due to his rationality, Hughes, in his poem, also blames religion for causing disintegration in human personality, dragging him into perpetual misery and pain. Thus, Hughes challenges the authority of Christian religion in determining and shaping the human identity as something that contradicts his own nature (White 14). As a result, it can be argued that Hughes not only connects man to his natural environment in his poems, but also tries to restore human ecology by reconnecting his soul and body to complete the whole of his existence. The rationality and the soul of human beings are not the characteristics which distinguish them from other creatures, because Hughes depicts his animals as having the capacity to feel and think. For instance, the poem “Little Whale Song” emphasises the unique individuality of the whale who has the capacity to think and feel.

The persona of the poem admires the whale’s ability to enter into intimate participation with his environment and embody the whole ecosystem in his own existence. Above all, Hughes gives expression to the whales, presenting them as speaking subjects who try to understand their ecological integration with the environment, and in this way the poet disrupts the anthropocentric assumptions concerning animals and the environment:

What do they think of themselves
 With their global brains-
 The tide-power voltage illumination
 Of those brains? Their X-ray all dimension. (1-4)

Bringing ecology and literature together, Hughes in this poem draws attention to the whales as complicated organisms that “make sense of the world not through their eyes but through the sounds in the water” (Lilley 156). The poem starts with making observations about the whales’ perception of the world through the wave of the sounds in the sea and continues with exploring further details about the communication skills of the whales. The communal relationship of whales with their environment makes the persona identify them with the ecosystem itself, since he sees the whole natural world in whales as components of the whole of the natural

ecosystem. Eventually, the persona can identify himself with these whales so that he begins to be able to hear their speaking and thus, manages to understand them:

‘We are beautiful. We stir
Our self-colour in the pot of colours
Which is the world. At each
Tail-stroke we deepen
Our being into the world’s lit substance,
And our joy into the world’s
Spinning bliss, and our peace
Into the world’s floating, plumed peace.’ (12-19)

Nature’s ability to think and apprehend the physical world in this poem can be considered as an ecological proof that *Homo sapiens* are not the privileged creatures who have the capacity to use language, to think rationally, and to feel emotion. There are other species much more complicated than the *Homo sapiens* living in nature which show the variety and diversity of life in the natural ecosystem which is beyond human understanding. They all have the capacity to communicate and express themselves in different terms from each other. Thus, human beings have no right to ascribe themselves as the sole moral subjects to have the authority to control and dominate the other creatures of nature. In this manner, the poem deconstructs the anthropocentric view that the nonhuman world exists merely to serve human needs, and replaces it with the ecocentric thought that all the living and the nonliving inhabitants of nature have their own inherent value whether they appeal to the benefit of human beings or not.

Wolfwatching includes varieties of poems to demonstrate the coherence of the operation of the dynamically interconnected ecosystem. The first poem of the volume “Sparrow Hawk” is a poem which demonstrates the maintenance of the ecosystem on a different scale. The poem analyses the relationship between the predator and the prey to explore their integration to the ecosystem. The poem’s concentration is on the sparrow hawk, a different species of hawk which feeds on the smaller birds:

Through your mulling gaze over haphazard earth
The sun’s cooled carbon wing
Whets the eyebeam.
Those eyes in their helmet

Still wired direct
 To the nuclear core-they alone
 Laser the lark-shape hole
 In the lark's song. (3-10)

The poem illustrates the hawk's ability to concentrate on his prey with his eyes. The hawk is generally known to be a sharp-sighted animal which can focus on his prey even from a remote distance. Hence, the poem brings forth the hawk's eyes as an important instrument in capturing of his preys. The quoted lines associate the eyes of the hawk with the sun, create an image of the eye as the sun's cooled carbon wing. The sharp-sightedness of the hawk is emphasised in the poem with an imagery that connoted the eyes of the hawk with a separated part of the sun, which is mutated and cooled. For this reason, it has the ability to look directly at the sun, as it is called in the poem as the nuclear core, without getting disturbed by the beams. In its demonstration of the working of the ecosystem, the poem constructs an interdependent relationship between, the sun, the hawk, and the lark. The poem deduces the idea that nature establishes its own balance of the ecosystem which depends on the predatory and prey relationship between the living organisms. However, it is not only the strong and predatory animals which are elevated and appreciated in this volume. *Wolfwatching* begins with an emphasis on the hawk's hunting of a lark in "Sparrow Hawk" and concludes with a poem dealing with the peaceful relationship between animals in "A Dove". The poem reveals some of the special features of the doves:

Temple-dancers, possessed, and steered
 By solemn powers
 Through insane, stately convulsions.
 Porpoises
 Of dove-lust and blood splendour
 With arch
 And plungings, and spray-slow explosions. (8-14)

Although the title of the poem is "A Dove", doves live in couples and they are most of the time engaged in love making. Unlike the sparrow hawk, doves are peaceful animals which live together as a community. The poem records the doves' contentment with their life style; singing songs and making love to each other in

complete isolation from the predatory relationships of other animals. Similar to a group of tribal people who make a ritual dance in a state of trance as a form of worship, the doves are hypnotised by love which keeps them away from any kind of anxiety. For this reason, the poem depicts them as temple dancers who are in a trance of happiness, possessed by a holy power which leads them to be in a perpetual state of ecstasy and pleasure of life. In this way, the poem proves that the continual struggle of the predator and prey to remain alive is not the only and ultimate characteristic which preserves the balance and integrity of the ecosystem. The idea of love also, is considered to be a determining element in keeping the health of the natural ecosystem.

In conclusion, beginning with the poems about human beings' exploration of the natural world in the *Remains of Elmet* which emphasises man's relationship to the earth and his rootedness to the place in which he lives, Hughes gradually develops his preoccupation with the human connectedness to the natural world and continues to investigate the ecological idea of interdependence with a greater intensity in the *River*. In this volume of poems, Hughes constructs a kinship and integration of human beings not only with the earth but also with the rivers and the fish living in these rivers, and further illustrates this connection by exploring the Indian tribes' conception of the natural world. In his last book *Wolfwatching*, Hughes expands his analysis of human relationship with his environment to encompass the interconnectedness of human ecology in the way that human beings themselves constitute an ecological system of interconnectedness in their personality which is composed of mind and body the integrity of which should be preserved to provide the health of the human organisms. As a whole, it can be claimed that Hughes's later poetry concentrates upon the construction of a bridge between human beings and nature, and in this way affirms the ecocritical premise that everything is connected to each other.

CONCLUSION

Beginning his literary career with the publication of *The Hawk in the Rain* in 1957, Ted Hughes pays special attention to nature and elements of nature in his poems. In his first period of writing, Hughes is preoccupied with the destructive power of nature. The relationship between the predator and the prey as a prevailing law of existence in nature constitutes an important influence in shaping Hughes's understanding of life in general. In the developmental stages of his poetic career, Hughes's poetry canalised into a new direction to form mythologically-oriented poems in his second period. *Crow* (1970) is the most significant book of Hughes's second period in terms of its concentration on mythological understanding of the world confronted by the Christian religion and its dogmatic ideas which shape the worldview of the Western societies. The publication of the *Remains of Elmet* in 1979, marks itself as the turning point of Hughes's literary career. Beginning with *Remains of Elmet*, Hughes directed his poems toward the newly arising problem of environmental issues which occupy the social and the political arena of the contemporary societies all over the world.

To invigorate the hypothesis that Hughes's later poetry is motivated toward the construction of ecological consciousness in order to prevent the destruction of the natural environment, Hughes's representation of nature and his perception of both the living and nonliving inhabitants of nature are investigated in terms of their coherence and responsiveness to the analysis of ecocriticism. The study has demonstrated the evolution of ecocritical thought beginning from its developmental stages to the establishment of fundamental principles.

Ecocriticism, which appeared as the response of literature to the increasing problems of environmental destruction in the 20th century, perceives literature as a significant medium in building an environmental consciousness. Ecocriticism has brought the attention of critical studies to the exploration of human relationship with

scrutiny, ecocriticism overthrows the stereotypes constructed upon nature and questions the human exploitation of nature. Ecology provides scientific evidence for ecocriticism to prove the interconnectedness of every organism and establishes the view of human beings as one of the species who have no superiority to the other organisms.

With the aim of changing the dualistic perception of people which causes the creation of the opposition between man and nature, ecocriticism establishes a holistic view of nature. In connection to the holistic view of nature, ecocriticism replaces the anthropocentric view, which approaches nature as a commodity to be consumed by human beings, with the ecocentric view which values nature in terms of its intrinsic worth. Ecocriticism not only works for the establishment of the scientific view of nature seen as a living organism, but also for the spiritual value of nature. Ecocriticism asserts that literature has an important duty in maintaining the ecological identity. The primary requirement of a literary text for ecocritical thought is the necessity of building environmental consciousness. Fostering the establishment of environmentally conscious literature, ecocriticism testifies to the recognition of the efficiency of literature in shaping people's perception of nature.

Within the structure of the major ecocritical principles, the applicability of Ted Hughes's poetry to the analysis of ecocritical theory is manifested in the first chapter through a careful study of specific poems in *Remains of Elmet* (1979), *River* (1983), and *Wolfwatching* (1989) which belong to Hughes's later poetic career. The *Remains of Elmet* is preoccupied with the distortion of natural environment in Calder Valley, famous for its natural beauty with the growing number of factories and mines which show the repaid process of industrialisation which captivates the earth. Acid rain and its poisonous influence on the disintegration of the ecosystem is another crucial environmental problem which is introduced in the *Remains of Elmet* and further developed in *River* which is preoccupied with the pollution of rivers due to the acid poisoning and waste disposal of industrial activity. The poet demonstrates the fact that the dangerous results of acid poisoning in the extinction of salmon fish is extended to incorporate the poisoning of human beings as well. Hughes's sensitivity to the extinction of species is reinforced in his last volume of poetry, *Wolfwatching* which explores the relationship between man and animals in nature. Depicting animals as

self-conscious individuals with the capacity to feel emotion like love and pain *Wolfwatching* implements the ecocentric perspective of the world perceived through the eyes of animals.

As can be revealed from the close analysis of Ted Hughes's poetry, Ted Hughes not only develops sensitivity to the environmental problems of pollution, extinction of species and the use of chemicals which are dealt with in his poems, but also he uses poetry as a medium to construct environmental awareness. Apart from the poet's sensitivity to the environmental problems, it can be claimed that in his use of literature to deduce the ecologically responsible behaviour, Hughes becomes the practitioner of ecocritical premises.

The ecocritical reading of Hughes's poetry reveals that Hughes, in this later period of writing draws attention to the global environmental problems threatening the world. With his emphasis on the problems of pollution, extinction of species and the use of chemicals, Hughes deliberately puts forth the environmental issues as the social and the political problem of the contemporary societies and thus confirms the ecological assumption that a literary text should construct an awareness for the urgency of the precautions against the environmental problems.

Furthermore, the investigation of Hughes's poetry in the light of the ecocritical principle of interconnectedness of everything in the second chapter has revealed that Hughes depicts every element of nature as an interdependent part of the whole of the universe which sustains the life flourishing upon it. Hughes's imposition of the idea that the destruction of the physical world will ultimately lead to the destruction of human species along with all the other species of the earth community have been very clearly demonstrated after an ecocritical study of Hughes's poetry. It has also been demonstrated that there is an overt ecological message in Hughes's poems and he traces the roots of environmental disaster to the establishment of anthropocentric thought. Anthropocentric thought is the major reason for the human exploitation of nature. Hughes sees religion as the primary reason for the establishment of anthropocentric thought. It is religion for Hughes, which distinguishes man as the only privileged species which has power over nature. Encouraging man to see himself apart from nature, religion fosters the exploitation of nature. It legitimises the brutal

treatment of nature and enables the consumption of the natural resources, the results of which lead to the annihilation of the world and all the inhabitants of it without the exclusion of human species. Mythic understanding of nature replaces the anthropocentric thought in Hughes' poems, which emphasise the notion of nature which is sacred, and whose existence and preservation is an ultimate necessity for the continuation of life on earth. Contemporary society's pursuit of material benefit from the earth is confronted by the sacred understanding of nature.

Hughes overthrows the false assumption that every part of the universe has its own existence separate from the other parts and establishes the ecological thought that human beings must see themselves as part of a broader whole which encompasses everything that lives in this universe. The ecological perspective of the universe with its emphasis on organic, holistic, continual and developmental view of nature is thought to have ideological impact in leading people to resist the fragmentation in their comprehension of the world. To emphasise the connectedness of human beings to their natural environment, Hughes explicitly shows the consequences of this separation and claims that the destruction of the physical world will ultimately lead to the destruction of human species along with all the other species of the earth community.

In conclusion an ecocritical reading of Ted Hughes's later poetry has illuminated major ecological issues invested in his poems. Detailed analysis of these ecological issues like the extinction of species and the problem of pollution has demonstrated Hughes's ecological understanding of nature according to which the integrity and the diversity of life are the necessary requirement for the preservation of the balance of the ecosystem. Consigning nature as an inseparable part of human life, Hughes's ecological conception of nature enables him to view nature as a life sustaining power rather than an instrument of aesthetic concern in servitude of human beings.

END NOTES

¹ The term ecosystem suggests a holistic conception of the earth which is formed by its component elements; both the living and the nonliving parts of nature such as air, waters, plants, animals, human beings, and the rivers. The interaction between these different entities constitutes the formation of the ecosystem, the balance of which should be preserved for the continuation of the life on earth.

² Ecology as a term is first defined by the German zoologist Ernst Haeckel as the total relations of animals with their organic environment (Birx 9). He is also a philosopher who is influenced by the evolution theory of Darwin. He made an important contribution to ecology with his definition of anthropocentrism as opposed to ecocentrism, which constitutes the major preoccupation of the science of ecology. Anthropocentrism for Haeckel is a “dogma which culminates in the idea that man is preordained center and aim of all terrestrial life” (12).

³ Named after the Greek goddess Gaia, James Lovelock’s Gaia hypothesis states that the biosphere is a self-regulating system, and a single organism. The Gaia theory looks at the whole earth from the outside, and sees it as a living entity (Lovelock xii). Gaia as living earth is more than the sum of its parts. The living matter, air, ocean, and land surface form a complex system and operate as a single organism. The continuity of life on earth, according to the Gaia hypothesis, depends on the presence of the different organisms as its inhabitants. It presents a new perspective of the universe whose survival is maintained by the interactions between the animate and inanimate parts of the planet.

⁴ The general characteristics of classical physics imply a certain Cartesian structure about the notion of universal and absolute order of time, independent of space. The main feature of this old physics is the analysability of everything into separate parts.

multidimensional wholeness" rather than starting from the scrutiny of parts (Merchant 94), because, the universe is "an undivided wholeness in flowing movement" in which all parts of the universe unite to form a totality (Bohm 11).

To stress the unbroken wholeness of the universe, Bohm introduces the term "implicate order" which is defined as the unbroken movements of electromagnetic waves (151). These electromagnetic waves, carried by "the holomovement" are in a constant state of continuum (151). From this theory Bohm draws the conclusion that even the smallest particles in the world, enfold the whole, and thus, intrinsically are related to the totality from which they are derived. Bohm, furthermore, states that:

Indeed, the attempt to live according to the notion that the fragments are really separate is, in essence, what has led to the growing series of extremely urgent crises that is confronting us today. This way of life has brought about pollution, destruction of the balance of nature, overpopulation, world-wide economic and political disorder, and the creation of an overall environment that is neither physically nor mentally healthy for most of the people who have to live within it. (2)

For Bohm, man's separating himself from his environment leads to wide range destructive results for the future of the universe. It is the holistic principle of life that directs the environment in which soil, water, air and ocean come together to form the universe.

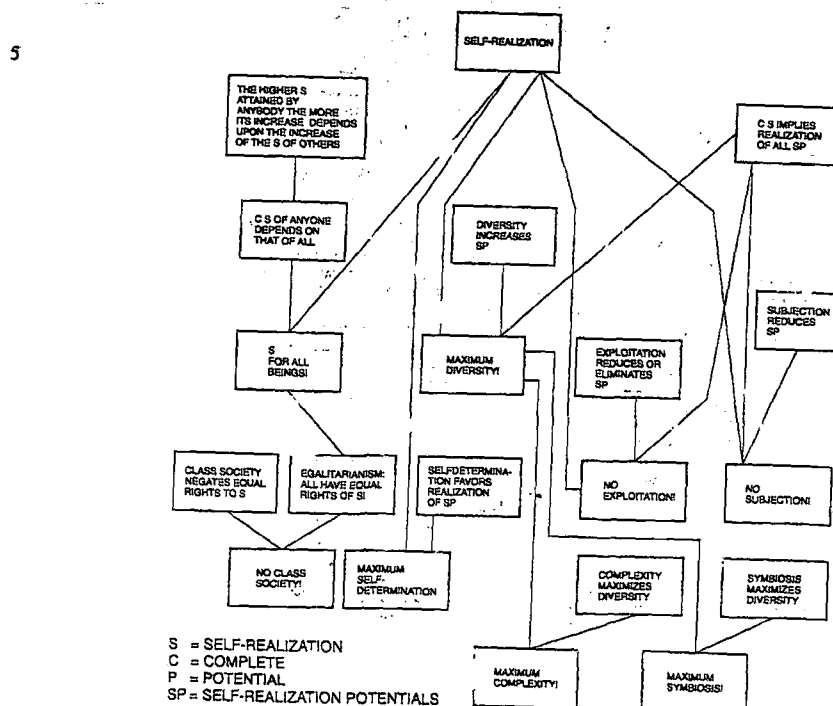


Figure 1: The diagram of Self-realisation (Naess 1993: 419)

The diagram which is drawn by Arne Naess to explicate interrelated system of Self-realisation emphasizes the recognition of the ultimate necessity of the existence and the participation of the integral parts of the whole ecosystem. He defines a network of relationships between the different organisms of earth and constructs physical and spiritual bond between them.



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