

**REPUPLIC OF TURKEY
VAN YÜZÜNCÜ YIL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**AN INVESTIGATION OF AN URBAN NOVEL FROM AN
ECOCRITICAL VIEW: *IF NOBODY SPEAKS OF REMARKABLE
THINGS* BY JON MCGREGOR**

MASTER'S THESIS

PREPARED BY



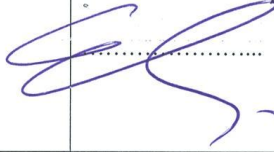

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Sedat TAŞIN tarafından hazırlanan "An Investigation of an Urban Novel from an Ecocritical View: <i>If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things</i> by Jon McGregor" adlı tez çalışması aşağıdaki jüri tarafından OY BİRLİĞİ / OY ÇOKLUĞU ile Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalında YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ olarak kabul edilmiştir.	
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Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü **Tez Yazım Kurallarına uygun olarak hazırladığım bu tez çalışmada;**

- Tez içinde sunduğum verileri, bilgileri ve dokümanları akademik ve etik kurallar çerçevesinde elde ettiğimi,
- Tüm bilgi, belge, değerlendirme ve sonuçları bilimsel etik ve ahlak kurallarına uygun olarak sunduğumu,
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**KENTSEL BİR ROMANIN EKOELEŞTİREL BİR BAKIŞ AÇISIYLA
İNCELENMESİ: JON MCGREGOR'IN IF NOBODY SPEAKS OF
REMARKABLE THINGS ROMANI**

ÖZET

Günümüze kadar edebiyat alanında yaygın olarak yer bulan doğa temasının, çağdaş romanlarda göz ardı edildiği düşünülür. Çağdaş yazarlar, çalışmalarını şehir, kültür, karakter gelişimi ve metinsellik üzerine kurma eğilimlerinden dolayı ve böylece dikkatleri doğal dünyanın dışına çekerek bir nevi doğal olandan yabancılaşmaya neden oldukları gerekçesiyle eleştirilirler. Bu sebeple, ana akım ekoeleştiri gelişimini doğa yazımı ve pastoralizm gibi alanlar üzerinden sürdürürken, doğa ile kültürün bulunduğu kentsel ekolojiler üzerine çalışmalar, insan dışı yaşam ile doğrudan bir bağlantıları olmadıkları gerekçesiyle oldukça azdır. Bu algıya karşı bir duruş sergileme niyetiyle, kent temelli edebiyatın aynı zamanda doğa-insan ilişkileriyle ilgili anlayış kazandırabileceği ve ekoeleştiriye dar çerçevesini genişleterek katkıda bulunabileceği hipotezi üzerinden savımı geliştiriyorum. Kentsel ve kurgusal çevrelerdeki doğanın varlığını kanıtlamak amacıyla, çoğunlukla doğa odaklı metinlerle ilgilenen ekoeleştiri alanındaki geleneksel doğa analizinin dışına çıkan bir yaklaşım benimsiyorum. Bahsettiğim ekoeleştirel okuma perspektifimi, ilk bakışta insan-dışı doğa ile hiçbir ilişkisi olmadığı izlenimi veren Jon McGregor'ın ilk romanı olan If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things romanının analizinde kullanacağım. Okuma perspektifimizi değiştirdiğimiz takdirde, romanın ister düalist isterse düalist olmayan insan-doğa ilişkileriyle ilgili betimlemeler içerdiği görülür. Bu tezin amacı, doğa çalışmanın çoğunda marjinal olsa bile, neyi ve nasıl okuduğunuza bağlı olarak, kent odaklı kurgusal bir romanın ekoeleştirel analiz bağlamında birçok olanak sunduğunu ortaya koymaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler : Ekoeleştiri, Doğa, Kültür, Roman, Ekoloji

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MCGREGOR**

ABSTRACT

Nature, which has been used as a common theme in world literature to the present day, is considered to be largely neglected in contemporary novels. Contemporary writers are criticized for their tendency to build their works on urban, culture, character development and textuality and thus drawing attention away from the natural world and causing a kind of alienation from the natural. For this reason, while the development of main stream ecocriticism continues on subjects like nature writing and pastoralism, the surveys of urban ecologies where culture and nature meet have been sparse on the grounds that they have no immediate connection with non-human life. With the intent of maintaining a stance against this perception, I develop my argument on the hypothesis that urban-based literature may as well give insights about the human-nature relations and contribute to ecocriticism in terms of extending its narrow canon. To demonstrate the presence of nature in urban fictional environments, I adopt an approach that goes beyond the traditional analysis of nature within the field ecocriticism which is mostly concerned with nature-oriented texts. I apply this ecocritical reading perspective to my analysis of Jon McGregor's first novel *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* which, at first sight, gives the impression of having no concerns about non-human environment. With a critical shift in reading perspective, the novel appears to include representations of nature and human relations that are either dualistic or naturalcultural. The purpose of this thesis is to reveal that even if nature is marginal for much of the work; an urban-based fictional novel can also offer numerous possibilities for an ecocritical reading.

Key Words : Ecocriticism, Nature, Culture, Novel, Ecology
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INTRODUCTION

Once ignored in favour of the topics such as race, class and gender until the end of the twentieth century, ecocriticism that surveys the relationship between literature and the earth's environment from an interdisciplinary point of view has recently become one of the most frequented fields of literary world. Journals, articles and books dedicated to this field of study have steadily increased. The concept of nature, which Raymond Williams defines "as the most complex word in the language", as well as providing the field to be examined from different angles has caused bifurcations among the scholars (1976: 216). One of these divergences and perhaps the most explosive one has developed around urban ecocriticism. While the development of main stream ecocriticism has continued on subjects like nature writing, pastoralism and wide open spaces, the surveys of urban ecologies where culture and nature meet have been sparse. With the attempts to demonstrate that urban centres pose a challenge to ecocriticism, the number of criticisms engaged with urban ecology has mushroomed. The culture oriented urban ecocriticism has focused their intention on the ignorance of main stream ecocriticism that nature has undergone a transformation through political and historical processes and the genres such as nature writing and pastoral are inadequate to analyse the complex interactions between culture and nature that shape urban environments. The point is that although urban novels like *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* by Jon McGregor may not indeed include wilderness, wild open spaces or rural spaces, this doesn't necessarily mean that it cannot be read with an ecocritical approach.

My hypothesis in this thesis is that even a substantially anthropocentric and textual urban-based fictional novel can give insights about and be concerned with the natural world. My ecocritical approach places nature and culture in the centre of the reading. I adopt a methodology to investigate the distributions of roles between cultural and natural components which are inseparable co-conspirators of urban environments. Within this context, my thesis moves beyond the traditional framework of nature-oriented genres and undertakes an ecocritical approach to analyse McGregor's urban-based fiction unlike the vast majority of main stream ecocriticism.

I present a comprehensive analysis in the first chapter, which consists of five sub-headings, to establish a foundation for the review of the novel. First, I seek to represent the developing/changing perception of nature from medieval periods until modern times. Special attention is paid to the transformation of nature from a sublime realm to a mechanistic one. Second, I seek to analyse the Romantic appreciations of nature through the well-known works of the period. This section embraces the attempts to turn back to a state of nature as a reaction to Western's mechanistic attitudes towards nature and examines the characteristics attributed to nature in the most known nature-oriented works of Romantic Period. Third, I seek to present an extensive survey of contemporary discussions over nature including Environmentalism, Deep Ecology and Social Ecology and the ways these theoretical approaches are distinguished from each other. Fourth, I seek to present the reasons behind the nature-culture dualism and the suggestions of the scholars to eliminate the dilemma. This section also surveys the discussions about why urban environments cannot be regarded as anti-nature and how these built environments embodies cultural and natural elements simultaneously. And lastly, I seek to provide an interpretation of urban ecology within the framework of ecocriticism to pave way for the ecocritical reading of McGregor's novel.

My discussion in the Second Chapter focuses on the representations of nature and the different aspects of the relationship between nature and culture in *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things*. The Second Chapter consists of two sub-headings which are Dualistic Representations and NaturalCultural Representations. The first section examines the depictions of nature and culture as two opposite poles. In this chapter where roles changes constantly, either rebellious nature challenges and achieves superiority over culture in a way to serve the Romantic appreciation of nature, or culture becomes the dominant power disregarding the presence and intrinsic value of nature collaterally with the mechanistic worldview of Enlightenment and Western philosophy. The second section includes a comprehensive analyse of multidimensional encounters of natural and cultural components in which humans and non-humans are equally participants and actors in establishing a mutual urban ecology and contributing to biodiversity.

1. A THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL SURVEY OF HUMAN-NATURE RELATION

1.1. Developing Perception of Nature in Western Culture

Man's perspective on the notion of nature has changed dramatically from the beginning of the Middle Ages to the present. Transition from hunter-gathering to the settled life form, a shift from polytheistic pagan beliefs to celestial religions, scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, industrial revolution of the eighteenth century and agricultural developments are accepted as the prominent causes of our environmental fate. Although, the exact time when human-induced change has given its start is unknown, mapping of the world by cartographers and geographical discoveries have converted the mystical perception of the globe into an observable, modifiable and ultimately masterable world. Domestication of animals and the use of a more complicated version of slingshots equipped with a vertical knife instead of the primitive and wholly of wooden one in agriculture were in some way the starting point of man-nature dualism. Man's search to know the order of nature and to intervene in it turned the nature from a mystical subject into a mechanical object and ended up with domination of human over nature. As Lynn White Jr. puts forward: "Man's relation to the soil was profoundly changed. Formerly man had been part of nature; now he was the exploiter of nature" (1996:8). The integrity of nature became vulnerable to the increasing power of humans. Within this context, the nature that was once conceptualized as divine and sublime all of a sudden became rebellious against manpower developed with mind and empirical science.

What lies under the man-nature dualism was the distinction between nature and God. Without this distinction, it would be sin for humans to intervene in nature. Because it was believed that nature was in a divine order and hierarchy in which God was the absolute authority, nature was his deputy or representative and then came humans and other beasts respectively. This sacred feature, attributed to nature during the medieval period, was the greatest obstacle to human discovery of nature and his surroundings. People were passive in nature and didn't have the luxury of questioning their position. Man's position in the divine order was associated with a

kind of fatalism. And, understanding the world and his place in nature would only be possible with a courageous attempt to explore his relationship with God or gods. This superior-subordinate relationship between man and nature would later contradict with the modern understanding of the world and evolve in the opposite way after the expansion of rationalist movement during the seventeenth century.

It wasn't until the increasing emphasis on reason that humans treated their environment with a confidence. While some philosophers like Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and Rene Descartes (1596-1650) who argued that with reason human can achieve a total understanding of nature and master over it, some other philosophers like Thomas Burnet (1635-1715), affected by the writings of Aristotle, drew attention to a divinely ordered nature as he explains "mountain ranges" in his *Sacred Theory of the Earth* (1684) "as being the physical outcome of God's displeasure with mankind" (Garrard,2004:63). Lynn White Jr. argued that people's relationship with their environment associate with their destiny which appears in the religious beliefs: "Human ecology is deeply conditioned by beliefs about our nature and destiny, that is, by religion" (1996:9). The new materialistic view that perceived the nature like a machine which man can shape and have a mastery over it contradicted with the traditional belief that there is a hierarchy and the world is divinely managed by God. The break point in comprehension of nature from an active and divine subject to a passive and mechanical object was emphasized by Carolyn Merchant. She dwells on how nature's representation shifted from an organic whole to manageable and controllable: "the image of an organic cosmos with a living female earth at its centre gave way to a mechanistic world view in which nature was reconstructed as dead and passive, to be dominated and controlled by humans" (1983:16). Small-scale agricultural activities with primitive tools can be exemplified for this critical shift.

Later, with the emergence of the capitalist economy, the increase in the use of money as a trading medium occurred. Regarding this, the organic and renewable basics of the medieval economy such as wood, water and wind were replaced by non-organic and non-renewable energy sources such as coal, iron and copper. Extraction and refining of these items ultimately resulted in depletion of forests and erosion. After the discovery of America in 1492, Europeans' relations with the new

continent gradually increased and the metal industry doubled. Consequently, the organic cosmos view, which continued until 1500, was replaced by a mechanical cosmos view until 1700.

The philosophical assertions of those known as fathers of modern science like Francis Bacon, William Harvey, Rene Descartes, Thomas Hobbes and contributions from scientists such as Galileo, Sir Isaac Newton, Johannes Kepler, Gerard Mercator and Columbus helped us to recognize the world physically and laid the foundations of this change. Columbus' exploration of America not only pushed people to the exploration of new undiscovered areas, but also instilled the confidence that the world wasn't a place to be feared, but a place that was waiting to be discovered. Mercator produced a "world map which would appear recognizably 'modern' to any student of geography today" (Brotton, 1998: 169). For expressing the location of a place, known today as navigation, latitude and longitude were required. Mercator's projection had both latitude and longitude. His discovery made great contributions to travellers and sailors exploring the world. In the field of astrology, Galileo and Kepler began to explore not only the world but the whole solar system and the unknowns of the planet. Galileo developed a thirty-fold zoom microscope. Besides, the invention of the steam engine was recorded as a ground-breaking development in the industry. Sir Isaac Newton's laws of mechanics and the principle of gravitation explained the order of nature through a mechanized world view. In his 1687 *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, he argued that, sometimes with direct intervention but mostly through nature laws, the order of nature was the work of God who created the universe. For him, it was possible for God to intervene in the functioning of the mechanical system. To compare, as "human-created machines were made to act in accordance with the goals of their operators, the physical world was similarly theorised as a complicated mechanism that was operated from outside by God" (White, 2007: 11). In addition to the industrial developments and scientific discoveries, the meeting of the mind with science placed man in the centre of the world, unlike the medieval periods when man was in the final ranks of the taxonomy where God was the absolute monarchy. New inventions and developed machines were the manifestations of the dominance of modernity over nature. As God created the world and managed it, men realized his capacity to create and control his

environment. Merchant associates humanity's control over nature with the developing of modern science as follows:

Modern science depends on a structural reality that allows for the possibility of control whenever phenomena are predictable, regular, and subject to natural laws. The assumption of the order of nature is fundamental to the concept of power over nature, and both are integral components of the modern scientific worldview. (2010: 10).

The assumption that nature had an order meant that it could be explained by mathematics and science. In addition to this, every phenomena that human mind can reach was subject to be predicted, managed and eventually controlled. With the help of technology and science, the destruction of nature brought a new dimension to the concept of private property. The growing capitalism led to the emergence of an egocentric approach, which led to the rapid manipulation of nature. With the rise of competition, the newly emerging bourgeoisie began to shape nature as they wanted in order to prosper individually.

It is no coincidence that technology and science became the practical applications of knowledge and reason at a time when Christianity outclassed the pagan beliefs and began to spread. Because, Christianity is generally supposed to be one of the most anthropocentric religions ever. The idea that nature was created in the image of God in pagan beliefs was replaced by the idea that man was the image of God on earth. Before, nature was thought to be animistic because of the mystical features attributed to, but now, man was indifferent to the feelings of the nature. Lynn White Jr. argued that "the spirits in natural objects, which formerly had protected nature from man, evaporated. Man's effective monopoly on spirit in this world was confirmed, and the old inhibitions to the exploitation of nature crumbled" (1996: 10). Humanity was no more a part of nature but the only authority sent by God to shape it for his own benefit.

From the 16th century onwards, recovery narratives dealing with the superiority of humanity began to be written. It was believed that before the fall of Adam and Eve from Eden, they had been superior to other creatures but after, they lost their position. English philosopher Francis Bacon (1561-1626) is accepted as the pioneer of these recovery narratives. According to him, it was a historical task for the

humanity to regain the prestige lost by the fall of Adam and Eve from Eden. And, science and knowledge were of great importance for this accomplishment. He identified the dominion of men over nature as a “work truly divine”. In the light of the recovery he dreamed, he writes:

Man by the Fall, fell at the same time from his state of innocence and from his dominion over creation. Both of these losses can in this life be in some part repaired; the former by religion and faith, the latter by arts and science (Bacon, as cited in Spedding et al, 1870: 114-115).

While Bacon relied on religion and faith to prove the innocency, arts and science were the key elements to regain the domination over nature. Robert James Berry describes the approach of modernity to science and technology in his book *Environmental Stewardship*: “Appearing probably for the first time, this is the modern vision of the scientific and technological enterprise: dedicated to the good of humanity by acquiring power over nature and using it to liberate humanity from all the ills of the human condition”(2006:38). Bacon's assumptions reveal that nature has no intrinsic value. Nature was purely for the benefit of mankind, and it was not only the right, but also the duty of mankind to use nature as he wished.

Another philosopher who viewed the earth as a garden of Eden waiting to be ordered was John Locke (1632-1704). In his the *Second Treatise of Government*, Locke criticizes the pre-modern belief that kings took over the task of dominating nature from God and asserts that dominion over nature was equally the duty of all humanity given by God. He believed that it was God's order to man to transform the earth from an unordered nature to a civilized society. This transformation required labor and property. Emphasizing on the relation between labor and property, he writes: “That was his property which could not be taken from him wherever he had fixed it. And hence subduing or cultivating the earth, and having dominion, we see are joined together. The one gave title to the other” (1948:108). Locke, referring to the following teaching in the Bible, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground” (Genesis: 1:28), explains that humanity has the right to establish a superior position on other living things: “Man's *Property* in the Creatures was founded upon the right he had, to make use of those things, that

were necessary or useful to his Being” (1967: 48). The two elements that were necessary to preserve the life and existence of humanity by fulfilling God's commandment were desire and reason; in Locke's philosophy, the former is illustrated as “having planted in man as principle of action by God himself; and the latter is illustrated as “the voice of God in him”(1967:147). Here, it is possible to talk about two different natures. The first is the nature that has become a civilized society through human mind and labour, and the second is wild nature that has not yet been touched by humanity. It is implied that the wilderness that is considered out of civilized society is a nullity unless it is mixed by human labour. Without human intervene, the untouched nature has no value and by transforming it into property only through human reason and labour, nature will have value.

The mechanistic world view that conceptualized the physical world as a clock and that human mind and labour were needed for it to work changed the perception of human about nature. This idea, which states that human mind is the greatest feature that distinguishes man from other non-human nature, emphasizes that nature is incomplete, because reason is the key element it lacks. And, this lack of nature was put forward as a just cause for the domination of man over nature. Val Plumwood, in her well-known eco critical book *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*, states that when the historical process is concerned, the human nature dilemma goes through three stages:

The first step in the evolution of human/nature dualism, is the construction of the normative (the best or ideal) human identity as mind or reason, excluding or inferiorising the whole rich range of other human and non-human characteristics or construing them as inessential. The construction of mind or reason in terms exclusive of and oppositional to nature is the second step. The construction of nature itself as mindless is the third step, one which both reinforces the opposition and constructs nature as ineluctably alien, disposing of an important area of continuity and overlap between humans and animals and non-human nature. (1993: 107).

According to Plumwood, as the first step of human nature dualism, the ability to use his mind was defined as the greatest attribute of man. Secondly, this ability of man inevitably became an oppositional force against nature. And finally, nature was interpreted as mindless, which caused man to become alienated from nature and become no longer a part of nature.

The third stage in Plumwood's dissertation, in which nature is illustrated as mindless, is generally associated with Rene Descartes, who is also the first name that comes to mind when the human nature dualism comes into question. Descartes rejected the mystical and divine features attributed to nature in the medieval period and states that there is nothing that cannot be explained in nature by human mind:

There exist no occult forces in stones or plants. There are no amazing or marvellous sympathies or antipathies; in fact there exists nothing in the whole of nature which cannot be explained in terms of purely corporeal causes totally devoid of mind and thought (Descartes, cited in Plumwood, 1993:104).

In the Cartesian thought, the whole nature is nullified. The nature is conceptualized as totally corporeal and inanimate. The non-nature world is illustrated as passive and consisting of no magical features. Descartes, who believed in power of science and knowledge thought that there is nothing that cannot be explained in nature with science and sufficient knowledge and explained that human beings could establish absolute dominion over nature. His dream of power and mastery over nature is explicit in his following dissertation:

It is possible to reach knowledge that will be of much utility in this life; and instead of the speculative philosophy which is now taught in the schools we can find a practical one, by which, knowing the nature and behaviour of fire, water, air, stars, the heavens, and all the other bodies which surround us we can employ these entities for all the purposes for which they are suited, and so make ourselves masters and possessors of nature (2006: xxvi).

According to Descartes, in addition to basic elements such as fire, water, air in nature, all other components surrounding us existed for one purpose and the reason for the existing of them was to serve humanity. The task of humanity was then to learn the purpose of these elements in our environment by means of knowledge and science and to become the owner of nature. In Cartesian philosophy, human-nature dualism later evolves to mind-nature dualism in which human is associated with mind and the whole nature is matter and corporeal.

In mind-nature dualism, nature is defined as feminine and masculine features are attributed to mind. This dichotomy enables the dominion of masculinity over

anything that defined as non-rational in woman nature. These non-rational subjects are considered outside the civilized society and give the powerful men the right to govern and shape them. Because, while the reason of male represented the culture that shaped the “civilized society”, the non-rational subjects represented the wilderness outside the “civilized society”. With the rise colonization and capitalism, lower classes and slaves formed the “nature” part of mind-nature dichotomy and became vulnerable to the harshness of male civilizers. Maria Mies writes:

The colonies were no longer seen as part of the economy or society, they were lying outside “civilised society”. In the same measure as European conquerors and invaders “penetrated” those “virgin lands”, these lands and their inhabitants were “naturalised”, declared as wild, savage nature waiting to be exploited and tamed by the male civilisers (1986:75).

This process initiated by colonialism and capitalism meant “the survival of the fittest” in the words of Darwin. In the mind-nature dilemma, a hierarchy was created in which the stronger used the weak as the result of “natural selection”. The naturalization of the virgin regions and their settlers by the so-called powerful men was the example of this hierarchy. This naturalization was a conscious attempt because being part of the nature was a sufficient reason to be exploited by the powerful. Francis Galton in his article “Hereditary Talent and Character” laments this hierarchy and writes: “We are living in a sort of intellectual anarchy, for the want of master minds” (Galton, cited in Porter, 1988:134). In this modern mechanistic world view, not only the natural objects but also humans are viewed as machines which Darwin describes as “survival machines”. So, in addition to animals, plants or anything in the nature, lower humans are also seen as the instruments for the satisfaction of the needs of the intellectual and powerful other human beings. Controlling these machines required to have scientific and technological knowledge.

Another feature of mind-body dualism is that just like nature, animals aren’t considered as mindful bodies. In Cartesian philosophy, mind is the synonym of soul, therefore; nature and non-human creatures doesn’t exhibit any features of soul, too. This idea, unlike the medieval belief that nature is “full of miracles and packed with symbolic meaning” explains how people became so indifferent in their relations with nature and animals towards the end of the middle ages (Eaton, 1994:15). Descartes

believed that body and soul are independent elements: “On thus coming to know how different the animals are from us, we comprehend so much better the reasons which prove the soul to be of a nature entirely independent of the body” (1952:149). It is emphasized that not all bodily creatures own a soul and that is what makes humans different from animals. Plumwood outlines the mind-body dichotomy: “*Consciousness* now divides the universe completely in a total cleavage between the thinking being and mindless nature, and between the thinking substance and ‘its’ body, which becomes the division between consciousness and clockwork” (1993:116). The contrast made between consciousness and clockwork caused man to be alienated from nature. According to Cartesianism, the central feature of humans to use his mind is what plants, stones, animals etc. lack and thus makes the whole non-human world inferior.

With the victory of Cartesian philosophy then, the perception of nature has completely changed. The perception that the earth is full of secrets and controlled divinely by God or gods was replaced by a controllable and masterable earth perception through science and knowledge. Moreover, while nature was superior to man in the medieval taxonomy, with the development of modernity, humans not only became superior to nature but also human and nature were regarded as two different concepts that could not be evaluated even in the same taxonomy. As a result of alienation, defined as outside of nature, humans became masters and controllers. The non-human world was attributed value only as an instrument to supply human needs. In his *We Have Never Been Modern*, Bruno Latour defines this process as “purification” (1993:10). He suggests that modernity created “two entirely distinct ontological zones: that of human beings on the one hand; that of nonhumans on the other” (1993:11).

The process which resulted in the domination and mastery of human over nature has passed through three stages. Plumwood lists these stages as “justification and preparation”, “invasion and annexation” and “appropriation (instrumentalism) and incorporation (assimilation)” respectively (1993:191). In the first stage, a substructure was set up to reinforce the exploitation of nature. Francis Bacon argued that mankind was superior to nature before the fall of Adam and Eve from Eden and

that it was the right of mankind to get back the lost reputation. He explicitly relayed his belief in religion to prove the innocence of human and in science to subdue the nature again. Exploitation of human nature for human benefit was introduced as “the real business and fortune of human race” (Bacon, cited in Spedding et al, 1870:149) and the first step of man-nature dualism was laid.

In the second stage, the non-human nature was viewed as *terra nullius* by rationalists. John Lock, referring to religion, argued that it was both the duty and right of mankind to transform the nature into a civilized society. The area outside the civilized society was declared as wilderness that was not mixed with human labour and inhabited by human mind. Through human labour and mind, the way for annexation and private ownership of nature was paved and attracted the rising capitalism which ended up with the increasing invasion of nature to derive a profit.

In the third stage, the whole sphere of nature, attributed no intrinsic value, became totally an instrument for human benefit. With the transformation from animate to inanimate and mechanistic quality attributed, the nature was passivated and the ultimate goal of Cartesian thought, the absolute domination of nature, was completed.

1.2. The Reappraisal of Nature in Romantic Period

In response to the scientific rationalism of Enlightenment, Romanticism was born in the second half of the 18th century as an artistic movement that glorified nature. Urbanization, industrialization and population density led to an increase in the longing to return to a state of nature. Regarding this, while Romantic Period artists like William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Henry David Thoreau and John Muir abundantly handled themes like natural beauties and nostalgia in their poems, philosophers of the same period like Friedrich Van Schiller and Jean Jacques Rousseau criticized the doctrines of Enlightenment.

The German philosopher Friedrich Van Schiller who criticized the Enlightenment argued that liberation of humanity didn't bring peace with:

With painful nostalgia we yearn to return as soon as we have begun to experience the pressure of civilisation and hear in the remote lands of art our mother Nature's tender voice. As long as we were the children of nature merely, we enjoyed happiness and perfection; we became free, and lost both. (1985:188).

For Schiller, civilization has taken us so much away from nature that we can only hear the sound of nature in art. In accordance with Schiller, Jean Jacques Rousseau suggested that freedom of mankind paradoxically resulted in enslavement. Jonathan Bates illustrates Rousseau's argument which Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer would later call the *dialectic of Enlightenment*: "We are born free, but we are enchained by a society which we try and fail to transform, so we seek instead to return romantically to the state of nature" (2000:45). Although the efforts of people to change nature caused them to prosper, these efforts prevented men from achieving happiness. Civilized man was not peace and quiet because he was in pursuit of prosperity and the desire to own more than the need was only possible by enslavement of someone else. Arguing that nature is the original home of all mankind, Rousseau voiced another criticism to the doctrines of Enlightenment in terms of private property:

The true founder of civil society was the first man who, having enclosed a piece of land, thought of saying, 'This is mine', and came across people simple enough to believe him. You are lost if you forget that the fruits of the earth belong to all and that the earth itself belongs to no one! (1994:54).

Rousseau identified the civilized society as a fall from nature and, at the same time, accused the emergence of the concept of individual property as the main reason for this fall. Besides, he qualified these people as simple who, without questioning, acquiesced in the privatisation of nature. According to Bate, Rousseau didn't idealize the state of nature as perfect but nevertheless; preferred it to the illnesses in the civilized society:

Rousseau does not idealize the state of nature into a pure golden age. He recognizes that it has its own inequalities: as in the animal world, the fittest survive, while weak infants and the elderly quickly die. But such deaths are from natural causes; Rousseau contrasts them with the physical and psychological illnesses brought about by progress - socially induced stress,

sexually transmitted diseases, the effects of gluttony, alcoholism, and so forth (2000:44).

In addition to these diseases, which Bate described as unnatural, the belief that rural areas were more liveable places for reasons such as air pollution and population density became widespread in the Romantic Period. On the other hand, the wild nature was still regarded as scary and horrifying places that no one would want to go consciously. Being in the wilderness was a sublime experience where man would find himself in the presence of God. Because the wild nature was believed to be the place where the devil was exiled, it was seen as “Satan’s home” (Cronon, 1995:72). Therefore, as it was believed that the devil was struggling with God, the wild areas were the places with the highest probability of encountering either the devil or the God. Because of these supernatural features associated with the wild nature, the feeling of being in the wilderness aroused much more fear than excitement. William Cronon says that by the end of the eighteenth century the wild nature had a different meaning than the present:

To be a wilderness then was to be “deserted,” “savage,” “desolate,” “barren”—in short, a “waste,” the word’s nearest synonym. Its connotations were anything but positive, and the emotion one was most likely to feel in its presence was “bewilderment” or terror (1995:70).

In Christian belief, it is known that the monks went to the wild in order not to be attracted to the charms of the world. Considering that only the monks who represented the Christianity wended their way to wilderness to estrange themselves from social life and because of the demonic and sacred traits of wild nature, it wasn’t even a matter of discussion for an ordinary person to travel to the wilderness.

The Romantic Period depiction of nature was a milestone in the perception of wild nature: the wild nature was not anymore a place where you could face demonic forces, but a place where you could live a supreme experience. As Cronon points out “Satan’s home had become God’s Own Temple” (1995:72). However, this shift in the perception of nature could not prevent it from being a place to be feared. The possibility of God manifesting himself in this vast wilderness was enough for such an experience to arouse anxiety. Another reason for this concern was that, one could understand how worthless he was in the face of the supernatural powers in

wilderness. Edmund Burke defines the feelings of pleasure and displeasure simultaneously awakened at the time of being in wilderness with oxymoronic terms as “delightful horror” (1986:73). According to him, the passion that is created by the great and the sublime in nature is astonishment and in the moment of astonishment, all the related concepts lose their meaning and cause some horror (1986:73-74). From this point of view, it can be said that in the Romantic Period the wild nature was seen as a mixture of the beautiful and the sublime. In wilderness, while man was mesmerized with the beauty of the nature in terms of aesthetics, the presence of the great one caused this feeling to be blended with horror.

It would not be wrong to say that the modern environmentalist movement, whose discourses are mostly based on the protection of the wilderness, is an extension of romanticism (Cronon, 1995:85). However, in the early romantic period, nature had not been destroyed as much as it is today, so it is necessary to note that there are differences between the nature defended by current environmentalists and especially the “nature” in Wordsworth's poems. In the poetry of Wordsworth, nature is portrayed as a respected phenomenon because of its greatness and vastness. Because of God's presence on the top of mountains, waterfall and so on, the characters in the poems of Wordsworth experienced the opposite feelings like “beatitude and horror, being and nothingness” at the same time (Thompson, 1974:3). Being in the presence of the sublime could make someone feel privileged; on the other hand, one could feel that he was worthless in the face of God's might. W.P. Albrecht relates these experiences to religion and observes the early romantic writers:

Early writers on the sublime . . . found that certain natural objects or phenomena . . . suggest the infinite power of God and therefore give rise to the feelings of awe, fear, admiration, astonishment, and devotion associated with the Deity (1977:83).

Although Wordsworth is appreciated as a nature poet and has poems praising pure nature as well, it is obvious that the following abstract from his *Prelude* shows consistency with Albrecht's claims:

A meditation rose on me that night
Upon the lonely mountain when the scene

Had passed away, and it appeared to me
The perfect image of a mighty mind,
Of one that feeds upon infinity,
That is exalted by an under-presence,
The sense of God, or whatso'er is dim
Or vast in its own being ... (1984:580).

Wordsworth's description is no less than a religious experience and it is not surprising that both God is portrayed as on the top of a mountain and the mountain as lonely. Because in the early nature writings, God is found in natural phenomena such as mountain, waterfall, storm that generally symbolize the power of nature. The expression of the mountain as alone means that it is far from the settlements, which is consistent with the Romantic understanding that the wilderness is the most likely place to encounter the God. The fact that the poet portrays himself in the presence of God and claims that the vast nature can be the God himself coincides with the perception of nature in Christianity. At the same time, the author's view of the image of God and his meditation as a result of this can be considered as a mixture of emotions such as fear, awe, astonishment and excitement that Albrecht associates with God in the early Romantic writings on the sublime. In this poem of Wordsworth, being in the nature gives rise to very mixed feelings rather than pleasure and joy and the depiction of supernatural elements rather than natural beauties is a good example of how nature is perceived at that time. In the poems of Henry David Thoreau, who is regarded as one of the most important advocates of nature in Romantic Period as well as Wordsworth, the situation is not very different. Thoreau showed the existence of God on the earth with symbols in his poems. As one of the pioneers of the wilderness tradition, he makes a distinction between pure nature and cities, and just as the other early romantic writers, indicates the existence of divine in nature, emphasizing that the wild nature is both scary and beautiful at the same time:

It is difficult to conceive of a region uninhabited by man. We habitually presume his presence and influence everywhere. And yet we have not seen pure Nature, unless we have seen her thus vast, and drear, and inhuman . . . Nature was here something savage and awful, though beautiful. This was that Earth of which we have heard, made out of Chaos and Old Night (Thoreau, 1988, 94).

On the one hand, Thoreau complains about the invasion of nature by man, while on the other he speaks of the essentials of pure nature. For him, the pure nature is where the humanity is not. And, unless you are pleased with the beauty and get horrified by the vastness which is a combination of pleasure and displeasure, you are not in a real nature. The perception of nature as both intimidating and pleasurable that the early Romantic writers like Wordsworth and Thoreau reflected in their works began to change from the second half of the nineteenth century. In this context, John Muir, one of the outstanding writers of the American pastoral, is considered a true nature writer. In his portrayal of the Yosemite Valley, Muir, unlike Wordsworth and Thoreau, mentions the pure beauties of nature rather than depicting the sublime presence in wilderness and the complex emotions it evokes:

No pain here, no dull empty hours, no fear of the past, no fear of the future. These blessed mountains are so compactly filled with God's beauty, no petty personal hope or experience has room to be. Drinking this champagne water is pure pleasure, so is breathing the living air, and every movement of limbs is pleasure, while the body seems to feel beauty when exposed to it as it feels the campfire or sunshine, entering not by the eyes alone, but equally through all one's flesh like radiant heat, making a passionate ecstatic pleasure glow not explainable (1988:86).

The author does not depict nature as a silhouette or image of God; rather as adorned with the beauty of God, and in this respect, he is distinguished from the early romantic writers. The fact that Muir and others from the late Romantic Period emphasized the pure beauties of nature more than the supernatural characteristics led to the revision of the relationship between nature and religion. Nevertheless, it is not true to say that the effect of religion completely disappeared even though the wild nature didn't make as many biblical connotations as before. Cronon likens the sentiments the wilderness evoked in humans before and after the Romantic Period to those impressions that a pleasant parish church and a grand cathedral leaves (1995:75). Traveling to the wilderness wasn't anymore regarded as a manly activity that required courage as it did before.

Although the influence of Romantic writers is undeniable, there were other reasons for the loss of the influence of religion on the view of nature. The growth of cities was possible by the destruction of the wild nature, which caused the divinity of

the wilderness to lose its meaning. Besides, the borders between cities and wild nature became abstract. Because, the places we call wild nature could be a part of cities at any time. Apart from these, the increasing air and noise pollution caused by industrialization in cities pushed people to go to the wild to refresh themselves in their spare time. Travelling to the wilderness to see the spectacular landscapes that were still untouched in wilderness became a favourite weekend activity. Ironically, those who performed that activity most were the beneficiaries of the advantages of industrial capitalism in cities. As more and more people fled to wilderness to relieve their tiredness and escape the overwhelming mood of the cities, “the sublime became domesticated” (Cronon, 1995:75).

Considering Thoreau’s famous declaration “in the wildness is the preservation of the World”, throughout the Romantic Period, we see that Romantic writers construct their efforts to revalue nature through the concept of wilderness (1937:672). For them, civilization was a threat to nature and the health and happiness of people would decrease as long as civilization increased. The understanding of the true nature as wilderness by Romanticism and the development of modern environmentalists’ arguments on wilderness in order to protect nature has led to the re-questioning of man’s place in nature and the emergence of a new dilemma between culture and nature which I will discuss in the next chapter.

1.3. Contemporary Discussions on Nature: Environmentalism versus Deep Ecology versus Social Ecology

Modern environmentalism is a contemporary movement that takes over the flag from Romanticism to defend the rights of nature. Environmentalism takes a stand against the ever-growing technology and industry of modernity and their harm to nature. The central concern of environmentalism which Cronon describes as “a grandchild of Romanticism” is to create a sustainable society (1995:72). In this context, it can be said that the conflict between Enlightenment and Romanticism has now been replaced by the clash between environmentalism and modernity. Like their Romantic ancestors, contemporary environmentalists’ main purpose is to protect the untouched wilderness areas as well as drawing attention to the natural problems such as air, water, soil pollution and extinction caused by reasons like ever-growing

technology and industry. Modernity's destruction of wilderness with the motto of "where there's much there's brass" which refers to "pollution means money" previously took the attention of only wild life defenders (Hobsbawm, 1999:164). But then, there was the perception that the consequences of colonization and capitalism's exploiting natural resources for the benefit of some portions threatened the future of humanity. The belief that the advancement of humanity is an antithesis of the preservation of the natural world began to gain wide currency. From the 1970s on, it was argued that modernity's patterns of development for the sake of gaining profit from nature would lead to major social and environmental problems in the following century unless a new ecological and economic stability was established (Irwin, 2001:44). Environmentalists emphasize the contradiction between development and the environment and argue that despite the ambition of unlimited economic growth of the modern world, the world's natural resources are not unlimited. It is suggested that this desire for growth is not for the benefit of humanity in the long term and the relationship between human and nature should be modified. In the 1980s, an environmentalist organization, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) put forward a new model called "sustainable development" that will ensure both growth and nature protection. With this new model, the organization declared the goal as "conversation and development to ensure that modifications to the planet do indeed secure the survival and well-being of all people". This declaration did not advocate that the biosphere shouldn't be destroyed in any way, but, it should be used in such a manner to meet the needs of present-day people and to be handed over to future generations. In the light of these arguments, environmentalists can be said to advocate a balanced relationship between the environment and human to create a sustainable society by rejecting the dominant ideology of modernity that "the growing domination of nature by man was the very measure of humanity's advance". (1995:261).

As it is understood, environmentalism is not against modernity's idea of growth unless it is unlimited. Environmentalism, also called ecological modernity as it acts in accordance with the policies of modernity, has been criticized for "advocating a watered-down form of environmentalism which assumes that the crisis of the earth can be resolved by modifying attitudes, laws, government policies,

corporate behaviour and personal lifestyles rather than by demanding fundamental structural change”(Hannigan, 2006:27). In addition, the search for solutions to the crisis of the earth with the tools of modernity, such as technology, science and industry, confronts environmentalism with a critique that it is a reformist movement. In this context, the suggestions that environmentalism brings to environmental problems are more superficial than fundamental. Considering that the suggestions environmentalism brings to the problems of environmental issues are superficial rather than fundamental, it appears that these criticisms are correct to a certain degree. For example, capitalism asserts that human needs must be met by production and consumption in order to achieve high living standards. Militating in favour of both the ongoing development and high living standards, mainstream environmentalists propose a reformist solution to the rate of production and consumption that causes the deterioration of nature. The proposed solution to the problem is recycling. Noting that mainstream environmentalism is a reformist movement, Jonathan Porritt thinks that recycling can be beneficial to some extent for a sustainable society; however, it cannot be an adequate measure and cannot go beyond an illusion:

The fiction of combining present levels of consumption with ‘limitless recycling’ is more characteristic of the technocratic vision than of an ecological one. Recycling itself uses resources, expands energy, and creates thermal pollution; on the bottom line, it’s just an industrial activity like all the others. Recycling is both useful and necessary – but it is an illusion to imagine that it provides any basic answers (1984:183).

As it is well known, recycling is an industrial process that requires energy use and will also cause environmental pollution. Therefore, it is contradictory to offer a solution that would have similar results with the problem that threatens the environment. In other words, environmentalists tend to protect nature with scientific and industrial mediums which are the key elements of humanism’s ultimate dream of mastery over nature. This technocratic attitude, which environmentalists hold to protect nature, is criticized for serving rather than challenging the modernity’s ultimate goal of transforming the nature. Tim O’Riordan accuses of the technocentric ideology, which reckons on human knowledge, of being arrogant “in its assumption that man is supremely able to understand and control events to suit his purposes”

(1992:33). He attributes the fact that technocentrics are so politically influential and that their suggestions are frequently adopted to the fact that they move in the same circle with the politically and economically powerful who manipulate nature most in the direction of their own interest (1992:34).

Because of their technocentric and reformist approach, environmentalist attitudes towards conservation of natural resources are also viewed with suspicion. Ecologist John Livingston defines this tendency as "the care of 'natural resources' and their protection from depletion, waste, and damage, so that they will be readily at hand through perpetuity" (1981:15). Another ecologist, John Passmore, maintains that natural resources are not protected from depletion, but are protected for later consumption (1974, 91). Then, the purpose of environmentalism comes out to be wise use and utilization of nature. As clearly stated in the declaration of Resource Conservation and Development the wise use of nature is thought to be "best achieved through rational, efficient, scientific and technological management"(cited in Addams and Proops, 2001: 87). Environmentalists who are so confident in technological and scientific knowledge are criticized for conserving the environment for later exploitation by those who are scientifically and technologically the most powerful. This manipulation by environmentalists is nothing more than to serve the ultimate goal of modernity, even though it is essentially done to protect nature without the intention of it.

The technocratic approach to the crisis of the earth is strongly criticized by more radical environmentalist movements. Andrew Dobson points out that "Greens are generally suspicious of purely technological solutions to environmental problems" (2007:13). Contrary to the technocratic attitude of mainstream environmentalists, Deep Ecology has an ecocentric attitude towards deterioration of nature. The Norwegian scholar Arne Naess, who is mostly credited as the founder of Deep Ecology movement, protests against the human utilization of nature as a valuable resource and defines the superficial solution proposals of mainstream environmentalists as shallow. Ecologic consciousness and deep ecology is in contrast with the modernity's technocratic worldview in which humans are assumed to be superior to and in charge of the non-human world (Devall and Sessions, 1985:65).

This consciousness requires the belief that there is an intrinsic value in the rest of the creation just like humans. Thus, the humans are regarded as parts of a biotic and organic whole. An Australian philosopher, Warwick Fox considers the central intuition of deep ecology:

It is the idea that we can make no firm ontological divide in the field of existence: That there is no bifurcation in reality between the human and non-human realms...to the extent that we perceive boundaries, we fall short of Deep Ecological consciousness (1984:196).

The denial of bifurcation between the human and the non-human world implies that everything on earth is interconnected. Neither humans nor other assets are discrete beings and our experiences are interrelated. That is, when you change something on earth, all of the parts in the universe can potentially be affected. Influenced by the perennial philosophy, this view is based on the doctrine which posits that if you leave your selfishness and egocentrism aside you will realize that “the other is none other than yourself”. As Deep Ecology activist John Seed exemplifies it: “-I am protecting the rain forest- develops into -I am part of the rain forest protecting myself. I am that part of the rain forest recently emerged into thinking-” (Seed et al, 1988:36). Therefore, deep ecology rejects the consideration of humans as privileged life forms and the creation of artificial boundaries between human and non-human beings and as Devall says “begins with unity rather than dualism which has been the dominant theme of Western philosophy” (cited in Fox, 1994:197).

Deep ecology, which bases its philosophy on spiritual traditions such as Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism and American rituals, emphasizes the importance of norms of self-realization and bio centric equality that can be achieved through deep inquiry in order to reach ecological consciousness. Self-realization occurs when individuals identify themselves with the extended whole and it is symbolized as “the realization of “self in Self” where “Self” stands for organic wholeness” (Devall and Session, 1985:67). According to Bill Devall and George Sessions, through the methodology of modern science, individuals are codified with the senses of narrow self or social self combined with a hedonistic ego which makes them dependent on whatever is the prevalent fashion in the society or social group and self-realization is

only possible with a philosophical and religious vision (Session). The central idea is that the human reaches a biological and mature personality through the process of self-realization, and only the self-realized individual can dissociate himself from his isolated identity from nature and contemporary cultural assumptions and thus; identify himself with other species on the earth.

On the other hand, the intuition of biocentric equality is that “all things in the biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom and to reach their own individual forms of unfolding and self-realization within the larger Self-realization” (Devall and Session, 1985:67). As the “plain citizens” of the biotic whole, humans have as much the same intrinsic worth as other organisms and entities on the earth (Leopold, 1949:240). As long as people believe that there is a core democracy between species in the biosphere, they will perceive and respect other entities as individuals with own rights. Deep ecology asserts that humans need other species to meet their vital needs such as shelter and food, but the democracy in the biosphere can be preserved if humans avoid extremism and do as little damage as possible to other species.

However, critics argue that these intuitions cannot go beyond principle and democracy is not possible practically in the biosphere. For instance, According to Tim Luke, even if people maintain a simple life as deep ecologists suggest with reducing their needs and “live with minimum rather than maximum impact on other species”, given the technological powers of people and the realities of life, humans’ contact with nature will still remain anthropocentric (1988:82). Because, non-human organisms and entities do not need people for their survival, people, on the other hand; need to use them for their simple needs. Since there is not a mutual utilization, other species will feel the pressure of humans even if humans don’t behave as masters of nature.

The only issue where mainstream environmentalists and deep ecologists agree is the wilderness. Both movements coincide with Romantic ideology in celebrating wild open spaces. According to Cronon, the understanding that real nature must also be wild is a dualistic vision in which man is left out of nature (1995:80). Equating nature with the wilderness contradicts with the existence of man in nature and reproduces the dilemma between humanity and nature. The “wilderness

fixation” of deep ecologists prevents them from seeing the nature and the urban environment around them “and the ways in which these metropolitan places challenge overly narrow conceptions of ecotheory” (Bennett, 2001: 36-37). In this connection, Cronon is of the opinion that wild nature poses a threat to preventing the environmental crisis in the world:

In its flight from history, in its siren song of escape, in its reproduction of the dangerous dualism that sets human beings outside of nature—in all of these ways, wilderness poses a serious threat to responsible environmentalism at the end of the twentieth century(1995: 80-81).

The efforts of Deep Ecology to eliminate the distinction between human and nature are not appreciated by ecofeminists. The notion of self-realization through dissolution and expanding the self is viewed as arrogance. Plumwood argues that as a result of the attempt of unity, the nature once again becomes the “other” and deep ecologists end up with a failure in respecting the boundaries and acknowledging the differences (1993:178). The fact that deep ecologists find themselves as “empowered to act on behalf of other beings or on behalf of the larger whole” reduces the nature to a passive realm and puts human again in a superior position (Macy, 1989:210). The attempts to solve the conflict between self-interest and nature through expanding the self paradoxically results in a further growth of human egoism. Plumwood notes that respect for the other’s boundaries and differences is part of respecting the other and considers the approach of deep ecology as equal to the modernity’s endeavours of subordination: “It is the master consciousness which presumes to violate boundaries and claims to subsume, penetrate and exhaust the other, and such treatment is a standard part of subordination; for example, of women, servants, the colonised, animals” (1993:178).

Besides, Plumwood denies the identification theory of deep ecology which posits the indistinctness and indistinguishable of the other. Instead of identifying ourselves with non-human partners, she stresses the importance of “nonholistic but relational account of the self” (1991:14). Distinct but connected selves are supposed to diagnose better the problems between each other. Otherwise, the person who identifies himself with the other can become alienated from both himself and the other. For this reason, keeping a distance as well as being in a continuous relation is

crucial for understanding and empathizing with the other. Jean Grimshaw writes in connection with this theory:

...care for others, understanding of them, are only possible if one can adequately distinguish oneself *from* others. If I see myself as "indistinct" from you, or you as not having your own being that is not merged with mine, then I cannot preserve a real sense of your well-being as opposed to mine. Care and understanding require the sort of distance that is needed in order not to see the other as a projection of self, or self as a continuation of the other (1986: 182-83).

Ultimately, in the framework of deep ecology and mainstream environmentalism, whether they want to protect or exploit, nature remains passive and humans become the spokesmen of nature. In addition, equating nature with the wilderness in which humans are left outside the nature, both movements fall into the trap of the human-nature dichotomy of modernity they oppose. Critics argue that this dilemma is an obstacle to finding a solution to the environmental crisis on the earth and that Deep Ecology ignores the environmental problems central in urban areas with its ecocentric approach. For example, Andrew Ross suggests that deep ecology and environmentalism, among whose priorities are wilderness, the natural-area preservation and wildlife protection; overlook the problems of urban residents like sanitation, rat and pest control, noise pollution, hunger, malnutrition, poor health and premature death (1999:15).

Such issues, which are an extension of the environmental crisis, are evaluated within the axis of Social Ecology. Founded by Murray Bookchin in the 1960s, Social Ecology differs in terms of both nature and human defence, even though it agrees with deep ecology on the damage that western capitalism inflicts on nature. For social ecologists, the exploitation of the poor are connected to the exploitation of natural resources. Issues such as racism, poverty, sexism and oppression are considered inseparable from environmental degradation in the context that humans not only dominate the environment but also each other (Black, 2018:53).

Historically, Bookchin assures that the environmental crisis is a manifestation of human domination by human, thus; he prioritizes the social problems: "All our notions of dominating nature stem from the very real domination of human by

human.... As a historical statement [this] declares in no uncertain terms that the domination of human by human *preceded* the notion of dominating nature” (Bookchin 1989:44). As domination of nature is regarded a manifestation of domination of human by human, then the priority is given to the liberation of human. Social ecologists, who base their ideology on Marxist ecological thinking, believe that a rational and ecological society can be achieved in a situation in which all kinds of hierarchy are eliminated; people are politically and economically equal. For example; Catherine Villanueva Gardner draws attention to the differences between black and white environments referring to Nathan Hare, noting that environmental problems do not affect everyone equally and that some specific problems are not universal (1999:204). For Hare, black and white environments differ not only in terms of quality, but also in nature, because of social injustice and uneven distribution of income (1970:2). In connection with this, environmental problems evoke different concerns for both realms. Within the context of white ecology, pollution threatens beaches and rivers, and prevents middle and upper class activities such as swimming, boating, fishing, water-skiing that are available close to home, on the other hand; pollution and overcrowding increases infant and maternal mortality rates and reduces average life expectancy, and thereby are serious problems directly affecting living standards in black environments (Hare, 1970: 2). Accordingly, The Environmental Justice Movement’s definition of environment as “the place you work, the place you live, and the place you play” implies the reality that certain environmental problems have different meanings for the people of different race, class and gender due to the reasons like social injustice, racial oppression and economic exploitation(cited in Di Chiro, 1996: 301).

Social Ecology, then, establishes a link between society and ecology, pointing out that culture and nature are two ontological zones influencing each other. Nature and environment are shaped by wider cultural, historical, political and economic processes and “it is impossible to separate defence of people from defence of the planet, human rights from ecological survival, justice from sustainability” (Coupe, 2000:5). Unlike Deep Ecology’s ecocentric approach that ignores the urban nature, Social Ecology, adopts an alternative approach which:

integrates the study of human and natural ecosystems through understanding the interrelationships of culture and nature. It advances a critical, holistic world view and suggests that creative human enterprise can construct an alternative future, re-harmonizing people's relationship to the natural world by re-harmonizing their relationship with each other (cited in Bortman et al, 2003:1308).

It is argued that the environmental crisis cannot be prevented by disregarding the place of humans in nature and the relationship between nature and humanity. According to Social Ecology, we must first define nature. The second step is to determine the way for how the humans will fit into nature, regardless of the definition of nature. For this, only by confronting complex and challenging relationships of the past, present or the potential future social forms with nature, we can draw a road map in dealing with our environmental problems (Bookchin, 1990:27) It is thought that the question arisen from these relationships can't be challenged with pure emotion, intuitionism or mysticism as Deep Ecology does by attacking reason itself as frustrating. In reference to the situation where Deep Ecology has fallen by ignoring the place of man in nature., Bookchin states that "unless we know what nature is and what humanity's and society's place in it is, we will be left with vague intuitions and visceral sentiments that neither cohere into clear views nor provide a guide for effective action" (Bookchin, 1990:2).

With these features, it is clear that Social Ecology brings a new perspective to the human-nature dualism. Cities and people are assumed to be parts of the environment, nature is politicized and different human actions in different cultures are considered as factors affecting the nature human relationship within the framework of social ecological thinking. However, Plumwood argues that representing humans as "first nature rendered self-reflexive, a thinking nature that knows itself and can guide its own evolution", Social Ecology brings humans to the forefront as rational beings to manage nature for its own best interest(1993:16). Hence, Bookchin's ecological rationalism is criticized for retaining a humanist-enlightenment emphasis on reason and emphasizing the importance of reason as the chief motivation for dominating nature and the most important feature that distinguishes man from nature. For some critics; Bookchin's view that it is the "responsibility of the most conscious of life-forms—humanity—to be the "voice" of

a mute nature and to act to intelligently foster organic evolution” leaves no room for the distinctness of nature(1990:32).While the first nature is represented as an unconscious entity doomed to be managed, the second nature, humanity, is given the right to be the voice of a mute nature because of its consciousness. Plumwood admits that social ecology focuses on some of the forms of hierarchy in society and their negative effects on the human-nature relationship; however, in terms of defending “assumptions associated with the human colonization of nature” she suggests that at least Bookchin version of social ecological thinking “inherits many problematic aspects of the humanist, Enlightenment, Hegelian and Marxist traditions (1993:16).

In spite of everything, by defining nature and culture differently and examining the relationships between them, social ecology has brought a new dimension to eco-criticism. Many authors have situated wilderness within the boundaries of cities in their writings in accordance with the teachings of social ecological thinking and have moved beyond the modernity’s problematic definition of wilderness. This kind of studies, which deals with the concept of wilderness within the cities, is important in terms of bridging the divide between nature and culture, as well as uniting nature with humans.

1.4. Urban Ecology: Nature-Culture Dualism

The growth and increase in the number of cities has made it a controversial issue where the society begins and where nature ends. Accordingly, an increasing number of theorists have begun to reconcile on the idea that human culture and nature are two inseparable concepts directly affecting each other. This dual interaction results in the emergence of new socio-natural forms. Erik Swyngedouw considers these socio-natural forms as the products of a metabolizing process of “natural” environment in which “both society and nature are transformed, changed, or altered” (1999:446). As the modernization process accelerates, it increases our chance of encountering more socio-natural entities or objects in our daily lives. For example, the seats we sit on, the buildings we live in, the various foods we eat, the computers we use are all commodities that have been converted from raw materials on the earth in accordance with our needs. Considering that nothing can be created from nothing, if we assume a piece of iron or aluminium as natural, the tools and

equipment made out of them are as much natural as those elements. Just like the items we use in everyday life, cities are built out of natural resources. The process of urbanization is directly related to the transformation of nature, thus; the interaction between nature and culture is most noticeable in urban spaces. From this point of view, Swyngedouw points out that the city and the urban can be defined as neither natural nor social structures alone:

On closer inspection, the city and the urban are a network of interwoven processes that are both human and natural, real and fictional, mechanical and organic. There is nothing "purely" social or natural about the city, even less a-social or a-natural; the city is both natural and social, real and fictional. In the city, society and nature, representation and being, are inseparable, integral to each other, infinitely bound up (1996:66).

In this way, the city and the urban can be seen as syntheses of natural and cultural entities which means that new interactions between culture and nature will lead to the emergence of new cities and consequently the formation of new urban natures.

Donna Haraway and Bruno Latour calls the semi-social and semi-natural proliferating objects that increasingly penetrate in our daily lives as "cyborgs" and "quasi-objects". These intermediaries or hybrids are the products of historical and political processes, both simultaneously representing society and nature, and embodying these two ontological domains. For Latour, this ontological transgression between nature and culture is an indication of the failure of the modern western ideology, which aims to create a duality between the natural and the cultural by separating the natural from the social, the facts from values and the mind from body. The western ideology, by making the "reality of the external world" and "the prison of the social world" a matter of choice, defines the nature as an independent phenomenon from humans and keeps the study of nature out of the social sciences (2004:17). As long as, Latour continues, "no one entertains *simultaneous* doubts about epistemology and sociology", we will be unable to get rid of this trap(2004:17). Latour advocates a structure what he calls networks for the management of the crisis. The study of this networks aims at combining three different approaches developed by critics to talk about our world: naturalization, socialization and deconstruction. The first; naturalization, "speaks of naturalized

phenomena”, the second; socialization, “speaks of fields of power” and the third; deconstruction, “speaks of truth effects” (1993:5). Latour gives the example of ozone layer to illustrate the idea of hybrid networks that goes beyond the terrains of both social and natural sciences and discourse:

The ozone hole is too social and too narrated to be truly natural; the strategy of industrial firms and heads of state is too full of chemical reactions to be reduced to power and interest; the discourse of the ecosphere is too real and too social to boil down to meaning effects. Is it our fault if the *networks are simultaneously real, like nature, narrated, like discourse, and collective, like society?* (1993:6).

The ozone layer and other crises are multifaceted entities, and only if we adopt multi-faceted approaches, we can overcome these problems and understand the world we created. According to Latour; neither one is possible: pursuing the problems “while abandoning all the resources of criticism” or abandoning them “while endorsing the common sense of the critical tripartition” (1993:6).

Latour uses the terms “actors” and “actants” for both humans and non-human entities and suggests a nature-culture collective to overcome the Cartesian thought of the non-human world as static, mute and passive terrain. To be able to deal with the hierarchical model of modernity, he combines nature and culture into a nature-culture collective, in which non-human entities are attributed lively roles and capacity to rebel. He argues that the goal is not to fuse the roles of subjects and objects but that “the self-evident distribution of roles must be replaced by a *range of uncertainties* going from necessity to freedom”:

To distribute roles from the outset between the controllable and obedient object on the one hand and the free and rebellious human on the other is to preclude searching for the condition under which...one can, one must, make these entities exchange among themselves their formidable capacity to appear on the scene as full-fledged actors, that is, as those *who forbid any indisputable transfer* (of force or reason), as mediators with whom it is necessary to reckon, as active agents whose potential is still unknown (2004:81-82).

Attributing obedient and masterable features to non-human world as opposed to free and rebellious humans stems from the underestimation of the capacity of non-human entities. Recalcitrance can be specific not only to humans but also to non-

human beings. If humans have the freedom to disobey and rebel, nature can also become rebellious under certain circumstances and what non-nature actors might do is unpredictable. Latour criticizes political ecological thought that associates the notion of necessity with nature and the notion of freedom with humanity and formulates a new maxim for ecologists and environmentalists:

If a maxim had to be stitched onto the flag of political ecology, it would not be the lapidary formula “Let us protect nature!” It would be a different one, much better suited to the continual surprises of its practice: “No one knows what an environment can do . . .” (2004:80).

Despite the illusionary separation between nature and culture, the hybrids of culture and nature are the extensions and parts of the history of humanity and are relevant to all humanity. Just like Latour, Donna Haraway rejects the idea that nature and culture are two different ontological zones and that they have different and unparalleled histories. Nature and culture are two indistinguishable phenomena and the products that arise from the interaction and interrelatedness of these intertwined zones are described as the notion of “naturecultures” by Haraway. She describes “naturecultures” as being “inside history as well as being inside the wonder of the natural complexity...-as one word- implosions of the discursive realms of nature and culture” (2000:26). She accuses “Western evolutionary, technological and biological narratives” of categorizing naturecultures as “odd boundary creatures” and placing them in a destabilizing position (1991:2). She argues that modernity and twentieth century technology have made “ambiguous the difference between natural and artificial, mind and body, self-developing and externally designed, and many other distinctions that used to apply to organisms and machines” (2004:11). The “disturbingly lively” nature of these cyborgs is highlighted and it is emphasized that the agency in the post-modern world can no longer be allocated only to humans.

In the light of all these debates, urban spaces come to the fore as places where nature-culture interaction is most clearly observed. Previously, urban and ecology or city and landscape were viewed as oxymoronic concepts, however; now the notion of urban ecology or city landscapes are embraced as a whole. While some scholars are of the opinion that urban environments are built environments replaced by the natural environment, some other scholars like Jane Jacob points out that urban environments

“are as natural as colonies of prairie dogs or the beds of oysters” (1992:443). Although “constructed” or “socially produced” statements are acceptable in terms of identifying urban environmental landscapes, the expression of “displacement” contrasts with the thesis that our world is shaped by social, economic and political processes. For example, the more natural is a nest built by a flock of swallows on a tree to sustain their lives, the more natural is a house built by humans to meet their need for shelter. In both cases, despite a nest or a house refer to constructed or produced phenomena, these are indications of the transformation of nature as a result of the processes aforementioned above, not the displacement of nature. Lefebvre, as opposed to this dilemma, brings out a new term called “second nature”. He suggests that the interaction of social, political and cultural processes with nature affects urban formations and requires “the immediate creation of something other than nature: a second, different or new nature” (Lefebvre, cited in Ballantyne and Smith, 2012:103). He emphasizes the social characteristics of urban environments:

Nature, destroyed as such, has already had to be reconstructed at another level, the level of “second nature” i.e. the town and the urban. The town, anti-nature or non-nature and yet second nature, heralds the future world, the world of the generalized urban. Nature, as the sum of particularities which are external to each other and dispersed in space, dies. It gives way to produced space, to the urban. The urban, defined as assemblies and encounters, is therefore the simultaneity (or centrality) of all that exists socially (1976:15).

The second nature includes cities, gardens, managed forests, roads, bridges, parks and arranged beaches, as well as all infrastructures. Second nature is a socially produced cultural landscape contrived out of the first nature. Therefore, it cannot be considered as anti-nature. Nature is also expected to adapt to the transformation in society. That’s why the second nature comes out of the beneficial cultivation of the first nature in accordance with social, political and economic infrastructures. As long as urban is viewed as a socio-ecological process, producing a second or third nature will not be a discomfortable idea. “What jars us much about this idea of production of nature” Neil Smith suggests is that “it defies the conventional, sacrosanct separation of nature and society” (1984:xiv). David Harvey’s famous dictum that “there is nothing unnatural about New York City” is based on the philosophy that human activity and ecosystemic projects are interrelated, not external to each other

(1993:28). Harvey takes a stance against the fetishistic conception of nature and complains that the sanctification of nature creates an indifference to the characteristics of the environments where a significant number of people live. He finds it “in any case, inconsistent to hold that everything in the world relates to everything else as ecologists tend to do” and then claiming that “built environment and the urban structures are somehow outside of both theoretical and practical consideration. The effect has been to evade integrating understandings of the urbanizing process into environmental—ecological analysis” (1996:427). In this framework, cities and other artifacts like bridges, dams, parks or buildings cannot be regarded as a replacement of nature; rather they constitute another nature with the transformation of first nature that is a result of a socio-natural metabolic process. Cities are constructed out of natural resources; hence, urbanization can’t be limited to sociality of cities. Urbanization is a socially mediated natural process.

1.5. Ecocriticism

Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* published in 1962, is considered to be the first book written with environmental consciousness and is considered to have laid the ground for the field of ecocriticism. Until the 1990s, literature focused mainly on the nature writing and nature discourse imposed by modernism, while issues directly related to earth such as human-nature dualism, nature-culture dualism, environmental awareness, and ecology were ignored. Most of the literary studies embraced the very representations of pure nature rather than the effects of ecological crisis on the earth. Laurence Buell points out that modern professional readers of literature are not capable of investigating “literature’s capacity for articulating the nonhuman environment” because, “our training conditions us to stress the distinction between text and referent” (1995:10). What Buell claim is that focusing on the distinction between text and referent isolates readers from the realistic aspects of natural world, hence; ecocriticism should provide a sense of “experiential or referential aspects” of literature (1995:36). Compatibly with Buell’s view, Serpil Oppermann exemplifies Hogan’s *Solar Storms* (1995), Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Ceremony* (1977), Annie Dillard’s *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (1974) and notes that unlike the discourse in “nature writings”, these texts “combine ecological and textual diversity” and while

they are “fashioned to create a reality effect”, they also “contain a multitude of fictional, cultural and ecological meanings” (2006:109). The language used to render nature in literary texts is also supposed to make ecological and cultural connotations. As “ecocriticism ostensibly has one eye on the page and one eye on the physical world” Scott Knickerbocker argues that “it needs to deepen thinking about the relationship between language and nature” (2012:8). Scott Slovic’s influential definition of ecocriticism gives insight into reading a text from an ecocritical perspective even if it is deprived of non-natural elements: “Ecocriticism is either the study of nature writing by way of any scholarly approach or, conversely, the scrutiny of ecological implications and human-nature relationships in any text, even texts that seem, at first glance, oblivious of the nonhuman world” (2008:27).

After the publication of the *Silent Spring* in 1962, some of the works in the 1970s were considered as examples of the ecocritical tradition, but it would take a few more decades for the trend to be fully enriched. The first organization of professional ecocritics, Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) was founded in 1992 in the USA and it was followed by the foundation of its journal, *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* (ISLE). A range of reasons can be underlined for why environmental degradation was not included in literary texts until the emergence of that organization and journal. Firstly, the images of pure nature and the language used in literary texts distanced people from the realities of the physical world. Secondly, the destruction of nature through science and industry by modernity wasn’t as perceivable as today. Thirdly, problems such as the thinning or perforation of the ozone layer that poses a significant hazard for the earth has not yet been scientifically clarified and thus; humanities did not identify themselves as a part of this problem to be involved in the studies. Another issue was that the theories like colonization, feminism and racism which dealt with the exploitation of the poor, black and women were gaining a momentum during the 1970s. The marginalization and threatening of these groups by dominant ideologies was more recognizable than the marginalization and threatening of nature. As Glen A. Love puts it in his book *Practical Ecocriticism*:

Curiously enough, while literary attention fastened upon the admittedly important social conflicts associated with race, class, and gender, there seemed little or no critical concern for literature that addressed the overarching and increasingly stressed natural systems within which these cultural conflicts were playing themselves out (2003:3).

Although the threat of nuclear destruction, water and air pollution, deforestation, extinction of species, toxic wastes became worldwide problems, the connection between culture and nature was ignored by the mainstream academic discourse based upon the reasons aforementioned (Love, 2003:3). Cheryl Glotfelty, in her *Ecocriticism Reader*, a collection of ecocritical essays published in 1996, draws attention to the lack of ecological concerns in the mainstream academic discourse at the time:

If your knowledge of the outside world were limited to what you could infer from the major publications of the literary profession, you would quickly discern that race, class and gender were the hot topics of the late twentieth century, but you would never suspect that the earth's life support systems were under stress. Indeed, you might never know there was an earth at all (1996:xvi).

From the 1970s onwards, humanities such as philosophy, sociology, religion, law and history were more or less interested in environmental problems, but literary studies remained almost indifferent to this field. In retrospect, Joseph Meeker's *The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology*, published in 1972, is one of the first books to examine the relationship between the environment and the literary from an ecocritical point of view. Among the early articles, William Rueckert's *Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism*, published in 1978, appears to be one of the antecedent studies in this field. This study is also important in that the term "ecocriticism" was first coined. Rueckert wrote in his essay that ecocriticism entails "application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature" (1996:107). Meeker's work was considered provocative in terms of bringing an ecological perspective to literature at the time of its publication. For a new reading of literature from ecological view, he brought a new paradigm:

Human beings are the earth's only literary creatures... If the creation of literature is an important characteristics of the human species, it should be examined carefully and honestly to discover its influence upon human behaviour and the natural environment—to determine what role, if any, it

plays in the welfare and survival of mankind and what insight it offers into human relationship with other species and with the world around us (1972:3).

Although Meeker's study was virtually ignored by literary circles at the time, he examined ecological problems from a tragicomic perspective, with a cross-disciplinary approach, and the issues he touched on, despite having been grown after 50 years, are still being ignored on purpose (Love,1996:228). According to Glotfelty, one of the most important problems of early studies in the 1970s was the disconnection between them. The reason for this disunity was that they were unaware of each other, and therefore could not refer to one another's work. In one respect, each critic was developing a new reading of literature from an ecocritical view in isolation. Therefore, ecocriticism couldn't make its presence felt unlike other outstanding fields. Only after 1990s, ecocriticism grew into maturity in terms of a united approach through which the academic discourse embraced the connection between literature and environment in conformity with one another.

After 1990s, ecocriticism developed into a multiplicity of approaches and subjects. Under the broad and umbrella term environmental literature, ecocriticism began to include:

nature writing, deep ecology, the ecology of cities, ecofeminism, the literature of toxicity, environmental justice, bioregionalism, the lives of animals, the revaluation of place, interdisciplinarity, eco-theory, the expansion of the canon to include previously unheard voices, and the reinterpretation of canonical works from the past(Love,2003:5).

In the broader frame, despite adopting many different issues and approaches, and including many complexities, the fundamental premise of all ecological criticism is that "human culture is connected to physical world, affecting it and affected by it" (Glotfelty,1996:viv). Therefore, ecocriticism does not regard literature as an area in which only pure nature might be portrayed, but values literature as an intellectual means to negotiate the interconnections between human and non-human. Just as post-colonial criticism brings an ethnical and cultural approach to the reading of literary texts, feminism analyses the literary studies and language from a gender-oriented perspective and Marxist criticism views the literary works in terms of social norms, classes and order, "ecocriticism takes an earth-centred approach to literary

studies”(Glotfelty,1996:viii). To put it simply, as a critical stance, “it has one foot in literature and the other on land; as a theoretical discourse, it negotiates between the human and the nonhuman” (Glotfelty, 1996,viv).

In the development process, ecocriticism progressed within the framework of deep ecology, the most radical fraction of the environmentalist movements, as the focus was on the harm of anthropocentrism to nature. Although critics didn’t disregard the class, gender, and ethnic inequalities and found them worthy of interest, they believed that human centrism was more dangerous than these, and was the most common element of modernity and its literature. The basis for this claim is that by no means, those who are exposed to ethnic, sexist and class pressures depending upon industry and technology would all be opposed to science, but they would all accept that the disorder in nature is human-induced. Correspondingly, most nature-oriented texts were based on the abandonment of the androcentric planning and the development of a biocentric understanding of nature, the aim of which was to live in harmony with the untouched nature. For instance, Lawrence Buell’s *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture*, as it is understood from its title, is regarded in the domain of pastoral tradition and deep ecocriticism and is shaped by Thoreau’s nature writing tradition; Jonathan Bate’s *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* and *The Song of the Earth* is mainly concerned with Romantic poets like Wordsworth, Thoreau, Coleridge, Keats etc. These studies agreed on “the importance of pastoralism as a literary and cultural force in the future” (Love, 1996:234). Laurence Buell lists four different conditions that a poem or fiction is required to be considered as environmental texts: first, “the nonhuman environment is present not merely as a framing device but as a presence that begins to suggest that human history is implicated in natural history”(1995:7). This eliminates texts that hold nature in the background and deny that natural history encompasses human history. Second; for Buell, the only legitimate interest is not human interest, third; a text’s ethical orientation is contradictive if human accountability to environment is not concerned and finally; “some sense of the environment as a process rather than as a constant or a given is at least implicit in the text” (1995:7-8). While Buell’s criteria draw a broader frame for the canon of ecocriticism, in practice, most of the leading

ecocritical studies are nourished by romantic tradition and the teachings of deep ecocriticism. Deep ecocriticism, as an antecedent of the romantic tradition, is admittedly a challenge to anthropocentrism in critical literary studies, but it perseveringly consolidates the human-nature dilemma on which deep ecology insists: nature is equated with wilderness, the existence of man on earth and the relationship between nature and culture are ignored and the tradition takes a position of spokesman instead of a mute nature.

The controversy over what counts as nature and the fact that almost half of the population in the world lives in cities required the emergence of a new genre in response to wilderness fixation and overwhelmingly neglect of non-wild habitats by mainstream ecocriticism. As a result of this requirement, there are a growing number of studies concerning cultural ecocriticism. These studies reject the mainstream deep ecocriticism shaped by nature writing and pastoral tradition and insist that this genre is insufficient to reflect complex interactions between the densely populated ecosystems and social, economic and political structures that shape urban environments (Bennett, 2001:32). This new type of genre, which examines the reflection of cities to literature from an eco-critical point of view, is called in different ways such as social, cultural or urban ecocriticism, and it was first introduced by Michael Bennett and David W. Teague in *The Nature of Cities: Ecocriticism and the Environment*, an edited collection of essays, in 1999. Drawing heavily on the philosophy of social ecology unlike deep ecology, Bennett and Teague's book aims to "sharpen the focus on the nature of cities by exploring the components of an urban ecocriticism" and points to "the self-limiting conceptualisations of nature, culture and environment built into many ecocritical projects in their exclusion of urban places" and argued for the need to "remind city dwellers of our placement within ecosystems and the importance of this fact for understanding urban life and culture". (1999:4). While Bennet and Teague's volume gives considerable insight into social ecocriticism, it easily shifts from urban ecocriticism to urban ecological issues like city parks and related issues such as race, gender, urbanity, and wilderness. Conformably with Lance Newman's observation that "the environmental crisis threatens all landscapes-wild, rural, suburban and urban" (1998:71) Buell in his attempts to focus on these interrelations to "put 'green'

and ‘brown’ landscapes, the landscapes of exurbia and industrialization, in conversation with one another” (2001:7). Thus, he calls for need for a shift to “the interdependence between urban and outback landscapes, and the traditions of imagining them” (2001:8). Similarly, Steven Rosendale, in *The Greening of Literary Scholarship* argues for an expanded ecocriticism. She recognises a need to “expand the purview of ecocritical practice by widening the canon of texts for ecocritical investigation and placing environmental criticism in a more productive relation with other, perhaps suspiciously humanist theoretical and critical practices”(xvii). To put it simply, as Bennett suggests, social ecocriticism “makes room for the urban, suburban, small-town, rural, and wild spaces that fill the physical and cultural landscape of the United States, West and East and its literature” (2001:41). In this way, social ecocriticism expands the canon of ecocriticism and involves a characteristic of correction to the prejudice of mainstream ecocriticism against the non-wild nature. In a social ecocritical reading, cities and urban areas aren’t regarded as an echo or remnant of wide open spaces, rather as a harmony of nature and culture. As Jacquelin Burgess et al. reveal the relationship between city and nature: “open spaces are seen and experienced holistically, as embedded in the built environment rather than isolated from it” (1988:459). This new expanded ecocriticism shows that nature is not passive and isolated as depicted in mainstream environmentalism but can be active and urban as well.

2. AN ECOCRITICAL READING OF IF NOBODY SPEAKS OF REMARKABLE THINGS

If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things, written by Jon McGregor in 2002, enabled the author to become the youngest author to be nominated for the Man Booker Award. Jon McGregor's evocative novel If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things takes place in a highly industrial and fictional town somewhere in Britain on August 31, 1997. Throughout the novel, we are invited to the houses of residents on one street with a 360-degree view and witness the resident's lives, thoughts, insights, sorrow, and happiness and hear their unspoken words. The novel's main narrative's focus shifts from an unnamed character to another unnamed character-which McGregor prefers to refer them using phrases like "the girl with the short blonde hair" "the young man with the dry eyes"-on a single street and on a single day. There are two narrative styles and two narrators in the novel. A male omniscient narrator portrays the events and the resident's lives on a street and a female first-person narrator turns back on the day of main event a few years later. One of the neighbours hits accidentally a child with his car at the end of the afternoon and the whole narrative revolves around this major event.

For some certain reasons, there is a general opinion that, of all the genres, novel is the most unsuitable and problematic one to read from an ecocritical perspective. For example, Dominic Head suggests that ecocritics are pessimistic about the future of literature, since novel is "is a mode of discourse which speaks to an increasingly urbanized population whose concerns appear to have no immediate connection with the non-human environment" (1998:66). The anthropocentrism of the novel was observed as another problematic issue for ecocriticism. Head argued: "the tendency of the novel to focus on personal development, and on social rather than environmental matters (and on time rather than place) is sometimes said to create an impression of alienation from the natural"(1998:64-5). The fear was that the textuality of novel could distract the readers from the natural world, the physical world outside the text (Bracke, 2014:425). Astrid Bracke argues in her *Contemporary English Novel and its Challenges to Ecocriticism* that the problem with traditional ecocritics is their "inclination to read for the message and analysing

works for an environmental dimension or moral, whereas the novel avoids conclusive messages” (2014:425). For her, what is described in a text is what most of the tradition ecocritics focus on rather than focusing on how it is described. She continues with recommending that “reading contemporary English novels from an ecocritical perspective requires little else than a shift in reading practices” (2014:426). Just as a text without women characters can be analysed with a feminist perspective, a text which is not nature oriented or a novel with a few natural representations can be read from an ecocritical perspective. That’s why, a literary work doesn’t have to be environmentalist or nature-oriented to be worthy of examining from ecocritical point of view. Regarding with this, some definitions of ecocriticism give insight into broadening the scope of the canon. For example, Glotfelty alleges that “ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (1996:xviii). Clearly, this definition makes it possible for both traditional tendency that is analysing nature-oriented texts and ecocritical analyses of literary works which are not tempting like contemporary English novels (Bracke, 2014:426). Hence, “even if a novel is not explicitly nature-oriented, it can still provide insights on contemporary human–nature relations; even in the most experimental novels, structure, focalization, and genre may influence the representation of nature” (Bracke,2014:426).

Most of the ecocritical analyses of cities discuss the natural areas within the cities such as parks, gardens, trees, barrages, forests and beaches. However, an analyse of *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* by Jon McGregor shows that readings of urban areas cannot be limited to social ecologies (Bracke,2014:427). Despite including a few representations of nature, instead of reading what is described and focusing on the message it conveys, changing the reading practice and zooming in how things are described makes the novel a challenge to ecocriticism. The representation of nature in *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable things* can be evaluated in two categories: Dualistic representations in which natural elements are marginalised, humans and non-humans are portrayed as two different realms and natural entities are shown as if they don’t belong to the city. The other category is “naturecultures” in which natural elements are described as truly part of the city and humans and non-human entities composes the symbiosis of the cities.

2.1. Dualistic Representations

The first person narrator in *If Nobody Speaks Remarkable Things* gives an example of dualistic representation in the very beginning lines when he observes the city with a lyrical expression:

If you listen, you can hear it.

The city, it sings.

If you stand quietly, at the foot of a garden, in the middle of a street, on the roof of a house.

It's clearest at night, when the sound cuts more sharply across the surface of things, when the song reaches out to a place inside you

It's a wordless song, for the most, but it's a song all the same, and nobody hearing it could doubt what it sings. And the song sings the loudest when you pick out each note. (McGregor, 2002:1).

Considering that a city is a combination of the human and the nonhuman and the natural and the cultural; then, the voice coming out of a city is supposed to be the voices of these combinations, as well. However; in the given lines, with the expression "if you stand quietly", it is obvious that the humans are not included in the city. The narrator makes a binary opposition between the humans and the nonhuman realms by quietening the humans to hear the song and by positioning people as listeners and the city as singer. Besides, the phrase "It's clearest at night" indicates that the "real sound" of the nature is best heard during a time –at nights- when cultural elements are most inactive and points to the implication that the "real sound" of a city is hindered when these elements are more active during the day. The whole decentring of the human leads the powerful presence of the nonhumans and in this way, *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* goes beyond anthropocentrism attributing nonhuman realms with voice and agency. In another scene where natural and cultural elements are confronted, the wind- the natural component- is marginalized and alienated:

And all these things sing constant, the machines and the sirens, the cars blurting hey and rumbling all headlong, the hoots and the shouts and the hums and the crackles, all come together and rouse like a choir, sinking and rising with the turn of the wind, the counter and solo, the harmony humming expecting more voices(2002:2).

The components of culture such as the sounds of machines, the sirens, the blurting and rumbling of cars, the hoots, shouts and hums and the crackles are represented as if they are interrupted with a natural entity. The wind is depicted as a rival and an external power that suppresses the voice of those cultural components. The narrator draws on and enforces a dualistic approach between the culture and

nature by the delineation of the wind as a solo and counter force against the cultural entities. The wind is not regarded as a part of the culture because it is not included in the harmony. Rather, it is marginalized and excluded as if it is in a clash with cultural elements. While the elements that compose the culture can cooperate as a chorus or group, the fact that the natural wind is defined as a solo show that it is excluded from that chorus. The increase and decrease of the sounds respectively with the withdrawing and blowing of the wind can also be metaphorically interpreted as the resistance of culture against nature or as a trial of nature to suppress culture. In addition to this, the expression that “the harmony humming expecting more voices” is a call of the culture for more support, which is, though standing together, remain incapable against nature, and a manifestation of the power of nature.

After only a few paragraphs, the narrator points out to the noise of the city that disappears with the night, and describes these moments as miraculous, complaining about the chaos caused by the cultural components:

...There is a miracle of silence. Everything has stopped. And silence drops down from out of the night, into this city, the briefest of silences, like a falter between heartbeats, like darkness between blinks. Secretly, there is always this moment, an unexpected pause, a hesitation as one day is left and a new one begins(2002:3).

Two kinds of dualistic approaches can be inferred from this single passage. First; silence is often used together with the feelings of comfort, such as peace and tranquillity. And, such feelings are often associated with the untouched nature and are most often felt in the presence of “natural” landscapes. Then, the modern cities come out to be based upon the juxtaposition of nature and culture. The idea of city emerges as “a process of taming and suppressing nature by imposing the conditions of culture upon it” (Lappi, 2004:235). The conditions imposed by culture upon this unnamed city must be so heavy that the narrator uses the phrases “like a falter between heartbeats” and “like a darkness between blinks” to emphasize the shortness of the moments of these feelings. Later, he resembles this peace of mind as a result of the absence of the cultural distractions to “a catch of breath as gasometer lungs begins slow exhalations” which signifies that culture hinders even the vital activities

like breathing and these activities can only be achieved at times when the presence of culture is least felt.

Secondly, if “silence” refers to the muteness of nature as silence is described in terms of dropping down from out of the night –the nature- then; once again we fall into the problematic discourse of the humanist critics of deep ecology that marginalizes and mutes the nature. A shift from this discourse is crucial because, if our environmental crisis stems from the exploitation of nature, the mute feature attributed to nature is what increases this exploitation. An individual’s ability to express himself is also a medium of being understood better. Hence, when nature is considered as a self-expressing entity, it will lead the understanding of non-natural world and decrease the capitalizing on nonhumans correlatively. In this context, we unhesitatingly agree with Hans Peter Duerr when he says in *Dreamtime: Concerning the Boundary between Wilderness and Civilization* that “people do not exploit a nature that speaks to them” and “finally, people don’t exploit those they understand” (1987:p.92).

In another passage, the first person narrator gives an example of another dualistic description in terms of quietness and calm when he observes the night-fishers lined up to catch fish at a waterfront:

And the night-fishers strung out along the canal, feeling the sing of their lines in the water, although they are within yards of each other they are saying nothing, watching luminous floats hang in the night like bottled fireflies, waiting for the dip and strike which will bring a centre to their time here, waiting for the quietness and calm they have come to here to find (2002:4).

The representation of humans leaving the city for a while for natural environments to find the quietness and calm is a dualistic indication of the assumption that these positive feeling cannot be found in urban environments. The narrator’s attempt to portray night-fishers as close-tongues and resemble luminous floats - which are considered within culture- to fireflies, can be interpreted as the purification of nature from culture. This attempt of purifying rivets the dichotomy between pure natural environments and urban environments. A dualistic perception that human nature is contrary to urbanization is created with the line -the night-

fishers feel “the sing of their lines in the water”-. Humans are identified with nature and they feel their thoughts in the water not in a cultural element. Feeling their lines in the water also purports the meaning that after the contact with culture, humans accumulate sorrows, worries and thoughts in their minds and consequently, they attempt to turn back and confide themselves to nature in order to relieve their sufferings and dispose of their troubles.

Another dualistic representation of nature in *If Nobody Speak of Remarkable Things* use colours to create a contrast. The red traffic lights are illustrated as a force trapping all the vehicles and stopping the whole city which makes “a pause worth savouring, because the world will soon be complicated again” (2002:5). The colour, which allows culture to make the world more complicated and disturbing, is exemplified by the green colour that is most often associated with nature. The scene is metaphorically reminiscent of hunters waiting for their prey when the narrator describes the drivers in traffic lights as “hundreds of pairs of eyes hanging on the lights, all waiting for the amber, all waiting for the green”(2002:4-5). When the green light is on, the culture will merge with nature again and the short savouring pause in the absence of cultural components will be easily broken with “a slamming door, a car alarm, and a thin drift of music”(2002:5).

Throughout the book, the dilemma between culture and nature becomes evident within the different features of night and day. The night stands out as the time zone when culture is least felt, as the cultural elements are most inactive. On the other hand, the effect of culture on nature becomes most visible during the daytime. While we witness the beginning of a new relationship of an exciting and shy couple through the eyes of the narrator, the first light of day hits the earth. With the sunlight, it appears that this time, the degradation of nature by culture on nature is pollution when the narrator depicts: “the first smudges of light seep into sky from the east, from far side of the city and in towards these streets” (2002:5). With the sunrise, pollution is first noticed seeping into sky in the east, then continues to move towards the unnamed street in the west. While the night is considered as an interval to purify from realms such as culture-induced noise and air pollution, during daylight these

realms come to light and become more observable. Darkness and light allows us to address the dichotomy between culture and nature from different perspectives.

In addition to darkness and lightness, rain also gives some clues about the artificial dualism created between culture and nature. The following abstract provides as an example of how the distinctness and independence of nature is ignored by humanity:

It rained, towards the end of the afternoon, suddenly and heavily, but that was all, there was nothing else unusual and unexpected about the day. And somehow it seems wrong that there wasn't a buildup, a feeling in the air, a premonition or a warning or a clue (2002:10).

The depiction of rain as the most unexpected and unusual event of the day is an indication of men's neglect of nature's distinctness and independence. It can also be considered as the disregarding of the needs of nature as an autonomous realm. Plumwood stresses that "we need to recognize not only our human continuity with the natural world but also its distinctness and independence from us and the distinctness of the needs of things in nature from ours" (1991:13). In this regard, rain can be unexpected or unusual for humanity, but for other creatures on earth, rain can also be vital. This understanding is the result of the alienation of humanity from nature and the perception that human being is superior to nature. The fact that it rains without a hint, clue or premonition leads to an astonishment because it is introduced as an attack on man's authority on nature which indicates that humanity is oblivious of how nature works. Daniel B. Botkin argues that, "It is only by understanding how nature works and applying this understanding in our management of nature that we can successfully achieve our goal: people living within nature, neither poisoning it nor destroying its reproductive capabilities" (1990, p.79). There is a direct relationship between understanding how the nature works and our environmental crisis. If it is the raining on the last day of the summer what honestly astonishes us, it doesn't turn the balance. The results can be evaluated again in terms of our actions by interfering the autonomy of nature and ignoring how it works. It involves in itself a contradiction that humanity ignores and continues to poison nature and get surprised by an unexpected natural phenomenon occurred as a result of his egoist actions.

The narrator continues to create a dualistic representation of nature using darkness and light while introducing the members living in their flats. The woman living at number nineteen wakes up early in the morning. She checks her three children and after murmuring a brief prayer for them, she leaves the room and heads to the bathroom. There, she sits and relives herself “watching the shadows of pigeons flap across the bathroom wall” (2002:15). At about the same time, the girl living at number eleven sleeps in the back bedroom. While the room is warm and becomes enlightened, “bird shadows pass quickly across her face but she does not wake up” (2002:16). Later, a young couple are introduced who are in their early thirties. While they sleep and snore in their attic flat of number twenty one, “there is a television on in the corner with the sound turned down, shadows pass through the room but the couple do not wake” (2002:16). Although these snapshots are short and do not affect characters, they involve a dualistic understanding between nature and culture. The nature is portrayed as if it is not a part of urban environments. Birds that can be considered as part of pure nature are depicted in the city only by their shadows. An oppositional relation between culture and nature is enforced in that countryside, rural areas or wilderness are prioritised as the natural habitats of pigeons or other kinds of birds and cities are almost excluded from these natural habitats of animals. While Christopher Martin Schliephake draws attention in his essay *From Green to Brown Landscapes* to the “changes that have occurred in our urban landscapes and our cultural images of them”, the exclusion of city as a natural habitat constitute an impediment to the “new ways of conceptualizing cities as integral part of a living, interactive biosphere” (2016:30). Because, the way how the images of animals, plants and other organisms are depicted in cities in the framework of ecocritical discourse are important for the solution of the human nature dualism and the construction of a common biosphere. The depiction of pigeons with only their shadows in the book makes the city and nature antithesis of each other rather than introducing the two realms as a symbiosis.

One of the most important consequences of our environmental crisis is the extinction of species. The extinction of species is related to our perception of animals and is an indication of how much we value them and the role the humanity provide for them. Therefore, one aspect of ecocriticism deals with the distinction of animals

from culture. Re-harmonizing the relationships with each other by overcoming the issues such as racism, poverty and sexism as Social Ecology suggests might not be sufficient to construct an alternative future. We need to re-harmonize our relationships with animals, as well. We must first adopt the animals and other organisms as part of the culture we build up in order to elude the nature-culture dualism.

The following example expresses an oppositional relation between men and animals and thus leads a dualist approach between nature and culture. The narrator describes the young couple and the street but disregards the animals: “The young couple in the street, dancing, their arms curled gracefully around one another, the music from the restaurant carpark still in their heads, disappearing into her house, leaving the front door open, the street empty and quiet” (2002:19). After emphasizing the emptiness and quietness of the street, he continues: “A cat, waiting on a doorstep. Pigeons, dropping onto chimneytops” (2002:19). The cats waiting in front of the door and the birds nesting on top of the chimneys are evaluated in the context of natureculture. Yet, despite the existence of animals, the description of the street as silent and empty constitutes a duality. For Jeremy Bentham, the distinction between men and animals is irrational because ““a full-grown horse or dog is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as a more conversable animal, than an infant of a day or a week or even a month old” (Bentham, cited in Singer,1983:8). Therefore, the artificial boundary between humans and animals is arbitrary and irrelevant (Garrard,2004:137). As Haraway says “to be one is always to become with many” (2008:4). That’s why; our transformation to prevent the degradation of nature should include the revision of our relationship with our animal partners. Haraway suggests that one of the reasons for what we are experiencing a nature-culture dualism is the limited rhetoric we use. In an attempt to overcome this rhetoric she coins the word “crittercam” which involves “the machinic, human, and animal beings whose historically situated infoldings are the flesh of contemporary naturecultures” (2008: 261). This new word contains the technologies surrounding us and the other living organisms we share the earth with, and renders the question whether the nature is superior to man or vice versa superfluous by removing the hierarchy. Eliminating the hierarchy will help men to become aware of the fact that “every organism fits on the

phylogenetic tree without being above or below anything” (De Waal, 2001:83). Considering that we are living on an earth surrounded by naturecultures, classifications such as humans, animals and machines are both harmful and unnecessary (Gerrard, 2004: 205).

Another example of culture influencing nature occurs after the narrator meets his next neighbour, Sarah. After his neighbour leaves, he sits there “watching the flowers quivering each time a lorry went past, feeling the tremble echo along the bones of my spine” (2008:25). The novel especially emphasizes upon the idea that the culture consistently influences nature each time a lorry, which is a part of the cultural components, goes past. In this kind of dualistic representation, culture is put above nature. The influence of culture is portrayed so strong that its effect is enough to shake a natural element and the echo emanating from the tremble is felt along the bones of the narrator. Urban is a realm where culture and nature meet and this interaction is what helps urban areas grasp some heterogeneous and multidimensional characters (Schliephake, 2015:203). This conceptualizing of city by Andrea Edl as a “complex organism” calls for “a more encompassing understanding of “environment” that has to take account of both human-made and natural aspects (Schliephake,2015:203,). However, in the abovementioned excerpt, the interaction between the lorry and the flowers reflect a conflict between culture and nature, rather than projecting the heterogeneous and multidimensional aspects of the city as complex organism and reinforces a narrow understanding of urban environments.

The narrator looks back to a few years ago and we are invited to the conversation with his friend Simon. They are looking at the moons through their windows: “I’d looked at the two moons, each as clean and thin and new as each other, the same size, like twins of each other” (2002:26). In this instance, nature is not conceived in terms of dualistic terms. Watching the moon through the window is an instance of natureculture in which culture and nature are so tightly interwoven. Man-made artefacts and natural components are described in an inseparable relationship. However, when the windows are closed, a binary opposition between nature and culture is forced: “And I’d swung his window closed, and the reflection of

the moon on the night swung away into the room with it and he said oh right yeah I thought it would be something that” (2002:26). The continuity between the human and non-human is replaced by a discontinuity between each other when the window is closed. Just as in the previous examples where the only shadows of birds are depicted, this time only the reflection of the moon is shown to belong to the city. The moon either belongs to countryside or wide open spaces where are not touched by humans or is just a reflection. This understanding is a result of the hegemonic way of conceptualizing urban environments and continues to strongly influence our interpretation of urban environments: Construction of cities through urbanization is what separates us from nature and through which humans are isolated from non-humans (Angelo, 2017:160). As John Berger argues, “the relationship between what we see and what we know is not settled” which means that the way we perceive the interaction of culture and nature is a reflection of what we have been taught before (1972:7). So, through re-positioning our vision and re-describing what we see, we can change our perception about the relationship between nature and culture (Merrifield, 2013:911-912).

Later, we are invited to the bathroom of the man in his early twenties, living at number eighteen. The narrator attributes the disease of the eyes of the man to the light and dust in the air: “It’s light that makes his eyes hurt, mostly, bright or sudden light, and the dust in the air” (2002:31). Although, whether this statement creates a binary contrast remains enigmatic, it still allows a comparison between the countryside and the city, given that the character lives in a highly industrial city. It can be concluded that the reason of air pollution is thought to be connected to industrialization and urbanization. And in this case, together with urbanization, we encounter another example where culture supresses nature. Even though this uncertainty is enough to reflect the cultural and natural conflicts in the narrator's perception, the narrator makes it clear in the next paragraph that the cause of the dust in the air is the urbanization: “It’s worse in the city, with all the dust and the dirt, and it’s worse in the summer, with long bright days” (2002:32). It is wrong to say that all cities have more polluted air than rural areas. For example, according to *Regional Quality of Life Counts* published by the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions in Britain, a roadside in Sutton, a London suburb, was measured to have

the cleanest air in the country. Besides, some big cities like Liverpool and Manchester in the country have been found to have cleaner air than rural areas. So, the point should be whether or not all people are equally affected by pollution both in rural areas or cities. Equalizing the fresh air with the countryside and attributing polluted air to cities is a result of deep ecology's wilderness fixation. This obsession causes the ecocriticism to remain stuck within some narrow concepts by ignoring both the very existence of humanity as the main actors of urbanization and the different dimensions of environmental problems in metropolitan areas. Ascribing natural degradation caused by western capitalism through industry- on which both Deep ecology and Social Ecology agree with- to urbanization and humanity is to hold all humans equally responsible for environmental problems. And this problematic issue eventually leads the underestimation of the fact that the people of different race, class and gender in metropolitan places are affected most by the destruction of nature and its results.

Another dimension of the distinction between man and nature is discussed through the concepts of space and place. In the following abstract, humans locks themselves to the houses after the tension that foreshadows it will rain soon. This instance reinforces a dualistic perception between nature and culture in terms of space and place:

The day will soon burn with a particular brightness, hot and lethargic and tense. Later, it will rain, hard, suddenly, and the hot tarmac will steam and shine as water streaks across the surface into the gutters. And windows will be hurriedly closed, and people will stand in doorways, in shocked silences (2002:33).

Yi-Fi Tuan defines place as “enclosed and humanized space” and “domesticated space” and space is a more abstract concept including the whole universe (2001:54). In this regard, cities which consist of man-made artefacts means places and security and are associated with escaping the hazards of nature. So, urban places are considered as shields to protect humans from “nature’s undependability and violence” (Tuan, 1998:10). In other words, urban spaces are conceived as bulwarks to separate humans from nature and the civilized from wild (Gersdorf, 2016:1). Catrin Gersdorf argues that this separation is a very “...distinction between

the urban and the wild, between environments created and inhabited by humans, and environments created by natural forces and inhabited by non-human animals, plants and other living creatures” and interprets it as “an expression of our anthropocentric myopia” (2016:1). Illustrating humans rushing into houses and staying in shocked silence with the purpose of a defence against raining creates a distinction between man and culture through space-place dichotomy. The narrator once again reinforces the dichotomy in terms of space and place later when she remembers her childhood and says: “I remembered what she said when I was a child and stuck indoors over rainy weekends” and “And so I tried to follow her example that day, hemmed in by the rain” (2002:49). This distinction reveals “not only a repetition of the subject-object divide examined by Derrida and others, but also a spacing in between these categories” (Case, 2018:1). For Andrew Case, “such a concept sees the urban centre as the place where humans live, and whatever lies outside of these places as natural spaces” (2018:2). However, German biologist and nature writer Bernhard Kegel reminds us that “almost every place on earth is inhabited by organisms, and they include the beautiful and the ugly, the obnoxious and the admirable, the charismatic and disgusting, the wonderful and the dangerous”(Kegel, cited in Gersdorf, 2016:1-2). Moreover, the attempts to separate urban centre from nature through the concepts of place and space result in charging man and nature with the mission of object and subject in certain circumstances and this separation will eventually contradict with the philosophy of Haraway and Latour that distributing roles to both human and non-human entities as full-fledged actors instead of putting them in a situation of object or subject is the only medium to establish a nature-culture collective to overcome the Cartesian thought.

Some contemporary ecocritics considers that space and place division is interconnected to object and subject division and such dichotomies preserves anthropocentric environmentalism. Hence, they argue for the necessity of an in-between for ecological discourse. Because, separating the areas on the earth to belong to humans and non-humans is no different than upholding the dualistic discourse between man and nature. In this case, establishing an in-between discourse to involve both space and place, as Haraway did by coining the term *crittercam* to include the whole beings, is of vital importance. Timothy Morton in his *Ecology*

Without Nature argues that such a dichotomy is also ironical which “involves distancing and displacement, a moving from place to place, or even from homey place into lonely space” (2007:98). The whole earth is the mutual living space of the whole beings, therefore; separating the space and place doesn’t go beyond displacement of moving from one place to another. Instead of placing one entity as object and the other as subject or vice versa through the theorization of space and place, some critics argue that adopting some other concepts like spacing and displacement will help us to find alternative ways of living in community and peace with our non-human partners and entities.

One of the most obvious examples of the dualistic representation of the city and the countryside in *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* shows up when the female narrator opens the window after a rainy day: “Swinging the window open, and the flood of fresh summer air that had come sweeping in, the sweetness of a rolling wind that was still clean from the countryside” (2002:63). She juxtaposes the city with the country emphasizing that the air coming from the countryside is still clean. Such an expression implies that all places inhabited intensely by humans on the earth are polluted by modernity more than countryside. These kind of examples are interesting to see in an urban novel because they remind us the Romantic nature writing. And, the qualities such as clean air or clean water as in the given citation are associated with pure and untouched nature and form the basis for the longing of deep ecological thinking for wilderness and pure nature. Cronon argues that it cannot be advocated that humanity’s destructive effects on the ecosystem of the earth is inevitable or natural but “everything we know about the environmental history suggests that people have been manipulating the natural world” either this or that way according to the record we have so far about our history(1995:82). So, attributing the environmental issues such as pollution, lack of clean air or clean water to urbanization is unacceptable. In this case, once again, humans are turned into the target as usual suspects and are regarded as responsible for the degradation of nature for which the most important reason comes out to be their existence. Such reasoning creates a paradox because if the nature is polluted and we fall short of clean air or clean water just because of our existence, then as Cronon claims, the only way left “to save nature is to kill ourselves”(1995:82). In the light of this discussion, drawing

on a binary opposition between countryside and city in terms of clean air is a dualistic approach in that it reduces the reasons for our environmental crisis to the mere presence of humanity and thus; prevents the productive ways of making progress in solving the environmental problems.

Some of the dualistic examples in *Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* use the sun to give insight about the perception of nature-culture relationship. When the readers witness the emotions of female narrator, her observation is suggestive of a kind of natureculture at first sight in which nature and culture intertwine but later, it is replaced by a dualistic understanding: "I thought about how I'd gone and stood in Simon's room for a while, looking at the sunlight brightening and fading on the ceiling" (2002:64). At first glance, the scene seems to describe a notion of natureculture by portraying that, as a natural entity, the sunlight brightens the room. But then, the ceiling of the room turns out to be a cultural element that stops and fades the sunlight. The scene gives a dualistic impression that the nature ends where culture begins. The nature loses its freedom and independence while interacting with a human institution. It also leads the emergence of a metaphor that powerfully describes the exteriority of natural elements. Such a theorization underestimates the social complexity of the urban areas consisting of both natural and cultural entities. Distinguishing nature from culture in terms of their negative effects on each other is based on the false Cartesian thought which aims to suppress and degrade nature by first assimilating and externalising it and then reducing the intrinsic value of nature to nullify it.

Roughly at the same time, nature and culture changes the roles in terms of affecting each other negatively. This time, the female narrator depicts the sun as the dominant natural entity affecting the culture: "I took a poster off the wall to see how much the sunlight had faded the paint in the time I'd been there"(2002:65). As opposed to the previous example, the sun comes out to be the dominant force suppressing a cultural element. These two controversial samples lead to the discussions of determinism in ecocriticism. The conclusion drawn from the first instance is that the nature is considered as determined by culture. Piotr Jaroszynski argues that "nature is only a phenomenon created by an apriori synthesis of

impressions with the categories of the intellect. In this concept of nature, culture becomes an autonomous sphere in which we create the values” (2007, 220). That is, as the main actors of culture, humans are decision-makers in nature and determining the value to be given to it. And, the inference can be drawn from the second instance is that the culture is defined by nature in which nature includes culture. In this case, culture comes out to be the completion of nature and a product of it. The fact that critics have opposite ideas on this issue prevents the concentric analysis of the distinction. However, In both cases, these kinds of analyses of nature and culture distinction creates a hierarchy schema including the two realms in which either culture or nature will be the suppressor. Consequently, culture and nature end up being two different poles apart from each other which leads the dichotomy between the two.

Towards the middle of the book, we are invited into a striking adventure of the twins playing cricket on the street. When children heads to the garden of the house number fifteen to find their fleeing ball, they are amazed by what they see. The house is empty and it feels for twins like being in an underground chamber or a secret garden. When they go upstairs, the scene becomes more interesting and the reason for their astonishment becomes clear. The whole passage not only becomes a valuable source to make an analyse of the contemporary nature-culture dichotomy but also gives us a sense of the understanding of the nature in Middle Ages and provides an opportunity for a comparison. Humans are decentred in the whole passage in favour of plants and animals. The first example of decentring of humans confronts us in upstairs when the twins see:

the carpets and the walls, the beds and the chairs, the record players and the shoes and the clocks and the ashtrays, the way that all of it is hidden, furred over, concealed by a slow slather of wet growth, mould and moss and crusted lichen creeping over it all like a lascivious tongue, muffling the hard edges, crawling across the floor, climbing up the walls, clinging from the ceilings, thickening and flowering and spraying out spores to breed in any untouched corners (2002:134).

While the cities and components forming them are considered as a new or second nature, the given example gives insight into domination in which no place is given to humans to fit into nature and the culture with its components is transformed

into a pure nature. Even the walls, ceilings, chairs, carpets and wall clocks in the house are covered with mosses and flowers, and the effort of natural elements to occupy all the untouched corners in the house by spraying out their spores metaphorically decentralizes and leaves no room for humans and consequently the humans become a passive realm and other as a result of being externalized. The natural elements are represented as privileged life forms and the presence of humans in nature as actors is ignored. The scenario leads to a bifurcation and creates a boundary between human and non-human realms in favour of nature. Decentralization of humans enforces the assumption that humans and non-humans realms cannot share the same environment and such an assumption doesn't lead to the way of thinking to eliminate the traditional dichotomies. On the contrary, it removes us further from eco-egalitarianism.

The passage continues to create a dualism between human and nature in terms of decentralization while the twins wander around and discover the other rooms in the empty house. In another room of the house number fifteen, the role of mosses and plants is undertaken this time by animals but the idea remains the same; the humans are externalized and decentred:

Mice, making nests from scraps of magazines and bedding, their tiny pink eyes staring back at her. Bats, hanging in wardrobes like tiny folded umbrellas. Pigeons, clustered in the corner of another room, murmuring and scratching and loosening their droppings onto the threadbare carpet. Spiders' webs woven thicker than net curtains, skirting boards honeycombed by woodworm, blue-green algae blooming in the bathroom sink (2002:135).

Normally, human beings are supposed to be living in a man-made artefact and use it as a home. Yet, the passage illustrates every corner of a man-made artefact as the nests of non-human entities like mice, bats, pigeons and spiders. Dana Philips dismisses this pastoral discourse because of its "tendency to transmogrify and to splinter into different versions" (2003:7) He concludes that pastoral discourse lacks the necessary features to prevent the environmental degradation since "the context of this crisis is largely an urban one" (2003:146). Greg Garrard, on the other hand, believes that only "the relatively novel constructions of human animal and the whole Earth... seem to offer metaphors adequate to the novelty of our predicament" (2004: 176). The narrative of the passage seemingly puts the animals in human images, thus

reduces the very presence of humans by decentring them. While the illustration in the passage meets the expectations of Deep Ecology to satisfy the deep ecological consciousness, it is not possible to establish an ecocentric perspective by entirely effacing humans in a text.

The instances of decentring of humans and re-centring of natural realms or vice versa are successively evident throughout Jon McGregor's *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things*. For Dominic Head, this process is the procedures of post-structuralist philosophy. He brings forward that the process paradoxically involves a combination of decentring and re-centring: the traditional hierarchical assumptions between humans and non-human realms are overturned through decentring the suppositions they predicate on and installing a new transient judgement platform in a qualified re-centring (1998:65). Head believes in a necessity of constructing a new ecological thinking based on this paradoxical combination since prescribing a way of preventing environmental crisis from ecological perspective will vary according to the particular situation, thus; they should necessarily be provisional (1998:65).

The given passage is also remarkable in that the twins feel both bewilderment and terror in the presence of the deserted house. They find it both scary and exciting. The emotions the deserted house evokes -which is surrounded by mosses, plants and animals- coincides with the feelings one may experience in the presence of nature in the Middle Ages when nature was considered to be superior to humans, the image of God and God was the absolute authority. The passage takes the readers back to old times when the superior-subordinate relationship of humans and nonhumans was in favour of nature. In this way, it serves to the wilderness fixation of deep ecology member and their dreams. Some critics argue that such illustrations is attempted to destroy the Cartesian mind-body dualism and remind the readers the presence of God which prevented the intervention of humans to nature in the Middle Ages. Even so, acknowledging that it prevents the problematic mind-body dualism of modernity, it still forces a binary opposition between human and nature by placing nature superior to humans and ignoring the existence of human entities.

While following one of the twins, we come across one of the most interesting snapshots of dualism between humans and non-humans in the novel. The narrator

describes what the young girl would have found if she could manage to go to upstairs to the attic room using the steep and crumbling steps:

She would have found the one room left open to the light, she would have stood, breathless, picking cobwebs from her fingers and her face, staring at a whole meadow of wildflowers and grasses, poppies and oxeyes and flowering coriander, all flourishing in bird droppings and all lunging pointedly towards the one square foot of available sky (2002:135).

The paragraph startlingly displays a celebration of wilderness in an attic room of an abandoned building of an industrial city. The young girl almost experiences a sublime moment as she becomes breathless while being surrounded with cobwebs all around her and staring at an image of an abundant wildlife with all the wild flowers branching out the room. The lunging of the flowers to the open sky pointedly like an arrow indicates the negative effect of culture on natural life and suggests that natural entities can only claim a place on the earth away from humanity such as in a house abandoned by humans. Such an assumption again enforces the idea that non-human entities can only survive to the degree that humans allow or in a total absence of humanity. The earth is illustrated as a place that can either be claimed by humans or wilderness which contradicts with the availability of biodiversity in urban centres. Moreover, the description of the attic room as one of the lucky inches of place in the house having access to the sky and attributing the flourishing of plants and the presence of animals to that fact indicates that “the opportunity for plant and non-human animal life to exist in an urban space is limited” (Burnham and Ebdon, 2009:246). Humans are put in a position of occupying powers of urban spaces which is normally conceived of as belonging to natural life that will be claimed back at the first opportunity (Burnham and Ebdon, 2009:246).

We happen upon a similar representation through the end of the novel describing the non-human life being metaphorically restricted. Michael tells about his hitchhiking adventure in his childhood to the female narrator. A van stops and he gets on the back of the van. He narrates that “these shafts of sunlight were scanning around inside of the van as we turned corners”. The shafts of sunlight infiltrate inside through “a couple of thin slits in the roof” (2002:233). A dualistic relationship between nature and culture in miniature is hinted at here. What brightens inside is not

the sun but the shafts of the sunlight which find a way through the holes in the roof. The van as a cultural component is metaphorically described as a force limiting the opportunity of nature.

The female narrator's voyage to her hometown also gives some insights about nature-culture dualism contradicting wide open spaces with cities. She contradicts culture with wide open spaces and describes nature as something which locates somewhere outside the city as long as cultural components allows: "It was a long journey, and I spent most of the time staring out of the window, watching the scenery change as we got further north, buildings and roads giving way to empty swathes of heather and sheep" (2002:105). The scenery doesn't involve the cultural and natural entities at the same time. The nature and culture is separated from each other with a border. The buildings give way to heather and then nature begins. Put this, the nature is described as located outside culture and begins somewhere where cultural components disappear.

An ecocritical view of urban novels also requires an analysis of the textual form and punctuations. Since contemporary urban novels don't include an ecological concern but draw attention to their form and experimental structure and focus on social developments rather than environmental matter, analysing the textual forms and punctuations enables us to capture the ecological aspects of urban novels.(Bracke, 2014:246).In this context, focusing on what is described in *Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* unlike the traditional ecocritics who focus on how it is described gives the readers some insights that the use of punctuations and form to represent the rain fall in the novel also leads to a dualism between nature and humans.

The period between the beginning and stopping of the rain fall spreads to two pages and tens of paragraphs in *Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things*. The tension makes itself felt when it begins to rain slowly, reaches to climax towards the centre when the rain pours down and leaves its place to a quiet atmosphere with the rain resting. The tension starting with drizzles is emphasized through commas (Bracke,2014:428): "One, two, three drops at a time, a slow streak down a bedroom window, a wet thud onto a newspaper page, a hiss onto barbecue coals"(2002:209).

The commas that are used in the sentence foreshadow the intensity that will be created with the rain fall. Once the rain falls reach to a climax, the tension rises and the intensity of tension is described in one long sentence which doesn't end up with a full stop. The climax spreads to over nine paragraphs and over fifty lines until closed by a full stop. Each sentence begins with "the rain falls" to illustrate the power and tension of the rain fall. According to Bracke, while the delayed full stops highlight the speed-up of the rain, the few commas used in the following sentence demonstrates its force as an external power approaching (2014:429):

the rain falls and seeps through the cracks in the felt roof of the attic at number twenty-two, the girl with short hair and the glasses repositioning an empty icecream tub for the last time, watching the pond-ripples slipping back and forth as each invading drop falls from the stained ceiling (2002:211).

The passage illustrates the power of rain using both -s- sounds such as falls, seeps, ripples and the appendix -ing- like repositioning, watching, invading (Bracke, 2014:429). Delineating rain fall as an external power causing a tension and an invading phenomenon leads to a kind of perception that humans and nature two realms unfamiliar to each other. Considering that it is an urban novel, the passage is also the indication of the false reality that alienation of nature and humans stems from the culture of which the main component is cities. While the female narrator describes the climax with nine long sentence that doesn't end up with full stop, she illustrates the beginning of the rain stop with four paragraphs which begin with "the rain falters", "the rain slows further", "the rain falls gently now" and "the rain fades away" (2002:212-213). As the rain begins to slow down, more commas and punctuations are used through which it is implied that the danger and stress generated upon humans is gradually decreasing:

the rain falls, gently now, past the small window of the attic flat of number twenty-one, the man with the tattoo is in bed again, smoking, and the woman with the henna-red hair is scooping up fallen petals from around a vase of roses, roses she had already kept for longer than they were intended to be kept, she takes the fallen petals and stuffs them into an empty jamjar (2002:213).

As the rain fall slows down, the pacing of the sentence decelerates accordingly with the punctuations. While the rain reaches the climax in the former

related paragraphs, the narrator focuses on the raindrops' touch on the cultural components and how they are affected. The raindrops are illustrated such as bouncing off the pavements powerfully, hammering anything on the earth, changing colour of the environment, muffling up the other sounds, touching on the curtains, leaking from the roofs and dropping from the ceilings etc. This focalization reflects the rain as an extrinsic and invading power suppressing the humans. Yet, when the rain slows down, the narrator once again begins to zoom in on the characters and daily routines. She doesn't describe the rainfall, but daily routines of characters such as man smoking a cigarette and the woman putting the roses into a vase. In the next paragraph, the rain stops completely and signs of life shows up in the street and everything returns to normal:

as the rain fades away there is stillness and quiet, light flooding rapidly into the street and through windows and open doors, the last few drops falling conspicuously onto an already steaming pavement,... there is a quietness like a slow exhalation of tension that lasts only a moment before the children move back into the road,...the storm passing across the rest of the city and out into the hills beyond (2002:213).

As the rain stops completely, accordingly, the consonances recalling the power of the rain decrease. The pace of the sentence also simultaneously slows down when the storm leaves the city and leads out into the hills around (Bracke, 2014:430). The quietness induced by the tension is only broken with the children moving into the street after the rain stop. Regarding this, throughout the novel, the quietness coming out with rain falls and humans' locking themselves into houses leads a dualistic perception that humans and nature cannot share the same environment. Furthermore, in particular with the latest paragraph, the hills are described out the city which indicates that there is a border between nature and humans or culture and nature. Such a conception leads to the false understanding that pure natural elements such as hills, mountains, rivers and lakes are necessarily out the cities and separated from cities with a border. Considering the cities built around the lakes, the houses built on the hills, the lake-side parks; such an illustration results in being a self-refuting idea.

The last example of human-nature relationship in terms of dualistic perspective appears in the conversation between the parents of the twins in the

bedroom of the house number nineteen. The woman flashbacks to the feelings she felt in her pregnancy period. She tells her husband that in pregnancy she feels like a mammal. When her husband laughs and says that humans are mammals as well, she continues to explain in detailed that:

...she felt like a damn elephant, a whale, huge and stately and balloon-like but also...not like a human at all, like an animal, locked into a process much bigger than herself, more than one human being, she meant that she felt part of a species, part of something that nature was doing and she had no control of (2002:227).

The fact that the woman feels weak due to pregnancy is the reason she reduces herself to the level of animals, which is actually a signification that she normally accepts herself superior. It becomes explicit that she approves herself as superior when she emphasizes the statement “damn” while resembling herself to animals such as elephant and whale. As long as we go back to the Middle Ages, we would remember that the superiority of nature to human beings was associated with the human being's feeling powerless and vulnerable to nature before the spreading of the mechanistic worldview. In the given abstract, the illustration of woman as being in control of nothing and under the regimen of nature can be considered to be the results of self-defence instinct and vulnerability. The both examples are related to each other in that the powerless facet accepts itself under the heel of and the subordinate of the sublime one. Such an understanding also means that the balance of power will constantly change according to circumstances and that man and nature will never be equal. In other words, once one side seizes the power, either man or nature will again reclaim the superiority that was temporarily borrowed by the other. The passage leads the dualistic perception that the process in which the woman feels powerless against nature and resembles herself to defenceless animals will end up after the pregnancy when she holds the power again and in consequence she will once again externalize and patronise on animals and the nature.

2.2. Naturalcultural Representations

In this section, I will use the terms “natureculture” or “urban nature” to refer to the multidimensional interfaces between humans, nonhumans and culture within an urban centre in *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things*. Naturalcultural images

include the representations in which natural and cultural elements are both simultaneously actors and participants in partaking and developing mutual urban ecologies (Augustine Fuentes). In this mutual ecology, both nature and culture are characterized as truly belonging to the cities and aligning with each other as opposed to dualistic representations. This ethos is evident in the novel when the first person narrator wakes up in the middle of night apparently with the rain fall:

It rained for a day and a half. It woke me up in the middle of the night, a quiet noise at first, burbling across the roof, spattering through the leaves of the trees, and it was good to lie there for a while and listen to it (2002:49).

At first glance, the passage seems to enforce another binary opposition between culture and nature by giving the impression that nature interrupts life by awakening the human sleeping in his bedroom. But later, the character clearly reveals his satisfaction from this situation explaining that he enjoys lying there and listening to the sounds of the leaves of the trees and rain drops. The narrator can even hear the sound of rain drops splashing from the leaves of the trees from her bedroom. The passage indicates that even in the least expected milieux of our daily lives, human and nonhuman entities have always been bound up with each other in multiple ways which negates the strained culture and nature binary division and makes it impossible to keep alive. The instance serves as a model of ecological niche and urban ecology in a highly industrial urban centre where human and nonhuman partners are described as living in collectivity with each other. In this way, the image not only comes out to be a description of the city as a complex living organism with humans, rainfalls, trees and man-made artefact existing in a harmony, but also attracts notice to the presence of non-human life in an urban environment which is problematically perceived “as the spatial and organizational epitome of human societies” (Gersdorf, 2016:3). Notably, the representation becomes an example of natureculture in which natural and cultural components are enmeshed with each other.

When the omniscient narrator talks to his friend Sarah on the phone, he becomes confused and dreams about Sarah remembering the old days and the long summer holidays they spent together. At a time when he doesn't know what to say he talks about the postcard his friend Rob sent him from Peru. Then, he looks at the card

to see the intertwining of culture and nature. Though it remains ambiguous whether the image reflects an urban centre or not, the culture and nature relationship makes it remarkable to be analysed in terms of ecocriticism: “I looked at the front of the card, at the pictures of Peru, smiling women in traditional dress, mountains, and monkeys in fruit trees” (2002:23).

The cultural and natural components are described harmoniously with being each other. The traditional anthropocentric hierarchy is broken as the natural components such as monkeys, mountains and trees emerge as a powerful presence along with human partners. It is worth nothing that monkeys and mountains are generally perceived as belonging to wilderness by Deep Ecology activists. Thus, what makes the postcard valuable in terms of ecocriticism is that it not only merges the human and nonhuman but also melts the boundaries such as wilderness, urban and countryside on which much of the culture and nature dichotomy dwells on. Besides, by blurring the both realms, the description makes it impossible to render one of the realms as the other. The environment portrayed involves such an uncertainty that it cannot be defined as culture or nature separately for which Oppermann argues: “... in the age of environmental uncertainty, the natural and the cultural can no longer be thought of as dichotomous categories” (Iovino and Oppermann, 2012b: 462). So, the image described is neither natural nor cultural, it is an illustration of natureculture. And, this illustration makes it necessary to rethink the juxtaposed entities as a circulating system (Iovino and Oppermann, 2012b: 454). To get back to the abstract again, the emphasis on the women’s smile and the monkey’s feeding on a fruitful tree and mountain possibly appearing behind demonstrates that both culture and nature are pleasant with coexisting in the same environment and giving voice to both realms is one of the key elements leading such a picture. It is a picture of both distinct and independent but intermeshed different realms.

Roughly at the same time, during a period when the conversation with Sarah on the phone comes to a stopping point, the cultural and natural components fits into the same picture when the omniscient narrator describes what he was busy with: “I straightened the flowers in the vase on the table, pulled out the dead leaves. I watched the traffic lights changing in the street outside” (2002:24). The description

exhibits that man-made artefacts are not only shelters to protect humans from nature but environments where human and nonhuman components encounter. In terms of ecology, city is a heterogeneous space which means that an urban environment is a continuum of different parts. Each part has a distinctive ecological meaning, physical property and use. Houses constitute one area of this continuum. So, the portrayed picture can be regarded as an example of the interaction between social and nature in a house. The illustration of the character as taking care of the plant in a vase while at the same time being able to watch the traffic lights shows that nature and culture encounters might be simultaneously everywhere. The scene is also remarkable in indicating that both nature and culture are infused with each other at any time or place and that both realms are integral part of the ecosystem we all share.

If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things not only represents the intertwining of human and nature in a highly industrial city but also provides a holistic view of both parks, which Buell explicitly describes as “a lesser kind of nature that cannot match the expansiveness and sublime experience of wilderness” and rivers that are regarded as components of pure nature through a single perspective. (Bracke,2013:10). When the omniscient narrator looks out the window from his house after speaking to Sarah on the phone, we are invited to a landscape that is consistent with the presence of a second nature in a city:

I saw the moon appearing, low and white over the park by the river. I remembered the time Simon had called me through to his room, saying look out of the window, a dark night and the moon was bright and crisp away to the left, a thing crescent like a clipped fingernail (2002:25).

Suddenly, there is a park, a river and the moon that fits into a single angle through the window. The scenery shows that urbanization is not opposed to nature unlike the traditional ecocriticism argues. It reflects that characteristics of natural process in urban centres in which transformation of nature along with the pure natural elements compose a second nature. As Anne Spirn suggests, cities are not the mediums of degrading nature, rather; they “transform it producing a characteristically urban natural environments” (1985:42). The park and the river generating an urban natural environment is also an indication of the open spaces in urban centre. Being able to see these open spaces through the window shows that

they are not isolated from cities but embedded in the built environment and experienced holistically with urbans (Burgess et al. 1988:459). Another quality of open spaces such as parks composing urban environments is that they are considered as new designs creating new methods of interaction between society and nature. They are the outcomes of a collaborative process in an attempt to create a socially inclusive setting as well as involving the community. In this respect, the urban realm in *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* includes a non-traditional nature that can stand as a corrective to the prejudice of the traditional ecocritical readings of urban ecologies (Bracke, 2014:431). Open spaces in urban areas are mediums for the connection of humans and nature, therefore; they cannot be regarded as a lesser form of nature, echo or remnant. They include the characteristics of urban ecology which make them precisely valued. The description of these realms in the novel is not the suggestive of the absence of real nature but the presence of an urban nature in a built environment.

Besides, the abstract is particularly notable in that the vision of the moon is not described in a dualistic perspective as in the previous samples. The vision represents the moon as itself not as a shadow or the reflection. While watching the moon appearing on the left side, Simon draws attention to the right side, the presence of a second moon that is pretty visible, saying: “look over there, look over that way, pointing away to the right, to a second moon as bright and crisp as the first” (2002:25). The visibility of the two moons simultaneously from a single angle shows that the possibility of the natural components in an urban environment is not necessarily restricted by culture, the man-made artefacts. They are not natural realms peculiar to rural areas. With their distinctness and independency, two moons are over the sky brightening the culture probably with the other lights reflection upon the streets.

In the next chapter, we are invited to the backyard of the number nineteen while a woman is hanging out the laundry. The description of the smell of the air infused with the smell of the laundry is a combination of nature and cultural artefacts when she inhales: “She breathes slowly and deeply, and for now the air smells clean, infused with the bright wetness of clean laundry” (2002:27). The smell inhaled is not

described in natural terms; it is neither natural nor cultural. The ambiguity of the natural phenomenon signals the transformation of natural qualities and naturalcultural characteristics of urban environments. The wetness of clean laundry is not a cultural medium to spoil the characteristic of the smell of the air. Rather, cultural and natural conflation give way to an urban ecology in which two different phenomenon are shaped and influenced by each other. The quoted passage doesn't mention about the earthy smell of the air and juxtapose it with the non-natural associations. The intrinsic and instrumental values of both natural and non-natural associations are protected through redressing a balance between them. Iovino and Oppermann argue from an ontological perspective that "there is no solid ground, no foundation, no safe place to stand... we dwell within and as part of a dynamic, intra-active world" (2012b: 490). Cultural and natural entities are everywhere and inherently affect every aspect our life including the smell of the air, so they can't be considered separately. The fact that nature and culture "dwell within and as part of a dynamic, intra-active...world" is the indication that both realms are entangled with each other and this cooperation is visible and perceptible in every corner of the earth we inhabit (2012b:490).

Another example of culture and nature interconnectedness that reflects the urban ecology in *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* is the rain fall. The rain shower in the afternoon suspends the life on the street and causes people to flee to their houses in a rush. When viewed from this aspect, just like Bracke says, it gives the impression that another dualistic representation of culture and nature is illustrated. It might be easily perceived that as a natural entity, the rain with all its glory affects the people and their lives in an urban centre, namely the culture, in a negative way by interrupting and forcing them to their houses (Bracke, 2014:428). However, when looked at carefully, it turns out that the situation is different from what it is supposed to be. The case is not as white and black as observed at first sight (Bracke, 2014:428). The description of the approaching rain shower involves the intertwinement of the characteristics of natural and non-natural entities in the scent of the rain:

And there's a smell in the air, swelling and rolling, a smell like metal scraped clean of rust, a hard cleanness, the air tight with it, sprung, an electric tingle winding from the ground to the sky, a smell that unfurls in the back of the mouth, dense, clammy, a smell without a name but easy to recognise and everyone in the street knows it, besides the children, everyone is smelling the air and looking upwards, saying or thinking it smells like rain (2002:208).

Entitling something as culture or nature wouldn't be a tough issue for as long as a few decades ago. However, with the increase of urbanization, natural and cultural aspects became so intertwined that, as in the quoted passage, nobody is able to name something as purely nature or culture, yet everybody recognizes and know what it is. The fact that everyone knows what the smell in the air connotes but cannot name it except the children can also be interpreted as the indication of the reality that the interaction of culture and nature does not have a long history. Besides, the avoidance of traditional ecocriticism to deal with urban ecology apparently leads the alienation of people from realities and description of the factual phenomenon that humans encounter in their daily lives with only connotations.

The qualities of the rain are not represented with expressions that recall nature. The omniscient narrator doesn't mention about the scent of the rain as earthy or natural, rather, he uses the terms that have more industrial connotations such as "metal scraped clean of rust" and "electric tingle" (Bracke,2014:428). Such an illustration including the conflation of natural and non-natural entities displays the significant transformation that the nature has undergone. Rain has become an ambiguous concept that is still recognizable but hard to name it. It is neither nature nor culture alone, but the combination of both and constitutes an apt example of natureculture belonging to urban ecology. Astrid Bracke refers to Bill McKibben to clarify the transformation of nature in terms of rain shower. For her, the transformation of nature can be described within the concept of Industrial Revolution and especially the nuclear tests and this process resulted in "the end of nature". The description of rain shower with industrial connotations is the indication of the end of the pure nature. Because, the very presence of humans and the culture they create renders the nature no longer a power separate from humanity and culture, it is shaped and influenced as long as we don't ignore the presence of humanity or unless we offer a solution such as a mass suicide to the existing paradox of traditional

ecocriticism as Cronon suggests. Bill McKibben, in his well-known book *The End of Nature* about global change, regards humanity responsible for killing nature. Although, he problematically argues that environment must be pristine to be nature, thus ignores the presence of humanity, his declaration is evident for the global dimension of nature and culture interaction: “Beginning with the invisible releases of radiation, and then the toxic pollutants like DDT, and then the by-products of large-scale industrialization like acid rain...we began to alter even those places where we were not” (1992: xix). Regarding this, while the previous generations were resided in a nature relatively unaffected by their activities, the situation is slightly different for the next generations (Cronon, 1995:82). This indicates that we and the next generations, from now onward, will share a biosphere completely changed as a result of our actions; “a planet in which the human and the natural can no longer be distinguished because the one has overwhelmed the other” (Cronon, 1995:82). The quoted passage from the novel is consistent with this argument. The qualities of rain shower has undergone such a transformation arising from our actions that it has become more ambiguous than before, so it can’t be described as culture or nature, it is naturalcultural and signals for urban ecology.

Halfway the novel, we are confronted with another instance when natural components are not narrated in dualistic terms but as part of the city. The first person female narrator talks to her mother on the phone. While looking for the ways of telling her mother that she is pregnant, she gets lost in thoughts and becomes short of breath. Then, she opens the window to get some air:

I open the window to get some air into the room, and a burst of noise rushes in. Traffic, and shouting, and music. And birdsong, from somewhere up on the roof, a thin twitter that creeps and tangles in with all the other sounds (2002:80-1).

The natural and non-natural components are narrated within the same composition. The sound of the twitter is not distinguished from the sounds of cultural elements. They all come together to form a common dominator. Instead of being shown as something different from other city sounds such as the sounds of car, people and music, the sound of the twitter creeping on the roof is considered in the same category with the others (Bracke, 2014:427). The sounds of the cultural or

natural components are not described as a counter sound to interfere in the other. The distinctness and independence of each component is preserved while being presented as part of the same whole that is the city. Due to such an intensive entanglement, a more-than-human way of collaborative coexistence appears to dominate urban spaces in which dichotomies between nature and culture or human and non-human are replaced with what can be defined as natureculture or naturalcultural. The components that are generally perceived as natural can be observed from the citations that they are not ignored or discriminated from urban environments but they collaborate with cultural elements and become as equally arbiters and actants to transform the urban spaces to mutual living quarters.

In another example, two girls in front of the house number twenty-two are watching a pigeon flying up the street and trying to understand the actions of the pigeon. The description of the movements by the narrator gives the impression that the pigeon is building a nest on the top of a shop:

They've been watching it for a while, arguing about it. They've noticed that whenever it comes back it's not carrying anything, but when it flies up towards the shop it has something crammed in its beak, a leaf, a twig, a piece of string (2002:148).

The attempts of the pigeon to build a nest on the roof of a shop can be evaluated from different aspects in terms of urban ecology. Firstly, the illustration reveals that urban environments stand for second nature not only for humans but for non-humans as well. The controversy about whether the built environments are artificial or natural can be acceptable to some extent since humans are both culture and nature considering the hybridity of humanity. Yet, the fact that most birds build their dens or nests in man-made artefacts plays out the distinction between artificial and natural in terms of urban spaces. The participation of the animals as domesticators and actors of what we count as second nature along with human beings makes such a distinction no longer relevant. So, the role of the birds comes out to be strong evidence that urban environments are not places where society and nature are separated as opposed to conventional beliefs. Secondly, the natural qualities of the items the pigeon carries such as leaf, twig and string to build a nest confute the assumption that urban environments are artificial. The instance has an evidential

value in that nothing can be created from nothing and serves as a model for the transformation of nature not by humans but non-humans. Besides, it is an example of close relationship and collaboration between animals and humans. Thirdly, the adaptation of animals to urban spaces gives clues about how biodiversity and ecosystem functions in urban environments. Understanding this functioning will help to understand and minimize the undesirable effect of humans on non-humans. Contrary to conventional assumption that urbanization leads to extinction of species, an evolutionary biologist Menno Schilthuizen takes an opposite view in his *Darwin Comes to Town* and defines the urban spaces as “powerhouses of evolution” (2018:45). He concludes that there are many startling results in terms of adaptation of animals to their new surroundings. Hence, acknowledging the adaptation process is a key element to preserve the biodiversity in urban environments which will rule out the negative impacts of urbanization on diversity.

Roughly at the same time, the narrator articulates the feeling of the girl with glasses while watching the pigeons. He continues to describe that for the first time she “notices...how graceful the pigeon looks, head stretched forward, feet tucked in under a curved belly, wings carefully angled to catch the breeze” (2002:148). The detailed description of the pigeon shows that urbanization is not necessarily a medium for the alienation of humans and non-humans. As long as biodiversity is appreciated and the functioning of urban ecology is acknowledged, neither humans nor non-humans will be externalized. According to Tim Ingold, the entanglement of humans with non-humans is most apparent in urban environments (2011:84). Because urbanization provides more opportunities than wilderness for humans to interact with non-humans. The key point here is the urban residents’ willingness to coexist and embrace non-humans as the co-inhabitants of the urbans. Our willingness prevents the alienation that is described as the “extinction of experience” which in return affects the biodiversity negatively (Soga and Gaston, 2016:96). It is emphasized that personal contact with non-humans is “vital to forge a person’s emotional intimacy with nature, which is never replaced by other vicarious experiences” (Soga and Gaston, 2016:97). In the novel, the girl’s willingness to acknowledge the pigeon in detailed poses an example of the urban residents’ willingness to coexist with non-humans in an urban centre and the direct contact of

the both. The mentioned encounter is also an indication of the humans' "deep and emotional tendency to affiliate with nature" (Soga and Gaston, 2016:97). Another instance of a close contact between humans and non-humans happens when a young girl runs in a front garden. She "runs past a pigeon in a puddle, beating water across its wings" (2002:240). The young girl and the pigeon seem to share the same garden in an urban environment. They are not alienated to each other. The instance is narrated as a usual coincidence when the girl splashes water to pigeon which indicates that the presence of humans and non-humans in a mutual environment can be internalized.

Through the end of the novel, the narrator presents a panoramic view of the city that can be considered as a summary of the cultural and natural interactions in an urban environment. The boy with the pierced eyebrow scans the city with a three-sixty vision and shows that every corner of the city has a quality of more-than-human when he overserves:

There is a bird stretching out its wings to steady itself on a high branch of the tree outside the old couple's house, there's a cat rolling in the dust outside his own house, a white cat, there are wildflowers growing in the mulch of a blocked gutter on the roof of number fifteen, overflowing and hanging down across the brickwork, tiny white flowers in a spray, larger yellow ones, poppies (2002:252).

The panoramic view is an evident for the presence of non-human life in every corner of the city. From birds and cats to wild flowers, the natural components seem to have become an integral part of the city. The snapshots are significant for both moving beyond anthropocentrism by giving agency to non-human realm and demonstrating that urbanization doesn't convert nature into something completely different. The built environment is not acclaimed by either realm but shared and used mutually. The urban ecosystem created by humans provides habitats for non-humans as well.

CONCLUSION

For a long time, I had felt alienated by this urban landscape; I had grown up in a small market town in East Anglia, and I missed the open spaces, the flat land, the ability to wander from my front door to the woods and the streams of the countryside close at hand. I resented the noise and the enforced hurry of urban living, the litter, the disregard, the fear of violence. But that night, standing on the roof and hearing the symphony of the city by night, I fell in love. I decided to write a novel about this love, and I decided that it would begin here, in the brief moment of quiet before the dawn (Gregor, cited in Edwards, 2010:217).

What Jon McGregor has written in his essay “Waking Up” sheds light on the representations of man-nature and culture-nature relationships in his urban novel *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things*. The replacement of the author’s passion to be in touch with nature with the infatuation with city can be described as the reason behind the shifts between nature and culture in an urban environment throughout the novel. Whereas, culture and nature are represented as the equal companions of the city in a few narrations, the novel mostly illustrates the dichotomy between city and countryside. The natural dimension of the city is mostly ignored and nature takes place as a marginalized realm in the novel. Hence, aside from a few instances that fetishizes nature and wilderness which is the general characteristics of environmental-oriented works, the general absence of nature requires the development of new strategies for the ecocritical reading of the book. Based on this fact, focusing on textuality, punctuations and narrative discourse have become the key element for analysing the novel in terms of ecocriticism.

Buell describes six metaphors including “city-nature binary”, “city as a macro-organism”, “city as palimpsest”, “city as fragmentary assemblage”, “city as network”, and “city as apocalypse” to provide urban ecocritics some methods to analyse the place of nature in urban spaces (2010:5-14). Of the six metaphors, the city Jon McGregor introduces in his fiction shifts from creating a binary opposition between nature and urban places to representing a mutual place in terms of a network or macro-organism embracing both natural and cultural entities. While the representation of city as a network or macro-organism reflects the naturalcultural aspect of city in which natural elements are depicted as enmeshed with culture and completely part of the whole, the characteristic of city as a natureculture can

suddenly be replaced in the novel with a dualistic approach in which nature is presented as fundamentally other and isolated from urban places. On the one hand, nature is depicted as being separated from culture and controllable by humans to serve the problematic thought of modernity, on the other hand, nature is a self-governing and independent realm. While in some parts, human and nature relationship in the given urban environment is at odds and includes a tension and aggressiveness, in some other parts, the two realms becomes the equal collaborators to create an urban ecology. The sudden shifts from naturalcultural representations to dualistic representations in a way contribute to ecocriticism in terms of developing a realistic approach. Within this context, the novel gives insights about the mankind's contemporary perception of nature.

In the naturalcultural depictions of the narrators, man-nature and culture-nature doubles find a common ground in an industrial city. In such instances, nature-culture and nature-human collaborations are seen obviously in an environment in which both realms form a whole along with protecting their differences and distinctness. Neither culture – humans being the most particular component- nor nature is degraded in that scenario. Non-human life including animals becomes an essential part of the city. The city, on the other hand, as opposed to the traditional assumption, comes out to be a critical medium for the close contact of nature and humans by providing an environment which cannot be completely claimed by either side but embraced mutually. Parks, rivers and moon seen from a single angle from the window of a building which is a cultural component, the emphasis on the smell of the rain associated with industry rather than its earthy quality, the emphasis on the clean smell of the air combined with the smell of the laundry, the harmony created by human and non-human sounds, and snapshots about the adoption of animals to city life, all reflect the characteristics of modern cities as a second nature. Such transformations do not imply the absence of nature in urban environments; rather indicate the fact that, as Matthew Gandy suggests, “nature has a social and cultural history that has enriched countless dimensions of urban experience” (2002:2). Accordingly, nature cannot be separated from the cultural and social history of humanity. Parallel to the historical changes and substantiality of nature in cities, “the design, use, and meaning of urban space involve the transformation of nature into a

new synthesis” (Gandy,2002:2). Such kind of mutual interactions between nature and culture are what make the urban ecology a complex mosaic. The naturalcultural coincidences in the novel demonstrate that neither nature nor humans cannot be degraded in an urban environment.

Dualistic approaches in *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* revolve around concepts such as light and darkness and space and place along with sight, sounds and the quality of air to create a contrast between countryside and urban environments. Throughout the novel, the rain becomes a prominent element to enforce the dichotomy between culture and nature. The use of textuality and punctuations to describe the rain fall that extends to a few pages gives nature prominence against culture and gradually increases the tension between the two realms. During the rainfalls, man-made artefacts are rendered as shelters for humanity to protect from the awakening of the nature. Man-made artefacts become a space isolating humanity from nature until the rain stops. Once the rain stops, once again the city and the streets are taken by humans. Such a strategy drastically ends up with a lack of rootedness and belonging to urban environments in terms of both nature and culture. The shadows of the pigeons depicted in some of the narrations, on the other hand, makes the impression that natural components belongs to countryside and what is left to cities can only be the shadows.

In addition to instances of the binary oppositions between countryside and city, the dualistic representations in the novel are also noteworthy in that the power balances between man and nature are in a constant change. Put it differently, degradation of nature is followed by decentralization of humans and this cycle repeats itself constantly. To set an example, whereas humans are decentralized in favour of a kind of wilderness fixation in the narration of the abandoned house in which animals and wild flowers are described as if claiming their own place somehow borrowed by humans; the balance of power evolves in favour of humans in another representation where the very presence of animals on the street is ignored and the street is described as empty.

Despite the abovementioned contradictory points of view and several clashes between culture and nature in the novel, *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things*

demonstrates that there is such a thing as urban nature. Natural representations show that urban environment and nature are not antithetical. The city described in the novel truly is a part of ecosystem with the natural and cultural co-conspirators it includes. Moreover, in terms of describing the experiences of humans and nonhumans in an urban environment, the urban novel I analysed becomes more remarkable than the traditional nature writings. Because, the novel not only includes the representations of pure nature but also provides an overall relationship between humans and nature which is the basis of our environmental crisis. Then, an ecocritical reading of *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* renders the opportunity to analyse the very existence of both realms in a single environment with both negative and positive aspects. Another important factor that makes the urban novel that I analysed is that it provides an opportunity for an objective ecocritical evaluation in terms of human-nature relationship. Such a quality makes it an undeniable fact that a fictional urban novel which was not written with the intention of advocating neither culture nor nature will contribute to ecocriticism in terms of including both realms and rendering the contemporary appreciation of nature and its place in urban environments.

Patrick Markee reminds us that “the twenty-first century will dawn on a world in which , for the first time, more people live in urban areas than in the countryside”(1996:27). Such a fact makes it necessary to broaden the framework of ecocriticism to include urban ecocriticism, as well. Urban environments also reminds us that considering the presence of humanity, there is not an unmediated way of being in contact with nature and “all environments- wild, cultivated and built- are only approachable through language, community and culture- a lesson that is needed to counteract the anti-theoretical bias of deep ecocriticism” and its fetishization of wilderness (Bennett, 2011:46). In the light of this information, *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* comes out to be a remarkable urban fiction in terms of both breaking the chains of ecocriticism and completing ecocriticism through ending the obsessions of deep ecocriticism with rural, western and wilderness. Although, proving the existence of urban ecology may not be a solution to the environmental problems, it is certainly useful to reveal the complexity of the historical relations between culture and nature. Hence, unless a cultural based understanding of ecology,

-as it is explicit in *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things*- is achieved and urban environments is regarded as an undeniable part of ecosystem, ecocriticism will continue to remain an uncompleted and undertheorized field.



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Yıl	Yer	Görev
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2014-2015	İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi	Öğretim Görevlisi
2015-2019	Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi	Araştırma Görevlisi

Yabancı Dil

İngilizce ve Fransızca

Hobiler

Edebiyat, Sinema, Satranç.

VAN YÜZÜNCÜ YIL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

LİSANSÜSTÜ TEZ ORJİNALLİK RAPORU

.../.../2019

“AN INVESTIGATION OF AN URBAN NOVEL FROM AN ECOCRITICAL VIEW: IF NOBODY SPEAKS OF REMARKABLE THINGS BY JON MCGREGOR”

Yukarıda başlığı/konusu belirlenen tez çalışmamın Kapak sayfası, Giriş, Ana bölümler ve Sonuç bölümlerinden oluşan toplam 78 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 27.05.2019 tarihinde şahsım tarafından Turnitin intihal tespit programından aşağıda belirtilen filtreleme uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı % 13 (on üç) tür.

Uygulanan Filtreler Aşağıda Verilmiştir:

- Kabul ve onay sayfası hariç,
- Teşekkür hariç,
- İçindekiler hariç,
- Simge ve kısaltmalar hariç,
- Gereç ve yöntemler hariç,
- Kaynakça hariç,
- Alıntılar hariç,
- Tezden çıkan yayınlar hariç,
- 7 kelimeden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç (Limit match size to 7 words)

Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Tez Orijinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılmasına İlişkin Yönergeyi İnceledim ve bu yönergede belirtilen azami benzerlik oranlarına göre tez çalışmamın herhangi bir intihal içemediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini bilgilerinize arz ederim.

27/05/2019
Sedat TAŞIN

Adı Soyadı : Sedat TAŞIN
Öğrenci No : 159201203
Anabilim Dalı : İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı
Programı : İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Statüsü : Y. Lisans ☒ Doktora

DANIŞMAN
Dr. Öğr. Ü. Metin BARLIK

...../...../2019

ENSTİTÜ ONAYI
U Y G U N D U R
...../...../2019

Doç Dr. Bekir KOÇLAR
Enstitü Müdürü

VAN YÜZÜNCÜ YIL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

LİSANSÜSTÜ TEZ ORJİNALLİK RAPORU

18.106/2019

“AN INVESTIGATION OF AN URBAN NOVEL FROM AN ECOCRITICAL VIEW: IF NOBODY SPEAKS OF REMARKABLE THINGS BY JON MCGREGOR”

Yukarıda başlığı/konusu belirlenen tez çalışmamın Kapak sayfası, Giriş, Ana bölümler ve Sonuç bölümlerinden oluşan toplam 78 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 27.05.2019 tarihinde şahsım tarafından Turnitin intihal tespit programından aşağıda belirtilen filtreleme uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı % 13 (on üç) tür.

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