

I. Representation of Man–Nature Relation in the Poems of Shelley and Whitman

This research work examines how both the poet P. B. Shelley and Walt Whitman harbor environmental imaginings in their respective works *Song of Myself*, *Song of Rolling Earth* and *Prometheus Unbound*. From anthropocentric and biocentric perspectives, both the poet assert and then vindicate the glory and joy of being reverential in relation with nature. The ecological ideals like symbiosis and ecological integrity are projected and then asserted in Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* and Whitman's *Songs of Myself*, *Leaves of Grass* and some of poems. In *Prometheus Unbound*, Shelley's hero, Prometheus defies any tendency which disrupts the harmonious interrelationship and interconnection between man, several natural elements and even gods.

In Prometheus's singlehanded battle against the divine totalitarianism, the anthropocentric concern reigns sovereign. Zeus puts into practices that principle which enables him to look at human beings and other elements of nature in a condescending way. Prometheus holds the belief that all the living and nonliving creatures on this planet have the rights to live without yielding to the tyranny and torture of those who seek to make a conquest of nature. In the last act of this lyric play, Earth expresses her rapturous delight at the victory of Prometheus.

In Shelley's poetic play *Prometheus Unbound*, Nature is portrayed as the sympathizer and well-wisher of Prometheus. At Prometheus's eventual victory, Nature appears to be more natural, vibrant and dynamic. Nature puts on more natural color. Plants, flowers, bushes, rivers, rocks and other rugged scenario turn out to be jubilant and joyous. It seems nature is profoundly contented with the hard-earned victory of Prometheus. Prometheus's victory marks the inception of the liberation of mankind from the bondage of darkness. Once human beings become free from

darkness, they explore the unknown territory and make earth knowable to the people at large.

Prometheus's victory enables mankind to explore and understand nature. It also offers Nature a chance for being known, protected and revered by mankind. That is why both Nature and human beings lament at Prometheus's tragic fate and exult over the eventual victory of Prometheus. Shelley's musing on environment is directed towards certain purpose. Shelley's sole thrust of celebrating nature and reflecting on its grace and benevolence is purely anthropocentric.

Like Shelley's environmental effusions and musings, Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and other poems deal with the crucial importance and beauty of nature. Whitman refers to the deeper value and significance of respecting nature, realizing its inherent worth and the power which rational mind does not understand. Whitman discusses the role and significance of natural objects like river (Brookline), flowers like (Lilac), grass and other common objects of nature. He treats objects and points their importance independent of these objects' immediate utility to human beings. From the perspective of deep ecology, Whitman celebrates nature independent of nature's immediate and utilitarian concern to human beings. Hence, Whitman's mode of glorifying nature and delving deep into its worth is biocentric out and out.

At Prometheus's victory, the notion of nature-human harmony appears in a crystal clear way. It appears that nature empathetically identifies with both the sufferings and salvation of Prometheus. At the victory of Prometheus, the earth utters "The joy, the triumph, the delight, the madness! The boundless, overflowing, bursting gladness, The vaporous exultation not to be confined! Ha! Ha! The animation of delight, which wraps me, like an atmosphere of light, And bears me as a cloud is borne by its own wind"(4.320). Whitman's *Songs of Myself* presents nature as an

embodiment of those qualities and characteristics which tend to foster symbiosis and ecological integrity. The biocentric angle gains an upper hand in Whitman's treatment of nature, its beauty and spontaneity. The freedom, simplicity, harmony, peace and equality amidst forces of nature are represented by Whitman as though they are the positive outcome of pervading nature-human harmony.

Nature is used by both the poets as the saving grace of human beings from both anthropocentric and biocentric perspective. The peace and harmony in human society is possible through the continuation of nature's integrity and vice versa. The lack of reconciliation between Prometheus and Zeus marks the inception of disaster and misery for human beings. Like Shelley, Whitman celebrates and exposes joy of noticing interconnectedness amidst all elements of the universe. Whitman sees interconnectedness amidst trivial objects like grass, mole, and spider to river and star. In most of memorable poems in *Song of Myself*, *Song of the Rolling Earth* and *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman does not hesitate to express how the sense of interconnectedness wells up in his heart after he is engaged in the sober contemplation of nature in its entirety. Each and every creature, no matter how powerful and powerless, can live happily. Such a freedom to live happily fosters the idea of symbiosis in nature. Thus it is fair to say that the idea of symbiosis is hinted at the success of hero in defying tyrants and power mongers who hold aggressive attitude to Nature.

In *Prometheus Unbound*, Zeus's rule puts people in bondage, darkness and harmony. He embodies conquering attitude. He is not driven by the idea of others' existence for the sake of his own life. Even Nature seems to lament at this misery of mankind. People cannot feel happy in such rule. Before Zeus's tyranny, all of his subjects fear to raise their voice. Prometheus's defiance of Zeus's edict makes other people mobile, energetic and increasingly aware of their own power. Under the

intimidating rule of Zeus, even people cannot feel attached to the harmony and happiness which Nature affords. In this battle of Prometheus for the restoration of order and harmony in nature, the anthropocentric viewpoint holds sway over any other speculative concern. In Walt Whitman's poem, *Songs of Myself*, unity and interconnectedness of all the living and nonliving beings on the earth foster the principle of symbiosis. In this striving of Whitman, the biocentric concern overshadows any other poetic concern.

Prometheus Unbound and *Song of Myself*, the fall of tyranny is represented as the gradual establishment of harmony and equality not only between vulnerable people and holders of power but also between man and nature. In this treatment of issues regarding Nature, both anthropocentric and biocentric angles are used simultaneously. The disintegration of aggressively encroaching institution and power marks the decisive inception of nature-human harmony which ultimately depends on the grace of ecological integrity and symbiosis.

Tyranny and rationalistic speculation create and intensify dualisms which hinder people's perception of symbiotic and non-dualistic vision. Order, symmetry, and harmony in nature enable people to resist tyranny and conversely the fall of coercive ideology facilitates equality and symbiotic sense of interconnectedness amidst the elements of nature. Nature is portrayed by both the poets when they go on to affirm poetically the values like unity and integrity of nature. Prometheus and Whitman's persona themselves embodies eco-friendly values and principles. This research concentrates on this aspect of nature-human harmony and ecological integrity.

Shelley and Whitman are two leading figures in the history of romanticism. Shelley is a British romantic poet whereas Whitman is an American romantic poet.

Both the poets have a great deal of similarities in terms of the subjects they treat and styles they adopt. In addition, they have plenty of poetical works to their credits.

They are well-known for their prolific poetical outputs. Shelley's lyrical play *Prometheus Unbound* is regarded as the most revolutionary work which drew a great deal of critical acclaim. In the same way, *Leaves of Grass* has also garnered ample appreciations. Regarding to Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, Ratomir Ristic makes the following observation:

By defying orthodoxy, conventions, and all kinds of tyranny, always guided by love, with his masterpiece *Prometheus Unbound* and a number of great longer and shorter lyrics, written in an immense variety of verse forms and a considerably enriched language of poetry, Shelley established himself as a major poet and one of the greatest lyric poets England has had. It was with *Alastor* that Shelley began emerging as a great artist. The poem was written when he was only twenty three ostracized by society for his desertion of Harriet for Mary.

(72)

Ristic praises Shelley's versification and style. In addition, he describes Shelley's trust in the efficacy of revolutionary ethos. Shelley is an ardent believer in freedom of an individual. He categorically rejects any form of domination which seizes hold on freedom of an individual. It is crystal clear that Shelley is intolerant of injustice. He asks and appeals for equality and justice.

Shadi Neimneh, a prominent critic of Shelley, says that issue of one's responsibility to reform one's own self takes precedence over the task of bringing reform in society. The success in the realm of inner self finds its manifestation in the social realm. Neimneh delivers the following view in this regard:

In dramatizing Prometheus's suffering and moral regeneration, Shelley suggests that rebellion is, first and foremost, an internal act, in which an individual must take the full responsibility of reforming the self by rejecting submission to all forms of evil. In other words, Shelley seems to stress the autonomy of the individual's will and its power in changing society. The ending of the play expresses Shelley's apocalyptic vision of the world yet his belief in the promise of a new order initiated by man. (21)

Neimneh contends that the prophetic hint at the emergence of new order is noticeable in the last part of the play, however apocalyptic Shelley might be. This prophetic conviction exemplifies the fact that Shelley's trust in the indomitable power of man is unflagging and unflinching. But his emphasis on the self-correction and his treatment of self-correction as the gateway to social reform is too utopian and implausible.

Stefanie Castillo holds the view that the self is both individual and universal to the Whitman. Man has an individual self, whereas the world, or cosmos, has a universal or cosmic self. The poet wishes to maintain the identity of his individual self. And yet he desires to merge it with the universal self. Castillo reconsiders the self:

Self involves the identification of the poet's self with mankind and the mystical union of the poet with God, the Absolute Self. Sexual union is a figurative anticipation of spiritual union. Thus the poet's ecstasy is both physical and spiritual, and he develops a sense of loving brotherhood with God and with all mankind. *Song of Myself* is a good example of the stylistic features of *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman's style reflects his individualism. (43)

Castillo says that the poet is also fond of using foreign words. The majority of Whitman's poems are the product of his rugged craftsmanship. He uses numerous images, usually drawn from nature, to suggest and heighten the impression of a poetic idea. These images appear to have no clear organization. Common objects are elevated and then portrayed as the object surcharged with unique significance.

Natan Kellerman argues that sense perception of the Whitman is far more vivid and striking. The ecstasy of physical sensation reaches its height in his poems. Kellerman puts forward the following view with respect to Whitman's power to render ecstasy of experience of seeing common objects in their symbiotic link:

Walt Whitman expresses the joy he feels through his senses. He is enthralled by the ecstasy of his physical sensations. He can enjoy each of the five senses — tasting, hearing, smelling, touching, and seeing- and even more — the process of breathing, the beating of his heart, and the feeling of health. He invites the reader to stop this day and night with him in order to discover the origin of all poems. Whitman chides the talkers, trippers, and askers for wasting their time discussing the beginning and the end. (32)

Whitman's ecstatic revelation of union with his soul is stupendous. He has a feeling of fraternity and oneness with God and his fellowmen. *Song of Myself* is a poetical expression of that mystical experience. It arises out of a belief that it is possible to achieve communion with God through contemplation and love, without the medium of human reason. It is a way of attaining knowledge of spiritual truths through intuition.

In *Routledge History of Literature in English*, Ronald Carter and John MacRae explore Shelley's poetic oeuvre. They scrutinize Shelley's romantic

nonconformist response to convention. Regarding to this aspect of Shelley, Carter and MacRae makes the following remark:

Shelley was the individualist and idealist who rebelled against the institutions of family, church, marriage and the Christian faith and against all forms of tyranny. He started writing and publishing poetry while at Oxford University, some three years before Keats's first publication. Shelley's ideas were anarchic and dangerous in the eyes of the conservative society of his time. He believed that original sin did not exist and that it was possible to attain human perfection on earth if humans could only free themselves from the chains of a repressive society. (218)

Unlike other romantic poets, Shelley blends individualism and the spirit of convention. The erstwhile charge against Shelley is flatly rejected by critics at large. He is realist to the extent of modest literary criticism.

Horace Traubel lauds Whitman's experiment with language. For Whitman, words have profound significance. He gives prime importance to colloquial words or colloquial expressions. Colloquial expressions bridge the gap between the natural and the spiritual. Traubel examines an inherent connection between spiritual and the natural in Whitman's poetic intensity:

Song of Myself is a good example of the stylistic features of *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman's style reflects his individualism. *Leaves of Grass* is only a language experiment. Words, for Whitman, have both a natural and a spiritual significance. Colloquial words unite the natural with the spiritual, and therefore he uses many colloquial expressions. He is also fond of using foreign words. The catalog is another special

characteristic of Whitman's poetic technique. He uses numerous images, usually drawn from nature, to suggest and heighten the impression of a poetic idea. These images appear to have no clear organization. (7)

Spiritual concept gives meaning and coherence to the apparently disconnected images or scenes. Whitman depends heavily on words and images. The spiritual concept binds all the disparate objects into a single thematic thread.

Michael Baron studies Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* in the light of the Greek Myth. Baron underscores Shelley's treatment of the Greek myth in this epic. The use of mythical framework in these poems is commendable. The love for freedom and philanthropic ideals dominate the forefront of this poem. Baron makes the following additional remarks with respect to this poem:

In *Prometheus Unbound*, Shelley employs the Greek myth of Prometheus, who was punished for stealing the gift of fire from the gods and giving it to mankind; but in Shelley's poems he is redeemed by the power of love and act as a symbol of human fulfillment resulting from a change in his imaginative vision. Prometheus represents archetypal humanity and, as in *The Ancient Mariner*, an apocalyptic change in his life reveals limitless possibilities; above all, a new way of seeing the world. (118)

Baron's view can be summed up in the line that the power of love can redeem not only the sufferer but also those who are acutely conscious of the painful nature of human sufferings. Of all the motives that drive human beings, it is the willingness to act out of one's own volition and will that brings real change in human life.

V. K. Chari is a noted critic of Whitman's poetry. He examines the organizing principle of self. In analyzing Whitman's notion of the self, Chari maintains that to Whitman, the self was the true meaning and center of all existence. He presents his additional view in the following excerpt:

Whitman possesses the power to project reality through the frame of self. Self is uppermost in his treatment of even the trivial things. He believes that the earthly things have value which is deeper than their pragmatic utility. Reality was not separate or different from the self. The influence of Ralph Waldo Emerson's writing on Whitman is noticeably present. There is relationship between Whitman's views and Hindu philosophy. Additionally, though there seems to be a duality in Whitman's concept of the self, the unified, monistic nature of Whitman's self is the most significant hidden essence of his poems.

(77)

The treatment of self in Whitman's poems is the most special issue. Various components of reality are projected through self. But the self-treated by Whitman is different from the egotistical sublime of Wordsworth. In the Whitman's poems, the self does not appear as the segment of analytical power to invest additional objects under poetic treatment. Rather the presentation and portrayal of self is fundamentally different from the other method. Whitman's self unifies disparate objects.

There is decided difference between Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* and Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound*. Aeschylus's drama offers that message which serves and secures the interest of the divine beings. Philanthropic ideal is deemphasized in the play of Aeschylus. On the contrary, Shelley's Prometheus is that sort of being who has an unwavering and unflinching love for human beings. Shelley's Prometheus is

far more credible and dramatically convincing in comparison with Aeschylus's hero. Marilyn Butler looks into both the poetic plays and makes this sort of comparative judgment. She makes the following observation on the proximity between Shelley's hero and that of Aeschylus:

The Prometheus Bound of Aeschylus supposed the reconciliation of Jupiter with his victim as the price of the disclosure of the danger threatened to his empire by the consummation of his marriage with Thetis. Thetis, according to this view of the subject, was given in marriage to Peleus, and Prometheus, by the permission of Jupiter, delivered from his captivity by Hercules. Had Shelley framed my his story on this model, he should have done no more than have attempted to restore the lost drama of Aeschylus; an ambition which, if Shelley preference to this mode of treating the subject had incited Shelley to cherish, the recollection of the high comparison such an attempt would challenge might well abate. (57)

Shelley is averse from a catastrophe as feeble as that of reconciling the Champion with the Oppressor of mankind. The moral interest of the fable is powerfully sustained by the sufferings and endurance of Prometheus. Aeschylus's play inculcates the message that any defiance of divine order can incur unprecedented consequences. In the hierarchical system, the position of man is always fixed. At the top of the hierarchy, there is deity. The position of man is fixed. Any attempt to defy divine injunction and edict is counterproductive and detrimental to mankind. This sort of anti-humanistic message is presented in Aeschylus's play. But Shelley's play is far more innovative though he too relies on the Greek myth. The constructive vision and

his trust in philanthropic ideals have inspired Shelley to mold the Hellenic theme in an innovative way.

Whitman's poems are characterized by his strong inclination to allow his individual self to dissolve in the universal self. He takes his self as the extension and manifestation of the universal self. Though an individual self is a manifestation of cosmic self in its micro form, it is not ineffectual and enfeebled. It is too driven by the urge to proceed ahead confidently with suitable internal mechanism of its own. This line of critical reasoning is presented by Kenneth M. Price. His view is cited below:

To Whitman, the self is both individual and universal. Man has an individual self, whereas the world, or cosmos, has a universal or cosmic self. The poet wishes to maintain the identity of his individual self, and yet he desires to merge it with the universal self, which involves the identification of the poet's self with mankind and the mystical union of the poet with God, the Absolute Self. Sexual union is a figurative anticipation of spiritual union. Thus the poet's ecstasy is both physical and spiritual, and he develops a sense of loving brotherhood with God and with all mankind. (87)

The poet, Whitman, is driven by the two conflicting urges. He is, on the one hand, eager to maintain the integrity and specialty of his individual self. On the other, he is fervently driven by the urge to merge into the broader cosmic self. He is tempted to cultivate the mystical experience of union with the cosmic self. He is at the same time aware of his social responsibility. What strikes the poet most is that fact that it is compulsory to maintain the integrity of self to be aware of one's social responsibility.

Even the most commonplace objects, such as Leaves, ants, and stones, contain the infinite universe.

Although all these critics and reviewers examined Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* and Whitman's *Song of Myself* from different points of view and then arrived at several findings and conclusions, none of them notice the issue of how democratic ideals are asserted in their works via using nature as a means. Nature serves as the reservoir of order, lawfulness, harmony and peace. Speculation on these attributes of nature paves the way for the democratic resistance against coercive ideology and any forms of tyranny. Similarly, the fall of tyranny ensures equality not only between one man to the other but also between man and nature. The fall of tyranny marks the inception of symbiosis and ecological integrity of nature. Thus this topic seems to be genuine and researchable. The present researcher explores evidences in the texts so that it would facilitate the process of how symbiosis arises amidst heterogeneous elements of nature.

With the theoretical insight of Cheryl Glotfelty and Terry Gifford regarding ecocriticism, the researcher proceeds ahead in this research. Glotfelty reiterates Barry Commoner's ideas that "Everything is connected to everything else" (*Discourse on Nature* 7). Furthermore, Glotfelty goes on to say that "literature does not float above the material world in some aesthetic ether, but rather plays a part in an immensely complex global system in which matter and ideas interact"(7). To probe the issue of environmental imaginings, it is worthwhile to quote Terry Gifford's remark.

Gifford contends that "a personal notion of nature will always be in dialectical relation to socially constructed notions of nature. The poet is a site where writer and reader negotiate the dialectic of personal and social meanings"(148). In the same vein, it sounds pertinent to say quote what Hannigan says "mainstream environmental

groups focused on separate though often parallel concerns defining them in environmental rather than social justice terms” (10). Fostering the notion of unity and integrity amidst seemingly opposing components, Dana Philip signals how dualistic categories are vanishing. He maintains that “The changes these sad figures embody are so far-reaching that the older dualisms break down. Man and machine, city and country, nature and culture, all merge in the figure of the bass boat” (Discourse on Nature⁷⁷).

Garrad traces the relationship between literature and the physical environment. He concludes that human beings interact with nature for the sake of multiple purposes. Out of their interactions, they happen to develop several responses and impressions about nature. Literature becomes an organized mode of expressing what human beings feel and experience out of their interaction with nature. Gred Garrad argues that “eco-criticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Eco-criticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies” (33). The exclusive concern of eco-criticism is to examine how nature is reflected in the literary works.

To create the methodological basis, the theoretical insights from ecocritics like Rachel Carson are used. Rachel popularizes the four concepts ‘ecology’, ‘food chain’, and web of life and ‘the balance of nature’. These terms serve as source of methodological fulcrum of this research. Barry Commoner’s four laws of ecology direct this research. Barry Commoner’s enumerates four laws that are "everything is connected to everything else, everything must go somewhere, nature knows best, and there is no such thing as a free lunch" (78). Though these ideas of Commoner and Carson lack profundity, they carry crucial conviction. They are as imperative as the notions of deep ecology. Deep ecology puts forward the notion that both the living

and nonliving things have profound sense of worth and value in the symbiotic and ecological integrity. According to some deep ecologists, things both living and nonliving should be judged not in terms of their utility to human beings but in terms of their worth and value in symbiotic organicity and ecological integrity. Thus, it is reasonable to say that deep ecology tends to foster the trend of respecting and judging things not in terms of their immediate utility but in terms of their underlying value for the protection and continuity of ecological organicity.

When environmental concern arose, the concept of ecology is used to examine this environmental concern in the broader theoretical framework. According to John Hannigan, “the concept of ecology was utilized in the 1970s to join together rising concerns about pollution with an ethical concern for nature. Environmentalism in the 1980s and 1990s underwent another transformation in which the central discourse is environmental justice” (100). Environmental activists blend elements of the ecosystem and social justice discourse. Supportive to this view of Hannigan is Dryzek’s view that is ‘environmental discourses develop, crystallize, bifurcate and dissolve and sometimes returns in a different wrapping’ (105). Doing justice to nature is tantamount to doing justice to the marginalized and excluded groups and minority.

Val Plumwood contends that human beings are ecologically constrained beings. He says that human beings have responsibility towards nature. To perpetrate crime against nature is to lose track of oneself. Not to be responsive to the ecological environmental crisis is to deny ecologically constituted side of selfhood. Human beings have increasingly ignored the fact that they are embedded in nature. Plumwood rejoins ‘This illusion of disembeddedness is an index of how far we have come in losing track of nature. To lose track of nature is to lose track of oneself.

Ecological denial is the burgeoning problem which can herald crisis and disaster if unchecked at time” (161).

While examining the ways nature is reflected in literary works, the eco-critics try to bring into light what sort of viewpoint and value system operate behind the representation of nature. In this regard, it seems eco-criticism is a political mode of analysis. Eco-critics generally tie their cultural analyses explicitly to a green moral and political agenda. In this respect, eco-criticism is closely related to environmentally oriented developments in philosophy and political theory. Timothy Luke puts forward the view that many styles of ecologically grounded criticism circulate in present-day “American mass culture, partisan debate, consumer society, academic discourse, and electoral politics as episodes of eco-critique, contesting our politics of nature, economy, and culture in the contemporary global system of capitalist production and consumption”(17). In the spectrum of several ordinary activities of human beings, aggressive approach to nature is reflected. From micro level, such aggressive advance towards nature and biased outlook on nature-human relationship should be corrected.

For ecocriticism to be of substance as an interdisciplinary field, it needs to realize that “ecology is not a slush fund of fact, value, and metaphor, but a less than fully coherent area with a very checkered past and a fairly uncertain future” (Dana Philip 54). Many ecocritics would be dismayed to learn that despite ecology’s heroic popular image. It has been characterized as a relatively lightweight science by informed observers “whose criticisms of it cannot be dismissed as mere carping even if those criticisms have sometimes been too harsh, above all when other biologists less taken with fieldwork than ecologists are have held the floor” (Dana Philips 67). In point of fact, ecology has not enjoyed as great a record of success as the other life

sciences have. Nor has it always been entirely in line with the ethos prevailing in those other sciences. The divergence of ecology from what is widely regarded as the scientific norm becomes especially clear when it is compared to molecular biology.

Ecocriticism is the study of representations of nature in literary works and of the relationship between literature and the environment. Ecocriticism as an academic discipline began in earnest in the 1990s, although its roots go back to the late 1970s. Because it is a new area of study, scholars are still engaged in defining the scope and aims of the subject. Cheryll Glotfelty, one of the pioneers in the field, has defined ecocriticism as “the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment,” (76) and Laurence Buell says that this study must be “conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmentalist praxis” (143). David Mazel declares it is the analysis of literature “as though nature mattered” (219). Ecocritics study literature written throughout history and analyze its relationship to the environment.

Ecocriticism has come to mean not only the application of ecology and ecological principles to the study of literature, but also the theoretical approach to the inter-relational web of natural cultural and supernatural phenomena. Kumari Sikha maintains that ecocriticism began “to explore constructions of environment in literary texts and theoretical discourse. Since literature has always conditioned our philosophical understanding of nature, of environment. Even the aesthetic categories by which our feelings for nature are understood the beautiful, the picturesque have been defined largely their use in literary and critical contexts” (131). Most ecological work shares a common motivation which is the awareness that people have reached the age of environmental limits. The consequences of human actions are damaging the planet’s basic life support system. Ecological awareness brings in people a desire to contribute to environmental restoration, not only as a hobby but as a representative of

literature. Ecocritics encourage others to think seriously about the aesthetic and ethical dilemmas posed by the environmental crisis. It also deals with how language and literature transmit values with profound ecological implications.

Nature and literature have always shared a close relationship as is evidenced in the works of poets and other writers down the ages in almost all cultures of the world. Today the intimate relationship between the natural and social world is being analyzed and emphasized in all departments of knowledge and development. Jean Arnold contends that “the literary critic tries to study how this close relationship between nature and society has been textualized by the writers in their works. In this context two terms have become very important today – ecology and ecocriticism” (79). Literature could not remain unaffected from this depletion and my study is on that how the concern for nature changes in romantic literature from reverence to destruction.

According to Arnold, the two components of nature, organisms and their environment are not only much complex and dynamic but also interdependent, mutually reactive and interrelated. Ecology, relatively a new science, “deals with the various principles which govern such relationships between organisms and environment. Today, ecology is defined as the way in which plants, animals and people are related to each other and their environment” (37). In this relationship they are so much interdependent on each other that any disturbance in one disturbs the other.

Timothy W. Luke is an eminent ecocritic. He argues that our daily activities and events produce profound effects in our relationship with nature. The productive activities, consumption pattern, political maneuvering and other conflict-oriented upheaval produce effect in nature-human relation. Hence, such activities need to be

rationalized and brought to the domain of ethical approach. Timothy Luke puts forward the following conclusion:

Many styles of ecologically grounded criticism circulate in present-day American mass culture, partisan debate, consumer society, academic discourse, and electoral politics as episodes of ecocritique, contesting our politics of nature, economy, and culture in the contemporary global system of capitalist production and consumption. As these debates unfold, visions of what is the good or bad life, where right conduct or wrong action for individual's repose, how progress should or should not be realized, and why solidarity or estrangement might grip communities increasingly find many of their most compelling articulations as ecocritiques. (17)

Ecocritique has become a common genre of analysis. It is mobilized for and against various projects of power and economy. It seeks to expose how power and ideology operate in the organization of our everyday existence. In the spectrum of several ordinary activities of human beings, aggressive approach to nature is reflected. From micro level, such aggressive advance towards nature and biased outlook on nature-human relationship should be corrected.

This thesis is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, the researcher introduces the topic, elaborates the hypothesis, and quotes different critics' views regarding to the text. In the same chapter, the researcher shows the departure also. The second chapter deals with the perspective on ecocriticism. In the third chapter the researcher makes a thorough analysis of the text by applying the tool of ecocriticism and the notions of deep ecology. The last chapter contains the conclusive ending of the research.

II. Perspectives on Eco-criticism

Ecocriticism is the literary response to the most pressing contemporary issue of all, the global environmental crisis. Ecological approach to literary studies is an environmental perspective in contemporary literary studies. Ecological literary study emerged as a recognizable critical school by 1993. The fundamental premise of the ecological criticism is that human culture is intimately connected to the physical world. Human culture affects the physical world and is affected by it. Ecocritics examine human perception of wilderness. They also explore the transformation of human perception of nature in the course of the history. They find out whether current environmental issues are accurately represented or even mentioned in popular culture and modern literature.

William Rueckert may have been the first person to use the term "ecocriticism" (Barry, 240). In 1978, Rueckert published an essay titled "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism". He argues "the use of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature. Ecocriticism is an organized movement to study literature from the environmental perspective" (66). British Marxist critic, Raymond Williams wrote a seminal critique of pastoral literature in 1973, "The Country and the City". He observed that losses lamented in pastoral might be true ones. He professed a green socialism. Ecocriticism is distinct from other critical approaches. Literary theory generally examines "the relations between writers, texts, and the world. The current environmental problems are largely of our own making- a by-product of culture. Ecocriticism explores the link between the human life and the environment" (56).

Historian Donald Worster observed the connection between the contemporary global environmental crisis and the function of ethical systems. He makes the following remarks in this connection:

If people overlook ecological values, the quality of human life in the country suffers. Ecologic crisis is the product of the democratic culture. Settlement influenced Native American ways of thinking about nature. Industrial revolution again remade the ecology, economy and conceptions of nature in the region. European explorers and settlers arrived in America during the seventeenth century. (12)

Past ways of relating to land will help people to establish ethical relationship with nature in the context of globalization, climate change and privatization.

Dana Phillips wrote the influential essay, "Is Nature Necessary?" He proposes that whether people admit it or not Nature plays an important role in shaping culture by its conspicuous presence or absence. Dana Phillips points out that postmodern experience is irrelevant in the rural areas of the nation. People feel alienation from nature in urban centers. Interaction with nature is an essential characteristic feature of human progress.

Phillips argues that we cannot get solace in the absence of nature. The self is formed and invaded by nature. Postmodern experience is a collective category. In this connection, he says:

People in the contemporary period have misunderstood the role of nature in the human lives. Culture has subsumed nature. He expressed the hope that the inclusive political practice can survive, and waken nature from its culturally induced coma. Dana Phillips argues that we cannot dispense with nature altogether. The present day politics is

more demographic than democratic. He asserts that a politics with environmental goals can restore nature and culture both. Or the conditions mark the emergence of what seems to be a post-political and thoroughly unnatural age. (54)

Postmodernism is the result of the epistemological basis of not only of the human relationship to nature, but of human relationships altogether. Freedom is false in postmodern age as it is constrained by a narrow range of options. The darker aspect of the postmodern age is the moment of a radical eclipse of the nature itself.

In the early 1970s, Barry Commoner wrote *The Closing Circle*. In this work, he discusses the rapid growth of industry and technology. He makes a mention of their persistent effect on all forms of life. He makes a suggestion that human beings can reduce the negative effects by educating ourselves about our connection to the natural world. Commoner summarizes the basics of ecology into what he termed “laws of ecology.” Other theorists have also used this idea to develop simple statements that help us understand and remember our connections to nature. According to Commoner, everything is linked to everything else. In his own words, "Everything has to go somewhere or there is no such place as away. Everything is always changing. There is no such thing as a free lunch. Everything has limits" (15).

These laws are crucial in understanding the relationships and interdependencies that lie between communities and ecosystems. They further explain that humankind is only one member of the biotic community. People are nurtured by the characteristics of the land. These laws will not explain everything. Mysteries will remain. But they will "give you a clearer understanding and appreciation of ecology, and your “niche” as a member of the living community" (Commoner 17).

Glen A. Love wrote the seminal essay, "Revaluing Nature: Toward an Ecological Criticism." She referred to the writing of English historian, Arnold Toynbee who published the narrative history of the world in *Mankind and Mother Earth*. He pointed out the suicidal result of human action on the planet earth. He called for the prompt and vigorous actions to keep the earth a habitable place. He has listed the potential threats to the earth. His view is listed below:

Nuclear holocaust, radiation poisoning, chemical or germ warfare, alarming growth of the world's population are the potential threats to human life on earth evidences of global warming, destruction of the protective ozone layer, Disregard to nature has resulted into harmful effects of acid rain, cutting of the great forests, the critical loss of topsoil and groundwater, increasing rate of extinction plant and animal species. There are profound threats to our biological survival. We must stop keeping self-interest above the public interest irrationally enough in matters of common survival. (32)

Glen A. Love considers that society as a whole and literary professionals have faced three crises in the last thirty years: civil rights, women's liberation, and environmental degradation. These problems have become world issues. Race, class, and gender are the issues with which much literary writing is preoccupied. We must acknowledge our place within the natural world. We have grown accustomed to living with crises. We must not depend on the past problem solving strategies. The issue of degradation of earth has occupied a prominent place in English literature.

Joseph Meeker expresses a deep concern for nature in his seminal book *The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology* published in 1974. Meeker wrote:

Human beings are the earth's only literary creatures... If the creation of literature is an important characteristic of the human species, it should be examined carefully and honestly to discover its influence upon human behavior and the natural environment-to determine what role if any it plays in the welfare and survival of mankind and what insight it offers into human relationships with other species and with the world around us. Is it an activity which adapts us better to the world or one which estranges us from it? From the unforgiving perspective of evolution and natural selection, does literature contribute more to our survival than it does to our extinction? (3-4)

Meeker has presented the rereading of tragedy and comedy from an ecological perspective. The question of the rights of nonhuman organisms has become a vital concern in many disciplines. Ecological thinking has assumed a central place in central public policy. Environment has influenced religion, philosophy, law, history, anthropology etc. It has also affected architecture and urban planning.

Literary theory and criticism has not remained unaffected or unwilling to address which are at the forefront of public concern. Literary representations of Man's relationship with nature both influence and are influenced by that relationship. Glen A. Love argues that a nature oriented literature corrects limited vision of the people; it offers a regard for the nonhuman life. Eco-consciousness rather than ego-consciousness is the need of the time in all spheres of life. Glen has profoundly dealt with the issue of ecology and nonhuman life profoundly. Additional view of Glen is illustrated below:

Anthropocentric misunderstand that natural literature is irrelevant and inconsequential. They mistook that nature is dull and unexciting while

society is fascinating and refined. Modern ecology has made it clear that the greatest of all intellectual puzzles is the earth and the myriad systems of life which it nourishes. Nature reveals complex adaptive strategies which human mind could not devise. Nature can only teach the lessons of simplicity. (43)

Glen A. Love asks for the redefinition of the pastoral in terms of the new and more complex understanding of nature as pastoral sense reflects the same sort of anthropocentric assumptions which are in dire need of reassessment. Man is a part of nature. She points out that the whole culture seems to follow an ecologically suicidal path.

The term 'Human-Nature harmony' indicates the mutual regard and cooperation between human beings and the different elements of Nature. Nature offers different types of resources to mankind so that human existence can continue and flourish peacefully. To perpetuate the timeless continuity of human lives on the earth, nature yields several things. Without those things, it would be challenging and troublesome for human beings to survive. Although human beings are the greatest recipients of the graces and contributions of nature, they too have certain kind of ethical and genuine sense of responsibility towards nature.

Human beings have to relate themselves to nature in such a way that the integrity and purity of nature remains intact. Nature demands unknowingly and subtly nonaggressive and nonviolent deeds from human beings. The reckless, haphazard and aggressive actions of mankind pose threat to the integrity and existence of nature. Thus it can be argued that human- nature relationship refers to the dependence of mankind on nature for the smooth continuity of their existence and the safeguarding of nature and its integrity by the rational and sagacious deeds of mankind. The

reciprocal sense of interdependence of mankind on nature and nature on the rational acts of mankind is the core idea that underlies human-nature relationship.

What makes human life and survival possible is nature, its gifts, its resources and other numerous productive resources. The cool atmosphere, productive resources and loving graces of nature facilitate, nurture and enhance the living conditions of man. Since human beings have been taking so many substantial things from nature, they should be grateful to nature. They are supposed to be thankful to nature. By being soft, nonaggressive and compassionate to ecological integrity and the purity of nature, human beings can express their gratitude. When human beings begin to recognize the fundamental contribution of nature to the smooth continuity of nature, they begin to think about stopping their haphazard and aggressive behavior towards nature. Literature is the product of human beings' artistic endeavor to give expression to their feelings, experiences and understanding of real life situation. In addition, it is an outcome of the free-play of human imagination which is activated by man's encounter with the wonderful dimension of life. In a sense, literature is representation of how and what human beings feel and experience in their lives. What human beings express in their artistic endeavor or literary discourse is what occurs to their minds when they interact with nature. To survive on this earth, it is imperative for human beings to interact with nature.

Since human beings can hardly live without interacting with nature, the thoughts, experiences, and understating of life are surely influenced by the mutual interaction between nature and human beings. Nature brings effect in the thoughts and habits of people. It can transform human life. Many aspects of human life are affected by the forces of nature, by the interaction of nature and mankind. The total pattern of human existence is by no means free from the grace, influence, and impact of nature.

At the same it can never be avoided that human acts and choices also modify nature. So far as the literary representation is concerned, structure of human thinking and experience is directly affected by miracle of natural beauty, purity and awesome charm of nature. What human beings express in their literary works is what they have received from their interaction with nature and dependence on nature.

In literary works, human artists give expression to what they felt about nature, how nature puts grace of love on them, how nature sometimes became cruel and how they tried to mollify the anger of different natural deities. Sometimes human beings express their gratefulness to the merciful and compassionate nature. At other times, they lament for the drought and dryness reeked by nature. The literary representation contains the joy and happiness provoked by the shifting seasonal change. While on other occasion, the literary works represent the sigh and outcry of mankind. Hence, it can be contended that literary works or representation are associated with nature, natural phenomena or seasonal change. Peoples' thoughts and emotions are the effects of their interaction with nature. Their interactions with nature shape and sustain their norms and values as well as other progressive outlook. Hence, it can be said that entire artistic and non-artistic nature of mankind are the effects and outcomes of the perpetual contact and interaction between human beings and nature.

The relationality between human beings and nature is presented in literature in several ways. Sometimes, natural disasters are portrayed as the effects of human beings' random activities which affect nature detrimentally. Literature always shows the peaceful and progressive existence of mankind as the effects of the harmonious relationship between mankind and nature. Both the darker and brighter sides of human beings are represented in literature as the effects and consequences of the characteristic of human-nature relationship.

Human beings and animals are embedded in the network of ecological web. If any part of that network is harmed then the whole web stops to function. So these two combinations sustain the relation between living beings and nature/ecology. Different kinds of natural things related to human life are mentioned directly and indirectly. These natural things have been discussed in the religious books also. These religious books have the specific and spiritual significance of those natural things. Forest, mountain, river and sun are given with the unique and specific importance. These natural elements have been playing crucial role in human life. The glorification of nature serves as the support for the constant security and welfare of people. Nature is glorified so that the chaotic human existence happens to take the form of harmony and order. Therefore, the glorification of nature seems in the sense of human welfare. Nature is not glorified in its own sake rather human preserve nature for their personal benefit.

The symbiotic interconnectedness of every living being of nature and human beings are expressed in the stories. Respect towards nature is fostered by these stories. Symbiosis is a condition in which both nature and human beings interact mutually so as to strengthen each other's existence. For human beings to exist and survive, nature is essential. For the smooth and continuous existences of nature, human beings' nature friendly behavior is necessary. In short, symbiosis is a reciprocal condition in which nature and human beings coexist harmoniously influencing one by the other.

Ecocriticism attempts to apply ecological concepts to literary studies. This ecological concept is a way of raising awareness about the dwelling place in literary texts. This kind of awareness is the knowledge that we get about the land or environment. The knowledge about the dwelling place in the literary text is similar to

knowing the place or earth. Thus, ecocriticism informs us about the origins of the natural world and the mechanism of the earth as a whole.

William Howarth is the famous eco-critic. He has defined the term Eco-criticism in his book some principles of eco-criticism in the following way:

A person who judges the merits and faults of writing that depicts the effects of culture upon nature, with a view towards celebrating nature berating its despoilers and reversing their harm through political action. Ecology studies the relation between species and habitats; eco-criticism must see its complicity it attacks. Although we cast nature and culture as opposites, in fact they constantly mingle, like, water and soil. (69)

William Howarth is of the opinion that eco-criticism is concerned with exposing the effects of culture upon nature. He cautions the despoilers of nature that the uninterrupted process of harming nature by human beings, ultimately results in the disintegration of human lives. Moreover, he argues that nature and cultures are not hostile to each other. On the contrary, they are interrelated to each other. He has talked about the value and importance of safeguarding nature. The primary importance and necessity of protecting nature is clearly expressed by Howarth.

To deal with the issue of disharmony giving way to the greater degree of harmony between characters and nature, the researcher takes the help of the theoretical insight. From the viewpoint of ecocriticism, the researcher makes use of the notion of ecocriticism. To probe the ecological issue in this work, the researcher makes use of theory of ecocriticism. David Pepper is the famous environmentalist. He is of the opinion that the aggressive ideology of the west believes in the idea of conquering nature. It sees the well-being of human beings in the complete conquest of

nature. The complete conquest which the westerners believe is the root cause of the troubled relationship between nature and human beings. Pepper puts forward the following views:

Inevitably, much of the green world view is about society, since it is concerned about the relationship between (Western) society and nature. It often says that we experience environmental problems because, at root, we have undesirable values about nature. This link with the undesirable way that, individually and in groups we value and behave towards each other need to be understood prior to taking a crucial decision. Hence there is a specifically green critique of existing society and conventional values—what greens are against—together with beliefs about what future society should be like if it is to be sustainable and environmentally benign— what greens are for. (19)

Pepper's main proposition is that the existing values about nature and nature –human relationship are not compatible with the notion of preserving nature. The aggressive idea of conquering nature for securing human prosperity is the root cause of the environmental hazards. So long as idea of being compatible with nature does not come in human mind, the prospect of hugging woods does not arise. The existing notion and ideology favors our temptation to log woods. If this sort of prevailing view is not corrected, it would create trouble for the existence of human beings and nature both.

The danger of reckless relation with nature incurs unexpected loss. To warn about this loss, it is pretty necessary. To ponder upon the issue in broader theoretical framework, it is essential to adopt other idea of ecocritics. With the new theoretical insight regarding ecocriticism, the researcher quotes the ideas of Gred Garrard. Gred

Garrad is a noted ecocritic. He traces the relationship between literature and the physical environment. He concludes that human beings interact with nature for the sake of multiple purposes. Out of their interactions, they happen to develop several responses and impressions about nature. Literature becomes an organized mode of expressing what human beings feel and experience out of their interaction with nature. Gred Garrad exemplifies the following views with respect to the connection with literature and physical environment:

What then is ecocriticism? Simply put, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender-conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts, ecocriticism takes an earth-centred approach to literary studies. (33)

The exclusive concern of ecocriticism is to examine how nature is reflected in the literary works. While examining the ways nature is reflected in literary works, the ecocritics try to bring into light what sort of viewpoint and value system operate behind the representation of nature. In this regard it seems ecocriticism is a political mode of analysis. Ecocritics generally tie their cultural analyses explicitly to a green moral and political agenda. In this respect, ecocriticism is closely related to environmentally oriented developments in philosophy and political theory.

What brings pleasure to human beings incurs disasters to animals and other species of jungle. This line of thinking is further elaborated by another ecocritics Timothy W. Luke. Timothy W. Luke is an eminent ecocritic. He argues that our daily activities and events produce profound effects in our relationship with nature. The productive activities, consumption pattern, political maneuvering and other conflict-

oriented upheaval produce effect in nature-human relation. Hence, such activities need to be rationalized and brought to the domain of ethical approach. Timothy Luke discloses the following conclusion:

Many styles of ecologically grounded criticism circulate in present-day American mass culture, partisan debate, consumer society, academic discourse, and electoral politics as episodes of ecocritique, contesting our politics of nature, economy, and culture in the contemporary global system of capitalist production and consumption. As these debates unfold, visions of what is the good or bad life, where right conduct or wrong action for individuals repose, how progress should or should not be realized, and why solidarity or estrangement might grip communities increasingly find many of their most compelling articulations as ecocritiques. (17)

Ecocriticism has become a common genre of analysis. It is mobilized for and against various projects of power and economy. It seeks to expose how power and ideology operate in the organization of our everyday existence. In the spectrum of several ordinary activities of human beings, aggressive approach to nature is reflected. From micro level, such aggressive advance towards nature and biased outlook on nature-human relationship should be corrected.

The problematical relationship between nature-human relations needs further scrutiny, which is done by using next theoretical insight. For ecocriticism to be of substance as an interdisciplinary field, it needs to realize that “ecology is not a slush fund of fact, value, and metaphor, but a less than fully coherent area with a very checkered past and a fairly uncertain future” (Dana Philip 54). Many ecocritics would be dismayed to learn that despite ecology’s heroic popular image, it has been

characterized as a relatively lightweight science by informed observers “whose criticisms of it cannot be dismissed as mere carping even if those criticisms have sometimes been too harsh, above all when other biologists less taken with fieldwork than ecologists are” (Dana Philips 67).

In point of fact, ecology has not enjoyed as great a record of success as the other life sciences have. Nor has it always been entirely in line with the ethos prevailing in those other sciences. The divergence of ecology from what is widely regarded as the scientific norm becomes especially clear when it is compared to other significant disciplines. Intervention on nature is supposed to bring unexpected consequences. Ecocriticism focuses on the fatal consequences of human intervention on nature. Ecocriticism is the study of representations of nature in literary works and of the relationship between literature and the environment.

Ecocriticism as an academic discipline began in earnest in the 1990s, although its roots go back to the late 1970s. Because it is a new area of study, scholars are still engaged in defining the scope and aims of the subject. Cheryll Glotfelty, one of the pioneers in the field, has defined ecocriticism as “the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment,” (76) and Laurence Buell says that this study must be “conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmentalist praxis” (143). David Mazel declares it is the analysis of literature “as though nature mattered” (219). Ecocritics study literature written throughout history and analyze its relationship to the environment.

Ecocriticism has its roots planted in the many forms of literature and literary criticism which have addressed nature, landscape and humanity’s relationship to the environment. Growing awareness of the critical state of the environment and threats to biodiversity has given ecocriticism’s focus a new urgency. As a very broad starting

definition, ecocriticism is "an earth-centred approach to literary studies" (Glotfelty 96). Early environmental criticism is mostly concerned with the critical interpretation of works about the natural world. It tended to focus on literature such as travel writing, or with movements or styles for which natural settings were especially important, particularly Romanticism and pastoral literature.

Ecocriticism has grown symbiotically with the newly "politicized and radical 'green' thinking of the second half of the 20th century. Ecocriticism may therefore focus on literary works about the environment. Or it may widen its scope to consider all the ways in which ideas about the natural world are constructed through language and literary representation, rhetoric, genre, imagery and narrative. Ecocriticism has come to mean not only the application of ecology and ecological principles to the study of literature, but also the theoretical approach to the interrelational web of natural cultural and supernatural phenomena. Kumari Sikha discloses the following views:

It began to explore constructions of environment in literary texts and theoretical discourse. Since literature has always conditioned our philosophical understanding of nature, of environment. Even the aesthetic categories by which our feelings for nature are understood the beautiful, the picturesque, the scenic, the sublime, the wild etc. have been defined largely their use in literary and critical contexts. Most ecological work shares a common motivation, that is, the awareness that we have reached the age of environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human actions are damaging the planet's basic life support system. (3)

Kumari maintains that this awareness brings in us a desire to contribute to environmental restoration, not only as a hobby but as a representative of literature. Ecocritics encourage others to think seriously about the aesthetic and ethical dilemmas posed by the environmental crisis. It also deals with how language and literature transmit values with profound ecological implications.

Arthur Lovejoy's contribution in this field is also very eminent. He observes that "one of the strangest, most potent and most persistent factors in the western thought is the use of the term 'nature' to express the standard of human values, the identification of the good with that which is 'natural' or 'according to nature'" (51). Nature and literature have always shared a close relationship as is evidenced in the works of poets and other writers down the ages in almost all cultures of the world. Today the intimate relationship between the natural and social world is being analyzed and emphasized in all departments of knowledge and development. Jean Arnold's contention regarding this social world is presented below:

The literary critic tries to study how this close relationship between nature and society has been textualized by the writers in their works. In this context two terms have become very important today – ecology and ecocriticism. With time, however, these ecosystems have been adversely affected due to increasing population and avarice of mankind. Literature could not remain unaffected from this depletion.

(10)

The two components of nature, organisms and their environment are not only much complex and dynamic but also interdependent, mutually reactive and interrelated. Ecology relatively a new science, deals with the various principles which govern such relationships between organisms and environment. Today, ecology is defined as the

way in which plants, animals and people are related to each other and their environment. In this relationship, they are so much interdependent on each other that any disturbance in one disturbs the other.

Literature well known for reflecting the contemporary issues could not have remained unaffected from this theme. The world of literature throngs with works dealing with beauty and power of nature. However, the concern for ecology and the threat that the continuous misuse of our environment poses on humanity has only recently caught the attention of the writers. It is this sense of concern and its reflection in literature that has given rise to a new branch of literary theory.

III. Environmental Imaginings in Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, and Shelley's

Prometheus Unbound

This research explores environmental imaginings in Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, "Mont Blanc". In the entire sphere of environmental imaginings dramatized in these poems, the earth is what resists the questionings and impositions of the human mind. These environmental musings on the earth involve what remains when the human constructions evaporate into the medium of its own existence. The limits of human life become tolerable for the poets when they know both nature and mankind need to coexist for peace, harmony, longevity and continuity of the survival of both nature and the earth.

The nature lover finds the object of Whitman's affection fouled. What was once beautiful and comforting becomes hideous and disturbing. He rejects the apostrophe to the mother, refusing kinship with a thing so alien, so toxic. He is left with a crisis of identity, the health of the landscape now suspect. His confident safety is threatened by an obsessive concern with infection in a kind of anti-pastoral gothic fantasy:

O how can it be that the ground itself does not sicken?

How can you be alive you growths of spring?

Are they not continually putting distempered corpses within you?

Is not every continent worked over and over with sour dead?

Where have you disposed of their carcasses?

I am sure I shall expose some of the foul meat. (285–286)

The Romantic or transcendental attitude according to which the poet understands him as the confident son of the earth is clearly reflected in the above-cited extract. The poetic act of negation is associated with the subtlety of things. It is furthermore

dramatized in the act of turning away—"I will not go now on the pastures to walk, / I will not strip the clothes from my body to meet my lover the sea" (77). Whitman's recourse to negative forms in the early editions of *Leaves* deserves fuller attention.

Biocentric Orientation in Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*

In Whitman's poem, Biocentrism encompasses all environmental ethics that extend the status of moral object from human beings to all living things in nature. Biocentric ethics calls for a rethinking of the relationship between humans and nature. It states that nature does not exist simply to be used or consumed by humans, but that humans are simply one species amongst many, and that because we are part of an ecosystem, any actions which negatively affect the living systems of which we are a part adversely affect us as well, whether or not we maintain a biocentric worldview. Biocentrists believe that all species have inherent value, and that humans are not superior to other species in a moral or ethical sense. Humans and all other species are members of Earth's community. All species are part of a system of interdependence. All living organisms pursue their own good in their own ways. Human beings are not inherently superior to other living things.

Whitman's are similar in many ways. Biocentrism and ecocentrism are two distinct ethical viewpoints. Biocentrism is a kind of ethics of individualism in that it emphasizes the value, rights, and survival of individual organic beings. Ecocentrism, on the other hand, takes a more holistic approach, giving moral priority to species and ecosystems rather than the individuals that compose them. Biocentric ethics differs from classical and traditional ethical thinking. Rather than focusing on strict moral rules, as in Classical ethics, it focuses on attitudes and character. In contrast with traditional ethics, it is nonhierarchical and gives priority to the natural world rather than to humankind exclusively.

The earth has or does something that corresponds to what people do when they communicate with words. This something cannot be communicated directly in language. Whitman seems to be seeking ways to bring the reader into contact with things and states of being for which there are no adequate words. Whitman calls for the dictionaries of words that print cannot touch. It will give voice to the things of the earth that language has not yet named. He denies to the earth's language the characteristics classically attributed to successful rhetorical utterances in human speech, such as pathos, organization persuasion, and discrimination. He projects the strange image of the earth as a dumb great mother:

The earth does not argue
Is not pathetic, has no arrangements,
Does not scream, haste, persuade, threaten, and promise,
Makes no discriminations, has no conceivable failures,
Closes nothing, refuses nothing, shuts none out,
Of all the powers, objects, states, it notifies, shuts none out. (177)

People may know the earth's reality indirectly by catching glances of her face's reflection in what has the character of a mirror. It involves an action that may imply the work of science which studies effects of the earth, secondhand signs, brief reflections from which a sense of the whole may be construed. Her smooth broad back is turned to us and must wonder at the true nature of the face.

The earth is dumb. And yet her words never fail her children. Whitman may well intend to present a broad and rolling surface of language, largely impenetrable like the earth itself. He urges us to understand not with the mind but with the soul. The earth speaks to the soul, not the ear. "The workmanship of souls is by those inaudible words of the earth," he says. "The masters know the earth's words and use

them more than audible words” (176). Communion with the earth requires a strong and healthy soul: “I swear the earth shall surely be complete to him or her who shall be complete, / The earth remains jagged and broken only to him or her who remains jagged and broken” (179). The “rolling” earth is never jagged and broken; it offers a smooth and pleasing surface. Like the rolling earth, the healthy soul is “real” and responds to a similar “language,” which is again described with negation: “No reasoning, no proof has established it” (180). In an affirmation of the soul’s language, the graceful approach of the earth is affirmed in this way:

These to echo the tones of souls and the phrases of souls,
(If they did not echo the phrases of souls what were they then?
If they had not reference to you in especial what were they then?)
I swear I will never henceforth have to do with the faith that tells the
best,
I will have to do only with that faith that leaves the best untold. (180)

The soul shares with the earth a system of language and meaning. It is distinct from what we normally understand to be human language and logic. The one may echo or resonate with the other without containing or fully comprehending it. The poet may show the way to the experience of the soul and the earth but can never fully capture it in written or spoken language.

The song of the rolling earth communicates as much by resonance as by verbal power, but the things of the earth are no less real because of the faintness by which we perceive them:

The best of the earth cannot be told anyhow, all or any is best,
It is not what you anticipated; it is cheaper, easier, nearer,
Things are not dismissed from the places they held before,

The earth is just as positive and direct as it was before,
Facts, religions, improvements, politics, trades, are as real as before,
But the soul is also real; it too is positive and direct. (180)

The soul itself is linked to the earth. It is an environmental agent that overtakes the ordinary life of the inspired individual and makes everything strange and new. The body seems as transformed as the earth when the soul descends, anticipating the idea from “A Song of the Rolling Earth” that the body, like the earth itself, communicates by means of substantial words. The speaker is Electrified with new feelings. He is almost painfully aware of the abundance of earthy influences. The poet experiences his body. Additional view is slightly postulated in the following citation:

I believe in you my soul; the other I am must not a base itself to you,
And you must not be abased to the other.
Loaf with me on the grass, loose the stop from your throat,
Not words, not music or rhyme I want, not custom or lecture, not even
the best,
Only the lull I like, the hum of your valued voice. (32–33)

The vibrations of the smallest leaves drooping in the fields give profound meaning to the speaker. Ants with their miniscule movements and weeds growing and spreading bring impressions to the poet that seems at once full of meaning and difficult to fathom. Meaning accrues when the body is understood as replicating the forms of the earth and is thus bound to the earth. The hair, the penis, the testicles and the pores of the skin find their counterparts in the mossy weeds. The poet’s loving words wrap the world in a sympathetic embrace. It builds an arc to hold the human family (brothers and sisters) and all creatures and things of the earth.

Whitman proceeds with a disarmingly playful series of guesses. One trope unfolds into another. All designed to show the continuity of individual lives and regional or racial types. Using the grass symbol tenderly, the poet arrives at his faith that human beings participate in the perennial renewal of life, thus anticipating the position to which he returns in “This Compost.” Of the grass, he asserts:

I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff
woven.

Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,

A scented gift and remembrance designedly dropt,

Or I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic,

Tenderly will I use your curling grass?

And here you are the mothers' laps. (33–34)

The grass is a flag, a handkerchief, a child. It is language, hair, lap, tongues. It is life itself. The creative principle, the soul, moves among things, connecting and disconnecting in a wide arc of meaning.

Yet integration does not overwhelm the integrity of individual things in the eco-poetics. In one of his finest postwar poems, “A Noiseless Patient Spider,” he dramatizes the difficulty of completing, much less sustaining, and the energetic connections that the soul yearns:

A noiseless patient spider,

I marked where on a little promontory it stood isolated,

Marked how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,

It launched forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself,

Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,

Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul. (45)

The spider represents power. The poet sends filaments from the root of his own being, seeking to bridge the empty spaces, creating thereby the path between reality and the soul. Writing is noiseless and ideally patient, Whitman isolated from rather than face to face with the ones addressed. He sends the filaments forth, seeking to capture the attention of readers and turn their gaze upward and outward. Whitman foretells problems haunting the twentieth-century discourse on nature. The soul's attention turns away from the earth, seeking to connect the spheres the outward reaches of the universe. The vision focuses first on the material spider.

In *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman regularly links sexual desire, particularly homoerotic desire, with the processes of the living earth. The poem "Earth, My Likeness," foreshadows the manuscript version of the spider poem:

Earth, my likeness,

Though you look so impassive, ample and spherical there,

I now suspect that is not all?

I now suspect there is something fierce in you eligible to burst forth,

For an athlete is enamored of me, and I of him,

But toward him there is something fierce and terrible in me eligible to

burst forth, I dare not tell it in words, not even in these songs. (109)

The speaker of the poem dare not tell the person he admires about the something fierce and terrible. But the noiseless and patient speaker does tell it in words for the benefit of the reader. He tells us that the earth is ample, but he does not show us the amplitude. Now the earth begins to round out abstractly. It lacks the wild growth of weeds and bumpy activity of anthills. The poet tells readers that he suspects the

subsurface fierceness of the earth, which gives him the confidence to recklessly confess the volcanic desire within himself.

Whitman uses more commonly than resonance to signify the sense of natural eloquence. The eloquence of nature and human eloquence resemble the natural phenomenon. In the “Among the Multitude,” the poet writes, “Ah lover and perfect equal, / I meant that you should discover me so by faint indirections” (111). Speaking through the persona of a father with his child in “On the Beach at Night,” the poet hints at the existence of the immortal soul. His extra environmental musings are dramatized below:

Something there is,
Something there is more immortal even than the stars,
Something that shall endure longer even than lustrous Jupiter,
Longer than the sun or any revolving satellite,
Or the radiant sisters the Pleiades (206)

It is a poetic feature. It actively resists the direct, the literal, and the conventional. It represents an attempt to create or dramatize resonance. It tends to simulate for the reader the experience of the body or interaction with the environment through the use of language. Whitman introduces the trend of making clear separations between human beings and nonhuman nature. His very wildness argues against this possibility.

Whitman’s use of personifying tropes shows shifts in his attitudes toward nature. To him, nature anticipates the conflicts among three dominant perspectives of twentieth-century discourse on the environment. They are the views of nature as spirit, nature as object, and nature as resource. The study of poetic form must take account of multiple contexts. It asserts that the identification with the earth as represented in personification and other tropes. It serves not one but all three of these

perspectives depending upon the context and the way the elements of the trope—person and natural object—interact and reflect one upon the other. Whitman’s notorious poetry of the body includes many of his most celebrated poems. It makes bold use of the trope, encompassing whole landscapes of life, as in these well-known lines from the 1855 version of “Song of Myself”:

Smile O voluptuous cool-breathed earth!

Far-swooping elbowed earth! Rich apple-blossomed earth!

Smile, for your lover comes!

Prodigal! You have given me love!. . . Therefore I give to you love!

O unspeakable passionate love!

Thruster holding me tight and that I hold tight!

We hurt each other as the bridegroom and bride hurt each other.

We must have a turn together. (LG 1855, 27)

This poetic extract eroticizes the seemingly innocuous category of nature lover. It is designed to shock sentimental sensibility. It denies the separation of human from nonhuman. Whitman’s earth is neither a mother nor a goddess nor a dead cold rock but a lover. Its dark and inviting moisture resists the old myths of sweet maternity, imperious sublimity, or cool indifference. The poet reads the signs of desire in the crooked fingers of the sea. He rushes to undress and exchange amorous wetness with the willing partner. It defies the stereotype of the nature poet calmly contemplating a picturesque scene. Occasionally he is paralyzed before the sublime vision of an all-powerful nature.

In *Leaves of Grass* both the personified earth and the earthy poet are highly active in their lovemaking. Both are heedless of all possible danger. In this argument, the resistance to the direct and literal that indirection implies tends to dissolve along

with the separation of human beings and nature implied in the concepts of system and environment. Division might actually be politically productive. Any attempt to figure the world in human terms invites the kind of human-centered understanding of existence. Such understanding can lead to the unwise or immoral treatment of the nonhuman. Whitman's poems embody some of the deepest conflicts of modern globalizing intelligence. *Leaves of Grass* projects the unity of human and nonhuman nature. This line of reasoning may lead to exploitation through an uncritical assertion of spiritual if not material identity. It also tends to preserve the integrity of the earth as an environment distinct from human interests and society.

Whitman makes no mention of the exhibit of human vanity to conquer nature. It is just the kind of event he relished. The features of the bark and the impressive height could well have lodged in his memory and resurfaced in the poem was. Whitman writes the poem to uproot indigenous peoples from their land so that white settlements could grow and dominate the western United States. What amounted to the systematic extermination of tribal life during this era gives the celebration of the new culminating man that Whitman attributes to the voice of the redwood tree a chilling note:

Not want from Asia's fetches,
Nor red from Europe's old dynastic slaughter-house,
(Area of murder-plots of thrones, with scent left yet of wars and
scaffolds everywhere,)
But come from Nature's log and harmless throes, peacefully builder
thence,
These virgin lands, lands of the Western shore,
To the new culminating man, to you, the empire new,

You promised long, we pledge, we dedicate. (167)

Whitman confidently asserts the naturalness of westward expansion. Whitman's very treatment of the redwood's voice as emanating from a fearful entity already departs from the scene of present-day life. It invokes a pattern that has been conventionally applied to Native peoples from colonial days down to modern times. In Whitman's poem, the all too easy substitution of redwoods for red people suggests the nationalizing or globalizing impulse. The note of resignation in the redwood tree's song rings oddly true. Whitman's identification with the redwoods arises from his own feeling of being overrun. For Whitman, the identification with the redwoods is not strong enough to override his faith in material progress. The poet could not find the energy to allow the ambivalence hinted in the poem to mature into a full-scale critique. His lack of critical energy may have resulted from the same resignation.

Nature resists our efforts to accommodate it to our needs or isolate the qualities of natural objects that please the human mind. The earth itself seems to resist the poet's sweeping claims. Whitman questions the human connection with the earth, wondering whether modern people can draw on the affections of the great mother:

Who speak the secret of the impassive earth?

Who bind it to us? What is this separate Nature so unnatural?

What is this earth to our affections? (Unloving earth, without a throb to answer ours,

Cold earth, the place of graves. (318)

Whitman conceptually divides the material earth from abstract Nature. The "voluptuous" earth to whom the poet vowed his love in the 1855 version of "Song of Myself" now appears unyielding and cold, the place of graves. Though the poet is clearly setting up a rhetorical conflict that he will quickly resolve, the sense of

abandonment in his portrayal of the “unloving earth ultimately sounds more convincing. It is a note that will sound again in “Prayer of Columbus” and “Song of the Redwood-Tree.”

The bird in “singer solitary” projects the poet. The poet perpetuates the bird. The poet engages the question of limits in a broader sense which is the limits of land at the ocean’s edge, the limits of life at the edge of death. The poem dramatizes the poet’s struggle against such limits. He indulges heavily in anthropomorphism, personification, and the pathetic fallacy, imposing upon a scene of nature aspects of a personal crisis. The poem’s tropes reverse the pathways of imposition. The moon (like the poet) is “swollen as if with tears,” the bird (not the poet) sings of lost love. The sea (not the poet) lisps the word death and appears as a wise if somewhat witchy old crone. It is the poet who feels imposed upon, possessed by the wild night scene, the demon bird, and the sea witch. The song of the bird is highly schematic with stark contrasts. It is musical in its rhythms but impoverished in its imagery. From one bird’s song a flock of aroused words must take flight.

The bird is an island unto itself. It is trapped in the repetitive cycles of love and death. It is insulated first by the experience of mating and nesting which is clearly highlighted in the following citation:

Shine! Shine! Shine!

Pour down your warmth, great sun!

While we bask, we two together, Two together!

Winds blow south, or winds blow north,

Day comes white, or night comes black,

Home, or rivers and mountains from home,

Singing all time, minding no time,

While we two keep together. (197)

The bird's song comprehends the earth only in broad strokes and general outlines. Everything is either home or not. And once love is lost, the bird sees all of nature refracted through the lens of sorrow. The poet imposes his emotions upon the bird, and the bird imposes upon the moon. The following extract is illustrative of the point:

O brown halo in the sky near the moon, drooping upon the sea!

O troubled reflection in the sea!

O throat! O throbbing heart!

And I sing uselessly, uselessly all the night.

O past! O happy life! O songs of joy!

In the air, in the woods, over fields,

Loved! Loved! Loved! Loved! Loved!

But my mate no more, no more with me! (200)

The bird appears as a closed system of love and sorrow. By contrast, the boy-poet remains open. Just as he is open to the song of the bird, he is open to the influences of the earth. He is sensitive to finer perceptions of the landscape's details. The ultimate image of the child-poet's openness is that of an island receiving the waves of the ocean.

The sea responds, bringing not only the word but something close to a mother's affection, which arouses the body of the child-poet. The sea whispers to the inspired child. The part of the individual receives influences from outside the self and then pours forth the words. The poem is about origins in the reminiscence of the time when the child's poet-heart was awakened. But it is also about survival and renewal in the grown poet's return.

The word out of the sea has a deeply eco-poetical significance. The threat and the promise of the earth is death. The hysterical turning away from the earth is a function of the human fear of death. "Out of the Cradle" hints strongly that the trouble with focusing ecological awareness. Even sustaining eco-political activism is rooted in the human alienation from the earth. The effort of environmentalists to tie the survival of the human race to the survival of nature as the source of life always runs up against this psychological limit.

Prometheus is tied to the precipice of Caucasus for his act of defiance of divine commandment. His agony of being tied to the precipice and increasing misery make him ponder upon nature. He imagines about nature, earth, waves of sea and sky. He tries to see order, harmony and system in nature. Because he is inwardly broken, he seldom finds harmony and beauty in nature. To him, nature is no more than the manifestation of his inner psychic condition or inner world of his rebellious self. The following extract taken from the text, *Prometheus Unbound*, dramatizes how the harmony between Prometheus's troubled inner self and dry nature filled with pain and powerlessness:

No change, no pause, no hope! Yet I endure.
I ask the Earth, have not the mountains felt?
I ask yon Heaven, the all-beholding Sun,
Has it not seen? The Sea, in storm or calm,
Heaven's ever-changing Shadow spread below,
Have its deaf waves not heard my agony?
Ah me! Alas, pain, pain ever, forever! (5)

The life of Prometheus is static and immobile. He is afflicted with a great deal of burden. Though surrounded by agony and misery, he does not feel broken hearted.

The external observer can find him miserable figure. But his interiority and triumphant sense resulting from defiance of divine decree reject such interpretation. He develops fortitude, undue sense of pride in the act done impulsively or intentionally. His tragic sobriety is reflected in the sobriety of nature. His sternness of spirit is emblematic of the deafness of nature. Prometheus asks himself why nature cannot heed my voice. Prometheus's inner condition is reflective of the outer dryness and deafness of nature. Only the harmonious psyche and pleasant mindset of human beings can have respect and reverence towards the integrity and purity of nature.

Shelley's Anthropocentric Orientation in *Prometheus Unbound*

The essential feature of the anthropocentric dimension of the cosmological domain is the belief that humans are separate from and ethically superior to the rest of nature. In Shelley's opinion, humans consider themselves to be rightfully, the masters of nature subduing it for their own instrumental purposes. With the demystification of nature, through scientific and technological development, its manipulation and exploitation were assured and resulted in the death of nature. The antipodal position to anthropocentrism is ecocentrism which considers nature to have inherent value regardless of its usefulness to humans.

There are two perspectives from which to examine the anthropocentric position. The first is the position that the objective is human emancipation and fulfillment in an ecologically sustainable society. This position has been described as human welfare ecology. The second acknowledges the same objective but with recognition of the moral standing of nonhuman world and its rights to continue evolving.

The primary point of departure between the two views is the position of humans in the biosphere. Within the ecocentric view, there is no basis for assuming

that humans represent the paragon of evolution with rights superseding or negating those of other life forms which are considered to have inherent value in their own right. Anthropocentrism postulates that the current ecological crisis stems from this over inflated sense of value. Even the weaker forms of anthropocentrism such as conservationism and human welfare ecology are not sustainable since they would be sacrificed for the more humanist perspectives.

Anthropocentrism beliefs affected environmental attitudes as measured by three scales constructed for the study, conservation behaviors, self-reported actions, and environmental apathy. However, the defined the anthropocentrism and anthropocentrism as two different constructs rather than opposite ends of a continuum as would have been more consistent with the literature. This leads to the intuitively inadequate reflection that one might be an anthropocentric since the two constructs are defined as independent of each other. It might also lead to measurement difficulties if the content of one scale is contained within the other. This would help to account for their weak and somewhat conflicting result suggesting that anthropocentrism has no effect but anthropocentrism does. In the current study, we are taking the approach tied more directly to the conceptual literature which places the two constructs as antipodal rather than independent.

Tied to the precipice eternally and being lost to the constant assault from a vulture, Prometheus is tragically aware of his own powerlessness. The awareness of his powerlessness implants a haunting sense of agony and entrapment. For the first time, he is awake to the limitations of humanity and invincibility of divinity. In the wake of his powerlessness, he summons and remembers the power of each and every element of nature. The following extract describes how Prometheus's awareness of his

powerlessness rather makes him aware of the mightiness and miracle of nature's power.

Of cataracts, flung the thunder of that spell!
Ye icy Springs, stagnant with wrinkling frost,
Which vibrated to hear me, and then crept
Shuddering through India! Thou serenest Air,
And ye swift Whirlwinds, who on poised wings
Hung mute and loveless o'er yon hushed abyss, (6)

Prometheus recollects the penetrating power of mountain. He is cognizant of soothing power of cataract and magic spell of the thunder. By the same token, he is made acutely conscious of the destructive power of frost and whirlwind. Vibrations nature produces and benefits human beings take range from positive to negative and brightness to darkness. There is diversity in Prometheus's recognition of nature and her power. It is the tragic condition of being entrapped in a recurrent moment of eternal damnation.

Human beings would be painfully aware of the grace, beauty, purity and redemptive power of nature only after they are robbed of their power, safety, security and existence. As long as they are sure that their lives go on comfortably, they seldom pay attention to nature. Only when they feel that their existence on this planet is threatened, they begin to redefine their relation with nature. The following extract illuminated the harmonious interconnectivity:

Who dares? For I would hear that curse again
Ha, what an awful whisper rises up!
It is scarce like sound: it tingles through the frame
As lightning tingles, hovering ere it strikes

Speak, Spirit! From thine inorganic voice

I only know that thou art moving near

And love. How cursed I him? (9)

Only when curse falls upon Prometheus, he comes to know how nature had safeguarded him. The natural order is so important for the continuity of human survival. Nature poses certain laws which human beings must obey. The defiance of natural law incurs heavy price. Those human beings who are aware of fatalness of defying natural law and commandment would begin to pay heed to the crucial contribution mother earth makes to human beings for the continuity of their survival.

To console Prometheus, the personified version of the earth comes to interact with him. The earth gives lots of injunctions to Prometheus. The earth advises that she is the source of all things, all creations, and all concrete manifestations. In an affirmative tone, the earth reiterates that she is the source of all things. She is linked to the roots of tree and blood in human veins. Variegated things are symbiotically joined one another. Clouds in sky and spirit of joy as well as the frozen air are all connected to the subtle thread of symbiosis. The following extract affirms this symbiotic essence:

The Earth:

I am the Earth,

Thy mother; she within whose stony veins,

To the last fiber of the loftiest tree

Whose thin leaves trembled in the frozen air?

Joy ran, as blood within a living frame,

When thou didst from her bosom, like a cloud

Of glory, arise, a spirit of keen joy!

And at thy voice her pining sons uplifted. (-10)

The earth ignites the dormant spirit of Prometheus. His philanthropic ideals brought him to the irresistible tragic jolts and slings. He endures all these unprecedented disasters in the name of punishment. He bears the brunt of all these inhuman cruelties up to the extent which a living being is capable of. But when his spirit gets sluggish, the mother earth comes to his aid. She persuades him that in the subtle principle of creation and ecological symbiosis, the ebb and flow of human optimism is natural. She confides him that his philanthropic ideals receive vigor and massive appraisal.

All the evils, mishaps, disasters and chaos that befall mankind are the consequence of human errors, aggressions and ambitious desire to conquer the earth, the nature. Panthea points out his bitter and unpalatable truth to all those who are required to attend Prometheus tied to the Precipice of Caucasus. The following extract is reflective of this reality which is the ground reality pertaining to the current plight of mankind:

Panthea

The heaven around, the earth below

Was peopled with thick shapes of human death,

All horrible, and wrought by human hands,

And some appeared the work of human hearts,

For men were slowly killed by frowns and smiles

And other sights too foul to speak and live

We're wandering by; let us not tempt worse fear (24-25)

The death and awareness of mortality are traced to collective mishaps and harms done by the whimsical and reckless activities of man. The very desire to win, to conquer and mold which must not be conquered is the root cause of mounting human misery.

Adversity does not happen inadvertently. Many mystical beings, ethereal creatures and semi-divine beings brood over the tragic lot of Prometheus. Some trace his misery to this exuberant pride in his ability to step over the principle of nature whereas others follow different track of reasoning. Their musings and meditations project certain line of logical thinking.

Panthea muses on the uniqueness of nature. Those who are supposed to attend Prometheus realize how nature/earth alone cannot survive in a meaningful way in isolation from nature. The hopeless spirit is convinced that all the cosmic and natural elements are hidden within man. The outer is the manifestation of inner. By correcting one's relation to nature, one can improve and enhance him or herself. The following extract is clearly demonstrative of this assertion:

Which bear thy name; love, like the atmosphere
Of the suns fire filling the living world,
Burst from thee, and illumined earth and heaven
And the deep ocean and the sunless caves
And all that dwells within them; till grief cast
Eclipse upon the soul from which it came:
Such art thou now; nor is it I alone, (54)

This feeling of superiority and domination is the major cause for the environmental degradation. Shelley, who had experienced the divine principle that seems to pervade in the entire creation, was antagonistic to the claim of human superiority. The dichotomy between the mental and material worlds which philosophers had increasingly taken for granted since the seventeenth century was to Wordsworth wholly antipathetic, and he frequently in his verse attempts a general statement of the basis of their unity.

The third stage of his life is a stage of transformation or the stage of intellect wherein Wordsworth begins to rationalize why he should feel for the sufferings of his fellow human beings. When he begins to rationalize, Shelley discovers that the same principle which is in him is present in all other beings. In other words, there is 'one underlying principle' which is pervasive in all beings:

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels. (77)

Shelley's contact with Nature has made him experience the unseen principle. That is why, whenever he looks at the Nature, he is reminded of the sufferings of human beings, and he feels for them. There is a need for every individual in the present world to perceive the animating principle of the world so that an intimacy with Nature may be developed, and thus Nature and humanity may be shielded from all sorts of perils that would devastate them.

Shelley believes that nature is constituted of microscopic organisms, animals, plants and human societies. He calls for the protection of nature from the damages of civilization and urges humans to be in touch with their wild selves and return to a sense of union with nature. Shelley's ecological views are derived from certain traditional beliefs taken from Indian culture, oriental mysticism and other contemporary beliefs. This poetic play presents an ecological image that indeed, was

based on a comprehensive view regarding nature as well as on scientific knowledge. The poem brings both the land and the self. The density of the imagery suggests the smallness of the poet's humanity as opposed to high still air. The following extract clarifies the point:

Down valley a smoke haze
Three days heat, after five days rain
Pitch glows on the fir-cones
Across rocks and the meadows
Swarms of new flies. (3)

Reading the poem ecologically emphasizes the tiny place humans have in the hugeness of the universe. Shelley presents a picture of solitariness and serenity. Living a simple life and being close to nature makes the poet feel at peace. Snyder rejects the sweeping materialism of Western civilization.

Shelley derives profound insight into the interdependence between nature and man. The tragic vision of Prometheus provokes him to accept nature as she is in her variegated form. No matter what she is and how she reacts, she has to be accepted and respected not for the sake of accepting but for the sake of the mutual bond of interdependence. The following extract produces a cogent evidence of the aforementioned claim:

Pressure of sun on the rockslide
Whirled me in a dizzy hop-and-step descent,
Pool of pebbles buzzed in a Juniper shadow
Stretched full on cobble ears roaring
Eyes open aching from the cold and faced a trout. (12)

Shelly places equal value between him and other ecosystems. He does not present himself as a dominant figure but as a small part in the universe. The whole poem seems to be a description of a real event but religious and ecological implications are conveyed through it. Everything has its position in the nature and no one component is superior to others in the world.

The study of nature and culture has been one of the major intellectual issues and centers of the political- cultural debates today. Environment and culture have become politically powerful signifiers which have not been better addressed by the previous critical schools than eco-criticism and green theory. Therefore, eco-critical approach is felt to be adopted to have environmental discourse for the protection of the nature and balance between human and non-human world, literature and the physical world. Keeping the sustainability of nature in consideration, eco-critical perspective has been adopted in the study of representative poems in the domain of humanities.

In the "Mont Blanc" of Shelly, nature is valorized for bio-centric purpose. To him, nature is a mysterious entity that should not be conquered by mankind. For its own sake, mankind should be selfless in offering their service to nature. Nature sustains human beings so long as human being's aggressive activities do not encroach on nature. The reason for celebrating nature is not always consistently bio-centric. At times, the reason for worshipping nature is anthropocentric. The relationship between human and non-human world is delicate and intrinsic. This is almost the obvious view regarding the relation between man and nature.

Green and Eco-criticism believe in balance, harmony, interconnectedness between nature and culture, language and earth. The world is facing the rapid environmental crises at the local and global levels due to the rise of human

population, rapid urbanization and rampant deforestation. Because of this bitter fact, the earth or nature centered approach is felt necessary to be adopted in literary studies to raise awareness. This approach aims at developing ideas about balancing nature-culture relationships. Green writing is given emphasis in the critical analysis of the poems.

The sole thrust of this research is to understand truth about how a symbiotic relationship amidst all the living and nonliving beings of the earth. The researcher tends to know if the analysis of the selected poems about nature helps to promote ecological wisdom and sustainability of the non-human world. It also keeps the purpose of consolidating the interconnection between human beings and eco-sphere without adversely affecting each other and maintaining ecosystem.

Shelley considers nature as a separate and independent entity. He visualizes man as a creature always cradled within nature. According to him, man is totally immersed in environment. Nature to him is an open book with lessons of mutability which is taught by repetition of days, seasons, years etc. Man learns his limitations and his lessons for survival from nature. Because of his unquenchable desire, he tries to break the limits of nature. Shelly talks about the peach tree that is being carried perhaps too far north to survive the intense cold of winter. It hints at the farmer's passion and natures will thus, "Why his nature is forever so hard to teach/that though there is no fixed line between wrong and rights/There are roughly zones whose laws must be obeyed" (155).

The most lucid interpretation of Shelly's lyric is that based upon the pattern of natural analogies, "things admit of being used as symbols because nature is a symbol, in the whole, and in every part" (56). Here, nature is perceived as the manifestation of the highest ideals. In *Mont Blanc*, has shown a way to establish a better world and a

better life. He has taught how a close relationship with Nature could be created in order to give birth to a peaceful and harmonious life in the world. He advises everyone to learn from the past. It also indirectly advises every reader to look back and see how human beings have behaved towards Nature in the past, and what the consequences of their anthropocentric attitude towards Nature are. It also insists on the need to take proper measures to establish harmony with Nature.

Shelley's attribution of these feminine and human qualities to the depiction of the sensitive-plant suggests his awareness of contemporary natural-philosophical debates of the day as to whether the sensitive-plant possesses sensibility (sensation) and volition. This view of Shelley is addressed in the following extract:

A sensitive plant in a garden grew,
And the young winds fed it with silver dew,
And it opened its fan-like leaves to the light,
And the spring arose on the garden fair,
Like the spirit of love felt everywhere;
And each flower and herb on earth's dark breast
The snowdrop, and then the violet (20)

The irritability of plants is abundantly evinced by the absorption and pulmonary circulation of their juices. Their sensibility is shown by the approaches of the males to the females, and of the females to the males in numerous instances. The essential circumstance of sleep consists in the temporary abolition of voluntary power alone. The sleep of plants evinces that they possess voluntary power. It also indisputably appears in many of them by closing their petals or their leaves during cold, or rain, or darkness, or from mechanic violence.

Shelley's "The Sensitive-Plant" exceeds mere figure or pathetic fallacy, so as to show some kind of ecological integrity and mutual sense of interdependence between nature and man. The following extract serves as a convincing basis of ecological integrity:

But the Sensitive-plant, which could give small fruit
Of the love which it felt from the leaf to the root,
Received more than all – it loved more than ever,
Where none wanted but it, could belong to the giver.
For the Sensitive-Plant has no bright flower;
Radiance and odor are not its dower –
It loves – even like Love – its deep heart is full,
It desires what it has not – the beautiful! (70-77)

This extract on the mutual sense of interdependence is even more suggestive. The sensitive-plant receives love and reproduces it by itself, as if it appeared to be breathing. The image of this plant respiring and providing love in the blissful sunlight, in botanical terms, coincides with the function of photosynthesis that plants undertake to produce oxygen. It should be remembered here that as the phrase small fruit emphasizes, the word small could be equal to little, which means that the sensitive-plant cannot produce. It produces love rather than giving forth either fruit or bright flower as radiance and odor are not its dower. This fact indicates that the sensitive-plant gives forth not physical or sexual love, but the love for the beautiful, the purity of nature and its inner working principle.

The sensitive-plant sustains harmony through the world in the evening. It serves one of the most important functions in this world. The sensitive-plant falls asleep. The lethargic aspect is revealed in the following extract:

The Sensitive-plant was the earliest
Up gathered into the bosom of rest;
A sweet child weary of its delight,
The feeblest and yet the favorite
Cradled within the embrace of night, (110-14)

The sensitive-plant is cradled within the embrace of night. Children are by their mothers “into the bosom of rest. During the night, it rests and stops breathing or panting in delight. The sleeping mimosa, the most sentient being in the world is a symbolic figure of sensibility common to all life. The circulating harmony of nature in this poem embodies Shelley’s attempt to synthesize aesthetic and scientific aspects in poetry.

The sensitive-plant is depicted as if it were weeping. This personification of the sensitive-plant enhances the effect of physical pain and cruelty. There is an echo of bloody executions in the metaphor of the heavy axe of the blast, and the sap drying up bears a resemblance of the blood-drained body. The sensitive-plant is dying from the debilitating blight. It is caused by its own tear-like sap. This desolation of the garden is not simply due to the severe autumn and winter. Even after spring returns, the sensitive-plant is not reborn, but replaced with other sinister weeds and fungi that are described poetically as follows:

When winter had gone and spring came back
The Sensitive-plant was a leafless wreck;
But the mandrakes and toadstools and docks and darnels
Rose like the dead from their ruined charnels
The tears it sheds make dews evaporate (114)

Hope for future regeneration is suspended here. The sensitive-plant still remains dead surrounded by those grotesque weeds that spread across the garden. It is representative of the system of nature, in which plants live with their own volition and sensibility. The sensitive-plant lived with bliss and slept at night after its daily delight and the gardener keeps the garden unified, where the flowers rejoice in the harmonious mood.

Shelley's concluding lines enigmatically connect the poem's binary oppositions of the physical and the metaphysical, life and death, and spiritual and material. After the total devastation of the garden, the narrator remarks:

Whether the Sensitive-plant, or that
Which within its boughs like a spirit sat
Ere its outward form had known decay,
Now felt this change, – I cannot say.
Whether that Lady's gentle mind,
No longer with the form combined (24)

For the narrator, the death of the sensitive-plant and Lady is just a mockery. The human sensory organs are unable to perceive the love, and beauty, and delight obscured from them. This contrast also distinguishes the power of love, and beauty, and delight, which pertain to light from sensory perception in the sense that the human "organs remain obscure. Shelley's idea of organic happiness is especially revealing for Shelley's understanding of the relationship between the human world and the world of nature.

Thus, it can be concluded that most of the representative poems of Whitman and Shelley project environmental imaginings and ecological musings. The various motives and thrusts which propel human beings to get tied to nature are examined

from every possible sides and vantage point. The gist of this examination is that troubled and lopsided relation between man and nature needs immediate correction for the longevity of mankind and the continuity of nature-man's symbiotic existence.

IV. Vision of Nature-Human Harmony

The core finding of this research is that human beings tend to renew and revamp their relationship with nature only when something goes wrong in their erstwhile relationship with nature and when they suffer from it. In the majority of romantic poems, there is emphasis on the importance of establishing good relationship with nature. Out of sheer necessity they come in contact with nature. In addition, they interact with nature in various ways out of whim, impulse and innocence as well. There is a symbiotic relationship between human beings and Nature.

The romantic ecology reverences the green earth because it recognizes that neither physically nor psychologically can human beings live without green things. Literary eco-criticism is motivated by environmental activism and it focuses principally on representations of the physical environment, especially of nonhuman nature. The dualistic separation of human from nature, promoted by Western Philosophy and culture as the origin of environmental crisis, demands a return to a monistic, primal identification of human beings and ecosphere. While nature is not a subject, it has a language of its own. It has been talking to us and its natural signs portend danger and perhaps catastrophe.

Whitman's subtle poems provide the modern man with a new lens through which he/she can witness the interconnectedness and interdependence of man and Nature in a vast ecosystem. Whitman's main aim in celebrating Nature has been a call to remind the people of the notion of biocentrism as the conviction that humans are neither better nor worse than other creatures but simply equal to everything else in the natural world. Shelley's views towards Nature and the interdependence of human being and Nature are the justification for his greatness among his contemporaries as a true Nature poet who engendered a new way of seeing, appreciating, and living in

harmony with Nature. Romantic poetry is a call to reconnect human being and Nature and to remind man of his/her reliance on Nature for survival. The survival of humanity comes with nature's mastery over the edifices of civilization.

Whitman's fame lies in the general belief that he has been viewed as a Nature poet who viewed Nature superior to humans. In other words, his views about Nature and his poems seek to heal the long-forgotten wounds of Nature in the hope of reaching unification between man and Nature. Therefore, this study is an attempt to focus on Whitman's selected poems in the light of ecocriticism in order to shed light on the poet's cautious views about the interdependence of man and Nature and purge Whitman of the unjust labels tagged to him as a self-centered poet.

Nature is treated as the major constituents of a vast ecosystem. It helps the readers grow ecologically. It intends to achieve tranquility in an era suffocated by technological pollution. Nature is at once together and apart with the human workings. Shelley uses nature as an image that he wants us to see on a psychological level. The human superiority over Nature should be totally eliminated. Life in the city is characterized by uproar, agony and fretful situations. But Nature is a symbol of peace and harmony.

If the fretful life of the city dominates Nature, humankind will become agitated. Consequently, life will become meaningless. If people realize the importance of Nature, it will offer them a harmonious life. This is crystal clear in Whitman's account of his experience. Whitman's eco-poetic intensions are captured in bold relief by the use of imagery, contrast, irony, hyperbole and other poetic devices. These devices intend to depict the immeasurable pain that his environment is subjected to. Although Whitman belongs to the school of deep ecology, his interests also associate him with social ecology.

Ecology is mainly concerned with the debate between forms of power in the human world, and how this leads to the control of nature. It stresses that the solution to human destruction on nonhuman nature is a social one. Deep ecology is more concerned with changing human consciousness as it draws from religious and philosophical attitudes. Shelley concurs with both, emphasizing the need to change consciousness while endorsing social changes to harmonizing human's relationship to nonhuman nature.

Human beings are careless in their activities so they are creating a number of problems in the environment. Careless human beings are sheer cause of the destruction of earth and its beauty. Mother earth is so much tolerant that whatever people do upon her she calmly accepts them. But it might also indicate that to the extreme point of toleration. She may turn towards revenge of heedless action upon her. There may be anti-action that will be far more destructive to human beings. This revenge has been foretold in myths in ancient cultures also. Though we can raise a question of existence of God at present but the current ecological problems of the world are not less serious.

The factors that drive people to enter into the relationship of dependence are not likely to harmonize human-nature harmony. The bad incidents, mishaps, and disasters that occur due to the aggressive and superior attitude of people teach them to rethink and reorder the nature-human harmony. This is exactly what happens in the nature-human relationship set up by the various characters of the stories. At last what becomes clear is the necessity of human beings to enter into harmonious relationship with nature.

Human beings should renounce their aggressive and superior attitude to nature. Then they should put nature on the same footing. The moment human beings

begin to turn their thoughts towards the immutable significance of nature in each and every sphere of life; new ecological visions of symbiotic bond and its redemptive power arise. The only key to harmonizing troubled and tensed nature-relationship is to renounce the aggressive erstwhile ideology.

To cut the entire matter short, it is necessary to keep at bay the illusion that man is the best creature in the world and it has the right to subdue and exploit each and every elements of nature. To cut the entire matter short, harmony between man and nature paves the way for the maintenance of ecological balance.

Works Cited

- Arnold, Jean. *Silence and Symbiosis*. New York: Cannon Gate, 2011.
- Baron, Michael. *Ecological Protocol in Romantic's Narrative*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994.
- Buell, Lawrence. *The Environmental Imaginings*. New York: Norton, 2007.
- Butler, Marylin. "Ecofeminist Theory and Grassroot Politics". *Hypatia* 6.1(Spring 1991):161-84.
- Castillo, Stefanie. *Shelley's Unqualified Optimism*. New Delhi: Mahabheer Publication, 2001.
- Chari, V.K. *Whitman's Concern: Self in Transition*. London: Macmillan, 1998.
- Carson, Rachel. *Whitman's Poetics and Politics*. London: Macmillan, 2001.
- Carter, Ronald and John Macrae. "Socialist and Cultural Ecofeminism: Allies in Resistance". *Ethics and the Environment*. New York: Indian University Press, 2000. 88-93.
- Donovan, Josephine. "Ecofeminist Literary Criticism: Reading the Orange". *Hypatia* 11.2 (Spring 1996): 161-84.
- Gifford, Terry. *Recent Critiques of Ecocriticism*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994.
- Glotfelty, Cheryl. *The Ecocriticism Reader*. New Delhi: Rupa, 2002.
- Garrad, Gred. *Ecocriticism*. London: Harper Collins, 2002.
- Hanningan, John. "Environmental Discourse". *Environmental Sociology*. New York: Routledge, 2008.36-52
- Kellerman, Natan. *Romantic Musings*. New York: Norton Books, 2001.
- Luke, Timothy. *Silence in Romantic Poetry*. New Delhi: Pilgrim Publication, 2004.

- Mazel, David. "Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections". *Environmental Ethics*.9 (1997):3-20.
- Neimneh, Shadi. "Eco-criticism in Process". *Ethics and the Environment* 16.3 (autumn 2001): 31-58)
- Price, Kenneth M. "Third-wave Feminism and the Need to Reweave the Nature/Culture Duality". *NWSM Journal* 16.3(autumn 2004): 154-79).
- Philip, Dana. *The Truth of Ecology*. London: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Plumwood, Vol. " Nature, Self and Gender: Feminism, Environmental Philosophy, and the Critique of Ratioanlism". *Hyptia* 6.1 Ecological Feminism (Spring 1991):3-27)
- Ristic, Ratomir. *Shelley's Critique of Tyranny*. New York: Cannon Gate, 2008.
- Shelly, P. B. *Prometheus Unbound*. London: Macmillon, 2001.
- Sikha, Kumari. *Green Rebellion: A Glimpse and Gesture*. New Delhi: Rupa, 2003.
- Traubel, Horace. *Literature and Environment*. New Delhi: Rupa Publication, 2005.
- Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass*. New York: Norton, 2007.