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Human Technology Versus Nature in Jules Verne's *The Master of the World*

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By

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Letter of Recommendation

Mrs. Pratima Chaudhary has completed her thesis entitled "Human Technology Versus Nature in Jules Verne's *The Master of the World*" under my supervision. She carried out her research from July 2017 to April 2018. I hereby recommend her thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "Human Technology Versus Nature in Jules Verne's *The Master of the World*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Pratima Chaudhary, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

This research explores how nature is exploited by man and how nature resists man's activities in return. It presents the human practices of ruling and controlling over nature is originated from Christian myth and encouraged by enlightenment thinking and advancement in science and technology. This research explores that technology and nature are against to each other. Human scientific activities are the cause of natural exploitation and manipulation. Natural resistance with its force is cause for destruction of human world. To illustrate these things, this research takes upon the symbolic representation of main protagonist intention to be the master of world with help of his machine and his death caused by natural force. To clarify technology against nature, the researcher draws a concept from ecocritics such as Greg Garrard, Rob Bodice, Cheryl Glotfelty, Lewis Walport and so on. By analyzing the natural territory before and after human encroachment with the help of technology, this research presents that human activities are source of natural exploitation as well as cause for destruction of the shelter of the several species including birds and animals. It points out that human anthropocentric view that prefers mastery over the world by using technology, leads natural resistance which is dangerous for human world. Therefore, it gives a message to human being to think about their activities and give up hostile view towards nature and mend their relations with nature.

: Technology Key Words, Nature, Exploitation, Human activities, Natural resistance,

Destruction

This research paper explores how Jules Verne's *The Master of the World* criticizes anthropocentric viewpoints that exploit the nature with the help of science and technology. This novel deals with scientific inventions as the source of natural exploitation and its consequences. It shows that invention of science and technology is against nature. This novel presents that human beings are curious of inventing new things and try to control nature with those newly invented things. In the novel Verne presents great inventor Robur as "extraordinary man" (126) who invents "marvelous machine" (131) to control and rule the natural world. Robur has arrogance in his intelligence. Verne presents that man uses science and technology to conquer the nature. Nature has its own cycle that's why she resists all scientific and technological activities. Verne leaves a message that human must think about their scientific activities. It makes aware of supremacy of the nature. This novel can be considered as a significant representation of powerful nature and its resistance against scientific and technological work of human being.

The present work focuses on exploitation of nature by human being and her resistance. Human exploits the nature with the help of science and technology and reinforces natural disaster. Human encroachment in nature's secret territory is not preferred by nature. She resists human activities which becomes dangerous for human being. Science uses nature as laboratory to experiment new things but does not care about nature. It explores the fact that science always disturbs the nature and nature is wonderful as well as dangerous thing. It nourishes us as mother as well as controls within its values as father figure. The research shows that nature checks and defends human scientific activities by being calm and destructive sometime. But human, because of their unique abilities, try to control it rather than control by it due to new technologies. In the novel, Verne presents that main cause of natural as well as human

destruction is human mind itself. Nature is mysterious but science always tries to destroy its all mystery. So human's scientific activities help them to violate the natural rules which compels nature to take reactive action against human's work. Nature is calm and beautiful but it becomes horrible while resisting to human scientific activities. Nature seems very offensive to human scientific activities. In the novel nature uses its natural force "thunder-storm" (142) as its weapon to challenge the scientific work of Robur and becomes the cause of Robur's death. Verne presents nature as more powerful than human's scientific work. This paper tries to explore the consequence of human ambition to control nature and its rules over it with the help of science and technology.

Jules Verne is a science fiction writer, who is claimed to be father of science fiction by many critics. Being a French writer, he is popular all over the world because his novels are most translated in the world. Most of his novel's subject matter is based on natural manipulation by scientific activities and adventurous journey. In his lifetime, he wrote 54 novels which are labeled as *The Extraordinary Voyages* by his producer Prrie Jules Hezel. Timothy Unwin defines *Extraordinary Voyages* as "written over a fourty- two year period from 1863 to 1905, are quintessentially a document about changing world and the new possibilities- social, scientific, or political opened up by progress" (5). After the popularity of his first novel, *Cinq Semaines en ballon (Five Weeks in a Balloon 1863)*, he achieved an international fame. *The Master of the World* is his second last novel which emerged as popular all over the world after his death. He died on March 24, 1905. He firstly started his writing as playwright then poet and at last becomes popular as science fiction writer. The changing world through science and technology and its negative impact on nature is captured by Verne in majority of his novel. Jean Michael Morgot clarifies "Verne's

literary career was destined to explore ‘Known and Unkown Worlds’ to recall the subtitle of *The Voyages Extraordinaries*” (152).

Jules Verne’s novel brought drastic change in the subject matter of the novel during late nineteenth and early twentieth century. He brought new subject matter for the novel. His science fictions are focused on scientific inventions of various kinds of technologies and its exploitation on nature, explorations of new places and adventurous journey through water, underwater, forest, desert and sky with the help of technological machine. He is farsighted writer who sighted the unusual use of science and technology will be harmful for the human being. Morgot argues “the most that I can claim is to have looked perhaps a little farther in to the future than majority of my critics” (155). In earlier volume of *Extraordinary Voyages* Verne presents science in a positive way. But later there comes the turning point in Verne’s writing. Later volumes are ironic and questionable towards science regarding *The Master of the World*. Morgot explains “in the second half of his life, Verne wrote novels...in which science was morally questionable, used as it was by evil characters to create human misfortune in works such as... *The Master of the World*” (156). Interplay between human and nature is presented in later volume of Verne.

Jules Verne’s *The Master of the World* is about technological domination over natural resources. It is about the one inventor’s travel through the sphere of the earth, water, underwater and in the air with the help of single machine. The novel begins with series of unexplainable events which occurs across the Western part of American State of North Carolina. First strange thing occurs in the Blue ridge Mountain, it is the mountain never before climbed by human being. In the mountain there "rises the crest". People can see smoke "floated above the mountain" and "glow in the sky" and hear "subterranean noises", "unexplainable rumblings" (13). They think that it is a

volcano but it is not. The mountain has naturally got its name as "refuge of birds" of several kinds. But now this mountain does not seem attractive to birds. Birds come to "summit of the mountain, circled high above the crest and then flew swiftly away, troubling the air with harsh cries" (12). Such strange things start to occur at different part of the State caused by moving objects. They move on very high speed that they nearly become invisible. In the road of Philadelphia, there occur extraordinary vehicle. No one can describe it's "form, or the nature or even size" (36), because of its rapid speed. But all agree that it is an automobile. This moving machine has created extreme danger on the high roads for other vehicle and for pedestrians.

Strange appearance comes in sight in the water along the coast of Maine, Connecticut and Massachusetts which no one could describe exactly, "A moving body would appear amid the waters, some two or three miles off shores and go through rapid evolutions" (47). It flashes for a while back and forth among the waves and then becomes invisible. The body moves with such a lightning speed that "the best telescopes could hardly follow" (47). Another strange event occurs at Lake Kirdall which is full of fish and there are several fishing boats. But for some time in the past, the fishermen have noticed a strange upheaval in the waters of the lake, "Sometimes it rises as if a wave surged up from its depths. Even in perfectly calm weather, when there is no wind whatever, this upheaval sometimes arises in a mass of foam" (63). Because of this unnatural waves and unaccountable currents boats sweep beyond all control and serious damages resulted.

Because of this unnatural strange events the first person narrator John Strock, Head inspector in the federal police department on Washington DC, travels to investigate. He first goes to mountains where the crest rises but cannot investigate the reality. Later he discovers that all the phenomena are being caused by the scientific

invention of the Robur and mountain is used as experimenting place. He is the brilliant inventor. Robur has invented a marvelous machine named as Terror; it is a ten meter vehicle which can transform itself into four things an automobile, speedboat, submarine and aircraft. Because of its high speed it creates the ecological imbalance. This machine can move on roads, waters, inside the waters and in the air. Robur is able to go any secret part of the nature. So he regards himself the master of the world. He tries to control the nature with the help of his invention Terror. He regards himself more powerful than the nature and rules over three spheres of the world- earth, water and air. But at last Robur's scientific activities are resisted by nature. Strock tries to capture the Terror and Robur but instead he is captured by Robur. At last Terror gets lightning bolt and destroyed and falls in the sea when it is in the form of aircraft. Robur's body is never found but Strock is rescued.

The Master of the World is a science fiction which presents the story of scientific and technological exploitation of nature and natural resistance as a threat for human being by explaining Robur's intention to control the world with the help of machine and his death caused by natural force, lightning. It describes about natural beauty, human's encroachment inside the secret place of nature and natural resistance to human activities. In this novel the hero does not reach his goal to be the master of the world. His way of goal is interrupted by the natural force. It discovers the human intention to be superior to nature. Verne presents nature in both ways as a source of beauty and destructive force. He mentions "thunder storm" and "lightening" to show that nature is a horrible thing. It destroys the Robur and establishes that no one is powerful than nature. He presents that there is natural power over the human power, so it is foolish for human beings to think themselves as powerful to nature. The novel shows that natural power is unlimited but human power is limited. By

presenting unlimited power of nature the novel gives us a message that human must mend their relations with nature otherwise they must pay.

Jules Verne's *The Master of the World* is a significant representation of powerful nature in the sense that nature is found resisting human scientific activities in the novel. The novel criticizes on the human foolishness to conquer the nature through their knowledge and science. This novel raises the issue of human intention to control the nature and resistance of nature. Verne's idea of natural resistance to science and technology is discussed by many critiques. Frederick Paul Walter argues "dealing with science's dark, sinister potential, raised concerns he would revisit in novels throughout his career[. . .] and *The Master of the World* (1904). In short seeds were there from the start" (3). This argument presents that Verne deals with threatening potentiality and dark aspect of science and technology in this novel. It tries to present that science and technology is not more powerful than nature. So, for human being it is foolish to try to be master of the world with the help of science and technology.

There are some limitations on human as well as scientific power. Human, being is overwhelmed by the so called intelligence, unable to see the limitations on his power. Sometimes it brings miseries on human life. Depending in his measurement, human intends to subdue the nature but does not think that unseen force of nature which could not be measured by human mind. Another critique Arthur B. Evans strengthens this idea by presenting short narrative of Robur in which scientific and technological inventions is defeated by natural force which becomes cause for human destruction. Evans describes:

In his helicopter like airship, Albatros- Robur, symbol of man's transcendence above and conquest of nature- degenerates into an insane megalomaniac who,

threatening global terrorism from his high- tech inventions, demands to be “Master of the World.” Similarly to Herr Schultze, Robur is also stopped only by divine intervention (again, a lightning bolt). But what is important to note is that these latter volumes of this series of novels in the *Voyages extraordinaires* clearly reflect, Verne’s own ideological turnabout as he appears deliberately to undermine the scientific and moral assumptions upon which his earlier (and best known) works were built. (290-91)

Evans description suggests that we human beings so called most intelligent creature on the earth are pretending to be unaware of the fact that we are digging our own grave by challenging the nature through science. Furthermore, Walter states “a later figure, the aeronaut Robur is a Nemo variant...bad news in *Master of the World*” (5). It also clarifies that there is destruction of Robur in the novel. Therefore, this novel tries to make us aware of the fact that it is better to mend our hostile attitude towards nature and live in harmony with nature instead of challenging her power.

Human beings, the most intelligent creature on the earth, are part of ecology and they are found many times challenging the natural rules through their abilities. It is bitter reality of the present world that science and technology dominates nature and nature in resistance to human activities uses its force as its weapon that ultimately brings disaster to human being. This bitter reality is presented in the novel *The Master of the World*. Arthur B. Evans argues “by Verne’s 1904 novel *Maitre du monde* (*Master of the World*), however, most of the illustrations were of the new variety. And, effectively blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality, even a real photograph is included from time to time” (260). His argument presents that this novel captures the reality of twentieth century which is the age of exploration of science and technology. Furthermore, Evans talks about the period of change which

affects Verne's later volumes of *Voyages Extraordinaires*, one is *The Master of the World*.

Finally, this period also saw the birth of the modern military industrial complex- where advances in science and technology were unilaterally applied to the production of ever- more lethal weapon systems, where national military budgets soared as France and other industrialized nations sought to consolidate their geocentric holdings with ironclad warships, machine guns, poison- gas canisters and new long- range artillery. Whether such inventional developments directly affected the composition of Verne's later *Voyages Extraordinaires* is a moot point. (290)

These lines suggest that world is occupied with invention of scientific and technological inventions that have impacted on Verne's writings such as *The Master of the World*. It shows the changing world with science and technology. Evans argues "a striking example of these change can be seen in later volumes of Verne's cycle novels [. . .] and *Maitre du monde* (1904: translated as *The Master of the World*, 1914)" (290). It gives a sense that this novel is about machine and invention.

Science and technology has shrunk the globe and added the extra power to human. Scientist regards that science is factual and perfect. But nature proves the imperfection of science. Machine is one of the miraculous devices in the earth that is produced through long experimentations of science. Human tries to use machine as much as he can without paying attention to its danger. Furthermore, Timothy Unwin criticizes Verne's novel as demonization of technology. Unwin argues "He writes of global travel and technological wizardry" (6). He further describes machine presented in Verne's novel as an evil supernatural being:

Throughout her work on Verne she demonstrates how ancient myths are

reused and recycled by the novelist in a modern framework: The figures of Prometheus, Vulcan, Icarus, Orpheus, Pluto, Janus and others reappear with all the trappings of modern scientific discourse and the apparel of new technology: and Verne's machines, far from being well-honed and efficient devices, are more like mythological monsters. (7)

This writer criticizes Verne as presenter of technology in negative way. This suggests that machine bears the quality of monsters having no sympathy and empathy. Here, by connecting Verne's machine with mythological monster, Unwin tries to clarify those machines are dangerous. Monsters always struggle to conquer the world even the God. Like monster, human tries to conquer the world by using machine. It gives the glimpse that nature is not in favour of scientific experimentations.

In the novel, morality of human being is questionable. Human gets all things from nature and why they try to torture their own shelter. Some critics argue that, Verne's aim is to instruct and enlighten his reader through a series of fictional journeys. The novel tries to warn human being about the scientific domination of the nature and natural response. By presenting scientific action and natural reaction, Verne tries to give some moral lesson to his reader about scientific torture to nature and natural resistance. Kenneth Berri finds Verne's novel loaded with moral lesson:

Verne's moral lesson is clear, from the nefarious Herr Schultze in *Les Cinq cents millions de la Begum* (1879), who threatens to explode and destroy France-ville with his ballistic missiles, to Robur, the enigmatic hero who in a later novel becomes Robur the megalomaniacal madman: "scientists not only have a moral obligation to educate society..., but also to safeguard society from the fruits of their own labor" (92). Verne speaks out against problems which still plague us, from the possible extinction of whales to the pollution of

the air we breath, and levies a general aesthetic criticism of modern industrialization. (379)

This argument presents that Verne by depicting scientific innovation in his novel tries to give some moral lesson. Verne raises the issue about so many problems caused by scientific invention. It tries to give a strong message to human being to think about nature before discovering any new thing. It presents that Verne raises the consequences of scientific invention which still people are facing.

Many critiques explore that science and technology was good in earlier phase of Verne's writing but bad in later volume of his writing including *The Master of the World*. They argue that science and technology is used to exploit the nature in most of Verne's writing. Morgot argues that "in most of Verne's novel, the heroes never reach their goal" (154). Verne presents his hero as a failure to prove that human power is limited and can be interrupted by natural force. Few critics argue that Verne's novel captures the reality of twentieth century which is the period of great invention of technology. It has experimented on nature without caring for natural destruction. Human scientific activities and nature are against to each other, so Verne presents scientific activities as root cause for the destruction of the nature and nature as a destroyer of human being in resistance. Some critics take Verne's novel as instructions for human being. They argue that Verne's novel gives a moral lesson that human being need to rethink about their hostile view towards nature. By showing the destruction to human world in *The Master of the World*, Verne questions over human deeds. Verne does not favour of scientific inventions and human encroachment in the nature. But at the same time, science and technologies cannot be denied in present situations. Without technology human life will be full of difficulties, so science and nature must go in a balanced way.

The Master of the World raises the questions over scientific explorations and inventions of machines during twentieth century and its exploitation of ecology. Natural exploitation by machine and objection of nature to machine is subject of concern in the novel. For centuries, Westerners have been struggling on experiment to invent very powerful machine to exploit nature. Verne in his novel captures the events of twentieth century witness's scientific and technological advancement that ultimately help man to exploit nature. Robur's desire to be the master of the world fails by resistance of nature in the form of lightning bolt and thunder storm. The tussle between human and nature is always main issue in Verne's most of novels. From ecological point of view science and technology has brought destruction of nature because human beings have been able to exploit nature by using man made machines.

Ecocriticism is a combination of two separate terms ecology and criticism. It helps to analyze text that illustrates the subject of nature. Ecology is the study of interrelationship between plants and living creatures and their relationship with the environment. Criticism is the critical study of anything with some principles. Ecocriticism refers to the critical study of ecological interrelationships. It focuses on living beings relation with environment regarding the interrelationship of living things with nature. Ecocriticism specially emphasizes on human interrelationship with nature. Greg Gerrard defines ecocriticism as "indeed, the widest definition of the subject of eco-criticism is the study of the relationship of human and the non-human, throughout human cultural history and entailing critical analysis of the term 'human' itself" (5). It presents that ecocriticism critically studies human and non-human relations and analyzes the concept of human. Further, Tucker quoted in Glen A. Love defines ecocriticism:

Challenges interpretation to its own grounding in the bedrock of natural fact,

in the biospheric and indeed planetary conditions without which human life, much less humane letters, could not exist. Ecocriticism thus claims as its hermeneutic horizon nothing short of the literal horizon itself, the finite environment that a reader or writer occupies thanks not just to culturally coded determinants but also to natural determinants that antedate these and will outlast them. (1)

It describes about the scope of ecocriticism. It presents that ecocriticism encompasses both human as well as nonhuman contexts and considerations as its subject of study. Cheryll Glotfelty defines “eco-criticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (xviii). It clarifies that ecocriticism analyzes interrelationship between living being and physical environment presented in literature. Environmental literature captures the living beings relations to each other and their relations with nonliving beings including nature. So it is most important subject of ecocriticism. In ecocriticism two things are dominant biocentrism and anthropocentrism.

Anthropocentrism is an attitude of human mind which evaluates the world by keeping human values at the center. Being at the center, human tries to dominate non-human - animal, earth and nature. It is a human centered viewpoint which objectifies others. Human regards that humans are only the subject of great importance. Human beings are selfish and always work to make their life luxurious. By using others, man tries to make his life comfortable but does not consider about others because human beings are overwhelmed by anthropocentric viewpoint. Human beings are Anthropocentric towards nature. They use nature as their scientific laboratory to produce technological things for themselves but do not pay attention to torture nature with their scientific experimentation. The dominance of nature is only resulted by

anthropocentric view of human mind. Boria Sax defines, “Anthropocentrism is this tendency to vastly exaggerate human dominance, understanding, power, autonomy, unity, guilt, virtue, wickedness and morality” (36). It presents that anthropocentrism is a tendency to enlarge the human values. It overstates human being and underestimates the non-human. Therefore, anthropocentrism is a human centered perspective which dominates others. Furthermore, Rob Bodice defines anthropocentrism in this way:

Anthropocentrism is expressed either as a charge of human chauvinism, or as an acknowledgement of human ontological boundaries. It is in tension with nature, the environment and non- human animals (as well as non- human preset. It is in apparent contrast to other- worldly cosmologies, religious and philosophies. Anthropocentrism has provided order and structure to human understanding of the world, while unavoidably expressing the limits of that understanding. It influences our ethics, our politics, and the moral status of others. (1)

This explanation portrays the impact of anthropocentrism on human mind that makes him consider himself as superior and the other as inferior. It shows that the situation of opposition between human and non-human is caused by anthropocentric view. It has influenced on ethics, politics and morality of human being. In Forward section of *Anthropocentrism: Humans, animals and Environment* Kenneth Shapiro writes “anthropocentrism..., is particularly vulnerable to this post- structuralist critique for it valorizes anthropos or human being against other animals at time when animal protection and environmentalism have emerged as well- established social justice movements” (n. p.). Because of this so- called anthropocentric view on human eyes, human beings are unable to see the reality. Anthropocentrism makes man to regard himself as the king of nature. It means that all human activities are guided by

anthropocentrism.

Science and technology helps to exploit the nature. Human beings always struggle to become a most powerful creature in the earth. Human mind is a beautiful gift from the God. By using human intellect, he produces scientific ideas and produces technologies to add extra power to him. With the help of science and technology, human feels that he is more powerful than non-humans and tries to conquer the nature. Expansion of human power as a form of technologies helps to increase human arrogance and he forgets that he is a creation of God and tries to challenge the role of God with scientific creation. Boria Sax argues human, “with the use of electricity and eventually computer technology, machines has started to appear even more anthropocentric” (32). It makes clear that technological machines are the most important cause for the increase of anthropocentric viewpoint. Nature reacts to human activities the way human treat nature. Positive or negative reactions of nature depend on human activities. Vaclav Havel quoted in Lewis Walport explains this dual action of nature in the following lines:

Modern science...abolishes as mere fiction the innermost foundations of our natural world: it kills God and takes his place an the vacant throne so henceforth it would be science that would hold the order of being in its hand as its sole legitimate guardian and so be the legitimate arbiten of all relevant truth... People thought they could explain and conquer nature- yet the out come is that they destroyed it and disinherited themselves from it. (ix)

The explanation suggests that anthropocentric viewpoint has created a problem in interrelationship between human and nature. Human, being a creation of God, tries to replace the role of God by challenging the God’s creation. It explains the result of human domination towards nature. Human considers that nature can be explained and

conquered. But nature is unpredictable and human is a small part of nature then how human could control the vast nature. By destroying the nature, human beings are disinheriting human species from the nature. It presents that human's future is oriented towards natural threat because of their own activities. Human existence without natural harmony cannot be imagined, so human is creating natural danger by themselves.

Verne's *The Master of the World* tries to explore the natural manipulation by human being by using the technological machines. Verne indicates that nature has its own way of reaction to human activities by presenting many signs of natural phenomena. Such are thunder storm, lightening, upheavals in the sea, powerful wave. Verne tries to bring conscious to his reader about natural resistance; it can be destructive for human being if they go beyond natural rule. This paper explores human exploitation on nature with the help of science and technology is resisted by natural force drawing on concepts from ecological theories of Greg Gerrard's *Ecocriticism*, Rob Bodic's *Anthropocentrism: Human, Animals and Environments*, Lewis Walport's *The Unnatural Nature of Science* and Cheryl Glotfelty and Harold Froman's *The Ecocritical Reader: Landmark in Literary Ecology*.

In *The Master of the world*, Verne criticizes human intention to exploit the nature and to be the conqueror of the world. He tries to indicate that natural exploitation by scientific experimentation is major problem in the world. Curiosity is instinct quality of human being so they try to reach in every secret and hidden place of nature. But human foot print in its secret territory is not accepted by nature which creates the tussle between human and nature. Human considers that he can subdue the nature by using his mind. Robin Attfield blames the Judeo Christian tradition as the root of domination of the nature and environmental crisis by discussing on Peter

Harrison's argument. Harrison argues that "the Christian doctrine of the creation sets the human being apart from nature; advocates human control of nature, and implies that the natural world was created solely for our use" (286). It blames that Christianity commands human being to dominate the nature and rule over it for their own purpose. Further, Harrison summarizes Lynn White Jr's ideas as:

... according to White, we already encounter evidence of attempts at the technological mastery of nature and those incipient exploitative tendencies that come to full flower in scientific and technological revolutions of later eras. All of this is attributed to the influence of Judeo- Christian conceptions of creation. Christianity, White concludes, 'bears a huge burden of guilt for environmental deterioration'. (287)

It describes that origin of human mastery over nature and ecological crisis is related to Christian belief. Man is born to subdue the nature. Christian myth presents that subjugation of nature by human being origins with the creation of first man in the earth. After creating the first man Adam God commands him, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (1). It helps human to realize that he is powerful and all the world is for him to use for his purpose. This description from the biblical myth shows that human beings are guided by religious doctrine. Human beings are in the form of Adam and it seems that as if they are following the gods command so they try to subdue the nature.

In the novel, Verne presents the protagonist Robur as the representative of Adam who intends to subdue the nature and tries to be the master of the sea, air and earth with the help of machine. He is presented as "extraordinary man", who has

"striking character of the portrait at the time". He does not fear with anyone even with nature. He considers that no one is powerful than him because he has a powerful machine. His personality is described as "The square shoulder; the back like a regular trapezoid, its longer side formed by that geometrical shoulder line; the robust neck; the enormous spheroidal head". His eyes are "burned with fire"; his eye brows "signified such energy". His personality is presented as he is anthropocentric. He revealed himself "hurling forth his name like a threat" (127). Robur states:

I refuse absolutely and definitely the sums offered for my inventions.

My machine will be neither French nor German, nor Austrian nor Russian nor English nor American.

The invention will remain my own, and I shall use it as pleases me.

With it, I hold control of the entire world, and there lies no force within the reach of human it which is able to resist me, under any circumstances whatsoever. (74)

This dialogue of Robur clarifies the human intention to control the world and rule over it with the help of machine. It presents that human beings are anthropocentric because they consider they are most powerful in the world and there is no any forces to resist them. It shows that machine adds extra power to human being. It supports human being to dominate the nature. Robur's warns other people that "let no one attempt to seize or stop me. It is, and utterly impossible". He announces that no one "can accomplish nothing against" him but he "can accomplish anything against them" (74) because he has most powerful machine. Human uses machine for their pleasure. Human tries to subjugate the nature depending in his own as well as machinery power.

Another factor is enlightenment which supports human being to exploit the

nature. The concept of enlightenment rises during 18th century. It is use of reason. So enlightenment period is known as age of reason. Human becomes free to use reason and thought in anything or in any condition with the development of enlightenment. It develops human being as rational and intellectual. Rationality and intellect expand the human power and human start to consider he is most powerful in the world. Human's realization of themselves as rational, intellectual and powerful encourages human beings to dominate the nature and rule over it. Human beings use reason and thought to produce new things from raw materials from the natural objects which led towards natural destruction and exploitation, Andre Krebber brings the reference from *Dialectic of Enlightenment* by Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno. He argues "instead of seeing the object as an object in itself and then trying to influence it, reason and thought became agents of rebuilding, reproducing and eventually creating the natural objects" (329). It shows that human beings are not ready to accept natural object as it is in real form. But they are eager to view it in different form, so they try to search possible looking of the object by using their reason and thought. The use of reason and thought manipulates the natural object, so the whole nature is manipulated by human beings. Further, Krebber explains:

The thesis of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* describes human history as continuous anthropocentric struggles for the master of nature in order to secure and self-preserve the human. Thought and reason function as human means to achieve this. With the European Enlightenment; however a change in technique appeared of human power over nature. What was previously attempted through the imitation of nature (mimesis), turned into material domination with the enlightenment. Nature was reduced to mere material for satisfying human needs and human came to be regarded as the central element

of the universe. (324)

This explanation describes that, there is long history of human struggles to get mastery over nature and thought and reason works to support human being in this achievement. This presents that enlightenment brings material domination over nature. By using the reason human tries to produce materials for human being from the nature. Nature becomes the subject for the use of reason and thought to produce new thing. It led to progressive development of science and technology. Lee Morrissey argues “provisionally it can be said that the Enlightenment is associated with the rise of science and the decline of religion, with a defenced of reasoned debate and open critique” (262). It shows that enlightenment helps in the emergence of science. Advancement in science and technology is cause for natural exploitation. In the novel, Robur is presented as rational and intellectual. He is described as extraordinary man. Construction of machine, Terror is result of his genius which “could conquer all the element at once” (130-31). It is very powerful machine which Robur used to manipulate the nature. John Strock describes:

So this machine actually fulfilled a four-fold use! It was at the same time automobile, boat, submarine, and airship. Earth, sea and air—it could move through all the elements! And with what power! With what speed! A few instants sufficed to complete its marvelous transformations. The same engine drove it along its course! And I had a witness of its metamorphoses! (119)

This paragraph describes about the powerful machine which is the scientific creation of human being. This machine dominates the nature. Robur has created this machine to conquer the world. It is ‘four- fold use’ machine which can transform itself into automobile, boat, submarine and airship. With the help of this machine, Robur moves through earth, underwater and air and disturbs the secrecy of the nature. Its high speed

creates ecological imbalance. When it is in the form of automobile it disturbs the ecology and harm's the animal. It comes like a 'thunder- bolt' creating a 'rumblings' and "whirlwind, which tore the branches from the trees along the road, terrified the animals browsing in adjoining fields" (37). It "killed the birds which could not resist the suction of the tremendous air currents engendered by its passage" (37). It shows that the machine destroys the animals, birds and plants. In the form of boat and submarine, it unbalances the wave of calm sea. It "Tossed about by violent waves and unaccountable currents, boat have been swept beyond all control. Sometimes they have been dashed one against another, and serious damage has resulted" (63). It rules over water and disturbs the secret of sea. And in the form of airship it rules over the air and creates rumbling sounds. It shows that Robur has tried to control all the element of the earth and rule over it.

Scientific experiment leads the natural destruction and exploitation. Use of reason is practiced in the form of scientific experimentation. By doing experiment human tries to prove either their reason is right or wrong. Experimentation has so many negative impacts on ecology; it manipulates the nature and damages the natural resources. It destroys the several kinds of birds, animals, insects and plants. Even destroys the soil, pollutes the water and air. Many things are in danger because of scientific experimentation. It becomes the catastrophe for non- humans. It does not care about other's destruction but only focuses on human's benefit. Scientific experimentation is guided by human being so they can exploit the nature as much as they want for their advantage. Use of reason is in the form of experimentation is very dangerous for the nature. Andre Krebber brings Bruno Latour's ideas in his discussion. Latour stress:

Instead of sheltering nature form anthropocentric impact, - the crisis has

evoked even more human involvement ‘with a still more invasive scientific apparatus’. This involvement follows in general the logic of rational, enlightened reason. The mechanistic Enlightenment of eighteenth-century Europe strove to establish human domination. The obstacles nature presented for human self- preservation was to be overcome once and for all. Human bonds with nature were rejected. (321-22)

It describes that enlightenment establishes human domination over nature. Human involvement in the logic of rationality and reason creates scientific experimentation which evokes natural disaster. It presents that reason and rationality of human being creates danger for nature. Human involvement in scientific activities becomes the cause for natural destruction. In the novel, Robur has chosen very secret place of nature for his experimentation, “where no human had ever set foot before him” (118). Robur uses nature as his laboratory for scientific experimentation and hiding place of his machine which brings serious damages on nature and animals. Robur has encroached in very mysterious and secret territory of nature. Strock describes about that secret place “this hollow formed an almost regular oval, with its longer diameters extending north and south. As to the surrounding- wall, what was its height, what the character of its crest, I could not judge” (121). It shows the secrecy of place. There is no path for human being to go there but Robur encroached with the help of machine. Further Strock explains:

But the idea one would naturally get from the name of refuge for birds of prey, eagles, vultures; the home of vast numbers of the feathered tribes, wheeling and screaming above peaks beyond the reach of man. Now Great Eyrie did not seem particularly attractive to birds; on the contrary, the people of the neighborhood began to remark that on some days when birds approached it’s

summit they mounted still further, circled high above the crest, and then flew swiftly away, troubling the air with harsh cries. (12)

It describes about the condition of nature before and after human encroachment in its secret territory. There are harmonious relations among animals and birds. Great Eyrie, is shelter for several kinds of living animals except human. They enjoy in their own beautiful environment. It looks very beautiful because animals and birds have good relation with nature. But it is destroyed by human encroachment in that place. Robur encroaches in that place and starts his scientific experiment; it threatens the birds and animals. Their home is destroyed by human being. So the birds come and fly away. Human decreases the beauty and attractiveness of nature.

Sometimes nature shows the sign of no acceptableness to human activities. It presents some glimpse of resistance to warn human being that their activities are not preferred by nature. Nature tries to inform human being that their power is not more than natural power. It presents the supremacy over human power. Though human beings regards themselves most powerful creature, they could not get victory over the nature. Nature has its powerful force to resist human activities. In front of the natural power human power becomes very weak. Human power cannot compete with natural force. Human mind seems limited in front of natural power. Krebber argues:

Despite our great knowledge of and power to manipulate nature, we do not seem to 'triumph over nature'. Instead of creating paradise like conditions on the contrary, we are threatened by the changes our manipulation of nature has caused. Bacon's intention 'that nature serves human affairs and interest' instead promises to warn into an ecological disaster. (331)

It describes about the supremacy of the nature. It presents that though human use their knowledge and power to conquer the nature they could not get victory over it. It

shows the nature is more powerful than human being. It presents that nature sometimes threatens human beings with its force as a charge of human manipulation of nature. In the novel, nature seems offensive to human activities. Nature shows the sign of refuse to human activities. Nature seems as if it wants to prevent human encroachment in its secret territory. Strock explains:

The balloon rose at once to a height of fifteen hundred feet, and there rested almost motionless for a quarter of an hour. Evidently the east wind, which was brisk upon the surface of the earth, did not make itself felt at that height. Then unlucky chance, the balloon was caught in an adverse current, and began to drift toward the east. Its distance from the mountain chain rapidly increased. Despite all the efforts of the aeronaut, the citizens of Morganton saw the balloon disappear on the wrong horizon. (14)

It describes that nature refuses the human activities. Wilker, aeronaut wants to go in Great Eyrie to find out that "if the mouth of a volcano really opened the mighty rocks" (14) with his balloon. But nature does not seem positive to human exploration on natural phenomena. So when he wants to fly on his balloon, wind flies his balloon at opposite direction. It suggests that nature prefers to be mysterious. Here, wind is presented as a force of nature which defeats the human activities.

Nature resists the human activities with its natural force which becomes destructive for human being. Human beings because of their intelligence, try to be more powerful than nature which leads natural resistance. A person starts to dig his own grave from the day he starts to disturb the secrecy of nature with scientific inventions. Though human considers that science helps to control nature but in fact both science and human are controlled by nature. Krebber argues:

Since then, science has been successful in manipulating nature to human aims.

Simultaneously, as the environmental crisis shows, humans are far from commanding nature. Instead of being under control and expelled outside the gates of society, nature pushes into society on all fronts. In relation to maintaining sound ecological living conditions for humans and other species on the earth enlightened sciences ultimately seem to fail. That we still face the same threat after forty years of lacking modern ecological problems is another indication of such failure. (322)

It presents that science is the failure as in front of the nature. Nature is more powerful than nature. It presents that though science regards it is successful to dominate nature, nature resists scientific activities of human being. In the novel Robur's scientific activities are resisted by natural force. It presents that Robur's scientific activities are not accepted by nature:

This ship, while flying before the some terrific thunder- storm which destroys the "Terror" had encountered some wreckage, among whose fragments were entangled my helpless body. Thus I found myself back among humankind once more, while Robur the Conqueror and his two companions had ended their adventurous careers in the waters of the Gulf. The Master of the World had disappeared forever, struck down by those thunder- bolts which he had dared to break in the regions of their fullest power. He carried with him the secret of his extraordinary machine. (142-43)

It describes about the destruction of the machine Terror and Robur's death caused by natural force in the form of natural resistance to human scientific activities. Robur tries to control the nature and intends to be master of the world with the help of his machine but nature resists to his activities. So, Terror gets lightning bolt and destroys. Robur's own activities become the cause of his death.

To conclude, Jules Verne's *The Master of the World* talks about the situation brought up by anthropocentric and technological misdeeds of humankind on nature. It presents an unimaginable journey through natural sphere and puts some question on human deeds and clarifies that nature is impossible to control. Verne presents various human mental ability in the form of Robur, who constructs marvelous machine and tries to conquer the whole world. Another is John Strock who digs out the mysterious events. These characters with genius mind are full of anthropocentric instinct inherited through their ancestral myths and tales, rationality supported by the Enlightenment as well as self-knowledge.

Verne intends to clarify that human technology and nature are against each other through different technological harm on nature and some glimpse of natural resistance. Verne presents his character as arrogant, full of anthropocentric, who are blind in their power and try to conquer the nature. Their blind faith on their power leads them to be a failure. Verne questions over the human deeds with the projection of Robur's invention of machine, his desire to control nature and natural response towards his character of his tale. The projection of machine and its harm on secret place of nature, animals and birds shelter show how much misery has brought up by humankind on Earth surface. Modern science has made human kind blind about the consequences it may bring up to the ecological phenomena on earth. Technology helps to manipulate or modify nature and encourages human kind conquer the hidden realities of the earth. Verne indicates result of disturbing the nature will always be destructive. When human tries to conquer or exploit the natural phenomena with technology, ecological balance is disturbed and nature seems to be violate. Nature has its own cycle so it is not bound by human action. By giving tragic end, Verne points out that nature is destructive to human technological encroachment on its secret

territory. Thus, through the tale of *The Master of the World* Verne tries to instruct his reader that ecological crisis is brought up by anthropocentric viewpoint. Despite our great knowledge and ability to manipulate nature, we will never be able to conquer nature.

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