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Literary Ecopsychologies in the Context of World Literature

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Poznan 2024

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Chapter 1 World Literature Studies

1.1 What is World Literature?

1.1.1 The Starting Point of Literature

Kelly J. Mays[1], editor of the book *Norton Introduction to Literature* (2019), mentioned in the opening section of the book that in the Charles Dicken's novel *Hard Times* (1854), Thomas Gradgrind cautions the teachers and students at his "model" school against exercising their imaginations. Mr. Gradgrind asks Bitzer, a pale, spiritless boy to define a horse. Bitzer gives exactly the kind of definition to satisfy Mr. Gradgrind: Quadruped and Graminivorous. Anyone who understands what a horse is rebels against Bitzer's lifeless depiction of the animal and the "Gradgrind" vision of reality. In other words, in his novel *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens depicts the character of Thomas Gradgrind, who is preoccupied with measuring every facet of human existence in an extreme circumstance. However, human beings cannot live exclusively on facts. It is dangerous to stunt the faculties of imagination and feeling. Dickens serves as a reminder of why we like and even require reading literature through the misunderstandings brought about by the over-focus on reality in his stories.

But what is literature? Before your reading this thesis, you probably could guess that it would contain the sorts of stories, poems, and plays you have encountered in classes or in the literature section of a library or a bookstore. According to *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, a number of definitions can be found for the word "literature", one of which is "imaginative or creative writing, especially of recognized artistic value."[2] We undertake a model of that definition with the aid of focusing on fictional stories, poems, and plays—the three major genres of "imaginative or creative writing" that shape the heart of literature as it has been taught in universities

[1] Kelly J Mays, *Norton Introduction to Literature*, 13th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2019), 1–2.
[2] Joseph P Pickett et al., *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 5th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018), 1025.

for over a century.

Yet in the modern perception of literature, we have therefore opted for a much-expanded conception of literature that includes creation myths, wisdom literature, religious texts, philosophy, and political writing in addition to poems, plays, and narrative fiction. Literature is capable of something extraordinary: it allows us a glimpse into the imaginative lives, the thoughts and feelings of humans from thousands of years ago or living halfway around the world.

1.1.2 Diversity in Literature

David Damrosch[3] in his book *How to Read World Literature* (2018) mentioned: the first challenge in reading world literature is that the very idea of literature has meant many different things over the centuries and around the world. At its most general, “literature” simply means “written with letters”. Even in more artistic contexts, many cultures have made no firm distinctions between imaginative literature and other forms of elevated writing.[4] For instance, The classical Chinese term "*wen*" referred to poetry and artistic prose, yet it encapsulated a broader range of interpretations, encompassing concepts such as pattern, order, and harmonious design. Furthermore, in Europe, the definition of literature remained very broad until the eighteenth century, reflecting previous concepts of literature as “humane letters,” but grew to be progressively confined to creative works of poetry, theater, and prose fiction. This interpretation has become the standard all over the world, including the new meanings of words like *wenxue* in Chinese and *bungaku* in Japanese, and *adab* in Arabic.

However, these terms can be utilized both very extensively or pretty restrictively. Often readers solely admit some poems and novels into the category of "real" literature. Damrosch believes that even in the sense of belles-lettres, literature can be defined to varying degrees of breadth.[5] For example, Sigmund Freud won a leading German

[3] David Damrosch, *How to Read World Literature* (Hoboken, Nj: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2018).
[4] Damrosch, *How to Read World Literature*, 9
[5] Damrosch, *How to Read World Literature*, 10

literary award, the Goethe Prize, given him in recognition of the artistry of his psychoanalytical case studies, and he is often taught in literature courses next to Proust, Kafka, and Woolf. Additionally, literature has grown to encompass oral compositions by illiterate poets and storytellers as well as works "written with letters." Movies and television programs provide audiences with many of the same delights that books did for nineteenth-century readers, and "literature" can be defined broadly to include works of aural and visual narrative, from movies to manga and poetic podcasts. Therefore, in view of this variety, we need to prepare ourselves to examine distinctive works with exceptional expectations.

1.1.3 The Birth of World Literature

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe recognized in 1827, while living in small-town Weimar, that he was in the enviable position of having access not only to European literature but also to literature from far further away, including Persian poetry, Chinese novels, and Sanskrit drama. He coined the term "world literature" to describe this new force of globalization in literature.[6] Since 1827, for less than 200 years, we have been living in an era of world literature. This era has brought many lost masterpieces back to life, including *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, which was rediscovered in the nineteenth century, and the *Popol Vuh*, which languished in a library until well into the twentieth century. Meanwhile, other works of world literature were not translated and therefore did not begin to circulate outside their sphere of origin until the last 200 years, including *The Tale of Genji*. With more literature becoming more widely available than ever before, Goethe's vision of world literature has become a reality today.

1.1.4 The Connection between "World" and "Literature"

At various points in the history of the literary world, one or two literary schools and

[6] Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir, *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, 2nd ed. (Milton: Taylor & Francis Group, 2022), 3.

schools of criticism have always predominated, and their "seats" have become the capitals of literary world. Therefore, the principles of literature had to be determined by this center, which was the owner of the so-called world literary capital. To be acknowledged by the literary world, all writers in the literary periphery had to use this center's literary capital for literary production, and, to use Casanova's words, Paris has become the Greenwich of the literary world.

As Pascale Casanova[7] has argued in *The World Republic of Letters* (2007), international literary space was conceived in the sixteenth century, when literature began to emerge as a source of contention in Europe, and it has continued to grow and expand ever since. With the formation and growth of the first European states came the emergence of literary authority and acknowledgment, as well as national rivalry. Literature, which was formerly restricted to regional areas that were isolated from one another, has now emerged as a common battleground. Meanwhile, Casanova contends that while there is undoubtedly a "center" in the history of literature, there are also marginal regions, particularly in the notion of literature itself. In other words, "minor" literature exists outside of the mainstream or "major" literature, and the literary networks of these marginal areas unintentionally gravitate toward the center in order to be recognized by the center and strengthen their own literary status.

The Renaissance period in Italy, enriched by its Latin roots, emerged as the inaugural acknowledged center of literary influence. Because Rome was once the center of Christian culture, the Bible, as well as a variety of literary and artistic writings, were written or translated in Latin. However, the centrality of Latin literature was challenged when the Bible was translated into Romance languages and other tiny languages that developed into French, and Rome gradually ceased to be the capital of literature. Then came France, with the rise of the La Pléiade in the mid-sixteenth century, which provided a first tentative sketch of transnational literary space by contesting both the predominance of Latin and the progress of Italian. French-language writing blossomed in Europe throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, and Paris increasingly became the

[7] Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2004).

capital of world literature. For centuries, individuals seeking a literary reputation came to France, and the majority of authors from the great literary countries, including Germany, England, Poland, and Japan, traveled to and stayed in Paris, many of them composing in French. For instance, it was in Paris that Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855) wrote *Pan Tadeusz* (1834), considered today to be the Polish national epic. The Japanese poet Kafu Nagai (1879–I959) prostrated himself before Maupassant's tomb when he arrived there in I907. These made Paris a cosmopolis and demonstrated France's significant importance as the capital of the literary world. Then, followed by the rest of Europe, Spain and England progressively entered into a rivalry based on the foundation of their own literary "assets" and traditions. During the 19th century, nationalist movements in Central Europe gave rise to new claims to literary existence. Finally, as a result of decolonization, African, Indian subcontinent, and Asian countries asserted their literary validity and existence as well.

1.1.5 The Economic Ecology of the Literary World

In contrast to the national boundaries that shape political belief and nationalist sentiment, the world of literature produces its own geography and divisions. The territories of literature are defined and circumscribed according to their aesthetic distance from the point of literary creation. Pascale Casanova believes cities where literary resources are concentrated, where they amass, become locations where belief is incarnated, they are centers of credit. In fact, they may be regarded as a subset of central banks. Paris is able to create literary value and extend terms of credit everywhere in the world. It is also the gateway to the "world market of intellectual goods," as Goethe[8] put it, Paris is not only the capital of the literary world, it is also a hub for the creative industries. However, this world republic of letters has its own mode of operation: its own economy producing hierarchies and various forms of violence. Franco Moretti[9], an Italian literary historian and theorist, mentioned a problematic point

[8] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*,10
[9] Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History* (London: Verso, 2005).

in the world of literature in his book *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History* (2005). He took an initial hypothesis from the world-system school of economic history, according to which international capitalism is a system that is both one and unequal: with a core and a periphery that are connected together in a developing inequality relationship. For example, literature used to move outward from the urban center to the colonial periphery in the previous imperial networks. Shakespeare was assigned reading in India, and Cervantes was assigned reading in Argentina, yet colonial writers' works were rarely assigned or even read in London or Madrid. Paris, London, and New York remain important centers of publication, as Pascale Casanova has argued in *The World Republic of Letters* (2007), and writers from peripheral regions typically need to be embraced by publishers and opinion makers in such centers if they are to reach an international audience. Franco Moretti used an economic metaphor for this literary geographical inequity. He argued source literature may become a source of direct or indirect loans, a source of loans for a target literature. There is no symmetry between central and marginal literature. In other words, the destiny of a culture (usually a culture of the periphery), is intersected and altered by another culture (from the core) that completely ignores it.

Why is there this inequality between the center and the periphery in the world of literature? The economy of literature is originally a concept in the sociology of literature regarding the study of literary production, but Casanova's study of this issue in her book starts mainly with the vehicle of literature, language. According to Casanova, language is the capital of literary creation, and once Paris became the literary world's center, Latin American, German, and Irish literary academics working in French finally won literary prizes and established their position in the literary world. Furthermore, she identifies a huge number of Latin American, African, and Asian writers who wrote and were translated in the language of the country where the "literary center" was located, allowing that country's culture to reach the world and be acknowledged by the literary world. Casanova also believes that the use of a certain language alone does not constitute literary capital, but that literariness is the most important effort in the use of language. Only through a thorough understanding of the concepts and techniques of

world-class literary masters such as Victor Hugo and Shakespeare can one comprehend the literariness of a language that has had a worldwide impact.

According to Casanova, the literariness conveyed by the language in the core of the literary world is favored by authors on the literary periphery, but this literary capital is seldom sold for money, and those who introduce it are not required to repay it. As capital exporters, the only profit that literary centers seek is the consolidation of their status and the enhancement of their reputation. *The World Republic of Letters* (2007) constructed by Casanova is based on the opposition between a capital, on the one hand, and peripheral dependencies whose relationship to this center is defined by their aesthetic distance from it. Over time, owing to the work of a number of pioneering figures remarkable for their freedom from nationalist prejudice, an international literary law came to be created. Therefore, many works in smaller languages, which were not considered very popular, have been recognized in the Republic of Letters and have become known worldwide. For instance, in the late 1980s, several foreign publishers bought up translation rights for Milorad Pavic's *Dictionary of the Khazars* while it was still in manuscript, though this was a first novel by a little-known Serbian poet. Pavic's work was published in 1988 in a number of languages, including English, French, German, Italian, and Swedish. And with a few years it began to appear in non-European languages as well. By now Pavic's cumulative international sales likely exceed the entire population of his native Serbia. Another example is the Polish writer, Olga Tokarczuk. She is one of Poland's most critically acclaimed and successful authors of her generation, having received the 2018 Nobel Prize in Literature as the nation's first female prose writer in 2019. Tokarczuk is noted for the mythical tone of her writing and the “magical realism” of her works have become important to her favorite readers around the world in translation.

To sum up, world literature should be a world republic; a gathering ground for many cultures; a community formed by the abolition of multiple languages; and a repository for information transmission and sharing.

1.2 How to Study World Literature

1.2.1 The World of the Text

David Damrosch explores how various cultures have varied perspectives on the nature and social relevance of literature in his book *How to Read World Literature* (2018). He claims that throughout the last few hundred years, most of western literature has been distinctly individualistic. Many modern novels concentrate more on the personal development of a hero or heroine, frequently in opposition to society as a whole. Much of western literature, as Harold Bloom[10] has put it in *The Western Canon* (1996), is "the image of the individual thinking". For example, Damrosch argued that individual thought has long been expressed in western poetry, like in the following lyric, usually known as "Western Wind", an anonymous poem featured in an English songbook around 1530:

Western wind, when wilt thou blow,

The small rain clown can rain?

Christ, if my love were in my arms,

And I in my bed again!

(Gardner, New Oxford Book, 20)

We appear to be overhearing a lover's lament, yet the speaker is not addressing us or anyone else, only the wind, and even the wind is removed from the scene. In other words, the focus is on the speaker's interior drama.

On the basis of this example, one may conclude that canonical lyric poetry inevitably reflects individual thought, while the love poetry, which was mentioned by Damrosch in his book, composed in early India, as shown in the following short lyric dating from before the year 900, reveals a vastly more social world:

Who wouldn't be angry to see

[10] Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages* (1994; repr., Basingstoke; London: Papermac, 1996).

his dear wife with her lower lip bitten?

You scorned my warning to smell

the bee-holding lotus. Now you must suffer.

(Ingalls, *Dhvanyaloka*, 102)

On a first reading, this poem seems only one step removed from *Western Wind*. Once again, we are overhearing a single speaker, one who talks to someone else, apparently a close friend who has hurt her lip and is afraid that her husband will be upset by her spoiled looks. If we read this poetry in the same way that we read the western example, we would most likely interpret it as concerned with the wife's emotional state. We may draw inspiration from the poem's conclusion, which highlights her suffering as a result of her husband's rage. However, when viewed in this perspective, the poem appears slender and unsatisfactory, and the sudden introduction of the idea of suffering appears unnecessary. A bee sting should only be a minor discomfort, and any sensible spouse should feel sympathy rather than anger.

If we read more in Sanskrit poetry, we may quickly solve the riddle, because many Sanskrit lyric compositions deal with illicit or adulterous love. A reader would be alerted to the underlying predicament from the poem's first couplet: the wife's lover had carelessly bit her in a place she can't conceal. The poet's expertise is displayed in his amusing use of a traditional motif, which inevitably leads to the husband's rage and the wife's anguish. Anandavardhana (820-890 CE), one of the finest Sanskrit poets, described this poem as an example of lyrical suggestiveness. Around the year 1000, his disciple Abhinavagupta presented a full exegesis of Anandavardhana's work. His interpretation demonstrates how deeply social this poetry was perceived to be, because Abhinavagupta never considers that the poem exclusively features the pair of friends and no one else. Instead, what appears to be a private encounter quickly turns out to be rife with social drama.

Damrosch used this instance to demonstrate the dangers of exoticism and assimilation when we read world literature, two extremes on the spectrum of difference and similarity. We will not get very far if we consider the Sanskrit poetry as the product

of some strange Orient whose artists are naive and irrational, or whose people experience an altogether different set of emotions than we do. We must study enough about the tradition to have a general awareness of its patterns of reference and assumptions about the world, the text, and the reader.

1.2.2 The Author's Role

On the other hand, Damrosch indicated that literature is anything invented by a poet or a writer in the western tradition dating back to Plato and Aristotle. This perspective can include praising the writer's unparalleled inventiveness, but it can also position literature on a spectrum that leans toward unreality, deception, and open lying. This is why Plato forbade poetry from his ideal city in the *Republic*, although Aristotle praised poetry as more intellectual than historical writing.

Various cultures, by contrast, have considered literature as firmly ingrained in reality, neither above nor below the audience's own physical and moral world. Writers are seen to be watching and reflecting on what they see around them, rather than creating things up. Stephen Owen has underlined this distinction while analyzing the poetics of the Tang Dynasty (618-907), widely regarded as the finest period of Chinese poetry. Owen quotes a poem by the eighth-century poet Du Fu:

Slender grasses, breeze faint on the shore,
Here, the looming mast, the lone night boat.
Stars hang clown on the breadth of the plain,
The moon gushes in the great river's current.
My name shall not be known from my writing;
Sick, growing old, I must yield up my post.
Wind-tossed, fluttering - what is my likeness?
In Heaven and Earth, a single gull of the sands.

(Du Fu, *A Night by the Riverside*)

Du Fu's lyric is similar to many western poems in that it shows the soliloquy of a solitary spectator. However, the speaker is a part of the natural environment around him; rather than melting away in the face of the poet's personal drama of illness, age, and political regrets, the landscape is shown in detail, its physical features mirroring the poet's private concerns and recollections. To summarize, Tang dynasty poets considered their responsibility as transmitting to their readers individual experiences and insights that had been artistically shaped and given enduring significance through the resources of the poetic tradition. Unlike western writers, who have frequently declared their artistic independence from the reality around them.

1.2.3 World Writer's Global Perspective

Starting in the last decades of the 19th century, the growth of economic and cultural globalization gave new dimensions to the world literature. Unlike Casanova's literary centrism, Damrosch takes a broader view of world literature, arguing that writers are gaining many new opportunities because of the world market, they are also adding more international perspectives to the process of writing. He claimed in his book *Comparing the Literature: Literary Studies in a Global age* (2022) that when authors take a step back to hypothesize about their profession, they frequently consult with a diverse spectrum of international writers, even though these writers' country may be from a tiny language country. A brief meeting with a world author, on the other hand, can have a transforming impact if it comes at a critical point in the career of a young writer looking for an alternative to dominating traditions at home. For example, for Mo Yan, this effect was produced from William Faulkner and García Márquez. He had not read either of them extensively, but was encouraged by the bold, unrestrained way they created new territory in writing. He also realized that a writer must have a place that belongs to himself alone. Another example comes from Oe Kenzaburo, Nobel laureate, who opened his acceptance speech by discussing two novels that helped him as a youngster cope with the tragedies of wartime Japan. Both were foreign stories of an adventurous boy's escape from familiar surroundings: Mark Twain's *Adventures of*

Huckleberry Finn, and *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*, by the Nobel Prize winner Selma Lagerlöf, who came from Sweden. “I am a big boy and I am a human being again!” – Oe claims that for many years afterward, in times of adversity, he would repeat these sentences to himself, drawing strength from his early identification with Nils. He encountered in Nils a youngster who against all difficulties, managed to acquire a mature humanity.

3 World Literature and Comparative Literature

1.3.1 Cross-culture and *Journey to the West*

World literature has long been associated with comparative literature. As a discipline, comparative literature lies at the heart of the study of world literature. Both have strong transnational aspirations, studying literature outside of and beyond a single national tradition. Meanwhile, reading world literature gives us the opportunity to expand our literary and cultural horizons far beyond the boundaries of our own culture. For instance, cross-cultural comparative studies of East and West beyond the boundaries of a particular nation have long been a prominent subject of study in the world literature. However, the exact coordinates of "east" and "west" are determined by the observer. For European explorers, Asia was "the Far East," yet China lies west of California and north of Australia. In premodern times, "the West" frequently meant India to the Chinese.

As the Tang dynasty's interest in Buddhism developed, brave pilgrims began to journey westward to areas in India associated with Buddha's life and teachings. The most famous of these pilgrims was a monk named Chen Xuanzang (c.602-64 CE), who spent 17 years traveling and learning throughout Central Asia and India before returning to China with 657 Buddhist treatises. His grateful emperor built a pagoda temple and repository for them, and Master Xuanzang spent the rest of his life translating the Sanskrit originals and writing commentary on them with a team of colleagues. His emperor requested Master Xuanzang to write down the chronicle of his epic journey,

and his travelogue became a classic travel account. Many literary and religious successors were inspired by Xuanzang's fascinating combination of pilgrimage and adventure story, and over a century later, his account formed the basis for one of the "four classics" of traditional Chinese fiction: *The Journey to the West*. This vast novel, published anonymously in 1592, is usually attributed to Wu Cheng'en, a minor official in the Ming dynasty.

According to Wu Cheng'en, Master Xuanzang travels with four fanciful companions supplied by Guanyin, the Goddess of Mercy: a reformed river ogre, a humanized pig, a dragon turned horse, and, most importantly, a loquacious and unruly monkey named Sun Wukong. They overcome eighty-one dangers and ordeals, from wild animals to malicious demons, before arriving in India and receiving the gift of scriptures from the Buddha himself. Wu Cheng'en created his story with complete artistic license. He altered the story's religious and political elements, as well as integrating talking animals and significantly expanding its astounding aspects. Wu Cheng'en adds a Confucian focus to the historical Xuanzang, who was an inconspicuous and self-motivated pilgrim who journeyed to India despite an imperial prohibition on foreign travel. He makes Xuanzang a devoted servant of the emperor, who assigns him the task of acquiring the scriptures.

Journey to the West is a tour de force, a magnificent masterpiece bathed in world and ethereal literature. As in *The Divine Comedy*, it provides readers the most fantastic fictional worlds, nevertheless, is true to life in deep ways.

1.3.2 The Limitation of Translation in Comparative Literature

The significant part of literature is translated and disseminated around the world, especially from languages of worldwide reach, such as Arabic, English, and Spanish. The rapidity with which prominent authors such as Stephen King and J. K. Rowling's writings have been translated into dozens of languages, and the importance of translation is even more evident for works in less widely spoken languages. However, translation has long had a negative impression. How can any translation represent the

nuanced meanings of a writer?

The two major translators of the story, *Journey to the West* into English, Arthur Waley and Anthony Yu, have taken very different approaches. Therefore, English language readers have a choice between two dramatically different versions of the story, each with its own view of the world. Damrosch stressed Anthony Yu's new four-volume translation contains the complete work, including its 745 introspective poems, provides the theological and philosophical context for comprehending the book as a full-scale allegory of religious self-cultivation. By contrast, in his 1943 translation, Arthur Waley created a kind of novelization of the original. Waley followed the viewpoint of the eminent scholar Hu Shih, who contributed a preface that describes the book as a masterpiece of vernacular folk literature rather than a predominantly religious work. Nonetheless, neither author's translation reflects the real meaning of the original author Wu Chengen's narrative, and there are numerous minor variations between the languages that the translation cannot address.

This is a theme that has been renewed in more recent discussions of "untranslatability". An American academic and translator, Emily Apter[11], presented a central concept called "untranslatable" in her book *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability* (2013), which means a word or other semantic unit that cannot easily be rendered from one language to another. The force of the "untranslatable" lies in the nature of words as pieces of a whole, as established by the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure – that is, how their meanings are derived from their relationship to each other. She argued that in order to comprehend all of the layers of meaning in a single word or phrase, knowledge of its linguistic context is required. The challenges of cultural and linguistic diversity take various forms, especially in sophisticated literary works, and even more so when the work comes to us from a totally different cultural context. This is when the limitations of translation become apparent. Emily Apter uses the concept of "untranslatable" to locate significant differences in thought that are conditioned by language and culture. In other words, for her, translation is as necessary

[11] Emily S Apter, *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability* (London; New York: Verso, 2013).

as it is impossible - an emblem of the utopian striving of human culture at its best. Therefore, according to Damrosch's proposition, although he encourages re-creation in translation, he also emphasized that some aspects of the original text cannot be touched by translation. In order to study comparative literature, one should not rely solely on translation but rather study the culture and language in depth, understand cultural differences between countries or regions while relying on the diverse perception, and be more sensitive to the delicate and untranslatable parts of the works in different cultural contexts.

Eventually, the most essential thing for my dissertation is to study the world literature in different cultures, on different issues, and in different disciplines, and to compare them in a cross-cultural, interdisciplinary approach from multiple viewpoints. I want to respect Apter's objections and reflect on the "untranslatable" aspects of literary works as well. It is vital to note that the thesis will focus on a comparative analysis of literary works from various nations, with a psychological and ecological criticism dimension in the following chapters.

Chapter 2 Literature and Psychoanalysis

2.1 Freud's Theory and Psychoanalysis

2.1.1 The Birth of Psychoanalysis

Henk de Berg[1] in the opening section of his book *Freud's Theory and its Use in Literary and Cultural Studies* (2004*)* mentioned some points about psychoanalysis. He stressed that an introduction to psychoanalysis' key concepts would seem nearly redundant in today's mindset. We have all heard of the term "superego" and "id"; we have all heard of "Freudian slips"; we have all learned that boys secretly desire their mothers and girls desire their fathers, that dreams are wish fulfillments; and that everything and anything is assumed to be about sexuality.

According to Henk de Berg, the history of psychoanalysis began with a patient named Bertha Pappenheim. She was not Freud's patient but had been treated by his elder colleague and mentor, Josef Breuer, from December 1880 to June 1882. Breuer and Freud collaborated on the publication of Bertha Pappenheim's case history, as well as a number of other case histories, in their 1895 publication, *Studies on Hysteria*. The concepts sparked by this work, particularly the Pappenheim case, led Freud along the path of psychoanalysis. Likewise, this work demonstrated how some hysterical symptoms, for example pain and paralysis, were induced by concepts that are unacceptable to awareness and hence become hazardous.

Furthermore, in 1900, Freud published *The Interpretation of Dreams* on his own. It provided a comprehensive theory of dreams, focusing on unconscious mechanisms and their relationship to consciousness. As a consequence, psychoanalysis was born. Soon after, Freud began to apply psychoanalysis to other disciplines of inquiry in addition to developing it as a discipline in its own right. This is due to Freud's realization that it is not enough to study psychoanalytic materials and amass a specific number of clinical

[1] Henk De Berg, *Freud's Theory and Its Use in Literary and Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Rochester, Ny: Camden House, ,Cop, 2004), 1–3.

cases to be a successful psychoanalyst. It is increasingly vital to broaden the realm of psychoanalysis and incorporate it into other relevant disciplines. For example, in order to bring forth much light and heat, psychoanalysis should integrate with the strengths of philosophy, literature, mythology, and even sociology.

James Hillman[2] in his monograph *Healing Fiction* (2019) indicated that in 1934 the Italian pragmatist philosopher and writer Giovanni Papini published a curious interview with Freud. In the interview, Freud said: by nature, I am an artist. And there is undeniable confirmation that in every country where psychoanalysis has penetrated, writers and artists have comprehended and used it better than physicians. In other words, no one like him proposed to translate the inspirations offered by the currents of modern literature into scientific theories. Freud relied on myth, literature, religion, and philosophy for the strength of his healing techniques and the depths of his research into the individual and human civilization.

2.1.2 Psychoanalytic Theories of Literature

For a better integration of psychoanalysis and literature, by 1907, Freud was already expanding the area of psychoanalytic literary criticism that he had begun in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) with his investigation of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* (425 B.C.) and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603) for their oedipal aspects and the effects the plays had on their audiences. Besides, the lecture *Creative Writers and Day-dreaming* delivered in 1907 and published in 1908, expands on the connection between literature and psychoanalysis. In order to comprehend creativity, it compares fantasy, play, dreams, and works of art. Robert N. Mollinger[3] in his book *Psychoanalysis and Literature: An introduction* (1981) argued that *Creative Writers and Day-dreaming* contained Freud's first theory on the structure of the literary work and began the psychoanalytic enquiry into what literature is. For Freud, literature, especially a novel, was equivalent to a daydream. The literary composition, like a daydream, incorporates

[2] James Hillman, *Healing Fiction* (Thompson, Ct: Spring Publications, 2019),3
[3] Robert N Mollinger, *Psychoanalysis and Literature: an introduction* (Burnham Incorporated Pub, 1981),2

in its delusional fantasy the realization of an unfulfilled wish and so improves on an unsatisfactory reality. For instance, Freud recounted the fact that the story of the ladies falling in love with the hero is scarcely realistic, but it is easily understood as a vital component of a daydream. Namely, Freud lays down the basic perspective that psychoanalysts have continued to take on literature: literature satisfies unfulfilled, partially unacceptable and therefore unconscious wishes in a disguised fashion.

Literature, in fact, is like a dream. The literary work contains symbols that must be comprehended, and psychoanalysis, according to Freud, can unravel the meaning of the symbols. In order to uncover the "original meaning" he utilizes myths, dreams, dream mechanisms, and references to other literary works. Following Freud's views, critics immediately made his fundamental findings plain. Wilhelm Stekel (1923) holds that "there is essentially no difference between dream and poetry,"[4] and Ernst Kris[5], especially in *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Art* (1952), turns attention to the elements besides the unconscious fantasy and they are systematically focused on by a sophisticated psychoanalyst. Kris still believes that the dream and art could be compared: "What in the dream seems like compromise and is explained in terms of overdetermination emerges in the work of art as plurality of meaning."[6] According to Kris, this is a significant contrast because of their disparities. The id, the reservoir of impulses and desires, is in control of dreams; nevertheless, the ego, the organizing function of the psyche, is in control of art work. The primary process, how the unconscious functions, may be contained in a work, but the process is in the service of the ego, which is under control. Consequently, in order to discern meanings in literature and to decipher symbols, one must be aware that the unconscious meaning does not represent the only meaning.

Additionally, Kris considers the dream as an intrapsychic process, whereas art is an interpersonal one. "Wherever artistic creation exists, the conception of a public exists"[7], he argues. It means that art is not exclusively the fulfillment of unattainable desires but

[4] Mollinger, *Psychoanalysis and Literature: an introduction,*3
[5] Ernst Kris, *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Art.* (London, George Allen & Unwin, 1953).
[6] Mollinger, *Psychoanalysis and Literature: an introduction,*3
[7] Kris, *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Art,*60

also a form of communication. The emphasis moves from the unconscious desire to the controlling ego, and analysis of style and formal features in literature becomes required. For example, ambiguity is perceived in poetry, as well as in other arts, as conveying a spectrum of meanings to the reader, and metaphor is also seen in a similar light.

2.1.3 Oedipus Complex

The Oedipus complex is perhaps Freud's most well-known notion. It's also the most criticized concept in psychoanalysis. Most people reject the assumption that all boys secretly desire their mothers and all girls desire their fathers and that the bond between children and parents is sexual in nature. As a consequence, it is all too often disregarded as patently untrue. However, according to the description in Henk de Berg's book *Freud's Theory and its Use in Literary and Cultural Studies* (2004), with deeper inspection the concept makes more sense than it first appears.

According to Freud, the child's relationship with its parents is essential for the formation of its proper sexual identity. The problems begin with the child's reliance on the nurturing mother. Not only are there challenges relating to the formation of a self-concept in the initial separation from the mother's body, but the mother's love is still dominant in the early formative years. As a result, the perception of the father as a rival in this love becomes so intense that he is drawn into fantasies of murdering this rival and acquiring the mother. Henk de Berg argued that children not only try to "seduce" the parent whose affections they desire most, but they also develop negative feelings towards the rival parent. Such hostility is particularly pronounced in very young children and during adolescence, who tend to wish their rivals out of the way or even dead.

Freud refers to this mental state as the child's Oedipus complex, after the protagonist of Sophocles' play *Oedipus Rex* (425 B.C.), who murdered his father and married his mother. This desire to get one parent out of the way in order to take exclusive possession of the other is, of course, profoundly antisocial and is suppressed before the child reaches adulthood. The Oedipal dilemma and its final resolution form a trial phase that

prepares youngsters for the necessity to locate a companion outside the family. As Jones[8] puts it in his book *Hamlet and Oedipus* (1976), "a child has to learn how to love just as it has to learn how to walk,"[9] For Freud, the Oedipus complex is the core of desire, repression, and sexual identity. It remains a life-long ambivalence towards preserving and breaching taboos and regulations. As the complex decreases, the superego emerges and forms part of the psyche's landscape.

2.2 The Psychoanalytic Study of Character, Author and Audience

Robert N. Mollinger in his book *Psychoanalysis and Literature: An introduction* (1981) mentioned that in 1910 Freud examined Leonardo da Vinci's background and connected it to his paintings. Though not a study of a literary figure, his book *Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming* published in 1908 fulfilled the parameters Freud outlined for applied psychoanalysis. He emphasized psychoanalysis assists in understanding the art work (the literary work itself, including the characters in it), the artist (writer, including his creative process), and the audience (readers and their responses).

2.2.1 The Play and Character

The interpretation of specific characters in novels and plays is related to the psychoanalytic examination of the literary work itself. Therefore, through a number of reflections on the play in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), Freud laid the foundations for the psychoanalytic interpretation of *Hamlet*. Moreover, these approaches were expanded upon by Freud's disciple and biographer Ernest Jones, first in a paper published in 1910 and then in a book titled *Hamlet and Oedipus* (1949).

The play is set in medieval Denmark. Hamlet's father, the king, has just been killed by his brother Claudius, Hamlet's uncle. Claudius has married his brother's wife, Gertrude, and ascended the throne. Hamlet does not know that his father was murdered,

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[8] Ernest Jones, *Hamlet and Oedipus* (New York: Norton, 1976).
[9] Jean-Michel Rabate, *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and Psychoanalysis.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

but he is extremely upset by his father's death and, above all by his mother's marriage to Claudius. Then, his father's ghost appears to him, telling him of the murder and urging him to take revenge for the crime. Finally, Gertrude, Claudius and Hamlet are all dead. The play ends with the arrival on the scene of Fortinbras, King of Norway, and his troops.

There are some reasons why Freud and Jones are so interested in this particular play. First of all, because *Hamlet* is regarded as one of Shakespeare's most significant plays, and helps us to understand how the great poet thought. Secondly, *Hamlet*'s irresistible and persistent attraction means that it also strikes a chord with the readers, so that finding out more about the play may help us to find out more about ourselves. As the western proverb says: there are a thousand Hamlets in a thousand people's eyes. The last but not least, *Hamlet* contains a mystery, says Jones, that no one has been able to solve: why is Hamlet so hesitant in avenging his father's death? why does Hamlet delay in killing Claudius even though he believes Claudius murdered his father? Jones contends that Hamlet has incestuous desires for his mother and death intentions for his father because he finds alternative explanations to be insufficient. Because of his own identical desires, Hamlet identifies with Claudius when he engages in incest with Hamlet's mother, Gertrude. In other words, killing Claudius appears to be the same as killing Hamlet himself. Additionally, Hamlet's father has been symbolically replaced by Claudius, who has now taken on the role of his father. That is, killing Claudius becomes patricidal conduct.

Jones believes that Hamlet's range of emotions explains why he hesitates to take any action. He then makes an effort to interpret Hamlet's other interactions in the play, including those with Polonius and Ophelia, in the context of Hamlet's internal problems. Namely, Hamlet's bottled-up emotions must find another way to express themselves because their natural route has been blocked.

2.2.2 The Author and The Creative Process

Obviously, it is insufficient to analyze a text's protagonists in psychoanalytic literary

criticism. It is also necessary to strive to link the text to the author's thoughts. Freud suggests that we might research “the relationships between the author's life and his works.”[10] Likewise, Robert N. Mollinger study has been divided into two main categories: the study of writers' creative processes in general as well as the analysis of the relationship between an author's psychology and his specific work.

Freud also hypothesizes about the way literary creation occurs. He makes a remarkable comparison between the author’s creative process and a daydream. In creativity, a vivid encounter in the present inspires the creative writer to recall a yearning from a previous experience, which is then fulfilled in the creative work. The composition incorporates elements from both the recent provoking event and a distant memory. On the other hand, to be an artist, one must be able to effortlessly access the unconscious through early experiences. To accomplish this, repression, which keeps unwanted desires unconscious, must be flexible. This hypothesis is related to Freud's dream theory in that an everyday occurrence triggers a childhood wish, which is later realized in a dream. Creating, then, is similar to dreaming, and it is considered a form of conflict resolution. An unsatisfied wish is one that has been found unacceptable, and it must therefore be satisfied in a disguised way, in a dream or as a work of literature.

However, Kris (1953) attempts to move away from Freud’s emphasis on the unsatisfied wish arising from the unconscious. For Freud, art is defined by the basic process mechanisms of the unconscious, condensation and displacement, as well as the artist's lack of control. By contrast, Kris divides the creative process into two stages: inspiration and elaboration. In other words, Kris begins to move artistic production out of conflict and into a nonconflictual domain of experience, from the unconscious and determined area into the preconscious, and from there into the conscious and purposeful. He stresses any regression to primary process thinking is in the service of the ego and thus is controlled. For example, Weissman (1968) correlated the infantile ability to imagine the mother's breast even when not in need of it with the future artist's ability to build self-created perceptions. Besides, others have more strongly followed Kris into

[10] Mollinger, *Psychoanalysis and Literature: an introduction,*14

the preconscious and conscious. Kubie (1958) hypothesizes that the preconscious system is “the essential implement of all creative activity”[11]. He argued that both conscious and unconscious symbols are rigid and disrupt the creative preconsciousness. For Kubie, creativity is “the ability to make new and unexpected connections”[12], and the preconscious, which exists on the outskirts of consciousness and is unrestrained by the repressed aspects of the unconscious, has the mobility to use it. This is caused by the fact that unconscious components have been forcibly kept out of consciousness due to their unacceptability, yet preconscious elements are neither rejected nor kept out of consciousness. Specifically, in dreams, a person cannot distinguish between the world of the mind and the external world. Yet in creation, the artist is aware that he is creating a work of fiction.

In addition, Robert N. Mollinger indicated once literary fantasies are related to personal fantasies, questions concerning the neurosis of the individual writer and creative writers in general arise. On his issue, Freud implied that the artist "neurotically moves away from reality"[13] yet he praises the artist's insights at times. Some critics have taken Freud's insinuation that artists are neurotic, while others have taken his connotation that they have a particular talent. W.R.D. Fairbairn focused on art's positive characteristics that serve an ideal as early as 1938. Though creativity is viewed as a means of atonement for destructive tendencies, the positive component of creation is emphasized here. In his book *Psychoanalysis and Literature: An introduction* (1981) the author holds a similar viewpoint. He feels that the writer's creativity and creative process are healthy and sensible, rather than neurotic. This is in contrast to many people's preconceived notion that artists are temperamental.

2.2.3 Interaction of the Artist and the Audience

In Freud’s essay *Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming* (1908) he mentioned that the

[11] Mollinger, *Psychoanalysis and Literature: an introduction,*16
[12] Mollinger, *Psychoanalysis and Literature: an introduction,*16
[13] Mollinger, *Psychoanalysis and Literature: an introduction,*20

author puts the readers in a position where they may indulge in somewhat improper daydreams without feeling embarrassed. Since then, the seed Freud sowed was nurtured by Kris (1952), who views art as a conversation between the artist and the audience. Kris describes art as an opportunity to share mental experiences; literature is an appeal to the reading audience to exchange the literary product with collective humanity and the artist. This is to say, Kris focuses more on the interaction between author and reader through literary works.

In the work of art, the artist's suppressed impulses and urges (id) interact with his higher synthesizing processes (ego) – he becomes aware of his unconscious. The artist's psychological level shifts from primary id processes to secondary ego processes. These processes are subsequently presented to the audience through the work. On the other hand, as it is with the artist, the audience also experiences a shift in psychic level, and aesthetic communication becomes an experience of shared psychic levels. There is an exchange of primary and secondary processes between the reader's and writer's wishes, impulses, and imaginations, as well as their strategies of managing and elaborating them. To borrow Kris's point of view, readers and authors share a resemblance of experience, pleasure and fantasy that transcends the textual contents.

Some may wonder how the reader goes about experiencing the plot in depth in the work. In order to unravel this doubt, we can find a relatively believable opinion in the book *Psychoanalysis and Literature: An introduction* (1981). It claims that symbols are one method the reader may add to the literary experience. The artist claims that the literary symbol is inherently unknowable; it conveys various meanings and has numerous reasons. From the reader’s perspective, it has multifarious potential, which means it may have diverse effects. If the symbol invokes the reader’s primary process, the reader participates in the aesthetic experience of the symbol's meaning, which is expressed in his own interpretation or understanding of the literary text. Furthermore, Kris summarizes the audience's contribution to the artwork, which consists of three major steps: initially, the contact between the audience and the work; secondly, the audience's psychological resonance; and lastly, the activation of a delightful inner experience in the audience. Thereafter, Holland (1968) expanded on these ideas to

develop a theory of the reader's response to a literary work. Holland contends that despite the fact that the literary text serves as a platform for the literary experience, the reader responds to it with his own personal associations. In his more recent work, he stressed the text transforms nothing; it is simply the words on the page. The reader transforms the material by following his “identity theme,” the central, unifying pattern that makes sense of what he selects and does. That is, while we are reading, we all utilize the literary work to represent and, eventually, to reproduce ourselves.

2.3 Structural and Post-structural Psychoanalysis and Literature

2.3.1 Unconscious as Textural Language

Shoshana Felman[14] claimed in her book *Literature and Psychoanalysis: The Question of Reading: Otherwise* (1982) that the variety of psychoanalysis prevailing in post-modern period was defined by the theories of French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan (1901-1981), who assumed the position of linguistic legate of Sigmund Freud. She discusses Lacan’s theories such as the “unconscious is structured like a language”, stressing that from Lacanian perspective the "texts" of language, literature, and culture all started to expose unconscious, disturbing, and unstable realities that fragmented the “independent ego.”

In Elizabeth Wright’s book *Psychoanalytic criticism, Theory in practice* (2003), she argued that Lacan’s research starts with the infant in an amorphous condition, to indicate the early stages of separation. Lacan returns to Freud's early concept of the ego in the latter's paper *On Narcissism*, in 1953, together with the essential metaphor of narcissism, the mirror.[15] Further, Lacan investigates and expands on the narcissistic metaphor's consequences. When the child stares in the mirror, he or she is charmed by numerous aspects of its own appearance at the same time. Whereas it previously perceived itself as a shapeless mass, it now obtains a sense of wholeness, an ideal

[14] Shoshana Felman, *Literature and Psychoanalysis* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).
[15] Elizabeth Wright, *Psychoanalytic Criticism: Theory in Practice* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003).

completeness, and all without exertion. This pleasurable mirror-image sensation is a metaphor for an uninterrupted unity between inner and outer, a flawless control that ensures rapid satisfaction of desire. Lacan identifies this pre-linguistic stage as the "imaginary." The initiation of the child into the order of language Lacan calls the “Symbolic Order”.

Elizabeth Wright also stressed that Lacan makes appeal to the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, who viewed the sign as split into two parts, a signifier and a signified. Meanwhile, the most universal result of this divide, according to Lacan, is the assignment of gender roles. He indicated that without language there is no gender or gender-oriented desire. Once inserted into language, the subject becomes immediately “discordant” with it. In this grey area the Imaginary sees a signifier one way, the Symbolic another, splitting conscious from unconscious. Lacan perceives an equivalence between language-forms and the reaction to repression: the aphorism “the unconscious is organized like a language” is more than an analogy, because the unconscious is born to be nothing more than its linguistic birthmarks. The fact that every word implies a lack of what it stands for magnifies the frustration of this child of language, the unconscious, because the absence of fulfillment must now be endured. Language imposes a chain of words along which the ego must move while the unconscious remains in search of the object it has lost.

This is a massive milestone in Freudian theory: the unconscious invaded every single utterance, whether spoken or written. Lacan's own style constantly imitates this illusion via puns, innuendos, and ridiculous conceits.

2.3.2 The Pleasure of the Text

Roland Barthes[16] mentioned the word “text” means “tissue” in his book *The Pleasure of the Text* (2012). Yet, if we have traditionally viewed this tissue as a product, a ready-made veil behind which lies, more or less concealed, meaning or truth, we are

[16] Roland Barthes, *Pleasure of the Text.* (Notting Hill Editions, 2012).

now stressing that in the tissue, the generative concept that the text is formed on is worked out in a constant interweaving. Meanwhile, Robert Bringhurst[17] used an ancient and thought-provoking metaphor about text in his book *The Elements of Typographic Style* (2016). He stated that the mind is a thread and that the raconteur is a yarn spinner. However, the actual storyteller, the poet, is a weaver. The scribes transformed an ancient and auditory abstraction into a vivid and tangible fact. After much effort, their work had such an even, flexible texture that they dubbed the written page a textus, which translates as *fabric* or *cloth*.

As text readers, we read a variety of texts, including novels, essays, and plays. We will have such a moment of pleasure from the text during the journey. This pleasure is derived from the text's profound significance rather than its literal interpretation. In other words, the subject receives access to bliss through the coexistence of languages operating side by side. Thus, the Biblical tale is overturned. Roland Barthes gave “the pleasure” a very figurative name called “a sanctioned Babel.”

Further, Barthes argues that we are able to take pleasure in words because the author completes the composition in order to make the reader happy. But this pleasure does not guarantee that the author himself is in a state of pleasure. Therefore, writers must cruise readers without knowing where they are. A site of bliss is then created. The possibility of a dialectics of desire, of an unpredictability of bliss as if no bets are placed, the game may still take place. Additionally, if they want to be read, that bit of neurosis occurs necessary to seduce their readers. The text's author must demonstrate to readers that it desires them. Writing is the understanding of the various blisses of words; it is Kamasutra.

As psychoanalysis has correctly stated, the most erotic portion of a body is where the garment gapes. The intermittence of skin flashing between two articles of clothing (trousers and sweater), between two edges (open-necked shirt, glove, and sleeve); it is this flash itself which seduces, or rather the staging of a partly hidden and partial visibility. Similarly, textual pleasure is not the same as physical striptease or narrative

[17] Robert Bringhurst, *The Elements of Typographic Style* (Seattle, Wa Hartley & Marks, 2016).

suspense. In these cases, there is a gradual unveiling: the entire excitation takes refuge in the hope of seeing the sexual organ or in knowing the end of the story. Rather than reading the entire story or exploring the ending, perhaps one of the chapters, a paragraph, or even a sentence can give us a touch to make our heart beat faster and make us feel pleasure. According to Barthes, the most traditional narrative (a novel by Zola, Balzac, Dickens, or Tolstoy) contains a diluted tmesis. It implies that we do not read everything with the same intensity; a rhythm is created, casual, and unconcerned with the text's integrity. Our desire for information compels us to skim or skip some paragraphs in order to get to the more interesting and pleasant parts of the anecdote quickly. Barthes used the analogy that we resemble a nightclub patron who goes onto the stage and speeds up the dancer's striptease, tearing off her clothing, but in the same order, that is, on the one hand respecting and hastening the ritual's episodes. Therefore, it is the very rhythm or what is read and what is not read that creates the pleasure of the great narratives.

2.3.3 Horror Stories and Uncanny

According to Elizabeth Wright's book *Psychoanalytic criticism, Theory in practice* (2003), Sigmund Freud's essay "*The Uncanny*" which was first published in 1919 stands at the center of reflections on the uncanny art of reading and the points at which the aesthetic meets the psychological. It is an experience that he gains access to through the process of reading literary work *The Sandman* (1815) by E.T.A Hoffmann, revealed as an emotional involvement with vague sensations of anxiety that he describes as "uncanny." Likewise, Sigmund Freud works with and against Ernst Jentsch's book *On the Psychology of the Uncanny* (1906), in which Jentsch defines uncanny experiences as "intellectual uncertainty" caused by a "lack of orientation." However, according to Freud, the "uncanny" cannot be simply defined as something that is unusual and is thus horrible, grotesque and fearful. The "Uncanny" can also be translated as "unhomely," which is the solution adopted here and there by David McLintock in the 2003 translation for Penguin. Uncanny is indeed based on the Heim (home) yet cannot be

always rendered as unhomely. Furthermore, Freud maps the semantic field of the term and teases its connotations of “hidden” or “concealed,” as well as “dangerous,” “frightening,” or “disquieting.” Literature and the arts can present us with forms of the uncanny that life cannot, because the artist has more access to illusion.

Hoffmann's story concerns the fortunes of a student suffering from a haunting childhood memory. The dreadful memory is associated with the tale of the Sandman, a bogey figure who threatens the eyes of children. A visitor named Coppola and Professor Spalanzani jogged his memory. Nathanael is caught between the desire for the latter's daughter, Olympia, and the girl, Clara. Finally, Olympia turns out to be a mechanical doll and is torn to pieces before his eyes by the two men, which causes him to jump to his death.

Commenting on the uncanny effect in this horror story, Jentsch connects the uncanny to “intellectual uncertainty” or doubt or misunderstanding about whether an object is animate or inanimate. He considers Olympia, the story's robotic doll, to be the source of Nathanael's fearful psychosis and the story's uncanny elements. On the other hand, according to Freud, this is insufficient to explain the story's uncanny phenomena and he emphasizes the character's previous experience. He contends the uncanny element is basically nothing new or unfamiliar, yet something that was long familiar to the psyche and was estranged from it only through being repressed. Moreover, Elizabeth Wright emphasizes that in Freud's interpretation everything is subordinated to a single thematic motif: the protagonist's fear of losing his eyes is comparable to his fear of losing his sexual organ. Castration is portrayed as a real threat in the story. Nathanael fears castration as a genuine occurrence, believing that the Sandman has returned to punish his childlike curiosity by depriving him of his eyes.

Yet, these psychoanalytic paradigms presented by Jentsch and Freud may not be sufficiently persuasive to explain the formation of the uncanny effect in the story. Weber (1973) argued Freud's omissions regarding psychoanalysis. He stressed Freud has colored everything with the fear of physical castration by insisting on the correlation of eyes and penis. As a result, he misses the fact that the eyes are the most powerful organs of desire and ignores the connection between perception and desire. The eye takes on

special significance both for its role in this discovery and as an organ of perception, which is part of the fulfillment of desire. The loss of one's eyes becomes a metaphor for the dismemberment of someone's self-image and the subsequent loss of identity.

2.4 Conclusion

In sum, although Freud's discoveries have limitations to a certain extent, it is incontestable that he seizes our humanity via the power of literature and brings anagnorisis, or the realization of truth, to us and to our society. Besides, Freud also discovered a self-analysis tool through which he gained insights that led to scientific discoveries and innovative possibilities and approaches for therapy. On the other hand, we were quite recently in a more difficult period of the new century known as “Covid Time” facing enormous struggles with grief and uncertainty, both professionally and personally. In the book *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and Psychoanalysis* (2022), editor Vera. J. Camden[18] illustrates his point. He argues that along with the pandemic, we have witnessed environmental calamities as well as social, political, and cultural upheaval all across the world. The psychological toll on the world's population from this confluence may be enormous. Accordingly, in light of the ever changing and complicated environment, we should investigate the world around us not only from a psychoanalytic perspective but also from a broader ecological viewpoint. The subsequent chapter will focus on the literary implications of ecocriticism.

[18] Vera J Camden, *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and Psychoanalysis* (Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York, Ny: Cambridge University Press, 2022).

Chapter 3 Literature and Ecocriticism

3.1 The Significance of Nature in Literature

3.1.1 Descriptions of Nature in Western Literature

Greg Garrard[1] in the opening section of his volume *Ecocriticism* (2012) mentioned some descriptions of environmentalism. According to him, it is widely accepted that contemporary environmentalism began with "a fable for tomorrow" in Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962). Carson's fairy tale opens with the words: there was once a town in the heart of America where all life seemed to live in harmony with its surroundings. Green fields, foxes barking in the hills, silent deer, ferns and wild-flowers, countless birds and trout lying in clear, cold streams, all delighted in by those who pass through the town.[2] Such lovely depictions of nature and pastoral settings remind us of Carson's deep relationship with it and the significance of nature in literature. Timothy Clark[3] summarized this approach in a technical term called *"nature writing"* in his volume *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment* (2011). He mentioned that it is still employed to characterize a type of creative non-fiction connected with mainly peaceful descriptions of natural landscapes and fauna, although the phrase has a deceptively cozy feel to it. For instance, much writing glorifies wildness in the manner of nineteenth-century American writers such as Thoreau or John Muir.

Raymond Williams (1921-1988), a Welsh writer, once said that nature has long been a crucial and perhaps definitive term of western traditions of thought, perhaps the most complex word in the English language. Every literary portrayal of a natural or urban landscape may represent an implicit re-engagement with what the term "nature" means or could mean, with its multiple implicit projections of human identity in connection to the non-human, with conceptions of the wild, of nature as shelter, of nature as resource. As an example, in the book *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (2008), Lawrence

[1] Greg Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2012).
[2] Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (London: Penguin Books, 1962), 1.
[3] Timothy Clark, *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Buell[4] stresses that the initial chapters of Genesis, the first book in Hebrew and Christian scripture, have been criticized as the main source of western domination: God's command to man to assume "dominion" over and "subdue" the creatures of the sea and land. However, others argue that this misinterprets both history and the biblical text and that the word "cultivate" is more essential, meaning pious management rather than change. Thus, in light of the Bible, western literature does a brilliant job of thinking about the relationship between humans and nature, as well as the location of humans within nature.

3.1.2 Descriptions of Nature in Chinese Literature

The Chinese people, like people in many regions of the world, have traditionally lived in close proximity to nature and with a keen awareness of natural processes. According to the paper published on *Chinese Social Sciences Today* (2013) by Scott Slovic[5], who provides us with some insights into Chinese environmental literature, what is unique in China are the core elements of environmental reverence that were articulated many centuries ago by Chinese philosophers and poets and are remembered even today, in the 21st century. When we speak of the birth of an ecological civilization in China today, we are referring to a re-affirmation of old Chinese values rather than the development of wholly new conceptions or attitudes.

For example, if you ask the typical educated Chinese citizen what the most important environmental phrase is, he or she would most likely mention Zhuang Zi's *zi ran da mei* (translated as "nature is the most beautiful") from the 4th century BC. This phrase indicates a basic human humility in respect for the non-human world, which is a challenging attitude to sustain when human groups attempt to control their environmental circumstances and acquire access to desirable resources. However, it is feasible that by recalling this fundamental admiration for nature's incredible efficiency

[4] Lawrence Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (Malden, Ma: Blackwell, 2008).
[5] Scott Slovic, "Ecological Civilization and Global Governance," *Chinese Social Sciences Today*, 2013.

and beauty, human societies in China and everywhere else on the globe may learn to curb our damaging, ill-considered actions. Furthermore, the concept of *tian ren he yi* (sometimes rendered in English as "the harmony oneness of the universe and man"), attributed to Song Dynasty (960–1279 AD) thinker Zhang Zai, is another traditional phrase that is likely to be offered as an example of Chinese culture's ancient awareness and veneration of the natural world. This concept resonates with the primary Chinese values of harmony and oneness, which are significant in both the social and environmental elements of Chinese society. In addition to the concepts from traditional Chinese philosophy that are so central to Chinese environmental thinking even in the twenty-first century, classical Chinese literary works, such as *The Peach Blossom Spring*, a fable written by Tao Yuanming in the Jin Dynasty (266–420AD) about a chance discovery of an ethereal utopia where the people are living an ideal existence in harmony with nature, continue to captivate Chinese and other international readers even today. As a result, the four-character idiom "*shì wai táo yuán*," which means "Peach Spring beyond this world," has evolved to represent an unexpectedly amazing area off the beaten route, generally an unspoiled wilderness of exceptional beauty.

3.2 From Environmental Criticism to Ecocriticism

3.2.1 The Formation of Environmental Criticism

In order to call attention to the antiquity, diversity and durability of environmental discourse, Lawrence Buell recalls some viewpoints in his monograph *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Criticism and Literary Imagination* (2008). According to Buell, creative art and critical reflection have always been fascinated by how theory, imagination, and technology interact, absorb, and transform the material world. The first legends told by humans are about the birth of the planet, its alteration by gods, or human ingenuity's second nature. In contrast to contemporary Christian philosophy which is mentioned above, Mayan mythography depicts the gods as creating humanity after multiple false beginnings from maize harvested with the assistance of

already-created animals, signifying “the collaborative survival that must exist between humans, plants, and animals.” [6] If environmental criticism is still an emerging conversation today, it has extremely old origins. Since the inception of these studies, the "idea of nature" has dominated literary academics and intellectual historians in various forms.

Nonetheless, Buell also noticed that the increase and sophistication of environmentality as an issue within literary and cultural studies since the 1980s demonstrated the need to correct the marginalization of environmental issues in most versions of critical theory that dominated literary and cultural studies through the 1980s. Why do environmental discourses seem to be more relevant than ever? The most obvious argument is that “the environment” became front-page news in the last third of the twentieth century. As the danger of an apocalypse by inadvertent environmental catastrophe became more likely than an apocalypse by purposeful nuclear aggression, public concern about the status and fate of “the environment” increased, initially in the West, but now globally. Therefore, the environmental shift in literature and cultural studies originated as a self-conscious movement decades ago. However, it has developed since then. The expansion of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) from a regional North American ferment to a thousand-member organization with participants worldwide, from the United Kingdom to Japan and Korea to Australia and New Zealand, is a telling indicator. Because of the serious environmental challenges that we have encountered since the 1980s, critics have concentrated more on environmental issues or criticism than the mere description of nature.

3.2.2 “Environmentalism” and “Ecocriticism” in Different Times

Environmentalism emerged in the second half of the twentieth century in response to perceptions of how severe environmental devastation had become. This movement

[6] Lawrence Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (Malden: Blackwell, ,Cop, 2008), 2.

arose from a love of nature and its traditions. Environmentalists are worried about hazards to human health, food, and shelter, as well as concerns for animals and wilderness, and these threats are both global and local. As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, *Silent Spring* (1962) was a work exposing the hazardous effects of industrial chemical residues in animal and human bodies. It is usually recognized as the first rallying of environmentalism as a public movement, owing to the worldwide response it garnered. As Ulrich Beck in *World Risk Society* (1998) argued, we live in the age of unintended consequences.[7] Ulrich Beck's statement emphasizes the strangeness of a society in which everyday banality becomes strangely politicized, often in unsettling ways. Aside from that, the escalating environmental disaster imposes a type of retro irony: "It is as if Western culture has purposefully set out to destroy the integrity of the ecosystem."[8] It appears that the depth and destructiveness of Western thought's assumptions are about the human connection to the natural world. According to Timothy Clark,[9] this important, amazing, but sometimes bewildering interaction of issues is the space of ecocriticism, or the study of literature and the environment.

Clark also argued that so-called reform environmentalism adheres to the dominant notion that the natural environment is largely viewed as a resource for humans, whether economically or culturally, but it works to protect and conserve it from over-exploitation. Most reform environmentalists urge solutions that fit within the boundaries of capitalist industrial society (sustainable development, carbon offset schemes, conservation charities with attractive publications). In other words, environmental politics becomes mainly a matter of long-term prudence for human interests and quality of life, the preservation of visually pleasing landscapes, and the leisure pastimes that go with them. Reform environmentalism feeds a new type of consumer piety, such that buying a less destructive brand of vehicle becomes saving the planet.

On the other hand, Lawrence Buell gives his insights about "ecocriticism" in his

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[7] Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society* (Cambridge Polity Press, 1998), 119

[8] Robert J Brulle, *Agency, Democracy, and Nature: The U.S. Environmental Movement from a Critical Theory Perspective* (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute Of Tecnology, 2000), 48.

[9] Timothy Clark, *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

volume *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (2008). He indicated "ecocriticism," the most general word for an increasingly diverse movement, has not yet attained the stature of gender, postcolonial, or critical race studies. The concept of "ecocriticism" appears to have been coined by US critic William Rueckert in 1978. A few works of literary criticism may have been considered as examples of ecocriticism before the term was invented, including Raymond Williams' *The Country and the City* (1973) in the United Kingdom and Annette Kolodny's *The Lay of the Land* (1975) in the United States, a feminist study of the literary metaphor of landscape as female. These were influenced by ecological concepts and posed some of the concerns that would become central to ecocriticism, but it was not until the early 1990s that ecocriticism became a recognized movement.

As literary and cultural critique from an ecological perspective, ecocritical texts are graded based on whether they are destructive or beneficial to the environment. Eco-critics examine the historical development of ideas such as "nature" in an attempt to comprehend the cultural developments that have led to the current global ecological crisis. It gives information regarding implicit attitudes and their effects on the environment. For example, although climate change does not appear in the index of Lawrence Buell's *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (2008), it is widely acknowledged to be the most serious environmental concern, with its horrors curiously developing an almost clichéd familiarity. Furthermore, while global warming is prevalent in modern environmental writing, such as Gretel Ehrlich's *The Future of Ice* (2005) and recent science fiction, literary criticism rarely discusses the problem explicitly in understanding literature and culture. It is generally only indirectly or implicitly at issue. As a result, ecocriticism evolved largely to address local and clearly recognized outrages and injustices. Climate change therefore confronts some green critics with the truth that, while they have been devising methods to think and act in connection to their national cultures and histories, they are still far from thinking in the way and on the scale expected by a really global issue. This viewpoint also coincidentally validates Lawrence Buell's insight into the status of ecocriticism.

3.3 The Mainstream Ideas of Ecocriticism

3.3.1 Ecocriticism as a Synthesis of Cultural and Nature Studies

Scholars cannot study ecocriticism without taking into account the influence of the environment on humankind. In addition, the relationship between humans and nature has been a topic of discussion. We already know from western biblical writings that God is the Creator and that people appear to be in command of nature, which has become a valuable resource for humanity. People have begun economic and cultural operations on this territory at the expense of environmental resources, including tree cutting and oil drilling. As a consequence, this has led to environmental issues such as declining forest cover, soil erosion, energy crunch and rising sea levels due to global warming. Some environmentalists argue that we should not over-exploit the earth's resources but rather work to improve the planet's ecology. By contrast, Timothy Clark[10] stresses more extreme viewpoints believe that environmental issues are far too important to be solved by tweaking preexisting political and economic structures. They urge that the material and cultural foundations of contemporary society should be reexamined. Anthropocentrism, the practically universal presumption that everything has worth primarily in connection to humans, is the fundamental issue, according to one radical group in particular, the “deep ecologists.”

The term "anthropocentrism" could come out as being excessively general. After all, even "biocentrism" is an opinion held by people, making it "anthropocentric" in a limited sense. However, "anthropocentrism" in environmental discourse typically refers to the belief that humans and their interests are the only things that matter and always take precedence over those of non-human creatures. In other words, anthropocentrism refers to any posture, perspective, or notion that places the human at the center or as the standard. An “anthropocentric” perspective of the natural world, on the other hand, sees it completely in relation to the human, for instance, as a resource for economic use or

[10] Clark, *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment*, 8

as an expression of specific social or cultural values - thus even landscape admiration may be anthropocentric. Furthermore, Bryan L. Moore[11] in his volume *Ecological Literature and the Critique of Anthropocentrism* (2017) made a similar point that it is also a very old issue, maybe a vestige of the interrelationships people sensed more clearly when civilization and development had not yet completely divorced us from our natural environments. Some may favor the view that we are all God's creatures and hence all of worth, while many writers argue that humans are too hopelessly destructive and self-centered to make any credible assertions about our species' positive worth. The uncontested anthropocentrism considers the earth wholly or primarily as a treasure chest for human consumption.

3.3.2 The Opposite of Anthropocentrism

People were concerned about the anthropocentric doctrine in literature before the birth of modern science, because it would result in a massive consumption of natural resources while also leading mankind into a kind of blind arrogance. As Bryan L. Moore claims, the birth of the rejection of anthropocentrism appears to be a post-Darwinian response, but it also has some ties to the aesthetic of the Sublime that developed in the eighteenth century, and then, a little earlier, it appears to be a product of the Enlightenment. However, several components of it predate the birth of modern science, and more than a few seeds of the notion may be found in early American Indian animism, ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, and Eastern faiths. For example, in the aforementioned Mayan myth of humans and animals together on the occasion of the maize harvest, humans and nature live in harmony and assist each other.

Timothy Clark claims that deep ecologists, in contrast to anthropocentrists, advocate a radical shift in human self-understanding: one should regard oneself not as an atomistic individual engaged in the planet as a resource for consumption and self-assertion, but as a member of a larger living entity. All human activities should be

[11] Bryan L Moore, *Ecological Literature and the Critique of Anthropocentrism* (Cham Springer International Publishing, 2017).

motivated by a desire to benefit the biosphere as a whole. Such a biocentrism would assert the intrinsic value of all nature life and replace the current preference for even minor human demands over the needs of other species or the integrity of place. Others, particularly ecofeminists and theorists in "social ecology," give variations on Murray Bookchin's stance, summarized in *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy* (2005), that “the mere concept of governing nature has its origins in the dominance of humans by humans.”[12] Ecological issues are considered the product of human society's hierarchical and elitist institutions, which are designed to exploit both other people and the natural environment for profit. Critics urge for fundamental political reform, such as a transition toward small-scale, frequently anarchistic communities free of built-in structures of injustice.

To these and other radical environmentalists, carbon-offset programs and other measures envisioned to address environmental damage through a few changes to the market-led economy appear insufficient and irresponsible. The industrial market economy and the contemporary state are fundamentally and structurally dedicated to a never-ending process of capital accumulation, which will only cease with their own extinction, either via political upheaval or, more likely, by environmental catastrophe.

On the other hand, Bryan L. Moore seems to have given us a conclusion about getting rid of anthropocentrism. He insists that if we are to address our worldwide ecological challenges, we must reconsider our role on the Earth and lessen our impact on it. This requires us to reject an excessive anthropocentrism and behave accordingly, both philosophically and spiritually. At this juncture, the non-anthropocentric tradition in Western literature constitutes a crucial element of the philosophical and aesthetic bridge necessary to enable us proceed more responsibly into the late twentieth century and beyond.

3.3.3 Nature Beyond Our Imagination

[12] Murray Bookchin, *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy* (Edinburgh: Ak Press, 2005).

According to the book called *Ecocriticism in Japan* (2018), which is edited by Hisaaki Wake, Keijiro Suga, and Yuki Masami, Karen Thornber, a Japanologist, has claimed that global catastrophes such as climate change, ocean acidification, and biodiversity loss are diminishing the importance of regional and national distinctions.[13] When we talk about climate change, and the human impact of natural disasters, the development of ecocriticism in Japan may be an appropriate case study. In particular, Japan may be a model for reflecting the core ideas of ecocriticism in the elaboration of the relationship between humans and nature. The notion of the Anthropocene has transformed environmental arguments in general, and ecocritical debates in particular, during the last decades in Australia, North America, and Western Europe. However, it has resonated less strongly in other regions of the world, including Japan.

The cultures of fossil fuels and the literatures of climate change have attracted a considerable deal of scholarly attention from North American and Western European eco-critics. By contrast, the volume *Ecocriticism in Japan* (2018) highlights two of Japan's most egregious environmental disasters: the mercury poisoning of Minamata Bay by the Chisso Corporation from the 1940s to the 1960s, and the Great Tohoku Earthquake in 2011, with its disastrous aftermath of technological failure and nuclear radiation. It is hardly unexpected that large-scale environmental catastrophes and tragedies have a profound impact on a nation's cultural imagination. Climate change has been a major political and legal concern in Japan, at least since it hosted the negotiations that led to the *Kyoto Protocol*, which raises the question whether and how this concern is reflected in literature.

As stated in the suggestion to reject anthropocentrism, we appear to need to recognize that nature is having a greater influence on human productivity and existence than we can conceive, owing to climate change and pollution. We are being dislodged from the harmony we formerly shared with the environment. It is, to some extent, eroding and even destroying human existence by its own principles.

Yuki Masami stresses that ecocriticism in Japan began in the 1990s and since then it

[13] Hisaaki Wake, Keijirō Suga, and Masami Yūki, *Ecocriticism in Japan* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2018).

has developed with at least three different phases. In the introductory chapter of the book *Ecocriticism in Japan (*2018), she mentioned that the first phase focusing on translation, the second stage introducing comparative approaches, and the third involving ecocritical interventions in Japanese literature. She pays attention to what could be of importance in shaping Japanese ecocriticism—a "harmony" discourse in Japanese literature, culture, and environmentalism. Since “harmony” by definition, alludes to a solid relationship, the phrase is frequently used to indicate ecological health. The concept of “harmony with nature” is frequently referred to as characteristically Japanese in two distinct ways. Some scholars and intellectuals see perceived harmony between humans and nonhuman nature as an ecologically healthy alternative viewpoint, while others see it as culturally produced and entirely ideological, with no ecological significance.

The case of Japanese ecocriticism elucidates the interaction between man and nature even further. The Asian attitude toward nature is more akin to reverence than the Western idea of conquering nature. Nature has brought us a significant amount of grief since the beginning of the twenty-first century due to human self-indulgence, and we have grown increasingly conscious that it is impossible for humans to survive in an environment without nature. Many modern intellectuals, particularly those concerned with environmental issues, frequently commend the Japanese attitude of "man in harmony with nature" as being ethically more desirable than the Western tradition of “man over nature” or “man against nature.”

3.3.4 Ecocriticism as an Interdisciplinary Study

While discussing the main idea of ecocriticism, Lawrence Buel also touches on an intriguing phenomenon in his volume *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (2008). He points out that environmental issues have sparked an increasing curiosity both for artists and academics, giving rise to cross-disciplinary environmental studies programs within colleges and universities that are typically motivated by student demand as well as faculty research agendas. Though natural and social scientists have traditionally been

the primary participants in such programs, a significant number of humanists have also been pulled in, with many of them bringing prior commitments of a citizenly nature to bear on ecologically driven teaching and scholarship.

As we know, “The environment” was becoming a more prominent public issue and a key focus of research in science, ecology, law, and public policy - as well as certain humanities subjects, most notably history and ethics. Nature provides us with the sublime imagination, and then the transcendent imagination brings us history and society. Lawrence Buell’s reference gives us some inspiration, he declares literature academics who adopted the environmental turn in the 1980s and 1990s found themselves in a mind-expanding, dizzying variety of cross-disciplinary interactions with life scientists, climatologists, public policy specialists, geographers, cultural anthropologists, landscape architects, environmental attorneys, and even applied mathematics and environmental engineers. Ecocriticism study as cross-disciplinary has its unique strengths and characteristics. It illustrates a remarkable element of the current ecological crisis: the challenge to the way human knowledge is organized. Previously recognized boundaries between the scientific sciences, social sciences, and humanities are not only being challenged, but are also being crossed and ignored in many environmental challenges and conflicts. For example, a question like how much CO_2 an enterprise should be permitted to release is a subject of politics, economics, climate studies, chemistry, social welfare, intergenerational ethics, and even animal rights. In other words, ecocritical study breaks down barriers across disciplines, and academics must analyze environmental issues in the context of their own fields and establish a balance between them.

To summarize, ecocriticism is the arena of a fascinating and complicated convergence of concerns, academic disciplines, and politics. Its potential strength is that it is more than just another subcategory of literary criticism positioned within its institutional boundaries; rather, it is work that engages provocatively with both literary analysis and issues that are concurrently but obliquely matters of science, psychology, morality, politics, and aesthetics.

3.4 An Ecology of World Literature

3.4.1 Different Languages, Different Spaces in World Literature

Alexander Beecroft is a prominent scholar of world literature who is quite interested in early Greek and Chinese context. He indicated in his monograph that in reading Pollock, as well as Damrosch, Casanova, and Moretti, and in continuing to think about his own work, he started to believe that we were all actually discussing different manifestations of the same issue, which is best described as "the interaction of literature with its environment." [14] To cite some instances, Beecroft mentioned the communication of the Homeric epic between city-states in classical Greece, the use of Sanskrit to create inscriptional poetry in Java and its subsequent replacement with Javanese poetry, and the competition between national literatures for recognition in Paris that Pascale Casanova described in *The World Republic of Letters* (2004). All of these examples, however, seem to be different rather than competing models for understanding how literature circulates in different spaces.

It is essential to start with the query of what makes a language in order to better appreciate what literature is. This is because the capacity to comprehend the language in which a text is created is the single most important factor in determining whether or not one will have access to that work since literature is undoubtedly formed of language. For instance, Beecroft considers English speakers who, in particular, believe that the boundaries of their language are very clear and unproblematic. There is little room for debate given how different is English from other Germanic languages like Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, and even German itself. However, English speakers run the risk of assimilating the rest of the world to their own experience and presuming that other languages are as precisely defined as English. By contrast, even more complexities may be seen in the Romance languages. French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese appear to be important languages with tens or perhaps hundreds of millions

[14] Alexander Beecroft, *An Ecology of World Literature* (Verso Books, 2015).

of speakers, each with a long literary history. The traditional everyday spoken languages of France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, however, are a part of what linguists refer to as a "dialect continuum[15]" under that surface. It is challenging to define clear lines of mutual understanding along this continuum, and to the extent that they do, these lines do not coincide with national boundaries. Likewise, the spoken dialects of China bear complex familial relationships to each other across large areas[16], derived in each case from common ancestors. The most representative examples are Mandarin, Shanghai dialect, Cantonese. Therefore, the implication that “a language is a dialect with a regional assembly”[17] should be acknowledged. On the other hand, Beecroft suggest an alternate slogan: “A language is a dialect with a literature[18], which he stress that the concept of “literariness,” A text often has to follow some set of diction and grammar rules in order to be considered “literature” within a certain culture. For instance, over the centuries, the writings of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, and others have influenced English speakers' perceptions of what makes for good written English, and both lexical innovations and grammatical simplifications have gained acceptance through use in imaginative literature.

3.4.2 Ecology of world literature

Unlike Casanova’s economic analogy, Alexander Beecroft uses an ecological metaphor for further explanation of world literature. According to Beecroft, ecology may offer a more intriguing and practical paradigm if we are coping with a system in which the many components are not actually equal to one another.

Ecologists study how various types of living things interact with one another and with their non-living surroundings. His metaphor is that ecology recognizes, acknowledges, and insists on the separate and mutually interconnected character of these numerous inputs, allowing changes in the external environment to have

[15] Beecroft, *An Ecology of World Literature*, 5
[16] Beecroft, *An Ecology of World Literature*, 5
[17] Beecroft, *An Ecology of World Literature*, 6
[18] Beecroft, *An Ecology of World Literature*, 6

complicated and shifting effects on the diverse species existing in a particular context. On a literary level, Alexander Beecroft insists analyzing the texts that make up a body of literature alone is not sufficient to comprehend it as a whole. Any specific literature must instead be viewed as existing in an ecological connection to other phenomena, such as political, economic, sociocultural, and religious factors, as well as to the other languages and literatures with which it is in contact. To cite an instance, when attempting to comprehend early Chinese literature, it is important to consider not only the texts themselves but also the political and cultural context in which they were written, including the fact that the leaders of the regional states competed for hegemony with other states that were less fully assimilated into a common cultural space at that time. As a result, adopting this ecological metaphor has the benefit of helping us understand that texts and literature survive in a variety of ways rather than using the same adaptive technique as, for example, Casanova. According to her, a literary work can only flourish if it has a following in important cities like Paris, London, or New York. But if we look at this process of survival and recognition through an ecological lens, we can see that different literary genres have flourished in various ways across time. It means that authors, texts, and literatures respond to a lack of acknowledgement as ecological agents by seeking out the niche in which they feel most at home.

Although the content of Alexander Beecroft's volume, *An Ecology of World Literature* (2015), is not ecocriticism in the conventional sense, the use of the term "ecology" is more related to linguistic ecology, which also investigates the links between their objects of study and human environments.

Furthermore, environmental constraints may undoubtedly impact literary ecology; in the past, climate change has caused civilizational collapse, inevitably changing the literary landscape. In his consideration of the role that biodiversity could play in keeping a literary culture sustainable, Beecroft makes use of fundamental ecological notions ranging from “the discussion of the biome as a paradigm for the comparative study of human cultures to borrowing from population genetics” at various points. His objective is that more abstract applications of ecological concepts and themes would enhance, rather than subtract from, the discussion of ecology in literary contexts.

3.5 Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter discussed the significance of nature in literature and ecocriticism. The first section examined the relationship between nature and literature in the framework of Western literature, including myths and legends, as well as particular instances from Chinese literature. Following that, the move from nature writing to environmental critique was outlined, as well as explanation why we need environmental criticism. The essay then explored the use of the terms “environmental criticism” and “ecocriticism” in different periods of time and discussed the humanistic context behind them. On this basis, the key concepts of ecocriticism were highlighted. These included environmental and cultural studies, anthropocentric studies, the multidisciplinary character of ecocriticism, and the anti-anthropocentric perspective that humans should live in harmony with nature. The final section of this chapter highlighted the approach to studying world literature in various areas, across different languages, using ecological metaphors. The harmonious growth of the ecosystem was attempted by comparing diverse aspects of global literature.

The next chapter will focus on the intersection between psychoanalysis and ecocriticism. In other words, it will further elucidate how people's hearts are healed and soothed in the context of climate change and environmental crisis and how to interpret the literature produced in this context from the perspective of ecological psychoanalysis.

Chapter 4 Literary Ecopsychology

This chapter will focus on ecopsychology and examine how different types of literary psychologies open us up to ecocritical issues.

4.1 An Exploration of Ecopsychology

Sigmund Freud gave a well-known series of lectures titled *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* in 1901. His goal was to introduce the public to the nascent and somewhat enigmatic discipline of psychoanalysis. He utilized jokes, double-entendres, and slips of the tongue to demonstrate how these common experiences reflect the unconscious mind's suppressed sexual and aggressive tendencies. Likewise, a comparable series of lectures today might be inspired by findings on ozone depletion, toxic waste, and the greenhouse effect. These shared environmental issues have evolved into the psychopathology of our daily lives. They show a state of the soul that Freud would not have named. However, Theodore Roszak[1] claimed in his volume *The Voice of the Earth* (2001), we have learnt a sobering lesson in the century since psychology was officially recognized as a branch of medical research. The human values that bind us to one another in society, involving honor, decency, and compassion, are not generally the same virtues that bind us companionably to the species we share the Earth with. The agony of what Theodore Roszak terms the “ecological unconscious” has risen in our time as a deeper imbalance.

Many terms nowadays have the prefix “eco” attached to them. Eco-politics, eco-philosophy, eco-feminism, and eco-consumerism are all topics of discussion. This small, unique, and specialized flag floats over our language as a sign of the times, intended to signify our tardy concern about the destiny of the Earth. Therefore, the perspective of ecopsychology seeks to reconcile our culture's long-standing, historical divide between the psychological and the ecological and to understand the demands of both the world

[1] Theodore Roszak, *The Voice of the Earth: An Exploration of Ecopsychology; with a New Afterword* (Grand Rapids, Mi: Phanes Press, Cop, 2001).

and the individual as a continuum. According to Theodore Roszak, previously all “psychologies” were “ecopsychologies.” Those who attempted to cure the soul assumed that human nature is intimately connected to the universe we share with animals, plants, minerals, and all the invisible forces of the cosmos. It is particularly contemporary Western psychology that has separated the "inner" life from the "outside” world, as if what was inside of us was something real, important, and inextricably linked to our study of the natural world.

4.2 As Above, so Below

Theodore Roszak mentioned in the preface to *The Voice of the Earth* (2001) that the ancient alchemists taught: “as above, so below.” A whole cosmology is contained in four words. The heavens above and the Earth below, including its life cargo, were viewed as a magnificent cosmic oneness, a harmony resonating in God's imagination. If the alchemists were correct in that regard, we can only presume it was a hunch. But “above” for them was the macrocosm, the universe of the celestial spheres, the angelic legions, and Dame Nature, as huge as the entire planet Earth. “Below” was the human soul, the microcosm. Furthermore, there was supposed to be a critical relationship between celestial intelligence and humanity's inner essence. In other words, macrocosm communicated with microcosm, while microcosm mirrored macrocosm. Nonetheless, Theodore Roszak also stressed that keeping these two domains apart has been the primary endeavor of rational thought and science for the greater part of two centuries. On one side, there is matter, and on the other, there is mind. The one is a secure realm of mathematical certainty, while the other is a muddy landscape of fluctuating emotions, dreams, and delusions. For us, the “macrocosm” has become the domain of precise sciences, the biggest collective intellectual endeavor of modern times, encompassing numerous branches of study: physics, astronomy, chemistry, and biology. And “microcosm,” the domain of mind, soul, and emotion, refers to psychology, the study of human experience as it can be gained from confessions made on a psychotherapist’s couch or possibly from novelists’ and poets’ introspective discoveries. Scientists have

given us a wealth of information about the structure and function of nature as a result of this separation; similarly, artists and psychologists have revealed astonishing insights into the human heart as a result of this separation.

However, the separation of interior and exterior, above and below, could never be more than a temporary expedient. Scientists now have great aspirations for a Grand Unified Theory, or "theory of everything." Some even try to include cultural, psychological, and religious aspects into the endeavor. We shall attempt to bridge the gap between the two worlds of existence—huge and small, lofty and negligible, outward and inward. For example, Galileo's astronomy, Newton's laws of motion, and Darwin's theory of evolution were all quickly taken up by the greater culture, as was Freud's psychology. Theodore Roszak believes that such a rational and emotional conversation would develop along the ecological line, and he discusses and reviews two significant concepts mentioned in his work: the Anthropic principle and the Gaia hypothesis. From the perspective of ecopsychology, we must confront the larger implications of the universe's organized and developing complexity sooner or later. It is possible that the underlying systems of nature, from which our psychology, culture, and science eventually arise.

4.3 Theoretical and Methodological Proposition

This short description of an important example of rapidly developing ecopsychology was to present some very promising new field of research, that also connects many problems of contemporary literary studies and provokes to rethink the new possibilities for the research concerning literature around the world. The previous chapters described research methods from the perspectives of world literature, psychological criticism, and ecological criticism respectively. Maybe there is some important potential of eco-psychological thinking and sensibility to be studied and revealed in literature viewed as a world phenomenon. However, each country has its own unique perspective on literature based on the characteristics of its tradition. Meanwhile, there is a certain

variety in the adoption of approaches and theories of literary criticism among countries, even for the same issue that literature is meant to represent. For ecological issues, the method of psychoanalysis is critiqued and explored in various countries through literature employing a country-specific literary traditions. For instance, in Poland, Jung's psychoanalysis used to be extensively applied in the composition and criticism of literary works, whereas Freud's psychoanalytic theories are strongly ingrained in the United States. Adler's concept of inferiority and superiority has become prevalent in Japanese literature in recent years, while prevailing importance of Lacanian model can be traced in French novels and short stories.

Thus, I became aware of the fact that the literature of different countries has its counterpart in psychological traditions that are inspired by different psychoanalysis. The research goal of the dissertation focuses on how to use the traditional context of psychoanalysis in different countries to deeply explore and compare perspectives on ecological criticism and ecological issues. The main hypothesis is that **different literary psychologies open differently for ecocritical issues, the dissertation aims to reveal these various potentialities of eco-psychological dimension of contemporary writing in the context of the world literature.** Therefore, I will take these dominant traditions as the main context in every analytical part of my thesis. Also, I am convinced that this is the way to unlock the new potential of ecocritical reading of literature and more broadly to explain how psychologically sensitive literature becomes more and more helpful in opening better ecological future.

In the following pages, multiple works from various countries in world literature will be used as a vehicle to further integration of the attitudes of four famous psychoanalysts from different periods, including Freud, Jung, Adler, and Lacan, towards ecological issues. I will analyze examples of literary works from Poland in the context of Jungian psychoanalysis, then from Japanese literature in the context of Adlerian psychoanalysis, American fiction in the Freudian context, and finally French literature in the context of Lacanian psychoanalysis. The examples will be literary works that focus on ecological issues combined with local psychoanalytical traditions.

Chapter 5

Olga Tokarczuk's Jungian Ecopsychology in *House of Day, House of Night*

In this chapter we will analyze the novel *House of Day, House of Night*[1] published in the English translation in 2002 by Polish writer Olga Tokarczuk, combining psychoanalytic and ecocritical approaches. We will begin with the narrator, the plot of the novel, and certain characteristics of the characters who appear in the novel, and select ecological elements in the novel for a more detailed analysis. On this basis, we will go over how psychoanalysis and ecocriticism are reflected and implemented in this work in further detail.

5.1 A Brief Review of the Work *House of Day, House of Night*

House of Day, House of Night is the first English-language translation of *Dom dzienny, dom nocny*, originally published in 1998 by the Polish novelist Olga Tokarczuk, who was awarded the 2018 Nobel Prize in Literature as the first Polish female prose writer. The novel is set near the Silesian town of Nova Ruda, which was taken from Germany and added to Poland following the Yalta and Potsdam conferences in 1945. It takes us to southern Poland, close to the Czech border, in what was previously German territory.

The story opens with a woman, the narrator and her husband, R., relocating to an old house in the settlement of Nowa Ruda, and the first part introduces us to their new home, with its spacious gardens, or fields, and the water running inconveniently beneath. Marta, their elderly neighbor and one of the book's more prominent characters, is also presented. The novel recounts the narrator's experiences in the vicinity of Nowa Ruda. She intersperses insights on her surroundings and neighbors with dreams, poisonous mushroom recipes, and anecdotes about individuals who have lived, visited, or are otherwise associated with the region. In addition, the narrator weaves together the

[1] Olga Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, trans. Antonia Lloyd-Jones (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2003).

stories of the local community and the wider history that informs them in no particular sequence. Therefore, rather than a book with a set framework, it should be viewed as a novel of fluidity and flexibility composed of many tale fragments pieced together. Tokarczuk explores the region's history, legends, and myths via these vignettes, highlighting its diversity. Tatiana Nazarenko[2] mentioned that *House of Day, House of Night* in her paper Tokarczuk's novel features a mosaic, or as the author defines it, video-clip structure, which is prevalent in postmodern works. Recollections, dreams, records of daily life, fables, family chronicles, guidebook entries, historical records, radio transmissions, descriptions of nature, culinary recipes, and hagiographic pieces are all intertwined.

Furthermore, as a result of the author's academic background as a clinical psychologist, Tokarczuk's books are rich in psychological components such as mythology and archetypal representations of the story's characters. This corresponds to what Jung's deep psychology involves. For instance, most of the vivid characters symbolize the psychological archetype underlying it, from the nature-friendly yet quirky Malta, to the inebriated Marek Marek, to Krysia yearning for her ideal partner named Amos, to Franz Frost, who refuses to swap his hat for a helmet till he was killed.

Overall, Tokarczuk's prose is straightforward and plain. She is sensitive to ecological issues and narrates her stories with a natural fluidity that effortlessly accommodates the world's hopes, drudgery, and oddities. Real lives coexist with the imagined, dreams with days, and the past with the present in a very convincing manner.

5.2 Jung's Collective Unconscious to Ecological Issues

Since the application of Jungian psychology to the characters in the novel and the depiction of nature were mentioned above, it is necessary to first bring closer Jungian psychology and its relationship with ecological theory.

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), a Swiss psychiatrist, was a significant thinker of the

[2] Tatiana Nazarenko, "Reviewed Work: House of Day, House of Night Olga Tokarczuk," *The Slavic and East European Journal* 48, no. 2 (2004): 324–26.

twentieth century and the pioneer of psychoanalysis. Although he died before the environmental movement gained traction, his observations are immensely pertinent to the current situation. Carl Jung never wrote specifically on ecology and he probably never dreamed that there would one day be a subject named "ecopsychology." Nonetheless, Jung's psychological insights and philosophical convictions frequently contained a strong premonition of modernity's rapidly changing connection with the natural world. Jeremy D. Yunt [3] mentioned in his paper that many of Jung's psychological concepts, as well as much of his writing on humanity's understanding of itself and its world, have direct relevance for analyzing and dealing with one of modernity's most pressing problems: balancing human needs and desires with the ecologically discernible needs of the natural world.

Jung believed that one of the fundamental tasks of psychology was to reacquaint the contemporary mind with archetypal realities that had been suppressed or disregarded in its imbalances of scientific-technical reason. Besides, Jung also considered that any intentional work on creating a link between one's unconscious, where the archetypes manifest themselves, and the workings of nature held tremendous potential for mediating meaning and healing the psyche. Here, establishing Jung's clear difference from Freud's understanding of the unconscious as simply a repository for our repressed infantile and sexual psychic contents, Jung supports the eco-psychological truism that it is connected with "the outer world," or "nature."

Finally, Jeremy D. Yunt stresses in his paper that modern psychology attempted to conceal the truth that our lives are shaped and influenced by natural cycles and forces, no matter how much we tried to pretend otherwise. In sum, psychology neglected the reality that people are animals—intelligent, brilliant, highly emotional, and creative beings that live within and rely on natural processes. Jung's viewpoint on the interaction between man and nature highlights a feature of archetypal psychology and the collective unconscious that transcends the individual while also reinforcing the environment's role in the archetype.

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[3] Jeremy D. Yunt, "Jung's Contribution to an Ecological Psychology," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 41, no. 2 (April 2001): 96–121, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022167801412007.

5.3 Tenderness and James Hillman's Psychology of Depth

Tokarczuk's sensitivity to psychology is strongly tied to Jungian psychology. Her work also exudes a certain atmosphere known as "tenderness". The explanation may be found in her Nobel-Prize speech, in which she speaks to the reader as a tender narrator of her works. Likewise, tenderness is a narrative we tell ourselves, much like any spiritual orientations. The strength of our compassion mirrors the power and sensitivity of our storytelling, as it does with all narratives. Moreover, she picked a category that was well-known from feminist and ecological critique, and as a result she effectively sparked a significant argument on contemporary literature.

However, Tomasz Mizerkiewicz[4] points out in his paper that commentaries on her Nobel-Prize speech do not mention a different approach to the concept, one which reaches to the philosophical background of James Hillman's "psychology of depth". To carry the remark still further, Mizerkiewicz also indicates that a variant of Jungian psychoanalysis which is developed by Hillman since the 70s, based on the Neo-Platonic belief that "I" am the soul, whose every experience and observation transforms everything into a "naively" personified being, in order to "psychologize" or "spiritualize" the entire encountered universe, should be remembered by everyone. The relationship between the soul and the experienced portion of the world is founded on that between Amor and Psyche. This is why Tokarczuk – following Hillman's argument – treats the objective things around her with tenderness, so that when she faces her teapot, she feels as if the teapot is talking to her. It is her tenderness that infuses the teapot with soul and turns it into active being. This is exactly why she said in her speech that tenderness is an art of personifying, the most modest form of love.

It is undeniable that we may identify links in the personification and Jungian archetypal psychology. According to James Hillman's volume called *Re-visioning Psychology* (1975) personifying has always been vital to the religious and poetic

[4] Tomasz Mizerkiewicz, "Justifying Tenderness – the History and Modernity of a Literary-Critical Concept," *Forum of Poetics* 28-29, no. 28-29 (December 29, 2022): 184–97, https://doi.org/10.14746/fp.2022.28-29.36758.

imagination, and it is now crucial to the experience of archetypal psychology.[5] Not only that, personifying acknowledges the soul's existence prior to reflection. It is a manner of being in the world and experiencing the world as a psychological field, where we are presented with events that touch, move, and appeal to us. On the other hand, tenderness, as defined by Tokarczuk, has a Platonic origin. In other words, tenderness stems from personifying, which is a central part of James Hillman's psychology of depth as well as Jung's archetypal psychology.

5.4 Tender Narrator and the Role of Imagination in the Dream

Tokarczuk published *House of Day, House of Night* (1998), the first of what she called her "constellations novels," where stories were to some extend shaped in a hillmanian manner. The most significant feature of the content was the philosophical reflection on dreams interspersed throughout the book. It is not tough to assume that the dream is the principal part of the narrative. Dreams convey the significance of human existence. Throughout the narrative, dreams also become the focal point of reflections. Every few pages, we may encounter descriptions of dreams: daydreams, nightdreams, dreams on the Internet, dreams of meeting one's ideal lover, nightmares of one's son eating toxic mushrooms—these dreams comprise the book's fundamental fragments. For example, in the beginning of the novel, we can see the following narrative:

> The first night I had a dream. I dreamed I was pure sight, without a body or a name. I was suspended high above a valley at some undefined point from which I could see everything. I could move around my field of vision, yet remain in the same place. It seemed as if the world below was yielding to me as I looked at it, constantly moving towards me, and then away, so first I could see everything, then only tiny details.[6]

[5] James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology* (HarperCollins Publishers, 1975).
[6] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 1.

The narrator opens the narrative by describing a world experienced in a dream. Nonetheless, it is an unusual initial impression, because the narrator lacks both a body and a name, it is only a still soul. It can be concluded that the world is a reality that is created by the narrator's imagination. In the dream, the narrator's eyes are like magnifying glasses that she may easily switch between. She can see the whole world as well as its minute details. It is as though the world is in front of my eyes and I am in it at the same moment. On the other hand, the "I" in the dream might be seen as the narrator's unconscious mind, which is distinct from her conscious self during the day and serves as a sort of release from the depths of her heart.

As a result, when we perceive the world around us in our dreams, we simply cannot help but be grateful to our imagination. It is vital to our subconscious mind. Furthermore, the images we receive are inextricably related to our imagination. As James Hillman stated in his book *Re-visioning Psychology* (1975), if we are intolerant of images, we are also intolerant of imagination, which will eventually lead to its destruction. Namely, it is because the narrator can see the whole image of that world in the dream that gives her the divine perspective and allows her to imagine the world in her own unconscious.

In addition to everything that "I" imagined in the dream, we can sense her as light as the breeze in the narrative style, resting far above the valley and tenderly glancing at all she sees. She is a "tender narrator" who gradually unfolds the narrative for the reader. It is worth mentioning that Tomasz Mizerkiewicz stresses—for Polish literary criticism, this is a novel approach—the term "tender narrator", which links the issue of tenderness with problems of modern culture and with such areas of literary studies as narratology studies and poetics. It is easy to think of Tokarczuk's speech at the Nobel Prize ceremony, in which she refers to the conversation between her and the teapot. With tenderness she turns an object into a living presence, and with her tender narrative she makes us feel as if we are having an immersive experience ourselves. Mizerkiewicz argued in his paper that Tokarczuk muses about the prospect of bringing to life a tender "fourth-person narrator" and contrasts him/her with the first-person narrator, who is constrained by cognitive, artistic, and cultural limitations. Moreover, the non-literary,

everyday word “tender” provided terminological novelty and stimulated the critical and literary environmental curiosity.

In the following paragraph, the “I,” who is still in the sky, observes the turbulent stream flowing between the hills and trees set deep into the ground. What is presented here is the “I” as the narrator conveying the softness and tenderness of intimacy with nature to everyone. Furthermore, it is important that, according to the following text, the author viewed the nature with the assistance of imagination:

> I could see a turbulent stream flowing down between the hills. I could see trees set deep into the ground like huge, one-legged creatures. The stillness of what I could see was only on the surface. Whenever I wished, I could look through this surface to what lay underneath. Under the bark of trees, I could see rivulets of water, streams of sap flowing up and down the trunk. Under the roof of the house, I could see the bodies of people asleep, and their stillness, too, was only superficial their hearts were beating gently, their blood was rippling in their veins, I could even see their dreams, fragments of images flashing inside their heads. In their tangled dream-thoughts I could see myself. [7]

Thus, the issue shifts from the physical to the psychological. We experience things that we ordinarily cannot see, which indicates that in dreams the subconscious mind or the soul is freed, and we rely more on imagination and memory to reconstruct the reality we observe. The subconscious can let us penetrate the surface to see rivulets of water, streams of sap flowing up and down the trunk or to witness the beating of the heart and the rippling of blood in veins beneath the body of a sleeping individual. James Hillman[8] emphasized that dreams are important to the soul—not for the messages they convey to the ego or for the recovered memories or revelations, what appears to matter to the soul is the nightly encounter with a plethora of shades.

On the other hand, a dream is a peculiar product. Sometimes we wonder: to whom

[7] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 1
[8] Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, 33.

do dreams truly belong? Hayao Kawai[9], a psychologist from Japan who is also a writer, uses an appealing metaphor in his volume called *Dreams, Myths and Fairy Tales in Japan* (2016). He argued that a dream is like a painting that has been left unfinished. And the paintbrush is the subconscious. But this analogy is also problematic, since, unlike using the paintbrush for painting, we do not have complete control over our dreams, and we even occasionally fear that they are capable of destroying us.

Most people nowadays believe that their dreams belong to them, but they do not feel accountable for what they dream. This paradoxical attitude exposes a shortcoming in the traditional perception of dreams. In this first part, the narrator even sees herself in the dream, creating a situation in which the "I" and the dream blend and I am in the dream, the dream also contains me. To put it another way, perhaps we can speculate that dreams belong to both the universe and the human who sees them. Meanwhile, dreams belong to the deep subconscious image which can be a bridge between nature and human beings. We see that we too are ultimately a composition of images, our person is the personification of their life in the soul.

5.5 Following the Trail of a Mirage-like Dream

Jung[10] claims that symbols from many cultures are frequently extremely similar because they evolved from archetypes shared by the whole human race and are part of our collective unconscious. Meanwhile, archetypes have universal meanings across societies and can be found in dreams, literature, art, or religion. Jung wanted to identify a large number of archetypes, but we will pay a special attention to "the anima/animus" in this section. The "anima/animus," according to Jung, is the mirror image of our biological sex, that is, the unconscious feminine side in males and masculine inclinations in females. A woman's mind has male components (the animus archetype), whereas a man's psyche contains feminine aspects (the anima archetype).

In *House of Day, House of Night* author mentioned Kummernis, who was a medieval

[9] Hayao Kawai, *Dreams, Myths and Fairy Tales in Japan* (Einsiedeln: Daimon Books, 2016), 9
[10] C G Jung, *On the Nature of the Psyche* (Princeton University Press, 2020).

saintly woman of remarkable virtue. She was sent to a convent as a child, and her father planned to marry her off when she was a young girl, but she had already decided to commit herself to the Lord. Her father opposed her marriage fiercely and persisted in bringing her home to be married. She went into a cave in the mountains and lived in seclusion, unaffected by the devil's temptations. She went to the convent three years later to take her vows, only to be imprisoned by her insane father. Praying day after day in a windowless room, Kummernis grew a silky beard on her face and said: "My Lord has delivered me from myself and has bestowed His face on me"[11]. On the other hand, Paschalis (previously Johann, renamed to Paschalis after he became a monk) was a lovely 17-year-old whose biggest dream was to have a woman's body. He stumbled upon the crucified Virgin Kummernis by surprise in a long-lost convent chapel. And then he shivered with dread at the image of Jesus' face on the young girl. He began writing the life of the saint. Paschalis felt a sense of déjà vu when he first saw the Virgin Kummernis, there seemed to be an inherent connection between the mythical Kummernis and the actual monk Paschalis. Perhaps the monk was a real-life incarnation of the Virgin Kummernis, who had appeared to write her tale so that it would survive.

But beyond this, in the following we will analyze another attractive dream in the novel. The part *Amos* recounts the story of a lady who hears a loving voice in her ear by dreaming and travels in search of it. In other words, the lady Krysia had a dream in which she heard the echo of loving voice from a man, so she awoke and traveled to meet the ideal mate she had identified in the dream. Krysia is described as a typical modern female who is too obsessed with her appearance. She is also a lady who is extremely sensitive to sound, and she despises and resents those who bother her at work. Till one day when in her dream she heard a clear and pleasant man's voice that shocked her. She fell in love with this voice and begins her search for Amos – that was the man's name - with an expectant hope. However, she was unable to find the actual Amos in the real world. Seemingly out of desperation she discovered a man with the last name Mos,

[11] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 63

first initial A, called “A. Mos” found in a phonebook in Częstochowa. When she went there to meet with the fake Amos and then going to leave his apartment, her heart was full of grief from the following conversation:

> Krysia took her identity card from the table and put it back in her handbag. Her throat felt painfully tight.
>
> ‘I’ll be off, then.’
>
> He didn't protest. He saw her to the door.
>
> 'So you dreamed about me?'
>
> 'Yes,' she said, slipping on her shoes.
>
> 'And you found me through the phone book?'
>
> She nodded.
>
> 'Goodbye. I'm sorry,' she said.
>
> 'Goodbye.'
>
> She ran down the stairs and found herself in the street. She walked down the hill towards the station, crying. [12]

Krysia has always had an ideal image in her mind, from her devotion to melody in her dreams to the excitement of discovering her ideal spouse by her imagination. Her world comes crashing down on her after encountering the false Amos, who is as much a stereotype of masculinity as she is of femininity. Her love becomes an ethereal dream. It is clear that a delicate and vulnerable woman finds it difficult to survive this roller coaster ride.

From Jungian perspective, we could say that the character Krysia, in order to experience imaginal reality, tries to find her ideal partner with wild courage. According to James Hillman[13], the imaginal reality is a psychic function, which also is the specific function of active, imaginative soul. This soul person (the animus archetype) is the embodiment of Krysia’s moods, self-reflections, and reveries. Furthermore, it drags her

[12] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 35-6.
[13] Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, 42.

irresistibly, uncannily inward to the depths of the uncut forest and the deeps below the waves. The “anima/animus” implies both psyche and soul as Lady/Man of Beasts riding our passions.

Jung specified “anima” or “animus” as the personification of the unconscious, functioning as the complex that connects our normal consciousness with imagination by arousing desire, clouding us with fancies and reveries, or deepening our reflection. Moreover, “anima” or “animus” is both bridge to the imaginal and also the other side, personifying the imagination of the soul. The core of her philosophical background is love, she comes to daily life via love and insists on it, much as Psyche in the classic tale is permanently linked with Eros.

On the other hand, we can analyze the dream even further from an Eastern or Asian perspective. Perhaps it is reasonable to compare a dream to a butterfly that happens to fly into our garden. I am able to observe and appreciate it, yet the butterfly comes and leaves on its own. Some of you may be familiar with the story of Chuang Tzu and the butterfly (ca. 300 B.C.). Chuang Tzu once dreamed of becoming a butterfly. When he awoke, he couldn't tell if he was a human who had dreamed of becoming a butterfly or a butterfly who had dreamed of becoming a human. Chuang Tzu poses an important question: might my entire life be someone else's dream?

Dreams are illusory from the Eastern perspective. We can feel it in our subconscious, we have an emotional attachment to what happened in the dream, yet when we wake up, we experience an inexplicable sense of loss and fruitlessness. This feeling of loss originates from the dream's fantastic and ideal moment, which ultimately transforms into tears that fall from the corners of our eyes. Here we would like to analyze lyrics of the song called *Yumemita ato de* (2002) (After I Dreamt) by the Japanese band Garnet Crow.

Whenever morning comes, I think of you

Making the beginning of everyday painful

We cannot return to then again, when the two of us were innocent

Just you being beside me, I was content

After I dreamt

You were still far away

Only my feelings got ahead of me and turned out fruitless

The rain of flowers fell, this road will remain unchanged

I want to walk it with you holding my hand

After I dreamt

In the direction of the unlocked windows

The sound of the wind splitting before my eyes

The quietly setting sun after it has passed

Was too gentle and it increased my love

After I dreamt

Now, I can't reach you

Words without love do not sound

To you whom I looked over from a little distance away

I smiled at hesitantly

After a long and breaking dream

and yet...

There will still be love in this world.[14]

These are extremely oriental lyrics in which the narrator awakens from his dream and feels the loss and grief in her heart. She clearly saw her lover in his dream, but as she wakes up, she finds herself growing further and further away from him. There is an unnamed sensation of loss. “I” hoped to take your hand and stroll along the path lined with cherry blossoms, but “I” realized that such a lovely scenario could only exist in her dreams. When the sun set in the west, a gentle breeze caressed her face. Despite the

[14] beastrife, “Anime Lyrics Dot Com - Yume Mita Ato de - after I Dreamt - Garnet Crow – J pop,” Animelyrics.com, 2024, http://www.animelyrics.com/jpop/garnetcrow/yumemitaatode.htm.

fact that “I” returned to reality from her imagination, the narrator still believed that love would exist in this world after the long dream. In this case, the dream scene is like a lovely butterfly that appears and then flies away, and it is also like a mirage that is visible but unreachable, as if it is there in front of us, but cannot be reached. Yet, the narrator believes that dreams are the bridge between love and soul.

If we compare these two stories, we will find some similarities and discrepancies between them. First and foremost, both characters met their ideal lovers in their fantastic dreams, which is pleasant and delightful to them. Moreover, even if Krysia eventually walks out of the false Amos’ house dejected, she still believes in the existence of her beloved. The gentleman who loves her and has a melodic voice is still the anchor of her soul. This point is also confirmed in the second narrative, when the narrator witnesses a magnificent sunset in reality and feels tenderness, she still believes in the existence of love in real life.

As we analyze the distinctions, we notice that Krysia, upon waking up from her dream, instantly searches for “the animus” in her soul, full of joy and thrill in her pursuit. She is certain that whatever she saw in her dream is what she will desire, regardless of whether the dream is accurate or not. In contrast, the Eastern perspective reveals a touch of sentimentalism. After waking up, the gap between the ideal and reality causes anguish, loss, and attachment to the dream world.

To sum up, according to James Hillman mentioned in his monograph, the loving comes first. Simultaneously, he indicates that perhaps the only way to discern the person of the soul would be through love. This connection between love and psyche implies a love for everything psychological, finding a space for it within the heart of imagination. The relationship between love and psyche entails applying a psychological viewpoint to all of love’s manifestations. Meanwhile, it is undeniable that there is a certain balance and harmony existing between the anima and the animus, or between the psyche and the soul. In other words, the anima and animus are connected with energies that are shielded from nature’s destructive powers, and their presence prevents the equilibrium inside us from becoming disturbed. It creates harmony and peace between human beings and the environment around them.

5.6 Personifying and Being a Mushroom

James Hillman mentioned in the preview of Chapter 1 of his volume *Re-Visioning Psychology* (1992) that personifying has always been vital to the religious and poetic imagination. Likewise, it is now crucial to the experience and thinking about the experience of archetypal psychology. However, in classical perspective, this viewpoint confines the concept of subjectivity to human beings. They are the only ones who are allowed to be subjects, to be agents and doers, to have consciousness and soul. For instance, the Christians emphasized that the psyche is associated with the ego's personality. Not only that, Descartes' psychology, which imagines a universe divided into living subjects and dead objects, is also fundamental to our contemporary conception of humans. Thus, there is no space for anything uncertain, ambiguous, or metaphorical.

Nevertheless, here we have to admit that this is a restrictive perspective in modern society and it has led us to feel that creatures other than humans assuming internal subjective features are merely "anthropomorphized" or "personified" objects, rather than persons in the recognized meaning of the word. In this section we will explore the animistic forest in accordance with its own principles, listening to the numerous autonomous voices for what they have to say. Yet on this excursion, we will enter the internal world of animism. We are searching for the anima, or soul. We begin with the assumption that the intimate relationship between the personified world of animism and anima—soul—is more than verbal and that personifying is – as Hillman put it – a process of soul-making. That is, we believe that the faculty to personify is necessary for soul formation. We will analyze the following examples from *House of Day, House of Night* (2003) in detail.

> If I weren't a person, I'd be a mushroom. An indifferent, insensitive mushroom with a cold, slimy skin, hard and soft at the same time. I would grow on fallen trees; I'd be murky and sinister, ever silent, and with my creeping mushroomy fingers I would suck the last drop of sunlight out of them. I would grow on things that had died. I would penetrate that deadness

right through to the pure earth - there my mushroomy fingers would come to a stop.

I would only grow at the most important moments of the day and night - at dawn and at dusk, when everything else is busy waking up or falling asleep. [15]

The essay begins in this piece by using personifying strongly to transform the narrator into a mushroom. We use the terms personifying to signify the basic psychological activity, which James Hillman called *the spontaneous experiencing*. In other words, "I" imagined herself as a mushroom, softly growing on fallen trees and utilizing her body to capture the last sunshine that had been left in the trees. From an ecological perspective, alternatively, we can make a point that Tokarczuk successfully used personifying to break the boundary between humans and nature, allowing individuals to not be isolated from nature, but to enter it, get closer to other plants around them, and enjoy the resources to become a part of it. Furthermore, it indicates a human being who creates Nature Gods in the image of humans, similar to how an author creates characters based on her own personality.

The term "personifying" contains one essential idea that there is a "mode of thought" that takes an internal event and projects it outside, which renders it alive, personal, and even supernatural. Therefore, human beings tend to imagine the mushroom here as a person, which actually is described in a manner of soul-making. However, this "mode of thought" is dominated by our conscious or unconscious rather than something we immediately experience. Human beings are unable to thrive on trees or get rooted in the soil. Yet if we incarnate as the mushroom, we are reborn with a particular soul and are capable of communicating with plants, animals even the whole natural environment around us through the process of psychologism when humans fall asleep or awaken from a sleep. It seems to be at the core of what Tokarczuk wants her audience to comprehend. Meanwhile, James Hillman[16] also makes a similar viewpoint in his book, where he has mentioned that personifying acknowledges the existence of the soul prior

[15] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 48-9
[16] Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, 13.

to introspection. It is a technique of being in the world and experiencing it as a psychological field in which humans are associated with events that touch, move, and appeal to us.

The mushroom not only traverses the divide between humans and nature, according to the quotation we can confirm that it also crosses the boundary between life and death. “I” would grow on partially decomposed things and go straight through that deadness to the pristine earth. “I” become a mushroom so that the narrator may move closer to the earth, not just to perceive the vitality, but also to experience death. For humans death could seem full of frightening meanings, but for nature death is merely a part of the natural cycle. The narrator felt this strongly in her mushroom incarnation, which challenged the human stereotype of death and explored the dialectical connection between life and death, humans and nature, from a broader ecological perspective. This approach is also supported by the following quotations.

> I would be generous to all insect life; I would give away my body to snails and maggots. I would feel no fear, I would never be afraid of death. What is death, I would think - the only thing they can do to you is to tear you from the ground, slice you up, cook you and eat you.[17]

Even if my body is devoured by insects, or consumed by humans as a dish, I am fearless. The narrator believes that death is just a basic element of nature. Thus, personifying makes the demise differ significantly from the original definition of death by abandoning the anthropocentric doctrine. The mushroom with a soul, embodiment of nature, crosses the boundary between humans and nature, life and death, and tells the audience how human beings and other creatures, including plants and animals, should coexist in harmony from an ecological viewpoint.

5.7 The Bird Inside Marek Marek

[17] Olga Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, trans. Antonia Lloyd-Jones (Northwestern University Press, 2003), p 49

We indicated at the start of the fiction that the narrator had a dream in which she was levitating above the valley and observed the entire field and everything around her. It is evident that the author has taken a macro viewpoint here, or is gazing at everything around her from the outside. Furthermore, this narrative technique is applied in other pieces of the work as well. For instance, in the fragment "*Whatsisname*", Marek Marek committed suicide due to alcoholism, however, his neighbor Whatsisname was unsurprised to witness his corpse. When the police arrived to question Whatsisname about where Marek Marek had been and what he had done, Whatsisname responded casually, "I didn't notice anything out of the ordinary, and if someone was addicted to drinking all day like Marek Marek, he would have been like that sooner or later."[18]

If the incident were examined from an outside perspective, Marek Marek would be merely considered a drunkard, and his death would have generated little compassion from those around him. Nevertheless, when we transform our viewpoint from external to internal or from macro to micro, we will find the New World. Thus, here we will be working within psychopathology, which, according to James Hillman, is central to the experience of soul-making.

In the story of Marek Marek, the work points out that it was not the alcoholism itself that killed Marek Marek, but the recurring and aggravating "internal bird" in his body. We can use the following excerpt as an example.

> Marek Marek had a bird inside him – that's how he felt. But this wretched bird of his was strange, immaterial, unnameable and no more birdlike than he was himself. He felt drawn to things he didn't understand and was afraid of: to questions with no answer: to people in whose presence he always felt uncomfortable. He felt the urge to kneel clown and suddenly start praying in desperation, not to ask for anything in his prayers, but just to talk and talk and talk in the hope that someone might he listening.[19]

[18] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 10
[19] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 15

The “big bird” had been inside Marek Marek since he was a child, and it was in the basement that he realized that the pain he felt did not come from outside, but from inside, and that it had nothing to do with his drunken father or his mother's breasts. The pain came on its own, for the same reason that the sun comes out in the morning and the stars come out at night. Furthermore, the “big bird” here obviously does not exist in real life. It is Marek Marek’s imagination, and it is also the source of his suffering. It can be explained that pathologizing (etymologically meaning ‘dividing, telling apart’) requires imaginal thinking rather than clinical rationalization. Pathologizing requires psychological insight since it is primarily a psychological reality.

Pathography remains the traditional source of psychoanalytic insight. The insights of depth psychology, as argued by James Hillman, emerge from souls in extremis, from sick, suffering, abnormal, and fantastic psychological experiences. The study of lives and the care of souls involves a continuous confrontation with what has been destroyed, with what has been damaged and hurts. Each face probably reveals a struggle with alcohol, suicidal despair, or terrifying anxiety. By contrast, the healthy, normal elements of the soul are never fully able to accept the final reflection that each of us makes about our individual course of deep analysis. From childhood, Marek Marek has already remembered the darkness because he was scolded by his father frequently for no reason. Thus, in his adolescence, although he has grown up to be a good-looking man, also adored by many girls, he does not know how to interact with them. Therefore in his young age he stabbed his girlfriend's acquaintance with a knife, after which he went on a real crying jag. Gradually he chooses to lie flat since the “inner pain” of drunkenness became irrelevant to him. Here pathology causes an intensively concentrated soul consciousness, as in enduring symptomatic pain.

When the big bird took over his whole body and kept fluttering, Marek Marek decided to hang himself to calm the bird inside him. However, his first suicide attempt was unsuccessful, so the bird inside him started screaming again, and the pain radiated.

throughout his body. Marek Marek exclaimed in anger: "I have lived like a pig and I will die like a pig."[20] Eventually, he continued to mutilate himself until he died.

For Marek Marek, the reason why he finally ended his life by suicide was because of the long-term repression, which led to insanity. Yet, for Hegel insanity is inherent in the soul's nature. In insanity the soul attempts to restore itself to complete inner harmony by overcoming existing contradictions. In other words, Hegel qualifies his proposal that the soul goes through it by emphasizing that his proposition is universal. Marek Marek choses suicide in order to bring peace to his soul, to liberate himself from the struggle and return to a position of balance.

On the other hand, James Hillman[21] was convinced that the discovery of the unconscious has resulted in a broad and overwhelming acceptance of the psyche's autonomous activity of pathologizing. Psychological analysis offered the vessel into which our unconscious pathologizing could be poured and then cooked long enough for its significance to emerge, for it to make soul and to come the meaning of suffering of the soul. A similar example is also found in another story named Ergo Sum. Ergo Sum, a high school teacher who once ate human flesh, was tormented by the horrible thought that he might change into a wolf at any moment because he read the sentence in Plato's *The Republic*: "Who has tasted human entrails must become a wolf"[22]. In the end, he worked as a free laborer for the peasants and was relieved from the heavy labor and frequent blood donations.

Olga Tokarczuk utilizes an internal-to-external microcosmic perspective to present the inner causes of Marek Marek's death and Ergo Sum's liberation in a concentrated manner and project them from the person onto the whole society. On the other hand, we realized from the cases of two characters that when both Marek Marek and Ergo Sum were unable to adequately cope with the imbalance between themselves and their inner world, the struggling soul within them took control of them and put them into a desperate situation, which finally ended in tragedy. This demonstrates how important

[20] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 22
[21] Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, 71
[22] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 185

it is to preserve harmony between body and psyche, or between humans and their surroundings.

5.8 Marta as the Archetype of Nature

The characters throughout the novel are “I” (unnamed narrator) and Marta, while the others are scattered in separate vignettes that disappear after the purpose is completed. According to the narrator, Marta's nearest neighbor, several of the personalities, especially Marta seems unreal, leaving an indelible impression. Marta is an old woman who makes wigs. She travels strangely, disappearing in winter and appearing on her own in early spring. Although “we” are friends, “I” knows very little about Marta because she rarely talks about herself and tells “I” her birthday at a different moment of a year every time. However, by following description we can see that she loves to tell stories about others, and “I” wonders how she knows so much about them. Despite her unpredictability, she always makes “I” feel intimate and comfortable.

> I have wondered who Marta really is. She's always giving me a different version of the facts about herself - even the year of her birth changes. For me and R. Marta only ever exists in the summer; in winter she disappears, like everything else around here.
>
> The smell of damp is usually unpleasant, but on Marta's clothes and skin it smells nice and familiar.[23]

This type of intimacy and comfort carries a distinctly Jungian psychological and ecological perspective. Firstly, Tokarczuk portraits Marta as being on this planet for a long time, as if she were an incarnation of nature, with the seasons changing and coming and going. The author employs personification to show Marta as a subconscious archetype – as James Hillman described this[24]on the basis of Jungian psychoanalysis.

[23] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 3
[24] Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, 32

In order to save the diversity and autonomy of the psyche from being dominated by any single power, personifying is applied in the narrative of literary works. In other words, personifying is the soul's answer to egocentricity. We can recognize it in this way: Marta seems to be the archetypal *anima* in Jung's collective psychology. She is a particular personification emerging at a particular moment, presenting a specific image of the soul's current emotions. Furthermore, we know that in Greek mythology Gaia is the ancestral mother who is also the personification of Earth. She possesses invincible prophecies that are more accurate than the oracles of Apollo. Marta and Gaia have a striking resemblance in the novel. It also demonstrates how Tokarczuk utilizes mythology to combine figure and God, emphasizing the significance of nature to humans through the power of God.

Moreover, the mythological background of Marta contributes to the soul-making of nature. Meanwhile, the work of soul-making is concerned essentially with the evocation of psychological faith. According to James Hillman[25], the faith arising from the psyche is faith in the reality of the soul. Since psyche is primarily image and is image always psyche, this faith is idolatrous. In other words, Marta makes people feel as though they are meeting Gaia, the earth's God, and people's worship of Gaia, in turn, causes them to believe in Marta's existence, further elevating the prestige of nature in the human world. This is because the term "psychological faith" interpreted by Hillman begins with the love of images and it flows mainly through the shapes of persons in fantasies, reflections and imagination. Their rising vivification offers one an increasing conviction of having, and eventually being, an interior reality of great significance that transcends one's personal life. This explains why Marta's character appears throughout the work and leaves an ever-deeper impression on the audience.

On the other hand, according to Justyna Sempruch[26] and her volume *Fantasies of Gender and the Witch in Feminist Theory and Literature* (2008), witches have been perceived, represented, and represented as the "unthinkable," strange misfits on the

[25] Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, 50
[26] Justyna Sempruch, *Fantasies of Gender and the Witch in Feminist Theory and Literature* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2008), 127

edges of culture throughout Western history and religion. And back to the novel, Marta, an elderly lady living alone in a hut, blurs the line between the normal and the odd, or between doable and impracticable. She is like a friendly witch, a vague existence, yet reminds her neighbors about what is impermanent and what is perpetual. Marta confuses the dichotomies of day and night, warmth and coldness, and life and death. By merging opposites, she challenges the framework of traditional conceptions of linear time, amount, or degree that are "appropriate" and "well balanced." Thus, she is the only character in the novel who crosses the bounder between the space *yin* and *yang*.

Marta "sleeps" through winter in a metaphorical extension of night into winter, and like everything else about her, Marta's hibernation is dramatic and deathlike, crossing the border into the "forbidden" and inconceivable. What's more, when we relate Marta's hibernation to death from an ecocritical perspective, she inadvertently reminds us of nature. This is due to the fact that when we consider the semantic and contextual meaning of the term *death* in Polish, *śmierć*, we instinctively endow it with a feminine gender. This corresponds to Marta's image and the character of Gaia, the earth's God. It is what distinguishes Olga Tokarczuk's interpretation of Marta as a natural archetype. Her body is lying in the dark cellar, carefully hidden among apples and potatoes, frozen in time and language. Half animal, half human, finally, in the part *Marta's awakening* we found "She might have woken up in March,"[27] and gradually returns from her womblike winter retreat to her "day house" routines.

Therefore, Marta, like the cycling of the seasons, becomes a symbol of eternity in the novel. She makes humans feel futile in comparison to nature. However, she also teaches us that life is like grass in nature, and that when spring arrives, the green will return to us.

[27] Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*, 280

5.9 Epilogue

Olga Tokarczuk's novel *House of Day, House of Night* breaks with established literary styles and shows an exploration of the boundaries of literature, with her psychic insight into what people think and need in the present. Nowadays, we think more effectively than ever before. Our contact with computers has affected our perspective; we now take in a lot of disparate, fragmented information and must piece it together in our minds. For Tokarczuk, this fragmented narrative is more flexible and appropriate than the typical linear approach. Her statements indicate that her compositions are up-to-date. They are mental gymnastics done in a very natural and comfortable way.

Besides, her psychological background has provided her with several creative inspirations, and she has developed a unique approach to understanding the increasingly convoluted and chaotic world within ecological issues through a psychological perspective. Like a hypnotist and a magician, she first uses hypnosis to put herself into an unconscious state, and then through a kind of magic narrative, using surreal methods such as fables, myths, and dreams, she integrates the very different experiences of individuals in the same situation into a culture, which is not a mystery, but exists in the daily life of Poles.

Finally, as Tokarczuk stated in her Nobel Prize speech, her purpose as a tender narrator is to collect the fragments of life in her own unique narrative. These narratives are to include the daily lives of the people around her, the struggle with souls in their inner worlds, the harmony between human beings and nature, and eventually they should link and bind them together in a beautiful constellation-like pattern. This is how she creates an entirely novel kind of wholeness, unifying humans and nature in a new way, which can be called "deep eco-psychology" from a Jungian and Hillmanian perspective.

Chapter 6 Olga Tokarczuk's Jungian Ecopsychology in *Flights*

In this chapter we will interpret Polish novelist Olga Tokarczuk's another well-known fictional novel called *Flights*[1], which was translated by Jennifer Croft in 2019. Tokarczuk describes the book as a constellation novel, in reference to its complex, nonlinear structure. However, as with the preceding chapter's analysis of the novel *House of Day, House of Night*, when we carefully delve into the different stories in the work, it becomes apparent that is might be read from an ecological and psychological perspectives.

6.1 A Brief Review and Reception of *Flights*

Flights is a novel that consists of 116 vignettes loosely linked by the theme of travel and escape from burden. The themes of these narratives include mobility versus stagnation, the human body, and the passage of time, plus an array of shorter reflections and meditations. Furthermore, the work, which ranges in length from thirty-odd pages to a line or two, includes essayistic observations, fictional stories, and fictionalized history. James Wood[2] argued that it is intermittently a work of fiction, but it is also an exercise in theory, cultural anthropology, and memoir. We hear the narrator's thoughts as she travels through an infinite network of airports, which she recognizes as a new human habitat. Meanwhile, we learn true stories based on historic facts as the narrator transports us back to the late seventeenth century Netherlands, where the famous anatomist Philip Verheyen meets his former student introducing us to what the master has accomplished. Elsewhere, the narrator allows herself to be transported to the deathbed of the renowned Polish composer Fryderyk Chopin in mid-nineteenth-century Paris. On the other hand, we also read fictional tales as a Polish traveler called Kunicki, whose wife and his children disappeared while on vacation in Croatia, or Annushka, an

[1] Olga Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, trans. Jennifer Croft (Penguin, 2018).
[2] James Wood, "'Flights,' a Novel That Never Settles Down," The New Yorker, September 24, 2018, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/10/01/flights-a-novel-that-never-settles-down.

ordinary Russian woman who departs from her family for a wandering life on the Moscow metro. Sean Gasper Bye[3], in a review of the novel, states that Tokarczuk frequently inserts herself into these stories, and it is not always transparent what is fiction and what is reality. Instead of a typical storyline the reader is drawn in by the mystery of what connects these stories. Reading *Flights* is like piecing together each component of an intricate puzzle.

As the two primary strands of the novel, the preservation of the human body and travel are scattered throughout the work. Her tales dwell most powerfully on the human body, including the wonders of its design and its meaning beyond death. She explores the minds and voices of people who mapped it for science and preserved it out of veneration. Moreover, the descriptions of the human body typically incorporate mythological and religious aspects. Some of these myths, for example, involve Achilles and the Greek deity Kairos. Beth Holmgren[4] indicated in her paper that perhaps there is a certain sort of reflection on the great and the small, the human body integrating everything with itself which contains stories and heroes, gods and animals, plant order and mineral harmony. For another, the novel effectively makes a distinction between "wandering" without a specific destination in mind and "journeys" to or from a specific place. Like the legendary journey of the hero Odysseus in *The Odyssey*, which the author alludes to in various vignettes, the real traveler is continually in motion, moving ahead through linear time in a form of quest. Kapka Kassabova[5] compared travel to the ways of wanderers in her review of *Flights.* She emphasized that the book's original Polish title, *Bieguni*, or Wanderers, refers to an obscure and possibly fictional Slavic sect that decided to abandon settled life in favor of a life of constant movement, similar to the traveling yogis, wandering dervishes, or itinerant Buddhist monks who survive on the kindness of strangers.

Around stories of travel, Tokarczuk sprinkles many chapters of all shapes and sizes.

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[3] Sean Gasper Bye, "Reviewed Work: Flights by Olga Tokarczuk, Jennifer Croft," *World Literature Today* 92, no. 4 (2018): 64, https://doi.org/10.7588/worllitetoda.92.4.0064.

[4] Beth Holmgren, "A Whole World of Mythology," ed. Wioletta Greg et al., *The Women's Review of Books* 36, no. 1 (2019): 12–13, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26646989.

[5] Kapka Kassabova, "Flights by Olga Tokarczuk Review – the Ways of Wanderers," the Guardian (The Guardian, April 12, 2019), https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/jun/03/flights-by-olga-tokarczuk-review.

There are snippets about airports, passengers, guidebooks, foreign hotels and airsickness bags. While reading this volume we can feel that the content is highly experiential and full of almost mystical insights. In addition, the structure of *Flights* depends upon Tokarczuk's psychological expertise, imitating the human mind's skipping from one train of thought to another, leaping to conclusions, and shaping connections based on intuition rather than logic. The work's protagonists and narrator are drawn into an ongoing, restless exploration of humankind's exterior and internal worlds, rejecting the Cartesian distinction between body and soul. Likewise, the novel focuses significantly on the interaction between tourists and their surroundings, illustrating the essence of travel and embracing nature from a sustainable perspective through the sights seen and feelings experienced by voyageurs. From the narrator's yearning to experience nature to her journeys through different countries and the images that spring to mind when she sees the shapes of islands on the map, all these make *Flights* a daring adventure in the possibilities of nonlinear storytelling.

6.2 Departure to the World

The novel's first chapter, *Here I am*, presents the passage picturing the narrator in a locked chamber where the air around her appears to freeze as night falls. "I" was so miserable that just wanted to leave the room to get away from the stillness. The original text of the first chapter in the novel contains the following description:

> I realized I've fallen into a trap here now, realized I'm stuck. I'm a few years old, I'm sitting on the windowsill, and I'm looking out onto the chilled courtyard. The lights in the school's kitchen are extinguished; everyone has left. All the doors are closed, hatches down, blinds lowered. I'd like to leave, but there's nowhere to go.[6]

It is noticeable from this section that the narrator recognizes she feels stuck in the

[6] Tokarczuk, *Flights*, 2

pressure of stasis, and she desires to start moving, to dive into an open universe in general, that is, nature, in order to escape this gloomy, constricted space. In other words, according to the narrator, being free of mental, physical, and spiritual encumbrances makes it possible for a being to wander freely through life.

Moreover, when the main character was walking across the fields to begin the first excursion, she discovered the immensity of nature. Some ideas struck the narrator as she climbed up the riverbank and observed the ribbon-like Oder River with the big boats flowing on it.

> the boats' own motion, so full of grace. I dreamed of working on a boat like that when I grew up – or even better, of becoming one of those boats.[7]

> the river flowed on, parading, concerned only with its hidden aims beyond the horizon, somewhere far off to the north.[8]

The narrator is standing on the riverside, dreaming of becoming a large boat, of integrating with nature, and facilitating the river to carry her gently towards the horizon. The author's depiction not only includes an ecological standpoint, but she also highlights in her description of the river that things flow in a manner that is both continuous and unpredictable. Simultaneously, the author employs personification to imbue the big boat with a soul. This strategy lets the reader feel even more strongly and psychologically that human beings are an essential component of nature. James Hillman[9], in his 1992 volume *Re-visioning Psychology*, stressed that personification is a psychologism that implies a human being who creates Gods in human likeness, much as an author creates characters out of his own personality. Hence, this metaphorical technique gives a soul to an object and makes the audience feel the presence of tenderness.

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[7] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 2
[8] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 3
[9] James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1992), 12.

Additionally, when the narrator saw many drowned bodies, then standing on the embankment and staring into the current of the river Oder the author has following account:

> in spite of all the risks involved – a thing in motion will always be better than a thing at rest; that change will always be a nobler thing than permanence; that that which is static will degenerate and decay, turn to ash, while that which is in motion is able to last for all eternity.[10]

Here the author talks about change, movement, travelling in relation to life, death and the river Oder. The author realizes that virtually nothing in the world remains constant and that everything, including nature, should be continually changing and cyclical. Although change is risky, it may liberate us from the dirt clinging; as the English proverb states, a rolling stone gathers no moss. Things in constant motion are full of energy and vitality. Likewise, the Chinese idiom *liú shuǐ bù fǔ, hù shū bù dù* which means flowing water does not rot, nor a door-hinge rust, has the same effect in validating the value of movement.

When we observe the changing seasons and the ever-flowing rivers, we realize that this view of nature, which continues to be fluid and changing, also symbolizes an impermanence view of life. In other words, our existence as humans, like nature, is fraught with uncertainty. This uncertainty motivates us to re-evaluate the relationship between “life” and “death.” For instance, in the face of an ever-changing society, including unexpected natural disasters and global pandemic like COVID-19, the most significant thing is to live in the present and to seize the moment. Similarly, from eastern viewpoint, we will find that Japanese Buddhist literature is filled with struggle to overcome the pain of transience. The *Hōjōki*, written in 1212 by the Buddhist monk Kamo no Chōmei, is one of the most beloved works of medieval literature in Japan. The opening lines have similar description of flowing river and nature which are familiar to most people in Japan.

[10] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 4

The flow of the river never ceases

And the water never stays the same.

Bubbles float on the surface of pools,

Bursting, reforming, never lingering.

They are like the people in the world and their dwellings.[11]

This initial description is comparable to what occurs to the narrator in the novel *Flights* as she stands on the riverside, staring at the slow-moving river. It is noticeable that while recounting natural change, this part emphasizes the volatility and unpredictability associated with this change, as if our lives were full of variables. We can escape decay and break the basic restrictions thanks to fluidity. However, it also reminds us to grasp the present since the next change is undetermined, much like a journey; where we will be or who we will meet next is uncertain, but it is an exciting opportunity to the new world as well.

6.3 From Case History to Soul History

In addition to the opening narrative on the narrator's travels, the work involves a plurality of stories set against the backdrop of genuine historical figures. A fairly typical one is about Dr. Filip Verheyen, an influential Dutch anatomist who lived in the late seventeenth century and sent a letter to his amputate leg. Van Horssen, his former student, discovered this inheritance. The letter describes his perception of pain from the outside to the inside, from the physical to the psychological.

Although the characters in the novel are historical, Tokarczuk has converted them into protagonists of a fictitious story based on the realities of historical individuals. Dr. Filip's laboratory was stocked with various specimens, one of which he told his students was named the Tendon of Achilles, which caused Van Horssen’s enthusiasm. He recognized his teacher as a poet with an artistic temperament as well as a scientific one.

[11] Kamo no Chomei, *Hōjōki*, trans. Matthew Stavros (Vicus Lusorum, 2020), 1

We discover in the following how the human body is internalized as a soul through myth.

> Maybe Filip Verheyen has happened on the trail of a hidden order – maybe in our bodies there's a whole world of mythology? Maybe there exists some sort of reflection of the great and the small, the human body joining within itself everything with everything – stories and heroes, gods and animals, the order of plants and the harmony of minerals?[12]

According to James Hillman[13], soul demands something more metaphysically important. In other words, it refers to our confinement inside the Hero myth, the purpose of which is to produce the mythological image of heroic breaking out of myth into "fact," "truth," and "science." Dr. Filip's artistic naming of the specimens stems from his mythical archetypal perspective of the human body as part of the soul's composition, which could additionally be interpreted as a sublimation from the physical to the spiritual. Jung called it – we are engaged in heroics. Achilles in this story is an ego development, ego strength and personal identity. A history in any other sense is more of an archetypal imagination tied together by an intriguing plot: the evolution of Ego, an Everyman with whom we can all correspond.

Moreover, as the plot proceeds, Philips expresses pain in the part of his body that has been lost and exposed. However, his student, Van Horssen, is perplexed because Philips should not endure pain on a physical. They start to consider researching the phantom pain. Consequently, Filip attempted to demonstrate, in Letters *to My Amputated Leg*, that because the body and soul are in essence one, there must be some sort of proportionality designed by the Creator. This is supported by the following description.

> He insisted that the highest sort of reason is intuitive, not logical. Learning intuitively, we will immediately notice the deterministic necessity of the existence of all things. Everything that is necessary cannot be otherwise. When we really realize this, we will experience great relief and purification. We will no longer be unsettled by the loss of our belongings, by the passage

[12] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 186
[13] James Hillman, *Healing Fiction* (Spring Publications, 1998), 22

> of time, by ageing or death. In this way we will gain control over our affects and attain some peace of mind.[14]

Parallels between physical and mental, outside and inside, life and soul can potentially be found in "case history" and "soul history." James Hillman[15] argued in his book that a case history is a biography of historical events in which one participated in. Soul history frequently ignores part or all of these events, and instead spontaneously invents fictions and "inscapes" with no substantial outward linkages. Furthermore, the biography of the soul concerns experience. It is reported best by emotions, dreams, and fantasies. The subjectivity in events, here pain, penetrates into "case history" in search of psychological depths. Although Philips could not feel pain physically, his senses informed him he was suffering from phantom pain. This implies that a level of mental trauma exists in psychic reality.

When an event goes through a psychological process, it becomes an experience, transfers from the outside to the inside, and ultimately becomes soul. Therefore, as an analogy for soul-making, recording history is a digestive procedure. Tokarczuk looks at history from the perspective of the soul. She digests events by meticulously compiling what occurred, transforming them from case material to subtle matter. Besides, because psychotherapy requires the fiction of literal realities as the primary material to work on, it improves only through regression, going back over the material one more time and rewriting its own history. Therefore, the novel's account of a fictitious narrative based on genuine individuals is particularly indicative of the author's academic background in psychology. Likewise, James Hillman[16] also argues that if humans had more experiences, there would be a need for fewer events, and the rapid passage of time would come to a halt. Then, he believed, what we do not assimilate is set out someplace else, in our dreams, in our physical symptoms, becoming tangible and outside.

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[14] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 210
[15] Hillman, *Healing Fiction*, 29
[16] Hillman, *Healing Fiction*, 33

At this juncture we must point to Hermes, who is the god of borders and hermeneutics, of connections between all sorts of worlds. Hillman[17] stated that he is a divine being and healer. And Hermes cures us by persuading us of the illusion of interpretation and making it work so that the interpreter strikes exactly on the word that opens the door. However, if Hermes is to function properly as a guide of souls, we must have some material for him to turn into a message. There must be something to move across the threshold and exchange, translating into an insight. For instance, besides the Dr. Filip Verheyen's story, the episode about Chopin's heart, in which Ludwika Chopin smuggles her dead brother Fryderyk's preserved heart back into his native Poland in a jar under her skirt from France, is also extremely remarkable. Beth Holmgren[18] stressed in her paper that it is as if Ludwika has given birth to Chopin's immortality. Tokarczuk used these historic figure-based stories as materials for Hermes. After some skillful hermeneutical work on a dream or story, these materials continue to be constructed in the psyche as part of its soul history. When Hermes is working on an analysis, it feels as though Chopin's and Filip Verheyen's stories have been stolen and rewritten. In other words, Hermes has captured the story and given it the winged sandals[19], which is also called Talaria. He served as protector of travelers and commerce and moved freely by using the winged foot between the worlds of the mortal and divine. And the story has vanished from the upperworld historical nexus where it began and has been twisted into an underground psychic meaning. Hermes spans reality and imagination, which is why it may generate an impression of mystery while also having the potential to soul-making.

6.4 The Bodhi Tree

The next section we intend to look at is another essay in the novel about the Bodhi tree, which effectively illustrates the relationship between Buddhism and nature. The Bodhi Tree tells the story of a Chinese businessman who traveled to India. During one

[17] Hillman, *Healing Fiction*, 36
[18] Beth Holmgren, "A Whole World of Mythology," ed. Wioletta Greg et al., *The Women's Review of Books* 36, no. 1 (2019): 12–13, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26646989.
[19] Mark P O Morford, Robert J Lenardon, and Michael Sham, *Classical Mythology*, 11th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 281

of his client encounters, the Chinese man mentioned that he wished to see the tree where Buddha obtained enlightenment because he had an ancestral faith in Buddhism.

The next morning, the Indian contractor surprised him by giving him a flight ticket to the place of the tree. The Chinese man in his fine suit and white shirt became entangled in a crowd of pilgrims. After hearing about Buddha and his teachings for over a decade and witnessing the Bodhi tree for the first time, the Chinese man expressed a sense of dissatisfaction. If we quote something from the story we will find that：

> Here, however, he felt lost, and helpless as a child. Women who came up to his shoulder, colorful as parrots, pushed past him in the direction this wide human stream was flowing. Suddenly the man was frightened by the thing that he repeated as a Buddhist several times a day, when he had time – the vow. That he would try to bring with his prayers and actions all sentient beings to enlightenment. Suddenly this struck him as utterly hopeless.[20]

The Chinese man in the story is dissatisfied. He had no thoughts or prayers in his mind because, while praying like a Buddhist most of the time, he didn't know how to express himself when confronted with the genuine Bodhi tree. He may have realized that his ancestor's enlightenment was a process that required self-reflection and could not be accomplished in one short trip. For example, viewing an archaeological site and experiencing its genuine beauty is more than simply taking photos with a camera. The beauty that you perceive is the harmony that results from interacting with nature.

In this essay, the Bodhi tree is the symbol of nature. The relationship between Buddhism and nature is inseparable. Priya Rakkhit[21] mentioned in her article that Buddhism's founder attained enlightenment under a Bodhi tree in a forest, and he spent a significant amount of his life in natural environs. Nature is never absent from the Buddha's four primary life events: birth, enlightenment, the First Sermon, and death. Furthermore, he always respected nature and advised others to do the same. He

[20] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 169
[21] Priya Rakkhit, "Significance of Nature in Buddhism," Buddhistdoor Global, February 7, 2014, https://www.buddhistdoor.net/features/significance-of-nature-in-buddhism/.

appreciated that the tree provided him with shade during his struggle for final enlightenment. Thus, the natural environment is regarded as a favorable place for meditation practice, and when we find a Bodhi tree, it serves to improve the spiritual world of the meditator, allowing him to experience the interaction between human beings and the natural world in his contemplation, thereby gaining enlightenment.

To sum up, the Chinese man in the story feels helpless in front of the Bodhi tree, because he is unprepared for prayer, both physically and mentally. After all, the elegant suits and white shirts, as well as the luxurious city atmosphere, will unconsciously inform him that he is still isolated from nature. Anitha R[22] argued in her article that the contrast of contemporary man's existence with nature highlights that greater attention must be paid to nature as it deteriorates. Thus, if someone wishes to pray more devoutly under the Bodhi tree, he must rid himself of the impatience brought on by the city's hustle and bustle and receive nature's baptism with a more tranquil mind. It is a sign that the only way to get closer to the purest portion of the heart is to give up the mind's diversions.

6.5 A Pilgrimage without a Destination

In the novel *Flight* the narrator's parents' preferred mode of travel was never able to escape the orbit of home, driving about in recreational vehicle, but ultimately returning home, unable to break free from the metaphysical constraints. The narrator, on the other hand, dislikes this mode of travel since it fails to suit her.

> That life is not for me. Clearly I did not inherit whatever gene it is that makes it so that when you linger in a place you start to put down roots. I've tried, a number of times, but my roots have always been shallow; the littlest breeze could always blow me right over. I don't know how to germinate, I'm simply not in possession of that vegetable capacity. I can't extract

[22] Elakiya V and Anitha R, "Nature of Nurture: An Ecocritical and Empirical Outlook of Olga Tokarczuk's Flight," *Juni Khyat (UGC Care Group I Listed Journal)* 12, no. 10 (2022): 168–70, http://junikhyatjournal.in/no_2_Online_22/17_oct.pdf.

> nutrition from the ground, I am the anti-Antaeus. My energy derives from movement – from the shuddering of buses, the rumble of planes, trains' and ferries' rocking.[23]

The narrator compares herself to the antithesis of Antaeus, who can only gain energy from the stable ground. She emphasized the real traveler does not go on mere vacations of circular trips, but instead is constantly in motion, going forward in a form of quest. Hence, she uses the term "pilgrim" to describe her own journey in the early vignette. After all, Tokarczuk reminds us, "Barbarians don't travel. They simply go to destinations or conduct raids.[24]"

Bri Campbell[25] mentions in her article what were the origins of the pilgrimage. The word *pilgrimage* first appeared in the 14th century, but the act of embarking on a pilgrimage had previously existed for millennia. Abraham was one of the earliest known pilgrims in the Judeo-Christian history. God called Abraham to leave his homeland and go with his family to the country promised by the Lord. In addition, a pilgrimage may sometimes follow in the footsteps of a religious figure. We will find that the pilgrimage tale appears frequently in Chinese literature. For instance, *Journey to the West* is a Chinese novel written by Wu Cheng'en that was published in the 16th century. It is recognized as one of the highest quality Classic Chinese Novels and has been applauded as conceivably East Asia's most popular literary masterpiece. The novel is an extended narrative of Tang dynasty Buddhist monk Xuanzang's mythic pilgrimage to the "Western Regions" (Central Asia and India) to acquire Buddhist sacred texts and return after numerous challenges and tremendous suffering. Although modern pilgrimages occasionally make use of modern conveniences, such as flying to a nearby airport and boarding an air-conditioned bus to the holy site, however, still need or promote austerity and physical suffering. Particularly, the narrator insisted she should become a pilgrim, because she realizes that the essence of travel is to experience

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[23] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 7
[24] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 52
[25] Bri Campbell, "What Is a Pilgrimage?," Tekton Ministries, 2021, https://www.tektonministries.org/what-is-a-pilgrimage/#:~:text=The%20first%20known%20use%20of%20the..

the journey itself or encourage some form of asceticism and hardships rather than to be focused on the end goal and the destination.

In the chapter *Train for Cowards* the protagonist expresses a preference for rail travel over travel by airplane as follows:

> Instead they must fully surrender to the time taken by rail travel, must personally traverse every kilometer according to the age-old custom of their ancestors, go over every bridge and through each viaduct and tunnel on this voyage over land. Nothing can be skipped, nothing bypassed. Every millimeter of the way will be touched by the wheel, will for an instant be part of its tangent, and this will be an unrepeatable configuration for all time – of the wheel and the rail, of the time and place, unique throughout the cosmos.[26]

It is clear that the narrator is hesitant to fly, because she believes she would lose freedom that comes with taking the train. Although flying preserves time and brings narrator to her destination more rapidly, it takes away the profound experience of the journey. For example, she has no recollection of conversing with the railroad staff members; she cannot appreciate the picturesque views of the countryside outside the window; and she cannot feel the rumbling sound of the train wheels as they pass over the rails. In other words, without the experience of the entire process, our perception of everything that around us will be destroyed. In consequence, our significant journey memories will vanish, and we will be powerless to create our own history.

In *Healing Fiction* (1998) James Hillman emphasizes the need of historicization. He mentioned the term *memoria*, which is the old one for memory and imagination. It implies an activity and a location that we now refer to as memory, imagination, and the unconscious. Thus, narrating "I" must recollect her stories not to acquire information about herself, but to discover herself in a story that "I" can identify as hers. The pilgrimage, with its value on process, becomes one of the best vehicles that can contribute to the narrator's capacity to shape such unforgettable memories and

[26] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 61-62

imagination. Hillman[27] indicated that Mnemosyne's very existence foreshadows the possibility that memories could potentially be turned into images that enter our souls via musing. Wandering without a destination obviously serves the purpose of accumulating fodder for recollection.

Additionally，another anecdote of wandering with no destination is featured in the novel. Annushka is a typical devoted housewife, caring for her ill child, locked in a loveless marriage with an ex-soldier suffering from PTSD, and living in a grim Soviet apartment. When her mother-in-law comes to take care of the child once a week, she runs errands around town. This time she flees the paralyzing, agonizing immobility of her existence, yet she has no idea where she is going to go. She has become homeless and travels in circles in the metro for days on end. In the chapter *What the Shrouded Runaway Was Saying* the narrator has the following accounts:

> Sway, go on, move. That's the only way to get away from him. He who rules the world has no power over movement and knows that our body in motion is holy, and only then can you escape him, once you've taken off. He reigns over all that is still and frozen, everything that's passive and inert.[28]

Adding to the author's prior statement that the flow of things is preferable to a state of silence, we could look into the author's perspective on the wandering life of the main character, Annushka as well. According to the quotation, Annushka decides to wander aimlessly in order to escape her previous mode of existence. Obviously, she desires to make changes to her lifestyle and is seeking a fresh start. Here we may concentrate on the author's account of picaresque mode which is mentioned by James Hillman[29] in this section. He argued that the central figure in picaresque mode fails to develop (or deteriorate), but instead travels in episodic, discontinuous motions. In other words, this

[27] Hillman, *Healing Fiction*, 51
[28] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 258
[29] Hillman, *Healing Fiction*, 22

sort of narrative ends abruptly because there is no target; thus, the denouement can neither be the finality of comedy nor the fatal flaw of tragedy.

Perhaps what the story about Annushka encourages us to share with us is not about the miserable end of the wanderer, but about how the wanderer seeks to uncover a new potential of self via thrilling experiences and suffering, just as the pilgrims in their journey aspire to discover a new self through the experience of the process.

6.6 The Beauty of Nature's Symmetry

From snowflakes to sunflowers, starfish to sharks, symmetry can be found throughout nature，which means asymmetrical patterns appear to occur more frequently than expected. Similarly, the author's novel emphasizes this issue. The author highlights in the minuscule chapter on *Island symmetries* that, according to travel psychology, two geographical regions that are closer together do not look comparable, and the parallels we might detect often occur on the other side of the world.

> Particularly interesting is the phenomenon of island symmetries. Unfathomable, unexplained, it is a phenomenon that would seem to merit its own monograph. Gotland and Rhodes, Iceland and New Zealand. Viewed without its partner, each of these islands appears incomplete, imperfect. The naked limestone cliffs on Rhodes are only complete when they meet the moss-coated cliffs of Gotland; the sun’s blinding glare is rendered real only in contrast with the golden softness of a northern afternoon.[30]

By gazing at the map, the author realizes the beauty of symmetry, and she feels that if the islands are not examined in pairs rather than separately, for example Iceland and New Zealand, they appear less than perfect. However, if we analyze it from an ecological standpoint, we will see that symmetry truly represents balance, the

[30] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 360

equivalent of the connection between top and bottom or left and right, which also suggests peaceful coexistence.

If we enhance this notion appropriately, we are able to comprehend that there ought to constantly be a balance between nature and mankind. In other words, the absence or disruption of either nature or humans can lead to a loss of completeness. As a result, the imperfections in this separation might alienate humans from nature. As a consequence, the symmetry between man and nature will be destroyed. We are unwilling to witness the two worlds that separate humans from nature since humans may have recognized that modern civilization as impossible to attain without the assistance of nature. For instance, while builders construct tall skyscrapers one after another, they may be inspired by nature. While scientists are extremely appreciative of mankind's tremendous innovations, perhaps the inspiration merely originated from a field trip.

To some extent, Tokarczuk's novel *Flight* confirm this idea. For example, in the chapter *Kairos* Karen, the professor's young wife, found an astounding phenomenon on the Greek island while on vacation with him.

> She saw the island's shores, and its caves. Cloisters and the naves carved into the rock by the water brought strange temples to her mind. Something had carefully built them over millions of years, that same force that now bore their small ship, rocked them. A thick transparent power, that had its workshops on land, as well.[31]

> Here were the prototypes of cathedrals, the slender towers and the catacombs, thought Karen. Those evenly stacked layers of rock on the shore, perfectly rounded stones, carefully elaborated over the ages, and grains of sand, and the ovals of caves.[32]

Karen discovered the natural prototype of the cathedral in human building on this journey. In other words, the oval-shaped cave inspired and served as the foundation for

[31] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 389-390
[32] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 390

the building's design. Meanwhile, when she saw the cave on the coast, she recalled the temple. It means that nature's ages of refining provided inspiration for human civilization.

Jung[33] believed that the personal unconscious was considerably closer to the surface than Freud claimed, and Jungian therapy is less preoccupied with repressed childhood traumas. The most significant distinction between Jung and Freud is Jung's notion of the collective unconscious. According to Jung, the collective unconscious is a universal alternative to the personal unconscious, containing mental patterns or memory traces shared with other members of the human species. These ancestral memories, which Jung referred to as archetypes, are represented by universal themes in many traditions, as conveyed via literature, art, and dreams. In other words, Jung emphasized that the human mind contains intrinsic features "imprinted" on it as a product of evolution. These common tendencies emerge from our ancestors. He referred to these ancestral memories and images as archetypes. Thus, Karen observes caverns that symbolize archetypes in deep human memory. It extends from the individual to the collective unconscious. For Jung, his favorite metaphor for dream was that it was nature itself speaking. This implies that nature has always played a significant role in the evolution of humans as a whole. This crucial duty maintains a delicate balance and symmetrical beauty between humans and nature, which may be the real explanation for why the author recognizes that islands require symmetry and that any absence is incomplete.

6.7 Kairos, the Right Time and the Right Place

Another significant motif in *Flight* is “the right and proper time.” Also, “the right place” is also mentioned in the novel in connection with the right time. She writes in a chapter titled *The Right Time and Place* as follow:

[33] Carl Gustav Jung and Richard Francis, *On the Nature of the Psyche* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004).

> Many people believe that there exists in the world's coordinate system a perfect point where time and space reach an agreement. This may even be why these people travel, leaving their homes behind, hoping that even by moving around in a chaotic fashion they will increase their likelihood of happening upon this point.[34]

Tokarczuk connects "the right time" to her themes of traveling, fragmentation, exploration, and adventures. Indeed, many events in the world need to wait for the right time. For instance, when a cheetah is hunting, it must find the appropriate moment to wait for the right chance; a talented young guy needs to be noticed by the veteran at the right time; and we must find the most suitable place and time to profess our love to the girl we adore. These all demonstrate how being in the right place at the right time can improve our efficiency.

In the novel, there is a story about a Polish tourist Kunicki, whose wife and child disappear while on vacation in Croatia. The Greek word for this concept of time, *kairos*, first appears during Kunicki's search for his missing wife. After his wife returns, he believes the word *kairos* can unravel the mystery of her disappearance. Thus, he consulted the dictionary of Greek language and found three meanings of the word. The meaning of this word is described in the novel as follows:

> He only reads what's written in Polish, in the Latin alphabet. '1. (On measure.) Due measure, appropriateness, moderation; difference; meaning. 2. (On place.) A vital, sensitive place in the body. 3. (On time.) Critical moment, right time, appropriateness, opportunity, nick of time, the propitious time is fleeting; those who turned up unexpectedly;[35]

Then, after consulting the dictionary, Kunicki realized how to utilize timing to explain his wife's unexpected disappearance. The concept of *kairos* and the god Kairos remain important. On the other hand, in actuality, the notion of "the right time" or *kairos* has its own distinct meaning and interpretation in Chinese literature. For instance, on the

[34] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 79
[35] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 347

road to success, Chinese people will talk about “timing,” “location,” and “people.” These refer respectively to “opportune time,” “geographic advantage,” and “unity of all ranks or popular support.” In other words, “the right time” in Chinese context means favorable timing, geographical and human conditions. Therefore, most individuals want to achieve certain accomplishments or successes in their particular fields in addition to their own unwavering efforts, but they also require an appropriate time, a suitable setting, and assistance of worthwhile others.

Besides, the novel’s final phrase connects themes of departure, fragmentation, journeys, and time.

> The flight attendants, beautiful as angels, check to make sure we’re fit to travel, and then, with a benevolent motion of the hand, permit us to plunge on into the soft, carpet-lined curves of the tunnel that will lead us aboard our plane and onto a chilly aerial road to new worlds. That smile of theirs holds – or so it strikes us – a kind of promise that perhaps we will be born anew now, this time in the right time and the right place.[36]

The narrator is aboard an airplane, getting ready to take off. Jennifer Croft’s poetic translation of this paragraph parallels the prior chapter title, “The Right Time and Place.” Furthermore, for the god Kairos, being at the right place at the right time is more than simply an alignment between the dimensions of space and time, it is also an announcement of newly opened opportunities and possibilities. The narrator’s boarding in the "here and now" represents the fact that she is about to kick off on a new journey in life, seeking new possibilities, accumulating additional incredible experiences, and molding her own soul. At the same time, as implied by the novels title, *Flights*, the narrator encourages audiences to permit the release of their initial solidified selves at the appropriate time and place and to express their own style on their own stage.

6.8 Get on the stage of our own

[36] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 403

According to Krzysztof Hoffmann[37], some stories contrast with the theme of *Flights*, following travel: the dead body, a motif that reappears in peregrinations to curiosity rooms filled with jars containing preserved human organs, and in the genealogy of specimen processes. Tokarczuk concentrates on the preservation of bodily specimens in several chapters, which is similar to the novel's fragmented form and style in terms of substance. In addition to the travel psychology, this is the novel's second major subject matter. Ariel Saramandi[38] mentions in his review of *Flights* that romantics and modernists employed fragments as a form and a style to represent their shattered and fragmented self-image. The self is not merely divided here, it is constantly recreated by the act of travel.

We find that the book is devoted to the body and its preservation after death in some chapters. For example, the character like Dr. Blau is engaged in the cult of the body, flight, decomposition and time. Furthermore, in the chapter *Cabinet of curiosities* the narrator goes to the art museum, but instead of looking at the lovely collections in the central area, he frequently moves down to basements to observe some unusual and strange creatures and human specimens.

> A dolphin's kidney in formaldehyde. A sheep's skull, a total anomaly, with double sets of eyes and ears and mouths, pretty as the figure of an ancient god with a dual nature. A human fetus draped in beads and a label in careful calligraphy saying 'Fetus aethiopis 5 mensium'. Collected over the years, these freaks of nature, two-headed and no-headed, unborn, float lazily in formaldehyde solution.[39]

It is worthwhile to consider why the author wants to keep strange species and malformed human specimens as subject matter for her work. Firstly, the narrative in the novel stresses the longing for physical motion and spiritual freedom. However, the preserved specimens presage the immortality of these human body components

[37] Tokarczuk Hoffmann, "Always Towards, Not From-To. Experiment, Travel, and Deconstruction in Flights by Olga Tokarczuk" (Czas Kultury, March 1, 2019)
[38] Ariel Saramandi, "Review | Flights by Olga Tokarczuk," The London Magazine, November 17, 2017, https://thelondonmagazine.org/review-flights-olga-tokarczuk/.
[39] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 18

immersed in formaldehyde. It implies that, whereas bodily elements may be preserved as specimens, the spirit of humanity is invisible and untouchable, containing greater uncertainty and fluidity. Furthermore， deformity denotes some sort of oddity, as well as a dreadful and melancholy hue.

On the other hand, James Hillman[40] introduces a deity from Greek mythology, Dionysus, in his explanation of this phenomenon from Jungian perspective. According to Hillman, Jung alluded to Dionysus by focusing on the dream's dramatic nature. Dionysus is the deity of a theater, and tragedy refers to his "goat song." He used the perspective of drama to read dreams. The framework of Dionysian logic is drama, the particular embodiment of Dionysian logic is the actor, and Dionysian logos is the enacting of fiction, oneself an as-if person whose actuality comes entirely from imagination and the conviction it imposes. This implies that we are standing on a stage where we belong. The self-divided is precisely where the self is authentically located.

Dionysus shatters the wholeness of our own identities, reintroducing us to our real selves. When the narrator encounters the physical specimen in the art museum, she learns another identity is veiled behind the mask of imagination. Therefore，if we decide to go back into the adventure or journey again, we must first destroy ourselves and change certain preconceived conceptions in order to stand on our own stage and perform our own role, which is typically expressed by “learning to destroy oneself before creating.”

6.9 Between me and the World: the Third Spiritual World

In the chapter *Flights*, Annushka, an ordinary Russian lady, is overwhelmed by the burden of her family and the exhaustion she feels from caring for her son. Hence, she departs from her husband and begins a life of wandering alone in the metro. The author's description below contains indications about her departure from home.

[40] Hillman, *Healing Fiction*, 42

> She has to find a place where she can finally cry, a secluded place, but not empty; it has to have the palpable presence of something larger than her, of big outstretched arms trembling with life. Annushka also needs to feel someone's gaze on her, to feel that her crying is witnessed by someone, to feel it isn't just addressing a void.[41]

Apparently, Annushka's daily routine at home did not offer her a sense of fulfillment, and the great mental strain she endured in raising her child even made her feel miserable to the point of wanting to run away and cry. She lacked the assistance and interpersonal support of her peers in the community. Consequently, in order to heal her broken heart and soothe her soul, she decided to move to a new environment that would provide her with more comfort and consolation for her soul. In other words, she is continually traveling in order to seek out the third spiritual world between herself and the world around her.

As an analogy, here we have to mention a story about Roseto[42]. Immigrants from Roseto Valfortore, Italy, arrived to Pennsylvania in the late 1800s to work at the slate quarry near Bangor. The settlers founded a new community, Roseto, after their previous one. They constructed schools, a park, modest stores, and over a dozen industries. The town was in existence, but it appeared to be a utopia that went undetected until the appearance of a doctor, Stewart Wolf in 1950s. Wolf was astounded that nearly no one under the age of fifty-five exhibited any indications of heart disease in Roseto, which was America's top cause of death in men under the age of sixty-five at the time. Thereupon, Wolf enlisted the assistance of sociologist John Bruhn. They discovered that there was no suicide, drunkenness, or drug addiction in Roseto, everyone appeared to die of old age.

After ruling out a host of other causes, Wolf found the town itself—its culture and social structure—was what kept Roseto's residents healthy. Many households have three generations living together. This implies that people who live in such communities are better able to get support and assistance from others around them,

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[41] Tokarczuk, *Flights.*, 234
[42] Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers: The Story of Success* (New York: Back Bay Books, Cop, 2008), 3-11

especially when they are under a great deal of mental stress, and they can help each other to create an appropriate living environment and a healthy spiritual world. We assume that it is their mental health that motivates them to maintain a healthy body, and that the relatively low incidence of heart disease is attributable to this. We believe Annushka would not have opted to flee to find a new third spiritual world if she had lived in a place with many trustworthy and reliable people around her.

Each of us deserves a spiritual home that can keep us out of depression and darkness, heal our hearts, and allow our spirits to find a place to belong. Our never-ending mobility can lead us to this third world, which exists between the actual and the virtual. Whether it is Annushka's wanderings or the immigrants from Italy, their ultimate aim is to seek out their own third spiritual dimension and, employing Dionysus' power, to recognize their own existence in this arena as genuine protagonists.

Epilogue

Flights, which was written by Polish novelist Olga Tokarczuk, is a work of fiction, yet it has elements of history, culture, and science. Moreover, unlike typical works that emphasize storyline and linear structure, Tokarczuk shows her extraordinary skill and employs a fragmentary and exceptional style of writing. The account begins with an unnamed traveler sharing her travel adventures. The novel's themes include travel, human body preservation, nature, and culture. The narrator tells stories from her life, and audiences are frequently confused between fiction and reality. Meanwhile, several of the novel's characters leave an indelible impression on readers. For example, the pioneering seventeenth-century Dutch anatomist Dr. Filip Verheyen, Chopin's sister Ludwika, who is smuggling Chopin's heart into Poland, an ordinary Russian woman named Annushka abandoning her family for a life, a Polish tourist Kunicki who search for his missing wife. These short pieces comprise Tokarczuk's encyclopedic fiction.

In addition, the narrator in the novel appreciates mobility places including airports, cities, hotels, and trains, as well as all the world's variations, the things that got away: "the unique, the odd, the abnormal." These two elements spark the author's interest,

since, on the one hand, the author intends to accomplish spiritual cleansing like a pilgrim via continual mobility and achieve harmony between humanity and the natural world. On the other hand, the author communicates the relevance of pieces to the whole via the fascination of bizarre objects, including human specimens, and presents the notion that only by shattering the original solidified body can we create our new self through fragments.

Flights is an exploratory window into a new world of possibilities. Likewise, it is an exciting adventure on an unfamiliar planet. Sean Gasper Bye indicated that the book *Flights* is a small opening into a universe of other possibilities, a journey to a new and unfamiliar landscape[43]. Thus, readers will immerse themselves in the imagination of the author's journey after reading this gorgeous and incredibly intelligent book. Meanwhile, since its publication in English, the book has brought Tokarczuk a new level of recognition in the English-speaking world as well.

Conclusion

As one of Poland's most critically praised and successful novelists of the twentieth century, Tokarczuk is known for the magical tone of her writing. Tokarczuk was raised in a progressive, intellectual household. She majored in psychology at the University of Warsaw, where she became interested in Carl Gustav Jung's viewpoints. That is why we are able to clearly observe Jung's psychological perspective in both *House of Day, House of Night* and *Flights*. Furthermore, based on Jung's archetypal psychology, which places a high value on the solid position of nature and the environment in human life, we can frequently examine the author's views through an ecological lens and analyze the deeper implications behind the content she expresses in both works.

We can readily recognize some specific characteristics and principles of ecopsychology in Olga Tokarczuk's two works through her unique perspective. Therefore, Tokarczuk's writings on ecopsychology may be summarized as follows.

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[43] Sean Gasper Bye, "Reviewed Work(S): Flights by Olga Tokarczuk and Jennifer Croft," *World Literature Today* 92, no. 4 (2018): 64–65

First of all, Tokarczuk's eco-psychological writing is constantly associated with the process of soul-making. Secondly, we try to identify the unity and harmony between humans and nature in her literary works. Meanwhile, she proposes that we should cross the boundaries between culture and nature, life and death, animate and inanimate.

Additionally, there is unquestionably evidence that contact with nature can heal human’s hearts and souls through the invitation of the spiritual world. Furthermore, the archetypal perspective in ecopsychology encourages us to reconsider the world around us, including the places we live, the objects we have, the people we encounter and everything that we experience. It reminds us of the significance of taking into account the objects around us as living beings, or as persons. This personification enables the audience to be healed.

Likewise, eco-psychological writing treats nature as if it was full of life. The personified elements of nature are the same as ancient mythological guardians, including Hermes, Dionysus, and other divines who have been personified. Finally, Tokarczuk's interpretation of eco-psychology leads to a profound psychologization of the world as a whole, where psyche corresponds to soul.

In 2019, Tokarczuk was honored as the first Polish female prose writer with the 2018 Nobel Prize in Literature for “a narrative imagination that with encyclopedic passion, represents the crossing of boundaries as a form of life.” Her distinctive fragmented narrative form is sometimes synonymous with postmodernism. These novels' innovative narrative style not only breaks away from the novel's typical chronological narrative, but also allows readers to experience the fragmentation of existence in today's society. We seldom have a huge amount of time to complete a work in the hectic city life; instead, we can only use the scattered time to gradually enhance our professional skills by collecting fragments of time, just like collecting little pieces in her novel. Finally, when we combine all of these components, we will realize that they have generated a lovely work of art, rich in beautiful patterns.

Pascale Casanova[44] persuaded in his monograph *The World Republic of Letters* (2007) that it is necessary to search texts for the expression of a deep meaning that goes beyond their manifest sense. She utilizes a metaphor from Henry James, comparing reading literature to admiring and analyzing the figures in the carpet. If we imagine one of Tokarczuk's novels as a whole layout on a carpet, the complicated combination of features in the carpet might therefore be compared to the novel's separated chapters and tales. The development of these pieces allows readers and critics to delve deeper into the text's meaning. Despite its chaotic look, every part is an essential component of the overall picture in the carpet, with each element of the pattern building it logically. In other words, the lack of intricacy may detract from the overall attractiveness of the carpet. Therefore, this is consistent with Casanova's perspective on world literature, as she mentions: each work that is declared to be literary is a minute part of the immense "combination" constituted by the literary world as a whole. Likewise, Tokarczuk's works, like constellations in the great cosmos, become the beautiful and magnificent embellishments scattered in the sky of world literature.

[44] Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2007).

Chapter 7

Japanese Adlerian Ecopsychology in 2:46 *aftershocks, stories of Japan earthquake*

This chapter aims to shift our attention to Adler's individual psychology from Jung's collective psychology. We will shift our focus from European Poland to Asian Japan to thoroughly examine and scrutinize the acknowledgement of Adlerian psychology in Asian culture and literature, especially in contemporary Japanese literature. Additionally, we will examine Japanese natural calamities, mainly including the Great East Japan Earthquake disaster and the correlation between Japanese individuals and nature from the standpoint of ecological psychology, considering the growth of eco-criticism in Japan and exemplary literary works to better elucidate how individual psychology was assimilated and flourished among the Japanese populace.

7.1 History of Psychoanalysis in Japan and its Cultural Applicability

When we mention the term *psychoanalysis*, the first person that comes to mind is apparently Sigmund Freud and its clinical or medical applications. Conceivably few people would associate psychoanalysis with culture. However, we can still try applying it to social culture and literary works, especially when we shift our perspective from Europe to Asia. Nina Cornyetz and J. Keith Vincent suggest in their monograph[1] that utilizing psychoanalytical perspectives can lead to advantageous and captivating discoveries while studying Japan within the Western Japan studies framework. According to them, Freudian methodology offers valuable analytical tools to investigate cultural phenomena. Additionally, they argue the psychoanalytic approach requires self-reflection that forms an essential part of the analysis. And this self-reflective dimension of psychoanalytic interpretation bears considerable significance for scholars whose focus lies in Japanese studies. Therefore, in the field of Japanese studies, there is a strong emphasis on the distinctive nature of Japanese culture. This

[1] Nina Cornyetz and J. Keith Vincent, *Perversion and Modern Japan* (Routledge, 2010): 1-2

emphasis is supported not only by a number of Japanese scholars, but also by the funding priorities of Japanese government organizations that have been tasked with promoting Japanese culture internationally. According to Harry Harootunian and Masao Miyoshi[2], notable scholars, a metaphorical comparison can be made between the conduct of American scholars in organizing knowledge fifty years after the conclusion of the war, and the behavior of individuals dealing with an unyielding adversary, leading to a desire to either obliterate or unite with it.

According to *Perversion and Modern Japan: Psychoanalysis, Literature and Culture* (2010), psychoanalysis was introduced to Japan in 1912 through a series of articles, which emerged just seventeen years after Freud introduced the term "psychoanalysis" to describe his method of psychological interpretation. In the following year, Morooka Son, a psychiatrist, published three articles in the literary journal *Eniguma*. One of these articles, "Concerning the volume of Nowaki of the *Tale of Genji*," utilized Freudian theory to interpret *The Tale of Genji*, a classic piece of Japanese literature.

Morooka's introduction of psychoanalysis as an analytic methodology with intrinsic theoretical worth, rather than solely as a medical or psychological therapy for treating neuroses, contrasts starkly with the history of psychoanalysis' reception in the United States, where its medicalization stripped it of its broader cultural applicability. Conversely, in Japan, four men, specifically Marui Kiyoyasu, Kosawa Heisaku, Ohtsuki Kenji, and Yabe Yaekichi, three of whom studied abroad with Freud's followers, made Japanese translations of Freud's writings available, with some even receiving Freud's enthusiastic endorsement of their endeavors. However, it was an arduous task to spearhead a psychoanalytic movement in Japan, as it was widely disparaged as irrational and insufficiently scientific, while culturalist theories of Japanese uniqueness critiqued psychoanalysis from the opposite perspective, claiming it needed to be nuanced by Buddhism or other Eastern sensibilities to suit Japanese temperament.

For instance, Nina Cornyetz and J. Keith Vincent[3] indicated that Morita Masatake believed that Zen Buddhism is the basis of a "Japanese" therapy. Later, Doi Takeo

[2] Masao Miyoshi, Harry Harootunian, and Rey Chow, *Learning Places* (Duke University Press, 2002): 1-18
[3] Nina Cornyetz and J. Keith Vincent, *Perversion and Modern Japan* (Routledge, 2010): 5-6

emphasized the necessity of adapting psychoanalysis to suit the model of "indulgence" (*amae*) in Japanese culture. Kosawa, who was a strong supporter of the Freudian psychoanalytic movement, coined the term Ajase Complex to diminish the significance of the Oedipal Complex in Japan and give more importance to the relationship with the mother. Interestingly, Kosawa drew inspiration from Buddhist legend to explain the origins of the Ajase Complex[4], which primarily depicts Ajase's enduring attachment to his mother, from initially harboring hostility towards her to eventually developing an endless emotional dependence on her. It is similar to how Freud used Greek mythology to describe the Oedipal Complex. This implies psychoanalysis is closely associated with literary narratives.

In 1953 James Clark Moloney[5], an American psychoanalyst, authored a scathing article criticizing Japanese psychoanalysis. He argued that unlike occidental psychoanalysis which aims to liberate the individual, the concept of individual freedom is not present in Japan. Moloney's remarks imply that psychoanalysis may not be suitable for implementation in Japan. However, it is crucial to evaluate the practicality of psychoanalysis by taking into account Japan's position as a recipient. This means that we must adapt a foreign culture and infuse it with a distinctly "Japanese" essence. When discussing "Japanese culture," it is important to acknowledge the influence of Chinese culture, which Japan absorbed during the Heian period and through its interaction with the Tang Dynasty. As a result, Japan has a fundamental connection to "Chinese culture" that is expressed through its language, architecture, artworks, literature, and religion. On the other hand, following the Meiji Restoration in Japan, the nation was confronted with the decline of China's national power and the ascent of Western countries, leading Japan to reevaluate its cultural standing in Asia. Japan initiated a cultural assimilation of Western values, which gradually became integrated into Japanese culture. As a consequence, present-day "Japanese culture" is perceived as a composite of both Eastern and Western cultural elements. This amalgamation provides insight into the

[4] Keigo Okonogi, "Japanese Psychoanalysis and the Ajase Complex (Kosawa)," *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* 31, no. 1-4 (1979): 350–56, https://doi.org/10.1159/000287357.
[5] Moloney Jc, "Understanding the Paradox of Japanese Psychoanalysis.," *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 34, no. 4 (1953): 291–303.

absence of individual freedom within the psychoanalytic context of Japan. In other words, Japan, which once advocated for the slogan of "*Datsua Nyuo* (breaking away from Asia and joining Europe)" at the end of 19th century, still cannot shake off the core of traditional collectivism in East Asian culture.

In this collectivist society, the Japanese people prioritize the individual's role within the group and emphasize a strong hierarchy. As a result, individuals may frequently experience feelings of inferiority. It can be said that Adler's individual psychology is a more accurate reflection of the cultural acceptance in modern Japan compared to the psychology of Jung and Freud. This can also explain why the widespread popularity of the book *The Courage to be Disliked* (2019) written by Ichiro Kishimi and Fumitake Koga[6] in Japan as a social phenomenon.

7.2 The Main Features of Adlerian psychology and the Relevance to Japanese Culture

Alfred Adler (1870-1937) was a major Austrian psychotherapist in psychotherapy history. Initially a colleague and early admirer of Sigmund Freud, Adler developed his own thoughts about the essence of humanity and soon parted ways with Freud to explore these ideas. According to J. Carlson and M. Englar-Carlson[7] in their volume *Adlerian Psychotherapy* (2017), unlike Freud and Jung Adler's theories appear to have endured, and they represent key components of most current approaches to psychotherapy. For instance, to support people to reach their full potential, Adler engaged in cutting-edge research on a variety of topics, including his belief in the equality of all people, encouragement, the pursuit of what is good or right, an emphasis on relationships and mental health, the idea of social interest and the necessity of taking cultural and contextual considerations into account. In addition, Ichiro Kishimi and Fumitake Koga mentioned in their work[8] that Adlerian psychology does not recognize the presence of trauma. Instead, it emphasizes understanding the current situation and

[6] Ichiro Kishimi and Koga Fumitake, *The Courage to Be Disliked: How to Free Yourself, Change Your Life and Achieve Real Happiness* (London: Allen & Unwin, 2019).
[7] Jon Carlson and Matt Englar-Carlson, *Adlerian Psychotherapy* (American Psychological Association, 2017):3–9.
[8] Ichiro Kishimi and Koga Fumitake, *The Courage to Be Disliked: How to Free Yourself, Change Your Life and Achieve Real Happiness* (London: Allen & Unwin, 2019):11

planning for the future rather than dwelling on the past. Meanwhile, Alfred Adler and Colin Brett envisioned a psychology of individual growth in their monograph[9], where people could strive to overcome negative self-esteem and indeed improve their lives. Moreover, Adlerians are concerned with holism and how each individual goes through life, recognizing one cannot comprehend an individual by examining their components, but that all elements of the person must be understood in relation to the general pattern and in relation to social systems. Put differently, Adler stressed the significance of connections and being linked to others, especially the broader community in which individuals live. People are considered as always attempting to belong and fit into the social surroundings. The outside world molds their awareness, as performs the world of the family. The emphasis on social interest or a sense of belonging to and contributing in the common good, is a hallmark of Adlerian thinking.

The popular and widely acclaimed book *The Courage to Be Disliked* (2019) has garnered significant recognition and praise from critics such as Oliver Burkeman from "The Guardian", both domestically in Japan and internationally. The book's authors, Ichiro Kishimi and Fumitake Koga, each bring their own expertise to the table. Mr. Kishimi is known for his translations of Alfred Adler's books into Japanese and his lectures on Adler's works. On the other hand, Mr. Koga is an acclaimed author with a background in psychology and business, having written other non-fiction works in these fields. The book serves as an introduction to Adlerian psychology through the perspective of Japanese philosophy. It revolves around two main characters: an elderly philosopher and a discontented young man. The young man, overcome with weariness and frustration towards life, finds himself immersed in despair. As the philosopher engages in conversation with him, he gradually introduces the young man to the teachings of Alfred Adler, a prominent figure in the field of psychology. The story can be analyzed through five overarching themes: the concept of trauma, the dynamics of interpersonal relationships, the division of responsibilities, the significance of community, and the importance of embracing the present moment. The significance of

[9] Alfred Adler and Colin Brett, *Understanding Life* (Center City, Minn.: Hazelden, 1998).

the present is illustrated in this tale. A lot of us dwelled in the past, holding onto either traumatic or happier moment, or we look ahead into the future, becoming fixated on possible problems or daydreaming about better times. However, while the past can provide us with lessons and the future may hold our goals, it is the present that represents reality, where life truly unfolds. As Oliver Burkeman[10] highlights in his critique of the book, it is crucial to recognize that the present moment is the only opportunity to initiate a transformation. While achieving a complete self-reinvention may seem overly optimistic, we should accept that we will never be able to fully reinvent ourselves. However, once we internalize this truth, we can begin to make gradual improvements.

At this juncture, it is possible that a query has emerged in the thoughts of numerous individuals. Namely, what factors have contributed to the commendation of Adler's individual psychology and the book *The Courage to Be Disliked* by the Japanese populace and its extensive sales abroad? It may be necessary to delve deeper into this phenomenon by examining the pertinent aspects of Japanese culture and the distinctive characteristics of Japanese society.

Nanae Takenaka who works as clinical psychotherapist at Osaka University introduces a clinical experience from her practice that relates to withdrawal in the volume edited by Thomas Singer[11]. According to her description, there has been a male graduate student named Rio which has stopped going to the laboratory after the summer vacation and has been consistently absent from class. He always had lunch alone in the canteen, and then isolated himself in a small stall. He has started spending long periods of time browsing webpages on his smartphone, completely isolating himself. This phenomenon is closely related to the widespread social problem among young people in Japan, known as *hikikomori.*

For the Japanese, withdrawal (*hikikomori*) is ingrained in a mindset that helps individuals deal with reality. Additionally, unlike Western culture, the ability to conceal

[10] Oliver Burkeman, “Want to Transform Your Life? Stop Chasing Perfection,” the Guardian, January 12, 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/jan/12/i-accept-myself-just-as-i-am-the-rise-of-realistic-self-help.
[11] Thomas Singer, *Cultural Complexes in China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan* (Routledge, 2020), 181.

one's own opinion is seen as a fundamental aspect of being an adult. In Japanese and Eastern Asian cultures, the emphasis is more on assimilating oneself into society rather than expressing one's individuality. In a way, withdrawing into the collective is necessary to thrive in Japanese culture. Therefore, this leads to individuals being overly concerned with the opinions of others within a small collective like schools, companies, communities, and struggling in interpersonal relationships without the courage to be their true selves. It must be declared that this is one of the disadvantages brought about by collectivist culture in Japan and other Eastern Asian countries. Due to this, Adlerian psychology is precisely notifying these people how to effectively manage their interpersonal relationships with others through the use of task separation. Not only that, but if we examine from the perspective of the linguistic characteristics of Japanese, we will also discover that the intricate honorific system in the Japanese language not only regulates the words and actions of the Japanese people, but also to some extent restricts the freedom of expression. The use of honorifics necessitates different language expressions for various individuals, which further reinforces the class consciousness in Japanese society, determining a hierarchical structure. Simultaneously, individuals within the collective face immense social pressure and often struggle in navigating interpersonal relationships. It is not surprising that *The Courage to Be Disliked* (2019) has gained popularity as individuals seek liberation from these intricate interpersonal dynamics.

7.3 Development of Ecocriticism in Japan and Harmony with Nature

Since the start of the 21st century, the study of literature with an environmental focus has become highly comparative. It is no longer limited to just Britain and the United States. Ecocriticism now encompasses research on the literature and cultures of numerous countries. Meanwhile, scholars from various institutions around the world are actively involved in this field of study. For instance, Ursula K. Heise[12] mentioned

[12] Hisaaki Wake, Keijirō Suga, and Masami Yūki, *Ecocriticism in Japan* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2018).

in the book *Ecocriticism in Japan* (2018) that German ecocriticism originated from Germanist scholars who were based in England and the United States. It later gained interest from Americanists in Germany before spreading to German departments within Germany itself. Furthermore, as Yuki Masami[13] has highlighted, the development of ecocriticism in Japan can be divided into three stages: the first phase focusing on translation, the second stage introducing comparative approaches, and the third involving ecocritical interventions in Japanese literature, where Americanists and Japanologists have played significant roles at different times over the past two decades. In the introduction part of volume called *Ecocriticism in Japan* (2018) Yuki Masami stated that the earliest scholarly attempt to define Japanese ecocriticism is most likely the joint essay by David Bialock and Ursula Heise. They identified three themes as characteristic of Japanese ecocriticism: perceived harmony with nature, response to major environmental crisis, and attention to "slow" injustice, which is an important milestone in defining Japanese ecocriticism.

The expansion of ecocriticism on a global scale has prompted the examination of how environmental issues, noteworthy events, and approaches studied by ecocritics vary across different regions, countries, and languages. Karen Thornber[14], a scholar specializing in Japan studies, has put forth the viewpoint that global crises like climate change, ocean acidification, and biodiversity loss are increasingly reducing the importance of regional and national distinctions. Especially, the two most prominent environmental catastrophes in Japan are the Minamata Bay mercury poisoning caused by the Chisso Corporation from the 1940s to the 1960s and the Great Tōhoku Earthquake in 2011, which resulted in devastating technological failures and nuclear radiation. These large-scale environmental accidents and disasters have deeply impacted the cultural imagination of the nation. It is worth noting that Bialock and Heise[15] recognize the perspective that the idea of being in harmony with nature is more of a cultural and ideological construct rather than an actual practice. They also believe

[13] Yuki Masami, *The Oxford Handbook of Ecocriticism*, ed. Greg Garrard (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 519–26.
[14] Karen Laura Thornber, *Ecoambiguity: Environmental Crises and East Asian Literatures* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012).
[15] Wake, Suga, and Yūki, *Ecocriticism in Japan*, 4

that this perceived harmony is not solely rooted in Japanese culture, but is also influenced by the enduring fascination that Westerners have with Japan. As a result, this perception of harmony can sometimes be contradictory to the social reality in Japan. Moreover, in his book *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons* (2013) Haruo Shirane, a prominent Japanologist, also makes a similar observation about the Japanese images of nature mentioned above. He refers to this as "secondary nature," which includes highly stylized nonhuman nature depicted in literature and art. Shirane[16] argues that the commonly mentioned Japanese "harmony" with nature is not solely due to the country's topography and climate, but rather a result of its strong connection to secondary nature. This connection has been constructed since the seventh century and was primarily based in major cities. Thus, we can deduce that the term *kyōsei* employed in the Japanese language signifies not just the harmony with nature itself, but also the alignment with the surrounding components of the human-created living environment. In other words, in Japan there is a strong belief in the concept of harmony, which is seen as a distinct cultural characteristic. Nakazawa Shinichi[17], a prominent anthropologist and thinker, emphasizes this Japanese view of harmony in contrast to the Western perspective that focuses on conquering nature. Nakazawa's argument is rooted in his deep understanding of Buddhism, and he explores how the reciprocal relationship between humans and nature has influenced the unique mindset and attitude found in Japanese culture.

7.4 Japan's Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster through Literature

It has been over a decade since March 11, 2011, when the Great East Japan Earthquake disaster occurred in Japan's Tōhoku region. Even now, the vivid memories of the disaster and the emotional accounts of its consequences continue to be deeply ingrained in the collective cultural awareness of people in Japan. The combination of

[16] Haruo Shirane, *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons: Nature, Literature, and the Arts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).
[17] Nakazawa, Shinichi. "Futatsu no 'shizen'" [Dual nature]. *Gendai shiso* 43. no.1 (2015): 35–41.

the earthquake, tsunami, and meltdowns at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, commonly known as the 'triple disaster' or '3.11', has resulted in significant and enduring impacts. Since 2011, the ongoing reconstruction in coastal regions affected by the tsunami has been progressing at a rapid pace. However, numerous towns currently have only a small fraction of their original population. The events of 3.11 brought nuclear power and its associated concerns into even greater focus. For instance, the challenges related to decontaminating areas exposed to radiation are still unresolved. According to McCurry[18] stated in "The Guardian", over 40,000 Fukushima refugees remain unable to return to their homes as of 2022. Furthermore, the nuclear power plant is expected to release over a million tons of contaminated water into the Pacific Ocean once the tanks reach their maximum capacity in summer or autumn 2023[19]. This will have severe impacts on the local fisheries, agriculture, and the surrounding environment. Despite the 12-year anniversary of the 3.11 disaster in March 2023 has gone, it is evident that the process of recovery is still far from being finished.

The triple disaster has not only had a significant effect on Japan, but it has also had a profound influence on Japanese literature, art, and film. Literature produced in the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster focuses on maintaining the ongoing dimensions and global implications of the event as central topics in public and scholarly discussions. Over the past decade, the literary community has gradually created works that respond to the catastrophic series of events. However, Linda Flores and Barbara Geihorn[20] claimed in their edited volume some authors have felt a strong urge to write, but often faced the challenge of not knowing the most effective way to address a crisis of such magnitude. These reactions bear similarities to those of authors of *genbaku bungaku* (atomic bomb literature) who grappled with the unprecedented experience of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. For numerous authors the occurrence of 3.11 marked a momentous shift. The sequence of catastrophic incidents announced a fresh age, a post-3.11 existence that indicated, primarily, essential changes in the

[18]Justin McCurry, "Japan Marks 10 Years since Triple Disaster Killed 18,500 People," *The Guardian*, March 11, 2021, sec. World news.
[19] "IAEA Finds Japan's Plans to Release Treated Water into the Sea at Fukushima Consistent with International Safety Standards," www.iaea.org, July 4, 2023.
[20] Linda Flores and Barbara Geilhorn, *Literature after Fukushima* (Taylor & Francis, 2023), 2–3.

structure of society after 'that day' (*ano hi*), as March 11, 2011, is often mentioned in both the media and the arts. Tragedies offer the opportunity for renewal and progress.

Various cultural and creative influencers have contributed to political and intellectual conversations about tragedy. Literature, in particular, has played a significant role in this context. Following the events of 3.11, many writers felt compelled to write about the process of recovery. They described how the Japanese people mourn, cope with the tragedy, and confront the challenges that have been exposed after years of being hidden beneath society's surface. Jordi Serrano-Muñoz[21] mentioned in his article that there is a wide range of literary works that explore the disaster, including poetry, short stories, novels, and creative essays. We can view the literature of 3.11 as a way to comprehend a society that may be at a pivotal moment in its history. For example, novelist Furukawa Hideo[22], a native of Tōhoku, penned the short story *Horses, Horses, Despite Everything the Light Is Still Pure* in the aftermath of the disaster. Rather than seeking refuge in shelters or leaving the evacuation zone, Furukawa and a companion chose to go against the flow of displaced individuals and documented their expedition through the ravaged region. Wagō Ryōchi[23], another resident of Fukushima, chronicled his thoughts and experiences in a poetic manner through his Twitter account in the immediate aftermath of the events. His posts garnered a significant following and he eventually published his writings under the title *Pebbles of Poetry*. In 1993, Kawakami Hiromi[24] authored a short story titled *Kamisama*. This story revolves around a highly courteous and traditional bear who relocates to an apartment neighboring the protagonist. In light of the Fukushima incident, she chose to revisit this story and created *Kamisama 2011*. In this revised version, she delves deeper into the difficulties and outcomes of seclusion for both individuals and communities, with a specific emphasis on those impacted by the catastrophe.

The triple disaster in Fukushima was exceptional, but it is crucial to understand that

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[21] Jordi Serrano-Muñoz, "Reading after the Disaster: Japan's Reaction to the 3/11 Events through Literature," Association for Asian Studies, 2019.
[22] Hideo Furukawa, *Horses, Horses, in the End the Light Remains Pure a Tale That Begins with Fukushima* (Columbia University Press, 2016).
[23] Ryōichi Wagō, "Pebbles of Poetry: The Tōhoku Earthquake and Tsunami—," The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus, July 19, 2011
[24] Hiromi Kawakami, "God Bless You, 2011," Granta, March 20, 2012.

it occurred in the broader global context of our world, which is prone to disasters. According to the introduction part of the book *Literature After Fukushima* (2023), Kimura Saeko and Anne Bayard-Sakai's collaborative collection of essays titled *Post-disaster Fiction as World Literature*[25] (2021) demonstrates the international scope of research on literary works inspired by the events of 3.11, positioning it within the broader context of world literature. That is to say the events of 3.11 not only sparked creativity in the arts, but also led to the emergence of new terminology and new perspectives on the world after 3.11. Literature after the Fukushima disaster serves as evidence of this significant shift, indicating how the aftermath of the disaster has reshaped social reality and discourse in several fields, such as trauma studies, disaster studies, ecocriticism, regional identity, food safety, and civil society.

7.5 The Reception of *2:46 aftershocks, stories of Japan earthquake* (2011)

It is evident from our previous discussion that the literature after the Fukushima incident focuses on conveying a message to those who have been marginalized in the aftermath of the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disasters. It also aims to explore their endeavors in rebuilding communities and restoring lives that have been devastated by the catastrophe. Furthermore, the extensive creation of written works and analysis on the 3.11 event allows us to examine the event and its consequences from various perspectives. *Pebbles of Poetry* is just one example of a literary piece that originated from social networks. However, another significant aspect of 3.11 literature is its groundbreaking connection with modern mass media platforms. Shortly after the earthquake, a cluster of Twitter users requested individuals to submit any creative work associated with the events and share it on the platform. This request quickly gained widespread attention, and the group decided to compile these materials and release them as a collection. *2:46 Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake*[26] (2011) is

[25] Saeko Kimura, and Anne Bayard-Sakai, *Sekai bungaku toshite no 'shinsaigo bungaku.'* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2021).
[26] Patrick Sherriff, *2:46: Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake* (London: Enhanced Editions, 2011).

an anthology written by bloggers as well as a few famous people, including Yoko Ono and William Gibson, that encompasses reflections, personal accounts, artwork, and short stories from renowned and unknown artists, whether they are Japanese or not, and whether they are situated near or far from Fukushima.

The book titled *2:46* is named after the exact time when the earthquake occurred. It is not a conventional book, as it was written and uploaded within a week to Amazon, which agreed to waive all of its fee and provide 100 percent of revenue from the digital edition to the Japanese Red Cross and its critical work aiding the quake's victims. This book evokes numerous memories, particularly the firsthand accounts of the earthquake. It is shared wirelessly to any number of devices and platforms involving cellphone, iPad and laptop. The recollections encompass the intense shaking, the unsettling movements, and the various ways in which people reacted. Surprisingly, many individuals remained remarkably composed, while others congregated on the streets, unsure of how to proceed. Although the book was not authored by a professional writer, it provides readers with an authentic and unfiltered account of the events that occurred during the earthquake. Jake Adelstein[27] once mentioned in his review of this book that a British teacher who blogs under the name Our Man in Abiko was searching for a way to assist the survivors of the Great Tohoku Pacific Earthquake and Tsunami and overcome his own feeling of helplessness. Eventually, while washing up one evening a week after the earthquake, he had an idea. The British teacher realized that although he lacked medical skills or the ability to fly a helicopter, he had the ability to edit. He decided to compile a book featuring voices from various individuals. He said, "I am utilizing my editing skills to contribute in any way I can." Another novelist Barry Eisler[28], one of the contributors to the book, authored the foreword section. According to his account, when he arrived in Tokyo in 1992, his initial impression of the city was that it was metropolitan. He struggled to articulate his affection for Tokyo while also recognizing that its rapid development had caused it to be cruelly impersonal. However,

[27] Jack Adelstein, "#2:46 Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake Published. Give a Little, learn a Lot, help Some People.," Japan Subculture Research Center, April 12, 2011.
[28] Barry Eisler, "'2:46: Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake,'" Truthout, April 22, 2011, https://truthout.org/articles/246-aftershocks-stories-from-the-japan-earthquake/.

following the 3.11 disaster, the collective aid and solidarity among the city's inhabitants became an oasis in the desert, enabling him to witness and experience the innate compassion of humanity.

To sum up, the accounts in the book are real-time narratives that offer small reflections. These reflections serve to highlight the realization of human insignificance in the face of natural disasters. While we may feel powerless, it is crucial that we do not lose hope. Those who have experienced such extreme events often describe it as a rebirth, similar to the phoenix's nirvana, where the focus shifts from suffering to a renewed sense of hope. They include photographs and artwork, representing a range of perspectives and bridging divides. The collection provides insight into how people were affected both during and after the events of that fateful Friday afternoon in March. They serve as beacons of hope for Japanese people, individuals connected to Japan, including countless overseas family members and former residents. Therefore, in the upcoming chapters, our attention will be directed towards analyzing specific vignettes only written by Japanese writers in this book.

7.6 Application of Adlerian psychology and the Ecocriticism in Anthology

This section will delve deeper into the four aspects of inferiority, acceptance of reality and the status quo, human-nature relations, equality in horizontal society in relation to the chapters in the anthology called *2:46 Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake* (2011), building upon the earlier description of Adlerian psychology and the theory of ecocriticism in Japan.

7.6.1 Human’s Powerlessness in the Presence of Nature

At 2:46 pm, on March 11, 2011, a powerful earthquake with a magnitude 9.0 struck the north-east coast of Japan. This devastating event resulted in a tsunami that claimed

the lives of over 18,000 individuals[29] and also led to a nuclear meltdown in Fukushima. Simultaneously, the shocking calamity also profoundly impacted the adjacent community. Numerous individuals residing in regions impacted by the seismic event were compelled to make the decision to relocate to more secure areas. Experiencing anguish, apprehension, and a feeling of helplessness in the presence of formidable natural forces, many residents chose to temporarily avoid and depart from the affected areas. Throughout the short story named *forget* written by Michiko Segawa in the book, we encounter depictions as the following:

> Every time we face a horrible natural disaster, it makes me think that the land, sky, seas, and mountains are exploding in anger. Tsunamis swallowed houses, cars, electric poles, schools, buildings, parents, grandparents, and children so quickly. More than ten thousand people's lives were taken. Can't the super technologies we created in this modern world prevent a disaster?[30]

Countless lives have been tragically taken by the devastating forces of earthquake and tsunami. Humankind's once firm belief that "man can conquer nature" has been shattered in the face of these natural disasters. Despite our efforts to harness advanced technology, such as nuclear power plants, in an attempt to control nature and benefit humanity, we are sometimes confronted with outcomes that surpass our imagination. Our pursuit of dominance over nature can sometimes be seen as a manifestation of our own feelings of inferiority. More often than that, we find ourselves powerless and humbled by the overwhelming power of nature. Alfred Adler and Colin Brett mentioned in their monograph that the feeling of superiority is the opposite of feeling inferior and the two are closely connected. It is not surprising to find a hidden motion of inferiority in individuals who exhibit a superiority complex[31]. Hence, through the establishment of human civilization and our desire to demonstrate our remarkable achievements and

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[29] Justin McCurry, "Japan Marks 10 Years since Triple Disaster Killed 18,500 People," the Guardian, March 11, 2021.
[30] Sherriff, *2:46: Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake*, 68-69
[31] Adler and Brett, *Understanding Life*, 32-33

superiority over nature, we have inadvertently demonstrated that we still possess an underlying sense of inadequacy when confronted with the forces of nature.

On the other hand, we cannot discount the role of catastrophic description and aftershock in the work. In the stories *evacuated* and *help* written by Takanori Hayao and Shizue Nonaka, we encounter a narratives where numerous residents who were directly impacted by the earthquake catastrophe sought to flee the areas that were severely affected. However, they were confronted with the unexpected disruption and destruction of communication systems and public transportation, which they had previously taken for granted. This sudden realization came as a major surprise to them and left them feeling shocked.

> When the first explosion happened at the Fukushima Plant, we decided to leave within a week at the most while monitoring the situation. However, Sendai is in complete isolation, with no prospect of reinstatement of the train service at Sendai Station, the airport is completely destroyed, and access to highways is restricted to emergency vehicles only.[32]

> I switched the TV on to find out what was happening. There were lots of aftershocks and a second big one. I was so scared and didn't know what to do. I rang and rang and tried to email, but didn't work for some time.[33]

It becomes apparent that the aforementioned descriptions appear to be disconnected from everyday experiences and leave us feeling amazed. Rita Felski[34] observed that literature of shock slips through our frameworks of legitimation and resists our most heartfelt values. She even argued that when experiencing shock, we can be led to a noticeable absence of emotion, creating a state of numbness or blankness that is often discussed by trauma theorists. Shock represents a sudden and forceful collision or encounter. It forcefully enters consciousness and challenges the reader's or viewer's

[32] Sherriff, *2:46: Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake*, 52-53
[33] Sherriff, *2:46: Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake*, 84
[34] Rita Felski, *Uses of Literature* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 110-113

defenses. Meanwhile, like a blunt instrument, it enters the mind and disrupts our usual ways of organizing and comprehending the world. Thus, in the context of this case, the portrayal of shock serves as a catalyst for illustrating the devastating events caused by nature. It leads us to reflect on our respect for the natural world and also prompts us to reconsider the dynamics between humans and nature.

7.6.2 Embrace the Reality, Confront the Disaster with Composure and Courage

In response to the unforeseen catastrophe, certain individuals made the decision to promptly evacuate the hazardous area in order to mitigate the potential threat of subsequent events such as aftershocks and tsunamis. Conversely, a significant number of Tohoku residents opted to remain in their respective hometowns and demonstrate their unwavering support. The remarkable poise and serenity exhibited in their reaction to the catastrophe were truly astounding, as if they were prepared to confront it head-on and adapt to its presence. The account in story *care* written by Yuki Watanabe as following provides evidence of this.

> When people living towards the coast were confronted with the threat of radiation, the whole town decided to evacuate without waiting for government instructions. Nobody in my hometown will evacuate. Why? What's more, they took in people evacuating from the town next door, so now they feel they can't evacuate themselves and leave those people behind.
>
> People of the Tohoku region are stoic, compassionate, calm and humble. They have always just dealt with the situation without complaining. Of course, they have questions and fears, but they hesitate to show them as they know other people are experiencing far worse.[35]

When a calamity occurs, the individuals in the Tohoku region do not voice their grievances, but rather embrace the reality and display resilience and fortitude. They are

[35] Sherriff, *2:46: Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake*, 17-18

even willing to forgo their own comfort to assist refugees from nearby regions. This demonstrates immense bravery and an optimistic outlook on life. Ichiro Kishimi and Fumitake Koga[36] emphasized in their bestseller that in Adlerian psychology trauma is completely dismissed, which was pointed out as a groundbreaking and revolutionary idea. The perspective on trauma in Freudian psychology is certainly intriguing. Freud believed that a person's psychological wounds (traumas) are responsible for their current unhappiness. However, Adler, in opposition to the concept of trauma, asserts no experience in itself is the cause of our success or failure. We do not suffer from the impact of our experiences, also known as trauma, but rather we shape them to serve our own purposes. Our experiences do not determine us, but the meaning we ascribe to them is what determines our actions. In other words, Adler highlights that our self is not solely shaped by our experiences, but rather by the meaning we give to them. Traumatic events and difficult experiences like disaster can influence our personality, but they do not have ultimate control over our lives. Therefore, for those individuals in the Tohoku region who have shown resilience and who have courageously accepted the harsh reality of the disaster, they are now contemplating strategies to utilize it as an opportunity to help others in their community. Instead of dwelling on what they have lost, they are directing their attention towards how they can bring about positive changes within their own capacities. They are absorbing the profound impact of the extreme experience, all while holding onto a firm belief in facing challenges with sincerity and composure.

The "living in the present moment and starting from now" lifestyle in Adlerian psychology is similar to the Stoic school of philosophy in Western philosophy. In the book *Reasons Not to Worry: How to be a Stoic in chaotic times* (2022), the author Brigid Delaney[37] offers a contemporary interpretation of the ancient philosophy of Stoicism. She reminds us that the word "stoic" has been distorted from its original meaning. We often use it casually to describe individuals who suppress their emotions, but the true

[36] Kishimi and Koga, *The Courage to Be Disliked: How to Free Yourself, Change Your Life and Achieve Real Happiness*, 11-14

[37] Brigid Delaney, *Reasons Not to Worry: How to be a Stoic in chaotic times* (Allen & Unwin, 2022).

Stoics were not like that. Their goal was to reduce unnecessary suffering by cultivating the mind to acknowledge several truths, including the awareness of one's own mortality and that of others. Furthermore, she points out that another principle of Stoicism is to evaluate what is within our control and what is not, and direct our attention towards the things we can control. We can only have control over our own character, actions, reactions, and how we treat others. Everything else is beyond our personal sphere of influence. Hence, she claims the reason for striving to develop indifference towards our health, wealth, and reputation is because ultimately these aspects are outside of our control.[38]

Based on the analysis provided, it is evident that Adlerian psychology and Stoic philosophy both advocate for the concept of "embracing the present moment." They share a mutual ideology, which is not only widespread in Western countries, but also in Eastern countries such as Japan, where it is highly valued and acknowledged. Building upon this belief, the Japanese people have embraced the principles of accepting reality while remaining hopeful, and responding calmly to situations by taking appropriate actions within their control. As Kosuke Ishihara mentions in his story *experience* as following:

> This disaster has made us appreciate the importance of life, of things, the bonds of family, the things we take for granted in our daily routines. To the victims—I know you're in dire straits, but keep your hopes up![39]

7.6.3 Collaborating within a Horizontal Social Network Community

During the occurrence of the triple disaster involving an earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear power plant meltdown, there was a significant disruption in communication and transportation. As a result, many individuals were filled with anxiety and possessed an

[38] Brigid Delaney, "'Inject That Stoicism into My Veins!': 10 Tools of Ancient Philosophy That Improved My Life," the Guardian, September 19, 2022, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/sep/19/inject-that-stoicism-into-my-veins-10-tools-of-ancient-philosophy-that-improved-my-life.
[39] Sherriff, *2:46: Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake*, 61

urgent desire to ascertain the safety of their families. They turned to various social media platforms like phone calls, emails, and Twitter to seek information. This remains the utmost priority for anyone who witnesses or experiences the devastating impact of a disaster. In response to such crisis situations, individuals in unaffected areas of Japan have been working tirelessly, racing against time, to ensure their personal safety and the safety of their loved ones. Simultaneously, they are additionally providing assistance to those in need to the best of their abilities.

For example, Yumiko Takemoto shares her personal account of the events that transpired between her and her neighbors in the aftermath of the earthquake. After the earthquake, she lost all her means of communication and could not even watch TV. It was too scary to stay inside, she spent the night in her car, constantly feeling the aftershocks. Two days later, the electricity and gas in her house came back on, and she and her family were relieved to have warm food and bright lights. Although they still do not have running water after ten days, they feel grateful to still have their house, especially considering the people in Ibaraki who cannot contact their families in Fukushima Prefecture.

During the time without running water, she relied on her neighbors for water from their garden well. The neighbors not only provided drinking water but also offered instant noodles and dishes for her meals. Their help was invaluable and words cannot adequately express her gratitude. She and her family were extremely grateful for the kindness they received, from her neighbors who provided well water and even strangers who shared water to fill their bathtub. At the end of story, Yumiko Takemoto uttered the following statement:

> My neighbors' kindness reminded me that it is very important to stay connected with our neighbors, and to help each other. I would like to urge everybody to be more actively involved in their local community in their everyday life. Because nobody can survive without the support from others.[40]

[40] Sherriff, *2:46: Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake*, 116

Here, the author emphasizes the significant impact that neighbors and communities have on the mutual collaboration link after a disaster. It is indisputable that in times of dire circumstances, we must depend on our local communities and neighborhoods for assistance. This is particularly evident in Asian countries like China, Japan, and Korea, where collectivism is deeply ingrained in society. In China and Japan, for instance, there exist age-old proverbs like "A close neighbor is better than a distant relative," which serve as a testament to the significance of community and neighborhood support.

Additionally, assisting one another within our community and neighborhood allows for a transformation of our relationships from a hierarchical structure to one of the equalities. In settings such as schools and companies, we often find ourselves in small groups where there are individuals who hold positions of authority, such as teachers, managers or proprietors. Occasionally, these relationships can make us feel oppressed. However, the bonds within a neighborhood tend to be much simpler, characterized by a horizontal equality. This type of relationship is more likely to foster mutual assistance without any profitable motives. It can be seen as a positive and healthy affinity between equals. Therefore, during times of disaster, this equal and mutual support, cooperation, and management of neighborhood relationships become even more significant. Adler's individual psychology claims the goal of interpersonal relationships is a feeling of community.[41] In other words, if we consider others as our comrades and recognize that we are constantly surrounded by them, it becomes important for us to find our own "refuge" within this life. Additionally, this process should also cultivate a desire within us to share and contribute to the community to understand others as comrades and the realization of having our own refuge is referred to as "community feeling." Meanwhile, “community feeling" is also referred to as “social interest,” that is to say, “interest in society.” It represents making the switch from attachment to self (self-interest) to concern for others (social interest).[42]

We should shift our perspective and recognize that we are not the focal point of the

[41] Kishimi and Koga, *The Courage to Be Disliked: How to Free Yourself, Change Your Life and Achieve Real Happiness*, 160
[42] Kishimi and Koga, *The Courage to Be Disliked: How to Free Yourself, Change Your Life and Achieve Real Happiness*, 163

world. Instead of constantly seeking what others can provide for us, we should consider what we can offer them in return. During times of significant calamity, the concept of equality becomes prominent as it liberates us from the societal divisions and biases that exist in a hierarchical structure. It allows us to view our surroundings without any distorted perceptions. It fosters a stronger sense of identity as part of a collective and a feeling of belonging. This in turn encourages collaboration and motivates us to make meaningful contributions to those around us.

7.6.4 Revisiting the Relationship between Human and Nature

The tsunami overcame the sea wall and hit the plant and cause the damage, which led to nuclear meltdowns and a number of hydrogen explosions. The initial measures taken to protect the public included implementing evacuation plans, providing shelter, imposing restrictions on food and water consumption, relocating individuals, and disseminating information. It was the worst emergency at a nuclear power plant since the Chernobyl disaster in 1986. If we classify the massive earthquake and tsunami as natural calamities, then we can view the meltdowns at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant as a subsequent catastrophe resulting from perceived factors.

The primary concern we need to address seem to be the reason behind the nuclear power plant's inability to withstand the forces of the tsunami and earthquake. It appears that one possible explanation, based on scattered reports, is that the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant did not consistently and thoroughly assess its susceptibility to external threats throughout its operational lifetime.[43] Putting aside the technical details, it is crucial to examine how to evaluate and interpret such human-induced disasters from a human standpoint.

In the anthology, we discover a short story called *expectations* authored by Miho Nishihiro. In her hometown of Abiko, Chiba prefecture, there was a low-5 grade earthquake recorded, which was smaller than the epicenter. Since she is inland, she did

[43] Hideki Nariai, "The Fukushima Daiichi Accident–Summary of Comments and Lessons from the Report by the Director General," *Journal of the Atomic Energy Society of Japan* 58, no. 3 (2016): 184–89.

not experience any tsunami effects. However, it was the largest earthquake she has ever experienced, and she has suffered greatly. As a mother of two small children, she is also concerned about the numerous aftershocks. But her greatest worry is the radiation leak from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant. Based on her narrative, she holds the belief that the issue stems from excessive self-assurance and a deficiency in openly sharing information about nuclear leaks.

> What I really want to know is, if the situation worsens, what happens? How is the condition of the nuclear plant going to affect us, how far is the risk going to spread, and what is the possibility of this happening? We need to know this kind of information but almost nobody has told us anything. If we had that info, everyone could consider all the options and be prepared for action, and public panic could be avoided if a worst-case scenario happened. But because we lack information, people evacuated the capital unnecessarily.[44]

It is evident from the original quote that there is a lack of sufficient accurate information available to the general public regarding nuclear power plants. This deficiency leads to a situation where the public is unaware and unable to adequately protect themselves. If we delve further into the underlying causes, it becomes apparent that we constructed nuclear power plants with the aim of harnessing nature for the benefit of humanity, and we attempted to employ human intellect to triumph over nature. However, our endeavors did not yield the desired outcomes. It was only in the wake of a catastrophe that we came to the realization that our understanding of nature was inadequate, and we emerged from the illusion that nuclear power plants were entirely secure. The appreciation for the inherent worth of nature has been received differently on a global scale. The Stockholm Declaration of 1972 and the World Conservation Strategy of 1980 both took a human-centered approach. This anthropocentric perspective is dominant in societies worldwide and is also prevalent in academia as well as domestic and international governance.[45] Hence, the initial development of nuclear power plants can

[44] Sherriff, *2:46: Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake*, 60
[45] W Washington et al., "Why Ecocentrism Is the Key Pathway to Sustainability," *The Ecological Citizen* 1, no. 1

be said to have been influenced by our inchoate interpretation of the natural world.

As the story unfolds, the author realizes we have had overly naive expectations for the safety standards of nuclear power plants. Constantly measuring the power of nature with a self-righteous understanding, it ultimately leads to dire consequences. At the end of the story, the author lodges the following appeal.

> My wish is that all the electric power companies will learn from this accident and do their utmost to prevent future risks. This accident has given us a good opportunity to take stock of the expansion of the nuclear power plants we Japanese have embraced as a solution to global warming. I hope that, in the future, renewable power sources will supply the bulk of our electricity and we won't depend on nuclear power.[46]

From the original text, it is evident that the author has a strong desire for all electric power companies to gain insights from this incident and implement appropriate measures to mitigate future hazards. Simultaneously, the author expresses a hopeful aspiration for renewable power sources to assume the role of the principal electricity provider in the future, thereby diminishing reliance on nuclear power. In other words, she advocates for a change in how we view nature, moving away from dominating it to coexisting with it. Most people propose abandoning nuclear power plants as a means of generating electricity and instead embracing lighter energy sources like wind and tidal power, even exploring more sustainable and recyclable approaches to bring humans and nature closer together.

Japan has long experienced frequent disasters, which has instilled a sense of mental preparedness in most Japanese people. They believe that they are interconnected with nature and are part of a more sizable community that includes not only humans, but also plants, animals, and the environment. This biocentric belief aligns with Adler's Individual Psychology, which emphasizes the importance of belonging and achieving a beneficial impact on our surroundings through the first and foremost principle that says,

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(June 30, 2017): 35–41.

[46] Sherriff, *2:46: Aftershocks: Stories from the Japan Earthquake*, 61

"Listen to the voice of the larger community.[47]" By living in harmony with nature and contributing to its sustainable development, tragic events like the Fukushima 50 could be prevented, and the number of individuals sacrificing their lives for societal progress could be significantly reduced as well.

Epilogue

By applying the principles of Adlerian psychology and ecocriticism to the analysis and interpretation of the stories in this work, it becomes evident that the mass media and government officials played a significant role in promoting the idea of public solidarity. In public discussions, the concepts of "*kizuna*" (emotional bonds between people) and "*gaman*" (endurance and perseverance) have been used to characterize Japan's historical stance in the face of difficulties. This sense of social cohesion and collective spirit not only motivates efforts to provide assistance, but also offers solace to victims by making them feel that their suffering is shared. However, Jordi Serrano-Muñoz[48] suggests that Japan is a society where individuals are expected to sacrifice their personal identity for the greater good, while also relieving authorities of their responsibilities. Besides, the Fukushima nuclear accident served as a wake-up call for the Japanese people, highlighting the dangers of overconfidence and underestimating the forces of nature. It also prompted a reevaluation of the relationship between humans and nature, as the Japanese people embarked on the challenging task of rebuilding the afflicted areas.

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[47] Kishimi and Koga, *The Courage to Be Disliked: How to Free Yourself, Change Your Life and Achieve Real Happiness*, 175

[48] Jordi Serrano-Muñoz, "Reading after the Disaster: Japan's Reaction to the 3/11 Events through Literature," Association for Asian Studies, 2019.

Chapter 8 Japanese Adlerian Ecopsychology in Yoko Tawada's *The Emissary*

In the previous chapter, we explored the impact of Adler's individual psychology on Fukushima literature following the Great East Japan Earthquake, considering the influence of climate change and environmental degradation. We examined the development of psychoanalysis in Japan and its connection to ecopsychology in contemporary Japanese literature. In this chapter we will examine the development of apocalyptic theory in Japan and delve deeper into the elements of eco-psychology in Japanese apocalyptic fiction. Building on our understanding of Japanese disaster literature, apocalyptic literature, and trauma literature, we will analyze the text of *The Emissary* (2018) written by Yoko Tawada from a relatively holistic perspective, considering both Adlerian psychology and ecological factors.

8.1 Apocalyptic and Apocalypticism

In today's interconnected world, globalization is frequently linked to advancements in the economy and society. However, it has also given rise to various challenges such as ongoing states of political tensions, population displacement, climate change, pandemics, and other unforeseen natural calamities. Considering these pressing issues, one might perceive the present era as a period characterized by significant trauma. Jennifer Ballengee and David Kelman[1] indicated in their monograph that theorizing globalization and trauma together brings their historic correspondence into sharp relief. Certainly, there is no doubt that the process of exploration, interaction, and disagreement that have taken place throughout the course of history have significantly influenced and molded the world as we know it. However, it is specifically during the 19th and early 20th centuries that we witnessed the dawn of modern globalization and the recognition of the profound impact of traumatic experiences. This particular era was characterized by the ascent and decline of nation-states, which eventually culminated

[1] Jennifer Ballengee and David Kelman, *Trauma and Literature in an Age of Globalization* (Routledge, 2021), 1.

in the occurrence of World War I. Meanwhile, apocalyptic thinking permeates almost every significant aspect of life in the 20th and 21st century. It has become a recurring theme in popular culture and influences the nature of social protest. It also shapes perspectives on the economy and the environment. Lorenzo Ditommaso[2] argued that the prevalence of apocalyptic thought today is a consequence of a significant change in mindset that emerged during the late 1960s and 1970s. He further emphasized that the core issue or fundamental element that connects all things "apocalyptic" is the worldview or "apocalypticism". In other words, the apocalyptic worldview is characterized by its fundamental beliefs about the characteristics of space, time, and human life. These beliefs form the basis for apocalyptic speculation and give significance to apocalyptic events. Therefore, without the apocalyptic worldview, nothing would be considered "apocalyptic". Just as the Buddhist worldview shapes Buddhist texts and rituals, and Marxist ideology supports Marxist movements and manifestos, the apocalyptic worldview provides a framework for understanding and interpreting apocalyptic phenomena.

Moreover, the main purpose of apocalyptic speculation is to enlighten the members of a particular group about the true nature of things. This function is crucial for all other messages related to apocalyptic speculation. Essentially, apocalyptic speculation can be understood as an information system. The information that is revealed is influenced by specific theories related to knowledge, history, justice, and salvation. Each of these theories is a logical result of the underlying worldview. In the apocalyptic mindset, salvation is always envisioned as a way to be saved from this world. Additionally, Lorenzo Ditommaso [3] mentioned the primary social function of apocalyptic speculation is to uphold, strengthen, and authenticate the group's identity. This is often done in response to internal or external threats. Therefore, it is important to note that even when the focus of the revelation is on personal salvation or transformation, individuals are still regarded as part of a group.

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[2] Colin Mcallister, *The Cambridge Companion to Apocalyptic Literature* (Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York, Ny, Usa: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 316–18.
[3] Mcallister, *The Cambridge Companion to Apocalyptic Literature*, 316–18.

In summary, the term "apocalyptic" is primarily encountered in various forms of human expression such as literary works, music, art, symbols, communities, and rhetoric. These manifestations all share a common apocalyptic essence, derived from a conceptual framework that includes beliefs about the nature of existence, knowledge, salvation, and justice. This framework is built upon fundamental principles regarding the nature of space, time and human fate. The combination of these principles and their associated claims forms a distinct worldview, apocalypticism. By examining apocalyptic phenomena through the lens of this worldview, we can differentiate between general characteristics and specific expressions, thus identifying elements that are "apocalyptic" in various cultural contexts throughout history.

8.2 The Trajectory of Apocalypse in Japan

8.2.1 From the Oldest Collection of Japanese Myths to Mid to Late Edo

To gain insight into the trajectory of the apocalypse in Japan, it is crucial to first examine the prevalence of apocalyptic movements and beliefs in premodern Japan. In general, apocalyptic thinking was not as widespread in premodern Japanese culture when compared to the Judeo-Christian tradition. Although apocalyptic myths can be found in various cultures worldwide, there is no specific apocalyptic myth associated with ancient Japan. The oldest compilation of Japanese myths, known as *Kojiki* and compiled in 712AD, includes narratives about the creation of the world and Japan, the birth of Japanese deities, their relationships and conflicts. However, it does not feature myths about catastrophic events or the end of the world.[4] According to Tamura Yoshirō's monograph,[5] the reason for this is that Japanese myths prioritize present reality over the past or the future. These myths aim to affirm the world, nature, and human beings as they are. Even after the introduction of Buddhism in the fifth century,

[4] Hayao Kawai, *Kawai Hayao Chosakushū: Shinwa to Nihonjin No Kokoro* (Myth and the Japanese Mind) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2003), 21–104.
[5] Yoshiro Tamura, *Japanese Buddhism* (Tuttle Publishing, 2000).

which brought with it cyclical perspectives and supernatural beings in some forms, apocalyptic thinking was not the primary ideology in premodern Japanese thought.

However, during certain historical periods in premodern Japan, specifically the late Heian (11th and 12th centuries), mid-Kamakura (late 12th and 13th centuries), and mid to late Edo (mid 17th and 18th centuries) periods, there was a widespread presence of apocalyptic ideologies, despite it not being a prevalent thought in earlier times. For example, Hayami Tasuku[6] argued that during the late Heian period there was a prevailing belief in a Buddhist perspective called *mappō*. This perspective taught that true perfection could only be attained in the Pure Land, not in our world. During this era, the concept of *mappō* was combined with Amidism, which emphasized devotion to Amitābha Buddha in order to be reborn in the Pure Land where enlightenment was assured. Meanwhile, Amidism and *mappō* pessimism became closely associated, particularly in the 10th century. The late Heian period was a time of peak aristocratic society, but also marked the gradual disintegration of that society. Furthermore, alongside social instability, there was an increase in anxiety and a sense of crisis due to the occurrence of plagues and natural disasters. For instance, in terms of literature, notions of transience and loss influenced court poetry and prose fiction involving as *The Tale of Genji*, although they were not explicitly apocalyptic.

During the early Heian period, Buddhism emphasized the importance of transcending the transient nature of existence, as well as the ego, and acknowledged the positive aspects of human life. However, the belief in absolute transcendence attained in the Pure Land did not provide a solution to the actual problems and suffering of the world. Hence, Kamakura Buddhism opted to confront the real issues in this world and pursued salvation within the realm of reality. Kamakura Buddhist reformers expanded the concept of salvation beyond just the individual to include society as a whole. One notable figure, Nichiren (1222-1282), advocated for social reform in a rebellious manner, which resonated with the lower-class individuals who were experiencing

[6] Hayami Tasuku, *Heian bukkyō to mappō shisō* (Heian Buddhism and Mappō Thought) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 2006), 196–199.

hardship. According to Sueki Fumihiko[7], a scholar who is well acquainted with Japanese Buddhism, Nichiren's teachings provided them with a means to resist worldly desires, address their challenging circumstances, and challenge the existing authorities. For instance, the essay *Hōjōki*, authored by Kamono Chōmei and finalized in 1212, serves as an exemplary literary piece from the Kamakura period that explores apocalyptic themes. The concepts of impermanence and *mappō* ideology are consistently present throughout the essay. By depicting natural calamities like floods, whirlwinds, droughts, and earthquakes, as well as human-induced disasters such as warfare, large fires, and famine, the text emphasizes the true affliction experienced by individuals in a world plagued by apocalyptic events. Simultaneously, it showcases Chōmei's resilience in the face of such upheavals.

Furthermore, during the Edo period, there was a revival of apocalyptic beliefs among commoners in the areas of new religion, social movements, and fiction. This is in contrast to the earlier Kamakura period, where apocalyptic movements were led by monks. As Buddhism declined in influence, Confucianism and Japanese philosophy gained popularity, focusing on human values and ethics rather than divinity, thus not emphasizing apocalyptic ideas. Confucianism and Japanese philosophy were mostly followed by the middle to upper warrior classes, who were not typically interested in apocalyptic ideologies. As a result, apocalypticism in the Edo period was more prevalent among the lower classes, including townspeople and farmers. During this period, there were several instances of farmer unrest. The primary objective of these riots was to eradicate social inequality, often through aggressive acts targeted at affluent farmers and merchants. Participants asserted that they were being guided by a divine being who orchestrated their actions.

Unlike the apocalyptic beliefs in Western culture, the apocalyptic movements in premodern Japan lacked the necessary influence to serve as a transformative ideology capable of restructuring society. This could be attributed to the traditional Japanese perspective, which places high importance on the current state of affairs and their

[7] John Breen, Sueki Fumihiko, and Yamada Shōji, *Beyond Zen* (University of Hawaii Press, 2022).

cyclical perception of time.

8.2.2 From Meiji to the End of World War II

During the Edo period, apocalyptic stories focused on the conflict between those with power and those without, drawing inspiration from real-world circumstances rather than fiction. These narratives did not involve the concept of an imaginary future. It was only in the early Meiji period, with Japan's modernization and the introduction of ideas about progress and the future, that apocalyptic tales began to incorporate fully developed fictional elements. Motoko Tanaka[8] highlights that during the modern period, there was a heightened sense of apocalyptic imagination, which involved contemplating the potential end of the world or even the entire universe. This expansion of imagination was closely connected to Japan's reintegration into the international community after a period of self-imposed isolation lasting almost two centuries.

However, during the Meiji period, there was a well-known phrase called *wakon yōsai*, which referred to the combination of Japanese spirit and Western technology. This phrase highlights the difficulty that Meiji intellectuals faced in trying to preserve Japanese traditions while also adopting Western ideas and technologies. Their ultimate goal was to find a way to balance their Japanese identity with modernity, or the process of Westernization, in order to maintain at least some aspects of their traditional culture. In the field of fiction, for instance, apocalyptic science fiction developed in Japan in earnest around the close of the 19th century, which expanded to include a diverse range of topics influenced by the arrival of foreign cultures, particularly from the West. This included incorporating new discoveries in astronomy, geology, and physics. In the late Edo period, there was a belief that astronomical events like comets and newly discovered planets could potentially lead to a worldwide devastation. This was because it was recognized that these celestial bodies had the potential to cause ecological changes on Earth.

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[8] Motoko Tanaka, *Apocalypse in Contemporary Japanese Science Fiction* (New York Palgrave Macmillan Us, 2014), 35.

On the other hand, according to literary critic Nagayama Yasuo, in his book *Natsukashii mirai* (A Good Old Future), he argues that Japanese apocalyptic science fiction during the prewar period had distinct characteristics compared to Europe and the United States. He has identified a recurring theme in apocalyptic science fiction novels since this time: the intentional avoidance of a definitive ending. This is because in traditional Japanese narratives it is customary to depict both the conclusion and the subsequent emergence of a new cycle, rather than merely stating a definitive end. Moreover, Motoko Tanaka[9] further elaborated that science fiction in the prewar period introduced the concept of outer space as a completely unfamiliar territory. These stories portrayed space as having mixed characteristics, which means it was a novel idea with the potential for exciting discoveries, yet it was also unpredictable and potentially dangerous. The presence of unknown adversaries, such as comets, extraterrestrial beings, planets, and other celestial phenomena, symbolized the perceived threat from foreign nations to a newly modernized Japan. In early modern Japanese narratives, the idea of an apocalypse encompassed the concept of foreign and alien elements, particularly in the context of Westernization. These elements were seen as new and alluring, but also enigmatic, influential, and capable of causing significant upheaval in the traditional Japanese society.

8.2.3 In the Postwar Period

Before the development of advanced weaponry, the outcome of wars may have relied heavily on the size and abilities of the soldiers involved. However, the advent of the technological revolution has significantly altered the nature of warfare. It has introduced unprecedented levels of devastation to both the environment and human civilization. Additionally, it has resulted in extensive casualties among disadvantaged populations and immense fuel consumption. As a result, the specter of war and apocalyptic crisis has become more imminent than ever before. The Holocaust serves

[9] Tanaka, *Apocalypse in Contemporary Japanese Science Fiction*, 39-40.

as a deeply unsettling instance where one individual's imagination led to a devastating catastrophic event on an unparalleled scale.

Furthermore, the apocalyptic imagination in Japan was significantly impacted by World War II. The devastating Great Tokyo Air Raid, which took place on March 9 and 10, 1945, resulted in the destruction of one-third of central Tokyo and caused the deaths of a large number of people in the ensuing conflagration. Additionally, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had a profound influence on apocalypticism. As the only nation to have experienced a nuclear attack, Japan continues to endure the consequences of this event. The atomic bombs brought to life a type of apocalyptic vision and power that had never been witnessed before. Therefore, the term *hibakusha*, individuals who have survived the atomic bombings, offer a unique viewpoint on the apocalypse as they have directly experienced it. They have not only observed the enormous destruction caused by these unexpected attacks, but they also continue to face ongoing health issues and the heartbreaking loss of fellow survivors due to radiation-related diseases. In this way, they are the trailblazers in experiencing firsthand the catastrophic capacity to not only eradicate humanity, but also the entire planet. In *Writing Ground Zero* (1995) John Whittier Treat[10] explores the distinctiveness of the atomic bomb experience and atomic literature. He draws comparisons between hibakusha, survivors of the atomic bombing, and victims of other bombing raids. One crucial difference between hibakusha and survivors of other atrocities is that the *hibakusha*'s experience of an apocalypse-like event never comes to an end. Although millions lost their lives due to conventional bombing, torture, and genocide during World War II, the survivors were able to move past the constant threat of death and the fear of torture when the war ended. However, for *hibakusha*, the impact of the atomic bomb continues indefinitely. It affects their lives, health, as well as future generations, local communities, cities, and even the entire country. The looming sense of death persists for them.

[10] John Whittier Treat, *Writing Ground Zero: Japanese Literature and the Atomic Bomb* (Chicago (Ill.); London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 8.

8.2.4 Japanese Apocalypse since 1995

During the early 1990s in Japan, a significant portion of the population experienced a time where they seldom encountered unexpected and life-threatening situations such as warfare, epidemics, and scarcity of resources. Prior to 1995, literature portraying apocalyptic scenarios depicted the Other, referring to an unfamiliar entity in diverse ways, such as an adversary or a monstrous external force. These narratives aimed to explore the connection between the unfamiliar other and one's own identity, as well as guide individuals on how to respond to the unfamiliar during times of turmoil.

On the other hand, according to numerous critics specializing in Japanese literature, sociology, and popular culture, the year 1995 is widely regarded as a pivotal turning point in Japanese cultural trends. This is primarily attributed to the occurrence of two significant apocalyptic events during that year, which had a profound and far-reaching impact on society and culture. The initial occurrence was the Great Hanshin Earthquake on January 17th in the southern region of Hyōgo Prefecture. It stands as Japan's most severe natural catastrophe since the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923. The catastrophic devastation caused by the earthquake led to a significant disruption between the past and the present. We could find that stories of apocalypse attempted to elucidate the connection between the unfamiliar Other and oneself, as well as how to respond to the unknown during times of crisis. However, within the context of the Great Hanshin Earthquake, the Other was also discovered to exist within oneself. Additionally, the earthquake served as a harsh reminder that human life can be abruptly extinguish. Though natural disasters have the potential to bring about a sudden apocalypse, it is often easy to overlook this reality as death remains mostly concealed in our daily lives. During this period Japan experienced a significant downturn in its economy as a result of the collapse of the asset price bubble from 1986 to 1990. This economic crisis put an end to the steady growth that had been observed in the 1970s and early 1980s, and Japan encountered its most severe decline since the end of World War II. The second major apocalyptic event in 1995 was the sarin nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway. This act of domestic terrorism, carried out by members of *Aum Shinrikyō* (Aum Supreme Truth)

on March 20, had significant impacts. D W Brackett[11] stressed in his monograph that the attack involved releasing sarin gas on multiple lines of the Tokyo Metro during the morning rush hour. As a result, there were numerous casualties, with at least a dozen fatalities and over five thousand individuals seeking medical treatment. Undoubtedly, this remains the most severe attack on Japanese soil since World War II.

Both the Hanshin Great Earthquake and the sarin gas attack were profoundly devastating events that shattered the illusion of safety and stability in modern-day Japan. These incidents starkly revealed that even in a tranquil and advanced society, an enigmatic and unfamiliar force or factor can inflict utter annihilation. In the upcoming section, we will delve into the novel *The Emissary* (2018), written by Yoko Tawada, examining its portrayal of the transformations experienced by Japanese society in the aftermath of an unidentifiable calamity. Moreover, the protagonist's reaction to this abrupt shift will be thoroughly analyzed. This literary work also serves as a reflection of the problems that present-day Japan must confront in its increasingly rapid and dynamic environment.

8.3 Bilingual Author Yoko Tawada and the Reception of her Work *The Emissary*

Yoko Tawada, a versatile author proficient in multiple literary genres, has crafted an extensive body of work encompassing novels, poetry, essays, and other forms of expression. Born in Tokyo in the year 1960, she embarked on a new chapter in her life at the age of 22 by relocating to Germany. Since then, she has maintained a bilingual lifestyle, composing written works in both her native Japanese and German languages. Tawada initiated her writing journey in 1987 when she released *Anata no iru tokoro dake nani mo nai* (Nothing Only Where You Are), a compilation of poems published as a bilingual edition in German and Japanese. In 1991, she earned the Gunzo Prize for New Writers for her debut novella entitled *Kakato o nakushite* (Missing Heels).[12]

[11] D W Brackett, *Holy Terror: Armageddon in Tokyo* (New York: Weatherhill, 1996), 1–8.
[12] Bettina Brandt, "*Ein Wort, Ein Ort*, or How Words Create Places: Interview with Yoko Tawada," *Women in German Yearbook: Feminist Studies in German Literature & Culture* 21, no. 1 (2005): 1–15, https://doi.org/10.1353/wgy.2005.0009.

Furthermore, the author's most recent book, *Memoirs of a Polar Bear* (2017),[13] was initially composed in Japanese before being translated into German by Tawada prior to its publication. Alongside being honored with the Gunzo Prize, Tawada has also been awarded renowned accolades in both Germany and Japan, such as the Akutagawa Prize and the Goethe Medal.

Tawada employed a bilingual approach in her writing, with a preference for composing longer pieces like plays and novels in Japanese, while opting for German when it came to shorter works like short stories and essays. Interestingly, Tawada also demonstrated a propensity for generating more newly-coined words, or neologisms, when writing in German compared to her Japanese compositions. Tawada's writing emphasizes the peculiarity of a language or specific words within a language when viewed from the standpoint of someone who speaks a different language. Maurer Kathrin[14] remarked that her writing employs surprising vocabulary, alphabets, and ideograms to draw awareness to the necessity of translation in our daily lives. Simultaneously, Yoko Tawada has noticed that language is not inherent but rather "artificial and magical,[15]" thus urging translators of her work to replace wordplay in her manuscripts with fresh wordplay in their respective languages.

One recurring motif present in Tawada's literature is the correlation between language and reality. According to Maria Ng and Philip Holden,[16] there is a notable aspect in which linguistic disparities might hinder individuals from fully assimilating into a new cultural environment. As an illustration, a native Japanese speaker would comprehend identical characters in both Chinese and Japanese, but the semantics and pronunciation of the term, such as "*tegami*" in Chinese and Japanese would differ, indicating distinct objects. Moreover, in Tawada's stories, there is a recurring theme of crossing boundaries. She incorporates her own experiences of traveling between different countries and cultures into her writing. However, she also delves into more

[13] Yōko Tawada and Susan Bernofsky, *Memoirs of a Polar Bear* (London: Portobello Books Ltd, 2017).
[14] Kathrin Maurer, "Translating Catastrophes: Yoko Tawada's Poetic Responses to the 2011 Tōhoku Earthquake, the Tsunami, and Fukushima," *New German Critique* 43, no. 1 (February 1, 2016): 171–94.
[15] Monika Totten and Yoko Tawada, "Writing in Two Languages: A Conversation with Yoko Tawada," *Harvard Review* 17, no. 17 (1999): 93–100
[16] Maria Ng and Philip Holden, *Reading Chinese Transnationalisms: Society, Literature, Film* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press; London, 2006), 88–201.

abstract boundaries, such as the division between reality and dreams, or the period before and after a disaster. For instance, she utilizes elements of magical realism, like the anthropomorphism of animals and plants in *Memoirs of a Polar Bear* (2017) mentioned above, in order to challenge familiar boundaries, including the distinction between human and animal. This exploration of challenging boundaries is further examined in *The Emissary* (2018), where the catastrophe that serves as the backdrop of the novel prompts a reconnection between humans and non-human entities, prompting contemplation on the true meaning of the exclusive concept of "human".

The Emissary, the fictional work that requires our attention next, delves into a futuristic dystopia while placing less emphasis on the negative aspects of this world. Instead, it centers around a selected group of individuals, portraying the essence of humanity in the face of an impending apocalypse. *The Emissary*'s theme has a close connection to the end of the world, which is what makes it an essential element for the analysis of Japanese apocalyptic literature. Thomas Moore Devlin[17] remarked that this book serves as a contemplation on mortality and optimism amidst an unpredictable future, skillfully blending humor and darkness.

The Emissary takes place in Japan, albeit in an alternate reality. The country has undergone an undisclosed catastrophic event in the past, leading to its isolation from the rest of the world. The consequences of this isolation are severe, particularly affecting the health and well-being of the newborns in this unfamiliar world. Children are born frail and incapable of self-care, while the elderly retain their vitality. As a result, the responsibility of caring for the children falls upon the adults indefinitely. Yoshiro, the protagonist of the story, is also an aging person who finds himself in this situation as the sole caregiver for his great-grandson, Mumei. Despite his own advancing years, Yoshiro has no choice but to attend to all of Mumei's needs and ailments. Tawada Yoko makes the decision to situate her narrative - one that revolves around an enigmatic man-made catastrophe resulting in a seemingly immortal adult population in Japan from the perspective of Yoshiro, a former novelist who witnessed the transformation of the world.

[17] Thomas Moore Devlin, "Introducing Yoko Tawada's 'the Emissary,'" *Babbel Magazine*, December 1, 2018, https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/yoko-tawada-the-emissary

John Self's stated in his review[18] that the story can be described as an "eco-terror mini epic". The story explores the concept of the elderly living longer while the younger generation facing demise in this lively Japanese satire. Despite being only 138 pages long, the narrative encompasses elements of eco-terrorism, family drama, and speculative fiction.

On the other hand, the success of *The Emissary* can largely be attributed to Margaret Mitsutani's precise and captivating translation. Mitsutani, who has also translated the works of Nobel laureate Kenzaburō Ōe, has described her experience of working on *The Emissary* as a challenging and serious yet enjoyable process of playing with words.[19] Overall, her translation is a commendable accomplishment. Tawada's frequent use of wordplay presents a variety of difficult translation issues, including idioms, puns, and a tongue twister, all of which Mitsutani gracefully resolves. As a result, Mitsutani's translation was nominated for the 2018 National Book Award in Translated Literature. Meanwhile, Tawada is a devoted follower of Kafka. Although she has similar concerns about otherness and depicting animal life, her works reflect reality. *The Emissary* portrays contemporary Japan as a dark and grim as one can envision. Parul Sehgal[20] noted in his review for “The New York Times” that Tawada addresses the aging population and the aftermath of the 2011 tsunami and the subsequent radiation release at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. In other words, the book attempts to grapple with the topics it brings up, such as the allure and risks of isolationism, the longing to envision the experiences of others, and how the Fukushima disaster connected to Japan's past of radiation poisoning dating back to the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the upcoming pages, we will present a detailed and comprehensive analysis regarding the textual content of the novel.

8.4 An Environmental Catastrophe Strikes another Vulnerable Japan

[18] John Self, “The Last Children of Tokyo by Yoko Tawada Review – an Eco-Terror Mini Epic,” *The Guardian*, June 28, 2018, sec. Books, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jun/28/the-last-children-of-tokyo-by-yoko-tawada-review.
[19] Emily Temple, “Meet National Book Award Finalist Margaret Mitsutani,” Literary Hub, November 2, 2018, https://lithub.com/meet-national-book-award-finalist-margaret-mitsutani/.
[20] Parul Sehgal, “After Disaster, Japan Seals Itself off from the World in ‘the Emissary,’” *The New York Times*, April 17, 2018, sec. Books, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/17/books/review-emissary-yoko-tawada.html.

In her novel *The Emissary*[21] Tawada presents a dystopian future in Japan where ecological catastrophes and genetically modified organisms abound. The main characters in the fiction, Yoshiro and Mumei, reside in this peculiar world. In this unparalleled apocalyptic disaster, not only has the environment experienced significant transformations, but also the individuals residing within it have undergone profound and non-reversible alterations to their physical and mental constitution. In the decades or even generations following an ecological disaster, the fundamental principles of biology have collapsed. Newborns are frail, with skeletal structures resembling those of birds and delicate teeth. Conversely, the elderly appear vibrant and athletic, as if they have been spared from the inevitability of death. It becomes evident from the portrayal of the primary protagonists in the initial stages of the narrative:

> Still in his blue silk pajamas, Mumei sat with his bottom flat on the tatami. Perhaps it was his head, much too large for his slender long neck, that made him look like a baby bird. Hairs fine as silk threads stuck to his scalp, damp with sweat. His eyes nearly shut, he moved his head as if searching the air, trying to catch on his tympanic membrane the scraping of footsteps on gravel.
>
> Smiling, deep wrinkles around his eyes, Yoshiro came closer, his shoulders heaving. No sooner had he lowered his head, lifting a foot to take off a shoe, than beads of sweat dripped from his forehead.[22]

In this narrative, we perceive the somber reality of our existence through a straightforward storyline that unfolds throughout a single day in the lives of Yoshiro, a 107-year-old narrator, and his great-grandson Mumei, whose name symbolizes anonymity. Yoshiro rouses Mumei from slumber, ensures he is properly attired and nourished, before accompanying him on his journey to school. When Mumei awoke, he did not independently change his sleepwear, instead he patiently waited for his great-

[21] Yōko Tawada, *The Emissary* (New Directions Publishing, 2018).
[22] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 3.

grandfather to attend to him. This behavior indicates that Mumei is physically frail and lacks a certain level of self-care in his daily life. Additionally, Mumei's distinctive features include an enlarged head, delicate neck, and inability to stand on his own, resembling a baby bird awaiting nourishment. In contrast, Mumei's great-grandfather Yoshiro exhibits a wrinkled smile and copious sweating despite his advanced age, defying the frail stereotype of an ordinary elderly individual. Furthermore, through the dialogue between Yoshiro and the proprietor of the bakery, we may gain a more comprehensive understanding of the state of health of his great-grandson:

> "Oh yeah, I saw that poster too. Learn to Limber Up from the Octopus."
> "Yeah, that's the one. I used to think stretching to limber up was nonsense, but you know, the human race may be evolving in a direction no one ever imagined. I mean, maybe we're moving toward the octopus. Watching my great-grandson I certainly get that impression."[23]

From the discourse, it is evident that human-beings are starting to express a desire to limber up from an octopus, and their physical bodies are adapting and progressing towards that of a mollusk. Notably, Yoshiro's progeny, Mumei, who should have been flourishing during their prime years, found themselves existing in a calamitous world where their body gradually declined akin to a mollusk, ultimately resulting in an abnormal state of fragility. However, as a great-grandfather, Yoshiro can only exert his utmost efforts to care for Mumei. For instance, Yoshiro selflessly offers to serve as Mumei's teeth in order to provide nourishment to Mumei, who struggles with chewing. He meticulously squeezes oranges into juice with the hope that Mumei can absorb more nutrients and sunlight. Nevertheless, even with these measures in place the act of drinking remains a daunting task for Mumei:

> That said, drinking was no easy task for Mumei. His eyes circling in their sockets with the effort, he would struggle to keep his Adam's apple pumping up and down like an elevator,

[23] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 14

> trying to force the liquid down. Sometimes it would come back up, burning his throat. Or on its way down it would enter his bronchial tubes instead, bringing on a coughing fit. Once he started coughing it was hard to get him to stop.[24]

Swallowing and chewing are inherent physiological processes for the average person, but Mumei faces exceptional challenges in performing these actions. One could argue that this difficulty is a consequence of the dangers that ecological disasters present to humanity. Although Tawada does not explicitly mention the origin of the disaster in her story, the descriptions within the text bear a strong resemblance to a Japan that has experienced earthquakes and nuclear accidents, as seen in Fukushima. As the philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy[25] proposes in his work *After Fukushima* (2014), in the present era, all natural disasters are now associated with the presence of nuclear risk. In fact, nuclear catastrophes are still considered the one type of catastrophe that cannot be completely remedied, as its effects persist for generations and penetrate the various layers of the Earth.

Meanwhile, Tawada has made the decision to place her narrative, which revolves around a peculiar calamity created by humans that has rendered the adults in Japan seemingly immortal, from the perspective of Yoshiro, who was a novelist prior to the transformation of the world. As quoted in the following, the work is frequently defined by Yoshiro's perplexity concerning the reality that he remains in good health despite being over 100 years old. Specifically, the psychological conflicts and paradoxes experienced by Yoshiro when confronted with his own frail great-grandchildren, who possess a somewhat unsettling and extraordinary longevity, create a striking juxtaposition between the two individuals. This uncommon longevity also highlights the issue of population's aging that Japan is presently grappling with.

> Whenever he tried to imagine the years Mumei would have to go on living after his own death, Yoshiro ran straight into a wall. For an old man like Yoshiro, time after death no longer existed.

[24] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 33
[25] Jean-Luc Nancy, *After Fukushima* (Fordham Univ Press, 2014).

> The aged could not die; along with the gift of everlasting life, they were burdened with terrible task of watching their great-grandchildren die.[26]

The ecological catastrophe depicted in the story not only resulted in irrevocable harm to the human-beings, but also caused extensive devastation to the natural environment, resembling rapid climate change and widespread extinction of both flora and fauna. Consequently, the survivors of the disaster were compelled to undertake transformative measures and adapt accordingly. In the text, there are evident indications pointing towards the degradation of the environment. Firstly, the author illustrates the interior of Yoshiro's room in the following manner:

> Sandwiched in between the eight-mat room and the kitchen was a room with a wooden floor about six and a half feet wide in which a light foldout picnic table and folding chairs like the ones anglers use were set up. As if to add to the gay summer excursion atmosphere, on the table was a thermos emblazoned with a picture of a raccoon dog with a huge dandelion sticking out of it.[27]

What causes us to experience a sense of uneasiness is the fact that tables and folding chairs designed for outdoor picnics are set up indoors to recreate the ambiance. This occurrence reflects the present circumstances, where it is not feasible for two individuals to have a picnic outside. Instead, they are limited to simulating and engaging in indoor activities. From this, we can infer that either the air quality is contaminated or the decline in flora and fauna has rendered outdoor picnics impracticable. In addition, we also noticed a huge dandelion appearing in a decorative picture. This occurrence could indicate a genetic variation within the species caused by the catastrophic disaster. Furthermore, within the text provided by the author, we subsequently discover the answer that confirms this hypothesis later in the article. Secondly, the images that arise in Mumei and Yoshiro's minds when they see the picture of dandelions are entirely

[26] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 36
[27] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 8

distinct. This disparity is due to the fact that Yoshiro experienced life before the disaster, whereas Mumei has only known the post-disaster era since birth. A passage in the narrative wherein Yoshiro reminisces about himself and the dandelion attests to this contrast:

> For Yoshiro, one look at a dandelion was enough to bring back childhood memories of lying in a grassy field gazing up at the sky. The air was warm, the grass cool. He heard birds chirping far away. Turning his head to one side, he would see a dandelion in bloom, looming just slightly above his eyes.[28]

Yoshiro reminisces about his early years, lying in solitude in the expansive wilderness, gazing at the sky. The gentle breeze and radiant sun filled him with joy as he observed the dandelions dancing in the wind. Regrettably, such vistas no longer exist in this harsh world. Only the mutated dandelions, evolved to survive in this environment, remain. This idyllic portrayal of the past, juxtaposed against the apocalyptic present, serves to highlight the dire ecological condition of the alternate reality in the story. On the other hand, Mumei has never experienced playing in an actual field before. However, since the decoration of the room, it appears that he has formed a mental image of a meticulously nurtured field. Therefore, in order to fulfill his wish of being able to have an indoor picnic, he requested his great-grandfather to paint the walls in the color of the sky. Additionally, he asked for the walls to be decorated with clouds and birds.

> "Let's buy some paint for the walls," he had said suddenly, several weeks earlier. Not catching his meaning, Yoshiro had asked, "The walls? They're still clean enough, don't you think?"
> "We can paint them blue, like the sky. With pictures of clouds, and birds, too."
> "You want to have a picnic indoors?" "Well, we can't have one outside, can we?"[29]

Mumei communicates with his great-grandfather using a rhetorical tone, while also

[28] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 9
[29] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 10

sharing the dire living conditions in his surroundings. As a reader, one can empathize with the protagonist's sense of helplessness in being unable to venture outdoors, while also feeling compassion for the devastating impact on the ecosystem and all species, including humankind.

There are many other descriptions of environmental devastation in the story similar to those mentioned above. Due to high concentrations of poison, fish are inedible, breast milk undrinkable. New holidays, such as “Being Alive Is Enough Day” and “Extinct Species Day,” have replaced outmoded ones. The underlying source of these issues stem from the degradation of the ecosystem. It is possible that by attuning ourselves to the wisdom imparted by the indigenous peoples of ancient times, we may come to recognize the significance of the 7th Generation principle[30]. The principle of the "7th generation" as taught by Native Americans suggests that in each decision, whether it is personal, governmental, or corporate, we should contemplate its impact on our descendants seven generations ahead. This is to ensure that the unpolluted sky, landscape, and mountains will persist for their future enjoyment. Therefore, in Tawada's novel apocalyptic aspirations result in a dark future that, although peculiar, bears a striking resemblance to reality. Tawada's portrayal serves as a conduit, allowing readers to bridge the gap between the realm of imagination and the real world. This affords readers the opportunity to contemplate the detrimental impact of their own actions on the environment while also serving as a compassionate advocate for the well-being of our planet.

8.5 Inferiority Complex Caused by Ecological Disasters

Whether the disaster is natural or man-made, the devastating force it brings extends beyond the physical realm and affects people on a spiritual level. This can manifest as feelings of inferiority when faced with the power of nature after a catastrophe, or as

[30] Molly Larkin, “What Is the 7th Generation Principle and Why Do You Need to Know about It?,” Molly Larkin, May 15, 2013, https://mollylarkin.com/what-is-the-7th-generation-principle-and-why-do-you-need-to-know-about-it-3/.

regional disparities resulting from these inferiority complexes. In the post-disaster Japan depicted by Tawada, young people are described as being so vulnerable that their jobs are easily replaced by the healthy elderly. Meanwhile, the once bustling metropolis of Tokyo has lost its usual vibrancy and has become a place from which people desperately escape. For instance, like most children of his generation, Mumei was unable to absorb the calcium he needed. The protagonist, Yoshiro, had a routine of perusing the daily newspaper. Whenever he stumbled upon news regarding a child's health, he would meticulously clip it out and preserve it for future reference. However, by some means, this behavior seems to have vanished. Yoshiro's rationale for refusing to preserve old newspapers is outlined in the following quotation:

> There was one more reason why he hadn't hesitated to throw away those old newspaper articles. Information concerning children's health was as capricious as autumn weather, or a man's heart. One article recommended "Early to Rise" as the road to health, but just a few days later the headlines screamed "Kids Who Sleep Late Grow Faster."[31]

The precarious nature of the children's health mirrors the reality that in post-disaster Japan, their health was not assured, impeding their normal development and leaving the elderly without recourse in their efforts to assist them. Meanwhile, not only did the physical weakness cause an inferiority complex, but also due to the disaster, property prices in Tokyo dropped dramatically. As a result, people who used to reside in the vibrant city started relocating to the western suburbs and other distant regions. This caused Tokyo residents, who had previously felt a sense of pride, to experience an inferiority complex stemming from the geographical disparity. Such discrepancies are evident throughout the narrative. For example, Yoshiro once conveyed to his grandson Tomo that the prospects of land prices in Tokyo decreasing in the forthcoming years were extremely remote. However, the actual turn of events left Yoshiro utterly astounded.

[31] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 28-29

> now that all of Tokyo's twenty-three wards, including prime locations, were designated an "exposure to multiple health hazards from prolonged habitation" area, neither its houses nor its land had any monetary value. Even though the twenty-three wards had never actually been classified as dangerous, more and more people wanted to leave, and since they didn't want to go too far, and because living near the sea was particularly dangerous, they began migrating toward the mountainous region from Okutama to Nagano Prefecture.

As per the theories proposed by Alfred Adler[32], a sense of inferiority can be attributed to various factors such as the upbringing during childhood, physical and mental constraints, or instances of being subjected to a lower social status. In the case of this story, due to the ecological disaster, Mumei experienced feelings of inferiority during his childhood, despite his great-grandfather's efforts to provide her with calcium and vitamins. Additionally, the fear of danger prompted more people to leave Tokyo, resulting in a decrease in population and energy within the city. As a result, the social status of Tokyo's residents has significantly declined, leading to an ongoing inferiority complex and acceptance of the city's decline. Naturally, Tokyo also relinquished its status as the preeminent hub for politics, economics, and culture in the capital.

8.6 Superiority Complex Arising from Ecological Disaster

In the previous section we explored the impact of ecological disasters on the development of an inferiority complex. Adlerian psychology has demonstrated that individuals commonly experience feelings of inferiority and strive to overcome them. In light of this we will now shift our focus to the concept of a superiority complex. Specifically, we will examine the ongoing nature of this complex and its developmental process. Adler[33] has emphasized the inherent connection between the inferiority and superiority complexes, hence we can expect to observe the presence of the superiority

[32] Riley Hoffman, "Alfred Adler's Theories of Individual Psychology and Adlerian Therapy - Simply Psychology," Simply Psychology, November 3, 2022, https://www.simplypsychology.org/alfred-adler.html.
[33] Alfred Adler, *The Science of Living* (London: Routledge, 2013), 78–80.

complex to varying degrees in cases related to the inferiority complex.

In Tawada's post-apocalyptic world, the self-superiority complex is most apparent in the unnaturally long lifespan of the elderly and the people's reliance on remote areas outside of Tokyo after the disaster. Moreover, the policy of excluding foreign languages can also be seen as a manifestation of Japan's sense of superiority. According to Adlerian psychological theories, all of these factors can be understood as a quest for excellence in order to overcome feelings of inferiority.

For example, as Yoshiro devotes extensive time to independently care for his great-grandson, he has considered the idea of bequeathing property to Mumei. However, his own robust physical condition ironically convinces him that his current lifestyle is the best and most suitable arrangement. All he can do is depend on his own vitality and health to ensure the well-being of his great-grandson.

> Assuming he had knowledge and wealth to leave to his descendants was mere arrogance, Yoshiro now realized. This life with his great-grandson was about all he could manage. And for that he needed to be flexible, in mind and body, with the courage to doubt what he had believed for over a century.
>
> He was not really an “old man,” but a man who, after living for a century, had become a new species of human being, he thought, clenching his fists again and again.[34]

The sense of superiority that Yoshiro possesses has facilitated his ability to recognize the need for a shift in his conventional perception of age, specifically pertaining to death. Presently his main focus is on the well-being of his great-grandchildren. Rather than perceiving himself as an elderly individual, he identifies as a unique entity that has thrived for over a century. This superiority complex carries a profound sense of irony within the setting by the author. Furthermore, another form of superiority arises from Japan's decision to separate itself from other nations and adopt a policy of isolation.

[34] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 40-41

The government's practice of seclusion forbade the use of foreign terms and names of foreign places for Japanese citizens, under the threat of death. This is explained in a profoundly enlightening passage from the text:

> His voice dropped to a raspy whisper on "New York." There was a strange new law against saying the names of foreign cities out loud, and although no one had been prosecuted for breaking it yet, all the same people were very being careful. Nothing is more frightening than a law that has never been enforced.[35]

At first sight, the policy of eradicating foreign cultures may instill in the people of the nation a feeling of superiority, a sense of distinctiveness, or a perception of being strong enough to not require any interaction with the outside world. From the perspective of the governing body, it is akin to the country and its citizens being entranced in a delightful reverie, and excessive contact with the outside world may rouse them from this dream-like state. From a historical standpoint, China also experienced a similar idealistic vision of a heavenly empire during the decline of the Qing Dynasty (1889-1912). However, as alluded to earlier, a feeling of superiority and inferiority often go hand in hand, and one could argue that it reflects a nation's lack of self-assurance. The isolation policy evokes memories of the Arrival of the Black Ships incident[36] (two separate voyages 1852–1853 and 1854–1855) that transpired towards the end of the Edo period in Japan. The primary objective of the Black Ships was to compel Japan to cease its 220-year practice of seclusion and to facilitate the opening of Japanese ports to American commerce, even if it required exerting gunboat diplomacy. Therefore, we must acknowledge that this isolated feeling of superiority diverges from historical patterns, and it lays the groundwork for the subsequent events in the novel.

Moreover, due to the natural disasters and environmental shifts, the climate of Honshu Island has become highly unpredictable. On certain occasions, there are intense

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[35] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 30

[36] Paul Hendrix Clark, *The Perry Expedition and the "Opening of Japan to the West," 1853–1873* (Hackett Publishing, 2020).

rainfalls, while on others, there are periods of drought. In response to this, an increasing number of residents in Tokyo are opting to relocate to Hokkaido, a remote island located in the northern region, as well as Okinawa, an outlying island situated in the southern part of Japan. However, from the original text it can be determined that not all residents meet the criteria for relocation:

> Although the population of Hokkaido had long been considered too small for such a large expanse of land, when an expert in population issues from Asahikawa concluded that the current population was actually ideally suited to the land area, the local government decided not to increase the population.
>
> Although Okinawa basically placed no restrictions on immigration from Honshu, they were afraid of an explosion in the population of single male laborers.
>
> Only prospective immigrants with jobs lined up were allowed to apply, and since there were very few jobs outside of agriculture, it was safe to say that without a farm to employ them, people from Honshu wouldn't receive permission to immigrate.[37]

From the quotation, it is evident that Hokkaido, which used to have a low population and desired an increase in tourism, has implemented a policy that restricts residents of Honshu from moving to the region, unless under special circumstances. There is potential to speculate that the stringent policy in Hokkaido is driven by the region's abundance of natural resources, which has led to substantial wealth for the locals. While the stated objective may be to maintain a balance between humans and nature, the underlying reason could be a reluctance to share the abundance of nature with a larger number of people. In the same way, while Okinawa allows access to individuals living in the state, both partners must submit an application simultaneously or possess agricultural work experience in order to gain entry to Okinawa. Being a secluded island,

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[37] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 46-47

Okinawa has not garnered much attention from the inhabitants of the capital city. However, recently, the abundance of its fruits has made it an attractive destination for residents of Honshu. In other words, whether it is Hokkaido or Okinawa, the decrease in self-confidence caused by environmental calamities has heightened the eagerness of the residents of Tokyo to relocate to places with plentiful natural resources. Consequently, stringent measures have been implemented to limit the access of people from the center area to these removed regions as a result of their perceived sense of superiority.

Nevertheless, the inquiry regarding the worthiness of acknowledging the actions or the condition of life that arise from this feeling of superiority is exposed in the subsequent dialogue between Yoshiro and his daughter's junior high school classmate. Presently the classmate is the proprietor of a flower shop. Amana, Yoshiro's daughter, who is currently in Okinawa conducting agricultural work, frequently discusses Okinawan fruits in her letters to her father.

> "What did Amana-chan have to say in her last letter?"
>
> "Something about seeing a new kind of red pineapple for the first time."
>
> "I envy them down there in Okinawa,"[38]

> "They have more fruit than they can eat, don't they?"
>
> "That's practically all she writes about. It isn't so interesting, reading about the latest red pineapple, or square pineapple, since they're not going to be shipped here anyway, but actually, I'm getting a little worried. It's strange, her writing about fruit and nothing else. A while ago I might have suspected she'd been brainwashed . . ."
>
> The two fell silent, both thinking roughly the same thing. Since orchards are actually factories that produce fruit, working in one all day, cut off from the outside world, might be pretty miserable.[39]

[38] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 57
[39] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 60

From the above passage, it becomes apparent that while Okinawa is renowned for its bountiful fruit offerings, there is a dark truth behind it. The reason why Amana solely discusses fruits in her letters is because the orchards in Okinawa have been transformed into mechanized factories, stripping away their leisurely and picturesque qualities. Yoshiro is concerned that Amana is one of the many workers burdened with labor-intensive tasks. He fears that the delicious fruits enjoyed by others may actually be the result of his daughter's tireless efforts. Adler[40] argued that true superiority lies not in isolating oneself from the world but in actively participating in society and lending a helping hand to those in need. It is evident that the unbalanced sense of superiority derived from such monopolistic control over resources did not rescue post-disaster Japan from the abyss of despair.

8.7 Optimal Solution to Overcome the Dilemma

In the aftermath of the disaster, there was a shift in mindset among some individuals in Japan. They started to deviate from traditional thinking and sought to overcome the challenges of a secluded nation with no external connections. This led to the emergence of a private organization in Japan with the aim of sending their own representatives abroad for informal study. Marika, who is Yoshiro's wife and Mumei's great-grandmother, has been designated with the responsibility of helping the organization select suitable candidates for the role of emissary. However, she faces a dilemma. On the one hand, she recognizes that Mumei's optimistic nature perfectly suits the role of an emissary. On the other hand, she wants her great-grandson to remain with Yoshiro indefinitely. She doesn't want her child to take any risks, even though she cannot change the current unfavorable circumstances.

Meanwhile, another mysterious figure, Yonatani, the geography teacher of Mumei at his current elementary school, is also secretly involved in the selection process for emissaries to study abroad. As Yonatani diligently has class by using the world map in

[40] Alfred Adler, *The Science of Living* (London: Routledge, 2013), 90-97

the classroom, he understands that it is his responsibility to select the most suitable emissary from among the elementary school students. He also recognizes that sending a selected few individuals abroad for higher education is the only way to alter the fate of the country and overcome the challenges it faces.

> With eyes like grapes moist with dew, the children stared up at the map of the world, never tiring of Yonatani's stories about countries beyond the sea. From among these kids he would have to find the one most suitable to be an emissary. Because his work involved constant observation of lots of elementary school pupils, Yonatani considered this to be his mission. For the time being he had his eye on Mumei, though he would have to watch him mature over the next several years before making a final decision.[41]

From the given passage, it is evident that Yonatani focused his attention on Mumei while selecting an emissary. Although he was unsure about his decision, he was willing to test it over time. The intriguing question here is that this secret organization took a non-conventional approach, unlike the government, and sought to change the country's fate in its own way. This concept is highly imaginative and unbelievable for the rule-abiding and observant Japanese people. The phrase *shikata ga nai* in Japanese is commonly interpreted in English as "it can't be helped" or "nothing can be done about it." According to Stanford psychologist Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu[42], the extensive use of this expression reflects Japan's enduring perspective and abiding attitude toward disaster—an acceptance of vulnerability. Likewise, Ron Slate[43] also demonstrated that this Japanese phrase represents the survivor's acceptance of challenges with appreciation for what endures and continues. However, in the book *The Courage to Be Disliked* (2019), a popular bestseller in Japan, it presents a widely embraced explanation among the Japanese people. This explanation advocates for accepting

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41 Tawada, *The Emissary*, 121

42 Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, "Finding Courage by Accepting Vulnerability | Psychology Today," www.psychologytoday.com, January 7, 2015, https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/finding-meaning-in-life-s-struggles/201501/finding-courage-accepting-vulnerability.

43 Ron Slate, "On the Emissary, a Novel by Yoko Tawada, Translated by Margaret Mitsutani – on the Seawall," On THE Seawall, April 22, 2018, https://www.ronslate.com/on-the-emissary-a-novel-by-yoko-tawada-translated-by-margaret-mitsutani-new-directions/.

reality while also striving for change, breaking free from widely accepted stereotypes, and discovering new paths forward based on this. Ichiro Kishima and Fumitake Koga[44] in their Adlerian psychology emphasized in their monograph the importance of not succumbing to mental pressure and self-doubt imposed by those around us. Instead, they encouraged individuals to find their own goals and persevere in the direction they desired, even if it meant facing isolation and hatred. In the face of an ecological disaster, the essential thing is to not surrender and give up but to possess the resilience to overcome the adversity.

Years later, when Mumei reached the age of 15, his previous geography teacher approached him once more. This unexpected encounter surprised both Mumei and his great-grandfather. After engaging in conversation for a short while, Yonatani took Mumei aside to discuss his potential interest in becoming an emissary. Yonatani believed that the passing of time had confirmed the validity of his initial decision and he had come on this occasion primarily to obtain a definitive answer. The subsequent narratives provided by the author in the article resolves the enigma for us:

> Sure that at age fifteen Mumei was psychologically mature enough, and knowing he would soon have to breathe through a machine, which would complicate matters, Yonatani had decided to approach the boy directly. Of course he could refuse, or wait a little longer, Yonatani assured him, blue veins standing out at his temples.
>
> "I understand. I'll go right away."
>
> Mumei's voice, which would never change, was high and clear.[45]

Through Yonatani's persistent and dedicated efforts he received a favorable response from Mumei after approaching and engaging in a conversation with him. In that moment, Yonatani likely experienced a sense of fulfillment and achievement. From Yonatani's perspective, it can be concluded that through Mumei, he discovered a

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[44] Ichiro Kishimi and Koga Fumitake, *The Courage to Be Disliked: How to Free Yourself, Change Your Life and Achieve Real Happiness* (London: Allen & Unwin, 2019).
[45] Tawada, *The Emissary*, 131-132

glimmer of hope for rebuilding Japan in the aftermath of the disaster. This revelation serves as a pivotal moment in the novel, as it redirects the story from its bleak and apocalyptic trajectory towards a brighter future. In other words, the inclusion of Mumei's promise enhances the storyline, becoming an essential and thrilling aspect of the overall narrative, and establishes the mood for the conclusion of the novel.

8.8 Mumei's Lifestyle and the Genuine Significance of the Term "Emissary"

When Mumei consents to serve as an emissary, the narrative undergoes a transformation, akin to the transition from night to dawn. In this post-apocalyptic realm Mumei not only displays the fortitude to confront the harsh realities of existence, but also risks being despised as he endeavors to alter the unfavorable status quo in his life. Within the framework of Tawada's constructed post-disaster world Mumei stands out as a distinctive figure within the Japanese psyche. This echoes the principles of "holistic approach"[46] espoused in Adlerian psychology: cultivating a positive self-image, taking action to achieve personal goals, and ultimately attaining a sense of accomplishment. Mumei's efforts to overcome his inferiority complex in the face of catastrophe align with the application of Adlerian psychology as he relentlessly pursues his aspirations. However, perhaps a more profound matter to contemplate is the exceptional attributes that distinguish Mumei as an emissary amidst numerous other contenders.

In Tawada's narrative Mumei is depicted as feeble and imbued with a sense of inferiority. However, being born in the post-catastrophe era he is a stoic being who is satisfied with the existing state of affairs and rarely complains. This is corroborated by his personal dialogues with his great-grandfather:

> Like most children of his generation, Mumei was unable to absorb the calcium he needed. Human beings may turn into a toothless species someday, Yoshiro thought, mulling over what the dentist had said on their way home until Mumei — responding to his unspoken anxiety —

[46] Kishimi and Koga, *The Courage to Be Disliked: How to Free Yourself, Change Your Life and Achieve Real Happiness*, 155-170

chirped, “Don’t worry, Great-grandpa, sparrows get along fine without teeth, you know.” Mumei had an uncanny ability to read people’s thoughts.[47]

This excerpt portrays Yoshiro's concern about Mumei's poor ability to absorb calcium, which is resulting in the rapid loss of his baby teeth. The dentist warns Yoshiro that this problem will also affect Mumei's permanent teeth. However, Mumei, sensing his great-grandfather's mood, remains optimistic and accepts the situation with no complaints. Mumei's stoic nature and understanding of his great-grandfather's changing emotions are prominent themes throughout the novel, as he believes that both sparrows and elderly individuals can live without teeth. In other words, the optimistic and forward-looking mentality portrayed by Mumei, the protagonist, gives the impression of someone who may appear weak externally, but possesses a positive and sunny disposition internally. In the midst of chaos and hardship caused by calamities Mumei’s lifestyle consistently transforms such adversity into a form of inner tranquility. This ability to bring solace and radiate one's own light is a characteristic of an emissary. It is this quality that enabled Yonatani to identify Mumei. Adler indicated in his book about lifestyle *The Science of Living* (2013) that we observe people's lifestyle in specific environmental conditions. We cannot clearly see a person's lifestyle as long as they are in a favorable situation. However, in new situations where they face difficulties, the lifestyle becomes clear and distinct.[48] Perhaps this is the reason why Mumei can unleash such a tremendous amount of energy when faced with challenges.

Finally, we thoroughly examine how skilledly the author manipulates homophonic devices across various cultures to convey their intended message through the title of the work, *The Emissary*. The Japanese original title is *Kentōshi*, which, as a common noun, refers to the emissaries Japan sent to China beginning in the 7th century. According to Fogel, Joshua A[49], the Japanese emissaries (Kentōshi) visited Tang China during the 7th, 8th and 9th centuries to learn about Chinese culture and civilization.

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47 Tawada, *The Emissary*, 17-18
48 Adler, *The Science of Living*, 98-99
49 Joshua A Fogel, *Articulating the Sinosphere: Sino-Japanese Relations in Space and Time* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009).

Initially the interactions were more political and ceremonial in nature, but gradually developed into cultural exchanges. These exchanges were also accompanied by the growth of commercial ties over time. However, in the context of this apocalyptic novel, Tawada cleverly coined a homonym with the word Kentōshi. In other words, although this homophonic word has divergent semantic connotations in their written Chinese characters, the latter word in the context of the fiction conveys a sense of proximity to the meaning "The Light Bearers[50]." Interestingly, the author uses the word Kentōshi, a double entendre to symbolically convey a deeper meaning. One aspect of this is the portrayal of emissaries sent abroad, similar to the ones sent to China during the Tang Dynasty, who need to gain knowledge about foreign cultures in order to bring about change in the current closed state. On the other hand, in this world after an ecological disaster, Mumei, the emissary, is compared to a beacon of hope for a new continent. Although the story does not reveal whether the emissary actually returns from their studies, it provides readers and viewers with a glimmer of hope that breaks through the darkness and stagnation. This represents a profound layer of meaning that the author intends to express through the novel's title.

Conclusion

Japan is a country that experiences frequent natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions. Especially, the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011 and the subsequent Fukushima nuclear power plant accident have garnered global attention. Moreover, this triple disaster has led to the emergence of post-disaster literature, known as "Fukushima Literature", which focuses on the theme of ecological disasters. During this time, notable writers like Kawakami Hiromi and Wagō Ryōichi have risen to prominence in the Japanese literary community.

Based on the Fukushima tragedy and the development of apocalyptic theory in Japan,

[50] Margaret Mitsutani, David Boyd, and David Karashima, "Some Prefer Footnotes: A Conversation with Margaret Mitsutani about Her Translation of Yoko Tawada's the Emissary," The Waseda International House of Literature Virtual Annex, September 10, 2021, https://www.waseda.jp/inst/wihl-annex/interviews-en/628.

as well as the general background of Japanese society, it appears evident that, in contrast with Jungian psychology, Adlerian psychology aligns more closely with Japan's cultural context and social circumstances. In other words, Adlerian psychology, which acknowledges reality, but does not settle for it, has led the Japanese people to recognize human vulnerability in the face of nature while also instilling the country with the courage to seek hope amid despair. From the chosen anthology and the fiction in these two chapters, some characteristics of eco-psychology in the context of Japan can be summarized as follows:

First of all, within Adlerian psychology, the concept of the inferiority complex emphasizes the sense of insignificance and powerlessness in humans when confronted with nature. This is reflected in the extensive portrayal of ecological disasters wreaking havoc on humanity in Japanese literary works. In contrast, Jungian psychology advocates for breaking down the boundaries between humans and nature, as well as between life and death. For example, Tokarczuk's work reflects the healing aspect of nature within the spiritual realm of mankind, while in Tawada's novel, the destructive power of nature in the face of humanity is emphasized.

Secondly, according to Adlerian psychology, a feeling of superiority can sometimes prevent us from seeing the truth. In challenging situations, it's important to seek support from others in the community as equal partners in order to overcome difficulties together. Unlike Jung's psychoanalysis, which focuses less on interpersonal interaction, it emphasizes the communication between individuals and their surrounding environment.

Additionally, combined with Adlerian psychology, which emphasizes finding hope and optimistic solutions in difficult situations, ecopsychology in the context of Japanese culture stresses the importance of living in harmony with nature, a type of coexistence, rather than trying to dominate it, especially in the face of challenges like ecological disasters. While ecopsychology in Tokarczuk's work also highlights the unity and balance between humans and nature, it does so by placing humans within nature and encouraging them to respond to nature's call for spiritual sublimation, a perspective not found in Adlerian psychology.

Finally, Jung's archetypal psychology merges personified aspects of the natural world with mythological narratives, frequently incorporating figures like Hermes, Dionysus, and other deities into literary works. Archetypal psychology perceives the world, encompassing both humans and nature, as a unified entity. In contrast, Adlerian psychology diminishes the link between mythology and nature, focusing more on the attitude and lifestyle of individuals in natural calamities, aligning with actuality.

Chapter 9 American Freudian Ecopsychology in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*

In the preceding section, we examined the utilization of Adlerian psychology as a theoretical framework in contemporary Japanese literature. We have also mapped out the course of how Japan, as a multi-hazardous country, has introduced and advanced apocalyptic literature, demonstrating the extent and reception of ecopsychology in Japanese literature through the analysis of two pieces. In the subsequent two chapters, we will continue to trace the footsteps of psychoanalysis across the Pacific Ocean, shifting our focus from Japan to the American continent to investigate how Freudian psychoanalysis took root and flourished in the United States. We will choose representative American literary works as our primary material and scrutinize in depth how Freud and the related theories of ecocriticism are expressed in literary works.

9.1 The Significance of Freudian Psychoanalysis in the United States

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) is widely recognized as an Austrian neurologist and the pioneer of psychoanalysis[1], his therapeutic approach for understanding and addressing ailments believed to stem from psychological conflicts. Once Freud established his private practice in Vienna in 1886, he commenced utilizing hypnosis in his clinical practice. However, the inconsistent outcomes of his early clinical work eventually led him to discontinue the use of hypnosis. Nonetheless, Freud discovered that patients' dreams could be effectively analyzed to uncover the intricate organization of unconscious material and to illustrate the psychological process of repression. According to Peter Gay[2] mentioned in his volume, by 1896 Freud began using the term "psychoanalysis" to describe his new clinical approach and the associated theories. Moreover, From August 29 to September 21, 1909, he traveled to the United States and delivered five lectures at Clark University. This visit is noteworthy as it symbolizes the sociocultural changes that commenced in the early twentieth century and significantly

[1] Daniel Pick, *Psychoanalysis: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2015), 3.
[2] Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time* (New York: Norton, 2006), 64–71.

impacted the United States for decades to come.[3] Although some scholars believe that psychoanalysis has always been controversial as a system for understanding the world, society, and humans, as Freud depicted them, the controversies of the late twentieth century have obscured the extent to which earlier intellectuals and public figures in the United States embraced psychoanalytic ideas and practices. This is evident in the influence of psychoanalysis in films or on the history of local figures and organizations. Nathan G. Hale[4] even argued "everyone agrees, Freud's thinking had far greater intellectual and social impact than it did elsewhere on the planet".

In the years following Freud's visit in 1909 and leading up to World War II, historians discovered that psychoanalysis spread in the United States primarily through two channels: the medical field[5] and the intellectual and cultural avant-garde[6]. The influx of European analysts and other intellectuals to the United States during the interwar period resulted in significant interactions. The prominent analytic practitioners often demonstrated a high level of sensitivity towards what could be regarded as philosophical inquiries in Europe. These included not only the mind-body problem and issues related to human nature, but also encompassed questions on education, social structures, literature, and the arts. As a collective, psychoanalysts displayed a remarkable interdisciplinary background. Therefore, John Burnham[7] mentioned in his edited book it is not surprising that psychoanalysts had direct intellectual exchanges as well as professional interactions with prominent thinkers and artists. In other words, during the peak of both the dissemination and status of psychoanalysis in the United States in the 1940s–1960s, it was challenging to distinguish the fundamental psychoanalytic movement from the widespread cultural influence. Furthermore, a dedicated team of analysts, promoting the concept of "American ego psychology,"

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[3] John Donald Hicks, George E.. Mowry, and Robert E.. Burke, *The American Nation. A History of the United States from 1865 to the Present, John D. Hicks, George E. Mowry, Robert E. Burke*, 5th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), 512–14.

[4] Nathan G Hale, *The Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis in the United States* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1995).

[5] John Chynoweth Burnham, *Psychoanalysis and American Medicine: 1894-1918* (New York: International Universities Press, 1967).

[6] Nathan G Hale, *Freud and the Americans the Beginnings of Psychoanalysis in the United States, 1876-1917* (New York Oxford University Press, 1971).

[7] John C Burnham, *After Freud Left: A Century of Psychoanalysis in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 1–4.

established the technical benchmark for psychoanalytic practice.[8] Concurrently, intellectuals and the general public encountered Freudian ideas prevalent throughout the culture. Nathan G Hale argued in his book *The Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysi*s (1971) that historians and other scholars have already confirmed the peak of interest in psychoanalysis in the United States during the mid-century decades, despite denials from some biased modern scholars[9]. One significant piece of evidence is the widespread practice of personal psychoanalysis among influential intellectual and policy elites for generations.[10]

Besides, in the domain of psychiatry, analysts have successfully assumed the majority of leadership roles, and their influence has consistently extended into the field of medicine and beyond. For example, during the World War II, professional psychologists were starting to acknowledge Freudian teachings and therapies, albeit reluctantly.[11] During the same period, psychoanalysis also gained prominence in other social science fields, especially from the 1930s onwards. An examination of academic publications from the 1950s demonstrates the substantial impact of psychoanalytic concepts, as scholars in anthropology and related disciplines, as well as in literature and the arts, overtly and consistently integrated psychoanalytic theories into their work.[12] Especially, in 1959 sociologist Richard Tracy LaPiere[13] from Stanford University determined that in the United States "the increasing prevalence of Freudianism as a rationale for and validation of human behavior represents a change of utmost importance." It tends to be clear that the evidence of the significance of Freud's influence in America during the 1940s–1960s is compelling. This peak period came to an end in the aftermath of the cultural movements of the 1960s and the simultaneous revival of material, non-psychological concepts, and new psychopharmaceutical

[8] Martin S Bergmann, *The Hartmann Era* (New York: Other Press, 2000).
[9] Todd Dufresne, *Against Freud: Critics Talk Back* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007).
[10] Stephen Farber and Marc Green, *Hollywood on the Couch: A Candid Look at the Overheated Love Affair between Psychiatrists and Moviemakers* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1993).
[11] David Shakow and David Rapaport, *The Influence of Freud on American Psychology* (New York: International Universities Press, 1964).
[12] Edward J. K. Gitre, "Importing Freud: First-Wave Psychoanalysis, Interwar Social Sciences, and the Interdisciplinary Foundations of an American Social Theory," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 46, no. 3 (July 9, 2010): 239–62, https://doi.org/10.1002/jhbs.20439.
[13] Richard Tracy Lapiere, *The Freudian Ethic, by Richard Lapiere* (Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1959).

treatments for mental disorders.

During the period from 1965 to 1975, as psychoactive drugs became widely accepted in the field of psychiatry, a new emphasis on physical symptoms began to push psychoanalytic practitioners to the margins of both the medical community and society.[14] Despite this trend, as late as the decades around the turn of the twenty-first century, Sigmund Freud continued to be of interest. In certain areas of literary and humanistic studies, as well as among significant numbers of psychotherapists, psychoanalysis still held significant influence. At the same time, innovators selectively incorporated Freudian ideas in new forms, influenced by reinterpretations of Freud in Europe and contributing to post-modern theories, establishing Freud as a respected thinker.

9.2 Post-apocalyptic Novels in the United States

Post-apocalyptic novels are intricately linked with apocalyptic literature, a genre of prophetic writing that was popular among millennialist early Christians. According to Greg Carey[15], the term "apocalypse" is of Greek origin, meaning "revelation" or "an unveiling or unfolding of things not previously known." Meanwhile, post-apocalyptic fiction is a subset of science fiction that depicts the collapse of Earth's civilization. The apocalypse event could be related to the climate, such as uncontrollable climate change. Brent Ryan Bellamy[16] argued in his monograph that post-apocalyptic novels do not necessarily revolve around the catastrophic end of the world, but rather depict fictional conclusions that might carry implications of urgency or historical significance. In his view, recent works of this genre set in or related to the United States reflect a cultural unease about the potential decline of US dominance and the arduous adjustment to life under neoliberalism.

Post-apocalyptic narratives showcase individuals adapting to significant shifts in

[14] Paul E Stepansky, *Psychoanalysis at the Margins* (New York: Other Press, 2009).
[15] Greg Carey, *Ultimate Things* (Chalice Press, 2012), 4.
[16] Brent Ryan Bellamy, *Remainders of the American Century* (Wesleyan University Press, 2021), 1.

their environment, frequently resulting in the elimination of different societal options. For example, individuals in a post-apocalyptic scenario may need to struggle to obtain basic necessities, often at the detriment of other survivors and their previous way of life. Additionally, the storytelling techniques that post-apocalyptic novels developed after World War II are particularly suited to exploring geopolitical anxiety in the twenty-first century. By envisioning a future where there is not enough material wealth to go around for the survivors, despite significant population reductions, post-apocalyptic novels depict a situation remarkably similar to what the ideologues of capital would have people believe they are experiencing today. Brent Ryan Bellamy, author of the book *Remainders of the American Century* (2021), emphasized that in the uncertain present these novels provide a means of articulating the management of anxiety at the end of the American century. On the other hand, the anxieties depicted in post-apocalyptic storytelling provide important insights into people's fears and potential responses. However, the eventful survival narratives often mask the underlying causes of these anxieties. This complexity is compounded by the evolving nature of historical reality. As a result, the fictional realms of post-apocalyptic stories are broadened. On the contrary, in post-apocalyptic novels there is another prominent trend that views crisis as an opportunity and promotes an interpretation of history that unexpectedly praises the individual over the collective and aims to return to the past. These literary works represent a deep-seated form of wish fulfillment, often depicting the hypothetical downfall of the United States to narrate its resurgence to a promising time. For instance, the post-apocalyptic novel *The Road* (2006) by American author Cormac McCarthy, which will be examined later in this chapter.

Post-apocalyptic fiction in the United States constructs a fantasy depicting the potential for the country to reclaim its dominant status, which encompasses a deep respect for individualism and an aspiration to revive the previous societal order. Furthermore, it aligns with enduring inclinations in the American political imagination and corresponds with an emphasis on individualism and an anti-collectivist ethos, which have arguably evolved into a predominant mode of external communication model in the United States to a certain degree.

9.3 Worldly Reception of the Novel *The Road* (2006) by Cormac McCarthy

It has been 18 years since Cormac McCarthy's harrowing post-apocalyptic journey, *The Road*, was first published in 2006. The novel depicts a father and son navigating through a collapsed United States after an unspecified ecological disaster that has devastated nearly all life on Earth. Cormac McCarthy was an American writer and dramatist, he authored a large number of novels in the Southern Gothic, western, and post-apocalyptic genres, and he also penned plays and screenplays. Saul Bellow praised his "absolutely overpowering use of language, his life-giving and death-dealing sentences."[17] Furthermore, Richard B. Woodward[18] has characterized his writing as bearing resemblance to the style of early Hemingway. *The Road* earned McCarthy the 2007 Pulitzer Prize[19] for fiction and is widely regarded as one of the most significant works of climate change fiction.

Nevertheless, when it comes to climate change, whether in the early years of the 21st century or even in recent years, the majority of Americans have consistently demonstrated a lack of interest in the topic or have perceived climate change as irrelevant to them. In other words, some Americans still prioritize other issues over climate change, and a portion of the population outright denies its existence. To gain deeper insights into the viewpoints of individuals who perceive less urgency in addressing climate change, the Pew Research Center undertook comprehensive interviews with 32 American adults who uphold this perspective, including those who do not acknowledge the existence of evidence indicating global warming. The interviews unveiled that utilizing language that portrays climate change as a crisis and an imminent threat was met with skepticism by a significant number of participants.[20] Additionally, another study by the same institute demonstrates the US public's opinions

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[17] Michael Lynn Crews, *Books Are Made out of Books: A Guide to Cormac McCarthy's Literary Influences* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2017), 57.
[18] Richard B. Woodward, "The New York Times: Book Review Search Article," archive.nytimes.com, April 19, 1992, https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/98/05/17/specials/mccarthy-venom.html.
[19] Seattle Times staff, "2007 Pulitzer Prize Winners," The Seattle Times, April 17, 2007, https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/2007-pulitzer-prize-winners/.
[20] Giancarlo Pasquini et al., "Why Some Americans Do Not See Urgency on Climate Change," Pew Research Center Science & Society, August 9, 2023, https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2023/08/09/why-some-americans-do-not-see-urgency-on-climate-change.

on climate change. The survey reveals that about 50% of US adults link climate change to human actions, while a similar proportion think that the Earth's warming is either natural or not supported by evidence.[21] These differences also extend to different views on the potential effects of climate change and the possible solutions, both in terms of policy and individual behavior. On the other hand, the United States has released more than 400 billion metric tons of greenhouse gases, surpassing any other country in the world.[22] Therefore, the United States' climate change policy significantly influences global climate change and efforts to mitigate it. Climate change has become a more prominent global issue than water and food pollution.

Despite limited public and government awareness of climate change in the United States, there are numerous ecologists and academics advocating for attention to the issue and for implementing measures to address it. For instance, Joshua M. Carlson[23] argued that the global community is facing an increasingly urgent challenge posed by the impact of human-induced climate change. It is crucial to implement measures to mitigate the adverse effects of it. Moreover, Claire Armitstead[24] once asserted in "The Guardian" that now more than ever novelists are facing up to the unthinkable: the climate crisis. However, Cormac McCarthy had already recognized the perils of climate change and its impact on humanity in 2006, utilizing it as the foundation for his post-apocalyptic novel. Therefore, this creative writing addressing climate change and the environmental crisis not only demonstrates the author's foresight, but also establishes new terrain for subsequent writers, raising awareness of climate change for them and society as a whole. Critic Michael Chabon[25] in "The New York Review of Books" mentioned that *The Road* does not belong to the genres of parable or science fiction.

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[21] Pew Research Center, "Public Views on Climate Change and Climate Scientists," Pew Research Center Science & Society (Pew Research Center Science & Society, October 4, 2016), https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2016/10/04/public-views-on-climate-change-and-climate-scientists/.

[22] Ian Tiseo, "Cumulative CO_2 Emissions Globally by Country 2018," Statista, December 12, 2023, https://www.statista.com/statistics/1007454/cumulative-co2-emissions-worldwide-by-country/.

[23] Joshua M. Carlson et al., "Paying Attention to Climate Change: Positive Images of Climate Change Solutions Capture Attention," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 71 (October 2020): 101477, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2020.101477.

[24] Claire Armitstead, "Stories to Save the World: The New Wave of Climate Fiction," The Guardian, June 26, 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/jun/26/stories-to-save-the-world-the-new-wave-of-climate-fiction.

[25] Michael Chabon, "After the Apocalypse | Michael Chabon," The New York Review of Books (The New York Review of Books, August 13, 2020), https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2007/02/15/after-the-apocalypse.

Fundamentally, it represents a return to McCarthy's most brilliant genre work, combining adventure and Gothic horror. Furthermore, Alan Warner[26], in "The Guardian" made the point that the novel explored transformative power and the climate crisis. McCarthy pushes the boundaries of conceivable love and despair shared between a conscientious father and his vulnerable young son. The initial impact of the novel is serious and overwhelming, culminating in an emotionally devastating effect. Finally, a critique of the novel by Janet Maslin[27] indicated that this piece of work is an artistic creation that evokes both fear and inspiration. McCarthy has called upon his most powerful visions to convey destruction. He articulates the unspeakable in a concise warning that is too impactful to be desensitizing. Thus, in the following section we will further analyze the impactful post-apocalyptic scenes and the warm relationships between characters in the work with specific reference to the text.

9.4 The Death Drive in Apocalyptic Fiction

Todd Dufresne[28] has cited the significance of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle (BPP)* of 1920 in elucidating Freudian theories. Furthermore, this work stands as a crucial addition to Sigmund Freud's body of work, representing the pinnacle of his "metapsychology" during the middle period and establishing the foundation for all his subsequent cultural works. In this piece Freud delves into contemplation not only regarding psychoanalytic theory, but also about enduring explorations of life and death, pleasure and pain. Among them also includes Freud's famous speculation, *Todestriebe*, the death drive theory. According to the *Beyond the Pleasure Principle (BPP)*, Freud proposed that a significant amount of human behavior was driven by two instincts: life drive and death drive. Life drive (Eros) encompasses survival, reproduction, and pleasure needs such as food, shelter, love, and sex. In contrast, death drive (Thanatos)

[26] Alan Warner, "Review: The Road by Cormac McCarthy," *The Guardian* (*The Guardian*, February 22, 2018), https://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/nov/04/featuresreviews.guardianreview4.
[27] Janet Maslin, "The Road - Cormac McCarthy - Books - Review," *The New York Times*, September 25, 2006, https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/25/books/25masl.html.
[28] Sigmund Freud, Todd Dufresne, and Gregory C Richter, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920; repr., Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2011), 13.

arises from an unconscious desire for death, which Freud posited as inherent in all humans. Freud suggested that self-destructive behavior was one manifestation of the death drive.[29] However, he also believed that these death instincts were largely balanced by life instincts. The dynamic interaction between life drive and death drive is a pervasive theme in apocalyptic fiction. This juxtaposition is exemplified in the novel *The Road* (2006), which will be the focus of our analysis this time. On the one hand, there is the protagonist's apprehension of mortality, depicted through the harsh, bleak, and despairing narrative. On the other hand, there is the father and son's pursuit of sustenance, resilience, and determination to persevere in the midst of adversity. It resembles an innate battle and struggle between survival and demise. We validate this interplay of death drive and life drive with the following excerpts from the work:

> When he woke in the woods in the dark and the cold of the night he'd reach out to touch the child sleeping beside him. Nights dark beyond darkness and the days more gray each one than what had gone before. Like the onset of some cold glaucoma dimming away the world. His hand rose and fell softly with each precious breath. He pushed away the plastic tarpaulin and raised himself in the stinking robes and blankets and looked toward the east for any light but there was none.

> With the first gray light he rose and left the boy sleeping and walked out to the road and squatted and studied the country to the south. Barren, silent, godless. He thought the month was October but he wasn't sure. He hadn't kept a calendar for years. They were moving south. There'd be no surviving another winter here.[30]

At the outset of the narrative, the author's distinct storytelling unveils a desolate and perilous world for the reader. The father, a central figure, endeavors to seek light in the direction of the emerging sun following a catastrophe, albeit unsuccessfully. Meanwhile,

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[29] Eric Berne, *What Do You Say after You Say Hello?: The Psychology of Human Destinyn* (London: Corgi Books, 2001), 399–400.
[30] Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (New York: Vintage International, Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc, 2007), 1–2.

he comes to the realization that enduring the oppressive darkness will not enable him and his son to survive, thus determining to trek towards the southern shore in pursuit of prospects for survival. The introductory depiction in the novel reveals the struggle between life and death to the reader. Ultimately, equipped with food and plastic tarpaulin, the father and son, pushing a shopping cart, commence their quest to discover hope amidst desolation. In terms of narrative devices, the novel commences in *medias res*, thrusting the reader into the midst of the action. The circumstances that led the man and the boy to their current predicament are gradually unveiled through flashbacks, creating a sense of urgency in their quest for sustenance and survival.

Furthermore, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud connects the repetition compulsion to the biological imperative. Angel Garma and Buenos Aires[31] stated that Freud believed that instincts were the outcome of the interaction between organic matter and environmental conditions. According to Freud's theory, every organism, after reenacting all the historically acquired conditions that made its existence possible, simply desires to "die in its own way" to finally achieve the pleasure of nonexistence.[32] Similarly, his new ideas in BPP could not have been darker, as he clarified in 1930 that one is left with two tragic, radically antisocial choices in life: to destroy others or to destroy oneself, sadism or masochism.[33] The latter encompasses every form of behavior that causes unnecessary conscious or unconscious suffering. In other words, sometimes the death instinct can be an unpleasant feeling, but nonetheless, individuals are unable to resist it; it is not a psychological trauma, but rather a subjective decision that people make regarding it. For instance, in the subsequent excerpt early in the novel, while heading south, the father brings his son back to his childhood home. Even though he is aware that there may be nothing left of the house, the father decides to return and explore.

They walked through the dining room where the firebrick in the hearth was as yellow as the

[31] Angel Garma and Buenos Aires, "Within the Realm of the Death Instinct.," *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*52, no. 2 (January 1, 1971): 145–54.
[32] Freud, Dufresne, and Richter, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 22.
[33] Freud, Dufresne, and Richter, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 19.

> day it was laid because his mother could not bear to see it blackened. The floor buckled from the rainwater. In the living room the bones of a small animal dismembered and placed in a pile. Possibly a cat. A glass tumbler by the door. The boy gripped his hand.[34]

The room was undoubtedly empty except for the rain-warped floor and the animal carcasses. For the father, the scene is not just a reminder of the past but a harsh reality to endure—masochistic suffering driven by the instinct of death. Moreover, this deadly and agonizing atmosphere permeates the room, causing the child to cling fearfully to his father's hand, wishing to leave sooner rather than later. The father, in contrast, is reluctant to depart, with an unpleasant yet undeniable feeling lingering in his mind—it tends to be the oppressive sensation induced by the instinct of death. Freud argued it is undeniably more challenging for us to comprehend the death drive, and we tend to perceive it only as a latent force behind Eros.

In addition, Freud emphasized that the destructive drive, when directed towards objects, must provide the ego with the satisfaction of its vital needs and with control over nature.[35] He took the standpoint that the aggressive tendency is an original, independent drive-disposition in humankind, and he thought that it is the greatest obstacle to civilization. In simpler terms, building human civilization is a unique process that opposes the influence of the death instinct on humanity. It represents Eros, which views the individual, the family, and the nation as a unified human community. Therefore, it is crucial for the remnants of human civilization to persist in post-apocalyptic fiction. They serve as a significant counterbalance to the primal death drive. There are plentiful examples of civilizational remainders in *The Road*. For instance, while traveling south, they encountered an abandoned gas station where they extracted the remaining gasoline to use as a fuel source. Furthermore, they stopped by a supermarket on the edge of town to gather food supplies, stumbled upon a vending machine offering cold beverages, and savored a can of Coca-Cola together.

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[34] McCarthy, *The Road*, 26–27.
[35] Freud, Dufresne, and Richter, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 134.

> They crossed the river by an old concrete bridge and a few miles on they came upon a roadside gas station. They stood in the road and studied it. I think we should check it out, the man said.[36]

> Coins everywhere in the ash. He sat and ran his hand around in the works of the gutted machines and in the second one it closed over a cold metal cylinder. He withdrew his hand slowly and sat looking at a Coca Cola.[37]

In the fragment of the original text, both supermarkets, coins, gas stations, and Coca-Cola are artifacts of human civilization. Although they are simply discarded remainders in a post-apocalyptic world, for a narrative to be categorized as post-apocalyptic, it must contain remainders, which refer to the story elements that have not been entirely obliterated by the catastrophic event. They provide comprehensible information about the fictional world and at times act as a resource. The philosopher Martin Hägglund[38] offers a valuable formulation of post-apocalyptic scenarios: survival entails persisting after a past that no longer exists and preserving the memory of this past for a future that has not yet arrived. In a post-apocalyptic world, our current existence becomes the past, and that envisioned present may evolve into the future we will encounter. The remnants repurposed by survivors serve as a testament to human civilization. It signifies a civilization that has not succumbed amidst the debris and dust, an undead civilization, and symbolizes a life force and hope guided by the life drive. On the other hand, in particular, a part of the death drive is redirected outward and manifests as an aggressive instinct, posing the greatest obstacle to civilization. Freud protested that the progress of civilization should exhibit the conflict between Eros and Death, between the life instinct and the destructive instinct, as it unfolds in the human species.[39] This conflict is the fundamental essence of all life. Thus, the advancement of civilization can be succinctly described as the fight for the survival of the human species.

Psychoanalytic experts have largely disregarded or minimized the death instinct

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[36] McCarthy, *The Road*, 6.
[37] McCarthy, *The Road*, 23.
[38] Hägglund Martin, *Radical Atheism: Derrida and the Time of Life* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008).
[39] Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 1930).

theory, Freud's most controversial and renowned hypothesis from the *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Marina Ludwigs,[40] for instance, contended that the current efforts to integrate the death drive into cognitive theories rooted in predictive processing are unconvincing due to the lack of paradox within these theories. However, two famous exceptions are Melanie Klein and Jacques Lacan. Lacan[41] incorporated it into his intricate theories, while Klein[42] placed the death drive theory at the core of her complex interpretations of unconscious "phantasy." Moreover, Freud's development of the death instinct theory is essentially a hypothesis, a speculation derived from his experiences.[43] Therefore, it is possible that he himself may not have been able to provide a truly scientific validation. However, there are resemblances and relevance in the cultural adaptation of the death instinct theory, particularly in apocalyptic fiction. This is because post-apocalyptic fiction serves as a form of speculation and imagination for the audiences, presenting an imaginary world and hypotheses as well. Therefore, the theory can be employed to analyze apocalyptic novels.

9.5 The Description of the Natural Environment and Ecological Shifts in *The Road*

The post-apocalyptic genre has long been linked with contemporary real-world crises. For example, Judith Merril's *Shadow on the Hearth* (1950) provides a realistic portrayal of human survival after the atomic bomb.[44] Additionally, Brent Ryan Bellamy argued that while some post-apocalyptic stories may directly respond to specific events, they hold broader symbolic significance.[45] In the case of *The Road* the depiction of ecological changes in the post-apocalyptic world highlights the potential future consequences of our current behavior in response to catastrophic events.

Death looms over the man and boy's experiences in the novel, manifesting as the

[40] Eric Gans, "Retrieving the Paradox: Freud's Death Drive and the Originary Concept of Deferral — Anthropoetics XXVII, No. 2 Spring 2022," Anthropoetics, April 22, 2022, https://anthropoetics.ucla.edu/ap2702/2702ludwigs/.
[41] Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2006).
[42] Hanna Segal, *Introduction to the Work of Melanie Klein.* (S.L.: Routledge, 2018), 12.
[43] Freud, Dufresne, and Richter, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 14.
[44] Judith Merril, *Shadow on the Hearth* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1950).
[45] Bellamy, *Remainders of the American Century*, 6.

harsh climate, threats from road agents, sickness, and scarcity of food. These are enduring perils that persist throughout their lives. Following an unspecified catastrophe, the Earth's ecosystem has been ravaged, and as the father and son journey south, they confront not only extreme cold and blizzards but also the lifeless, blackened rivers. Such a desolate environment drains vitality, leaving an eerie silence as though all life has ceased and they have become the sole survivors in the world. The subsequent scene depicts them passing by a dam, the conversation evoking an oppressive silence:

> What is that, Papa?
>
> It's a dam.
>
> What's it for?
>
> It made the lake. Before they built the dam that was just a river down there. The dam used the water that ran through it to turn big fans called turbines that would generate electricity.
>
> To make lights.
>
> Yes. To make lights.
>
> Can we go down there and see it?
>
> I think it's too far.
>
> Will the dam be there for a long time?
>
> I think so. It's made out of concrete. It will probably be there for hundreds of years. Thousands, even.
>
> Do you think there could be fish in the lake?
>
> No. There's nothing in the lake.[46]

The conversation between the father and son highlights father's helplessness. The father emphasizes the longevity of the concrete dam, contrasting it with the lack of life in the man-made lake it created. This irony reflects the extended survival of human civilization compared to nature. Although it may appear that human civilization surpasses nature, the absence of nature and other life questions the purpose of these

[46] McCarthy, *The Road*, 19-20.

artifacts. Similarly, as the father and son journey south, they experience various extreme weather conditions and strange ecological landscapes, including extended snowfall and stagnant rivers filled with dark water. While traveling through the remains of a human-made tourist resort, they come across charred forests and formerly clear rivers that have disappeared.

> He shifted the pack higher on his shoulders and looked out over the wasted country. The road was empty. Below in the little valley the still gray serpentine of a river. Motionless and precise.[47]

> They passed through the ruins of a resort town and took the road south. Burnt forests for miles along the slopes and snow sooner than he would have thought. No tracks in the road, nothing living anywhere. The fireblackened boulders like the shapes of bears on the starkly wooded slopes. He stood on a stone bridge where the waters slurried into a pool and turned slowly in a gray foam. Where once he'd watched trout swaying in the current, tracking their perfect shadows on the stones beneath.[48]

> The falling snow curtained them about. There was no way to see anything at either side of the road.[49]

With burned branches, stagnant rivers, empty roads, snow that makes it impossible to tell where to go, and unbearable cold, the author vividly paints a picture full of ecological disasters and environmental devastation as the father and his son make their way to the south. This exaggerated setting not only intensifies the challenges faced by the characters, but also prompts the reader to contemplate the potential severe consequences for our planet if current trends persist. These ecological descriptions serve as both the backdrop of the novel and a powerful warning to the reader.

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[47] McCarthy, *The Road*, 6.
[48] McCarthy, *The Road*, 29-30.
[49] McCarthy, *The Road*, 94.

The Road serves as a model for American apocalyptic fiction, and this depiction of human civilizational decline in the novel seems to be tied to the broader context of the United States. For instance, taking a global perspective in *The Long Twentieth Century* (1994) and subsequent works, the sociologist Giovanni Arrighi identifies a shift starting in the 1970s from the peak of US hegemony to what he calls its autumnal phase.[50] Through the application of apocalyptic fiction, it shows that Arrighi's model narrates the rise and fall of the United States as a key player in the global system. Essentially, at the beginning of the 20th century, the United States stood as the world's most productive industrial economy. It was widely recognized that American companies led the way in mass production and consumption. However, by the 1970s, the U.S. had encountered a mounting energy crisis and was heavily indebted. This marked the onset of a phase that Robert Brenner[51] termed the *long downturn*. Notably, infrastructure projects such as highway development and nuclear energy initiatives have been shown to have significant ecological and environmental implications, all of which are mirrored in the Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*. Coupled with the onset of climate change in the 1990s and the degradation of the Earth's ecosystems, it can be contended that the ecological recession depicted in the post-apocalyptic world also reflects the current developmental predicament confronting the United States.

9.6 Analysis of Main Characters in the Novel – Struggle Between Death and Life

When discussing the primary figures depicted in the novel, they consist of the father and the son embarking on a lengthy journey to the south and the mother of a child who appears in man's dream. Additionally, there are a few individuals who have managed to survive in this post-apocalyptic world in unconventional ways. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* Freud is compelled to acknowledge the existence of a compulsion powerful enough to override the pleasure principle - the repetition-compulsion.[52] This

[50] Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times* (London: Verso, 1994).
[51] Robert Brenner, *The Economics of Global Turbulence: The Advanced Capitalist Economies from Long Boom to Long Downturn, 1945-2005* (London; New York: Verso, 2006), 41–96.
[52] Freud, Dufresne, and Richter, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 14-26.

phenomenon led Freud to significantly revise his theory of the drives. In BPP, he once again reconfigures this supposed dualism to explain the subject's persistent repetition of unpleasurable experiences. On the other hand, the sexual instincts aim to prolong life, creating a dynamic that emerges from the conflict between these two instincts: the inclination towards inorganic matter versus the preservation of the species through the individual (Eros). Freud suggests that the death and life instincts are intertwined from the beginning.[53] Therefore, upon analyzing the novel using the death drive theory, we will discover that the narrative primarily focuses on the interplay between various characters in a battle between life and death: the father and the son continuously igniting torches in pursuit of hope amidst a hostile environment, the mother opting for suicide due to her inability to endure fear of death and devastation, and a group of cannibals striving to survive by sacrificing others. Further details and insights can be gleaned from the following excerpts from the novel.

> They squatted in the road and ate cold rice and cold beans that they'd cooked days ago. Already beginning to ferment. No place to make a fire that would not be seen. They slept huddled together in the rank quilts in the dark and the cold. He held the boy close to him. So thin. My heart, he said. My heart. But he knew that if he were a good father still it might well be as she had said. That the boy was all that stood between him and death.[54]

From the beginning, the man displays a relentless survival instinct and unwavering devotion to the boy. He employs resourceful methods to procure food and fuel. His actions illustrate how he has sustained both himself and the boy through exceedingly challenging circumstances. On many occasions, he goes without food for days when it is necessary. The man is fixated on gathering supplies and excels at ensuring the duo's safety. It is evident from the novel that the man does all of this for the sake of the boy. When the boy falls ill, the man spares no effort and holds the boy close. The boy

[53] Véronique Voruz, "'That Which in Life Might Prefer Death …' from the Death Drive to the Desire of the Analyst |," Law Explorer, November 7, 2015, https://lawexplores.com/that-which-in-life-might-prefer-death-from-the-death-drive-to-the-desire-of-the-analyst/.
[54] McCarthy, *The Road*, 29.

symbolizes the man's own will to survive. The boy is the man's sole reason to persevere. In other words, ensuring the survival of the boy means sustaining hope and provides the man with a reason to continue living.

On the other hand, the boy resembles his father in many ways, but their relationship evolves throughout the book. Initially, he is bound to his father by affection and necessity and entirely reliant on him. However, as the boy gains more knowledge about the world, his viewpoint diverges from his father's. It becomes apparent that the boy perceives the world differently from his father. Unlike his father, the boy has no memories of a verdant earth and no sentimental attachment to the vanished world. This disparity in perspective is most noticeable in the boy's inclination to be charitable towards strangers. He seeks to assist almost every person they encounter.

> The boy took the tin and handed it to the old man. Take it, he whispered. Here.
>
> The old man raised his eyes and looked at the boy. The boy gestured at him with the tin.[55]

> Back. More.
>
> He stepped back again.
>
> Papa? the boy said.
>
> Be quiet.
>
> He kept his eyes on the thief. Goddamn you, he said.
>
> Papa please don’t kill the man.
>
> The thief's eyes swung wildly. The boy was crying.[56]

The young boy generously offers assistance to the old man, Ely, without expecting anything in return, a behavior that contrasts with his father's values and even surprises Ely himself. When the thief takes all their possessions, the boy becomes visibly and audibly distressed, feeling as though they have effectively caused the thief's death. Additionally, the boy becomes preoccupied with a "little boy" they encounter on the

[55] McCarthy, *The Road*, 163.
[56] McCarthy, *The Road*, 256.

road. These actions and concerns exhibited by the boy indicate his desire to aid the remaining inhabitants of Earth rather than avoid them, revealing his distinct perspective on what is necessary for survival. Contrasting with his father's distrust of the people around him. The boy wants to influence the survivors with his own kindness.

Nevertheless, Freud still emphasized that the death instinct tends to manifest as unpleasant repetitions towards both internal and external extremes, also known as *masochism* and *sadism*, which resist the life drive. The novel contains two prominent instances that offer substantial proof of this phenomenon. One is the tragic suicide of the son's mother due to overwhelming mental anguish, and the other is the prevalence of violent and gruesome cannibalism among other individuals who survived.

> She watched him across the small flame. We used to talk about death, she said. We don't any more. Why is that?
>
> I don't know.
>
> It's because it's here. There's nothing left to talk about.
>
> I wouldn't leave you.
>
> I don't care. It's meaningless. You can think of me as a faithless slut if you like.
>
> I've taken a new lover. He can give me what you cannot.
>
> Death is not a lover.
>
> Oh yes he is.[57]

According to the original text, the woman conveys a perspective opposing survivalism before eventually taking her own life. She mocks the man's assertion that they are "survivors" of the disaster. Instead, she argues that they should already be dead to escape the unavoidable horrors of rape, enslavement, and murder as human society collapses. The father recalls the unforeseen apocalyptic incident that took place years ago. He then reminisces about the time they were on the road - his wife, his son, and himself - and their ongoing debates. He advocated for survival over self-destruction,

[57] McCarthy, *The Road*,56-57.

while his wife lacked faith in his ability to protect them, leading to her eventual suicide. She chose death over the inevitable fate of being assaulted, murdered, and consumed. It is clear from evidence that the death drive leads individuals to self-destruct from within, aiming to escape unpleasant repetitions by ending their lives; it is not a result of trauma but a method to attain freedom from suffering through self-determination. On the flip side, the death instinct can also manifest as outward aggression.

> Inside the barn three bodies hanging from the rafters, dried and dusty among the wan slats of light. There could be something here, the boy said. There could be some corn or something. Let's go, the man said.[58]

> He raised his head slowly, the pistol in his hand. He looked down at the boy and when he looked back toward the road the first of them were already coming into view. God, he whispered.[59]

While the father and the son peacefully scavenge what remains of civilization for their sustenance, other survivors turn to depravity. In the absence of vegetables, animals, and technology, cannibalism has become widespread. Road agents and cults prey on other travelers. For example, they rest in a muddy field and then set off for a barn to search for food. Upon entering, they discover the remnants of slaughtered individuals and a horrifying assortment of human bodies. The man is surrounded by ruthless, armed scavengers known as road agents, who arrive with a truck and weapons. He is forced to use one of his three valuable bullets to protect the boy.

> You wanted to know what the bad guys looked like. Now you know. It may happen again. My job is to take care of you. I was appointed to do that by God. I will kill anyone who touches you. Do you understand?

[58] McCarthy, *The Road*, 17.
[59] McCarthy, *The Road*, 60.

Yes.[60]

The father utilizes a handgun to instruct his son on distinguishing between morally upright and immoral individuals. Within this post-apocalyptic setting, numerous individuals submit to being targeted and endangered, as the death instinct drives these assailants and flesh-eaters to resort to any means necessary for survival. Simultaneously, the father employs his compassion to impart to his child that there is still a torch, that they must not succumb to the cruelty of others, and that they must maintain a sense of hope for their lives. The novel portrays a vivid depiction of the conflict between life and death through the challenging environment surrounding them and the interactions between the father and the son.

9.7 The Final Scene - Allowing the Desire for Survival to Continue

Thanks to the determination of the father and the son, they triumphed over hunger and cold, eluded other survivors repeatedly, and ultimately reached the southern coastline. However, the journey has deteriorated the father's health. On his deathbed, he fails to keep his promise to his son to never abandon him. He cannot bring himself to use one of the last two bullets to shoot his son and instead holds him as he passes away. The son inquires what he will do without his father, feeling lost and alone. In his final words to his son, the father assures him that goodness will come to him.

Just take me with you. Please.

I can’t.

Please, Papa.

I can’t. I can’t

hold my son dead in my arms. I thought I could but I can’t.

You said you wouldn’t ever leave me.

[60] McCarthy, *The Road*, 77.

(…)

I'm really scared Papa.

I know. But you'll be okay.

You're going to be lucky. I know you are. I've got to stop talking. I'm going to start coughing again.

It's okay, Papa. You don't have to talk. It's okay.[61]

As the boy becomes increasingly conscious of his father's impending death, he understands that he is the one who will have to consider what comes next. This leads the boy to mature, and he starts to assume the role of a father in the relationship. Over time, the boy gradually replaces the man as the leader of their group. Furthermore, the separation from his father has made the son realize that his father has been a guiding light for him throughout the journey. In this moment of parting, he feels the responsibility to take up his father's legacy and carry forward the hope for life and his father's unfulfilled dreams of exploring the world and completing the poem he cannot achieve.

The entirety of the novel exudes a potent essence of mortality, yet it ultimately imparts a sense of vitality to the reader. The narrative of the novel seems to start by taking the audience into a dark tunnel, leading the audience and the main characters through darkness and cold, and urging them to persevere. Just as despair creeps in, a glimmer of light emerges at the end of the tunnel, conveying a sense of enlightenment to the reader. This preservation of hope within a post-apocalyptic world serves as the novel's finishing touch. As the father and the son separated, the father instructed his son to perpetually keep the flame of hope in his heart and to carry it even further.

I want to be with you.

You can't.

Please.

[61] McCarthy, *The Road*, 279.

You can’t. You have to carry the fire.

I don’t know how to.

Yes you do.

Is it real? The fire?

Yes it is.

Where is it? I don’t know where it is.

Yes you do. It's inside you. It was always there. I can see it.

Whenever the boy's morale weakens, the man reassures him that they are "carrying the fire." "The fire" can symbolize various things, but primarily it represents hope. The man and the boy bear the fire of hope all along for humanity and integrity in a post-apocalyptic world filled with death and brutality. Eventually, the boy encounters a cohort of reliable strangers on the pathway. Nonetheless, it is the boy’s benevolent disposition, his faith in the potential goodness of others, and his choice to trust that unveils a new world for him.

The end of the novel shifts focus back to the trout in the mountain stream, suggesting a withdrawal of human beings from the protagonist role in our world and a return of the spotlight to animals and nature. This return to nature narrative serves to urge readers to pay attention to the ecological environment around us and emphasizes that only by doing so can we avoid a post-apocalyptic world.

Epilogue

The 21st century has witnessed the discussion on the emergence of the Anthropocene, involving adverse environmental occurrences such as climate change, ongoing biodiversity decline, and disturbance of ecological equilibrium. Especially in the United States, the rapid economic development and technological innovation of the past century have caused people to focus more on human society itself, overlooking the changes in the surrounding environment and climate. This oversight has created the potential for unnoticed harm or even destruction of the environment. McCarthy’s

novel's plot and description of climate changes reflect both environmental and ecological degradation, unveiling Freud's concept of the death drive. Kübra Baysal[62] argued in the book *Apocalyptic Visions in the Anthropocene and the Rise of Climate Fiction* (2021) that advanced technology has empowered humankind while destroying the nonhuman environs. The human society is increasingly moving in a direction influenced by Freudian theories, indicating an increase in the dominance of the death instinct-driven forces. The degradation of our environment serves as an indication that **the death instinct is progressively gaining control, and it might eventually surpass the life instinct in the future**. Therefore, the prevalence of apocalyptic scenarios has greatly increased in scientific and literary works as researchers and writers have increasingly expressed their concerns about the threatened future of humanity, as well as the destruction of the natural world, and its devastation through widespread disasters, diseases, human conflict, and brutality.

Most of the post-apocalyptic works, including *The Road*, portray an enduring battle between survival and destruction. Simultaneously, they serve as a poignant reminder to prioritize environmental protection in the process of human civilization, to discard the notion of an anthropocentric mindset, and to pursue the harmonious coexistence of humanity and nature. As conveyed in the novel's concluding scene, it is only by grounding the development of the entire planet in nature that we can evade succumbing to the drive towards destruction. Furthermore, it enables us to contemplate the ways in which we can overcome and transcend the death drive.

Post-apocalyptic fiction, similar to Freud's concept of the death instinct, serves as a warning to remain constantly watchful, although it is merely a hypothesis and the depicted events may not actually transpire. While the creation of the eco-utopia proposed by Janet Fiskio[63] is nearly unattainable, we can still carry hope and raise awareness of the protection of the ecological environment for ourselves and those in our surroundings within the context of a declining environment.

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[62] Kübra Baysal, *Apocalyptic Visions in the Anthropocene and the Rise of Climate Fiction* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021).

[63] Janet Fiskio, "Apocalypse and Ecotopia: Narratives in Global Climate Change Discourse," *Race, Gender & Class* 19, no. 1/2 (2012): 12–36, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43496858.

Ultimately, the novel's title *The Road* symbolizes life itself, with the journey reflecting the human experience - an unpredictable and demanding path filled with instances of hardship and instances of beauty. This work prompts contemplation on the purpose and significance of life in the presence of challenges and unavoidable mortality.

Chapter 10 American Freudian Ecopsychology in Mary Oliver's *Upstream*

In Chapter 9 we examined the current state of post-apocalyptic fiction in the United States and the prevalence of Freudian psychology in the country. Additionally, we employed the death drive and life drive components of his theory to conduct a practical analysis of the post-apocalyptic novel *The Road* by the American writer Cormac McCarthy. In this chapter, we will continue elaborating on key theories in Freudian psychology, including the relationship between the id, the ego, and the superego, as well as the significance of day-dreaming and the impact of traumatic childhood memories on personal growth. Concurrently, we will delve into the evolution of ecological autobiography and environmental writing in the United States. To completely comprehend the theory, we will incorporate the analytical material in Mary Oliver's *Upstream: Selected Essays*[1], which was selected as "The New York Times" bestseller in 2016, to elucidate the invaluable role of nature and creative writing in aiding the author's escape from childhood suffering and her self-healing process.

10.1 The Id, the Ego, and the Superego in Freudian Psychology

According to Freudian psychology[2], it is argued that the separation of the psyche into the conscious and unconscious is the foundational premise of psychoanalysis. This division enables psychoanalysis to comprehend the pathological processes in mental life and to integrate them into the realm of science, as they are both widespread and significant. To the majority of individuals with a background in philosophy, the concept of anything that is psychical but not conscious is so unimaginable that it appears nonsensical and able to be disproven purely through logical reasoning. However, Sigmund Freud contended that this perspective arises from the insufficient study of the relevant phenomena of hypnosis and dreams. He argued that the field of consciousness

[1] Mary Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays* (New York: Penguin Books, 2016).
[2] Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1962), 3.

psychology is inadequate for addressing issues related to dreams and hypnosis.[3]

In Freud's renowned psychoanalytic theory, he asserted that personality is comprised of three elements referred to as the id, the ego, and the superego. These components collaborate to produce intricate human behaviors.[4] Freud proposed that the id governs a person's instinctual behaviors, operating on an unconscious level. He likened the mind to an iceberg, with the conscious mind being the visible part above the surface and the larger unconscious mind below, where the id exists. Additionally, Freud viewed the id as the most fundamental and primal element of personality, present from birth.[5] In addition, the id is influenced by what Freud called the *pleasure principle*[6]. This principle aims to seek immediate gratification for any need or desire a person may have. For instance, hunger triggers an immediate craving for food. Failure to fulfill these needs can lead to feelings of anxiety, tension, or unease. In other words, the id is the unconscious, instinctual component of personality, responsible for bodily needs and emotional impulses, especially aggression and sexual drive. It is the psychic force oriented towards instant satisfaction. On the other hand, Freud defined the ego as a component of the personality that facilitates the expression of the id's desires in a practical and acceptable manner. The ego originates from the id but is shaped by real-world influence. It functions based on what Freud termed the *reality principle*. While the id's demands are subconscious, impractical, or inappropriate, the ego's objective is to satisfy those desires in a manner that acknowledges reality. This involves evaluating the situation and considering the advantages and disadvantages of taking action. Freud compared the relationship between the ego and id to that of a rider and a horse. The horse represents the powerful force driving them forward, while the rider dictates the direction and path they take.[7] Moreover, the superego is an integral aspect of the psyche that aspires toward ethical conduct. It comprises the assimilated beliefs,

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[3] Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, 4.
[4] Simon Boag, "Ego, Drives, and the Dynamics of Internal Objects," *Frontiers in Psychology* 5, no. 666 (July 1, 2014), https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00666.
[5] Gil G. Noam et al., "Ego Development and Psychopathology: A Study of Hospitalized Adolescents," *Child Development*55, no. 1 (February 1984): 184, https://doi.org/10.2307/1129844.
[6] Lorenzo Moccia et al., "The Experience of Pleasure: A Perspective between Neuroscience and Psychoanalysis," *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* 12, no. 359 (September 4, 2018), https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2018.00359.
[7] Sigmund Freud, *The Anatomy of the Mental Personality* (Literary Licensing, LLC, 2011).

principles, and ethics that individuals acquire from their parents and societal influences.[8] Its aim is to refine and cultivate our actions while repressing any unacceptable impulses from the id. The superego endeavors to prompt the ego to act in accordance with idealistic standards rather than pragmatic principles. Freud proposed that the superego consists of two main components: *the conscience*[9] and *the ego ideal*[10]. Kendra Cherry[11] argued the former is concerned with behaviors considered wrong, inappropriate, or immoral, and going against it can lead to negative consequences such as punishment or feelings of guilt. The latter represents the idealized self that an individual strives to be, encompassing how we believe we should act and treat others. Therefore, the superego's purpose is to restrain the primal urges of the id and uphold high moral standards.

The interaction among the id, ego, and superego is significant, with the ego acting as the conscious, "executive" part of the personality. Instead of functioning separately and independently, the id, ego, and superego overlap and interact in various ways to influence thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. According to Freudian psychology, the ego acts as a mediator between the demands of the id, the superego, and reality. The iceberg analogy[12] illustrates that the mind is mostly concealed beneath the conscious surface, with the id being entirely unconscious while the ego and superego function both consciously and unconsciously. This interplay among the three components is comparable to the layers of a partially submerged iceberg.

10.2 Day-dreaming and Creative Writers

According to Ethel Spector Person's[13] statement in the introduction part of her

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[8] Daniel L Schacter, Daniel Todd Gilbert, and Daniel M Wegner, *Psychology* (New York: Worth, 2011), 481.
[9] Sigmund Freud, James Strachey, and Anna Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Volume XIV, (1914-1916), on the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works* (London: Vintage, 2001), 243–58.
[10] Salman Akhtar, *Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* (London: Karmac, 2009), 89.
[11] Kendra Cherry, "Freud's Id, Ego, and Superego," Explore Psychology, July 20, 2021, https://www.explorepsychology.com/id-ego-superego/.
[12] Saul Mcleod, "Unconscious Mind | Simply Psychology," Simplypsychology.org, 2009, https://www.simplypsychology.org/unconscious-mind.html.
[13] Servulo A Figueira, Peter Fonagy, and Ethel Spector Person, *On Freud's "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming"* (Yale University Press, 1995), https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt2250vrw.

edited volume, Freud published *Creative Writers and Daydreaming* in 1907, presenting it to an audience of around ninety intellectuals. The paper delves into the origins of day-dreaming and its connection to children's play. Additionally, it serves as Freud's most direct investigation into the creative process. He argued both the child at play and the creative writer are exercising their imaginative capacity. They both approach their activities with seriousness and are able to differentiate between their imaginative creations and reality. The distinction lies in the fact that the child connects their imagined scenarios to tangible elements in the real world, whereas the adult, due to shame, keeps their fantasies private. In other words, he draws connections between creative writing and play, saying that a work of creative writing, much like a daydream, is an extension of the play of childhood. As Freud emphasized, daydreaming utilizes a present situation to construct a future image based on past experiences.[14] Meanwhile, he observed that the connection between fantasy and time holds significant importance. A fantasy is sparked by a current event, evoking the memory of a past experience when the desire was fulfilled. In this model presented by Freud, fantasies not only serve as substitutes, but also offer a potentially adaptive framework for real-life future scenarios. Furthermore, Freud even hinted at the role of fantasy in neurosis and psychosis and explored its link to dreams. He maintained that nighttime dreams and daydreams both serve as fulfillments of wishes. Thus, Person contended that this insight anticipates a shift in Freud's later works, focusing on the nature and origin of unconscious fantasies.

By contrast, Freud posited that the creative writer can link daydreams and artistic creations, stating, "A strong present experience triggers a memory of an earlier experience (usually from childhood), leading to a wish that is fulfilled in the creative work."[15] Therefore, the work demonstrates aspects of both the recent stimulus and the old memory. In later periods different scholars have different views on the two major themes in Freud's paper, fantasy and creativity. For instance, Marcos Aguinis[16], an expert writer, effectively lays the groundwork for our examination of Freud's paper. He

[14] Servulo A Figueira, Peter Fonagy, and Ethel Spector Person, *On Freud's "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming"* (Karnac Books, 2013), 3–13.
[15] Laurence A Rickels, *Critique of Fantasy, Vol. 1* (Punctum Books, 2020), 57.
[16] Figueira, Fonagy, and Person, *On Freud's "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming"*, xiv.

mapped out the similarities Freud highlights between the imaginative writer and the child at play. Most significantly, Aguinis clarified the extent of "significant importance" that Freud attributes to fantasy and how he defines its connection to pathology and dreams. Trosman[17] emphasized that subsequent psychoanalytic studies on creativity have concentrated on three primary areas: biographical studies utilizing literary works as a reference, analyses of literary works, and inquiries into the origins of creativity. He stressed the role of positioning fantasy as central to creativity. Additionally, he proposes that Freud's paper prompts consideration of "how the experience of pleasure can be processed," highlighting the significance of pleasure in creative work residing in the ego rather than solely in the expression of drive. Harold P. Blum[18] regarded *Creative Writers and Day-dreaming* as a significant contribution to the application of psychoanalysis to culture due to Freud's understanding of the connection between myths and wishful fantasies. Finally, Infante[19] also discusses the significance of fantasy in artistic creation. Infante concurs that artistic creation, akin to dreaming, frequently symbolizes the fulfillment of suppressed desires or an effort to navigate through traumatic or mourning circumstances and at times serves as a means to communicate a message.

The perspectives presented by these academics above demonstrate the significant impact of fantasy on day-dreaming, as well as elaborate on the strong connection between imagination and creativity as noted by Freud. The author's recollections of past experiences are evident in their creative work through the expression of fantasies, particularly through daydreams. Subsequently, unconscious fantasies are stimulated, contributing to the further enhancement of creativity. Thus, it can be posited that daydreaming and creative writing are mutually beneficial.

10.3 The Perception of Ecological Autobiography in the United States

[17] Figueira, Fonagy, and Person, *On Freud's "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming"*, xv.
[18] Figueira, Fonagy, and Person, *On Freud's "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming"*, xv.
[19] Figueira, Fonagy, and Person, *On Freud's "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming"*, xvi.

Writing as a method for processing grief has existed for as long as art has. Since the romanticism era's celebration of introspective personal expression this type of writing has frequently manifested as autobiography. According to Paschal[20], autobiography is a penetration of the past by the present. Meanwhile, Mark Christopher Allister[21] pointed out in his monography that from Mary McCarthy's *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood* to Richard Wright's *Black Boy* autobiographers have constructed narratives to articulate the pain and make sense of it all. They acquire strategies for responding that enable them to reinterpret their own histories, assisting them in mitigating their overwhelming sorrow. Furthermore, Ruth A. Wilson[22] asserted that our history is always present with us. We carry it forward, and it continues to impact us, as the very core of our current selves is founded on our past encounters. Since our past has such a significant influence on our present selves, it might be beneficial to dedicate time to delving into the nature and significance of our earlier experiences, particularly those linked to the environment. An autobiography is often perceived as a factual chronicle of one's personal life, but its main emphasis is on experiences rather than mere facts. When we refer to "experience," we are addressing something with significance, representing the individual's interaction with facts and events. In recent years, as critical research on autobiography has continued to increase, scholars have expanded their scope to enhance our understanding of the genre. This expansion has been highly successful, leading to the prominence of the more inclusive term *life-writing*[23], which encompasses forms such as diaries, memoirs, and biographies. This has caused the autobiography to appear too narrow in comparison.

In the ongoing development and expansion of American ecocriticism, moving away from its origins in the analysis of nonfiction nature writing, Nathan Straight[24] stressed in his monograph the importance of recalling that at the core of the varied genre of environmental writing lies the endeavor to grapple, through storytelling, with the

[20] Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography.* (Routledge, 2017), 13.
[21] Mark Christopher Allister, *Refiguring the Map of Sorrow* (University of Virginia Press, 2001), 1.
[22] Ruth A. Wilson, "Ecological Autobiography," *Environmental Education Research* 1, no. 3 (October 1995): 305–14, https://doi.org/10.1080/1350462950010305.
[23] Mark Christopher Allister, *Refiguring the Map of Sorrow* (University of Virginia Press, 2001), 3.
[24] Nathan Straight, *Autobiography, Ecology, and the Well-Placed Self: The Growth of Natural Biography in Contemporary American Life Writing.* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011).

connection between the individual and the world. Besides, the concept of an environmental autobiography entails an autobiographical narrative that focuses on environmental aspects. It often revolves around favorite places or special places from childhood.[25] The exploration and examination of environmental autobiographies have yielded insightful discoveries and insights into the relationship between humans and the Earth, as well as the significance of the autobiographical process. Hester[26] discovered that the environmental autobiography is beneficial for evaluating environmental preferences and effective in sensitivity training. According to Hester, the significance and worth of environmental autobiographies lie more in the process than in the outcomes. He asserted that it is often the process that leads to self-realizations. Moreover, the literature review reveals that autobiographies centered on the ecological self are uncommon. While the environmental autobiography and the ecological autobiography share many similarities, there are significant differences. For instance, Smith[27] emphasized that the environmental autobiography is more narrowly focused, examining various environments and "special places" one has encountered. Conversely, the ecological autobiography considers the entirety of one's experiences in connection to the natural environment and acknowledges that our perceptions of the external environment are constantly influenced by our internal environment of needs, desires, memories, and visions.

Engaging in an ecological autobiography could be seen as a contemporary form of a *vision quest*[28], in which an individual devotes time and effort to delve into the wilderness of their own past experiences. This vision quest is typically a gratifying experience, as it often leads to fresh insights and understandings and is frequently accompanied by a feeling of happiness and spiritual wellness. For example, this phenomenon occurs when authors of nonfictional works find personal connection and healing through their observations of the external world, leading to an end of depression

[25] Kimberly Dovey, "Refuge and Imagination: Places of Peace in Childhood," *Children's Environments Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (1990): 13–17.
[26] R Hester, "Favorite Spaces," *Childhood City Newsletter* 14 (1978): 15–17.
[27] John C. Smyth, "Environment and Education: A View of a Changing Scene," *Environmental Education Research* 1, no. 1 (January 1995): 3–20, https://doi.org/10.1080/1350462950010101.
[28] Ruth A. Wilson, "Ecological Autobiography," *Environmental Education Research* 1, no. 3 (October 1995): 308, https://doi.org/10.1080/1350462950010305.

and progression through mourning. Each individual begins their journey in a state of depression stemming from grief, but ultimately transforms his/her experiences into a healing narrative. Therefore, through the creation of an ecological autobiography, one can expect to reach a new level of self-awareness and a revised understanding of responsibility towards oneself and the environment.

10.4 The Poet Marry Oliver and Her Poem *Wild Geese* (1986)

In order to introduce specific Freudian ecopsychology within the literature of Mary Oliver, I will commence by conducting an analysis of her renowned poem *Wild Geese*. The analysis aims to highlight the dramatic essences of her writing, which are rooted in the experience of suffering and delicately outline the direction of Freudian ecopsychology. A detailed description will be presented later on. Marry Oliver, a highly accomplished poet, is widely admired in the American literary community. She has been honored with prestigious accolades, including the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award for her compelling poetry. Renowned American poet Maxine Kumin praised Oliver as an indefatigable guide to the natural world in the "Women's Review of Books".[29] The predominant theme in her poetry comprises vivid imagery and natural elements. In her seventh collection *Dream Work* published in 1986, Oliver presented *Wild Geese*[30], a poem that encourages readers to embrace the beauty of nature. Also, this poem is written in the style of the Romantics, like John Keats.

> You do not have to be good.
>
> You do not have to walk on your knees
>
> for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
>
> You only have to let the soft animal of your body
>
> love what it loves.

[29] Poetry Foundation, "Mary Oliver | Poetry Foundation," Poetry Foundation, 2019, https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/mary-oliver.
[30] Mary Oliver, *Dream Work* (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1986), 14.

Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting -
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.

(Mary Oliver, *Wild Geese*)

The poem provides the reader with insights in a calm and tranquil manner. Oliver recognizes the human tendency to seek direction and significance, yet we continually struggle to feel content within ourselves, consistently encountering sensations of being out of place. She advises the audience that when experiencing despair or inadequacy, turn to nature and observe the wild geese. Interestingly, novel findings emerge as we shift our focus to the intricate elements of the poem.

In the opening lines of the poem Oliver provides counsel and direction on how to lead a fulfilling life. She asserts the importance of contemplating the concept of “to be good.” The poem commences with the proclamation, "You do not have to be good," immediately granting permission to readers to cease their pursuit of flawlessness. Suggesting that life is challenging and rife with emotional turmoil, the poem proposes that individuals should show more compassion to themselves. With a distinctly Freudian undertone, she underscores the presence of hardships in life, including suppressed negative emotions from childhood and the past. In lines 4 and 5, the author reinforces the concept that humans are inherently animals. The implication is that we

should embrace our instincts, which may superficially appear hedonistic. However, upon closer examination of the poem, it becomes evident that the author is advocating for a return to nature and a rejection of societal constraints. The message is to align ourselves with the natural order.

In the subsequent lines of poetry, Oliver conveys to the reader that regardless of the events unfolding in one's life, the world persists in its rotation. We encounter challenges in our human existence. For instance, fretting about fitting in with a specific social group. Nevertheless, in the natural world we witness the unwavering rising and setting of the sun. The natural world will endure unchanged, despite our tribulations. When Oliver alludes to the wild geese, she encourages us to emulate them. They are certain of their place and purpose as they return home to nature. Furthermore, in the final section of the poem, Mary Oliver presents the reader with certain resolutions while demonstrating the presence of struggle in life. When experiencing solitude, take a stroll outdoors and observe the natural surroundings. The planet reaches out to us, offering contrasts of both adversity and adventure, much like the wild geese. We should not succumb to loneliness and life-grief, for we are integral to the organic world and belong to the community of nature.

The initial impression that many readers may have of this poem is the appealing representation of the natural world and the encouragement to appreciate its uncomplicated beauty. However, upon deeper reflection, it becomes apparent that the longing for nature originates from the author's desire to escape the hardships and suffering of life. In essence, the poem not only communicates the beauty of nature but also its significance: nature serves as a remedy for the struggles of childhood and promotes healing. In other words, regardless of one's circumstances, even if one feels isolated or adrift, one can look out into the expansive realm of nature. This profound understanding of the natural world may have also altered the initial perception of Mary Oliver for many individuals.

The concluding section of the poem emphasizes the utilization of the imagination bestowed by the world, despite feelings of isolation. This imaginative faculty grants us the freedom to craft myriad creations, from poetry to other forms of literature. Freud

perceives this faculty as a form of daydreaming, enabling escape from trauma while intertwining creative writing and imagination. Moreover, she claims that nature serves as a potent aid to deal with trauma and strengthen our imaginative capacity.

10.5 The Reception of Mary Oliver's *Upstream: Selected Essays* (2016)

Mary Oliver originated in Maple Hills Heights, a suburban area of Cleveland, Ohio. She sought solace from a challenging home environment in the adjacent woods, constructing shelters from twigs and grass, and crafting poetry. As a prolific writer of both poetry and prose, her primary themes persist in exploring the intersection between the human and the natural world.

Upstream: Selected Essays (2016) – in this thoughtful and illuminating spiritual compilation of essays Mary Oliver provides further astute observations about the natural world, animals, and the literary influencers who have guided her. "The New York Times" assigned a high rating to this work, emphasizing that it presents a compelling synthesis of the poet's reflections on the natural, spiritual, and artistic realms.[31] Meanwhile, "The Chicago Tribune" commented that within the slender volume containing 19 spiritual essays, Oliver presents to the reader epistles after epistles from her Book of Nature and the meditations therein.[32] Furthermore, Danny Heitman[33] also referenced Oliver's works in his review, stating that Oliver's poems about nature are deceptively simple and straightforward, similar to Robert Frost's seemingly plain outdoor poems.[34] However, upon closer examination, both Oliver's and Frost's verses unveil deeper and more intricate themes.

The book is segmented into five parts. In the initial section Oliver describes her deep

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[31] Daphne Kalotay, "Essays," *The New York Times*, December 16, 2016, sec. Books, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/16/books/review/essays-mary-oliver-eliot-weinberger-jace-clayton-benjamin-percy.html.

[32] Barbara Mahany, "Brian D. McLaren, Mary Oliver and W.S. Merwin Address the World of the Spiritual," Chicago Tribune, November 8, 2016, https://www.chicagotribune.com/2016/11/08/brian-d-mclaren-mary-oliver-and-ws-merwin-address-the-world-of-the-spiritual/.

[33] Danny Heitman, "'Upstream' Places Poet Mary Oliver in Her 'Arena of Delight,'" Christian Science Monitor, October 19, 2016, https://www.csmonitor.com/Books/Book-Reviews/2016/1019/Upstream-places-poet-Mary-Oliver-in-her-arena-of-delight.

[34] Poetry Foundation, "Robert Frost," Poetry Foundation, 2019, https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/robert-frost.

affection for nature, reading, and poetry. She also discusses her admiration for the poet Walt Whitman and reflects on writing as an art form. It is important to note the author's motivations for leaving her parents and immersing herself in nature. Oliver disclosed in a 2011 interview with Maria Shriver[35] that she had experienced sexual abuse at the hands of her parents during her childhood, leading to recurring nightmares and significant mental distress. As a result, she expressed a desire to become invisible and to seek safety and healing in the natural environment of the woods. In the subsequent sections the author not only delineates the sea creatures, but also portrays the avian and amphibian inhabitants surrounding the pond and turtles from a wider viewpoint. Furthermore, Oliver divulges her beloved poets such as Emerson, Poe, Whitman, and Wordsworth. The fourth section also serves as a depiction of the natural world, but in this instance the author does more than simply observe; instead, she integrates herself as a part of nature and views animals as companions akin to humans. This is evident in her concern for the potential damage to spider webs during a household move and in her personal efforts to tend to an injured black-backed seagull. The last part focuses on the location where Oliver resided for an extended period, Provincetown. This wistful section chronicles the city's rapid expansion in the tourism sector alongside the surging influx of tourists and resultant environmental degradation as the economy flourished. Despite the inadequate mitigation of environmental issues, her affection for the land where she dwelled endures.

Hamilton Cain[36] penned in his critique of *Upstream* that Oliver immerses us in an ever-widening circle, in which a shrub or flower opens onto the cosmos. Thus, imagine taking this collection of essays and immersing yourself in a garden teeming with a myriad of blossoming flowers and verdant grass. The air is filled with melodies sung by birds while warm sunlight bathes your body, and a light blue sky with drifting white clouds stretches overhead. As you settle onto the lawn with a cup of robust coffee and a slice of cake, any internal worries could be dispelled momentarily, and you could

[35] Maria Shriver, "Maria Shriver Interviews the Famously Private Poet Mary Oliver," Oprah.com, September 3, 2011, https://www.oprah.com/entertainment/maria-shriver-interviews-poet-mary-oliver.
[36] HAMILTON CAIN Special to the Star Tribune, "Review: 'Upstream: Selected Essays,' by Mary Oliver," Star Tribune, October 7, 2016, https://www.startribune.com/review-upstream-selected-essays-by-mary-oliver/396229271/.

relish the exquisite moments inspired by the poet and nature.

10.6 The Courage to Go Upstream and Reverence for Nature

The book commences with *Upstream*, a poetic segment where Oliver reminisces about wading upstream in rippling water as a child while her parents stayed downstream.

> I walked, all one spring day, upstream, sometimes in the midst of the ripples, sometimes along the shore. My company were violets, Dutchman's-breeches, spring beauties, trilliums, bloodroot, ferns rising so curled one could feel the upward push of the delicate hairs upon their bodies. My parents were downstream, not far away, then farther away because I was walking the wrong way, upstream instead of downstream.[37]

The author begins with a captivating narrative detailing how her individual journey distinguishes her from her parents. Her company comprises violets, trilliums, and ferns. She is gratified by the continual opening of her heart. She presents the notion of "upstream," a metaphorical voyage against the current, an unexplored path that leads to marvels yet to be unearthed. The theme "upstream" provides a guiding framework for the entire compilation, urging readers to question traditional norms and delve into the profound aspects of their own lives. However, the reason behind the author's immersion in nature and departure from her parents is a question that requires contemplation. From the author's background and the interview she was given, it is evident that Oliver's childhood was overshadowed by the trauma of sexual abuse that was inflicted by her parents. According to Freudian psychoanalysis, people's childhood memories are persistently revisited in their subconscious dreams and repressed emotions, causing significant distress to the author. Consequently, she felt the need to distance herself from her parents and seek a new world of her own. It is evident from Oliver's accounts that the environment where she experiences profound healing is nature. Venturing into

[37] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 4–5.

the forest and against the current, she finds solace and protection within the realm of towering trees.

She is amazed by the resilience of a hundred-year-old oak and a hungry bear. Subsequently, following these consecutive moments of wonder, Oliver implores us to assist her in teaching the children, because she believes that what adults often overlook, children approach with great curiosity.

> Teach the children. We don't matter so much, but the children do. (…) Give them peppermint to put in their pockets as they go to school. Give them the fields and the woods and the possibility of the world salvaged from the lords of profit. Stand them in the stream, head them upstream, rejoice as they learn to love this green space they live in, its sticks and leaves and then the silent, beautiful blossoms.[38]

The author conveys her awe for the natural world in the concluding section of the essay. Moreover, Oliver underscores the importance of incorporating natural elements, such as peppermint, into daily life to foster a stronger connection between humans and nature. She advises children to cherish green spaces, as they will serve as essential tools for dispelling inner darkness in the future. When the spiritual section is connected with the babbling of a stream and blossoms amidst colorful flowers, it creates a tranquil world free from distress and filled with hope and security. This is the meaningful message relating to the power of nature that the author aims to impart to children.

10.7 The World of Poetry and Oliver's Creative Writing

In her ongoing exploration "upstream" Oliver leads readers on a captivating journey into the realm of creative intellects and her unwavering quest for art. Oliver underscores the importance of her childhood "friend" Walt Whitman, through whose work she first comprehended that a poem is a temple that a place to access and in which to experience,

[38] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 8.

and who urged her to disappear into the realm of her writing.

> But first and foremost, I learned from Whitman that the poem is a temple—or a green field—a place to enter, and in which to feel.[39]

Oliver observes that during her childhood she lacked genuine friendships and perceived those around her as strangers. It was through poetry that she found her first friend, Walt Whitman, whom she cherished as a valued companion, despite they are in different periods. This marked the turning point in her life, as she discovered that nature healed her heart and poetry sparked her creative inspiration. This curiosity transformed her rebellious nature, which had previously led to serious truancy issues at school. In other words, poetry catalyzed her character transformation and instilled in her an appreciation for the world's beauty. It also facilitated her interpersonal connections, fostered creativity, and helped her overcome past hardships.

> I never met any of my friends, of course, in a usual way—they were strangers, and lived only in their writings. But if they were only shadow-companions, still they were constant, and powerful, and amazing. That is, they said amazing things, and for me it changed the world.[40]

Moreover, Oliver explores the profound impact of art and nature on the human spirit, encouraging individuals to find motivation in the environment. She reflects on the factors that empowered her to form a fulfilling life through work and love, emphasizing, "I could not be a poet without the natural world. Someone else could. But not me. For me, the door to the woods is the door to the temple."[41] Perhaps we could interpret this passage of hers with a unique perspective. Freud employed the technical term *unconscious fantasy*[42] to elucidate the connection between creative writing and day-dreaming. In Olivier's journey from nature to creativity, nature serves as the primal

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[39] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 12.
[40] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 7.
[41] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 154.
[42] Figueira, Fonagy, and Person, *On Freud's "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming"*, xii.

material that stimulates her imagination. Through nature she taps into her unconscious fantasies, which in turn prompt recollections of poems she has read and enable a deeper focus on the creative writing of her art.

Oliver also found inspiration for her creative writing in the poetry of other writers in addition to Walt Whitman. For instance, Ralph Waldo Emerson, whom she describes as being "unbelievably sweet and, for all his devotion to reason, wondrously spontaneous."[43] William Wordsworth showed her that one's authentic dwelling is formed "not of beams and nails but of existence itself."[44] Edgar Allen Poe, who made it clear to her that "in this universe we are given two gifts: the ability to love, and the ability to ask questions."[45] It is evident that the aforementioned instances are indicative of Oliver's expression of gratitude towards the authors who provided motivation and inspiration during her formative years.

10.8 Stay Alive and Feel the Eternity of Time

Oliver, as a nature enthusiast, composes her essays in a manner that not only portrays the splendor of nature and her affinity for her own natural surroundings, but also connects them to her personal experiences, a characteristic of environmental autobiography that surpasses the realm of nature. As noted by Ruth A. Wilson[46] in her paper, the concept of ecological autobiography goes beyond simply admiring the beauty of nature; it involves incorporating personal experiences to envision and contemplate the environment. This imaginative process frequently exhibits Freudian attributes, drawing from childhood experiences or previous traumas woven into non-fictional accounts of the environment and the evolving self. In Oliver's chapter, she discusses how adults possess the autonomy to alter their surroundings, while children lack the ability to do so and must accept their circumstances quietly.

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[43] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 65-66.
[44] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 114.
[45] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 91.
[46] Ruth A. Wilson, "Ecological Autobiography," *Environmental Education Research* 1, no. 3 (October 1995): 305–14, https://doi.org/10.1080/1350462950010305.

> Adults can change their circumstances; children cannot. Children are powerless, and in difficult situations they are the victims of every sorrow and mischance and rage around them, for children feel all of these things but without any of the ability that adults have to change them. Whatever can take a child beyond such circumstances, therefore, is an alleviation and a blessing.[47]

Through her narrative Oliver portrays a sense of powerlessness during her formative years, enduring mental anguish without the ability to effect change. She describes a feeling of sinking deeper into this despair, mentally numb as her vitality wanes. In her quest to escape this predicament, she endeavors to seek analgesic solutions that can alleviate her suffering and restore a sense of vitality. Fortunately, she discovered that nature and literary creativity served as the remedies she required to heal from her traumatic memories. Literary creation resembles a delightful daydream, while the lush greenery of nature bestows upon her a profound sense of inner peace and keeps her staying alive.

Moreover, Oliver outlines the necessary conditions for creative work as being solitude, concentration, and self-discovery throughout the creative process. And throughout her creative process she realized she had three selves within her. They are the past self, the child. The self that is governed by time is called the social occupation. And the self that transcends the boundaries of time is the one who hungers for eternity.

> I am, myself, three selves at least. To begin with, there is the child I was.[48]

> And there is the attentive, social self. This is the smiler and the doorkeeper.[49]

> It is a third self, occasional in some of us, tyrant in others. This self is out of love with the ordinary; it is out of love with time. It has a hunger for eternity.[50]

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47 Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 14.
48 Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 24.
49 Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 24.
50 Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 27.

These three selves described by Oliver encompass the self of the past, which, though it exists in the subconscious dream world at the present possible time, never disappears and is always with us. Furthermore, upon entering society, everyone is assigned a societal role that must be fulfilled to signify their position in that society. For instance, some individuals become regular pilots, while others become ordinary company employees. It is clear that the second self is relatively influenced by time and social responsibilities. Conversely, the third self has character, a creativity that surpasses time and possesses the nature of a longing for eternity, which can be interpreted as a creative inspiration that flows constantly and is not bound by time. It is comprised of curiosity, brimming with a desire for the future and the unknown.

Interestingly, our minds have a tendency to easily make analogies to Freud's three articulated selves: id, ego and superego. The primal part of the heart, id, operates based on the principle of pleasure. The superego serves as the moral component of the mind, embodying internal social standards and values. Meanwhile, the ego adheres to the reality principle and functions as a mediator between the two.[51] If this theory is applied to Oliver's case, it will be discovered that the third self, referred to as such by her, functions similarly to the ego, utilizing imagination and creativity that transcends time to maintain a balance between past trauma, social morality, and societal norms. Oliver employs creativity to confront the haunting memories of her childhood while simultaneously challenging societal perspectives and establishing a new therapeutic world for herself through creative writing and nature.

> There is a notion that creative people are absentminded, reckless, heedless of social customs and obligations. It is, hopefully, true. For they are in another world altogether. It is a world where the third self is governor.[52]

[51] Saul Mcleod, "Id, Ego and Superego," Simply Psychology, July 10, 2023, https://www.simplypsychology.org/psyche.html.
[52] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 29.

Creative artists, as Oliver notes in her work, transcend social norms and responsibilities. This is something she has been striving for all along.

10.9 The Healing Function of Nature

When Oliver was a child, residing in a small town surrounded by wooded areas and a meandering creek, her great joy and solitary pastime was constructing a series of miniature dwellings. And the small-scale homes she constructed consistently exhibited distinctive characteristics.

> They were huts really, made of sticks and grass, maybe a small heap of fresh leaves inside. There was never a closure but always an open doorway, and I would sit just inside, looking out into the world. Such architectures were the capsules of safety, and freedom as well, open to the wind, made of grass and smelling like leaves and flowers.[53]

Oliver built the shelter using basic branches and foliage. Her sole desire was to have a door that allowed the wind to enter, ensuring a view of nature from inside. This location serves as a protective capsule for her, blocking communication with those around her and society as a whole while maintaining a connection to nature. In essence, the trees, flowers, and green leaves provide the author with an invaluable sense of security, acting as a healing remedy for inner peace. Additionally, she responds to nature with solitude, which could be considered a sign of respect for nature.

> solitude was a prerequisite to being openly and joyfully susceptible and responsive to the world of leaves, light, birdsong, flowers, flowing water.[54]

Meanwhile, there are numerous interactions between her and natural creatures. For example, when she goes for a walk with her dog and encounters a fox, she observes

[53] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 111.
[54] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 111.

them chasing each other. Likewise, she ventures into the woods alone to search for an owl's nest, and she tends to an injured seagull to extend its life. Through these experiences she comes to realize that humans, like any other creatures of nature, are simply a part of this ecosystem, and they support each other in times of need. This de-anthropocentric way of thinking enables the author to better comprehend nature and derive healing energy from it.

Furthermore, as the author delves into the influence of nature on herself, she further stresses that the abode she truly seeks in her own life is not a traditional house, but the entire Earth, or, in essence, existence itself.

> And we might, in our lives, have many thresholds, many houses to walk out from and view the stars, or to turn and go back to for warmth and company. But the real one—the actual house not of beams and nails but of existence itself—is all of earth, with no door, no address separate from oceans or stars, or from pleasure or wretchedness either, or hope, or weakness, or greed.[55]

It is worth considering for the reader to ponder the author's discussion regarding the essence of existence itself. Perhaps the author's true intention is to convey to the audience the sublime and eternal beauty of nature. We can speculate on the plausibility of this interpretation. Whether it is the mountains and rivers, flowers, plants, or trees, their existence seems eternal compared to the fleeting experiences of human beings. In other words, people may be too fixated on their own experiences, leading them to be trapped in the haze of the past. Therefore, viewing the constancy of nature can help us realize that although we suffer in our painful struggles, we should also remember that we are part of the natural order and that we belong to the realm of things, having a recurring feeling that we have our place “in the family of things.”

This is why immersing ourselves in nature can provide clarity when we are burdened by mental stress or relationship issues. Nature's magnificence and eternity put human hardships into perspective.

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[55] Oliver, *Upstream: Selected Essays*, 114.

Finally, the utilization of nature's healing power in the inner spiritual realm, facilitating the process of moving past traumas, provides a solution for individuals deeply entrenched in difficulties. This distinctive perspective on ecopsychology is prominent throughout Oliver's ecological memoir.

Conclusion

Eco-autobiography, as a distinctive form of non-fiction narrative, not only delves into the connection between nature and humanity from an eco-critical perspective, but also underscores the vital role of the natural environment in human development. Furthermore, this autobiographical approach integrates the author's childhood experiences, and the work articulates the interplay between subconscious memories and the environment. In essence, it merges Freudian psychology and eco-criticism, which tend to call it ecopsychology, providing a novel interpretation of the role of memoirs: it unearths the author's traumatic experiences through memories and offers resolution by harnessing the therapeutic influence of the natural environment. This divergence from conventional memoirs is noteworthy.

Mary Oliver, the renowned American poet, can be considered as one of the exemplars of a comprehensive depiction of ecological autobiography combined with the methodology of Freudian eco-psychology. In particular, Freud, in his psychoanalytic theory, proposed three components of psychoanalysis: the id, the ego, and the superego. And he highlighted the moderating function of the ego between the other two. However, it is important to note that Mary Oliver also mentions three "selves" in her work, similar to those identified by Freud. These include the enduring influence of the past, the societal roles individuals assume, and a transcendent self that seeks what she loves and eternity of time. She developed Freud's idea that the ego is a crucial point in the interaction of consciousness with nature and its healing influence on us. This deliberate echoing of Freud's concepts aids readers in seamlessly integrating the two perspectives.

After conducting an analysis of the volume *Upstream* in conjunction with the literary theory of ecopsychology, we can possibly derive the following conclusions. Firstly,

childhood memories have the potential to become integrated with long-term memory, gradually fading, but never truly vanishing. As Freud has noted, they may resurface subconsciously, such as in dreams. Secondly, the work prompts readers to revisit the relationship between humanity and the natural world. Eco-psychological theory endeavors to elucidate the interconnectedness of the natural environment and human beings. Natural creatures and green spaces not only bring tranquility to the human spirit, but also aid in overcoming depressed childhood memories and attaining the joy and liberation of healing. Furthermore, for Mary Olivier, nature has evolved into a sanctuary for her daydreams and imagination, inspiring her creative writing through solitary immersion and the study of poets' works that resonate with her, repeatedly nurturing her great new works.

Now, after revisiting the perception of Freudian psychology in the United States and analyzing the case studies of the two selected works from eco-psychoanalytic perspective, it is possible that new discoveries are coming to light.

These two examples of American literary Freudian ecopsychology demonstrate the innovative, vivid, and varied reception of Freudian psychology within US ecological writing. *Road* and *Upstream* support the notion that Freud still serves as the basic framework for American writers. Moreover, challenges to ecological issues and profound experiences of nature have prompted them to explore Freudian ecopsychology through literature. They individually select the most appealing aspects of Freud's oeuvre. For example, in the novel by Cormac McCarthy, the tension between the death drive and the life drive was a crucial process during the ecological disaster. Conversely, Marry Oliver focused on Freud's idea of the significance of childhood trauma, using literary writing to harness nature's power to ignite human imagination and overcome suffering through the creative arts. Thus, we can easily imagine how diverse other American writers response to Freudian psychanalysis are in their ecological writings.

Chapter 11

French Lacanian Ecopsychology in Michel Houellebecq's *The Possibility of an Island*

In the prior section, we explored the evolution of Freudian psychology in the United States and its incorporation into American literature. Additionally, concerning the crucial matter of climate change that has attracted considerable interest in the early 21st century in the United States, we investigated how Freud's theories on life and death instincts and the interaction between nature and humans are reflected in literary works. This analysis was conducted by examining dystopian literature and compilations of ecological autobiographical essays, interpreted from the standpoint of Freudian eco-psychoanalysis. In contrast, beginning with this chapter our focus shifts to the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan as we delve into the book by the French writer, Michel Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island* (2006), from a Lacanian psychoanalytic viewpoint. Moreover, we will explore how Lacanian psychoanalysis elucidates its intricate connection with the environment and its novel interpretations of Freud's concept of "desire."

11.1 The Metamorphosis of Psychoanalysis from Freudian to Lacanian Theory

Throughout the course of history, mankind has grappled with overcoming their narcissistic inclinations until scientific revelations challenged the notion that humans are the center of the universe. For instance, the Polish astronomer Copernicus illustrated that the Earth orbits the Sun, removing humans from their perceived central position in the cosmos. Darwin elucidated our evolution through random processes, displacing our esteemed status among all life forms. Moreover, Freud's exploration of the significant role of the unconscious mind in mental functions exposed that our conscious ego does not reign supreme even within itself. However, in the context of today's advancements in brain sciences, psychoanalysis appears not to be as subversive as previously thought, but instead it seems to be a part of the traditional humanist domain that is now facing

new challenges. For example, Slavoj Zizek [1] pointed out that at the scientific knowledge level, it seems that the cognitivist-neurobiologist model has replaced the Freudian model. In psychiatry at the clinical level, pills and behavioral therapy approaches are taking over the place of psychoanalysis. Within the social context, Freud's idea of repressing individual sexuality seems to have lost its validity in today's hedonistic permissiveness.

Nonetheless, Zizek still succeeds in illustrating that the era of psychoanalysis has not entirely faded through the perspective of the French psychologist Jacques Lacan (1901-1981), which is characterized by himself as a "return to Freud"[2]. Furthermore, Lacan did not interpret this response as a return to what Freud stated, but as a return to the essence of the Freudian revolution. According to Tom Eyers' argument in his monograph[3] Lacan put forward an ambitious, sometimes highly abstract, and always philosophically suggestive interpretation of Freud, aiming to establish a solid theoretical foundation for the innovative revitalization of psychoanalytic practice. In particular, Lacan initiated his "return to Freud" by interpreting the complete psychoanalytic structure through what could be considered his most famous phrase: "The unconscious is structured as a language." According to Lacan, this concept of the unconscious is aligned with Romantic philosophy of life rather than Freudian theory. In other words, it demonstrated how the unconscious itself obeys its own grammar and logic: the unconscious talks and thinks, implying the unconscious is not solely controlled by untamed instincts that need to be controlled by the ego, but rather the space where a distressing truth is articulated. Jean-Michel Rabaté stated that Lacan's originality consisted in firmly positing post-Freudian psychoanalysis first as a therapy based on a particular use of language.[4]

Furthermore, distinguishing itself from the perspectives of other mainstream psychoanalytical schools, the primary aspect that immediately stands out is the philosophical underpinning of Lacan's theory. Lacan has frequently been referred to as

[1] Slavoj Zizek, *How to Read Lacan* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 2.
[2] Zizek, *How to Read Lacan*, 2.
[3] Tom Eyers, *Lacan and the Concept of the "Real"* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1.
[4] Jean-Michel Rabatâe, *The Cambridge Companion to Lacan* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

a "philosopher of psychoanalysis", but it is evident that he would not have been able to accomplish the radical re-foundation of psychoanalysis that he envisioned if he had not been a psychiatrist initially. However, for Lacan, psychoanalysis in its most basic form is not a theory and set of methods for dealing with mental disturbances, but a theory and set of practices that expose individuals to the most extreme aspects of human existence. For instance, his theory elucidates the process by which entities such as reality establish themselves initially. According to Lacan, abnormal developments such as neuroses and psychoses hold the significance of core philosophical stances towards reality. Illness influences the entirety of one's connection to reality. Moreover, Lacan maintains that the objective of psychoanalytic therapy is not the patient's welfare, prosperous social existence, or individual satisfaction, but rather to prompt the patient to address the elementary coordinates and impasses of their own desires.[5]

Although we will elaborate further on the specifics of certain concepts in Lacanian theory later, at this point we cannot overlook the methodology derived from Freud's psychoanalysis and Lacan's development of diverse abstract concepts. In order to access Freud's hidden treasures, Lacan brought together a diverse array of theories, ranging from Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistics to the philosophies of Plato, Kant, Hegel, and Heidegger. As a result, it follows that most of Lacan's fundamental ideas have no equivalent in Freud's theory. For example, Freud does not refer to the triad of Imaginary, Symbolic, and Real or discuss 'the big Other' as symbolic order; instead, he focuses on the ego rather than the subject. Lacan borrows these terms from other fields to create distinctions. Slavoj Zizek, a prominent Lacanian psychoanalysis researcher, remarked in his book that Lacan's “return to Freud” established a fresh theoretical basis for psychoanalysis, leading to significant implications for analytic therapy from a philosophical perspective.[6]

Like Freud, Lacan has been extensively debated, with his controversial personality, obscure style, and extensive influence on culture, ethics, philosophy, and sexuality, along with his unconventional teaching methods and treatment approaches, provoking

[5] Zizek, *How to Read Lacan*, 4.
[6] Zizek, *How to Read Lacan*, 5.

strong rejections and passionate praises. Furthermore, due to his dedicated focus on education, the density of psychoanalysts per population is the highest globally, initially in Latin nations like Italy, Spain, Argentina, and Brazil, then across North America, and eventually reaching Asian countries, particularly China.[7] His doctrines and ideologies have disseminated globally during a period witnessing a general downturn in traditional psychoanalytic practices worldwide.

11.2 Lacan's Three Orders: the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic

Jacques Lacan is acknowledged for his controversial techniques within the realm of psychoanalysis. Among them, his three-order theory, including the Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary, is arguably one of the most substantial and well-known of Lacan's theoretical ideas. For Lacan, there is no sense in his thinking that any single order could or should become psychologically dominant through treatment. In other words, there must be a combination and influence among these three orders. As far as he is concerned, various content can be integrated into this conceptual triangle. However, the three dimensions must collaborate, resulting in the absence of a definitive narrative or linear plot, as they are interdependent.

Firstly, the Imaginary is the psychic realm that Lacan believes encompasses much of what we perceive as ordinary conscious reality. It is based on the foundation of the Symbolic, which organizes it, establishes its standards, and sets its socio-linguistic limits. Furthermore, Lacan describes the imaginary as an essential construct that enables the psychoanalytic individual to exist in and interact with their environment. For instance, Esther Pelled[8] contended during the discussion with Yehuda Israely that a comparable phenomenon occurs in meditation, where the essence involves reconnecting with the physical body. The fundamental directive in meditation is not centered around thinking, but rather on perceiving and experiencing sensations. It means that the realm of the Imaginary is primarily constructed of delusions that organize the world, forming unities, harmonies, or connections of resemblance and

[7] Rabatâe, *The Cambridge Companion to Lacan*, xi.
[8] Yehuda Israely and Esther Pelled, *The Ethics of Lacanian Psychoanalysis* (Taylor & Francis, 2023), 65–66.

sameness among individuals and objects. Besides, Moses May-Hobbs[9] points out that in Lacan's theory, the concept that best represents the Imaginary order is the "Mirror Stage", during which the infant becomes captivated by their reflection in the mirror as a unified entity. Thus, we can predict that the satisfaction that attends the specular image is the satisfaction of experiencing the self as a unified whole. Without this fantasy-based imagery, we might experience an unexplained feeling of dread and isolation from the individuals and objects in our vicinity.

In the second place, the Symbolic is the primary framework of language, according to Lacan, which Freud neglected to fully consider. We can even consider that the Symbolic order includes not only language, but also all the societal and representational systems that form the foundation of everyday consciousness. The role of language for Lacan is not just a tool for transmitting meanings among individuals. Instead, it is seen as a medium that traps those who use it within the symbolic realm of their culture, society, and obligations. In other words, in Lacan's perspective, entering the realm of language is crucial for development; as the infant starts to learn language, they also encounter the concept of the "big Other"[10] — the presence of external authority. Therefore, language, as defined by Lacan, serves as a socio-symbolic social construct, a witness, and an enforcer, shaping the socio-symbolic order. It establishes boundaries for our actions and expressions, imposes restrictions, and evaluates deviant behaviors and indecencies. Esther Pelled utilized a figurative analogy in an intriguing manner to interpret the significance of the Symbolic, where she highlighted that an individual's reliance on society is similar to a word's meaning depending on the sentence.[11] This indicates that the meanings of subjects are derived from their social context.

Finally, the Imaginary and the Symbolic constitute "reality," which Lacan contrasts with the Real. The Imaginary and the Symbolic can be described more easily as groups of functions and experiences, as they each contain signified and signifier, and encompass expression and understanding. In contrast, the Real fluctuates between

[9] Moses May-Hobbs, "Jacques Lacan: Explaining the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real," TheCollector, September 20, 2023, https://www.thecollector.com/jacques-lacan-imaginary-symbolic-real/.
[10] Jean-Michel Rabaté, *Jacques Lacan: Psychoanalysis and the Subject of Literature* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave, 2001), 12.
[11] Israely and Pelled, *The Ethics of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, 67

different meanings in Lacan's theory, often representing either materiality or an unstructured expanse underlying the patterns imposed by the Symbolic, which means the Real exists inherently beyond daily, communicable reality.[12] Nay, the "Real", Tom Eyers[13] argued, must be understood as the central, determining concept of Lacan's work, early and late, without which his metapsychology would succumb to one of two fates: either the temptations of linguistic idealism or a theoretical and clinical overinvestment. According to Lacan's theory, we create a transition from the Real realm to the Imaginary realm via our imagination during the mirror stage. It can almost be considered that access to the real world is typically challenging without experiencing certain traumas and suffering. This order is a chaotic world that is incomprehensible to us at birth, marking the pre-imaginary phase stemming from the body's existence. In particular, it arises not from the concept of the "self", but from the disordered world of sensations. According to Moses May-Hobbs, the Real is the unstructured opposite that reality is built to resist and encode. Despite its elusive nature, Lacan often discusses the Real in his later writings; it is its almost indescribable presence that drives anxiety and compulsion. The Real continues to be something outside of direct experience, yet it is consistently encompassed in and manifested through perception and behavior.

To conclude the relationships among these three orders, here we refer to Yehuda Israely[14] thoughts on the subject of the Real, elucidating that the Real deconstructs the illusory identity of the Imaginary-Symbolic realm. The Symbolic serves to reconcile the Imaginary and the Real.

11.3 Lacanian Theory and Environment

When contemplating the ecology and environment of the planet, humans consistently tend to anthropomorphize our planet, Earth, by assigning it a gender and likening it to our maternal figure. This perception has a notable historical background, from various

[12] Moses May-Hobbs, "Jacques Lacan: Explaining the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real," TheCollector, September 20, 2023, https://www.thecollector.com/jacques-lacan-imaginary-symbolic-real/.
[13] Tom Eyers, *Lacan and the Concept of the "Real"* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1.
[14] Israely and Pelled, *The Ethics of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, 68

unsubstantiated New Age beliefs about Gaia to more politically oriented ideas found in Indigenous traditions, depicting diverse interpretations of motherhood. However, mothers play a crucial role in our lives as they provide protection and nurture, yet they can also be seen as a source of danger. According to Jacques Lacan, mothers have the tendency to overly protect and control us, resembling a maternal crocodile from whom we must emancipate ourselves. Lacan's perspective highlights a deep-rooted conflict or paradox in our emotions towards the one who has given us life and care.[15] This theory suggests that we may harbor mixed feelings towards our planet, considering our reliance on it. In order to evident this, Jones, Mairwen K et al. have shown that if we analyze the environment from a psychoanalytic perspective, we may discover that psychoanalysis focuses on the individual, and each of us has distinct ways of responding to environmental challenges.[16] For example, we adopt various strategies pragmatically to mitigate environmental impact: we engage in recycling initiatives, prepare for potential environmental catastrophes, meticulously monitor waste disposal dates, or allocate funds towards acquiring sustainable transportation options such as a Tesla. On the other hand, the protestor is more precisely a hysterical subject, appealing to the master: government, corporations.[17] Environmentalism is a social activity: which means that for Lacan the problem is others, the big Other, or authority figures. Thus, this dichotomy, stemming from individual's reverence for nature coupled with a communal disapproval of environmental stewardship, mirrors the intricate dynamics found in humanity's ambivalent connection with our planet.

How our understandings of the environment and nature are shaped during the age of climate crisis and the Anthropocene carries psychoanalytic significance. To analyze this, we can delve into the approach by investigating the core three-order framework in Lacanian theory as mentioned above: the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real.

The imaginary environment is the space that surrounds us, as noted by Lacan in the "mirror stage" essay, where the child playfully explores the connection between

[15] Clint Burnham and Paul Kingsbury, *Lacan and the Environment* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 1–2.
[16] Mairwen K Jones et al., "The Impact of Climate Change on Obsessive Compulsive Checking Concerns," *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 46, no. 3 (January 5, 2012): 265–70, https://doi.org/10.1177/0004867411433951.
[17] Ilan Kapoor, *Psychoanalysis and the Global* (U of Nebraska Press, 2018), 257–82.

movements in the image and the reflected surroundings.[18] In this context, the environment acts as an image, shaping the ego and our narcissistic interactions with others. It serves as a playground, a realm of joyous activity, as Lacan later mentioned, yet also a place of estrangement and hostility.[19] Therefore, these dualities of emotions play a pivotal role in comprehending the various ways we connect with and appreciate the environment. It is essential to avoid slipping into moralistic judgments against those holding opposing views. According to Clint Burnham and Paul Kingsbury[20], the environment, or nature, is portrayed in the realm of the imaginary as not only nature itself, but also as a source of beauty, awe-inspiring, and even sublime.

In terms of the Symbolic, referring to order, law, and language, the environment is defined and examined through scientific means: categorization, classification, measurement, and exploration. Nevertheless, as Slavoj Zizek[21] points out today, the postmodern subject demonstrates a sense of skepticism towards official institutions, while also holding beliefs in various conspiracy theories. That means the concept of the "big Other" is absent, making science unreliable, and still, we are all susceptible to deception, being misled by false representations of the Amazon Forest Fires[22]. Climate summits seldom occur in less glamorous locations like Newark, Lagos, or Leeds, as the presence of pollution might be too close to the Real.

Furthermore, Marc De Kesel[23] can help us think about the environment as the Real. He compares the environment with *Das Ding*. Lacan claimed that as a radical exteriority, the "thing" nevertheless forms the central point around which the whole libidinal economy revolves and at which desire aims. No matter the "thing," or *Das Ding*, we argue, it is crucial to understanding the environment as the Real. On the one hand, there is a foreign kernel in our innermost existence, our unconscious, which we sometimes think of as unnatural; on the other hand, nature functions as a radical externality, the

[18] Jacques Lacan and Bruce Fink, *Ecrits: The First Complete Edition in English* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2006), 75.
[19] Lacan and Fink, *Ecrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, 76.
[20] Burnham and Kingsbury, *Lacan and the Environment*, 3.
[21] Critical Theory Ebooks, "Slavoj Zizek - Key Ideas," criticaltheorylibrary.blogspot.com, 2011, http://criticaltheorylibrary.blogspot.com/2011/02/slavoj-zizek-key-ideas.html.
[22] T. J. Demos, "The Agency of Fire: Burning Aesthetics - Journal #98," www.e-flux.com, 2019, https://www.e-flux.com/journal/98/256882/the-agency-of-fire-burning-aesthetics/.
[23] Marc De Kesel, *Eros and Ethics* (State University of New York Press, 2009), 225.

locus of our most sincere feelings and beliefs. Our attitude towards the environment and nature is often fraught with contradictions. For instance, humanity's insatiable appetite for seafood has led to the overfishing of marine life, bringing about environmental pollution from secondary human-made products such as plastic fishing nets. With the situation deteriorating and the recognition of the harmful consequences of our actions, concerns emerge regarding potential retribution from nature. This has sparked a growing appreciation for the sacredness of the natural world in our subconsciousness. Consequently, we shift our focus to advocating for the preservation of marine life and launching various community-led marine conservation initiatives. This dualistic approach highlights our acknowledgment of the significance of nature while exposing our struggle to break free from a consumerist mindset that views nature primarily as a resource for human benefit.

11.4 The Interpretation of Desire in Lacanian Theory

Just as Edgar Allan Poe, the American novelist, and Mallarmé, the French poet, are frequently compared in the realm of literature, the field of psychoanalysis inevitably draws parallels between Freud and Lacan. Lacan's emphasis on a “return to Freud” was underscoring the significance of culture and language in psychoanalysis. While Freud's ideas can be gleaned from his writings, Lacan's interpretation, particularly his post-Freudian psychoanalysis, remains abstract and challenging to grasp from the original texts. Therefore, delving into Lacanian scholars' insights is essential for a comprehensive understanding, necessitating an examination of Lacan's claims from a third-party perspective. Among the prominent figures in this area is the Slovenian literary critic, Zizek, who often elucidates Lacan's concepts using examples from popular culture to convey complex ideas to a wider audience.[24] Following Zizek's description we can enhance the comprehension of intricate Lacanian theories concerning desire, Object Small a, and related subjects.

[24] Rabaté, *Jacques Lacan: Psychoanalysis and the Subject of Literature*, 11.

According to Zizek's understanding of the relationship between the subject and the object, the relationship between the subject and the object experienced by each individual in a dream is that the subject, moving faster than the object, draws nearer and nearer to it but is never able to reach it—the dream paradox of an ongoing approach to an object that maintains a consistent distance.[25] Lacan aptly highlighted the significant aspect of the unattainability of the object. The paradox highlights the connection between the subject and the object that triggers its desire—an object that remains unachievable. The desired object is consistently out of reach; our only option is to surround it. In essence, the desired object escapes our pursuit, regardless of our efforts to obtain it.

In terms of desire, Zizek also discusses another paradox. He elucidates a famous second dreamlike condition that we frequently experience: moving immobility[26]. Despite all our frenetic activity, we find ourselves immobilized in the same position. Furthermore, by referring to the Hellenic lore of Tantalus and Sisyphus to strengthen his argument he observes that both characters endure a perpetual cycle of effort; Tantalus is perpetually tormented by the proximity of a goal he can never attain, while Sisyphus is condemned to recommence his labor anew upon reaching the midpoint of his endeavor. The libidinal economy of Tantalus's torments is noteworthy; they distinctly illustrate the Lacanian differentiation between need, demand, and desire. This means that an ordinary object meant to fulfill certain needs transforms significantly once it is entangled in the dynamics of demand, ultimately giving rise to desire. In other words, when we request an object from someone, its "use value" (its ability to fulfill our needs) transforms into a representation of its "exchange value"; the specific object then acts as an indicator of a web of interpersonal connections. If the other party fulfills our request, they are demonstrating a particular stance towards us. The ultimate aim of our demand for an object is not solely to meet a need associated with it, but to affirm the other person's attitude towards us. For instance, when a husband sends flowers to

[25] Slavoj Žižek, *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture* (Cambridge; London: The Mit Press, 2006), 4.
[26] Žižek, *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*, 5.

his wife, the flower transforms into a symbol of affection that transcends the mere physical presence of the flower, embodying our approach towards our family.

In contest, Sisyphus' perpetual effort of pushing the boulder uphill only to watch it tumble down symbolizes the idea that a goal, once achieved, continually eludes us. In this paradox, we must acknowledge the fundamental essence of the psychoanalytic concept of drive, or more accurately, the Lacanian differentiation between its aim and its goal. The goal represents the final destination, while the aim denotes our intention—the very act itself. Lacan argues that the true purpose of the drive is not its goal (complete satisfaction), but its aim: the drive's ultimate intention is simply to replicate itself as a drive, to revert to its cyclical trajectory, and to persist in its journey towards and away from the goal. The genuine source of pleasure lies in the repetitive motion of this enclosed loop.[27] In particular, sometimes to achieve high scores in our final examination we dedicate our efforts to practice and familiarize ourselves with the exam material, aiming to attain the desired grades. However, upon reaching our goal, the satisfaction may not be as profound as anticipated. Instead, we find ourselves preoccupied with the demanding coursework of the upcoming semester. It seems that the satisfaction we pursue appears to elude us once we obtain the grade. According to Lacan's theory, the focus should be on valuing the process of learning itself rather than the relentless pursuit of top grades. This Lacanian proposition of process theory asserts that true satisfaction stems from a mindset grounded in continuous learning, beyond merely the grade recorded on the final evaluation.

Lacan has claimed that the object small a is what philosophical reflection lacks in order to be able to locate itself and ascertain its nullity.[28] Perhaps gaining a clearer insight into Lacan's concept of the *petit objet a* (Object Small a) becomes feasible in light of the aforementioned elucidation. It becomes apparent that this "Object Small a" symbolizes the desire intrinsic within us — a desire we quest for yet vanishes when we attempt to apprehend it. Despite our relentless pursuit, when we reach out for it, it

[27] Jacques Lacan, Jacques-Alain Miller, and Alan Sherican, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* (London, England; New York, New York: Routledge, 2018), 179.
[28] Michel Chion, *The Voice in Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, [Ca, 2008), 122.

eludes us, showcasing its void nature and refuting its apparent essence. As a result, Lacan interprets the deepest desire from an almost philosophical viewpoint. Unlike Freud's libido economy, he reconceptualizes desire in a broader and more abstract manner, which can be considered a crucial aspect of the Freudian reevaluation process.

11.5 Reception and reviews about the fiction *The Possibility of an Island* (2006)

In order to integrate Lacanian psychology, ecocriticism and apply their theories to literary works, we have selected French writer Michel Houellebecq's novel *The Possibility of an Island* (2006) for our analysis. And before that, we will explore the novel's reception in book reviews among experts and the general public, followed by the examination of the reflection of Lacanian psychology in the novel, focusing on specific sequences between the interactions of characters in the fiction.

Houellebecq gained his initial significant global recognition when *Les Particules élémentaires* (1998) was published, known as *The Elementary Particles* in the United States. The book has attracted a broad audience owing to Houellebecq's pessimistic perspective, combining conservative political stances and graphic material. Although receiving accolades, the author has ignited debates by expressing viewpoints in both interviews and writings that have been deemed racially insensitive, sexist, and highly skeptical by certain readers.[29] For example, in his interviews, he has gained notoriety for disparaging Islam, and within his novels, he criticizes feminism, favoring instead the merits of sexual tourism.[30] Nevertheless, Ann Manov[31] still highlights it in her critique of this French author: it is clear that Houellebecq is an important writer — the most interesting, the most provocative, the most of our time, for better or worse.

In the plethora of critiques and scholarly essays analyzing his novel *The Possibility of an Island*, we initially encounter noteworthy themes like immortality and the

[29] Writter53, "Brief Review on Michel Houellebecq," Site officiel de l'écrivain Michel Houellebecq, May 19, 2022, https://www.houellebecq.info/michel-houellebecq/.
[30] Stephen Metcalf, "Clones Behaving Badly," *The New York Times*, June 11, 2006, sec. Books, https://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/11/books/review/clones-behaving-badly.html.
[31] Ann Manov, "The Annihilation of Michel Houellebecq," UnHerd, January 17, 2022, https://unherd.com/2022/01/the-annihilation-of-michel-houellebecq/.

relentless pursuit of desire in the context of the ecological world destruction. The book is structured as a conversation between Daniel1, a caustic modern comedian, and his genetically replicated offspring from a millennium in the future, Daniel 24. Daniel 1, in his forties with a cynical outlook, joins a religious group called the Elohimites. They store cells cryogenically and believe in a scientific process to transfer personality and memories across generations. On the other hand, Daniel24 is an exact DNA copy. The critic Stephen Metcalf picks up the story of Daniel 1 and of human history far in the future, where Daniel24 and his fellow "neo-humans" live in a world ravaged by environmental disaster and almost completely devoid of human interaction.[32] He is researching and analyzing the autobiographical diaries of his ancestor in a post-cataclysmic world, which form the main body of the novel.

Houellebecq utilizes the novel's narrator, Daniel 1, to discuss the yearning for eternal life as a man in his middle age. There are essentially two methods to address the issue of aging: either discover a method to halt the aging process in the body or find a means to substitute the body with a new, identical one — a clone. In the work, Michel Houellebecq delves into the second choice. Kara Babcock argued that in the novel, in the future of Daniel 1, neo-human clones engage in intellectual interactions exclusively, dedicating the remainder of their time to contemplation, philosophical pursuits, and composing annotations on the writings of those who came before them.[33] The cult's leader persuades the followers that achieving immortality is possible through cloning, however, they gradually lose their humanity in the process. This is evidenced by the decline in emotional display and the incapacity to interact with others warmly. Subsequent clones even substitute sexual reproduction with mechanical programming. The machinery of Daniel 24's analysis of his forerunner is frequently heavy. Without the need for procreation and mortality, the post-human duplicates have observed that all human feelings have vanished throughout the ages. The question posed by the author to the reader is whether the immortality attained at such a price is truly desirable. In

[32] Stephen Metcalf, “Clones Behaving Badly,” *The New York Times*, June 11, 2006, sec. Books.
[33] Kara Babcock, “The Possibility of an Island by Michel Houellebecq | Kara.Reviews,” kara.reviews, August 22, 2010, https://kara.reviews/the-possibility-of-an-island/.

other words, the narrator, Daniel 1, interprets these changes as further evidence of humanity's unavoidable deterioration. Kara, furthermore, perceives the attainment of immortality, which necessitates a sacrifice in emotional vibrancy, as an existence defined by a profound sense of solitude that is laced with an undercurrent of bitterness, accompanied by an overtone of repression, and an overwhelming sense of futility.

Besides, the character Daniel 1 finds himself cast away amidst the tumultuous tide of sexual modernity, estranged by the culture of consumption, devoid of faith, and ensnared by a constant yearning for fulfillment. As a cynical comedian, he is a stern observer of contemporary social realities. On the one hand, his excessive pursuit of wealth and his strong craving to fulfill his physical desires embody the principles of consumerism and hedonism, while on the other hand, he progressively loses his identity and ventures down a road of self-destruction. Tim Adams in his review of the novel characterizes the main character's mindset as dulling misanthropy[34], a perspective on existence that leads him to despair about the real world and seek refuge in a cult to transform the existing abhorrent state of affairs. Moreover, in the work Houellebecq has taken the concept of sexual liberation to its ultimate extreme by exploiting the influence of mass marketing. This has resulted in a society where individuals predominantly strive for self-optimization, perceiving a life of sexual gratification as a fundamental human entitlement. Stephen Metcalf[35] highlighted in “The New York Times” the essence of the novel, suggesting that we could interpret Houellebecq as more than a mere provocateur. According to him, the pursuit of complete human freedom ultimately culminates in a form of private desire totalitarianism.

At the conclusion of the novel, the clone Daniel 24 finds himself in a dystopian future, characterized by almost complete mechanization and an inability to connect with human emotions. In this desolate setting, Daniel 24 yearns to escape his confines and seek out a new world—an island where he can experience genuine human emotions. This narrative also embodies the novel's longing for emotional connection, serving as

[34] Tim Adams, “The Book of Daniels,” *The Observer*, October 29, 2005, sec. Books, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2005/oct/30/fiction.michelhouellebecq.
[35] Stephen Metcalf, “Clones Behaving Badly,” *The New York Times*, June 11, 2006, sec. Books.

the poignant climax of the story. Sexuality and love, desire, and aging bodies are recurring themes in Houellebecq's work. The difficulty of all human affective attachment and, in particular, love.[36] Therefore, the author's intention in presenting this work to the audience may involve a deeper contemplation on navigating and catering to their own desires, while discovering genuine and heartfelt emotions amidst the materialistic society endorsed by consumerism.

11.6 The Relationship with Natural World and Self-destruction

When pondering the connection between humanity and the natural environment, we often reflect on our own insignificance within the vast cosmos. We frequently remind ourselves to maintain a humble stance in the presence of nature. Nevertheless, Lacanian thinker Todd McGowan points out in his research that sometimes we neglect to recognize that the priority of the subject tends to make us misunderstand the relationship between humans and nature.[37] In essence, placing excessive emphasis on subjectivity may prompt us to reevaluate our internal exploration and rapport with nature. To offer a more comprehensive and thorough examination of the characters and storyline in the novel, the model introduced by Todd McGowan will be utilized to interpret this literary work. McGowan reminds that Kant compares our relationship to the natural world with our relationship to the moral law. He claims, "the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me."[38] Sometimes, the way we relate to the natural world and ethical principles can be diametrically opposed, leading individuals to view themselves in contrasting ways. In Kant's assertion, looking at the starry heavens reminds Kant of his smallness in the universe, while the moral law reminds him of the subject's grandeur, that subjectivity is capable of a transcendence that the natural world is not.[39] He believes that a subject can simultaneously exist in two distinct realms: a

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[36] Ingeborg Jandl et al., *Writing Emotions: Theoretical Concepts and Selected Case Studies in Literature* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2017), 265–66.
[37] Todd McGowan, "Self-Destruction and the Natural World," *Springer EBooks*, January 1, 2021, 273–93, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-67205-8_15.
[38] Immanuel Kant and Thomas Kingsmill Abbott, *Critique of Practical Reason* (Mineola, Ny: Dover Publications, 2004), 269.
[39] Burnham and Kingsbury, *Lacan and the Environment*, 274.

realm of appearances and a transcendent realm where the subject's moral actions reside. Initially, he is considered a finite entity. Kant views his own finiteness as the fundamental aspect of subjectivity. Moreover, this perception of the natural world instills in him a profound sense of respect. However, upon contemplating the moral principles inherent within, Kant transitions from the world surpassing the subject to the subject surpassing the world. With the guidance of moral principles, one can choose to act contrary to societal norms, natural instincts, and even the fear of death. The moral code empowers individuals to act against their own self-interest. This excessive subjectivity is especially noticeable in the initial part of the novel, where the ethos of consumerism and hedonism dominates the main characters' lives. For instance, the comedian Daniel 1 is unsatisfied with merely chasing after wealth, and his relentless pursuit to fulfill his sexual cravings verges on madness.

> During the first phases of my rise to fortune and glory, I had occasionally tasted the joys of consumption, by which our epoch shows itself so superior to those that preceded it. (...) But it remains the case that, on the level of consumption, the preeminence of the twentieth century was indisputable: nothing, in any other civilization, in any other epoch, could compare itself to the mobile perfection of a contemporary shopping center functioning at full tilt.[40]

The notion of deriving pleasure from consumption appears to be increasingly prevalent in the current societal framework. Daniel 1 receives a generous salary for participating in comedic skits, subsequently acquiring both a car and a villa along the Spanish coastline under the strong recommendation of his partner Isabella. From his perspective, this signifies affluence and alignment with his self-perception, which is also called the subject's moral activities, leading to an enhanced sense of self through consumerist actions, consequently maximizing the omnipotent subjectivity. At the same time, Daniel 1 exhibits extreme behavior in his pursuit of sexual activities; he shows no affection towards his son and wife, rather preferring to pursue a relationship with a lover of

[40] Michel Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, trans. Gavin Bowd (New York: Vintage International, 2007), 19.

similar age or a much younger girlfriend with a significant age gap. He falls in love twice: firstly with Isabelle, a magazine editor whose honesty aligns with his own; and subsequently with Esther, a seductive young actress 25 years his junior. Loving a woman who ages beyond his interest, followed by one who is ridiculously younger than him, Daniel l seizes each chance to discuss the essence of middle age and desires that exist beyond our capacity to satisfy them adequately.

> On the day of my son's suicide, I made a tomato omelet. "A living dog is worth more than a dead lion," as Ecclesiastes rightly says. I had never loved that child: he was as stupid as his mother, and as nasty as his father.[41]

> There are, it seems, people who do not believe in love at first sight; without giving the expression its literal sense, it is obvious that mutual attraction is, in all cases, very quick; from the first minutes of my encounter with Isabelle I knew that we were going to share a love story, and that this love story would be long.[42]

> I understood that I was going to love Esther, that I was going to love her violently, without caution or hope of return.[43]

From the original passage, we can observe that Daniel 1's relentless quest for material possessions and personal gratification could be characterized as an intensification of subjectivity. Todd McGowan posits that an intensified subjectivity hinders one's ability to perceive the external world objectively, causing them to engage with their environment from a non-neutral standpoint that consistently recognizes its own desires.[44] This perspective emphasizes the role of human beings in the natural world, highlighting desires and human power above all else. However, it is essential for us to assess whether the pursuit of this desire truly holds intrinsic significance. Specifically,

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41 Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 19.
42 Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 21.
43 Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 148.
44 Burnham and Kingsbury, *Lacan and the Environment*, 277.

further examination would be needed to determine the extent of the relationship between desire and pleasure. Zizek has previously highlighted in Lacanian psychology that the subject is consistently pursuing the object at an increased pace. However, every time the subject is on the verge of apprehending the object, it slips away from the subject masterfully, ultimately eluding capture. This perpetual cycle of pursuit and evasion creates a sense of stagnation. It appears that the subject is incapable of attaining the desired state of perfection. Lacan proceeds to designate this elusive yet imperative object as the *petit objet a* (Object Small a), symbolizing human desire.

As the storyline of the novel unfolds, the invalidity of desire becomes much more evident. For instance, Daniel 1 sells the luxurious car he previously used to flaunt his wealth; Isabelle's declining physical appearance renders her unappealing to him, leading to his disinterest in her on a sexual level, eventually prompting Isabelle herself to decide to leave him as she expresses her unwillingness to be a burden. Conversely, Esther, despite her willingness for physical intimacy, never truly develops romantic feelings for him and eventually finds love elsewhere, leading to her departure. This illustrates that the desire Daniel 1 pursues—the distinct to surpass mere necessities, be it wealth, possessions, or ultimately, physical gratification—is essentially futile. There is even a possibility that such a pursuit may lead to self-loathing and self-destruction, which stem from humanity's failure to maintain a harmonious equilibrium between its interaction with the natural world and its own self-centered perspective.

> I sold the Bentley —it reminded me too much of Isabelle, and its ostentation was beginning to annoy me.[45]

> There was no love-making, that evening, as we went home through the dunes. We had to put an end to it all, however, and a few days later Isabelle announced her decision to leave. “I don’t want to be a burden,” she said. “I wish you all the happiness you deserve,” she said as well—and I still wonder to this day if it was a bitchy remark.[46]

[45] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 86.
[46] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 82.

> Esther was a few meters away but paid no attention “to me when I sat down, she continued to chat with her friends, to evoke memories of other parties, and it was at that moment that I understood. She was leaving for the United States for a year, maybe forever; over there she would make new friends, and, of course, she would find a new boyfriend. I was abandoned, certainly, but in exactly the same way that they were, I had no special status.[47]

11.7 Self-destruction versus Clonal Rebirth

After reaching middle age and acknowledging the reality of his body aging, experiencing a decline in sexual drive, and being abandoned by his two romantic partners, Danie l finds himself engulfed by profound loneliness and sorrow. These emotions exacerbate his sense of hopelessness and deep-seated misanthropy. Consequently, he decides to join a sect where he encounters its prophet and leader. Within this community, he learns about a proposition involving cutting-edge bio-cloning technology that could preserve his genetic material for a potential rebirth. However, to proceed with this process, he must adhere to two conditions: transferring all his assets to the church upon his demise and committing suicide to initiate the resurrection process.

> The first fundamental ceremony to mark the conversion of each new follower—the taking of a DNA sample—was accompanied by the signing of a document in which the postulant bequeathed all his possessions to the Church, after his death—the latter reserving the right to invest them, while promising to return them to the follower, after his resurrection, in their entirety.
>
> The second fundamental ceremony was the entry into anticipation of resurrection—in other words suicide.[48]

[47] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 293-294.
[48] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 311-312.

After undergoing internal conflict, Daniel 1 eventually consents to the terms stipulated by the Church to achieve rebirth by relinquishing his possessions and taking his own life. Essentially, dissatisfied with his ailing body, his drive invokes him to fulfill his higher satisfaction post-reincarnation. At the same time, someone who made the same decision to commit suicide was her girl-friend Isabelle.

> It was on Christmas Day, midmorning, that I learned of Isabelle's suicide. I wasn't really surprised by it. I sensed, in the space of a few minutes, that a sort of emptiness was settling inside me; but this was a predictable, anticipated emptiness. (…), I also knew that I too, sooner or later, was going to head toward the same kind of solution.[49]

Thus, this leads to the story of Daniel 1 and his replicated descendants, Daniel 24 and Daniel 25, sequentially portrayed in the book. The progenies of Daniel 1 peruse the life stories passed down by their ancestors, hence gaining insight into the lifestyles of humankind from centuries past. However, according to Todd McGowan's examination of the subject's desires, we can comprehend that the subject can depend on logic to direct its actions, but also that the moral law indicates the presence of a self-destructive element in the subject.[50] Similar to the ethical principle, the drive provides gratification by sacrificing the subject's well-being, leading to the destruction of self-interest. Consequently, in order to gain this renewal, a terrible cost must be incurred. Besides, this destruction extends beyond the mere self-interest of humans; it also impacts the environment that sustains us. For instance, as the cloned descendants of Daniel proliferate, a severe environmental crisis unfolds on the planet. It is evident that excessive subjectivity, or desire, has disrupted the equilibrium between humanity and nature, resulting in irreversible damage to both future generations and the environment itself.

> I did not know what was in it at present, but my first days on the road had revealed to me that

[49] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 327
[50] Burnham and Kingsbury, *Lacan and the Environment*, 278.

> at least some species had survived the succession of tidal waves and extreme droughts, the clouds of atomic radiation, the poisoning of the water supply, in fact all of the cataclysms that had ravaged the planet for the last two millennia.[51]

> The succession of nuclear explosions, of tidal waves, of cyclones that had battered this geographical zone for several centuries had ended up completely flattening its surface and transforming it into one vast sloping plane, of weak declivity, which appeared in the satellite photos as uniformly composed of pulverulent ashes of a very light gray color.[52]

In a society characterized by restlessness, hatred, and insatiable desires, individuals resort to utilizing cloning technology to procure substitutes for themselves, adapting to an alternative means of existence. This societal landscape is marked by consumerism, rampant sexual behavior, cloning practices, the dominance of youth culture, and a societal shift towards primal instincts in the absence of conventional moral standards. These themes unfold within a futuristic dystopia where humanity has nearly eliminated its own presence.[53]

On the other hand, in the clone-dominated post-human world, readers wonder whether their regeneration, continuous duplication, and rebirth truly provide them with satisfaction and pleasure. To gain insight, we may look at certain excerpts from the novel.

> By turning from the path of pleasure, without managing to find an alternative, we have only prolonged the latter tendencies of mankind. When prostitution was definitively outlawed, and the ban effectively applied across the entire surface of the planet, men entered the gray age.[54]

> Being genetically descended from Daniel1, I have, of course, the same features, the same face, (…), but that sudden expressive distortion, accompanied by the characteristic chuckles, which

[51] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 395.
[52] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 411
[53] W. John Schacht, "The Possibility of an Island by Michel Houellebecq," PopMatters, 2024, https://www.popmatters.com/michel-houellebecq-possibility-island.
[54] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 33.

> he called laughter, is impossible for me to imitate; I cannot even imagine its mechanism.[55]

> Intelligence permits the domination of the world; this can appear only within a social species, and through the medium of language. This same sociability, which had enabled the appearance of intelligence, was later to hinder its development—once technologies of artificial transmission had been perfected. The disappearance of social life was the way forward, teaches the Supreme Sister.[56]

> (…) our generations follow one another "like flicking the pages of a book.[57]

It is evident in the footage that Daniel 24 and his companions, as replicas of Daniel 1, are posthuman creatures who live in secluded compounds and seem incapable of understanding and feeling human emotions. These cloned creatures are unable to feel the joy, sadness, and compassion of human beings, and although their lives are prolonged, they are unable to experience the skin-to-skin contact between humans and the pleasure of sex, or to perceive the emotional interactions and lack of sociality that occur between people in a community. In contrast, through Daniel 24's autobiography, what we can sense is the creatures' desire for human emotion and their emotional attachment to animals, especially the interaction with the clone of Fox, Daniel 1's dog.

> The fact still remains that I would have difficulty imagining a day of my life spent without running my hand through Fox's coat, without feeling the warmth of his little loving body. This necessity does not diminish as my strength wanes, I even have the impression that it becomes more and more pressing.[58]

According to Sabine Schönfelder's analysis of the novel, this closeness to animals is caused by what could be called "the nostalgic representation of emotions".[59] It is

[55] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 48.
[56] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 140-141.
[57] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 142.
[58] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 141.
[59] Jandl et al., *Writing Emotion: Theoretical Concepts and Selected Case Studies in Literature*, 265.

necessary to recognize the difficulty of all human affective attachment and, in particular, love through the novel. From Daniel 1's excessive pursuit of sexual pleasure and consequent neglect of love to the absence of human emotion in cloned creatures, these instances demonstrate the scarcity of love, which not only highlights its value, but also underscores the argument that cloned creatures are not a superior resolution for the maintenance of human emotion. Meanwhile, we can also learn from McGowan's studies that this emotional bond with animals represents a notion diametrically opposed to human subjectivity, termed "human animality".[60] The absence of intrinsic human animality in the clones marks a deficiency in their existence. The clones, although resurrected with unaltered genetic material, experience a distorted perpetuation of life that is devoid of affective relations and instinctual human traits. Although he dwells within a nebulous space of restrained liberty, Daniel 24's rapport with Fox underscores his affinity for animalistic tendencies and his yearning for primal human connections. It is this dissatisfaction that compels his progeny, Daniel 25, to aspire to depart from his familiar confines in pursuit of a novel environment.

11.8 Retrieve the Animality of Mankind and Find the Possibility of an Island

The descendants of Daniel 1, the clones, are devoid of the ability to experience happiness or joy; they lack any form of desire or emotion. They are unfamiliar with the sensations of crying or laughter and incapable of feeling pain or joy. Stripped of their freedom and independence, they reside behind protective barriers, isolating themselves. Their sole means of communication with the external world and their fellow clones is through the internet. Their sole source of satisfaction lies in analyzing the emotions of the previous human occupants and observing the control screens displaying the surviving savage post-apocalyptic horde.

Excessive human subjectivity fills Daniel 1's world with all kinds of extreme fulfillment, whether it is the satisfaction of material desires under consumerism or the

[60] Burnham and Kingsbury, *Lacan and the Environment*, 276.

physical satisfaction of desires above needs under hedonism. This subjectivity ultimately leads to inner emptiness and self-destruction. It seems that the situation enters an irretrievable dimension where even the clones, although their lives are extended, cannot solve the dilemma of emotional needs. The relationship between man and the natural world is at an impasse, and the clones living in the post-catastrophic period see no hope for life; they can only numbly interact with their own kind in a programmed manner. In the midst of the reader's despair, author Michel Houellebecq offers us some clues and possibilities for hope: one is the existence of Fox, the pet dog. In other words, it is a way for us to re-appreciate the importance of animals in human life. That is what Lacanian scholar Todd McGowan refers to as *animality*. In order to balance the relationship between human beings and the natural world, human beings need to rediscover this animality in Fox so that they can effectively reconcile it with their excessive subjectivity. We can look at the novel's description of the interaction between humans and Fox for inspiration.

> There was still the last morning, and the last walk; the sea was as blue as always, the cliffs just as black, and Fox trotting along beside us. “I’m taking him,” Isabelle had said abruptly. “It’s to be expected, he’s been with me longer; but you can have him when you want.” As civilized as you could get.[61]

> I telephoned Isabelle, who picked up the phone after the second ring—so she was not sleeping either. We agreed that I would stop by to take Fox in the following days, and that he would remain with me until the end of September.[62]

> As for Fox, he is happy. (…), it is an obvious joy for him to be reunited with life and daylight. His joys are identical to those of his ancestors, and they will remain identical among his descendants; his nature in itself contains the possibility of happiness.[63]

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[61] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 83.
[62] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 115.
[63] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 61-62.

> Love is simple to define, but it seldom happens—in the series of beings. Through these dogs we pay homage to love, and to its possibility.[64]

> (…) Fox, the only being worthy of survival I had had the chance to encounter; for his gaze had already contained, occasionally, the spark announcing the coming of the Future Ones.[65]

It is readily apparent from the aforementioned excerpts that Fox plays a vital role in both Daniel 1 and Daniel 24. Firstly, the emotional connection is fostered between Daniel 1 and Isabelle during the leisurely strolls they embark on with Fox. They mutually cherished the companionship to such an extent that even on the ultimate day of their separation, they opted to bid farewell by accompanying Fox for a walk. It is evident that when Isabelle mentioned taking Fox with her, Daniel 1 felt a profound sense of reluctance. Moreover, post-breakup, Daniel 1 expressed a desire to reunite with Fox, indicating his underlying wish to reconnect with Isabelle, establishing Fox as the sole remaining link between the estranged individuals. The reason why Daniel 1 parted ways with Isabelle was not due to a lack of affection, but his unfulfilled sexual desires, highlighting, as a witness to the love, Fox's role shared between them. The author endeavors to portray a love transcending mere physical yearning, an affection rooted in instinctive connection. Even up to the tragic moment of Isabella's suicide, she entrusts Fox to Daniel, who promptly comprehends her wishes and assumes the responsibility of caring for Fox. As the episode unfolds, Daniel chooses to safeguard Fox's DNA, envisioning an everlasting extension of his life akin to his own longevity. To their fortune, Fox successfully transitions into the realm of the New Humans, sparking an intriguing interaction with Daniel 24, the progeny of Daniel 1. Of utmost significance is Fox's unparalleled emotional connection with his predecessor, retaining the joy and emotions that all other clones, in contrast, have forsaken. Here, the distinction between clones and animals will come to our minds naturally. This comparison is especially noticeable in this literary work. It could be deduced that the intention behind

[64] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 161.
[65] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 422.

emphasizing Fox's role by the author is to encourage the clones to rekindle the animality in Fox, emphasizing the reliance on feelings. This animalistic aspect is crucial in addressing the interaction between mankind and the environment. One could posit that by introducing Fox's joyous animal traits amidst Daniel 1's overwhelming subjectivity and Daniel 24's extreme emotional detachment, they would lead to a certain equilibrium in the human-nature relationship.

Another method of overcoming desire and consequently attaining animality can be observed in the final section of the novel. Living more than a millennium later, the clones, or the offspring of Daniel 1, came to the realization that the current status quo did not reflect a promising future. Subsequently, Daniel 25 and Marie 23 ventured beyond the confines and entered the natural realm, which overflows with the Darwinian race. They witnessed a world in disarray from post-atomic bombs and ecological disasters, observing the regression of humanity into primitive brutality. Ultimately, they uncovered remnants of human nature that were unchangeable within themselves. They started to realize that by restraining individual desires and excessive subjectivity and exploring the innate animality existing in nature, we can cultivate balanced emotions and reconnect with our core humanity. The author aims to guide readers towards a realm of potentialities and the island where the emergence of a truly new "future human" could be possible in the epilogue of the work.

> To get out of the ruins of New York, Marie 23 had had to mix with many savages, sometimes grouped in large tribes; unlike me, she had sought to establish contact with them.
>
> The life of the neohumans was intended to be peaceful, rational, remote from pleasure as well as suffering, and my departure would bear witness to its failure. The Future Ones, perhaps, would know joy, another name for continuous pleasure.[66]
>
> I remembered especially the final sentences: “And the reason for this is that our former nature

[66] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 414.

was such that we formed a complete whole. It is the desire and pursuit of this whole that is called love."[67]

Epilogue

Lacanian psychology endorses the concept "return to Freud", reinterpreting Freudian psychoanalysis from a fresh viewpoint. It not only contemplates the "desire" of earlier theorists by incorporating rather abstract ideas from linguistics and philosophy, but also puts forth the three primary orders: the Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary, which reshape our perception of our previous experiences and the norms of the community. Furthermore, he also delves into the dynamics surrounding the connection between psychoanalysis and the environment, proposing that the planet mirrors a maternal figure to us. As such, humans must confront the ambivalence that we have to face retribution from this maternal figure while also depending on her existence. The contemporary Lacanian thinker Todd McGowan's in his paper posits that humankinds not only acknowledge their insignificance in the grandeur of nature, but also reveal a tendency towards excessive subjectivity when confronted with desires and moral laws. His work underlines that this heightened human subjectivity leads to a path of self-destruction, encompassing not only the human species, but also the surrounding environment. With the assistance of this Lacanian eco-psychology, we conducted a textual analysis of the book *The Possibility of an Island* (2006) by French author Michel Houellebecq.

In the novel, set against a backdrop of rampant consumerism and hedonism, Daniel 1, a comedian, uses humor to satirize the dark and violent aspects of society. While indulging in his own desires for wealth and sexual pleasure, he finds himself overwhelmed. After a fleeting period of enjoyment with his two girlfriends, the perpetual emptiness leads him to join a cult. In order to preserve his DNA and continue his existence, he must relinquish all his belongings and opt for suicide. However, his clones, Daniel 24 and 25, although granted extended life, lose their capacity for feeling

[67] Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*, 417.

emotions and tend to become apathetic. Following a severe environmental catastrophe, these clones realize that their existence does not align with the future neo-human civilization. They observe in a dog named Fox and savages the animalistic essence that humanity has forsaken. Recognizing the significance of reconnecting with this lost aspect of their animality, they venture into the unknown on a quest for rediscovery.

When utilizing Lacanian ecopsychology to examine this piece, it becomes evident that the protagonist's immersion in primal desires is driven by the pursuit of the *object petit a*, which means an entity that never truly existed. This leads to Daniel's perpetual inability to fully gratify his wants, whether they involve riches, carnal pleasures, or the mere continuation of his existence. He mirrors a subject in relentless pursuit of an object, endlessly near yet unattainable. Furthermore, concerning the environmental disequilibrium and the futuristic society after catastrophe, Lacan underscores that these stem from an excess of human subjectivity, where escalating desires compromise the ecosystem. This underscores why the author advocates for diminishing this subjectivity by rediscovering the inherent goodness and affection within human nature, thereby fostering the final destination of equilibrium and steadiness. Only through this approach can humans cease to disrupt the overall natural order, enabling them to harmoniously coexist with the environment as integral components of nature rather than adversaries.

Chapter 12

French Lacanian Ecopsychology in Sylvain Tesson's *The Consolation of the Forest*

In the preceding section, we presented an exposition of the pertinent theories by the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, encompassing his perspectives on desire and the connection between human beings and the environment. Furthermore, we meticulously scrutinized the aforementioned content in conjunction with the French novel *The Possibility of an Island* (2006), elucidating Lacan's theories through the novel from a literary viewpoint. In this chapter, we will further explore Lacanian psychoanalysis from a French writing's perspective, delving into Lacan's interpretations of space and the concept of the subject. Additionally, we will integrate philosophical principles from Taoism into Chinese philosophy. By drawing connections between Lacanian and Taoist ideologies, we aim to elucidate how Taoist philosophy complements Lacanian psychoanalysis. For the practical analysis section, we will utilize the non-fiction memoir *Consolation of the Forest* (2014)[1] by the French writer Sylvain Tesson. Through Tesson's account of his six-month solitary exploration near Lake Baikal in Siberia, we will deepen our comprehension of the interplay between humanity and nature, as well as explore his perspective on solitude. This book, *Consolation of the Forest* (2014), can be seen as a sequel to the previous one, *The Possibility of an Island*. Despite the story taking place in a totally different setting, it remains remarkably coherent in terms of the author's views on the world and society. The main characters in the novel and essays hold a strong pessimism for humanity, avoid social interactions, and protect themselves from human civilization. They both seek solace in isolation, attempting to bridge the gap between themselves and the new world, eager to interact with animals, plants, and their surroundings. One could argue that they share a Lacanian eco-psychoanalytic perspective and lead a similar lifestyle.

[1] Sylvain Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, trans. Linda Coverdale (Penguin Books, 2014).

12.1 Reception and Reviews about the Memoir *Consolation of the Forest* (2014)

The *Consolation of the Forest* by Sylvain Tesson is a travelogue that chronicles the author's immersive six-month sojourn in a solitary cabin set amidst the wilderness of Siberia. This literary work captivates the reader through its candid self-examination, introspective musings, and exquisite use of language, offering a profound exploration of Tesson's evolving connection to the natural world and the profound beauty found within it. In this memoir, Tesson had committed himself to living as a hermit before reaching the age of forty. Having previously traveled to the secluded Lake Baikal in the Siberian taiga, it proved to be an ideal location for him to embark on this aspiration of dwelling in solitude, purposefully and minimally, distanced from other individuals. Jenni Kauppi[2] in her critique of this compilation of diaries observed that it vividly captures the psycho-emotional terrain of a man while living in almost complete solitude, accompanied only by two dogs, a meticulously selected reading list, and sporadic unexpected visits from distant neighbors, hunters, and visitors seeking shelter. Furthermore, Tesson integrates classical, contemporary, Eastern, and Western philosophies to interpret his challenges, complemented by his own profound personal insights. If he is the central figure in his narrative, then the Middle Taiga serves as the exquisitely venerated supporting cast.

On the other hand, Tesson elucidates his rationale for desiring a solitary sojourn in a Siberian cabin—it was part of his life goals. He yearned to revisit and further encounter its unadulterated essence. Starting with fierce February blizzards, snow-covered landscapes, and a frozen waterfall, the narrative progresses towards the gradual arrival of spring—featuring butterflies, ducks, and mild skies. The writer harbors a profound affection for the natural world and its offerings, a sentiment that resonates throughout each chapter. In particular, with regards to the interaction between the author and the beauty of nature, Alysha Matson[3] has argued that Tesson increasingly perceives beauty

[2] Jenni Kauppi, "Books Review: Sylvain Tesson - Consolations of the Forest," Open Journal, June 9, 2014, https://archive.openjournal.com.au/books-review-sylvain-tesson-consolations-of-the-forest/.
[3] Alysha Matson, "Consolations of the Forest," siberia.voices.wooster.edu, accessed June 5, 2024, https://siberia.voices.wooster.edu/travel/consolations-of-the-forest/.

in the animals and landscapes surrounding him, contemplating their interdependence and interactions. This conveys an environmental message: to value all natural elements and creatures, to treat them with reverence. Alysha Matson also emphasizes Tesson's view that nature is magnificent, intricate, resilient, and untamed, which means we simply have to cease causing harm to it, as we are naive enough to believe that we can conquer it.

In periods of solitude, Tesson pursues a life focused on pure sensation—relaxing in a hammock, listening to the wind, experiencing the snow on his face, and observing graceful displays of ducks and geese. He draws parallels between his own existence and that of animals, pondering whether animals possess consciousness, as believed by philosophers. Blake Morrison[4] in his review proposed that when confronted with a dilemma, instead of considering the actions of a hero, we should contemplate the choices of a horse or an oyster. Essentially, Tesson claims that creatures in nature exhibit their own consciousness and aesthetic sensitivity. He meticulously documents his daily activities in a journal, dedicating a significant portion of his time to trekking, completing tasks around the cabin, fishing to bolster his provisions, and engaging in reading. A renowned blogger, Kristen[5], provided a distinctive perspective in the exposition on her website, contending that her minimalistic lifestyle in her modest cabin serves as a lavish exploration into her own psyche, a tribute to the grandeur and splendor of nature, and an opportunity to contemplate philosophical matters unaffected by external obligations and desires.

Therefore, this book is characterized by a thoughtful and unhurried narrative, reflecting Tesson's daily experiences. The journal entries vary in length, with some being concise reflections while others delve into deeper contemplations on life's intricacies. As audiences engage with the text, it encourages them to momentarily step away from the surrounding cacophony, immerse themselves in its prose, and connect with that small aspect of their own being captivated by the beauty of the writing and

[4] Blake Morrison, "Consolations of the Forest by Sylvain Tesson – Review," *The Guardian*, June 1, 2013, sec. Books, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/jun/01/consolations-forest-sylvain-tesson-review.
[5] Kristen, "BookNAround: Review: The Consolations of the Forest by Sylvain Tesson," BookNAround, December 2, 2013, http://booknaround.blogspot.com/2013/12/review-consolations-of-forest-by.html.

the ideas within its pages. Tesson revels in the tranquility of isolated life and asserts that hermits are not in conflict with the world as they withdraw, but rather just stepping aside from it.

12.2 Lacanian Theory on Spatial Discord Within and Outside the Realm of the Real

If we solely viewed this diary through the lens of solitary enjoyment and the author's interaction with wildlife, it may overly simplify the reader's perspective. Hence, this analysis will incorporate Lacanian theories to examine the work from a multifaceted angle. Given the author's solitary existence in a cabin within Taiga Forest, the contemplation within this confined setting likely holds profound significance. Therefore, delving into Lacan's concept called “the realm of the Real” will provide a fresh perspective on the narrative.

Slavoj Zizek once alluded to a fundamental phenomenological experience of discord while discussing Lacan's concept of the real in his book *Looking Awry* (2006). Especially, the disproportion between inside and outside, present to anyone who has been inside a car.[6] From an external vantage point, the vehicle may seem compact; upon entering, we may occasionally experience claustrophobia, yet once situated inside, the car surprisingly appears more spacious, and we feel at ease. Nonetheless, the trade-off for this comfort is the lack of seamless connection between inner and outer space. Occupants within a vehicle perceive the external world as slightly remote, separated by a visible boundary created by the glass. Lacan views the external reality beyond the car as "another reality[7]," a distinct form of existence not directly continuous with the internal reality of the car. The sensation of discontinuity becomes evident when we open the window and confront the immediate presence of external reality. When we are inside a car with the windows rolled up, we feel the unreality of the outside space. In short, the outside view through the glass window presents a kind of cinematic reality projected

[6] Slavoj Žižek, *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture* (Cambridge; London: The Mit Press, 2006), 15.
[7] Žižek, *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*,15.

onto the screen of the glass window. It is this phenomenological experience that allows us to appreciate the great contrast between inner and outer space.

Thus, by spending prolonged durations in confined areas like a compact vehicle, a personal space, or a cabin, we can sense an excess of internal space related to our external environment. To address this discrepancy, it is essential to eliminate any barriers hindering us from immersing ourselves in a more expansive space.

12.3 The Environment as the Real

Zizek's delineation of the disparity between internal and external spaces, lets us reassess the correlation between the environment and the domain of the Real through a Lacanian psychoanalytical lens. We might consider how our views of the environment and nature in the age of the climate crisis and the Anthropocene hold psychological importance. Using Lacanian theory could help manage the conflicting desires and tensions between humans and nature. Recalling Lacan's theory of the three orders once again, as discussed in the prior chapter, the Imaginary environment is the space surrounding us, as noted by Lacan in the “mirror stage” essay, detailing the child’s experiential exploration of the connection between movements within the image and the mirrored surroundings.[8] In this context, the environment functions as an image, shaping the ego and our narcissistic interactions with others.

Meanwhile, in terms of the Symbolic, characterized by order, law, and language, the environment is defined as per scientific description and analysis. Nevertheless, the contemporary postmodern individual displays cynicism towards formal institutions.[9] Essentially, the absence of the big Other, skepticism towards science, and susceptibility to deceptive representations of incidents such as Amazon forest fires[10] are prevalent. On the last concept of the Real, Marc De Kesel can assist us in contemplating the environment as the Real. He suggests that with *Das Ding.*

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[8] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink (1966; repr., New York; London: W.W. Norton, 2006), 75.
[9] “Slavoj,” Wikipedia, August 10, 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slavoj_.
[10] T. J Demos, “The Agency of Fire: Burning Aesthetics - Journal #98,” www.e-flux.com, March 2019, https://www.e-flux.com/journal/98/256882/the-agency-of-fire-burning-aesthetics/.

> As a radical exteriority, the “thing” nevertheless forms the central point around which the whole economy revolves and at which desire aims, a “topological” paradox for which he forges the term “extimité.”[11]

The "thing," known as *Das Ding*, is essential for comprehending the Environment as the Real. For nature, Marc De Kesel stressed that it exists topologically in a way that is neither exclusively external nor internal to us, but rather both simultaneously. Nature as the “thing” can be described as "extimate": there is an external core within our deepest selves, our unconscious mind, which may at times seem unnatural to us; in addition, nature serves as a fundamental external entity, the foundation of our most genuine emotions and convictions. It was recognized as the existence in the pre-period of the mirror stage. In other words, nature, or the surrounding environment, is not something that is merely external—it is defined by our interactions with what is external as well as what is internal.

Therefore, our connection to nature can be likened to what the late Lacan termed a non-relation[12], better comprehended through topological frameworks. That is, viewing nature through a Lacanian lens means we must not adopt an anthropocentric viewpoint, perceiving it as detached from us. Instead, we should aim to incorporate it into our daily existence and recognize its intrinsic value within us. This dual internal and external perspective encapsulates the essence of Lacan's exploration of nature.

12.4 Different Perceptions of the Subject by Lacan and Zhuangzi in Chinese Philosophy

It is evident that the subjective notion of “I” is fundamental to Jacques Lacan's philosophical framework. According to Lacan, the evolution of selfhood progresses through three distinct phases: the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic. Moreover,

[11] Marc De Kesel, *Eros and Ethics* (State University of New York Press, 2009), 225.
[12] Clint Burnham and Paul Kingsbury, *Lacan and the Environment* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 4.

Lacan's examination of Hamlet's tragedy highlights the challenges and ultimate significance of embracing one's desires. However, as he progressed into the 1960s and 1970s Lacan started feeling unsettled and dissatisfied with the 'abnormal' desires represented in symbols.[13] He suggested that language enables individuals to present themselves to others, yet it also leads to their alienation as physical beings in complex life scenarios, a concept defined by Lacan as "the fading of the subject[14]". This dilemma becomes Jacques Lacan's central issue. Nonetheless, Zhuangzi's philosophical views on the matter offer a potential resolution to Lacan's inquiry.

Lacan quotes often from Chinese classics which show his knowledge of these ancient philosophical works, particularly Daoist texts. He argued that the Chinese possess a highly effective system to complement the Western point of view.[15] Lacan diligently studied Chinese philosophy under François Cheng's guidance, with a particular focus on the central doctrine of Daoist teachings found in *The Zhuangzi*[16]. The ideology of the interconnectedness of Heaven, Earth, and I, along with the concept of unity between all things and self, profoundly impacted Lacan.[17] Furthermore, the three phases of the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic form the basis of the Lacanian theory of the subject, and they can be linked back to Zhuangzi's depiction of the triangular relationship between the cicada, the mantis, and the magpie. A review of the original story[18] will enhance our comprehension of the issue at hand. Zhuangzi was meandering through a garden when he was captivated by a particularly unique magpie. Nearby, he spotted a cicada basking in a delightful patch of shade, completely oblivious to its surroundings. Just a little way behind, a praying mantis was patiently awaiting the perfect moment to capture the insect. The mantis noted the cicada's lack of awareness, feeling secure from any potential threat. However, the magpie, positioned advantageously, not only noticed the cicada's carelessness, but also saw through the

[13] Jacques Lacan, Alan Sheridan, and Malcolm Bowie, *Écrits: A Selection* (London; New York: Routledge, 2008), 323–60.
[14] Jacques Lacan and Alan Sheridan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* (London: Karnac, 2010), 208.
[15] Lacan and Sheridan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, 152.
[16] Zhuangzi, *The Zhuangzi. In Chinese Text Project*, trans. J Legge (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2016).
[17] Zhuangzi, *Zhuangzi: The Complete Writings* (Hackett Publishing Company, 2020).
[18] Zhuangzi, Burton Watson, and Columbia, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

mantis's illusion, prepared to seize both of them. Next, we can proceed to analyze and contrast Lacan's and Zhuangzi's perspectives on the concept of the subject. According to the analysis by Quan Wang[19] in his research, using the third-person perspective, Zhuangzi observes animals in their natural habitat and draws parallels between the animal kingdom and human society. In contrast, Lacan delimits the three human relationships using language and societal norms, categorizing them into three fundamental stages of the subject: the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic.

Since Lacan realized that his conception of the subject focused solely on the human-centric viewpoint in his later years, Zhuangzi's philosophy of the subject serves as fertile ground to amend the deficiencies in Lacanian theory. Zhuangzi, by following the bird's gaze, uncovers a world of animals. Shifting away from the human and adopting a non-human perspective towards animals breaks the hold of anthropocentrism and introduces a key concept in Zhuangzi's metaphysics: cross-species transformation. Although Lacan was aware of this concept, he had not implemented it yet. In the same way, according to Zhuangzi, the subject emphasizes that human identity is a continuous process of interaction with the fluctuating surrounding elements. Thus, our identity should not be isolated from the surrounding environment but instead be described in its symbiotic connections with the various elements nearby. Essentially, humans and their surroundings merge into “the poetics of oneness.” In other words, Zhuangzi presents the concept of I in the context of interspecies relationships, delineating the subject within a much wider framework compared to that of Lacan. This suggests that Lacan's concept of the subject is encapsulated within Zhuangzi's philosophical structure. Thus, this innovative perspective has forged a cultural link between the East and the West, signifying a revival in philosophical reflection.

12.5 Taoism and Nature, the Interpretation of the Concept of Non-action (*Wu Wei*)

The anthropocentric humanism of the European Enlightenment clashes with

[19] Quan Wang, “A Comparative Study of the Subject in Jacques Lacan and Zhuangzi,” *Asian Philosophy* 27, no. 3 (July 3, 2017): 248–62, https://doi.org/10.1080/09552367.2017.1354419.

contemporary holistic sciences. Fundamentalists, secularists, socialists, and capitalists emphasize human primacy. From traditional Christian and modern Enlightenment perspectives, human life is fundamentally incomparable to animal and plant life. Humans' innovation relies on the power of our intellect or spirit surpassing nature. This human-centered view of the world, whether rooted in religious or secular ideologies, is now understood to be inaccurate. On the other hand, evolution indicates human genetic commonalities with other animals. Moreover, ecology highlights human dependence on various interconnected ecosystems comprised of plants, trees, and bacteria. In contrast to biblical human and divine agency based on a single act of creation, Daoist self-understanding is centered around the concept of the Way. The Way is not created divinely or by a divine being; instead, it is the ongoing creative process through which the universe unfolds. According to James Miller's analysis in his monograph, the cosmological foundation of one of the earliest Daoist texts, *The Way and Its Power (Dao de Jing)*[20], asserts that the natural world is not merely a group of interacting objects initiated by a divine entity, but is instead a fluid framework of essential operations characterized by self-evolution.[21] Consequently, the universe did not originate from an external act of creation, but rather exists as a network of inherently spontaneous or self-creating pathways. The summary of chapter 25 in *The Way and Its Power* encapsulates this perspective quite cryptically in the statement "*Dao fa zi ran*," which could be interpreted as "ways take as their model their own capacity for self-generation." In Daoist philosophy, the natural world is considered inherently self-generating rather than following predetermined 'natural laws' as dictated by a higher power. Daoists uphold spontaneity as a fundamental value, rooted in their perception of nature. This spontaneity, as described in the *Dao de Jing*, is manifested through a commitment to 'non-action[22] (*Wu Wei*)' rather than active intervention. By embracing 'non-action (*Wu Wei*)' Daoists appreciate the intrinsic capacity for self-evolution present in all things without relying on external efforts to impose change.

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[20] Arthur Waley and Laozi, *The Way and Its Power: A Study of the Tao Tê Ching and Its Place in Chinese Thought* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1965).
[21] James Miller, *Daoism and Nature* (Oxford University Press, 2006).
[22] Robert King, "The Evolution of Non-Action (Wuwei) in Daoism as Seen in the Taipingjing," *Nagoya Future Culture College Research Bulletin* 40, no. 40 (March 10, 2015): 51–61, https://doi.org/10.20582/nfcc.40.0_51.

James Miller stressed that the Daoist perspective on nature and spontaneity described previously did not originate from a scientific evolutionary cosmology, but emerged in conjunction with medical theories concerning the human body.[23] In other words, the ability of the body to maintain a state of overall physiological balance. The foundation of Chinese medicine lies in the circulation of *Qi* energy through the body's meridians connected to various organs. In this perspective, illnesses are seen as obstructions in *Qi* flow, prompting doctors of Chinese medicine to restore the energy flow for optimal health. Balance among the *Qi* flows in different organs signifies a healthy state, according to Daoist principles. Within the body, there exist *yin* and *yang* energy systems: *yin* systems store potential energy, while *yang* systems channel this energy. Daoists perceive a fundamental natural pattern where positive and negative forces create a circular flow striving for equilibrium. This dynamic systemic view aligns classical Daoist philosophy with modern systems thinking, treating the body and nature as interconnected systems seeking overall balance.

Furthermore, Daoists consider this internal balance and systemic equilibrium to be virtues. We can realize that, from the Daoist perspective, achieving balance or harmony without external interference (non-action) is seen as a high virtue. This is the natural process of adjusting the diversity of forces to reach a beneficial equilibrium for the entire system. Applying this concept of virtue to ecological ethics can be valuable, emphasizing the importance of considering the overall health of ecosystems when humans make decisions for their own well-being.

12.6 Inside and Outside of the Cabin

As previously discussed, Tesson's memoir, *Consolation of the Forest* (2014), documents his six-month solitary stay on the shores of Lake Baikal in the Siberian region. In February, equipped with supplies to endure the extended cold and the short-lived blooming of spring, Tesson reached his isolated cabin. He opted for only the

[23] Roger S Gottlieb, *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology* (Oxford University Press -11-16, 2006).

essentials: books, vodka, and cigars, as he commenced his journey. The location where he retreats is a wooden cabin, historically used for exiling Soviet dissidents, which he willingly visits, braving the extreme temperature of -30 °C. His sole means of defense are a signaling flare and a dagger. The only source of warmth available is a cast-iron stove. Furthermore, once his computer and satellite phone cease to function, his sole method of reaching out to the outside world is to don his snowshoes and embark on a journey, with the closest village situated 75 miles away.

The living conditions and the ambient natural surroundings appear to be inhospitable and challenging. Yet, in the midst of these circumstances, he contemplated the significance of his dwelling from a completely novel perspective. For example, he mentioned in his diary when describing the cabin: with the yurt and the igloo, it figures among the handsomest human responses to environmental adversity.[24] In the midst of a frigid and harsh natural environment, living in the cabin appears more akin to an otherworldly existence. The author carries spiritual sustenance and devotes each day to consuming extensive literary material in his cabin. His perception of time by the cast-iron stove differs from that in Paris, where it consistently lets him feel speedy. He smoked cigars in his cabin and insisted on maintaining a daily diary of his interactions with the world around him, documenting the tits outside his window, the meals he prepared, and his personal tranquility and seclusion. This profound sense of satisfaction permeates the original text.

> Living in a cabin means having the time to take an interest in such things, the time to write them down, the time to read them over. And what's more, once all that is done, you still have time left over. At the window this evening, la mésange, mon ange: my angel the tit.[25]

> To attain a sense of inner freedom, one must have solitude and space galore. Add to these the mastery of time, complete silence, a harsh life and surroundings of geographic grandeur. Then

[24] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 12.
[25] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 59.

do the maths, and find a hut.[26]

In the cabin, time grows calm. It lies at your feet like a good old dog and suddenly, you've even forgotten it's there.[27]

In the beginning there was the organic womb where life put itself together. (…) The cabin fulfils the maternal function. The danger comes from constantly craving the comfort of this lair and vegetating there in a kind of semi-hibernation.[28]

It is evident from the writer's narrative that residing alone in the cottage brought him pleasure and a sense of liberation. He was attuned to the leisurely passage of time and could pursue his desires unhindered. Despite the cabin's diminutive presence in the chilly forest and its physical dimensions were notably restricted, through a Lacanian psychoanalytic lens, we discern that while this physical space is confined, when the writer warms himself, reads, and slumbers within this exclusive domain, he fosters a perception of expansiveness and freedom. This phenomenon resembles the sensation of spaciousness one experiences within a car after prolonged confinement. Notably, as the writer likens the cabin to a nurturing womb, a form of attachment develops as he finds solace in his life within its confines. In other words, the cabin's external walls delineate its interior space, engendering a perceptual illusion of spaciousness through prolonged habitation.

On the flip side, to examine Lacan's theory on the distinction in perception between internal and external space, let's consider the following excerpt.

Inside and outside the cabin, the feeling of time's passage is not the same. Indoors: a rippling of cosy hours. Outdoors: −22º F, the slap of every second. On the ice, the hours drag. The cold numbs their flow.[29]

[26] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 72.
[27] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 51-52
[28] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 74.
[29] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 56.

> The cabin is at the heart of a tanka poem, in contact with the lacustrine, mountainous and woodland worlds, symbolizing respectively death, the eternal return and divine purity.[30]

From the passage above, it is evident that the cabin's interior and exterior present contrasting atmospheres. The interior space appears as a greenhouse, providing a conducive environment for relaxation. Conversely, outside the cabin harsh weather conditions like snowstorms prevail, accompanied by the chilling presence of the lake and sporadic popping sounds that emphasize the pervasive risks and dangers. This juxtaposition creates a suffocating ambiance in comparison to the welcoming interior. These observations resonate with Lacan's theory on divergent perceptions of the Real. While the external environment embodies a disorderly realm fraught with hazards and uncertainties, the internal space exudes warmth and expansiveness. It is conceivable that the interplay of internal and external settings in the cabin mirrors Lacan's concept of spatial discord. This explanation provides more practical insights into why the author perceives a significant contrast between the interior and exterior of the cabin.

Fortunately, the writer does not linger in this cognitive dilemma. To overcome it, Tesson decided to leave the cabin, engaging in activities such as chopping wood, fishing, and venturing into the forest. He even climbs halfway up a granite rise that offers a panoramic view of the entire lake. Essentially, he opts to establish a direct link between the internal and external spaces, echoing Lacan's concept of the connection between humanity and the surrounding environment.

> Almost half a mile to the south of the cabin, a granite rise cleaves the forest. (…) I toil my way up there; powdery snow covers the scree. I sink in up to my thighs and sometimes lose a foot down a gap between two rocks. From the summit, Baikal: a plain striped with ivory veins.[31]

[30] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 57.
[31] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 49.

> Spent a long time on firewood duty. Another tree cut down and up and stacked away. Then I cut paths with a shovel through the snow to the lakeshore, the banya and the woodpile. Tolstoy recommended working four hours a day to earn the right to shelter and sustenance.[32]

> I listen to Schubert while watching the snow, I read Marcus Aurelius after my wood-chopping chores, I smoke a Havana to celebrate the evening's fishing.[33]

According to Clint Burnham and Paul Kingsbury in *Lacan and the Environment* (2021), when the nature is understood as the Real within the framework of the three orders, the relationship between the environment and the human being is positioned in a manner that does not solely exist outside or inside the human being but rather in an intermediate space between the external and internal realms. This concept, termed "extimate" by Marc De Kesel, elucidates the desire of the author to dismantle the boundary between inner and outer space, effectively traversing both realms simultaneously. That is to say, it is necessary to shift away from the anthropocentric viewpoint of perceiving the environment as solely for human use. Simultaneously, we should acknowledge nature as the primal, disordered external realm that existed before self-recognition. This dual internal and external nature is a distinctive aspect of Lacan's environmental perspective, as demonstrated in the diary's depiction of the risks presented by the natural world while participating in activities like woodcutting, mountain climbing, and fishing.

12.7 Get into Nature, become a Fish, become a Tree

Unlike the traditional Christian belief that God created the whole world, Taoism in Chinese philosophy highlights the de-emphasis of the subject. This involves setting aside anthropocentrism and re-evaluating the connection between humans and nature. Moreover, this aspect is also an addition that Chinese philosophy brings to Lacan's critique of the subject later in his life.

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[32] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 83.
[33] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 22.

Perhaps we can examine the memoir from two aspects that concern the relationship between humans and nature in Taoist philosophy. The initial aspect involves exploring the author's motivation to embrace solitude and withdraw from society and its busyness. It is evident that Tesson, akin to the protagonist of the prior novel, is a recluse seeking to forsake material desires and relish the tranquility of isolation and anonymity. As the author delves into the Chinese poets' perspectives on the material world while residing in the cabin, his notion of shunning society for a natural setting intensifies notably.

> There is a Chinese tradition in which old men would retire to a cabin to die. Some of them had served the emperor, held government posts, while others were scholars, poets or simple hermits. Their cabins were all alike, the settings selected according to strict criteria. The hut had to be on a mountain, near a source of water, with a bush for the wind to caress. (…) After having wanted to act upon the world, these men retrenched, determined to let the world act upon them. Life is an oscillation between two temptations.[34]

In Chinese culture, most scholars and poets aim to pursue their social ambitions in their lifetimes; some seek the privilege of society, while others strive for unending wealth. This pursuit of fulfilling personal desires often results in them losing their true selves. On the other hand, those who opt to relinquish their ambitions usually seek a serene retreat away from the chaos of the world. This tranquil sanctuary should be nestled close to mountains and clear streams, in a place free from civilization. The practice of these reclusive individuals to detach from worldly matters and revert to a natural state echoes the principles of Taoism. They confront the dichotomy between worldly success and a return to nature that aligns with their innermost desires. This decision resonates with Lacan's concept of the desire for the unattainable, highlighting that the pursuit of desires alone may lead to disappointment and emphasizing the importance of relishing the journey of accomplishment. Thus, the author's positive portrayal of the Chinese hermit in his memoirs also suggests his inclination to diminish the subject's significance,

[34] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 94.

or at least his aspiration to temporarily withdraw from mainstream society in pursuit of an untainted sanctuary.

The alternative viewpoint on the relationship between humans and nature is the third-person perspective found in Zhuangzi's Taoist philosophy. We can recall the story of magpie, mantis, and cicada, which we mentioned in the theory section. In contrast to Lacan, who confined the three orders to human realms, Zhuangzi highlights an inclusive perspective across species regarding human-nature interactions. This approach underscores the importance of integrating humans within the natural world, shifting the focus to assimilating with nature. It can be viewed as the recluse's next phase after renouncing selfish desires, where one immerses entirely into nature, blending in as a constituent, whether as a plant, animal, tree, or fish.

> I am the emperor of a mountainside, lord of my puppies, king of North Cedar Cape, protector of titmice, ally of lynxes and brother of bears.[35]

> On the embankments, clumps of anemones dot the sand. Ducks have landed in the open areas, eager for love and fresh water. They were living it up down south. They lift off clumsily when the dogs dash over to them. First men imitated birds to build planes, and now the first planes they built are imitated by ducks. The shoreline is in a permanent aerial ferment: eagles soar, geese patrol in gangs, gulls do nosedives, and butterflies, amazed at being alive, stagger through the air.[36]

> In short, after an outing, after gorging on the grandeur of the lake, remember to give a little wink to a small servant of beauty: a snowflake, some lichen, a tit.[37]

The excerpts above illustrate various interactions concerning the author and the environment. It is evident that the author portrays himself as the partner of the forest

[35] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 135.
[36] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 160.
[37] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 55.

realm, taking on the roles of the protector of the tits, the companion of the bear, and a part of the natural world along the lake's edge. This cross-species perspective on transcending one's human identity encapsulates the essence of Zhuangzi's philosophy. For instance, each time he returns from a walk, the author increasingly focuses on the humble vegetation and tiny creatures surrounding him. Moreover, as winter transitions into spring, amidst the arrival of the spring breeze, the author seems to immerse himself in an animal kingdom, with butterflies dancing, seagulls gliding above the lake, and ducks and geese gracefully navigating the waters. Such a picturesque scene appears to integrate the author into the natural setting. There is an observable inclination to naturalize humans.

Furthermore, this cross-species thinking also influences the author's exploration of the genuine essence of love and company with his two dogs.

> My two dogs choose to face the lake, blinking, enjoying the peace of the day, and their drool is a thanksgiving. They are conscious of the happiness of resting there, on the summit, after the long climb. Heidegger tumbles into the water and Schopenhauer as well.[38]

> In the clearing, I reverse the proposition and try to love creatures with an intensity proportional to their degree of biological distance from me. To love is not to celebrate one's own reflection in the face of one's double, but to recognize the value of what one can never know.[39]

The companionship of two dogs not only assisted Tesson in overcoming the emotional distress of his romantic breakup, but also led him to recognize the simplicity of animals compared to humans. Dogs, unlike humans, do not harbor endless desires for various things; instead, they exhibit unwavering enthusiasm for chasing after and retrieving the same bone. This concept of animality, previously discussed, suggests that humans can get rid of their desires by reconnecting with their innate animalistic nature. Additionally,

[38] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 167.
[39] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 170-171.

the author highlights how Christian ideology segregates humans and animals through an unbridgeable divide, implying that animals lack moral ethics and intentional behavior. Contrary to this belief, the two young dogs in the author's narrative challenge the viewpoints of their predecessors, especially as they face the lake, exuding joy and contentment. This scenario not only underscores the author's emphasis on animality, but also showcases his ability to perceive animal consciousness from an interspecies perspective, a profound insight made possible by viewing oneself as an integral part of nature. At the same time, the author's concept extends to his comprehension of the genuine significance of love, highlighting that understanding how to love involves acknowledging the worth of entities distinct from oneself rather than simply admiring each other's human nature. "Love Beyond the Human Species" enables a broader audience to grasp that forming a deeper bond between humans and nature necessitates knowing how to cherish even the smallest of creatures like an insect, a paramecium, perceiving humans, the surroundings, and the planet as a unified entity.

12.8 Reduce Intervention and Respect for Nature's Internal Laws

In addition to the Taoist belief in the unity of heaven and man, there is another significant concept in Chinese philosophy concerning the interaction between humanity and nature that merits attention: the principle of non-action, as elucidated in the author's narrative.

> Ah, the genius of the Chinese! Inventing the principle of 'non-action' to justify staying all day in the golden light of Yunnan on the threshold of a cabin ...[40]

> But please note! Chinese non-action is not sloth. Non-action sharpens all perception.[41]

The origins of Daoism are attributed to Laozi, which is not only a textual source but

[40] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 92-93.
[41] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 94.

also a historical figure. Then, the concept of non-action, *Wu Wei*, is initially elucidated in Laozi and Zhuangzi in harmony with nature, serving as a concise representation of the philosophical teachings of Daoism. The Dao, which means the *Way*, is portrayed as the cosmic origin and sustainer of all existence while also being the perpetual wellspring of creation. In this context, non-action does not signify inactivity, but rather the avoidance of forceful actions, implying a lack of imposition of one's will.[42] According to Daoist ideology, this principle dictates that rulers should honor the natural inclinations of their subjects (the people) by refraining from excessive interference in their lives, allowing them the freedom to pursue their own aspirations and paths to self-realization. Moreover, non-action aligns with Lacan's perspective on the subject-environment relationship, in which our connection with the environment is viewed neither as purely internal nor external but as an intermediary space known as "extimate." In this context, the protagonist's inclination is to remain at the threshold, benefiting from the interior's comfort while relishing in the external sunlight.

This principle is certainly relevant to the interaction between individuals and the environment, which underscores the importance of minimizing excessive human interference with nature externally and respecting the innate equilibrium of natural progression. The writer's firsthand experience in the Siberian Taiga Forests validates this principle.

> I have no gun and will not be hunting. To begin with, hunting is not allowed in the nature reserve. Secondly, I would consider it a dirty trick to shoot down the living creatures of these woods in which I am a guest. [43]

> Yesterday's idiots have trashed everything. They've trampled the drifts and left their mark all over. I won't have peace until a snowstorm reupholsters the lakeshore.[44]

[42] Laozi, Ursula K Le, and Jerome P Seaton, *Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching: A Book about the Way and the Power of the Way: A New English Version* (Boston, Mass.: Shambhala, 2009).
[43] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 19-20.
[44] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 27.

> Retreating to the forest cannot be everyone's course. (…) When crowds enter the forests, it's to chop them down. Life in the woods is no solution to ecological problems. The phenomenon contains its own counter-principle: the masses, taking to the woods, would bring along the evils they'd hoped to flee by leaving the city. No exit.[45]

> Robert Baden-Powell's advice should be made a universal principle: 'When through with a campsite, take care to leave two things behind. Firstly: nothing. Secondly: your thanks. What is essential? Not to weigh too heavily on the surface of the globe. Shut inside his cube of logs, the hermit does not soil the Earth.[46]

Arriving in this serene territory with a complete set of equipment, Tesson opts for a solitary existence in his cabin, enjoying leisurely walks by the riverside or through the forest. His lifestyle is one of deep respect for nature. He refrains from hunting not due to the absence of a shotgun, but because he believes, as a newcomer, he lacks the right to disrupt the tranquility of the forest. His desire is to witness nature's subtle transformations amidst winter's embrace. The occasional intrusion of a Russian motor vehicle on the frozen lake appears particularly jarring and disruptive to him, who views them as uncivilized individuals who despoil nature. Additionally, the author portrays a forest that is not suitable for everyone, indicating that those seeking solace from urban stresses merely alter their surroundings, unable to rid themselves of inner turmoil or attain the solitude found by true hermits, who can only depart the forest with a sense of gratitude.

This approach of attentively observing the minute variations in the environment rather than disrupting or altering the natural ecosystem can be seen as a representation of non-action (*Wu Wei*). According to Taoist beliefs, it becomes clear that its essence lies not in nonfeasance, but in refraining from external human interference and showing regard for the inherent laws and patterns of nature's progression. For instance, deforestation, hunting wildlife for profit, and littering in natural habitats are all forms

[45] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 29.
[46] Tesson, *Consolations of the Forest*, 23.

of external meddling by humans in the environment. These interventions disrupt the equilibrium of natural development, requiring a prolonged period of intentional restoration to return to its original state. Especially, the writer in his memoir highlighted that our interaction with nature should be rooted in the emotion of gratitude to promote nature to restore its equilibrium autonomously. Similar to the concept in traditional Chinese medicine emphasizing the necessity for individuals to balance *yin* and *yang* for wellness, nature seeks internal equilibrium all the time devoid of external disruptions as well. In Lacanian eco-psychoanalysis, this equilibrium is also attained through the extimate position on the threshold of the cabin.

Conclusion

This chapter represents a continuation of the introduction to Lacanian psychoanalytic theory. Lacan, a renowned French psychologist, reintroduced Freud's ideas, incorporating linguistic and philosophical abstract concepts to provide fresh perspectives on psychoanalysis, particularly focusing on desire and self-destruction. Furthermore, Lacan emphasized the interconnectedness of psychoanalysis and the environment, highlighting the dynamic relationship between humans and their surroundings as a critical balance between internal and external factors.

In the previous chapter of the novel, *The Possibility of an Island* (2006), we saw a misanthropic comedian who, in his own inimitable mockery, points out his dissatisfaction with the world. Additionally, he struggles with his uncontrolled desires, especially his excessive reliance on sexuality, which leads to a profound sense of emptiness after his breakup with his two female companions. Ultimately, he opts to join a cult to leave the world to his clone. Similarly, in this chapter, we have analyzed the memoir *Consolation of the Forest* (2014). We delved into the motivations behind the protagonist, Tesson, abandoning urban life to dwell alone in a cabin by Lake Baikal. Embracing his hermit lifestyle with a hint of misanthropy, he returns to nature to relish solitude, signaling a deliberate detachment from the society of desires, or, in Lacan's terms, renouncing *Object Small a*, the desire, in pursuit of the pure enjoyment of life

itself.

The two books also offer a Lacanian psychoanalytic viewpoint on the theme of human-environmental interactions. Firstly, in *The Possibility of an Island* (2006), the narrative unfolds in a post-apocalyptic world grappling with environmental crises and man-made disasters. Here, clones devoid of human emotions mechanically peruse the diaries of their predecessors, except when in the company of a dog that stirs some clones' dormant animality. Thus, some clones decide to venture beyond their confines in search of an island where they can reclaim their humanity. The novel underscores the intricate relationship between humanity and nature, balancing the call for environmental conservation with the relentless consumption that leads to a sobering realization. The novel portrays the interdependence of individuals and their environment through the lens of animality. On the other hand, in a memoir *Consolation of the Forest* (2014) the protagonist navigates human-nature relations through life in the Taiga Forest. Tesson, residing in a secluded cabin, finds solace in solitary activities like reading while harmonizing with nature through woodcutting, fishing, and hiking with two dog companions. The author argued that reducing the dominance of the subject in the coexistence of humans and nature is a prudent strategy. In essence, prioritizing nature's inherent developmental laws and minimizing excessive human intervention is crucial for fostering the harmonious growth of both human beings and the environment.

As Lacan questioned the limitations of his concept of the subject in his later years, he delved deeper into the exploration of Taoist Chinese philosophy concerning the subject and the environment. Through analyzing the relationship between humans and the natural environment, a noteworthy new dimension in Lacanian psychoanalysis emerges—one that highlights a perspective of cross-species and the principle of non-action (*Wu Wei*) in Taoism, emphasizing a comprehensive outlook on the connection between individuals and their ecological surroundings.

In the memoir, the main character discovers the fundamental principles of Taoism by reading classical Chinese poetry and then implements them in his daily life. The author envisions immersing himself in the world of plants and animals in the forest, engaging in conversations with tits by the windowsill, sharing the happiness of playful dogs, and

feeling the winter chill alongside the trees. This perspective across different species, which challenges human-centered views, embodies a key concept in Chinese Taoist culture. Moreover, by exploring the principles of Chinese medicine, we emphasize the importance of balancing *yin* and *yang* for body health. This approach involves respecting nature's intrinsic harmony, allowing it to self-regulate through the changing seasons—a concept referred to as non-action in Taoist philosophy. These thematic elements address Lacan's earlier concerns, offering a fresh perspective for readers engaging in critical Lacanian eco-psychoanalysis.

CONCLUSION

13.1 Speak, Matsutake

When strolling through the verdant forest with our kinfolk on a summer weekend, the murmur of water flowing in the woodland reaches our ears, and above, we witness the sunlight filtering through the treetops to the forest floor. These visual and auditory stimuli naturally spark our curiosity for the thriving ecosystem. For example, children may engage in a bug-hunting expedition, while grown-ups appreciate the roadside blossoms, contemplating the gifts nature provides. However, notably, American anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing would enjoy scouring the forest for mushrooms. In her publication, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (2015), the author conveys to her audience that her passion for foraging mushrooms stems from seeking moments of pleasure amidst apprehension and unpredictability.

There are numerous origins that could be inferred from this uncertainty. For instance, the global climate is becoming increasingly unstable, and advancements in industry have had a far greater detrimental impact on life on Earth than previously thought a hundred years ago. The economy is no longer a catalyst for growth or hope; any of our occupations could vanish during the next economic downturn. Additionally, a series of new catastrophes, such as novel viruses and sudden droughts and floods, have emerged. Therefore, now, it appears that all our lives are on shaky ground, even when, momentarily, our financial situation seems secure. In essence, these indirect impacts resulting from human civilization emerge when economic growth and globalization are prioritized. Although the flaws in our ecosystem may be beyond our influence, Anna Tsing presents her distinctive viewpoint that the emergence and proliferation of fungi in forest environments serve as both a blessing and a navigational tool in an unpredictable world.[1] This realization fuels her enthusiasm for mushroom foraging.

[1] Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 2.

Economic growth and the advancement of human civilization often come at the expense of certain resources, leading to widespread deforestation, the depletion of oil reserves, and soil degradation that impairs agricultural productivity. Consequently, once the resources of an area are fully exploited, it is frequently abandoned, turning into a desolate, unusable ruin. Remarkably, it seems that today's global landscape is dotted with such ruins, casualties of the extensive consumption of raw materials by burgeoning urban centers with their towering skyscrapers. From an ecological perspective, it is often within these ruins that humans are compelled to seek new opportunities for sustainable living. Moreover, it is often posited that the most compelling Anthropocene timeline does not commence with the emergence of our species, but rather with the advent of modern capitalism, which has orchestrated extensive, long-distance alterations of landscapes and ecosystems. We constantly encounter discussions of precarity in the news. Gorillas and river porpoises teeter on the brink of extinction. Rising sea levels inundate the entire Pacific Islands. The reason these phenomena might seem unexpected is that many of us grew up with visions of modernization and progress. Nevertheless, we find ourselves in ever-changing configurations that reshape both ourselves and our surroundings. Everything is in flux, including our capacity to adapt and endure.

The matsutake mushroom, frequently celebrated in Japanese poetry as the scent of autumn, serves as a beloved symbol of the fall season. Its fragrance conjures a nostalgic melancholy for summer's abundance while also summoning the acute vibrancy and enhanced awareness characteristic of autumn. Fascinatingly, matsutake's propensity to thrive in desolated environments allows us to delve into the degradation of our communal surroundings. Essentially, matsutake are wild fungi that inhabit forests disrupted by human activity. They exhibit resilience to some of the environmental disturbances caused by humans. However, they are far from nuisances; they are esteemed delicacies—particularly in Japan, where their steep prices can render matsutake the most valuable mushroom on the planet. By fostering tree growth, matsutake contribute to the regeneration of forests in formidable conditions. According to Anna Tsing’s research, matsutake first appeared in Japan's written records in the

eighth-century anthology of Japanese poetry known as *Man'yōshū*. The mushroom became prevalent around Nara and Kyoto, where deforestation for temple construction and iron smelting altered the landscape. This anthropogenic disruption facilitated the emergence of matsutake in Japan, as its principal host, red pine, thrives in the sunlit, nutrient-rich soils created by deforestation. In the absence of human interference, Japan's forests would naturally regenerate with broadleaf species that overshadow and inhibit pine germination. Consequently, as red pine expanded due to deforestation, matsutake became a prized gift. Matsutake was regarded as an elite luxury, emblematic of the refined appreciation of artfully reconstructed nature. However, with the advent of fossil fuels superseding firewood and charcoal, the use of woodlands declined, leading to dense thickets of broadleaf trees. By the mid-1970s, matsutake had become scarce in Japan, driving up their value as luxurious gifts, perks, and bribes.

Every organism reshapes its environment through cyclical periods of growth, distinct reproductive behaviors throughout its lifespan, and patterns of geographic dispersion. The significant proliferation and subsequent vanishing of the matsutake mushroom convey a vital narrative to humanity. It serves as a poignant reminder for us to not overlook the importance of ecological conservation amidst our pursuit of civilizational progress. The presence of the matsutake mushroom acts as a signal, indicating that those forest lands have been neglected by human activity. Concurrently, it underscores the necessity of achieving a balance between economic development and environmental preservation. In essence, we need to realign our attention. Various preindustrial livelihoods, ranging from foraging to street food vending, persist to this day, even with emerging practices such as commercial mushroom harvesting. Despite this, they are often disregarded due to our narrow view of progress. However, these livelihoods also contribute to our understanding of the world, encouraging us to engage with our environment rather than perpetually striving for future advancements. Meanwhile, Anna Tsing highlights the concept that humans actively shape multispecies environments by creating living spaces that accommodate other species.[2] Specifically,

[2] Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, 20-22.

pines and fungi collaborate to thrive in open, sunlit areas with exposed mineral soils. This dynamic interaction illustrates how humans, pines, and fungi collectively arrange habitats for mutual benefit.

The matsutake's message underscores the necessity for an immediate paradigm shift in our perception of the world, especially amidst the prevailing crises and instability. It highlights the essence of sustainable development: instead of accelerating globalization and furthering human civilization, we should decelerate, observe our surroundings, and emphasize regional distinctions. This approach calls for respecting the customs and norms of various countries and ethnic groups, thereby fostering regional diversity. Essentially, we should re-evaluate how each region's culture reflects its ecological attitudes. As demanded pattern for ecological analysis, Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing highlighted the significance of "temporal patterns" in ecosystems. She mentioned that each living thing remakes the world through seasonal pulses of growth, lifetime reproductive patterns, and geographies of expansion,[3] which can be understood as different temporal rhythms present in different environments. For instance, many crops grew together in the same field, and they had quite different schedules. Rice, bananas, taro, sweet potatoes, sugarcane, palms, and fruit trees mingled; farmers needed to attend to the varied schedules of maturation of each of these crops. This makes Tsing's thinking the useful frame for the following concluding remarks of my dissertation. Meanwhile, this perspective aligns with the objective of analyzing literary texts from different regions within the framework of world literature, intercultural and interdisciplinary studies, as emphasized in this thesis.

13.2 Psychology from an ecological perspective

In 1901, Freud gave lectures titled *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life,* highlighting how jokes and slips of the tongue reveal the unconscious mind's repressed tendencies. Furthermore, modern equivalents could draw from environmental issues

[3] Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, 21.

like ozone depletion and the greenhouse effect. These illustrate a new "psychopathology" of daily life. As Theodore Roszak[4] noted in *The Voice of the Earth* (2001), the century since psychology's emergence has taught us that human values differ from those needed to coexist with other species. This disparity underscores today's "ecological unconscious" and its deeper imbalance.

Many contemporary terms feature the prefix “eco,” signifying our concern for Earth’s fate. Ecopsychology aims to bridge the gap between psychological and ecological domains, understanding the continuum of world and individual needs. According to Theodore Roszak, all historical "psychologies" were inherently "ecopsychologies," connecting human nature to the universe. Modern Western psychology uniquely separates the "inner" life from the "outside" world, though historically, these were seen as intertwined. In other words, from an eco-psychological viewpoint, we must eventually address the broader implications of the universe's structured and evolving complexity. It is conceivable that the foundational systems of nature, from which our psychology, culture, and scientific understanding ultimately emerge, hold significant influence. However, as previously noted, every country offers a distinct viewpoint on ecopsychology within its literary works, rooted in its traditional characteristics. Concurrently, the adoption of literary criticism's approaches and theories varies among countries, even when addressing identical themes represented in literature. Thus, an interdisciplinary approach encompassing world literature from various countries is employed to synthesize the perspectives of four renowned psychoanalysts—Freud, Jung, Adler, and Lacan—on ecological issues. This study involved a Jungian psychoanalytical examination of Polish literature, an Adlerian psychoanalytical interpretation of Japanese literature, a Freudian analysis of American fiction, and a Lacanian critique of French literature. The selected examples are literary works that address ecological concerns within the framework of their respective psychoanalytic traditions.

13.3 Eco-psychoanalytical interpretations in different countries and works

[4] Theodore Roszak, *The Voice of the Earth: An Exploration of Ecopsychology; with a New Afterword* (Grand Rapids, Mi: Phanes Press, Cop, 2001).

This dissertation employs an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach to analyze and compare literary texts from various countries, utilizing the perspectives of four eminent psychoanalysts. The study investigates the unique characteristics of different countries and regions through the lens of ecological psychoanalysis.

Initially, as a highly esteemed and successful Polish novelist of the 20th and 21st century writer, Olga Tokarczuk was renowned for her enchanting writing style. Her work frequently intersects with Jungian archetypal psychology, emphasizing the pivotal role of nature and the environment in human existence. Certain distinguishable characteristics and principles of Carl Jung's ecopsychology are distinctly evident in Olga Tokarczuk's works, *House of Day, House of Night* and *Flights*, as perceived through her singular perspective. Tokarczuk's eco-psychological literature is inherently linked with the process of soul-making. In her works, we strive to identify the intrinsic unity and harmony between humans and nature. She posits that we should dissolve the barriers between culture and nature, life and death, and the animate and inanimate. Meanwhile, interaction with nature can heal human hearts and souls through the invocation of the spiritual realm. The archetypal viewpoint in ecopsychology prompts us to reevaluate our surroundings, encompassing the habitats we occupy, the objects we possess, the individuals we meet, and all our experiences. It emphasizes the importance of viewing the objects around us as living beings or as people. This personification facilitates healing for the audience. Additionally, eco-psychological works in Poland regard nature as inherently vibrant and full of life. The personified aspects of nature mirror ancient mythological guardians such as Hermes, Dionysus, and other deities. Ultimately, Tokarczuk's interpretation of eco-psychology induces a deep psychologization of the world, wherein the psyche is synonymous with the soul.

Secondly, Japan frequently experiences natural disasters, including earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions. Notably, the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and the Fukushima nuclear disaster drew worldwide attention. Within the context of Japanese culture, ecopsychology emphasizes coexisting with nature rather than exerting control over it, especially during ecological crises. Adlerian psychology, which

acknowledges, but does not yield to harsh realities, has helped the Japanese recognize human vulnerability in nature's presence while fostering the resilience to find hope amid adversity. In our chosen work, *2:46 Aftershocks: Stories of the Japan Earthquake*, the narrative not only highlights human vulnerability in the face of natural disasters, but also emphasizes the communal spirit of mutual aid, cooperation, and commitment to coexist with the environment under challenging conditions. From the perspective of Adlerian ecopsychology, an inflated sense of superiority may obstruct our perception of reality. In the face of adversity, it is crucial to engage with others within the community as collaborative equals to collectively navigate through challenges. Furthermore, when incorporating Adlerian psychology, which highlights the pursuit of hope and constructive resolutions in challenging circumstances, the practice of ecopsychology within Japanese culture underscores the significance of living in symbiosis with nature. This approach emphasizes a form of coexistence, rather than domination, particularly when confronting adversities such as ecological catastrophes. This is validated in the narrative of the second piece, *The Emissary* by Yōko Tawada, in which the protagonist, Mumei, inhabits a post-apocalyptic environment where ecological systems and natural habitats have been irrevocably damaged. Nevertheless, he persists in his optimism and demonstrates a readiness to assume the role of an emissary, aiming to restore hope among the individuals who have endured the calamity in this nation. While ecopsychology in Tokarczuk's literature emphasizes the interconnectedness and equilibrium between humanity and the natural world, it achieves this by situating humans within the ecosystem and advocating for their responsiveness to nature's demand for spiritual elevation, a viewpoint that is absent in Adlerian psychology. Jung's archetypal psychology intertwines personified elements of the natural realm with mythological stories, often integrating figures such as Hermes, Dionysus, and various other gods into literary compositions. Conversely, Adlerian psychology downplays the connection between mythology and nature, placing greater emphasis on individual attitudes and behaviors in response to natural disasters, in alignment with reality.

Besides, the 21st century has marked the onset of the *Anthropocene*, characterized by

environmental issues like climate change, biodiversity loss, and ecological imbalance. Particularly in the United States, a century of rapid economic growth and technological progress has shifted more attention towards human society, often neglecting ecological problems. This lapse has created the potential for undetected harm or even the obliteration of the ecosystem. For example, the narrative framework and portrayal of climate changes in the post-apocalyptic novel *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy highlight both environmental degradation and ecological collapse, underscoring Freud's concept of the death drive. The trajectory of human society is increasingly shaped by Freudian principles, suggesting a growing prevalence of forces driven by the death instinct. The deterioration of our ecological surroundings reflects this trend, indicating that the death instinct is progressively asserting its influence and could potentially overshadow the life instinct in the future. Therefore, the narrative in *The Road* illustrates a persistent struggle between live drive and death drive. It simultaneously functions as a poignant call to prioritize ecological conservation within the continuum of human advancement, urging us to move past an anthropocentric worldview and strive for a symbiotic relationship between humanity and the natural environment. It compels us to reflect on how we can surmount and transcend the instinct toward self-destruction mentioned by Freud. Moreover, Freud, in his psychoanalytic theory, proposed three components of psychoanalysis: the id, the ego, and the superego. And he highlighted the moderating function of the ego between the other two. Mary Oliver, the renowned American poet, also mentions three "selves" in her work *Upstream: Selected Essays*, similar to those identified by Freud. She expanded upon Freud's concept that the ego serves as a pivotal element in the interplay between consciousness and the natural world, highlighting its therapeutic impact on our well-being. The analysis of her work indicates that childhood memories can integrate with long-term memory, gradually fading, but not disappearing entirely. Freud noted that these memories may resurface subconsciously, often in dreams. Additionally, the work encourages a reevaluation of humanity’s connection to nature. Freudian eco-psychological theory aims to clarify the bond between the natural environment and humans, with natural elements promoting tranquility and assisting in overcoming troubled childhood memories to achieve healing and joy. For Mary Oliver,

nature serves as a refuge for her imagination, fueling her creative writing through solitary reflection and the study of poets that inspire her, which continuously nurtures her innovative works.

Eventually, Lacanian psychology, within French literature, advocates a "return to Freud," offering a novel interpretation of Freudian psychoanalysis. It engages with past theorists' concepts of "desire" while integrating abstract elements from linguistics and philosophy, introducing the three fundamental orders: the Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary, thereby transforming our understanding of past experiences and societal norms. Moreover, Lacan underscored the intricate relationship between psychoanalysis and the environment, accentuating the dynamic interplay between individuals and their surroundings as an essential equilibrium between internal and external influences. In *The Possibility of an Island* by Michel Houellebecq a misanthropic comedian critiques the world through his unique satire. He grapples with uncontrolled desires, notably his dependence on sexuality, resulting in profound emptiness post-breakup with two female partners. On the other hand, in the memoir *Consolation of the Forest* by Sylvain Tesson the protagonist forsakes his urban existence to live in solitude at Lake Baikal. Embracing a hermit lifestyle and a touch of misanthropy, he reconnects with nature, deliberately distancing himself from societal desires, which Lacan terms “Object Small a”, in favor of pure life enjoyment. Furthermore, both books provide a Lacanian psychoanalytic lens on human-environment interactions. In *The Possibility of an Island*, the narrative is set in a post-apocalyptic world facing environmental crises and disasters. Clones, lacking human emotions, mechanically read their predecessors' diaries, unless influenced by a dog that awakens some clones’ dormant animality. The novel highlights the complex relationship between humanity and nature, emphasizing the need for conservation amidst relentless consumption that leads to profound realizations. It illustrates the interdependence of individuals and their environment through the concept of animality. In *Consolation of the Forest* the protagonist explores human-nature interactions while living in the Taiga. The author suggests that diminishing human dominance in coexistence with nature is essential. Prioritizing nature's natural development and limiting human intervention is vital for promoting harmonious growth

between humanity and the environment. It is significant to highlight that in his later years Lacan acknowledged the constraints of his understanding of *the subject*. Consequently, he incorporated various Taoist Chinese philosophical concepts into his psychoanalytic framework to enhance and refine his theoretical constructs. For example, the equilibrium between *yin* and *yang* is essential for maintaining bodily health. This methodology emphasizes the importance of honoring the inherent balance of nature and permitting it to self-regulate in accordance with the seasonal transitions—an idea encapsulated in the principle of *wu wei*, or non-action, found within Taoist philosophy. This thematic component, demonstrated in *Consolation of the Forest* provides an innovative viewpoint for audiences participating in critical Lacanian eco-psychoanalysis.

13.4 Epilogue

This dissertation employs the theories of four distinct psychoanalysts to examine various literary works from four different countries, aiming to demonstrate that literary psychologies address ecocritical issues in diverse ways. The research seeks to uncover the multifaceted ecological-psychological dimensions of contemporary writing within the context of world literature. Concurrently, it investigates how the traditional psychoanalytic contexts of different regions can be leveraged for deep explorations and comparisons of environmental issues. Ultimately, this approach aims to unlock new potential in ecocritical readings of literature and illustrates how psychologically nuanced literature can contribute to a more sustainable ecological future.

Admittedly, after our comparative analyses, it is evident that literary ecological psychoanalysis in various national and regional contexts possesses unique characteristics, reshaping our previously monolithic perception of psychoanalytically charged writing. Simultaneously, this analysis provides a general understanding of the environmental realities faced by different regions. I think that the dissertation proved that the initial assumption that various literary psychoanalytical traditions open differently for ecological issues was right. The above-mentioned variants form together

the new image of network established not by the logic of globality, but by the logic of planetary human-natural local constellations. They occur to be effective practically and regionally and encourage others to be more and more innovative in creating their own specific and effective ecopsychologies. These ecopsychologies, as literary examples demonstrated, support local environments in revivals of human-natural constellations in today's endangered or ruined landscapes – in a way similar to how Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing described them. Nonetheless, it still has limitations and does not fully capture the majority of psychoanalysts' perspectives on regional environmental issues, which warrants further exploration by future researchers.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all the people who contributed in some way to the work described in this Ph.D. dissertation. First and foremost, I express my special appreciation and thanks to my academic supervisor, Professor Tomasz Mizerkiewicz, for accepting me into his group. During my research in Doctoral School of Languages and Literatures, he contributed to a rewarding graduate school experience by giving me intellectual freedom in my studying, supporting my attendance at various conferences, engaging me in new ideas, and demanding a high quality of work in all my endeavors. Additionally, I would like to thank Professor Piotr Śliwiński and Professor Krzysztof Skibski for their interest in my work.

I would like to express my gratitude to the administration of the School of Humanities at the College of Science and Technology, Ningbo University, for enabling me to pursue my doctoral studies abroad. Additionally, I am particularly thankful to my colleagues, who exhibited remarkable commitment during my absence from work.

Furthermore, a special thanks to my family. Words cannot express how grateful I am to my mother-in law, father-in-law, my mother, and father for all of the sacrifices that you have made on my behalf. Your prayer for me was what sustained me thus far. I would also like to thank to my beloved wife, Feng Ding. Thank you for supporting me for everything, and especially I cannot thank you enough for encouraging me throughout this special academic experience.

Ultimately, as a life experience imbued with profound gratitude, I extend my appreciation to all individuals and entities encountered during my residence in Poland. Each of these interactions will undoubtedly be etched in my memory as a lasting imprint.

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