

Original Paper

A Road to Ecocritical Insight in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*

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Received: September 15, 2022 Accepted: October 1, 2022 Online Published: November 1, 2022

doi:10.22158/sll.v6n4p92

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/sll.v6n4p92>

Abstract

This article is going to study the ecocritical conception in Virginia Woolf's (1882-1941) novel, To the Lighthouse (TL) (1927). This is an ecocritical reading which uses Lawrence Buell (1939-) and Derek Wall's (1965-) ideas of ecocriticism. Lawrence Buell defined eco-criticism as the study of the relationships between literature and environment in an environmentalist praxis or as a critical insurgency mainly focused on the issue rather than methodology like what cultural studies of identity and body have done. Writers create their works under the influence of environment and nature and a literary work is not created void of nature. Literary works beyond of concepts and contents which are addressed by writers indicate the interaction of human and nature. Wall believes that ecology in particular and the environmental sciences in general have demonstrated how closely one's species is connected to all other in a web or net of life connections. To the Lighthouse (TL) takes place in a summerhouse near the sea and its main goal is traveling to the Lighthouse amid the sea. There are many natural parts and nature's elements which are studied in detail to reveal the relation of ecocriticism and literature. This article studies the close relation of man and nature and notes that there is an intimate relation between them. There is a bilateral relation between nature and man; they affect each other in several ways. Woolf's To the Lighthouse is a good context to portray ecocriticism and green cultural studies. Woolf constructs a remarkable and moving examination of the complex tensions and allegiances of family life from the seemingly trivial postponement of a visit to a nearby lighthouse.

Keywords

ecology, ecocriticism, environmentalism, nature, environment

1. Introduction

There is an undeniable relationship between human and nature that is reflected in literature. In this sense, new principles were introduced in literary works. In this study, it has been tried to demonstrate the eternal relationship of man and nature. Some clues point to the mutual relations of man, nature and environment even in urban, rural and social structures. Individuals' mentality and behavior vary in different environments. On the other hand individuals try to change the environment according to their own mentality and morality while turning the nature into a new form that is more suitable for them or destroy it.

Eco-critics have presented some hypotheses concerning the nature effects appeared in a literary or artistic work. The consequence of these effects on the individuals appeared in their works are demonstrated by signs of nature and eco-centrism or play critical roles in creating the characters or events while displaying the individuals' way of thinking and tendencies. This discussion will expand a reading of Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* in the light of ecocritical representation. This novel creates a discourse which discusses the concept of ecocriticism through the interactions of some men and women with natural world who go to a country house. Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* can be a good example of such challenges.

The scene of hitting water and waves with the rocks on the beach is frequently demonstrated and its incorporation with the sound of waves pushes us towards the importance of nature components that contribute to achieve self-recognition and deep search and reach perfection. While reading the novel, it can be found that some of its words are a sign of nature. This article concentrates the relationship amongst literature and man condition and also their association, consequently it analyzes ecocriticism. In such manner it depicted the earth and its significance for person. At that point it demonstrated how firmly individuals are connected to nature and different species in a web of life and demonstrates the harms created by men's activities to their condition and at last to themselves and these results in these present circumstances. Natural, issues without a doubt, requires a change of human mentalities and organizations. This research shows that Woolf's novel mirrors the part of the sea as an image of internal nature.

2. Methodology

The main theoretical discussions will be presented based on Lawrence Buell's and Derek Wall's ideas about ecocriticism and environment. Throughout the world of literature and criticism, there are several critical perspectives which are being developed to introduce different ways of interpretations and evaluations toward ecocriticism. The objective of this thesis is to investigate ecocriticism in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*. In this way the key terms such as ecology, ecocriticism, and environment have been chosen to show in *To the Lighthouse*. The theoretical approach of this study concentrates on the images of ecocritical studies.

As Lawrence Buell (1939-), in *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (2005), argues the environmental entrance into literary and cultural studies appeared as a “self-conscious movement” and ecocriticism, is “the commonest omnibus term” of this heterogeneous movement (Buell 2005, p. 1). He states that “[e]cocriticism is an umbrella term”, used to allude to the environmentally adjusted study of literature and the arts more generally, and to the theories that underlie such critical practice (ibid 138). He expresses more like feminism in this respect, “ecocriticism gathers itself around a commitment to environmentality from whatever critical vantage point” (ibid 11). Buell, in *Writing for an Endangered World: Literature, Culture, and Environment in the U.S. and Beyond* (2001), argues within literary and rhetorical studies, the motivation to engage environmental issues has mainly come from the ecocritical movement, which has engaged itself especially with “creative and critical recuperation of the natural world”, although lately it has begun to employ a wider range of texts and positions (Buell 2001, p. 31). Ecocriticism can be considered as environmentally work in literature studies.

As Buell states the concept of ecocriticism as an organization of academic critics, artists, environmental educators, and even green activists strengthened the penchant within the movement for condemning “the metropolitan tendency in literary studies towards high theory and abstraction” (ibid 2005, p. 6). For example Buell, in *Writing for an Endangered World: Literature, Culture, and Environment in the U.S. and Beyond*, discusses how the beauty and suffering of nature can be perceived and focused on, if it convey into people’s everyday images, and into the stories they tell. Hence the success of all environmentalist efforts ultimately depends on “some highly developed technology, or some arcane new science”, but on “a state of mind, on attitudes, feelings, images, [and] narratives” (ibid 2001, p. 1). Acts of environmental imagination potentially record and stimulate at least four kinds of involvement with the world. At first they might connect readers with others’ experience, suffering, and pain: that of nonhumans as well as humans. They may reconnect readers with places where they would otherwise never physically go. They may lead “thought toward alternative futures” (ibid 2). Besides, they may influence one’s caring for the physical world: because “it feel more or less precious or endangered or disposable” (ibid). All this may motivate a reader’s “reading about a cherished, abused, or endangered place” (ibid). Accordingly, Buell portrays green and brown landscapes, the landscapes of exurbia and industrialization, in conversation with one other. He believes an ecocritic observes, “its critical practice must be greatly extended, for “the environmental crisis threatens all landscapes—wild, rural, suburban, and urban” (ibid 7).

Likewise, Derek Wall, in *Green History: A Reader in Environmental Literature, Philosophy and Politics First Edition* (2004), argues for solving environmental problems “Ecocritics have been forced to consider human affairs and embrace a set of political, economic and cultural principles” (2004, p. 7). Any description of “Green” quests a consideration of approaches to human society. He states “solving perceived ecological problems undoubtedly demands a transformation of human attitudes and

institutions” (ibid). Wall believes that ecology in particular and the environmental sciences in general have demonstrated how “closely our species is linked to every other in a web or net of life connections” (ibid 98). The readers have also perceived the damage done by their actions to their environment and finally to themselves.

Wall argues Ecocritics seriously struggle capitalism, as do many conservative environmentalists, and defend social equality but are hostile to those forms of socialism that are centralized and seek to dominate the natural world. He states “Green politics is the politics of survival” (2010, p. 11), yet the way they live in a capitalist society that is only for the sake of profit, threatens everything. He, in *The No-Nonsense Guide to Green Politics*, states “moving to a world where humanity can prosper without wrecking the environment is a vital necessity but sometimes seems impossibly difficult”(ibid). The contemporary Green movement was born in response to the feeling that people have “become death”.

3. Ecocriticism

Michael Payne and Jessica Rae Barbera, in *A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory* (2010), contend that ecocriticism can likewise be called “literary ecology” (205). “Environmental literary studies”, is a field of criticism that was founded in the late twentieth century as “a slightly delayed response in the humanities to the global emergence of the environmental movement in the 1960s and 1970s” (ibid). It is equivalent to natural theory and environmental history, and to some degree examinations of place, space, and scene. By the same token, it outlines the fundamental of mid twenty-first century’s cross-disciplinary field of ecological humanities. Ecocriticism profoundly re-translate control relations in stories by joining settings and setting.

Simultaneously, ecocritics proceed with their endeavors to build up their field as a hypothetical approach and in addition a method for reading, concentrating on setting as an appearance for concentrate the transaction of natural and social settings, including how writings themselves can be comprehended as serving an ecological capacity in human improvement and misuse of the world and different creatures. Ecocriticism has started to investigate extensively issues of how content and the subjectivity of both writer and reader can be viewed as developing in a sort of nature-content. Buell “developed a set of criteria for identifying texts that cue the reader into a more “ecocentric” or “nature-centered literary experience” (ibid 206). Hence, ecocriticism as the study of literary works with considering the representation of relations among human beings and the rest of the more than-human world has always been concerned with the agency of human beings and the need for rethinking social behaviors and actions. Patrick D. Murphy (1951-), in *Ecocritical Explorations in Literary and Cultural Studies: Fences, Boundaries, and Fields* (2009), states “[e]cocriticism, then, tends to focus on the relationship of the reader’s attitude toward the text’s representation of the extra textual world more so than the world imaginatively represented in the text” (6).

Greg Gerrard, in *Ecocriticism (New critical idiom)* (2004), argues ecocriticism investigates “the ways

in which we imagine and portray the relationship between humans and the environment in all areas of cultural production, from Wordsworth and Thoreau to Disney and BBC nature documentaries” (i). It is intensified by modern environmental movements. And in comparison with feminism and Marxism ecocriticism is a confessedly political mode of analysis. Ecocritics’ cultural analyses are generally tied to a green moral and political agenda. In this regard, ecocriticism is closely connected to environmentally oriented evolutions in philosophy and political theory. As Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, in *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (1996), state ecocriticism develops “the insights of earlier critical movements, ecofeminists, social ecologists and environmental justice advocates seek a synthesis of environmental and social concerns” (5). The ecocritics seek to observe environmental thoughts and representations wherever they emerge, in order to perceive more clearly an argument which seems to be happening in a great many cultural spaces. Ecocriticism explores to evaluate texts and ideas in terms of their coherence and usefulness as reactions to environmental crisis.

Gerrard argues “the widest definition of the subject of ecocriticism is the study of the relationship of the human and the non-human, throughout human cultural history and entailing critical analysis of the term ‘human’ itself” (5). Ecocriticism’s close relationship with the science of ecology makes it unique amongst contemporary literary and cultural theories. It may seem obvious that ecological problems are scientific problems rather than objects of cultural analysis. The challenge for ecocritics is to consider the ways in which ‘nature’ is always in some ways culturally built, and the other the fact that nature really exists, both the object and, albeit distantly, the cause of one’s discourse. Buell calls this “a myth of mutual constructionism: of physical environment (both natural and human-built) shaping in some measure the cultures that in some measure continually refashion it” (2001, p. 6). Environmental problems postulate analysis in cultural as well as scientific terms, for they are the result of a mutual action between ecological knowledge of nature and its cultural inflexion.

Glotfelty and Fromm, state “What then is ecocriticism? Simply put, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (xviii). Their definition shows Lawrence Buell’s observation that “the environmental crisis involves a crisis of the imagination” (2005, p. 2). Ecocriticism applies an earth-centered approach to literary studies. All ecological criticism shares the central assumption that human culture is related to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it. Glotfelty and Fromm state ecocriticism takes as its subject “the interconnections between nature and culture, specifically the cultural artifacts of language and literature” and “[a]s a critical stance, it has one foot in literature and the other on land; as a theoretical discourse, it negotiates between the human and the nonhuman” (xix). Literary theory, generally, studies the relations between writers, texts, and the world. Literary theory refers to the world as synonym with society-the social sphere. Hence ecocriticism refers to “the world” to involve the entire ecosphere. Accordingly if one:

agree with Barry Commoner’s first law of ecology, Everything is connected

to everything else, therefore literature does not move above the material world in some aesthetic ether, but, rather, apply a part in an immensely complex global system, in which energy, matter, and ideas interact. (Ibid)

Progressively ecocriticism tries to make complex involvement of texts with concerns of environmental social justice. Most ecocritical work shares a common motivation: the troubling awareness that men have reached the age of environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human actions are damaging the planet's basic life support systems. In philosophy, various subfields like environmental ethics, deep ecology, and social ecology have emerged in an effort to understand and critique the "roots causes of environmental degradation and to formulate: an alternative view of existence that will provide an ethical and conceptual foundation for right relation with the earth" (ibid).

The fiction tends to show nature as particular and active, intervening in striking bursts, disrupting the human infrastructure, underscoring the vibrant reality and persistence of the nonhuman world. The nonhuman presence does not need to predominate in a text to be effective for the ecological "cause", on the contrary, it is often more conspicuous when occurring briefly, sharply asserting itself within the human context. Virginia Woolf evidences an:

obvious interest in the environment, even if it is not usually her foremost focus. Using our contemporary definitions, we can label Woolf an environmentalist because of her philosophy and her textual praxis. Despite a plethora of scholarship the theme of nature/the environment in her writing has been largely unexplored from the ecocritical perspective. (Kostkowska 4)

Woolf's ecological consciousness is evident in her themes. In ecological terms, this last shared conviction supports a belief in fiction's ability to transform the world into an environment that respects and protects all beings and entities. Woolf's relationship to "others in nature" from her early diaries to the garden in *To The Lighthouse* and nature in *The Waves*, and *The Death of the Moth*, concluding that Woolf "questions abuses of the living things" and "constructs solidarity across distant species" (Scott 114).

In fact Woolf's has used nature as one of the aspects of purity in which its presence opens a new gate to eco criticism. Woolf's in her novel represents eco criticism as the form of nature. The nature which is represented in every line of the novel as the element of purity and origination nature, in Woolf's novel, is the background of the story in fact. From the first lines of the novel one can see that the plot has started in the nature and the family's cottages located beside the sea. In other parts of the novel, nature can be represented as well and it clarifies that Woolf's has used the nature in her novel to create a kind of balance between nature and literature.

Woolf's gives a sort of the interaction between natural object and imaginative vision. Mrs. Ramsay emotionally responds to the beauty and calmness of the bayasa plateful of the blue water and the

image of waves in pleats, yet the magnificent view of the sea leads her into a fantasy of the moon country. Mrs. Ramsay's fantasy produced by the blue water gives her a sense of peace and relief by soothing her feelings disturbed by the ugly academic jargon of her husband at home. It also suggests a kind of triumphant and independent visionary identity for Mrs. Ramsay when Woolf's, like the Romantics, combines the objective world of things with the subjective world of mind. Moreover, in this symbolic language, Mrs. Ramsay associates herself with the lighthouse and her husband with the sand dunes: That was the country he liked best, over there; those sand hills dwindling away into darkness (TL 80).

The indifference of the lighthouse to the ravages of time upon the Ramsay household is shared by all nature. As the torn leaves and tumultuous seas show, nature itself is vulnerable to the assaults of time and flux, but nature's fertility opposes and resists the passage of time. It is also dominant over man. Mrs. Ramsay makes clear that nature looks on man's misery, meanness and torture with equal complacency and that his optimistic inferences reflect only his own hopes and beliefs.

In the third part of the novel, Lily Briscoe attempts to do the same task by painting picture. Both of them examine carefully the essence of life and reality in an artistic way until they reach a final understanding of life. In *To the Lighthouse*, therefore, Woolf's use of the sea and the lighthouse as extremely physical objects symbolically associates with the emotions and thoughts of her characters, in which the reader becomes able to learn their immediate responses and reactions against the situations they encounter. Apart from their actual meanings, these physical objects suggest another idea and meaning in Woolf's novels.

As Lawrence Buell states "the environmental turn in literary and cultural studies appeared as a self-conscious movement little more than a dozen years ago" (2005, p. 1). Besides, he knows that "ecocriticism is the commonest omnibus term for this increasingly heterogeneous movement" (ibid). At first, "the belatedness and liminality of the recent environmental turn in literary-critical studies" appears to be odd (ibid). Because innovative art and critical manifestation have constantly taken an acute interest in how the material world is involved, absorbed, and reshaped and influenced by "theory, imagination, and *techne*" (ibid). In one form or another the notion of nature has been a controlling concern for literary scholars and intellectual historians ever since these field appears.

4. Environment Importance for Human Being

Derek Wall argues "for most of us, even the committed activist, the Green movement has no history. Worries about environmental destruction seem very modern" (2004, p. 1). This shows the importance of environmental problem for green culture and both of them for human beings. The world has been controlled for centuries "by a 'paradigm' of domination, reductionist science and masculine values hostile to the natural world" (ibid). Green culture comprises the cultural shift to a new paradigm, therefore, what human demands, is a new dimension of politics altogether. Green politics highlight

such a dimension, a politics that is neither left nor right but in front. Solving the problem of pollution and environmental degradation demand a study of the history of Green movements and the wider study of the relations between humanity and nature. Despite some feminist spirituality, most ecocritics refuse the belief of nature spirits or conscious Earth Goddess, they consider nature as alive, vital and worthy of reverence. Wall claims:

Perhaps the most important element of green philosophy is an “ecocentric” approach. While other political ideologies have generally viewed nature as a quarry—something to be dug up and exploited for short-term gain—Ecocritics put the environment at the center of their concerns. (Ibid 98)

The “ecocentric” notion of green philosophy emphasizes that other species and even the nature have moral form. They cannot just be consumed without regard, only as means for human gain. This shows that even if the serious environmental problems do not endanger human society, Ecocritics would still want to struggle against them, because they would endanger the diversity and beauty of this planet. In essence, ecocritics debates that the rest of nature has ethical status and cannot be used to benefit human without thought. Wall continues:

In seeking to solve environmental problems Ecocritics have been forced to consider human affairs and embrace a set of political, economic and cultural principles. Any description of “Green” demands an exploration of approaches to human society. Solving perceived ecological problems undoubtedly demands a transformation of human attitudes and institutions. (Ibid 7)

The most radical ecocritics dependably endeavor to fabricate an alternate type of society. Important answers for our serious ecological issues, the item not simply of misconstrued relations amongst humankind and nature however similarly of ill will between various segments of society, will come as much from writing and history as from science and financial aspects. Apparently contemporary natural issues have obviously existed in the past and powered biological concern. Earth First!, beginning in the United States and spreading to Australia, Canada and the UK, has focused on a mentality that places the Earth and its species first and restricts all human-fixated strikes on nature.

Ecocriticism is known as a response in the humanities to the worldwide development of the ecological review. Ecocriticism challenges control relations in stories by exploring settings and setting. In this way, setting assessed in ecocriticism. Ecocritics focus on setting as an appearance for concentrate the interchange of natural and social settings, and they demonstrate how writings apply an ecological capacity in human improvement and abuse of the world and different creatures. Ecocriticism researches the writings and thoughts as implies that responds to natural emergency.

This multi-faceted environmental crisis has economic roots. Ecocritics certainly believe that there needs to be tighter regulation aimed at preventing and cleaning up the various ecological problems, but see ever-increasing economic growth as the root cause. While technology may allow men to produce

goods in cleaner ways, there is a contradiction at the heart of the pursuit of growth. The more men consume and produce in the supposed pursuit of a better life, the greater is the inevitable increase in pollution and waste. Many environmentalists point to the Jevons Paradox. William Stanley Jevons, a 19th-century economist, argued in his book *The Coal Question: An Inquiry Concerning the Progress of the Nation, and the Probable Exhaustion of our Coal Mines* (1866), that “technological improvements tend to increase the use of resources” (37). He adds green politics is about “changing the structures, so that individuals can more easily reduce their consumption of carbon” (ibid 43).

William Mark Adams in *Green Development: Environment and Sustainability in the Third World* (2001), tries to bridge an important gap between environmentalism and development. This book argues:

The “greening” of development calls for a quite fundamental reassessment of the concept of development itself. The mainstream environmentalist critique of development sees a need for reform, changes of planning procedures, better valuation of nature, and better techniques for trading off economic growth, poverty and environmental degradation. This kind of thinking about sustainable development has dominated the “greening” of development that has taken place. (Adams xvii)

The world is not a machine, to be run by privileged super-mechanics, however skilled in environmental housekeeping. Rather than simply contributing to the enhanced efficiency of centralized bureaucratic and technocratic power, “green” development must also address the capacity of individuals and groups to plan and run their own lives, and control their own environments. It attempts to draw a link between theory and practice by discussing the nature of the environmental degradation and the impacts of development. The phrase “sustainable development” (ibid) has become the focus of debate about environment and development in a different sense.

5. Rural Life, City life, Technology and Landscape

Rural life, city life, technology and landscape have always had a significant role in ecocriticism. In fact these are some fundamentals for this approach. The scholars and critics should pay a special attention to these natural phenomena in order to criticize their selected work. Raymond Williams, in *The Country and The City* (2013), argues:

“Country” and “city” are very powerful words, and this is not surprising when we remember how much they seem to stand for in the experience of human communities. In English, “country” is both a nation and a part of a “land”; “the country” can be the whole society or its rural area. In the long history of human settlement, this connection between the land from which we all get our living and the achievement of human society has been deeply known. And one of these achievements has been the city; the capital, the large town, a distinctive form of

civilization. (1)

Therefore, the country involves the notion of a natural way of life: of peace, innocence, and simple virtue. But city involves the notion of an achieved center: of learning, communication, light. Powerful hostile association has also shown that the city is a place of noise, worldliness and ambition and the country is a place of backwardness, ignorance, limitation. This distinction between country and city, as fundamental way of life, refers to the classical times.

Derek Wall maintains, “there is no doubt that the earliest urban civilizations created severe environmental damage” (2004, p. 32). A few errands, for example, Over-expanding of the rural surpluses fundamental to assemble urban communities, pyramids and sanctuaries, prepare armed forces, get ready formal attire for religious rulers and keep up organizations result in over-cultivating, soil disintegration and the annihilation of regular environments. The wrong method for Irrigation ,for instance water system in antiquated Mesopotamia and the Indus valley, result in over-salinization, as expansive waterways vanish and left poisonous salt on some time ago fruitful land. Colossal regions of woodland are taken away to clear a path for fields of wheat. Loss of tree cover and over-energetic cultivating exercises prompt to boundless soil disintegration. The learning of early social orders firmly impacts on the contemporary ways to deal with nature. The Mesopotamians consider nature as a wild monster to be restrained. Divider examines:

The Green movement has been defined as ruralist, concerned not just with environmental quality but with promoting a way of life close to the land. Peasant revolutionaries from John Ball (d. 1381) in the thirteenth century to the Chartist Fergus O’Connor (1794-1855) have called for radical land reform. (Ibid 158)

There are a few historical prove about land change, In Eastern Europe worker parties, oversaw in a “Green International”, with comparable journeys are conspicuous in the 1920s, and land change is one of Gandhi’s primary concerns. Ecocritics battle for Organic development and soil preservation measures, they additionally battle against the utilization of green-field destinations for building. “Idealistic” communists like Owen contended that if more individuals were considered to deal with the land, profitability can be expanded while managing soil ripeness. Rustic termination issues are later association.

There has always been a contradiction between two groups, those who try to maintain or recreate rural balance, and those who try to reform the cities. Many Romantic poets criticize the cities as against nature and do not just evaluate the cultivated countryside, but examine their inspiration to supposedly untouched wilderness. Ecocritics believe that it is better to make cities ‘green’, argue that getting rid of the car and building vast city farms and parks will present the solution to ecological problems. City and country must be unified, because out of this joyous union will born a new hope, a new life, and a new civilization.

Ecocritics develop their arguments by critiquing of science and technology:

[s]uspicion of the “technofix” is common, with nuclear power, the chemical industry and biotechnology viewed with particular hostility. Such technophobia derives from a number of distinct yet linked concerns. A reductionist scientific method is innately flawed and hostile to nature. While science may not be rejected, what is usually seen as orthodox scientific method is criticized. A new holistic science is called for, which draws on and in turn enhances ecological appreciation. (Ibid 129)

Modern science, despite of being defective, may be considered too effective at bringing out nature’s secrets. However ecocritics worry that effective technology causes humanity to rape nature more effectively. Science is considered as being out of control, through scientists developing new and dangerous technologies as a means of expanding their control over others or simply for the hell of it, out of curiosity. It may be that “the white-hot rash of our technology will in the end prove destructive and painful for our own species” (Gerrard 102). Ecocritics suppose that inappropriate techno-fixes are suggested as the solution of social or environmental problems that need democratic and political answers.

6. Ecocritical Visualization in *To the Lighthouse*

Virginia Woolf is a modernist of her age and pays a special attention to some subjects such as nature. She also sometimes represents nature as female. Woolf assisted the “art form’s evolution and transcendence beyond a narrow conception of dominant story structure and assumptions revolving around fiction and poetry” (McCormack, p. 68). Woolf used sublime nature in her work. One can say a majority of her works, which takes place in nature and natural sceneries, are a great foundation for her works. *To the Lighthouse*, like her many other works takes place in the nature and traveling to the nature and through the sea. The first section begins with Mrs. Ramsay promising her son James that they can visit the lighthouse on the next day. This prediction is denied by Mr. Ramsay, who declares his confidence that the weather will not be clear.

The introductory page leads the readers to the nature. They are going to take a trip through the nature and a natural phenomenon is going to prevent them. There are so many other places, the sounds of the nature, the colors and the sceneries which are all the signs to show that Woolf applied nature as a great factor in her novel:

The gruff murmur, [...] had ceased; so that the monotonous fall of the waves on the beach, which for the most part beat a measured and soothing tattoo to her thoughts and seemed consolingly to repeat over and over again as she sat with the children the words of some old cradle song, murmured by nature, “I am guarding you”—“I am your support”. (TL 4)

One can easily see the power of nature and its importance in Mrs. Ramsey's life. When she talks about the nature she is full of pleasure. Her words are so sublime: "Perhaps you will wake up and find the sun shining and the birds singing", she said compassionately, smoothing the little boy's hair" (TL 3). She behaves as if the nature is a part of her, consequently, she draws attention to the feminine perspective of nature in this novel. The sea during the novel is an unchangeable feature which represents the tight relation of nature and time together. Botkin observes:

[a]s long as we could believe that nature undisturbed was constant, we were provided with a simple standard against which to judge our actions, a reflection from a windless pond in which our place was both apparent and fixed, providing us with a sense of continuity and permanence that was comforting. (188)

The physical presence is felt in many ways; the sound of the waves which intrude in the thoughts of the characters, the smell of salty water on towels, sand from the beach which makes Mrs. Ramsay feel as though the beach is brought into the house as well as its actual presence, visible from the garden. The "overpowering presence of the sea, felt acutely due to the fact that the characters are on a small island, surrounded by it" (Larsson 10). On this first level, however, the focal point is "[i]nteraction between the characters' perceptions of the sea and the ensuing imagery of their epiphanies" (ibid). An epiphany happens while Nancy is by the sea, during the outing in chapter of "The Window". In fact, the whole novel happens in the nature in the summerhouse which is built at the heart of nature:

They came there regularly every evening drawn by some need. It was as if the water floated off and set sailing thoughts which had grown stagnant on dry land, and gave to their bodies even some sort of physical relief. First, the pulse of colour flooded the bay with blue, and the heart expanded with it and the body swam, only the next instant to be checked and chilled by the prickly blackness on the ruffled waves. Then, up behind the great black rock, almost every evening spurted irregularly, so that one had to watch for it and it was a delight when it came, a fountain of white water; and then, while one waited for that, one watched, on the pale semicircular beach, wave after wave shedding again and again smoothly, a film of mother of pearl. (TL 9)

Such a description of natural sceneries and characters' mood about the nature emphasizes the role of the ecocriticism in the whole novel. The sea as one of the elements of the ecocriticism is equaled to purity and originality and when the characters are in the nature due to the impressions of the nature they change and try to be as pure and as clear as possible which is a direct relationship with ecocriticism. The sea's purity and originality is regarded as the direct effect of the nature in the whole novel; therefore, it can be estimated that there is a close relationship between the literature which is regarded as Woolf's novel and ecocriticism. Consequently, when the link "that bound things together has been cut, they float up there, down there, of anyhow"; floating at random becomes an image of chaos, and

the sea is once more the symbol of disintegration. The sea, also, releases the unknown powers in the characters, makes them expand beyond the limitations of the self.

Mrs. Ramsey is the one who always pays attention to the lighthouse and she answers the call of the light and finally joins it. This is the clear example in which one part of the feminine perspective is represented in the novel. The role of the lighthouse is similar to the role of the women to help others to find away to discover the unknown nature.

The sea, storms, rock, reefs, shallow water, beach, sun, wind, cloud, and waves are the main elements which are repeated through the novel. Ecocriticism focuses on the role of nature in human's life. Woolf in some part of the novel reflects this harmony between the nature and human. Besides, she sometimes relates human's mood with the nature or even symbolizes human nature with nature. As an example:

[b]ut outside a great storm scarcely keep his feet; houses and trees toppled over, the mountains trembled, rocks rolled into the sea, the sky was pitch black, and it thundered and lightened, and the sea came in with black waves as high as church towers and mountains, and all with white foam at the top.
(*TL* 29)

Storms consist of both wind (air) and rain (water). And as air is the element which can symbolize the mind, and water is the element which can symbolize the emotions, storms symbolize agitated thoughts and emotions. Metaphorically, storms are men's inner Demons which torment both their mind and their unconscious. The rocks, reefs and shallow waters symbolize the final dangers and miseries which seem to accompany the end of any stormy trip.

7. Variety of Natural Elements in *To the Lighthouse*

To the Lighthouse takes place in a summerhouse near the beach. Being near the beach means there is the image of many natural phenomena in the novel. In fact as a whole the novel takes place in the nature. A powerful natural image, which relates Woolf's novel to ecocriticism, can be water. Water is repeated in the novel thirty nine times, which shows the importance of this image in the novel. Creating both the feeling of fear and happiness, it creates a sense of dichotomy in the novel. It does not just create these two feelings, but some other feelings like excitement. Mrs. Ramsey, the main character, identifies herself with the nature and enjoys every second of watching that: "Oh, how beautiful!" For the great plateful of blue water was before her" (*TL* 5). The omniscient narrator is well-aware of her feeling and describes it beautifully.

There are many descriptions for water in this novel. There are many colors for that, like blue. Some other times in the novel the narrator describes it, "the water was quite purple and dark blue, and grey and thick, and no longer so green and yellow, but it was still quiet" (*TL* 20). In some other parts it is described as "silver water" (*TL* 101) which demonstrates the important role of water in every part of *To the Lighthouse*. The other image, which is caused by water, is the image of the waves which is repeated

about sixty four times. The duality of sense is felt by the waves more. Somewhere in the novel the characters get happy by touching this natural phenomena:

it was a delight when it came, a fountain of white water; and then, while one waited for that, one watched, on the pale semicircular beach, wave after wave shedding again and again smoothly, a film of mother of pearl. They both smiled, standing there. They both felt a common hilarity, excited by the moving waves. (TL 9)

The great sense of passing waves under the naked feet will always create a sense of hilarity and happiness. As it is obvious these natural phenomena and parts of nature can relate the ecocriticism to the novel. Once the readers start the reading they will notice that Woolf as romantic writers benefits the nature in her works. She brings the nature into the literature. Repeating the parts of nature in her novel can be a proof to that.

Since the waves are so powerful image in *To the Lighthouse*, it has been described in several ways in this novel. There is a sense of destruction in the waves as well as happiness. Waves are composed of two natural phenomena, wind and water. They are sometimes described as white fountains which bring relaxation and sometimes they reflect the fear of destruction:

[b]ut outside a great storm scarcely keep his feet; houses and trees toppled over, the mountains trembled, rocks rolled into the sea, the sky was pitch black, and it thundered and lightened, and the sea came in with black waves as high as church towers and mountains, and all with white foam at the top. (TL 29)

Wind, the other element which shapes the waves, is repeated about twenty times in *To the Lighthouse*. Blowing wind is very important for those who live near the sea. If there are fishers or they are going to sail a boat they should be aware of the direction of the wind. Wind, blowing directly, or indirectly plays an important role in this novel.

Ecocritics always pay a special attention to the natural elements in a literary work of art to find the relation of that work with nature or impact of the nature to the work or its author. Nature had a significant effect on Woolf so that she uses it in most of her works. These take place in the nature and retella story of a woman who wants to take trip in nature. Therefore, it is not surprising that she has used nature as an influential image in her work. Flower, as a sublime creature in nature, brings romance in *To the Lighthouse*. Picking flower, gifting it and smelling have always been a sign of romance. Such a romance is so colored in this novel. Repetition the image of flower about forty eighth times shows the feminine perspective of the novel. "She was beautiful like that light. It was odd, she thought, how if one was alone, one leant to inanimate things; trees, streams, flowers" (TL 34), such a description from a female character in the novel shows such a perspective in the novel.

To the Lighthouse imports many other natural pictures in it, which empower the idea of ecocriticism in the novel. As an example one can refer to the image of rock and stones in this novel. Rock is repeated in many parts of the novel and about thirty seven times and the stone is repeated about fourteen times:

And Andrew shouted that the sea was coming in, so she leapt splashing through the shallow waves on to the shore and ran up the beach and was carried by her own impetuosity and her desire for rapid movement right behind a rock and there—oh, heavens! in each other's arms, were Paul and Minta kissing probably. She was outraged, indignant. She and Andrew put on their shoes and stockings in dead silence without saying a thing about it.

(TL 37)

Maybe the rock represents harshness but here the narrator makes use of it and creates a romantic scene out of it. There are so many other pictures and natural scenes in the novel like, tree about forty eight times, butterfly about nine times, sand seventeen times, sky twelve times, cloud fourteen times, stars about seven times, mountain about fourteen times etc.

8. Conclusion

This article is a study of *To the Lighthouse* based on ecocriticism. It studied the howness of representation of nature by Woolf. She was a modern writer of her age who broke the boundaries of women and expressed herself and her ideas. She had a great concern for the nature so that the reader can find the theme of nature in many of her novels. The present article shows she had a special interest in the natural world and used this natural world in her novel, *To the Lighthouse*. This novel is one of the masterpieces of the world literature in which many themes can be found.

At first it concentrated the relationship amongst literature and man condition and also their association, consequently it analyzes ecocriticism. In such manner it depicted the earth and its significance for person. At that point it demonstrated how firmly individuals are connected to nature and different species in a web of life and demonstrates the harms created by men's activities to their condition and at last to themselves and this results in these present circumstances. Natural issues without a doubt require a change of human mentalities and organizations. His research showed that Woolf's novel mirrors the part of the sea as an image of internal nature. The article followed the relationship amongst woman and nature and the relationship of nature and human that is done by woman. Along these lines female characters are considered as an inspiration.

This article hypothesized ecocriticism as the principle term for condition hand over abstract reviews. It demonstrated that ecocriticism starts from the conviction that expresses the human experience of creative energy and the review can contribute fundamentally to the comprehension of ecological issues; the numerous types of eco-debasement that burden planet earth today. What is obvious in this novel, is that the characters do this by prudence of their comprehension of the power of word, story, and

representation to strengthen, charge, and direct ecological concern.

In this article it is examined that since the ascent of ecocriticism as an interpretive approach, Woolf has turned into a typical subject for ecocritical examination. This article proposed distinctive pundits' dialogs and has noticed Woolf's regard for the regular world. It follows abundant proofs in Woolf's written work of her consideration regarding the more-than-human world. In *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf decenters the human through her portrayal of the moderate activity of nature upon the Ramsay house. In natural terms, this proposition demonstrates that Woolf into the Lighthouse has a fiction's capacity to change the world into a domain that regards and ensures all creatures and substances.

As it is mentioned in previous discussion, natural elements of nature are in the core of attention. The researcher illustrates how Woolf imports the natural elements in her novel repeatedly. The relation of the nature and different parts of the novel is explained in details. Focusing on the nature the researcher shows ecocritical aspects of the novel. Besides, centering on the number of some elements of nature, the researcher shows the importance of nature in *To the Lighthouse*. The novel takes place in a summerhouse which is located near the sea. There is a lighthouse toward which the main character always wishes to travel. Hence, it seems that, traveling to the nature is the main goal of this novel.

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