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Faunal Narratives in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God* and Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*

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Abstract

The (un)friendly relationship between man and other elements of the ecosystem preoccupies people in all domains including literature. This paper seeks to investigate the presentation of the links between human beings and the fauna in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, No Longer at Ease and Arrow of God and Thomas Hardy's The Mayor of Casterbridge, Tess of the D'Urbervilles and Jude the Obscure. The research question that guides the work is: how do Chinua Achebe and Thomas Hardy project man's relationship with the fauna? The hypothesis is based on the premise that both authors highlight instances in which man harms as well as others in which he protects animals. Using Zoocriticism and the Comparative Approach, the work concludes that Achebe and Hardy showcase multidimensional degrees of interaction between man and animals with the aim of promoting more peaceful co-existence between them; though they did so in different manners owing to their varying cultural backgrounds. Thus, ecological discourses should take into account the contexts as different spatio-temporal entities project different environmental realities.

Keywords: Environment, Fiction, Zoocriticism, Comparative Analysis, Vision

Introduction

The earth's ecosystem of which man is part is degrading rapidly and this is partly due to human action. Consequently, man needs to put in more efforts in order to control this environmental deterioration and prevent his own destruction as well. Literature

can contribute in solving this environmental degradation crisis. Asika and Madu highlight these as they say:

Environmental degradation, air pollution emanating from environmental abuse, oil spillage, industrial emissions,

toxic and nuclear wastes are among the major examples of man's constant abuse of nature which threatens his continual survival and existence in the world. All these are becoming serious global issues which literature has identified itself in the struggle to provide the much needed balance and complementarily existence between man and his environment.(41)

This work examines the manner in which Hardy and Achebe present man's relationship with the fauna in their texts. Animals constitute an important element in ecocritical discourse as Buell, Heise and Thornber opine that "Often intertwined with critical discussions of place, the figure of the animal has played an important role in its own right in ecocritical thought"(430). In order to analyze the dynamics that animate the relationship between human beings and animals in the selected works of Chinua Achebe and Thomas Hardy, it is hypothesized that both authors highlight instances in which man harms as well as others in which he protects animals. From a theoretical perspective, Zoocriticism which studies the manner in which authors represent the relationship between man and animals in their literary texts will be used. In relation to Zoocriticism, Shapiro states that "It was nevertheless recognized from the outset that animal studies also benefit from some contributions from both the humanities and the natural sciences" (1-2). Baker also highlights the use of the theory in analyzing animals in literature when he submits thus: "In more oblique ways, art and literature can of course also employ the particular characteristics of their medium to address perceptions of the animal." (Baker *Animals, Representation and Reality* 191). In order to juxtapose the ways in which Achebe and Hardy who hail from different backgrounds project animal realities in their respective texts, the Comparative Approach which according to Payne and Barbara involves "The study of literatures across frontiers"(142) will be associated with Zoocriticism. Buell, Heise and Thornber evoke the association of Ecocriticism of which Zoocriticism is a branch with the Comparative Approach when they say "As ecocriticism continues to spread worldwide, the need for comparative and coordinated study of different bodies of literature and scholarship will increase. This must mean further exploration both of (post)colonial non-Western literature and literature of societies neither Western nor ever colonized by Western powers"(433). The texts of Achebe and Hardy fit into this description. This becomes clearer when we consider the declaration of Tötösy de Zepetnek about Comparative Literature which goes thus:

First, Comparative Literatures means the knowledge of more than one national language and literature, and/or it means the knowledge and application of other disciplines in and for the study of literature and second, Comparative Literature has an ideology of inclusion of the Other, be that a marginal literature in its several meanings of marginality, a genre, various text types, etc. (*Theory* 12)

Therefore, Zoocriticism will be associated with the Comparative Approach to compare Chinua Achebe and Thomas Hardy's representations of man's relationship with the fauna in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart, No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God* and Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge, Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. This paper is divided into three sections namely: "Predation Clues", "Abuse of Fauna" and "Valorization of Animal Species".

Predation Clues

One of the ways in which man's relationship with the faunal world is conflicting is through predation especially where human beings kill animals for consumption or other related purposes. Man's preying on animals as presented by Achebe and Hardy in their respective texts is what this section will focus on. An intriguing issue, though, is the question of "ethical acceptability" (Wolfe 39) which Mambrol makes clearer thus; "Why worry about animals when children are starving, or when other people are still being killed, raped and abused" (1)? All items of the ecosystem are mutually dependent and feed on one another either directly or indirectly; and man is no exception. Man's preying on animals is fundamentally, in my opinion, not a problem so far as it is not wasteful or unsustainable. It is noteworthy that the way in which both authors project the killing of animals has a link with the background cultures as Elder, Wolch & Emel point out that "violence done to animals and pain inflicted on them are almost inevitably interpreted in culturally and place-specific ways" (73-74).

With regards to Achebe, human being's predation on animals can be observed in a good number of instances. When "Okonkwo decided to go out hunting" (Achebe *Things* 27) after getting his second wife thoroughly beaten for cutting some leaves off a plantain stalk in what is clearly an act of transferred aggression, it signals the predatory dimension as far as man's link with the fauna is concerned. In this light, on the day of the great wrestling match which is the second day of the new year marked by the Yam Festival, Ekwefi, Okonkwo's wife kills a fowl for consumption as the narrator says "The fowl Ekwefi had just killed was in the wooden mortar" (Achebe *Things* 28-29). This indicates that man kills living things for consumption purposes. Another instance where man is in conflict with fowls for this reason is when people from Okonkwo's village pay him a visit when he is in exile. In a bid to get his guests something to eat, Okonkwo whispers something to his first wife who nods, "and soon the children were chasing one of their cocks"(Achebe *Things* 96). It could be understood that the chasing of the fowl by the children originates from the whisper. Ipso facto, Okonkwo wants to feed his tribesmen with chicken, whispers to his wife to get one for him and she instructs the children to catch it.

Apart from fowls, goats are among the animals that find themselves under threat of predation from man in Achebe's works for a varied spectrum of reasons. When Obierika's daughter, Akuekue, is getting married, the conflicting relationship between man and goats is brought out clearly. For this occasion, "Three young men helped Obierika to slaughter the two goats with which the soup was made. They were very fat goats, but the fattest of all was tethered to a peg near the wall of the compound and was as big as a small cow. Obierika had sent one of his relatives all the way to Umuike to buy that goat. It was the one he would present alive to his in-laws"(Achebe *Things* 79). The adjective "fat" that describes the goats shows the seriousness of man's predation on the goats. Also, the "fattest" is reserved for presentation to the in-laws. The narrator symbolically presents the threat of disappearance of goats as a result of man's predation in the incidents that occur in the Umuike market where Obierika sends Nwankwo to buy the biggest goat afore-mentioned. The people of Umuike have the magical power to make goats disappear as narrated by Obierika himself; reason why he warns Nwankwo to be very vigilant with the goat he will buy from the Umuike market. In a flashback blended with humour, Obierika says "There was once a man who went to sell a

goat. He led it on a thick rope which he tied round his wrist. But as he walked through the market he realised that people were pointing at him as they do to a madman. He could not understand it until he looked back and saw that what he led at the end of the tether was not a goat but a heavy log of wood" (Achebe *Things* 79). This epitomizes the threat of disappearance that man poses to goats due to his great preying on them. Likewise, when Okonkwo's exile term comes to an end and he is preparing to leave his mother's homeland, he offers a feast to his mother's people in which goats and fowls were also killed. Okonkwo says he is calling a feast because he has the means to bear its cost. He declares his affluence, at least in terms of goats and fowls that can be killed by saying that "I cannot live on the bank of a river and wash my hands with spittle. My mother's people have been good to me and I must show my gratitude" (Achebe *Things* 117). With this declaration, he makes arrangements "And so three goats were slaughtered and a number of fowls. It was like a wedding feast. There was foo-foo and yam pottage, egusi soup and bitter-leaf soup and pots and pots of palm-wine." (Achebe *Things* 117) Here again is a situation where man preys goats and fowls.

However, some indigenes have the audacity to prey on the most dreaded python that villagers look at with a lot of awe as "The story went around that Enoch had killed and eaten the sacred python [...]" (Achebe *Things* 126). Though Enoch was cursed by his father for doing so, the deed had already been done as the villagers believed. In this particular context, Enoch is not seen by the villagers as one of them since he follows the Christian preaching that there is nothing sacred in a python which is considered by Christians as just an ordinary snake and; even Mr. Brown, a Christian missionary, preaches against excesses and overzealous manners like killing a python to prove one's faith. When Enoch disrespects these diverse institutions that subtly share the fact that the python should not be killed (at least unnecessarily for Mr. Brown), it is an indication of man's endless desire to prey on living things of all category.

However, the prey takes steps to avoid being killed by man. In a proverb the narrator declares "Eneke the bird says that since men have learned to shoot without missing, he has learned to fly without perching" (Achebe *Things* 16). This is Nwakibi telling Okonkwo that he no longer gives his yams to young people because they do not work hard enough to have good yields and he always loses his yams; but promises to give Okonkwo because the latter is a hard working young man. This confirms Mambrol's opinion that "Animal categorisations and the use of derogatory animal metaphors have been and are characteristic of human languages" (1).

Apart from instances in which man preys on animals to eat, there are several situations where man kills them for the gods during animal sacrifices. The killing therefore has a cultural dimension and corroborates Mambrol's assertion that "While cruelty, death or extinction are not the necessary results of the human representation of animals – many such representations are sympathetic or benign – it is difficult for animals to escape anthropocentrism because they exist in modern cultures much more in representation than in 'the real'" (1). This lends the treatment of animals by the two authors from different cultures to the Comparative Approach which Tötösy de Zepetnek describes as "the theoretical, as well as methodological postulate to move and dialogue between cultures, languages, literatures, and disciplines" (Tötösy de Zepetnek *Cultural Studies* 259). There are several instances in Achebe's

texts in which there is conflict in the relationship between man and animals because the latter offers the former as sacrifices to different gods, goddesses and deities for various reasons. A case in point concerns Okonkwo's father, Unoka, whose farms do not yield as much as others' do and he resorts to offering fowls as sacrifices to the gods to make his harvest better. Unoka says that every single year, "[...] before I put any crop in the earth, I sacrifice a cock to Ani, the owner of all land. It is the law of our fathers. I also kill a cock at the shrine of Ifejioku, the god of yams. I clear the bush and set fire to it when it is dry. I sow the yams when the first rain has fallen, and stake them when the young tendrils appear. I weed – (Achebe *Things* 12)" With all these his yields do not get better and he does not look as if he will stop the sacrifices any time soon since he believes that it is the sacrifices that will guarantee good harvests for him. This killing of fowls by Unoka to increase his yields proves to be wasteful killings when Ani tells him that his sacrifices will not change his yields because as lazy as he, Unoka, is, he plants on barren land while others are going very far to look for new fresh and fertile land which is certainly more difficult to cultivate. Unoka who is willing to sacrifice to the gods all the time is a foil to Obiako the palmwine tapper who suddenly gives up his trade. In a flashback, while talking about Obiako, Nwakibie says: "I have heard that many years ago, when his father had not been dead very long, he had gone to consult the Oracle. The Oracle said to him, 'Your dead father wants you to sacrifice a goat to him.' Do you know what he told the Oracle? He said, 'Ask my dead father if he ever had a fowl when he was alive'" (Achebe *Things* 15). As seen here, Obiako is a foil to Unoka because the latter is unwilling to sacrifice to the gods even when the gods themselves decree that he does so.

However, this does not make him an animal-friendly individual. This is because he says he does not refuse to sacrifice the goat because he wants to save the life of the goat but simply because he cannot afford the goat especially given that his late father whose spirit is asking for the goat to be sacrificed did not leave any for him to inherit. Like his father, Okonkwo also has conflicting ties with animals as a result of the enormous sacrifices he performs. Okonkwo's wife Ekwefi has given birth to many children who all die in infancy and that makes her a bitter woman in her husband's household so much so that when there are incidents worth celebrating that have to do with children, she, alone, will understandably be sad. When Ekwefi's child Onwumbiko dies, her husband's first wife has already had three strong and healthy. When she gives birth to her third son in succession, the narrator says "Okonkwo had slaughtered a goat for her, as was the custom" (Achebe *Things* 56). When everyone is celebrating and feasting in Okonkwo's household, it is Ekwefi alone who is visibly unhappy despite her good wishes to the lucky mother. Her sadness is aggravated by the fact that while she is childless as a result of burying many children in their infancy, her co-wife has a goat sacrificed for her third successive son meanwhile she, Ekwefi, may never have such an honor and privilege. Another instance in which animals are sacrificed in a way that looks excessive is during Ezeudu's burial. Ezeudu is a very great man and regarded in high esteem in Umuofia and in addition to the fact that the whole clan is at his funeral, a lot of sacrifices have to be made. During his funeral, "The ancient drums of death beat, guns and cannon were fired, and men dashed about in frenzy, cutting down every tree or animal they saw, jumping over walls and dancing on the roof. It was a warrior's funeral, and from morning till night warriors came and went in their age groups. (Achebe *Things* 84-85) Here, animals

are sacrificed for nothing apparently as the killing does not seem to serve any purpose or to appease any god or goddess like the other sacrifices afore-mentioned.

It is the same thing that happens when Okonkwo is exiled. In the great Ezeudu's funeral, Okonkwo accidentally kills a man. Since it is a female murder because it is accidental, Okonkwo's funeral will be for seven years after which he will be free to return unlike intentional murder considered male murder for which the penalty is permanent banishment. So, when Okonkwo accidentally kills a fellow kinsman in Ezeudu's burial, he and his family have to leave the village that day and "As soon as the day broke, a large crowd of men from Ezeudu's quarter stormed Okonkwo's compound, dressed in garbs of war. They set fire to his houses, demolished his red walls, killed his animals and destroyed his barn" (Achebe *Things* 87). In this case, however, unlike in Ezeudu's burial, the killing of the animals is to cleanse the land of the kinsman's blood that Okonkwo has spilt and to appease the goddess of the earth. It should be noted that all these take place before the advent of colonialization in Igbo land and deconstruct the belief that it is only the colonizers who came and distorted a very harmonious relationship between man and nature. Caminero-Santangelo paraphrases William Bienart as sharing this view. As he posits, Biernart "[...] argues that pre-colonial African practices were by no means always in harmony with local ecology, and notes how the long histories of western influence and of colonialism have transformed local environmental knowledge, attitudes and practices"(703).

Like Achebe, Hardy presents an instance in which animals are killed indiscriminately in the farm where Tess and his friends work. The killing of these animals is in such a way that concerns over the long term survival of certain species may be raised because they do not only kill all species indiscriminately but they kill both the old and young without differentiation. It is narrated that:

Rabbits, hares, snakes, rats, mice, retreated inwards as into a fastness, unaware of the ephemeral nature of their refuge, and of the doom that awaited them later in the day when, their covert shrinking to a more and more horrible narrowness, they were huddled together, friends and foes, till the last few yards of upright wheat fell also under the teeth of the unerring reaper, and they were everyone put to death by the sticks and stones of the harvesters. (Hardy *Tess* 110)

In this case, the harvesters corner rabbits, hares, snakes, mice and rats; and use sticks and stones to kill them brutally. Though Elder, Wolch & Emel opine that it is "Both difficult and inappropriate to characterise one type of harm or death as more painful or more humane than another" (73-74), the mass indiscriminate killing of animals here appear more brutal than the previous incidents. This is the apex of man's conflicting link with animals.

When Amikwu is getting married, the bride has to take an oath accompanied by a sacrifice to the effect that she has never slept with any man before getting married. Uchendu, Amikwu's father, holds the staff out to the bride, asks her to swear to it that she has never slept with any man and when she does, "Uchendu took the hen from her, slit its throat with a sharp knife and allowed some of the blood to fall on the ancestral staff. From that day, Amikwu took the young bride and she became his wife" (Achebe *Things* 93). The fact that each bride has to take an oath of this nature accompanied

by the sacrifice of a fowl indicates that the human-fowl relationship is strenuous as a result of the traditional rituals associated with marriage.

Hardy also presents instances of man's violent relationship with animals as a result of his predation on them that are linked to marriage. A case in point is when Jude and his bride, Arabella, have to kill a very big pig as part of their marriage rites. The narrator says "The time arrived for killing the pig which Jude and his wife had fattened in their sty during the autumn months, and the butchering was timed to take place as soon as it was light in the morning, so that Jude might get to Alfredston without losing more than a quarter of a day"(Hardy *Jude* 48).

There are even indications in Achebe's works that the sacrifice of fowls is not enough and something bigger may be needed for sacrifices to make the gods even happier. This is seen when Ezeulu sights the moon. During the Yam Festival, the yams brought by the villagers are counted, which is a traditional census method because through the number of yams presented by each village, the number of people in the village is known. In one occasion after the counting, Ezeulu tells Ulu "May we increase in numbers at the next counting of the villages so that we shall sacrifice a cow and not a chicken as we did after the last New Yam feast." (Achebe *Arrow*: 6). This is an indication that the lack of a peaceful co-existence between man and other living things due to sacrifices which is already bad as seen above can get even worse. Ironically, the relationship between the ulu and the people does not get better. In fact, it gets worst as the new moon refuses to appear for the villagers to celebrate the Yam Festival and take the roads to their farms. When they consult the god, Ulu is offended and one of the elders says "Let us ask Ezeulu to go back and tell the deity that we have heard his grievance and are prepared to make amends. Every offence has its sacrifice, from a few cowries to a cow or a human being. Let us wait for an answer"(Achebe *Arrow* 208-209). This shows that the villagers are willing to sacrifice any animal and in a hyperbole a human being if necessary.

Again, in connection to feasts, during the Akwu Nro feast celebrated before the yam festival, the narrator says "The climax of the evening came with the slaughtering of the rams" (Achebe *Arrow* 200). As a chair was set in the middle of the ilo and the Mask sat down, there was comparative silence. The fact that this killing of rams by man during this event represents the climax is indicative of the value that the villagers attach to such animal sacrifice.

A situation is equally presented wherein a herbalist causes the death of many birds to fortify and protect himself. As Ezeulu looks on, the herbalist sits a little apart from the group of other onlookers and does not participate in their conversation. Ezeulu looks round the room and sees how the herbalist has fortified it against all evil spirits. There are three lengthy gourds corked with wads of dry banana leaves hanging on the roof and a fourth gourd is the biggest hangs directly over the patient. On the neck of the fourth gourd is a string of cowries and a bunch of parrots' feathers partially inserted into it; indicating that parrots have been killed for this purpose. Also, "Two freshly sacrificed chicks dangled head downwards on either side of it"(Achebe *Arrow* 114). Thus, apart from the killing of parrots for their feathers that form part of the herbalist's defence system against enemies, fowls are slaughtered for his patient to be treated.

The predatory attitude of man towards animals is corroborated and intensified by the several images of the goatskin bags presented by Achebe in his texts. The elders use the goatskin bag as chairs in public places as well as in their private homes. Many of such instances are presented in Achebe's texts. For example, after Okoye talks with Okonkwo, the former rolls his goatskin and departs (Achebe *Things* 6); in Nwakibie's compound, Okonkwo presents palm wine, everybody thanks him and the neighbours bring out their drinking horns from the goatskin bags (Achebe *Things* 14); sometimes when Okonkwo goes to big village meetings or communal ancestral feasts he allows Ikemefuna to accompany him carrying his stool and his goatskin bag like a son (Achebe *Things* 20); the medicine man, Okagbue, specialized in treating ogbanjes brings out a sharp razor from the goatskin bag slung from his left shoulder and began to mutilate the dead child (Achebe *Things* 55); when Obierika's child is getting married, his relatives and friends begin to arrive with their goatskin bags hanging on one shoulder and rolled goatskin mats under his arms (Achebe *Things* 81); on the second day of Okonkwo's exile in his motherland, his uncle, Uchendu, calls his family and the men bring their goatskin mats (Achebe *Things* 93); when Okonkwo's friends visit him in exile Uchendu sits down on his goatskin to receive them (Achebe *Things* 96); Ogbuefi Ugonna, a man with two titles who joined Christianity, comes for a Christian feast with his drinking-horn in his goatskin bag (Achebe *Things* 123); and Obierika passes and calls Okonkwo so that they should go to the market and the latter hangs his goatskin bag and follows Obierika (Achebe *Things* 142). These are some of the numerous instances in Achebe's texts wherein the goatskin bags and mats are presented to reflect the conflicting and predatory relationship man entertains with animals as he kills them to obtain such goat skins.

Like the goatskin explained above, animal horns used enormously in Achebe's texts corroborate the predatory attitude of man towards animals. This comes to play with the description of the much dreaded egwugwu masquerade. The narrator describes that on the head of the egwugwu "[...] were two powerful horns" (Achebe *Things* 64). It is not only masquerades that are associated with animals horns but humans themselves are also linked to it. This is brought out when the narrator says "Nwaka emptied the wine in his horn and hit it twice on the floor" (Achebe *Arrow* 41) while waiting for Ezedimili to tell him why the head of an Ezeulu is removed and put in the Ulu shrine after he dies.

Hardy also presents an instance in which the killing of animals by man is seen through the animal parts he uses. The rabbit skin used to produce caps, like the goatskin used in Achebe's texts to produce bags and mats as well as animal horns used in fabricating drinking cups, is shown where the narrator says "Tess Durbeyfield had been one of the last to suspend her labours. She sat down at the end of the shock, her face turned somewhat away from her companions. When she had deposited herself a man in a rabbit-skin cap, and with a red handkerchief tucked into his belt, held the cup of ale over the top of the shock for her to drink" (Hardy *Tess* 113).

We also see man's predation tendencies in relation to fishes where Susan Henchard among others is involved in fabricating nets that will be used in fishing. The fact that Elizabeth-Jane and Susan Henchard are all involved in "working twine nets for the fishermen" (Hardy *The Mayor* 23) is indicative of the demand for fishing nets which further point to the fact that man and fishes do not have the most cordial relationship.

There are equally instances where man kills animals not for consumption, sacrifice or its parts as explained above but apparently for the pleasure of killing them. An instance is seen where it is narrated that the young Obi has "a rusty razor-blade with which he sharpened his pencil or sometimes cut up a grasshopper" (Achebe *No Longer* 68). Another child, Nwafo, wrestles with his friend, Obielue, for reasons that have to do with killing birds for pleasure. The narrator says "It had all started from the moment they went to inspect the bird-snare they had set with resin on the top of two icheku trees" (Achebe *Arrow* 210). This means that they want to catch and probably kill birds as part of their play; and corroborates Heise's view that;

Unlike tribal peoples, peasants, or hunters in past centuries, whose subsistence depended on their familiarity with the surrounding ecosystems, most citizens of modern societies are free to acquire such knowledge or not, or to learn some parts of it and ignore others. Some distinctly modern forms of intimate acquaintance with nature—highly specialized hobbies such as bird-watching or orchid collecting—depend precisely on their being leisure activities rather than existential necessities; and they are often quite far removed from any genuine ecological understanding, focusing as they do on one particular aspect of ecology rather than its systemic functioning. (55)

When man from an early age as is the case with Obi begins to entertain a strenuous relationship of with natural elements, it can only get worse when humans attend adulthood and that is exactly what Obi observes in Lagos when he returns from England. Talking about Obi, the narrator says:

His car was parked close to a wide-open storm drain from which came a very strong smell of rotting flesh. It was the remains of a dog which had no doubt been run over by a taxi. Obi used to wonder why so many dogs were killed by cars in Lagos, until one day the driver he had engaged to teach him driving went out of his way to run over one. In shocked amazement Obi asked why he had done it. 'Na good luck,' said the man. 'Dog bring good luck for new car. But duck be different. If you kill duck you go get accident or kill man. (Achebe *No Longer* 13-14)

As seen here, drivers in Lagos find pleasure in killing dogs. This is because they superstitiously believe that when one kills dogs it brings good luck; unlike the duck whose killings bring ill luck to the killer. This explains why automobilists go out of the road to kill dogs. All these point to the fact that Achebe paints an image of an unharmonious relationship between man and animals because humans kill animals for consumption, sacrifice, for its parts or simply for pleasure.

There are other instances in Hardy's texts, unlike in Achebe's, in which the killing of animals by man is not intentional. When Elizabeth Jane is getting married to Donald Farfrae, her step father, Henchard, chooses a bird as her wedding gift. However, when Henchard gets to the wedding site, he feels unwanted and for fear of causing an embarrassment in the ceremony, goes away unnoticed leaving the gold finch he had put in a cage in one corner of the house. Long after the wedding, the cage is discovered by Farfrae with feathers in the bottom; an indication that the bird died of starvation. (Hardy *The Mayor* 321) Another accidental death of

a living thing that can be blamed on man's carelessness is seen when Prince, Tess's family horse, dies on the high way when Tess becomes inattentive and it collides with a mail-cart.

In consternation Tess jumped down, and discovered the dreadful truth. The groan had proceeded from her father's poor horse Prince. The morning mail-cart, with its two noiseless wheels, speeding along these lanes like an arrow, as it always did, had driven into her slow and unlighted equipage. The pointed shaft of the cart had entered the breast of the unhappy Prince like a sword, and from the wound his life's blood was spouting in a stream, and falling with a hiss into the road. (Hardy *Tess* 35)

This vivid and graphic description of Prince's death due to Tess's negligence points to the fact that even when man does not mean to harm animals, his actions still put their lives in great danger. In a way, Hardy is insinuating here that man will never be in total harmony with nature but should strive for that or at least to limit the unfriendly co-existence as much as possible.

As seen above therefore, both Achebe and Hardy present instances in which human beings kill animals. These killings are for a wide variety of reasons ranging from killing them for consumption, for sacrifices to deities, for cleansing the land, as parts of marriage rites and as sports in Achebe's novels. Many of these instances occur before colonialism and that is why I disagree with Alam and Goigoi who say that the African was in harmony with nature so that it was colonialism that "disturbed the balance" (Alam 49) or that Africa was in "an inviolate state of nature" (Goigoi 1). On his part, Hardy presents fewer instances where man kills animals and such killings in Hardy's texts are for consumption, marriage rites or totally accidental. It can then be seen that Hardy and to a greater extent Achebe present man's conflicting relationship with other living things in the sense that man preys on them. Some of these reasons could be justifiable in the sense that as part of the ecosystem man needs to feed on other elements thereof for his survival. This is the case with instances where man moderately kills the animals for food or for other reasons that have to do with providing his needs. This goes in line with the view of Buell, Heise and Thornber who opine that "Ecocritics highlight the ways in which human societies systemically, even if unintentionally, damage habitats and species ranging from microorganisms and plants to insects and amphibians. Whereas animal studies scholars usually find any direct violence inflicted on animals unacceptable, environmentalists and ecocritics sometimes accept such violence in the interest of ensuring the survival of crucial ecosystems" (432). However, both writers present the indiscriminate, immoderate and pleasure killing of animals so as to sensitize against such excesses. These are the cases which according to Heise "depend precisely on their being leisure activities rather than existential necessities; and they are often quite far removed from any genuine ecological understanding, focusing as they do on one particular aspect of ecology rather than its systemic functioning" (55).

Abuse of Fauna

Apart from the unfriendly link between man and animals due to the fact that man kills them as seen above, there are instances in the works of Achebe and Hardy where the conflict between man and the fauna comes as a result of the suffering that man subject animals to. This is what Mambrol refers to as "ways in which serious consideration of the status of animal seems to be

fundamentally compromised by the human" (1) and is the focus of this section.

One of the ways in which animals suffer in man's hands is when such animals like horses and oxen are transformed to means of transporting people and goods from one place to another. Achebe presents this during the leisurely outing of Obi and his friends. When the sun is setting, the hills of Funchal and the green trees and the houses together with their white walls and red tiles look very much like an enchanted isle because they are very appealing to the eyes. Ironically, when Macmillan, Obi and Clara go ashore together, the narrator says, "They passed two oxen pulling a cart which was just a flat board on wheels with a man and a sack of something in it. They went into little gardens and parks" (Achebe *No Longer* 24). This suffering the oxen are subjected to for the purpose of serving man is rather a stain in the otherwise pleasurable scenery Obi and his friends are observing. This use of animals in transporting people and things comes to Umuofia with colonialism as no such instance is seen before colonization.

This probably explains why horses play a far greater role in transportation in Hardy's works than Achebe's. The horse and cart that Abel Whittle has to use in transporting Henchard's hay are ready but Whittle is nowhere to be found as "Six o'clock struck, and there was no Whittle. At half-past six Henchard entered the yard; the waggon was horsed that Abel was to accompany; and the other man had been waiting twenty minutes" (Hardy *The Mayor* 94). Here, unlike Whittle who has chosen not to work, the horse has to be available to pull the cart and do any other thing man deems necessary. Referring to animals Bell and Russell say "They are doomed to passively accept the given, their lives "totally determined" because their decisions belong not to themselves but to their species. Thus whereas humans inhabit a "world" which they create and transform and from which they can separate themselves, for animals there is only habitat, a mere physical space to which they are "organically bound" (192).

In the epistolary dimension in which Lucetta writes a letter to Henchard telling him how to get her letters back to her, the suffering of horses as coach pullers is also highlighted. In the letter, Lucetta says she is on her way to Bristol to see her only relative who is rich with hopes that he will do something for me. She says she will return through Casterbridge and Budmouth where she will take the packet-boat and that is where she requests Henchard to meet her with the letters. She adds that she will be in "[...]the coach which changes horses at the Antelope Hotel at half-past five Wednesday evening" (Hardy *The Mayor* 114). This points to the fact that the horses are made to suffer in transporting man, in this case Lucetta, and her belongings. This assertion that is confirmed when she meets Henchard and in talking about the huge amount of furniture she came with. She says "It took a waggon and four horses to get it here." (Hardy *The Mayor* 172) The fact that the wagon is too big that four horses are required to pull is indicative of the great suffering the horses in question endure while transporting the goods.

A similar image is projected when Farfrae arrives with his newly purchased hay which is so bulky that it cannot pass unnoticed and is being brought by horses. The narrator says "A yellow flood of reflected sunlight filled the room for a few instants. It was produced by the passing of a load of newly trussed hay from the country, in a waggon marked with Farfrae's name. Beside it rode Farfrae himself on horseback" (Hardy *The Mayor* 173). In addition to the immense loads of hay, the horses also transport Farfrae.

When Mr. Phillotson, the schoolmaster, is leaving the village for Christminster, "The miller at Cresscombe lent him the small white tilted cart and horse to carry his goods to the city of his destination, about twenty miles off, such a vehicle proving of quite sufficient size for the departing teacher's effects" (Hardy *Jude* 3). The fact that the horse has to pull the cart for about twenty miles shows the suffering horses go through while transporting man and his goods.

The suffering of horses while transporting human beings and their luggage is brought out even more vividly as Phillotson is on his way to Christminster. The loads the horses carry, the distance they cover and the topography of the area only help to intensify their suffering of animals. Below the hill on which Phillotson stops for a rest a team of horses appear:

[...]having reached the place by dint of half an hour's serpentine progress from the bottom of the immense declivity. They had a load of coals behind them--a fuel that could only be got into the upland by this particular route. They were accompanied by a carter, a second man, and a boy, who now kicked a large stone behind one of the wheels, and allowed the panting animals to have a long rest, while those in charge took a flagon off the load and indulged in a drink round. (Hardy *Jude* 15)

In terms of horses transporting people, another case is seen where Jack Dubeyfield, after realizing that he may have noble blood in his veins decides that he will start enjoying the privileges that go with it immediately by not trekking home. He therefore tells his son "Now take up that basket, and go on to Marlott, and when you've come to The Pure Drop Inn, tell 'em to send a horse and carriage to me immed'ately, to carry me hwoome" (Hardy *Tess* 7).

Jack Dubeyfield himself owns a cart horse by name Prince and it is due to its effort and labour that the Dubeyfields have something to live on. Being a poor family, the Dubeyfields suffer to make earns meet as they do not go to bed before 11:00 pm and have to be up latest 2:00 am to work on the beehives. But their horse, Prince, suffers even more as the produce has to be delivered in Casterbridge every day by slow wagons pulled by the horse on very bad roads over long distances.(Hardy *Tess* 31) This is typical of Hardy's cultural background and not Achebe's. However, as Elder, Wolch & Emel indicate, "This does not imply that animal suffering, agony and death are mere social constructs; they are only too real"(74).

Equally, with the advent of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, many machines were produced, some of which have to be pulled by horses before they accomplish their tasks. This is hinted to by the narrator when he says "Presently there arose from within a ticking like the love-making of the grasshopper. The machine had begun, and a moving concatenation of three horses and the aforesaid long rickety machine was visible over the gate, a driver sitting upon one of the hauling horses, and an attendant on the seat of the implement"(Hardy *Tess* 110). In addition to obligating these animals to work in their farms, human beings very often maltreated them by not feeding them well and beating them. This is brought out as the narrator indicates that:

The harvest-men rose from the shock of corn, and stretched their limbs, and extinguished their pipes. The horses, which had been unharnessed and fed, were again attached to the scarlet machine. Tess, having quickly eaten her own meal, beckoned to her eldest sister to come and take away the baby, fastened her dress, put on

the buff gloves again, and stooped anew to draw a bond from the last completed sheaf for the tying of the next. (Hardy *Tess* 116)

Hardy, in his life, has always advocated for a better treatment of horses. Referring to Hardy, Bloom (123) says "Many people were amused when, asked for his comments on modern warfare, he suggested that armies should at least stop using horses on the battlefield." Therefore, it is clear that man causes suffering on animals in both Achebe's and, especially, Hardy's novels by making them transport humans and goods; and pull machines used in farming.

As is the case with transportation as seen above, Achebe and Hardy also converge in their presentation of the relationship between man and other living things in their projection of caged birds. Achebe presents the matron of the restaurant with foreign ownership where Obi and his friends go to eat as one whose pet is a caged parrot and she prefers to sit beside the parrot as the narrator in reference to the angle where she sits says "It must have been her favourite corner, because her parrot's cage was directly overhead." (Achebe *No Longer* 31) Having admiration for a parrot is good but depriving it of its freedom for personal pleasure is bad. This is another aspect with foreign traits that Achebe decries in his texts as the owner of the caged parrot is a European.

A similar issue is brought out by Hardy in relation to Elizabeth Jane's marriage with Donld Farfrae. Henchard goes out to buy what he will present as a gift to his step daughter on her marriage day and "At length a caged goldfinch met his eye. The cage was a plain and small one, the shop humble, and on inquiry he concluded he could afford the modest sum asked. A sheet of newspaper was tied round the little creature's wire prison, and with the wrapped up cage in his hand Henchard sought a lodging for the night"(Hardy *The Mayor* 315). Here, the narrator makes it clear that putting a bird in a cage is imprisonment. When the bird is abandoned and it dies, this situation is aimed at deploring the maltreatment of birds by humans.

This seems to stem from an incident in Hardy's life. Hardy Florence says "They (Hardy and his father) noticed a fieldfare, half-frozen, and the father took up a stone idly and threw it at the bird, possibly not meaning to hit it. The fieldfare fell dead and the child Thomas picked it up and it was as light as a feather, all skin and bone, practically starved. He said he had never forgotten how the body of the fieldfare felt in his hand; the memory had always haunted"(444).

Another incident that brings out the unfriendly relationship between man and animals is when a bull attacks Lucetta and Elizabeth Jane. A bull that is passing down the street destined for the market with huge horns decides to give the two ladies a serious chase and is determined to get them until it is distracted by a rattling door. When the bull is distracted, a man appears to save the ladies. "He ran forward towards the leading-staff, seized it, and wrenched the animal's head as if he would snap it off. The wrench was in reality so violent that the thick neck seemed to have lost its stiffness and to become half-paralyzed, whilst the nose dropped blood. The premeditated human contrivance of the nose-ring was too cunning for impulsive brute force, and the creature flinched." (Hardy *The Mayor* 201) The violence meted on the cow by the man look as if the man cares little about its suffering and align with Bell and Russell (191) when they say: "The more-than-human world and human relationships to it have been ignored, as if the

suffering and exploitation of other beings and the global ecological crisis were somehow irrelevant.” The bull’s head is disfigured, neck loses its stability, and the animal bleeds so badly that Lucetta and Elizabeth Jane look at it with more pity than fear and vengeance. (Hardy *The Mayor* 202) When Hardy presents the suffering of animals this way, it is with the view of condemning it since in his life, Hardy had a special “[...]concern with the sufferings of animals” (Millgate 450) and “He was particularly concerned over the suffering of horses in war-time, and declared emphatically that they should never be sent to the Front” (Gibson 76).

As seen above, in the texts of Achebe and Hardy, instances abound in which there are conflicts between human beings and other nonhuman creatures. This can be seen as human beings expose horses and oxen to enormous suffering as they transport human beings and their goods from one place to another. At times, these animals cover long distances under terrible conditions, are deprived of freedom, and in some cases incur serious physical pain and injury through beating. The authors bring these excesses to the lamplight to sensitize the readers on their ills so that they can be corrected. This goes in line with the views of Bell and Russell who say “We believe, rather, that disrupting the social scripts that structure and legitimize the human domination of nonhuman nature is fundamental not only to dealing with environmental issues, but also to examining and challenging oppressive social arrangements”(190).

Valorization of Animal Species

Apart from presenting instances where man maltreats and even kills animals, Achebe and Hardy project situations in which humans are protecting the fauna. This representation of man’s links with living things from two opposite perspectives is what causes Baker to declare that “Our representation of animals, especially in the present, is characterised by blatant and unresolved contradiction”(167). However, the authors simply want to present a balanced vision by projecting man’s conflicting links with nature so that it is changed; and also highlighting the harmonious link between the two so that it is ameliorated upon. Therefore, I agree more with Mambrol who submits that “Representation has also proved crucial in the destruction of animal species, and is central to the contemporary preservation of others” (1).

The valorization and protection of living organisms is highlighted in several instances by the two authors and this is brought out at the very beginning of Hardy’s *Jude the Obscure* thus: "Be a good boy, remember; and be kind to animals and birds, and read all you can. And if ever you come to Christminster remember you hunt me out for old acquaintance' sake" (Hardy *Jude* 4). These words from Mr. Phillotson to Jude as the latter is leaving for Christminster are a pointer to the fact that man needs to value and protect nature; and form the backbone of the ecological vision of Hardy as well as Achebe. This is because the two writers present animals from a protective perspective by bringing out the ways in which man valorizes them. One of the ways through which man valorizes nature is by raising it to the status of a divinity and this is particularly true in Achebe’s works. In Achebe’s novels, the python is the nonhuman creature given the highest degree of awe by virtue of its divine status. The narrator says:

The royal python was the most revered animal in Mbanta and all the surrounding clans. It was addressed as "Our Father," and was allowed to go wherever it chose, even into people's beds. It ate rats in the house and sometimes

swallowed hens' eggs. If a clansman killed a royal python accidentally, he made sacrifices of atonement and performed an expensive burial ceremony such as was done for a great man. No punishment was prescribed for a man who killed the python knowingly. Nobody thought that such a thing could ever happen. (Achebe *Things* 112)

It can be seen that the python is valorized by the appellation “Our Father” which Christians use for the Almighty God, is given the liberty to go anywhere at any time, is granted the freedom to consume whatever it chooses to consume among man’s possession and is given the burial reserved for a great man if accidentally killed. With this royal position attributed to the python, it is beyond human imagination that an individual should intentionally kill a python.

However, it is rumoured that Okoli has killed the sacred python; a thing which if confirmed will be an abomination of the highest degree in Umuofia land. Okoli is a new Christian convert and the church preaches in favour of killing the python since to them it is just an ordinary snake with no spiritual powers. While the discussion on whether or not Okoli really killed the sacred python is going on, “Okoli was not there to answer. He had fallen ill on the previous night. Before the day was over he was dead. His death showed that the gods were still able to fight their own battles. The clan saw no reason then for molesting the Christians”(Achebe *Things* 114). The people of Umuofia therefore believe so much in the spiritual uplifting of the python that to them, any man who dares to kill a python intentionally will be dealt with accordingly by the gods of the land. The degree to which Umuofians revere the python is so high that even some Christian missionaries have to restrain their Christians from treating the python badly for fear of having an open conflict with the villagers. This explains why despite the diametrically opposing beliefs they have, the Christian church and the villagers especially when Mr. Brown, who preaches the protection of the python, is around, have an ever expanding mutual respect and cordial relationship. As narrated, “This growing feeling was due to Mr. Brown, the white missionary, who was very firm in restraining his flock from provoking the wrath of the clan”(Achebe *Things* 126). But not all Christians saw things from the same angle as Mr. Brown because some of the new converts are so overzealous and over excited that they will do anything, including killing a python, to challenge the traditional beliefs in order to prove their loyalty to the church. One of the members who fall in this category is Enoch whose father, ironically, is the priest of the snake cult. Enoch is also linked to killing the python as “The story went around that Enoch had killed and eaten the sacred python, and that his father had cursed him”(Achebe *Things* 126). Here again, like Okoli who was punished with death by the gods for killing the python, a curse is placed on Enoch by his own father.

Even among Christians converts themselves, there are some who still revere the python and can hardly do anything to kill it. That is the case with Moses Onachukwu who argues that Christians should not kill the python because it causes nobody any harm and that there is no Biblical verse which states that killing a python is a virtue. Mr. Goodcountry is a foil to him as he preaches that it was a snake that brought sin unto mankind and man has a duty to kill it; if his Christian affinities are not to be questioned. When Oduche, Ezeulu’s Christian son, listens to this heated debate, he rapidly chooses the side of Mr. Goodcountry and makes up his mind

almost immediately that he must kill a python. Oduche knows that there is one big and another small python living almost entirely in his mother's hut. The pythons are harmless, kept the rats away and were suspected of frightening away a hen and swallowing her eggs only once. With this in mind "Oduche decided that he would hit one of them on the head with a big stick. He would do it so carefully and secretly that when it finally died people would think it had died of its own accord"(Achebe *Arrow* 50). The ewe attached to the python makes Oduche not to execute this already softened killing plan. He puts it in a box to die a natural death but it is rescued. By giving the python a divine status, Achebe paves the way for its valorization and protection.

Another way through which nature is given importance is in terms of the effort put in place by man to promote it or to keep it in good shape. This is brought out particularly in Hardy's works. Valorizing and protecting the nature has always been keen to Hardy as Millgate declares that "Hardy had learned through years of deliberate self-education and of London living that there were other, more acting-more humane ways, for example, of treating animals, and broader views of the nature of the universe"(276). This attachment to nature even played a part in Hardy proposing to and marrying Emma as Millgate stresses that "[...] she was capable of a generous and even courageous compassion for creatures, human and animals, who were ill equipped [...] which had been so important an element in Hardy's attraction to her[...]"(398). An instance in which man takes decisive concrete steps to do something in order to benefit the situation of living this is with Jude when he throws away the clacker with which he was asked to scare birds from eating crops. He considers himself as a friend to the birds and empathizes with them as the narrator says "His clacker he had by this time thrown away from him, as being a mean and sordid instrument, offensive both to the birds and to himself as their friend"(Hardy *Jude* 8). Stretching the point further, it is narrated that; "Why should he frighten them away? They took upon more and more the aspect of gentle friends and pensioners--the only friends he could claim as being in the least degree interested in him, for his aunt had often told him that she was not. He ceased his rattling, and they alighted anew"(Hardy *Things* 8).

In this situation, Jude positions himself as an advocate for the birds with whom he shares two key elements which are rejection and friendlessness. Jude feels lonely as he has nobody who is really his friend and even his aunt with whom he lives has made it clear that she is not his friend; making him virtually unwanted in a house he calls theirs. He seems to see the same things with the birds who have been rejected by everyone and who are treated as strangers in the farms and bushes which are supposed to be their natural habitats. Hardy's attachment to birds and his desire to protect them is known as Millgate declares in reference to Hardy that "He knew, too, what birds affected which brakes, and possessed an extraordinary sensitivity to the sights, the smells, and especially the sounds of the countryside at every hour of the day or night [...]"(33).

Jude's empathy with birds extends to other nonhuman living things which he tries to protect and to avoid hurting; and he goes by Garrard's philosophy that "The boundary between human and animal is arbitrary and, moreover, irrelevant, since we share with animals a capacity for suffering [...]"(137). As Jude is moving along the road and sees worms, the narrator says:

It was impossible to advance in regular steps without crushing some of them at each tread. Though Farmer

Troutham had just hurt him, he was a boy who could not himself bear to hurt anything. He had never brought home a nest of young birds without lying awake in misery half the night after, and often reinstating them and the nest in their original place the next morning. He could scarcely bear to see trees cut down or lopped, from a fancy that it hurt them.(Hardy *Jude* 9)

Jude is a foil to Farmer Troutham and other children due to his protective tendencies towards nonhuman living things. While Troutham smashes the worms in a casual matter, Jude sees that very disheartening and carefully avoids hurting them. In the same situation, while other children bring home nests and find much pleasure in the birds and/or eggs inside, when Jude brings home a nest it becomes a source of torture for him prompting him to return it to its original location the following day. This, coupled with the fact that he does not like to see trees felled for fear that they might harm birds, make Jude a kind of bird advocate in Hardy's texts and go a long way to indicate Hardy's view that man should live in perfect harmony with other living things.

Like Jude, Giles is inseparable from nature as "He seemed to be accustomed to the noises of woodpeckers squirrels and such small creatures he took no notice of her tiny signal [...]"(Hardy *Woodlanders* 270). This is reminiscent of Dennis in Asong's *No Way to Die* who is so attached to the natural elements in his surrounding that he finds it very difficult to leave his village Mbongo. Dennis says of the morning he is leaving Mbongo to Menako:

Driving out of there was like pulling a fish out of water. The sight of the giant mahoganies and irokos, of bamboo huts, of skeletal dogs and sickly-looking children; the stench of uncovered latrine, of pigs, dead and alive, the endless croaking of frogs under the stones that supported my crumbling house. All these had become the very arteries through which my lifeblood flowed. [...] Every inch away seemed to give me the feeling of a sharp knife cutting into and severing the umbilical cord of my very existence. (Asong 93-94)

This view of man living in harmony with nature is stretched further when an image is painted in which man surrenders his residential area to other living things for their betterment. In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, the rooms in which many infants had cried during their nursing is now occupied by nascent chicks. Equally, "Distracted hens in coops occupied spots where formerly stood chairs supporting sedate agriculturists. The chimney-corner and once-blazing hearth was now filled with inverted beehives, in which the hens laid their eggs; while out of doors the plots that each succeeding householder had carefully shaped with his spade were torn by the cocks in wildest fashion" (Hardy *Tess* 68). This is indicative of the great attention Hardy gives these living things and is reminiscent of his desire to see it protected; and it becomes even more credible when we consider his love for animals as a person. Right from childhood, Hardy demonstrated an attachment to animals as Millgate states that "Hardy is said to have made water colour drawings of animals for Mrs. Martin at the age of 9 or 10, but most of his surviving sketches are of architectural or topographical subjects"(65). Similarly, Bloom says: "In addition, Hardy had a great love for animals and his writings repeatedly demonstrate his concern for their suffering"(19). This concern makes Hardy propose a connection between man and nature in which they can all be victims or victors of all societal realities; and

so there is need for them to live in Harmony. An example of a perfect link between human beings and animals occurs when Fanny Robin stumbles in the night, falls down and loses consciousness. Then;

From the stripe of shadow on the opposite side of the bridge a portion of shade seemed to detach itself and move into isolation upon the pale white of the road. It glided noiselessly towards the recumbent woman. She became conscious of something touching her hand; it was softness and it was warmth. She opened her eyes, and the substance touched her face. A dog was licking her cheek...The animal, who was as homeless as she, respectfully withdrew a step or two when the woman moved, and, seeing that she did not repulse him, he licked her hand again (Hardy *Far* 317).

Another way through which Achebe and Hardy valorize nature is by showing its abundance; thereby reflecting what nature will look like without man harming it. In Umuofia, the crier is always charged with the responsibility of transmitting information about any key issue to all the villages. He is a man whose voice and instruments are loud enough to be heard by all each time he announces something. But there is a night when the sounds from the insects in the nearby bushes are so loud that they over shadow the crier's voice. The narrator says "[...] the crier's voice was gradually swallowed up in the distance, silence returned to the world, a vibrant silence made more intense by the universal trill of a million forest insects"(Achebe *Things* 7). The hyperbole involved in the description of insects is an indication of the narrator's desire to see man live in harmony with those creatures so that they too can blossom.

The blossoming of nature is also brought out in Hardy's works with reference to the rejuvenation of nature associated with spring which seems to have a bearing on Tess's actions. When Tess is jobless, she contacts everybody she knows to tell them that she is looking for a job and they should let her know if they find something. She waits for long until:

A particularly fine spring came round, and the stir of germination was almost audible in the buds; it moved her, as it moved the wild animals, and made her passionate to go. At last, one day in early May, a letter reached her from a former friend of her mother's, to whom she had addressed inquiries long before[...]that the dairyman would be glad to have her for the summer months.(Hardy *Tess* 126)

This indicates that the blossoming of nature and those of man are parallel and symbolize the fact that when man makes nature better, he himself becomes better because their lots are intertwined.

Achebe and Hardy converge in their valorizations of the fauna despite the fact that they do it, in some cases, differently owing to their varying cultural backgrounds. Achebe valorizes nature by making it sacred and giving it divine attributes making it man's duty to respect and protect it and also an abomination for him to harm or kill it. This is how he presents the royal and sacred python in the Igbo community. Unlike Achebe, Hardy does not idolize nature but presents instances wherein man protects nonhuman creatures without any human or divine benefits. Jude epitomizes this dimension. The two authors, however, are similar in the way they show nature's abundance especially when man does not harm

it. All these indicate that the authors valorize nature, show its worth and the steps taken by man to protect it.

Conclusion

In their representation of man's relationship with the fauna, Achebe and Hardy project instances in which man kills animals such as goats and fowls for consumption or as marriage rites. Achebe adds situations where nonhuman creatures are killed for sacrifices to the gods, for cleansing the land and as entertainment; while Hardy injects circumstances where they are killed due to man's negligence. From an ethical perspective, some of these killings are justifiable when man does so for consumption or for his existential needs provided they are moderate and sustainable; while the unnecessary and disproportionate killings need to be controlled. Furthermore, both authors highlight instances where man maltreats animals specifically horses and oxen by using them for transporting humans and goods under difficult conditions. By depicting the pathetic conditions of these transport animals, both authors sensitize against man's subjection of these animals to such difficult conditions. Finally, Achebe and Hardy converge in their valorizations and protection of the fauna although they do so differently in certain circumstances due to their varying cultural backgrounds. Achebe's valorization of nature is epitomized in the fact that he presents the python as sacred and royal, making it an obligation for man to respect and protect it; and at the same time a sacrilege for man to harm or kill it. On his part, Hardy constructs the character Jude to be the torchbearer of his nature protection vision as Jude takes steps to protect animals with no anthropocentric considerations. Both authors crown this by showing the beauty and abundance of nature when man does not harm it. This is the ecologically protective discourse Achebe and Hardy share in their views of man and the fauna. Therefore, while both authors share a fauna protection ecological vision, they project them in different ways and for varying motifs at times. Consequently, debates on ecological issues, and faunal narratives in particular, should consider the varying ecological and cultural realities; since all environments are not exposed to the same ecological issues and consequently do not express them in the same manner.

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