

AN ECOFEMINIST PERSPECTIVE ON SPACE IN *LOLLY WILLOWES OR THE  
LOVING HUNTSMAN* BY SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER AND *HAPPINESS*  
BY AMINATTA FORNA

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WARNER AND *HAPPINESS* BY AMINATTA FORNA**

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## ABSTRACT

AN ECOFEMINIST PERSPECTIVE ON SPACE IN *LOLLY WILLOWES OR THE  
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The conventional logic, which produces hierarchical dualisms, has long been an influential perspective on life. It is possible to see the impact of dualisms in every aspect of the modern world. The ways in which spaces are designed and the regulations about how one can interact with the space are one manifestation of the influence of dualisms on our lives. Binary thinking especially restricts the subordinated parties' (e.g., women and non-humans) experience of space. It is possible to see the representations of these restrictions in literary texts. Hence, this study aims to produce a comparative analysis of *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* (1926) by Sylvia Townsend Warner and *Happiness* (2018) by Aminatta Forna through the lens of critical ecofeminism in order to explore how the effects of dualisms might be observed in these two novels, written about 90 years apart. Even though these works have previously been studied through a similar lens, they have not been examined comparatively or through a critical perspective focusing on the dualistic mentality remaining in ecofeminist approaches. The study concludes that even though dualisms change and evolve in time, their impact on especially women and nature continues; and, yet, as these novels attest to it, the ecofeminist problematization of these dualisms continues as well.

**Keywords:** *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman*, *Happiness*, Critical  
Ecofeminism, Space, Val Plumwood

## ÖZ

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER'IN *LOLLY WILLOWES OR THE LOVING HUNTSMAN* VE AMINATTA FORNA'NIN *HAPPINESS* ADLI ESERLERİNDE MEKANA EKOFEMİNİST BİR BAKIŞ

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Hiyerarşik düalizmler üreten geleneksel mantık, uzun zamandır hayata dair görüşler üzerinde etkili bir bakış açısı olmuştur. Düalizmlerin etkisini modern dünyanın her alanında görmek mümkündür. Mekânların tasarlanma biçimleri ve mekânla nasıl etkileşim kurulabileceğine dair düzenlemeler de, düalizmlerin hayatlarımız üzerindeki etkisini gösterir. Düalist düşünce özellikle kadınlar ve insan olmayanlar gibi tahakküm altına alınan grupların mekân deneyimlerini kısıtlar. Edebi metinlerde bu kısıtlamaların temsillerini görmek mümkündür. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma Sylvia Townsend *Warner'in Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* (1926) ve Aminatta Forna'nın *Happiness* (2018) romanlarını eleştirel ekofeminizm merceğinden karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemeyi ve yaklaşık 90 yıl arayla yazılmış bu iki romanda düalizmlerin etkilerinin nasıl gözlemlenebileceğini araştırmayı amaçlar. Bu eserler daha önce benzer bakış açılarıyla incelenmiş olsa da, karşılaştırmalı olarak veya ekofeminist çerçevede etkisini sürdüren dualist düşünceye odaklanan eleştirel bir bakış açısıyla incelenmemiştir. Bu çalışma, düalizmlerin zaman içinde değişip evrilmesine rağmen, özellikle kadınlar ve doğa üzerindeki etkilerinin devam ettiği; ancak bu romanların da gösterdiği gibi, ekofeminizmin bu düalizmleri sorunsallaştırmaya da devam ettiği sonucuna varır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman*, *Happiness*, Eleştirel Ekofeminizm, Mekan, Val Plumwood



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsmen* (1926) by Sylvia Townsend Warner and *Happiness* (2018) by Aminatta Forna in the light of critical ecofeminism and space theories on ecological and gendered aspects of space such as bioregionalism and eco-cosmopolitanism. To study these two novels together can shed light upon the differences regarding the ways in which aspects of gender and environment are treated in fiction written about ninety years apart. It will be argued that while some ideas about home, city, nature and gender have changed in time, the main structure, that is the dualisms of conventional logic such as man/woman and human/nature beneath those ideas remains intact. This comparative study of *Lolly Willowes* and *Happiness* aims to reveal that although there is a major time difference between the two novels, they both show how binary dualisms maintain their major impact on women's and nonhumans' interaction with space and processes of space creation, albeit in changing ways according to the eras in which the novels were written. In addition, it will be argued that major women characters in both novels act and think in ways in which they destabilize the conventional dualistic mindset.

*Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsmen*, which is Warner's debut novel, is about an old maiden/a witch, who, after forty years of being a daughter, a sister and then an aunt, retires into nature. She then starts to build her own life and creates connections with her environment as a whole, including people, animals and the inanimate material world; yet, this state of blissful existence is interrupted when Lolly's old life and the outer world of oppression intrude into her new life. In a 1986 introduction to a collection of Warner's novels, *The New Yorker* magazine's fiction editor William Maxwell states that "[t]he habit of looking at things carefully was perhaps acquired, perhaps ingrained. Her descriptions have the exactness of a Chinese ink drawing. Her extraordinary fancy existed side by side with and never distorted her profound understanding of human and animal behavior" (XV). He also reports "'if I were

reincarnated,' she [Warner] added, 'I think I would like to be a landscape painter'" (XV). Her interest in the material environment with everything it encompasses gives way to an ecofeminist understanding. *Lolly Willowes* draws a picture of a world of equality and connection between all living beings and also the nature that surrounds them. Yet this blissful order of the Great Mop, Lolly's address of retirement, is disrupted by the outer world with its hierarchies and ways of interacting.

Surprisingly, the critical literature on *Lolly Willowes*, a modernist text published almost a hundred years ago, remains limited. This is intriguing considering the fact that Warner gained acknowledgement and success in her lifetime. In fact, *Lolly Willowes* was left out of literary history and canon soon after it was published until it was rediscovered in 1978 as a part of a feminist revival (Marcus 531). Marcus attributes *Lolly Willowes*'s neglect to two factors. The first one is, she claims, "literary historians of the 1930s have largely left women out of Left history;" and, the second reason is that "in the age of metropolitan modernism, Warner politicizes the pastoral" (533), meaning that in a period when urban and modernist themes are prevalent, Warner uses the pastoral, a theme traditionally associated with rural life, to engage with political issues especially in terms of woman's position. These two points Marcus identifies have significant implications for this study since the writer and her text faced injustices that are rooted in the dualisms of man/woman and culture/nature. The studies on *Lolly Willowes* generally revolve around the terms "pastoral" and "rural," both due to the theme of the novel and the aforementioned metropolitanism of the modernist period; yet, there are also a number of studies on the novel from feminist and queer perspectives. The association of modernism with metropolitanism might be a direct result of the fact that after witnessing a rapid transformation process during the Victorian Era, the modernist period is the beginning of the reactions towards a fully formed urban life and metropolitan experience. Another reason for the importance of the discussions of the pastoral and the rural in the text is the idea of "Englishness" and its connection to the rural. As David Matless maintains, "in England, landscape preservation, in seeking to protect, and to project, the countryside as symbolic of national identity, itself enacts and generates definitions of Englishness" (179). In the period when the novel was published, the rural and the pastoral became symbols for patriotism and nationalism. In relation to that, Harriet Baker indicates that Warner's

“novels correspondingly present a detailed rejection of normative masculinist approaches to landscape, espousing instead an alternative ruralism built upon feminist and queer identity” (51). This claim brings us closer to an ecofeminist perspective that also takes space into account since it highlights that approaches to landscape are indeed gendered. Regarding the connections between gender, ecology and space, Jane Feather comments on Warner’s “Woman As Writers” lecture, in which Warner defines women and working-class writers as the ones who “enter the literature by pantry window” (384). According to Feather, this statement also includes a reference to the pastoral since while upper class men cannot interact with the real world from their “study” or “drawing room,” women and working classes are the ones who are in the “untidy ‘landscape’” (3). Additionally, Jennifer Poulos Nesbitt gives an account of *Lolly Willowes* by adapting a feminist geopolitical perspective. According to Nesbitt, “Warner demonstrates both the geopolitics and the gendering of ‘hereness’” in *Lolly Willowes* (455). All these studies provide a valuable starting point for further studies of the novel. They scrutinise the gendered structure of landscape and space and the meaning of this gendering process; all the same, these studies can be expanded if the novel is explored from an ecofeminist perspective, which helps see better the novel’s gendering of the landscape and its emphasis on the spatiality of gender, both of which contribute to deconstructing the binary oppositions that oppress both women and nature.

*Happiness* by Aminatta Forna (1964-) is a contemporary novel published in 2018. Aminatta Forna is a writer of Sierra Leonean and Scottish origins. It might be said that her own heritage that consists of different cultures is mirrored in her ability to construct bridges between various cultures. In her novels such as *The Memory of Love* (2010), *Ancestor Stones* (2006) and *The Hired Man* (2013), she includes characters with different backgrounds and creates channels of communication between these characters. Through their encounters, characters achieve a more contented way of existing on earth. Hence, not only cultures but also characters are bridged individually. The same bridging is also observed in *Happiness*. The novel features a number of characters from different backgrounds. The narrative consists of multiple stories that intermingle with one other. One of the protagonists, Jean, is an American “urban wildlife biologist,” who comes to London in order to track urban foxes. Jean also has

a side job which is to create “wild spaces” in urban buildings in places such as balconies and terraces. Both the thematic concerns and narrative structure of the novel challenge the hierarchies that create and get created by binary oppositions. The novel does not merely exhibit how environmental and gender-based hierarchies function, but also actively challenges them, especially through Jean’s occupation and the solidarity between the characters in London from different backgrounds. The problems encountered by the characters are resolved through cooperation with nature, animals and among human beings.

Although it is a relatively new novel, the scholarship on *Happiness* is not scarce. Trauma has a special place in Forna’s body of work, and as in *Happiness*, her earlier novels, too, deal with subject-matter such as loss and historical trauma. Forna has also published a memoir, *The Devil That Danced on the Water: A Daughter's Quest* (2002), in which she tells the story of her loss of her father. Hence, the critical literature on *Happiness* also focuses predominantly on trauma. While some studies just deal with the novel’s approach to trauma, Ankhi Mukherjee also thinks that Forna offers a way out of trauma in *Happiness* by using Ursula Heise’s term of eco-cosmopolitanism. Mukherjee’s perspective on the novel connects trauma studies and ecocritical perspectives. She thinks that in Forna’s novel, “culling of pests and feral animals, and the hounding of illegal immigrants are manifestations of the same phobia of alien invasion that structures ownership and entitlement in the global city” (417). Mukherjee draws attention to the novel’s foregrounding of the connection between hostility toward any so-called outsiders in the city and assumptions about ownership. Merve Sarıkaya-Şen adopts a similar approach to the novel. She claims that “*Happiness* represents the transformational process of suffering and/or psychological wounds through the reparative agency of interconnectedness among humans as well as between humans and animals” (1). She expands on the subject and furthers the argument of how building relationships both between humans and with other beings that humans co-exist with can benefit in the process of psychological healing. Similarly, Ernest Dominic Cole in his “Decentering anthropocentrism: human-animal relations in Aminatta Forna’s *Happiness*” focuses on how the novel’s “narrative positioning interrogates anthropocentrism by decentering humans and advocating for interconnectedness of the human and animal world” (2). While all these studies are

significant in the context of this study due to their ecological and anti-anthropocentric perspectives that challenge dualisms and hierarchical structures, a comprehensive ecofeminist study on the novel is yet to be conducted. Although there are some directly ecofeminist readings of the text,<sup>1</sup> as will be pointed out during the analysis of the novel later on, they fall into the trap of dualism while attempting to challenge it. In addition, representations of spatiality in the text, for instance, how the ideas of home, city and nature vary in meaning according to different species and genders, remain largely uncharted.

This study aims to uncover spatial façades of ecofeminism, that is, how space can be related to ecofeminist perspectives in *Lolly Willows* and *Happiness* in order to contribute to existing ecofeminist readings of the novels since space is in a constant cycle of interaction with its components in both texts. The creation process of space is also affected by the dualisms and hierarchies of the anthropocentric patriarchal structure of society. As Doreen Masey points out, “from the symbolic meaning of spaces/places and the clearly gendered messages which they transmit, to straightforward exclusion by violence, spaces and places are not only themselves gendered but, in their being so, they both reflect and affect the ways in which gender is constructed and understood” (179). This perspective can also be expanded to “earth others.” From houses to countries, spaces and places reflect, shape and are shaped by humans’ relation with other species.

In this study, *Lolly Willows* and *Happiness* will be studied together since they illustrate the ideas of ecofeminism and spatiality in literature in a way that both highlight the historical differences in these perspectives and the everlasting logical structure of hierarchal binaries in two seemingly opposite settings: the city and the country. Warner’s and Forna’s texts encompass both of these spaces to highlight the human being’s existence inseparable from their environment and the entangled structure of the human lives with every entity around them. To examine these two novels together, with ninety years of time gap in between, can throw some light on the question of how, in literature, understandings of women’s relationship with space and

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<sup>1</sup> See Shaddad, Lobna. "Where Euphoria Lies: Social Ecofeminism and the Paradox of Satisfaction in Aminatta Forna's *Happiness*." *The International Journal of Literary Humanities*, 21.2 (2023), 39-51.

human beings' relation and interaction with companion species in their shared spaces have changed in time. The two novels' contrasting treatment of space is especially open to exploration since while in *Lolly Willowes* Lolly retires into "nature" from London, in *Happiness* Jean observes the species that are considered wild in London and creates "wild spaces" in London buildings. Through a detailed examination of the novels, it is seen that while some ideas of space, ways of interacting with it and interactions of the entities in it have changed in time, the underlying structures and discourses of dualism and hierarchy remain intact, in need to be scrutinised and challenged.

In the following chapter of this study, first, a theoretical framework on ecofeminism, its history and branches will be provided. Additionally, discourses of anthropocene, patriarchy and the classical logic, to which ecofeminism responds will be explored. Then, critical ecofeminism and specifically Val Plumwood's concepts will be discussed since they will constitute the main strand of the methodology of this study. Secondly, a short introduction to the studies of space in literature will be provided and the possible intersections of ecofeminism and space theories will be tracked in the light of Dorwen Massey's perspective on gender and space, bioregionalism and eco-cosmopolitanism. Lastly, dichotomies such as feminine/masculine and culture/nature will be examined in engagement with theories of space.

In the third chapter, *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* will be examined in terms of gender, space and interactions with space in the light of ecofeminist approaches. Modernist perceptions of nature, gender and space will also be integrated into the discussion to achieve a better understanding of the context of the novel. Specifically in relation to gender, the novel's treatment of the dichotomy of the feminine and the masculine, its perception of being a single woman, the concept of witchcraft and gender roles assigned to men and women will be examined. In the discussion of space, the dichotomy of the city and the country, idea of home and separation from home and the absence of personal space apart from the domestic space will be examined. Lastly, the concept of building a retirement in nature, the differences between how female and male characters interact with space and the environment and the idea of cohabitation with other humans and species will be analysed.



In the fourth chapter, which will focus on *Happiness*, first, the contemporary perceptions of nature and gender will be discussed. Then, the ecofeminist perspective of the novel will be examined and the novel's deconstruction of certain gender roles will be traced. In terms of space, firstly, the idea of "natural" constructions in an urban area will be discussed. The novel's treatment of the city/nature dichotomy and its deconstruction will be analysed. Additionally, parallel to *Lolly Willowes*, the novel's approach to the idea of home will be explored. While examining the interactions between space and the environment, Jean's active role in dissolving dichotomies through her occupation and the ideas of cohabitation will be pointed out.

## CHAPTER 2

### CRITICAL ECOFEMINISM AND SPATIALITY

While anthropocentric and male-centric world views have long seen the world as the sphere of man, woman as an object that exists in this sphere, and nature as the Other that needs to be constantly challenged and dominated, more contemporary ideas concerning the relationship between human and nature and men and women problematise such tendencies by accepting the agencies of such entities as self-evidential. Though in changing ways, feminist philosophers have challenged this perspective from the outset. Additionally, ecocritical scholars have produced contrary ideas, favouring nature's position not only in relation to human beings but also as a separate entity, existing regardless of being beneficial to humanity. Therefore, ecofeminist theories should be regarded in the contexts they have emerged. To this end, while utilizing the older conventions and conservative ideas to provide a critical infrastructure, this study uses contemporary ecofeminist ideas as its theoretical framework. In order to analyse *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* by Sylvia Warner Townsend and *Happiness* by Aminatta Forna from within an ecofeminist perspective, I will first examine the conventional perspective of logic that constructed the system of thinking that ecofeminism has examined, discussed, and objected. Then, I will focus on the interrelations of ecofeminism and space theories.

#### 2.1 The Conventional Logic

*There is a good principle, which has created order, light and man; and a bad principle, which has created chaos, darkness, and woman* (qtd. in Beauvoir 114).

Before routing towards an ecofeminist perspective to discuss oppression, hierarchy and dualisms that lead to those, first, it is vital to examine the roots of these ideas. While it is difficult to pinpoint a beginning for the so-called conventional logic, it can best be observed in the writings of classical philosophers, humanist scholars and enlightenment thinkers such as Aristoteles, Plato, Thomas Aquinas, Descartes and Kant. Though it started as an inquiry to answer the question of the separations and

commonalities between body and mind, this thought system was eventually defined as a system of dualisms and hierarchies. The dualisms have evolved and increased in number according to the conditions of the current human era. Additionally, Judeo-Christian religions have also enhanced these dualisms. These dualisms can be exemplified as soul/body, men/women, culture/nature, civilized/barbarian etc. In these dualisms, the former one is always positioned as superior to the latter.

First, the philosophical texts in history that include and meditate upon the mentioned dualisms is to be examined to provide a holistic insight into the current state of the paradigm. In *Politics*, Aristotle openly positions the male human at the top of the hierarchy on earth and soul over the body. He states that

[a]t any rate, it is, as I say, in an animal that we can first observe both rule of a master and rule of a statesman. For the soul rules the body with the rule of a master, whereas understanding rules desire with the rule of a statesman or with the rule of a king. In these cases it is evident that it is natural and beneficial for the body to be ruled by the soul, and for the affective part to be ruled by understanding (the part that has reason), and that it would be harmful to everything if the reverse held, or if these elements were equal. The same applies in the case of human beings with respect to the other animals. For domestic animals are by nature better than wild ones, and it is better for all of them to be ruled by human beings, since this will secure their safety. Moreover, the relation of male to female is that of natural superior to natural inferior, and that of ruler to ruled. (8)

Aristotle does not merely offer these dualisms but also deems them “natural”. As Marilyn Frye indicates, the power of dualisms partly stems from the belief that they are the “natural” and the only “reasonable” way to perceive things (34). While Plato sometimes seems to depart from Aristotle in terms of woman’s position, he also favours culture over nature in the culture/nature dualism. In *Phaedrus*, by quoting Socrates, Plato writes “country places with their trees tend to have nothing to teach me, whereas people in town do” (7). Plato’s statement carries a departure from nature when it comes to learning which is considered a mental exercise, hence, the reason/nature dualism is also fortified in Plato’s philosophy. Moreover, as Chandrakala Palia highlights, according to Plato, the only way for women to achieve equality is to repress the qualities that are attributed to the feminine, such as “passion, emotion and intuition and even her relation to reproduction” (27).

Humanist thought of the Renaissance, considering the Neo-Platonism of the era, unavoidably carries parallelisms with the classical era. Helen Wilcox states for the Renaissance that

[i]n law, women had no status whatsoever but were only daughters, wives or widows of men; according to the church they were to be silent and listen to the advice of husbands or pastors; in religious and cultural patterns of thought, they were daughters of Eve with a continuing proneness to temptation and a disproportionate burden of guilt. (4)

This shows that, as historian Joan Kelly indicates, women did not have a Renaissance (19), which means that women were left out of the developments that freed men from the oppressions of previous historical eras. Moreover, the rediscovered ideals of the classical era further enhanced the constraints upon women. While the Renaissance seemingly supported the education of women alongside men, the education's aim for the two sexes was completely different. The aim of woman's education was "becoming above all else, whereby she will be able to entertain graciously every kind of man" (207); in other words, women's education was also an instrument serving men.

René Descartes, who is known as the father of modern philosophy is the founder of Cartesian thinking. Cartesianism is a perspective that promotes radical dualism of mind or soul and body. According to Descartes, while the mind is the immortal entity that is pure substance which ensures rationalism, the body is merely biological with only the mechanical or physiological functions. Moreover, the mind or soul can survive even if it is separated from the body (Moriarty xxxiii), meaning that in Descartes's philosophy mind is ontologically and epistemologically superior to body. Though Descartes's dualism only focuses on the relation between subject and object and mind and body, Plumwood states that "a philosopher's explicit focus on particular dualisms is often deceptive, for the gendered character of the dualisms for example may lurk in the background in unexamined and concealed form, as much feminist philosophy exposing phallogentrism has shown" (38). While Descartes himself does not extend his dualism to ideas of masculinity and femininity, his complete separation of the sphere of necessity from the sphere of ideas affected modern philosophy deeply in terms of other dualisms.

Remarkably, towards the Enlightenment, one of the strong influencers of the

Enlightenment, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, did not depart from the essentialist views of his precedents. His famous phrase, “[h]ell is other people” (45), does not apply to women. According to Rousseau, “‘What will people think’ is the grave of a man’s virtue and the throne of a woman’s” (346). Rousseau claims that women must be the embodiment of virtue due to their role of reproduction and should not be as free as men in their movement on earth. Another enlightenment philosopher who deeply influenced modern philosophy hence, the way modern men think is Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. He, too, is explicit in his divisive views on men and women and the hierarchy between the two:

Women may have happy inspirations, taste, elegance, but they have not the ideal. The difference between man and woman is the same as that between animal and plant. The animal corresponds more closely to the character of the man, the plant to that of the woman. In woman there is a more peaceful unfolding of nature, a process, whose principle is the less clearly determined unity of feeling. If women were to control the government, the state would be in danger, for they do not act according to the dictates of universality, but are influenced by accidental inclinations and opinions. (144)

As some of his other fellow philosophers, Hegel positions women on the side of inspiration while positioning men on the side of reason, and attributes superiority to men. Additionally, it can be seen that this dualism of men/women also entails hierarchical oppositions drawn between ideal and inspiration, or animals and plants.

As can be observed in the ideas of philosophers from ancient eras to the Enlightenment which carry great reflections on the perspectives of the modern world, dualisms have not only been present but also influential. While women, nature and emotions have been placed on the inferior side of the dualism, men, culture and reason are placed on the superior side. Additionally, the sets of entities that exist on the same sides get connected to each other through the mapping techniques of various philosophers.

In time, these dualisms started to occupy so grand a space in our epistemological schemas that a widely referenced writer, Herbert Read stated that “the history of modern philosophy is a history of the development of Cartesianism in its dual aspect of idealism and mechanism” (70). While providing a description for the classical logic

which is used in its primary form in mathematics, John P. Burgess states that “[i]n mathematics the facts never were and never will be, nor could they have been, other than as they are” (1). With that very fundamental definition of classical logic, it is possible to start seeing the problems that may arise from its usage in the humanities. Classical logic assigns a set roles and intrinsic qualities to the entities it defines and builds arbitrary yet influential hierarchical relationalities.

Yet, while classical logic and its rules are deeply influential in every era of life, there have also always been scholars that criticise and challenge that perspective, especially feminists, post-humanists and ecocritics. The common point among the perspectives of these scholars is that they all push the male human out of the centre. For instance, Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), a protofeminist, challenges Rousseau’s binary justifications and states that both for men and women a public image is “[a] sentiment that often exists unsupported by virtue, unsupported by that sublime morality which makes the habitual breach of one duty a breach of the whole moral law” (169). Though, considering the time, challenging the dualism directly is an unthinkable concept yet, Wollstonecraft regards the subject from a more holistic standpoint instead of commenting according to gender. Additionally, Wollstonecraft also detects how women are animalised by the male perspective and their “instincts” which come from their animality are denied to them as a guide since the reason is the superior pathfinder (71). Later, feminist scholars adopted the post-structuralist method of deconstruction while challenging dualisms. Poststructuralist feminists have denied a pre-determined gender identity that has set meanings and attributions. Judith Butler, for instance, resolved that gender is performative, meaning that it actually does not exist but is socially constructed through actions that are related to certain ideas of gender. Though this perspective indeed abolishes the dualisms, it has caused some concerns since this perspective may cause the historical injustices that are based on gender to be ignored and harm the feminist movement. As Birkeland states, “[a] gender-blind prism hides problems centering on power, dominance, and masculinity” (26).

Both posthumanist and ecocritical scholars have challenged androcentrism, yet it might be said that they focus more on the species and environment rather than gender. From a postanthropocentric view, Mads Rosendhal Thomsen and Jacob Wamberg define posthumanism as “a break with a pervasive, if often unacknowledged,

assumption: that humanity is somehow separate from the rest of the universe and constitutes a center for orientation” (1). This definition focuses on the aspect of posthumanism that aims to decenter the human. In a similar vein of thought, Greg Garrard states that “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). While it is commonly accepted that (male) human dominance should be challenged, ecocriticism also highlights the connections between all beings on earth.

Though it is difficult to detect if patriarchy and Anthropocentrism have created the conventional logic or the conventional logic has created patriarchy and anthropocentrism, it is safe to state that the conventional logic, Anthropocentrism and patriarchy are in a constant cycle of nourishing each other. Patriarchy is defined with a perspective that puts the male human at the centre of the network of beings and defines women only in relation to men since men are the side of the dualism that is related to so-called positive characteristics. While the male is the reference point, the female is the other, hence, the dominated. While the male is the definer, the female is the defined. Birkeland explains patriarchal cultures as cultures in which the “reality is divided according to gender, and a higher value is placed on those attributes associated with masculinity” (18). So, everything in the design of reality is bound to that hierarchical dualism and the arbitrary placement of characteristics (such as masculine and feminine) in that dualism. Likewise, Anthropocentrism is the perspective that places the human at the centre among all the other beings. Anthropocentrism sees the human as the master of all beings and measures the value of the environment and its components according to their benefits to humanity. This perspective, as a consequence, has brought many troubles and drawn attention to itself since, in return, humanity has also been affected by environmental disasters. In this sense, it may be seen how patriarchy and anthropocentrism are related to each other and how they build the current world order together. There is a direct connection between patriarchy and Anthropocentrism. It sees the human male as the master of all the other beings. These perspectives centralise the human male, and everything else is seen as subordinates in the universe, which leads to androcentrism. As many feminist thinkers have argued, the relationship between the oppression of women and nature is not the result of a

singular body of thought, but is a direct consequence of a singular paradigm which is androcentrism. So, it is resolved by feminist scholars that a feminist way of thinking requires questioning not only gender-related problems nor an ecological way of thinking is related only to the environmental problems; they both need to question the foundational assumptions that have created the current hierarchy of beings and modes of thinking. Marti Kheel highlights that “what is needed is a reweaving of all the old stories and narratives into a multifaceted tapestry” (Kheel 272). Customary perspectives must be rethought, and narratives must be reconsidered in order to achieve a perspective which is far more egalitarian. This new way of thinking is named “feminist logic” by Val Plumwood in *Representing Reason, Feminist Theory and Formal Logic* (2002).

## **2.2 Ecofeminism**

The conventional logic is often used as a tool for oppression with its hierarchy-creating structures. As a consequence, some feminists, such as Andrea Nay, tend to completely reject the idea of logic. Nay proposes that even though there are different kinds of logic, “what is impossible is a feminist approach towards it since logic is an invention of men, that it is something that men do and say” (5). She claims that “In my view, there is no one Logic for which such a theory can account, but only men and logics, and the substance of these logics, as of any written or spoken language, are material and historically specific relations between men, between men and women, and between them and objects of human concern” (5). Yet Plumwood, though agreeing with the problematic use of reason and logic as a tool to achieve domination, points out that to accept that logic is completely anti-feminist or that it cannot be just or unitary, and not addressing the problematic assumptions it is built upon prevent us from creating alternative modes of thought (15). Plumwood maintains that there is no one Logic but many Logics, and some of them are even contradictory in themselves. Hence, to deny that is to assume that Logic is monolithic. Once the plurality of Logic is acknowledged, it can be seen how Logic is actually not neutral, hence, the acceptances that cause the hierarchies among humans and between humans and the non-human entities on earth might be challenged effectively. Plumwood states that “if theories of negation and of otherness are seen as linked to forms of rationality, this critique of dominant logics can be seen as extending and supporting the feminist and



postmodernist critique of the phallocentrism of dominant forms of rationality” (18).

Yet she also points out that

a broader concept than phallocentrism is needed because many of the key areas of exclusion are associated not only with women but with other subordinated groups such as slaves, the colonized, and with subordinated economic classes. Thus the exclusions of reason as conceived in the dominant traditions of Western thought express not a male but a master identity, and the ideology of the domination of nature by reason has been common to various forms of oppression. (19)

A broad and detailed criticism of the exclusion of the ones who do not have the “master” identity is needed; and, this is the way a feminist logic can be achieved. Ecofeminism, in the context of this study, can be the answer of this need with its structure that does not merely target phallocentricism but also all forms of hierarchy and foundations that construct and support these ideas of dominance. The aimed feminist logic can be accepted as the logic of ecofeminism.

Being a complex whole of ideas on woman, nature and their commonalities in terms of oppression, ecofeminism has been a focal point of discussions since Francoise D’eaubonne first coined the term in 1974 with a reference to previous feminist movements and critics that point out the “ecological content inherent in feminism” (D’eaubonne 154). Due to its controversial and also polyphonic structure, ecofeminism has several definitions rooted in various perspectives. For instance, cultural ecofeminists such as Charlene Spretnak attribute an inherent connection to woman and nature since the cycles of nature also occur in the female body such as the menstrual cycle, and biological women are capable of producing life in their bodies. Susan Griffin, a pioneer ecofeminist, states that “[w]e [women] know ourselves to be made from this earth. We know this earth is made from our bodies. For we see ourselves. And we are nature. We are nature seeing nature. We are nature with a concept of nature. Nature weeping. Nature speaking of nature to nature” (226). According to Griffin, women are nature itself due to their characteristics. This way of conceiving the connection between woman and nature also leads to spiritual feminism, which celebrates the characteristics that are accepted as “feminine” and claims that the earth, i.e., Gaia, is feminine. For some spiritual feminists, the earth is a goddess. According to spiritual feminists, the source of male oppression is men’s fear of what

is unknown to them, which reveals itself both in the oppression of nature and woman. Today, ecofeminists take a less essentialist route. The very scholars who have created spiritual ecofeminism also rerouted their ecofeminism after the criticisms regarding its essentialism. One of the most rigid critics of ecofeminism is Janet Biehl, who criticises ecofeminism from several points. She points out that ecofeminism recognises an intrinsic connection between woman and nature, which in a way recognises the essentialist perspectives on both woman and nature; and it glorifies what Biehl deems “irrational,” the glorification of the early neolithic, myths and worship (2). Janet Biehl’s criticism has been extensively answered later on, and it is highlighted how Biehl avoids more “rational” accounts of ecofeminism in studies such as “Ecofeminism Revisited” by Greta Gaard; yet, still, Biehl’s influence had been so grand for a while that the term ecofeminism was avoided, and different terms were preferred to express the ideas that are close to ecofeminism such as ecological feminism or feminist environmentalism (Gaard 27). Nevertheless, this study prefers the term ecofeminism since it is the source of all the ideas on the subject and the criticism of the shortcomings of the early studies should not refute the perspective itself.

On the other hand, the criticism of some of the ideas in the field is necessary. Firstly, attributing an intrinsic connection between woman and nature reproduces the dualistic and hierarchical structures of androcentrism. Secondly, woman’s activism on environmental issues is celebrated and encouraged by some ecofeminist scholars (Ynestra King, Vandana Shiva, Ariel Salleh and Maria Mies). Though women’s contributions to environmental movements are valuable, to foreground women as the saviours of the environment again restricts women to a traditional role and burdens them with the responsibility of keeping the world in a proper condition. Additionally, it again assigns to women the characteristics of the “feminine” side of the chart of dualisms, such as compassion and empathy. As Plumwood explains

[a] popular contemporary green version attributes to women a range of different but related virtues, those of empathy, nurturance, cooperativeness and connectedness to others and to nature, and usually finds the basis for these also in women’s reproductive capacity. It replaces the ‘angel in the house’ version of women by the ‘angel in the ecosystem’ version. (“Mastery” 20)

To accept these adjectives can cause to reproduce earlier patriarchal imputation under a new framework. “An uncritical celebration of women’s nurturance or passivity is not compatible with equality” (Plumwood “Ecofeminism” 49). Critical ecofeminism acknowledges the problems of a gynocentric ecofeminism; nevertheless, it also recognises and restores the significance of previous feminists and ecofeminists’ contributions with solidarity (Plumwood 49). These criticisms of the field have enabled ecofeminism to form a more comprehensive and investigative structure, leading the way to critical ecofeminism. According to Plumwood, critical ecofeminism, as a political movement, would stand for women’s willingness to advance in their relationship with nature beyond passive inclusion in it and their reaction against past cultural exclusion. It would represent an active, deliberate, and reflective positioning of women with nature against a damaging and dualizing form of culture (“Mastery” 42). Hence, critical ecofeminism still stands with nature, as ecofeminism itself, yet this is a solidarity against destructive logic rather than an intrinsic connection. Indeed, critical ecofeminism is not a sharp departure from previous feminisms but a construction that is built upon them.

Critical ecofeminism, as its name reveals, not only analyses “the connections—historical, empirical, conceptual, theoretical, symbolic, and experiential— between the domination of women and the domination of nature” (Carr 16) but also aims to unravel the roots of the ideas of the domination logic entirely. Additionally, critical ecofeminism “address[es] intersections of race, nation, gender, and species” (Gaard “Introduction” XVI) since injustices based on them are sourced in the same perspectives. According to Plumwood, critics such as Greta Gaard, Val Plumwood and Janis Birkeland might be categorised as critical ecofeminists. Especially, Plumwood’s works such as *Feminism and Mastery of Nature*, “Gender, Ecofeminism, and the Environment,” *The Ecological Crisis of Reason*, “The Politics of Reason: Toward a Feminist Logic” theorise critical ecofeminism extensively.

### **2.3 Critical Ecofeminism**

The basis for all ecofeminisms is expressed and widely used by ecofeminist scholars in Karen Warren’s statement that “ecological feminists (“ecofeminists”) claim that there are important connections between the unjustified dominations of women, people

of color, children, and the poor and the unjustified domination of nature” (1). Critical ecofeminism especially focuses on the logic of domination alongside the interconnections of various oppressions resting on that logic. Both in the context of that logic and ecofeminism, hierarchical dualisms emerge as important aspects, so it is valuable to understand what dualism is and what the said dualisms are. Plumwood states that “dualism can be seen [as an] alienated form of differentiation” (“Mastery” 42), meaning that sides of dualisms are not only different but also strange to each other. At that point, Plumwood highlights the difference between dualism, dichotomy and even hierarchy since “in dualistic construction, as in hierarchy, the qualities (actual or supposed), the culture, the values and the areas of life associated with the dualised other are systematically and pervasively constructed and depicted as inferior” (“Mastery” 47). Yet, while in the hierarchy the power structures might change in certain situations, dualism’s structure that builds and attributes arbitrary or actual characteristics prevents a shift in dynamics. And, this process not only convinces the dominator of its power, but also the dominated of its powerlessness. As a consequence, any change in the perspectives of the sides of the dualism becomes impossible, even inconceivable.

These dualisms are, though not limited to, culture/nature, reason/nature, male/female, mind/body, and master/slave. It is possible to see that in all these dualisms, nature and what is related to nature are always positioned on the inferior side. The dualism of reason/nature has a key role in the system. Plumwood explains that this radical separation between reason and nature lies at the roots of Western culture and while every superior perceived concept is seen as a part of the realm of reason, everything below that reason belongs to the realm of nature, in other words, irrationality and inferiority. According to Plumwood, every other dualism is a gendered form of the reason/nature dualism in terms of the conception of power even though it might not seem so at first glance. (“Mastery” 45). The sphere of reason and its connotations create a master identity which rules over those who belong to the realm of nature. The power of the master is rooted in the characteristics that are attributed to him, which also constitute the characteristics that the ones in the realm of nature are excluded from. In dualisms, while the attributions to the superior side of a dualism are important, the characteristics that are not assigned to the other side are equally so.

Plumwood defines the characteristics of dualisms as backgrounding (denial), radical exclusion (hyperseparation), incorporation (relational definition), instrumentalism (objectification) and homogenisation or stereotyping (48-50). These characteristics might also be seen as the strategies that ensure the power of the dualisms to remain perpetual. Backgrounding, or denial, places the non-male, and/or non-human to the background of the existence of the master. While the owner of the master identity lives, achieves and affects, the others exist as non-agent beings. As Frye explains “women’s existence is a background against which phallocratic reality is a foreground” (167). This is also accurate for non-human beings in the scheme of dualisms. In addition to this backgrounding, this perspective also denies an interdependency among the master and the others. The master is all capable and does not depend on the others in any way. As Birkeland states, “this model of Man in Western thought has been described as a ‘mushroom’; he springs from nowhere as an adult male, with neither mother, nor sister, nor wife” (24). And in this context, without an environment, either. This master identity exists on earth without any connections that they absolutely depend on to live. Plumwood explains this feature of dualisms as follows:

[a] dualism... should be understood as a particular way of dividing the world which results from a certain kind of denied dependency on a subordinated other. This relationship of denied dependency determines a certain kind of logical structure, as one in which the denial and the relation of domination/subordination shapes the identity of both the relata. (“Towards” 19)

From the perspective of the master, any other logical structure is impossible to fathom. Hence, the dominant is always dominant and the subordinate is always subordinate in the schema. Dualisms are also informed by radical exclusion or hyperseparation since they construct not only difference but also a relation of inferiority/superiority; so, it is necessary for the sides of the dualism to not share any characteristics with each other. This might be observed in the attitudes towards woman, animals, and other races. As Birkeland suggests, “attributes defined as feminine (nurturing, caring, or accommodating) are seen as disadvantages, while those defined as masculine (competitive, dominating, or calculating) are encouraged. To be masculine, after all, is to dissociate oneself from ‘feminine’ attributes” (24). The superior side of the dualism cannot have any characteristics from the feminine side. Any possibility of commonality is strictly denied. A tendency towards feminine attributions is seen as a

disruption. Similarly, other races are feminised and animalised, that is to say, are pushed towards the other side of the dualism to achieve an idea of dominance upon them. This strategy is used to normalise the oppressions or even abuses towards the “inferiors”. Val Plumwood explains that by referring to slavery. The polarisation of the attributed qualities of the master (power, reason, agency) and the slave (animality, submission) provides a base for the claim of “slave by nature” (50). Indeed, freedom/nature is also an established dualism and masters are naturally free while the ones that are closer to nature intrinsically need to be dominated and tamed. Hence, slave-holding is nothing but a necessity of nature for both sides. Animals have also faced similar approaches. Though Darwin’s studies suggest the otherwise, the idea of strict separation from animals stayed almost unharmed in structures of thought. While his own studies are influential contributors to dualistic ideas, Sigmund Freud explains how men struggle in the face of information that shakes their rooted perspectives as follows:

The first was when it realized that our earth was not the centre of the universe, but only a tiny speck in a world-system of a magnitude hardly conceivable; this is associated in our minds with the name of Copernicus... The second was when biological research robbed man of his peculiar privilege of having been specially created, and relegated him to a descent from the animal world, implying an ineradicable animal nature in him: this transvaluation has been accomplished in our own time upon the instigation of Charles Darwin, Wallace, and their predecessors, and not without the most violent opposition from their contemporaries. But man's craving for grandiosity is now suffering the third and most bitter blow from present-day psychological research which is endeavouring to prove to the ‘ego’ of each one of us that he is not even master in his own house[.] (223)

Freud’s examination shows how, while even the scientific discoveries suggest otherwise, dualisms do not simply fade away. Yet still, the logical structure of hierarchical dualism presents the ideas that are refuted by science as natural facts.

Incorporation or relational definition is a close attitude to hyperseparation, yet with a nuance. While hyperseparation emphasises the difference between the sides of dualism, the masculine characteristics and the feminine characteristics, the relational definition sees every characteristic of the feminine side as a lack of masculine traits. For instance, emotion is a rupture from reason; reproduction is an inability to produce. This perspective is also rooted in the approach that accepts the sides of dualisms as

complements to each other, or more so, feminine traits as complements of the masculine side. Yet this should not be confused as a need of the masculine since, as stated earlier, dualism denies the need. Master denies the benefit of the other while benefitting from it. Memmi explains the concept of relational definition in the context of colonisation as follows:

The mechanism of this remoulding of the colonised...consists, in the first place, in a series of negations. The colonised is not this, is not that.... He is never considered in a positive light; or if he is, the quality which is conceded is the result of a psychological or ethical failing. (83-84)

Another example of this is that while masculine traits are seemingly considered positive, when a woman displays them, this is seen as a disgrace. One of the most telling examples of this situation can be seen in relation to witchcraft. In many historical contexts, a man's knowledge and wisdom are accepted as qualities that elevate him, yet women were long attacked for being witches when they were knowledgeable. Women who observed nature and produced home remedies for minor diseases were accused of witchcraft while men's production was considered science and celebrated. Stephanie Lahar states that "during the Burning Times of the witchhunts in Europe from 1300 to 1700, most of the priceless traditional knowledge about plants, healing, and folk medicine in the West died with thousands of women and men who were murdered precisely because they were the holders of this knowledge" (94). Yet statistics show that 80% of the accused witches were women (Scarre 25). While the exact motives behind the witch-hunts are still discussed, this shows the role that gender and gender-specific attributes played is significant. According to Plumwood, defining the self in relation to the other is a "special case of incorporation" that prevents the "other" to exist as a fully independent being. The other becomes merely a foil "which reflect[s] the master's desires, needs and lacks" (52). This situation, consequently, leads to instrumentalization or objectification. Instrumentalization rejects the needs of the dominated and perceives it as merely a tool for the master's needs and desires. This approach accepts woman as the provider of man's needs and nature as the provider of human needs. While the master has its own aims and ends, the dominated becomes a constant resource for the maintenance of the centre. Consequently, while the centre is regarded in a frame of moral considerations, the dominated is left outside of this circle of moral values as a mere tool (Plumwood

“Mastery” 53).

Lastly, an often encountered characteristic of binary thinking is homogenisation or stereotyping. The dominating class ignores the differences between the subordinated, both among the same species and the whole class of the dominated. For instance, while women are seen as unreasonable, hysterical creatures, they are also animalised since both groups lack the elevating qualities of masculinity. Gaard states that “one task of ecofeminists has been to expose these dualisms and the ways in which feminizing nature and naturalizing or animalizing women have served as justification for the domination of women, animals, and the earth” (5). The application of the same set of adjectives erases the differences between every entity in the dominated class. This perspective was previously explained by Edward Said in the context of Orientalism. He discusses how the mindset of the coloniser perceives the “Orient” as a monolithic geography, or even an idea of a geography that does not consist of different countries, humans or cultures but one identity of the “oriental” (15). All of these characteristics and/or strategies of dualism are in relation to each other and nourish each other. Structurally, binary oppositions assign characteristics to the dominated through already existing patterns of difference and magnify these differences as a tool to construct power dynamics.

Plumwood also offers escape routes from dualism. She states that it is necessary to find a way to integrate an idea of non-dualistic and non-hierarchical perception of difference without falling into the traps such as elimination of difference or reversal. This strategy of elimination denies any difference and aims to position all beings into the dominating side of the dualism. Hence, characteristics such as nature or emotion are denied. Reversal, on the other hand, celebrates the characteristics of the previously dominated side of the dualisms and aims to put them in the position of power yet this strategy does not challenge hierarchy but simply reproduces it. So, Plumwood offers “a system of thought, accounting, perception, decision-making, which recognise the contribution of what has been backgrounded, and which acknowledge dependency” (60) with a highlight on continuity rather than separation, which recognises the identities and needs of all beings, whether male or female, human or animal and respects them. In terms of animals, Plumwood proposes the perspective of ecological animalism. According to Plumwood, to deny the place of hunting in some cultures, or



to claim that a woman-led society would completely deny using animals again leads to exclusion and essentialism. Unlike ontological veganism which includes complete abstention from animal use, ecological animalism is a “context-sensitive semi-vegetarian position, which advocates great reductions in first-world meat-eating and opposes reductive and disrespectful conceptions and treatments of animals, especially as seen in factory farming” (“Ecofeminism” 53). Hence, it further subverts the dualism of human/animal by promoting mutual use in condition of equality and by highlighting respect, instead of placing the human outside of the sphere of nature. As Plumwood states, “Ecological Animalism supports and celebrates animals and encourages a dialogical ethics of sharing the world and negotiation or partnership between humans and animals, while undertaking a re-evaluation of human identity that affirms inclusion in animal and ecological spheres” (53).

There are many ways to approach ecofeminism since multiplicity is innate to it; nevertheless, its main argument stands as follows:

Ecofeminism is a movement that makes connections between environmentalisms and feminisms; more precisely, it articulates the theory that the ideologies that authorize injustices based on gender, race and class are related to the ideologies that sanction the exploitation and degradation of the environment. (Sturgeon 23)

As it builds connections between environmental and feminist positions, ecofeminism also stands against other injustices such as the ones that are rooted in the ideas of race and class. Consequently, it can be said that the fundamental aim of ecofeminism is to subvert the dualisms that produce these injustices.

Ecofeminism, since its advent, has also been used as a critical lens in literature to observe and criticise texts that are informed by structures of domination between humans and nature and man and woman alongside other binaries. While sometimes a hierarchical understanding of the relation between humans and nature or man and woman is explicit in the theme and structure of a text, sometimes it is the critical lens of feminism that uncovers the deeply ingrained perspective of domination both in language and lifestyle represented in literature.

Like ecofeminist theory itself, ecofeminist literary theory too has also evolved and

changed over time. In the beginning, it was used to find connections between woman and nature in order to empower and celebrate women; however, today, this approach is rather seen as a discursive means of confirming and reproducing the existing dualisms. To illustrate, while sometimes the animalism of D. H. Lawrence's women characters and their connection to "mother earth" are celebrated as ways to depict strong female characters, recent scholarship criticises that perspective since it alienates both woman and nature as distant beings strange to man and its culture. Val Plumwood points out that Lawrence's portrait of woman "appeared to provide a green version of the 'good woman' argument of the suffragettes, in which good and moral women, who are nurturant, empathic and life-orientated, confront and reclaim the world from bad men, who are immersed in power, hierarchy and a culture of death" (8). Though this perspective may be empowering for the time period, it does not provide a critical assessment in terms of the roots of that power, hierarchy or the culture of death.

## **2.4 Intersections of Space Theories and Ecofeminism**

This study proposes that a perspective that emphasises the interrelations and interactions between every entity on earth, and the necessity of that naturally involves how we interact with the environment, more specifically with the space in which humans exist with all the other beings. What space means can be explained with Michel de Certeau's often-quoted definition, "space is a practiced place" (117). The physicality of place gains conceptual meanings with practices in it as the structuring of it and in this context, through interactions with it and the interrelations in it. Hence, while place is regarded as merely the location, coordinates, structures, space may be accepted as the concept that is formed as a consequence of the way these places are experienced, conceived and produced. This study aims to focus on space and how it is experienced in various ways. Space has been mostly merely a background or setting in literary studies until the spatial turn. The studies of scholars such as Lefevre, Bachelard, and Bakhtin show the further implications of space and its design. Space itself, as all the other entities, is also always in interaction with the characters and story in narratives. Townsend's and Forna's texts integrate the idea of space as city, country and landscape to highlight the human being's inseparable existence from their environment and the entangled structure of the human lives with every entity around them. In these texts, an ecofeminist perspective is used

to display this intersection. This study is not located within a geocritical framework, which uses texts to better understand the place that they are set in, but the aim is to take space as an inseparable part of narratives and the female experience, and investigate how the other components of the text interact with place, shape it and are shaped by it in an ecofeminist context, and how gender or more extensively the mentioned binary oppositions affect the modes of these interactions. Hence, different perspectives on space such as bioregionalism, eco-cosmopolitanism, and Doreen Massey's perspective on gender, space and multiplicity, which highlight the idea of dualisms and interrelations in space, will be used.

Doreen Massey rejects the idea of one linear and temporal history of humanity and power that is practised through this idea and indicates that space offers multiplicity and different methods to construct different versions of reality we experience especially through the relationships that entities build with one another. According to Massey, the spatial is "constructed out of the multiplicity of social relations across all spatial scales... through the geography of the tentacles of national political power, to the social relations within the town, the settlement, the household and the workplace" (4). Here, Massey explains how webs of relations construct space. Additionally, Massey discusses the multiplicity of space, since "space is the practiced place," the meaning of a place is as various as the experiences of that place. This, by itself, mutilates the strategies of binary thinking by multiplying the meanings of one place. When one entity has more than one meaning and these meanings are not parts of the same set of adjectives such as feminine and rational, a dualism's attempt to restrict the connotations of one entity fails. Massey also states that

the particularity of any place is, in these terms, constructed not by placing boundaries around it and defining its identity through counter position to the other which lies beyond, but precisely (in part) through the specificity of the mix of links and interconnections to that 'beyond'. (5)

Hence, it can be concluded that Massey also rejects hyperseperatation and relational definitions by denying to completely separate the possible features of certain entities or define an entity through its other. Instead of binary dualisms that create the others, Massey promotes links and interconnections. She also focuses on the gender of spaces. Spaces are constructed with certain rules of exclusions. There are spaces from which

women (or any other being on the dominated side of the binary dualisms) are intentionally removed. Although these rules are rarely voiced, they are treated as common knowledge and widely internalised. These rules do not simply decide where women can or cannot go but also consequently other areas of life, for instance, where women can work. Throughout history, women have been entrapped in the so-called domestic sphere as unpaid domestic workers. Massey explains how women's entry into the job market threatened the patriarchal order since it meant that women would go out to work and enter the public sphere, and, consequently, neglect their domestic duties for their husbands and children (198). Massey's investigations on space have been valuable for feminist studies and can also offer new angles for critical ecofeminist perspectives.

Bioregionalism is related to both spatiality and environmental thinking. It focuses on "how to live in the space," meaning learning to live by being aware of one's immediate place, by experiencing deeply the environmental characteristics of the place, the weather, the water, the plant life etc. and being in deep connection with all these characteristics (Berg and Dasmann 35). Michael Vincent McGinnis explains bioregionalism as a "framework that stud[ies] the complex relationships between human communities, government institutions and the natural world, and through which to plan and implement environmental policy" (1). This means that bioregionalism not only focuses on a specific place but also its cultural, social and political meanings since "human beings cannot avoid interacting with and being affected by their specific location, place and bioregion" (1). Yet, the political stance of bioregionalism differs from other environmental perspectives, since, according to bioregionalists, environmental movements generally react to disasters, yet bioregionalism adapts a more positive approach and aims to connect with space and "seeks to head off environmental crises by attempting to both imagine and create human communities that live sustainably in place" (Lynch, Glotfelty and Armbruster 3-4). Bioregionalism is averse to a political idea of border; it rather supports an idea of border based on natural regions and cultures that share the region. One of the foregrounders of bioregionalist ideals, Gary Snyder, maintains that bioregionalism aims "cultural and individual pluralism, unified by a type of world tribal council; division by natural and cultural boundaries rather than arbitrary political boundaries"

(330-1). This might display how bioregionalism may ally with ecofeminism with its ideas of pluralism and border-redefining. The perspective aims to re-connect with the space we live in by recognising the elements that construct it and by intentional interconnections with them. Berg and Dasmann explain the connection between interconnected relations with other beings and spatiality as follows:

All life on the planet is interconnected in a few obvious ways, and in many more that remain barely explored. But there is a distinct resonance among living things and the factors which influence them that occurs specifically within each separate place on the planet. Discovering and describing that resonance is the best way to describe a bioregion. (399)

While drawing attention to place, life and, the relations between them, bioregionalism also highlights the consequences of breaking the connections among living beings and to their environments. These consequences are, more specifically, displacement and consequently, diasporas. Habitats are constantly harmed and transformed by “commercial, industrial and agricultural developments, natural resource extraction, tourism and war, [and] a chain of ecological and cultural disruptions is initiated” (Thomashow 122). And to avoid extinction, “indigenous societies must either adapt to the changing circumstances [or] migrate to a new habitat” (122). Thomashow’s stance is especially valuable since he does not only include humans in his idea of diaspora. While animals and other (than human) living beings are more apt to extinction due to their inability to change locations as quickly (though not easily) as humans, they still can migrate and become displaced both by themselves and by human activities such as commerce or ecological imperialism.<sup>2</sup>

Ursula K. Heise approaches bioregionalism critically and proposes instead “eco-cosmopolitanism.” She criticises bioregionalism’s focus on proximity, questions the morals of this concept and highlights a rejection of globalism in bioregionalism and similar environmental theories (38). According to Heise, instead of focusing on restoring a local sense of place, environmentalism should prioritise cultivating an awareness of the intricate interconnections between diverse natural and cultural

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<sup>2</sup> Ecological imperialism is a theory by Albert Cosby which highlights that as a result of imperialism not only humans but also other organisms such as plants and animals are harmed due to foreign diseases and invader species that are carried by colonizers to the colonized lands.

environments globally, and how human actions impact and alter this interrelatedness (21). Hence, a change in modes of thinking is necessary to achieve a global sense of environmentalism. Heise states that the works of different scholars have displayed that “a ‘sense of place’ cannot mean a return to the natural in and of itself, but at best an approach to the natural from within a different cultural framework” and “the assumption that places possess inherent physical as well as spiritual qualities to which human beings respond when they inhabit them must be replaced by an analysis of how such qualities are either ‘socially produced’ or ‘culturally constructed’” (45). So, the production process of places cannot undertake an innate quality and these processes should be considered. A more nuanced approach is necessary which connects the human and non-human but also recognises the “connectedness with both animate and inanimate networks of influence and exchange (Heise 61) which are the global cultural and political processes; hence, “the issue isn’t so much that all places are connected (one of the great clichés of modern environmental studies), as it is understanding which connections are most important” (qtd. in Heise 62).

Barry Commoner’s first law of ecology is that “everything is connected to everything else” (8). In that web of connections, not only all beings are always in a process of interactions and evolve through these interactions, but also how we conduct these interactions matter as political actions. Ecofeminism as a theoretical framework explores the relationalities between humans, animals and nature, and the politics of their construction processes. Space theories also focus on humans and their interactions with their environments and an idea of space with all those influential factors might enlighten the meanings of relationalities among the entities on earth through necessary political considerations, hence, the ideas of gender, race and environment. An ecofeminist perspective on space shows that the physical and conceptual boundaries that are imposed upon the environment are inherently intertwined with systems of power, domination, and exploitation. It reveals how patriarchal and anthropocentric structures shape not only the understanding of space but also our relationships with it, often resulting in the marginalization and exploitation of both women and nature. By examining the intersectionality of gender, race, and environment within spatial dynamics, ecofeminism reveals how these power dynamics are maintained and how they can be challenged through more equitable and sustainable spatial practices.

## CHAPTER 3

### **BINARY OPPOSITIONS AND SPATIAL INTERACTIONS IN *LOLLY WILLOWES OR THE LOVING HUNTSMAN***

This chapter examines *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* (1926) by Sylvia Townsend Warner through the lens of critical ecofeminism, focusing specifically on spatial relations. While doing that, modernist perspectives on gender, nature and living arrangements (city, country, home etc.) will be reviewed in order to understand how the text responds to the period and is affected by modernist perspectives in its deconstruction of the impositions of the era to achieve a feminist logic. Finally, this chapter aims to analyse how one entity's position in the dualisms of the current era might be influential on its interactions with other entities and the space in which they exist in *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman*.<sup>3</sup> By doing so, the chapter argues that *Lolly Willows* shows how woman's relationship with space is regulated by dualisms, the destabilization of which reshapes the aforementioned relationship as can be seen in the representation of Great Mop, a wild space in which dualisms do not function.

*Lolly Willowes* tells the life story of the titular character, Lolly (Laura) Willowes. She is born in 1874 to a conservative English family as the third child. She has two brothers, Henry and James; yet, she is raised in the family estate, Lady Place, as an only child since her brothers are much older and they mostly stay away for school. Due to her mother's poor health and her father's love for his daughter, Lolly grows up closer to him. Eventually, her mother passes away. Soon after getting married, James brings his wife to Lady Place, and Laura, her father and James's family begin to live together. Not interested in any suitors, Laura refuses to get married and stays with her father. Their contented life continues until the death of the father, after which it is decided that Laura should live in London with her brother Henry and his family, leaving Lady Place to James and his wife. Laura involuntarily moves to London and

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<sup>3</sup> In the rest of the chapter, the novel will be referred to as *Lolly Willowes*.

starts to help with the household management and care of the children. This continues for twenty years. One day, while Laura is running errands, she finds a little shop with bottled fruits, homemade marmalades, and garden-grown produce. This shop leads Laura to have an epiphany and she decides to finally live the kind of life she has always desired. She buys a guidebook and a detailed map of Chilterns, where the goods of the shop are produced, and while searching for the place, she finds herself in "Great Mop." She immediately decides to move to that place and shares the news with her family. They do not take Laura seriously and it is only one of her nephews, Titus, who is genuinely interested in the place and Laura's decision to move there. Laura rents a room and begins to live in Great Mop. She is content with her life and spends her days in the woods, taking long walks. Yet one day Titus visits Laura and decides to move there, as well. This makes Laura feel frustrated since she wants to continue leading her life away from her family. One day Laura finds a black cat in a cottage, which scratches and bleeds Laura. This makes her realise that she has made a blood-pact with Satan to banish Titus. Consequently, Titus is haunted by various inconveniences. Later, she falls in love with a villager and decides to leave the Great Mop with her. In time, she learns that almost everyone in the village is a witch or warlock, and participates in their witch sabbaths until realizing that this is also not the kind of life she wants. In a personal encounter with Satan, Laura explains this to him and questions him on the subjects with which she is not satisfied both in terms of witchcraft and life in general. After their conversation, Laura feels content and realises that what makes Satan a good master is his indifference.

*Lolly Willowes* is the first of the seven novels by Sylvia Townsend Warner. Before the publication of this novel, Warner had published several poetry and short story collections. It is possible to say that *Lolly Willowes* includes some autobiographical details such as Warner's idyllic childhood in the country, the death of her beloved father, her moving to London and her life as a single woman in England at the turn of the twentieth century. Claire Harman, in her book, *Sylvia Townsend Warner: A Biography*, highlights Warner's relationship with the landscape quoting from a letter she wrote to the poet Leonard Bacon:

Sylvia was possessor of 'a most entrancing view ... endless, rich and classically handsome: meadows, and the enormous solitary elms of that



clay soil, belts of woodland, here and there sober pale-faced eighteenth-century houses showing through their baffle of trees; and the Thames Valley mists thrown over it like a gauze.’ (9)

Warner was familiar with the landscapes, houses and the city she represented in her work. Yet, Warner’s experience of London was different from that of Lolly’s since unlike the fictional character she created, Warner was a financially independent woman, in control of her own income and she celebrated the possibilities that London offered (Harman 39).

### **3.1 The Problematisation of Binary Dualisms in *Lolly Willows***

To better understand how *Lolly Willows* approaches binary dualisms, specifically the gender norms of the era in which it was produced, first, it is valuable to understand how gender was conceived in the Modernist era (i.e., roughly between the 1900s and 1940s). According to Marianne Dekoven, there exists an ambivalence in Modernism. Especially “male-authored Modernism . . . produce a sense of Modernism as a masculinist movement” (176). This masculinist façade of Modernism advocates a “firm, hard, dry, terse, classical masculinity, over against the messy, soft, vague, flowery, effusive, adjectival femininity of the late Victorians” (176). This perspective reproduces already existing binaries of feminine/masculine and the other binaries and conflicts that it entails. Psychology as a new area of study, especially the work of Freud, also enhanced the attribution of intrinsic masculine and feminine characteristics to males and females. Yet this “masculinist misogyny . . . was almost universally accompanied by its dialectical twin: a fascination and strong identification with the empowered feminine,” since “in Freud, as in Modernism in general, the power of the maternal feminine comes closest to erupting into representation, and therefore is met by an even more cruelly powerful act of re-repression” (Dekoven 174-79). As the feminine is recognised as an influential, though negative, force in the psyche, its representations were increased in volume. The ambivalence was partly rooted in that. While the masculinist ideas were constantly reproduced at the turn of the century changes, also an idea of the “new woman” was born, an idea of a woman that is “independent, educated, (relatively) sexually liberated, oriented more toward productive life in the public sphere than toward reproductive life in the home” (174-

79). This new woman was the murderer of “The Angel in the House.” Virginia Woolf, who, alongside her fiction, theorised the modernist era and literature, describes the angel in the house figure as follows:

She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed herself daily. ... in short, she was so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to sympathize always with the minds and wishes of others. Above all...she was pure... In those days—the last of Queen Victoria—every house had its Angel. (160)

The angel in the house is a personification of the expected qualities of the feminine side of the dualism. Modernism both triggers and challenges binary dualisms. In *Three Guineas*, Woolf connects oppressive rules and politics such as fascism to gender politics (Snaith 17). She highlights that the ideas about woman are very similar in Nazi Germany and England (99) and works on developing a perspective, as in critical ecofeminism, that will end all kinds of oppression. The climate of the modernist era is certainly not free from binaries and hierarchies, yet especially woman writers and scholars (e.g., Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein, Mina Loy) build perspectives and theories that will benefit the struggles against these binaries culturally and theoretically. As Dekoven indicates, the revolutionary cultural and political change at the turn of the century is both a threat and promise and it is “embodied in the figure of empowered feminine.” Hence, “desire for freedom in unresolved dialectic” is an often-encountered theme of modernist works by women (183).

Warner’s works were usually perceived as “middle brow” until the publication of more recent studies, and, consequently, excluded for long from the modernist canon. Yet, although Warner’s style is closer to traditional forms in its narration, the themes she deals with and her approach toward gender and binaries are now accepted as illustrative of a modernist stance and her work now is included in modernism studies since it fits into the general qualities promoted by Ezra Pound’s modernist slogan “Make it New.” *Lolly Willowses*, set at the beginnings of the twentieth century and published in 1926, captures the binary oppositions that are encountered in the late Victorian era and the modernist era, and challenges them both thematically and through certain tools such as satire and fantastical elements. Because this is a novel written by a woman writer in the modernist era, the gender structures and the

oppression that is rooted in gender are among the main concerns of the novel, in which the gender norms of the era are constantly reflected and challenged. Warner displays the conventional norms of gender and then dismantles them through Laura's process of self-emancipation and through some narrative experimentation. Additionally, the text constantly advances its thematic connections between the oppression of woman and nature through nature imagery and metaphors. The novel can be conceived as an account of Laura's process of subjugation and emancipation from the gender roles that are bound to her as a consequence of binary conceptions. The process takes place in three stages: first, Laura's childhood, during which ideas of dualisms are covertly imposed on her; then, her adolescence and majority of her adulthood, during which she is obliged to perform the normative roles of womanhood; and, finally her adulthood and seniority, when she manages to free herself from the demands of the conventional logic.

Laura's childhood is seemingly spared from the restrictions of the period in terms of gender. Yet, it can be seen that her family's approach to Laura is in line with the hierarchical binary oppositions constructed between the masculine/feminine, reason/emotion, culture/nature or powerful/weak. She is loved "despite" her gender. Additionally, unlike the other young girls, she climbs trees, jumps over haycock and reads liberally from home library. Laura's father, Everard, adores her daughter, yet this love is specifically rooted in Laura's gender. "He [is] in love with her femininity" (10). Everard, since her birth, cherishes that he has a daughter: "'Oh, the fine little lady!' he cried out when she was first shown to him, wrapped in shawls, and whimpering" (10). Everard sees the newborn as an embodiment of femininity. Parallel to that, he feels at a loss about how to materially show his love towards Laura since unlike Henry and James she is a daughter. Everard lays down port<sup>4</sup> for his sons for their birth and coming of age, yet "he could not lay down port for Laura" (10). As a girl, Laura cannot be a part of this tradition despite the parental love that is shown to her. Instead, Everard buys her a pearl necklace. In addition, the narrator remarks that "[a] stuffed ermine which [Everard] had known as a boy was still his ideal of the enchanted princess, so pure and sleek was it, and so artfully poised the small, neat head

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<sup>4</sup> Laying port is a tradition that port wine is bought and kept for years to commemorate the special days of children.

on the long throat” (10). Here, the features of femininity are informed by the masculine/feminine dualism. Characteristics of purity and poise are some of the expected qualities from Laura since her infancy, and her father’s gift of pearls functions as a symbol of this expectation. The roles played by the siblings in their childhood also reflect the conventional gender roles in that “when they played at Knights or Red Indians, Laura was dutifully cast for some passive female part” (11). The boys are responsible for their sister, but in their games, Laura becomes a passive object in the game rather than an active participant of it. She plays the role of the princess that needs to be saved by the knights, or the victim of the “Red Indians” (11). The counterparts of knights and Red Indians are also significant in terms of dualisms. The narrative of savage Indians in conflict with honourable knights appears even in the children’s plays.

Laura’s liberty of reading the library books of her own choosing is considered by some “ladies” in their social circle a failure on the part of her mother, Mrs. Willowes, in raising her daughter according to the norms of proper femininity:

New books were just what she wanted, for she had almost come to the end of the books in the Lady Place library. Had they known this, the silk and sealskin ladies would have shaken their heads over her upbringing even more deplorably. But, naturally, it had not occurred to them that a young lady of their acquaintance should be under no restrictions as to what she read, and Mrs. Willowes had not seen any reason for making them better informed.

So Laura read undisturbed, and without disturbing anybody, for the conversation at local tea-parties and balls never happened to give her an opportunity of mentioning anything that she had learnt from Locke on the Understanding or Glanvil on Witches. In fact, as she was generally ignorant of the books which their daughters were allowed to read, the neighbouring mammas considered her rather ignorant. However, they did not like her any the worse for this, for her ignorance, if not so sexually displeasing as learning, was of so unsweetened a quality as to be wholly without attraction. (14)

Laura’s time that is spent on reading is a consequence of her mother’s ill health, due to which she is not able to perform her so-called motherly tasks properly and criticised by their neighbours. This also shows how the education of children is seen as the mother’s duty since the father, Everard, does not receive any criticism in this regard. Additionally, this passage shows that the education of female children is considered

completely apart from that of male children. The fact that Locke, a prominent figure in studies on reason and Glanvil, an influential historian, are strange names to other female children and that Laura is not familiar with the books that other daughters are allowed to read show that in education, female children at the time were alienated from the sphere of reason. And, while the other mothers consider Laura ignorant, this is not a characteristic that devalues her since intellect is not a vital feature in the sphere of femininity. In contrast, learning is reflected as a displeasing quality. In the novel, it is reflected that woman's education has gained importance in the period, yet its aim is different than that of man's: "[s]he should have the companionship of girls of her own age, or she might grow up eccentric" (16). The education of young girls, in the company of other girls, ensure the homogenisation of the oppressed gender. Becoming "eccentric," in other words, diverging from the binary schemas, is reflected as an ever-concerning path for the female children.

The first turning point in Laura's life takes place with her mother's death. With the death of the major female figure in the house, Laura has to inherit the roles and duties carried out by her late mother; in other words, she is impelled to leave behind her childhood, during which, even though she has been exposed to the consequences of the binary opposition between man and woman, she has not yet performed the conventional roles of womanhood. In the novel, Laura's entering the sphere of the feminine is seen as a retirement from the world and "loss of her liberty" (18). Upon entering the stage of "ladyhood," Laura leaves behind the sphere of freedom. As a young woman, she begins to enact her role of staying at and constituting the background of her father's life; in other words, as Plumwood explains, she starts to "be defined as a terra nullius, a resource empty of its own purposes or meanings, and hence available to be annexed for the purposes of those supposedly identified with reason or intellect, and to be conceived and moulded in relation to these purposes" ("Mastery" 4). Her duty is to comfort her father in a "legitimate womanly kind" (13). Both James and Laura experience the loss of their mother, but "a thicker clothing of family kindness against the chill of bereavement" is weaved around "*his* sorrow" (13, emphasis in original). Laura is seen responsible for "weaving" this "clothing" both for Everard and James, since emotion, or, in this particular context, sorrow, is seen as a natural part of the sphere of femininity while it is considered a disruption in the world

of masculinity. Yet with Laura's stepping into adulthood, her disruptions of femininity also start to come to surface. She does not have the "*jeu perlé*", pearly playing, of her mother's piano performances; she fails to charmingly entertain at the parties, which is "the duty of every marriageable young woman" (20). Laura's lack of *jeu perlé* and the pearl necklace that represents the femininity compose a rhetorical contrast since while the lack of *jeu perlé* might be read as a signifier of Laura's inability to perform traditional femininity, the pearl necklace signifies the expectancy concerning the femininity. Laura also is not interested in the idea of marriage, and all these foreshadow her prospective life as a single woman, largely liberated from the man/woman dualism.

The second turning point of Laura's life is the death of her father. As an unmarried woman with both of her parents dead, she ceases to be a part of the household she has belonged to until then and has to move to her brother Henry's house. This decision is made by her extended family, without consulting to Laura. The novel opens with a decision declared by Caroline, Henry's wife, as "Of course, ... you will come to us" (6). The fact that this is the opening of the novel displays the event's significance in the narrative. Laura's absorption into the new household and the final denial of her will become the trigger points for the rest of the storyline. As Christine Reynier states "[t]he passive role Laura's education has cast her in and the subjection patriarchal rule has devised for her end up in her complete alienation once she falls under the sway of her brother and sister-in-law" (317). In the household, Laura is objectified as a tool for the maintenance of the house and the care of the children. Laura's life at the house of Henry and Caroline is described as follows:

Time went faster than the embroidery did. She had actually a sensation that she was stitching herself into a piece of embroidery with a good deal of background. But, as Caroline said, it was not possible to feel dull when there was so much to do. Indeed, it was surprising how much there was to do, and for everybody in the house. Even Laura, introduced as a sort of extra wheel, soon found herself part of the mechanism, and, interworking with the other wheels, went round as busily as they. (19-20)

The time in the house is consumed in a relentless cycle of housework, and it is only the women in the house, Laura and Caroline, who are responsible for the chores. Laura becomes a wheel in the machinery of patriarchy against her will. She ensures the

maintenance of the domestic structure. Additionally, embroidery functions as a metaphor suggesting Laura's own background in the domestic sphere and that she is embroidered into the lives of her brother's family. Her name is also modified according to the household. She is referred to as Laura when mentioned individually, yet as Lolly when mentioned in relation to the family. Her identity is altered for the comfort of the family up to the point that her birth name ceases to be used, to serve the centre, which, in this context, is the patriarchal family. In the same way, Laura's value in the house stems from her "usefulness," which is repeated on several occasions and prevents Laura from claiming her sense of self as an individual.

She is obliged to constantly labour, spending her time solely on domestic chores. Women in the household are not only responsible of the house but also the people in the house. For instance, everything in the timeline of the household is planned by Caroline according to "Henry's digestion":

Dinner was at half-past seven. It was a sensible rule of Caroline's that at dinner only general topics should be discussed. The difficulties of the day... were laid aside. To this rule Caroline attributed the excellence of Henry's digestion. Henry's digestion was further safe-guarded by being left to itself in the smoking-room for an hour after dinner. (21)

This reflects the sharp separation of the spheres of necessity and masculinity. As Plumwood states, the mental sphere which is associated with an elite masculinism leaves the task of meeting the essential needs to "slaves and women" and "regard this sphere of necessity as lower and . . . conceive virtue in terms of distance from it" (36). The realms of masculinity/femininity and necessity/freedom (or reason) are so separated from each other that masculine party's own bodily functions are ensured by the feminine. Indeed, Caroline embodies the idea of Angel in the House. She is reflected as a good Christian, "a good wife, a fond and discreet mother, a kind mistress, a most conscientious sister-in-law" (22). Caroline's adeptness at perfecting the role of middle-class womanhood emerges as a foil for Laura's sense of inadequacy, since, while Laura is also included in the maintenance of the house as an important contributor, she does not consider herself as capable or willing as Caroline. Caroline's perspective reflects that "she did not attach an inordinate value to her wifehood and maternity; they were her duties, rather than her glories. But for all that she felt emotionally plumper than Laura" (24). This shows that Caroline also connects her

imperative position at the feminine sphere of femininity to the sphere of emotion. The fact that she is a wife and a mother places her in a more sentimentally mature position. Additionally, since dualisms are conceived as the only natural way to exist, Caroline and Henry constantly try to convince Laura to get married, yet they fail due to Laura's incompatibility to the scheme of dualisms.

Laura's resistance against the binaries and her identity as "new woman" in the context of modernism is further revealed with her decision to move out of Henry's household and begin to live alone. When she reveals her plan to the family, she faces objections, yet she remains devoted to the plan. When Laura states she is no longer useful to the household since the children are grown up, Henry refuses the idea of valuing Laura due to her usefulness, yet he immediately notes that Laura is "extremely useful" (36). Another reason for refusing the idea, according to Henry, is its "impracticality" (37). Yet she expresses that "[n]othing is impracticable for a single, middle-aged woman with an income of her own" (37). With that, Laura reveals the anxieties of the post-war England on the subject of single womanhood. Emma Sterry explains the issue as follows:

The single woman was not, of course, the exclusive benefactor of women's changing roles in modernity, nor was she responsible for them. But she was a figure who outwardly resisted domestic scripts, was well-placed to take advantage of new opportunities available to women, and who symbolized the potential physical and moral decay of modern society. In other words, the single woman was a convenient scapegoat. (29)

Additionally, as Doreen Massey states "the fact of women having access to an independent income was itself a source of anxiety" (179). The single woman's ability to move on the surface of earth without any necessities challenges all aspects of dualisms. She does not background the masculine by devoting her own life and personality to a man; she cannot be objectified; she cannot be hyperseparated since she also displays features that are attributed to the masculine; and she cannot be defined in relation to the masculine or stereotyped since she differs from the conventional logic's traditional woman figure. It is possible to claim that Laura is compatible with variations of the figure of the new woman: the single woman, the spinster and the lesbian. After World War I, the figure of the single woman, which was also named as the "surplus woman," started to take up more space in literature. With the significant



decrease in the male population, the number of single women and widows increased, and also the gradually growing numbers of educated women and the Suffrage Movement made women's liberation possible and availed a life independent of men; and this caused concerns in the traditional, conservative perspectives. As Sterry states, in the period, "[w]e see... how scripts regarding femininity and sexuality were increasingly destabilized" (2). In the novel it is reflected that although it is unexpected and shocking for a woman to demand emancipation from the family, particularly a highly traditional one such as the Willowses', it emerges as a possibility as a consequence of the advances in women's liberation. Laura, as a single woman, has the choice, yet the choice is only available to her through resistance.

The lesbian subtext of the novel also contributes to Laura's portrayal as a new woman. Sterry indicates that in the period, "[s]exological views on homosexuality similarly informed fears about women's deviance from domestic scripts" (38). Implications of Laura's sexuality, other than her refusal of marriage, are seen in the scene where Laura involuntarily dances in the sabbath:

These depressing thoughts were interrupted by redhaired Emily, who came spinning from her partner's arms, seized hold of Laura and carried her back into the dance. Laura liked dancing with Emily; the pasty-faced and anemic young slattern whom she had seen dawdling about the village danced with a fervor that annihilated every misgiving. They whirled faster and faster, fused together like two suns that whirl and blaze in a single destruction. A strand of the red hair came undone and brushed across Laura's face. The contact made her tingle from head to foot. She shut her eyes and dived into obliviousness—with Emily for a partner she could dance until the gunpowder ran out of the heels of her boots. (63)

This moment of intimacy between two women and Laura's intense feelings during the dance reveal Laura's homosexuality. Indeed, the only moment in the sabbath that Laura enjoys herself is her dance with Emily. Sterry highlights that the combination of the fear of the spinster and the lesbian creates an uneasiness since it is a danger for young women to be seduced by older women and diverge from the domestic paths (38); yet, here, young Emily is represented as a temptress. With that, the novel is further separated from the binary means of thinking and the gender roles assigned by them.

While thematically revealing, scrutinising and challenging the dualisms, the novel,

albeit rarely, directly comments on them, as well. At the beginning of the novel, through the perspective of a character in the future, then adult Fanny Willowes, Laura's niece, Laura's situation is reviewed as follows:

Even in 1902 there were some forward spirits who wondered why that Miss Willowes, who was quite well off, and not likely to marry, did not make a home for herself and take up something artistic or emancipated. Such possibilities did not occur to any of Laura's relations. Her father being dead, they took it for granted that she should be absorbed into the household of one brother or the other. (8)

Through this flashforward and sudden change of focalisation, the text scrutinises the gender norms of the period. As Marcus explains, "[t]he novel captures the transitional period in the history of the family-as the ideology of the natural duty of a daughter to nurse her parents in their old-age . . . was replaced by a pathology of the single, self-sacrificing woman" (150). The single woman, although she does not have a family of her own, becomes the focal point for sacrifice for the extended family. Warner's rare use of flashforward as a narrative technique renders the social commentary and feminist stance of the novel more visible. Warner merges the kind of commentary on social issues that is commonly seen in the realist novel with modernist techniques in order to highlight her position towards the era's attitude to gender roles and sexuality.

Alongside the femininity of female characters, the masculinity of the male characters is also telling. As Beynen explains, "[i]f 'maleness' is biological, then masculinity is cultural. Indeed, masculinity can never float free of culture: on the contrary, it is the child of culture, shaped and expressed differently at different times in different circumstances in different places by individuals and groups" (2). In the novel, the masculinity of the main male characters is reflected in alliance with the perspective of conventional logic. All of the main male characters, Everard, James, Henry and Titus are drawn as characters that are free from what is defined as the sphere of necessity in the logic of binary dualisms and, as stated previously, women are held responsible to regulate both their bodily and emotional needs. For instance, when Titus decides to visit Laura, James's wife Sibyl writes to Laura, "I feel quite reconciled to this wild scheme of Tito's, since you will be there to keep an eye on him. Men are so helpless. Tito is so impracticable. A regular artist" (53). Here it is reflected that the lack of practicality, in other words, the ability to manage vital affairs, is not unusual in men;

on the contrary, it is expected from an artist, a member of the intellectual sphere also known as the sphere of reason and artistic creativity to be impractical since he is in a higher position than the sphere of necessity. When Laura decides to move out of Henry's household, it is shown how a traditionally masculine character reacts to this challenge against his superior position in the binary of man/woman. Henry answers Laura's wish to move out as "I cannot allow this. You are my sister. I consider you my charge. I must ask you, once for all to drop this idea. It is not sensible. Or suitable" (36). Laura's will is bound to Henry's. As the representative of reason, Henry deems Laura's decision insensible and regards it according to the values of the patriarchal society. Additionally, Henry considers Laura's demand as madness (36). Wanting something that falls outside the societal norms and out of Henry's better judgement means a complete alienation from the sphere of reason. After this incident, Laura questions the state of her income and learns that most of it has been lost by Henry as a consequence of his faulty investment decisions. Henry, however, is enraged by Laura's questioning of his actions as seen in the following extract:

You know nothing of business, Lolly. I need not enter into explanations with you. It should be enough for me to say that for the last year your income has been practically non-existent . . . Your capital has always been in my hands, Lolly, and I have administered it as I thought fit. (37)

Laura is denied the control of her own income, and her ability to comprehend business is belittled since she is a woman. Yet when Henry explains the situation, Laura does not only understand but also proposes solutions, displaying her resistance to be confined within the sphere of mere femininity. Henry's fury stems from two things: firstly, a member of the subordinated side questions the authority of the superior party, which is unfathomable; and, secondly, Henry faces his own failure in a field, economics, that is closely connected to reason; hence, Henry's sense of identity which depends on his success in so-called masculine fields is shattered.

### **3.2 Intersections of Space and Critical Ecofeminism in *Lolly Willowes***

In addition to the representations of its treatment of gender, the novel's representation of space is equally important to see the reflections of binary dualisms and how they dictate every area of life in the story. In this regard, the examination of different spaces and how their perceptions and meanings are influenced by the identities of the

characters can also be integrated into the critical ecofeminist perspective. In the novel, interactions with space reflect modernist perspectives, relationalities among humans and with the non-human on the basis of gender and ideas of identity and offers a path for critical ecofeminism. Modernist perspectives especially include the ideas on rural and urban alongside woman's interaction with space while critical ecofeminism analyses the relations that are based on identity among humans and between human and non-human. In the novel, Lady Place, Apsley Terrace in London and Great Mop in Chilterns are featured as significant spaces. Alongside these physical spaces, the dichotomy of the outside/inside is also valuable for the context of this study. According to Edward Soja, "we must be aware . . . how relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life, how human geographies become filled with politics and ideology" (6). In *Lolly Willowes*, spaces display how the aforementioned binary dualisms are carved into different forms of spaces; in addition, the novel also explores how dualisms are challenged through interactions with spaces as well as the interactions of the different species with one another in these spaces.

Laura's ideas of home throughout the novel may be discussed under the subject of interactions with space and the restrictions on it due to dualisms. Laura is separated from her home and brought to London without her consent due to her identity as a single woman. As a consequence of her father's death, she becomes the responsibility of her brother although she is an adult woman with her own income. In London, she cannot constitute a sense of home. It is stated that "[e]xcept for a gradual increment of Christmas and birthday presents, Laura's room had altered little since the day it ceased to be the small spare-room and became hers" (30). Laura cannot engage with the space she lives in or see it as home although she lives there for ten years since the house does not belong to her not only in financial terms but also in terms of power relations in the space. Although she occasionally visits Lady Place, which was once her home, she has lost her sense of home for Lady Place too since "[t]he knowledge that she now was a visitor where she had formerly been at home seemed to place a clear sheet of glass between her and her surroundings" (25). After the death of Everard, the house is passed to the next male descendant, who is James, and after his death it is passed to Titus. Since he is not of age, the house is leased and with that the house that has lost its

meaning for Laura is physically dispersed, too. As a female descendant, Laura cannot have a claim on her family home which she has managed for years. After a long time period during which Laura has lived without a sense of home, she finds it in Great Mop, which is not a building but a small settlement. This place becomes Laura's home with its buildings, paths and woods. This may be seen in the scene in which Laura nestles into the woods to be protected from the weather, yet there she feels belonging and ease for the first time in years and "she forg[ets] that she sat there for shelter" (45). This scene enhances the idea of Great Mop as Laura's home with its structure that does not allow any binaries and hierarchies.

In the novel, the story is intricately intertwined with the exploration of distinct spatial contexts, each imbued with symbolic significance. Through the protagonist's sequential engagements with these spaces, a thematic progression emerges, which is reflective of the evolution from binary dualisms to an emancipated state of interaction with space. Spaces in the novel and the actions related to spaces such as moving out of and in, and the arrangement of the spaces carry significance in terms of reflecting the characters' approaches to dualisms that define woman, nature and animals as inferior categories.

Lady Place is the house where Laura and two previous generations of the Willowes are born; hence, it is connected to the traditional perspectives on domesticity. The Willowes' attitude to the idea of changing places reflects the traditional perspective of the family. The notion of permanence in a place is related to the idea of honour. It is stated that "[t]he Willowes obstinacy . . . had for so long kept unchanged the home of Dorset" (9). Staying in the same house for generations is a part of the family pride. When it is time to change the home in Dorset, the action of moving out is narrated as follows:

When grandfather Henry, that masterful man, removed across the border, he was followed by a patriarchal train of manservants and maidservants, mares, geldings, and spaniels, vans full of household stuff, and slow country waggons loaded with nodding greenery. "I want to make sure of a good eating apple," said he, "since I am going to Lady Place for life." Death was another matter. The Willowes burial-ground was in Dorset, nor would Henry lie elsewhere. (17)

This passage indicates how for the needs and comfort of the centre, which is the male human, the peripheries are displaced. In order to strengthen the patriarch's sense of space, the subordinated parties of the master/servant, human/animal, man/woman dualisms are carried as inanimate objects alongside the male human who chooses to move. The subordinated sides of the dualisms are not entitled to space practices, such as movement in the space or shaping the space, outside of the master's will. The same situation might be observed in Laura's involuntary move to London. Laura's position as a single woman after her father's death is likened to "a piece of property forgotten in the will, . . . ready to be disposed of as they should think best" (9). As Plumwood maintains, "[t]he backgrounding and instrumentalisation of nature and that of women run closely parallel" (21). As servants, animals and trees that are carried to constitute the background of the lives of the Willowses, Laura, too, is placed to the background of Henry's patriarchal family. Moreover, in the quotation given above, the strictness in terms of space is again highlighted by the fact that even in the case of death, the familial space keeps its boundaries.

The idea of the house as a place that hosts different generations of the same family might also be observed in other novels published at the time such as *Rainbow* (1915) by D. H. Lawrence and *Howard's End* (1910) by E. M. Forster. The focus on the unchanged family space may highlight the steadiness of the traditional, patriarchal family structure. Similarly, during the First World War, when Henry is asked what they do in the case of bombings, he answers, "[w]e stay where we are" (Warner 26). Alongside the idea of family pride, the idea of national pride is also highlighted. Laura's inner response to the statement displays her position as the new woman who scrutinises the entrenched conceptions as follows:

A thrill had passed through Laura when she heard this statement of the Willowses mind. But afterwards she questioned the validity of the thrill. Was it nothing more than the response of her emotions to other old and honorable symbols such as the trooping of the colors and the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians, symbols too old and too honorable to have called out her thoughts? (26)

The family house is the place where Laura is introduced to dualisms. It is named as the "Lady Place." Its name might be read as an allusion to its representation as the domestic family home. Although Lady Place appears to be a place in line with nature

and its cycles, the binary hierarchies remain intact in men's relationships with women, nature and animals. Jane Marcus argues that "[t]he discourse of Artemis is pure, savage, and antiurban, signifying both selfhood and sisterhood and a powerful sexuality in virginity. Artemisian discourse is directed against male desire" (139). According to Marcus, "[t]he discourse of Artemis is pure, savage, and antiurban, signifying both selfhood and sisterhood and a powerful sexuality in virginity" (139). Artemisian discourse is directed against male desire. In a similar vein of thought, it might be put forward that Lady Place is reflected as a space that excludes Artemisian discourse. Laura learns the uses of herbs from her nurse, Nannie, yet Nannie forbids consumption of mugwort, thinking that it is poisonous. One day, Laura runs into a passage in a book which states that "Artemis had revealed the virtues of mugwort to the dreaming Pericles" (16)<sup>5</sup>. Learning that, Nannie reacts by stating that "[t]hose Greeks didn't know everything" (16). Traditional Artemisian knowledge is denied in favour of traditional patriarchal beliefs. Laura's close relation with nature may be observed in her interest in botany and brewery. She writes a book about healing herbs in the region, yet it does not achieve commercial success. Thus, Laura tries to achieve a state where she "lives in place" as bioregionalists suggest, yet it is restricted by the traditional practices of her family and society. The brewery as the workplace is seen as the sphere of male members of the family and it is first given to Henry although he is unwilling to take over the brewery. So, it is left to James. While the workplace is to be bequeathed to male members, the management of the house passes to female members of the family. When Laura's mother dies, she becomes the lady of the house. "For nearly ten years she [keeps] house for Everard and James" (16). Laura is obliged to stop being a child and become a "young lady" with "comfortings legitimate womanly kind" (12) since she has to take over the role of the manager of the house. The gendered conventions of keeping and owning a house are reflected as follows:

Lady Place was a large house, and it seemed proper that James should bring his wife to live there. It also seemed proper that she should take Laura's place as mistress of the household. The sisters-in-law disputed this point with much civility, each insisting upon the other's claim like two queens curtsying in a doorway. However, Sibyl was the visiting queen and had to yield to Laura in civility, and assume the responsibilities of housekeeping. She jingled them very lightly, and as soon as she found

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<sup>5</sup> Pericles was a politician in the golden age of Athens.

herself to be with child she gave them over again to Laura... (18)

The management of the house, although it seems as a form of dominion over the inner workings of the household, it actually is based on patriarchal relationalities. Women in the house are mentioned as “queens,” yet it is stated that this reign is actually a euphemism for woman’s taking over the responsibilities of the home. As Virginia Woolf indicates in “Three Guineas,” women with the identities of wives, mothers, sisters or daughters labour in the house without any provisions. It seems that the domination over the house belongs to women, yet it is actually passed through patriarchal bloodline or marital bonds. Additionally, it is aimed at maintaining the needs of men. Hence, the dichotomy of outside/inside or public/private does not refer to woman’s dominion over the inside or the private but a modality to enhance the dominion of men in both spheres.

The domination of man over the “other” is also seen in the way animals are treated in *Lady Place*. Animals are hunted, stuffed and displayed as objects of decoration. They are used as a species to enable human males to practice their masculinity. For instance, it is narrated that “grandfather Titus had made a journey to Indies and brought back . . . a green parakeet” (9). The British imperialism and colonisation of the West Indies bear the implications of the concept of ecological imperialism, according to which imperialist interventions might consciously or unconsciously influence the local flora and fauna of the colonised spaces. In the novel, a species, the parakeet, which is domestic to another geography and climate is carried to England as a souvenir. Again, another species is displaced due to the will of a male human. Hunting is a common pastime in *Lady Place*. Animals are not killed because of necessity, but simply for fun. When Laura is born, Everards goes on a hunting trip, yet comes back “after the first kill,” (10) since a vixen he sees reminds Everard of Laura. Through such parallelisms, constant connections are drawn between animals and women in the novel through the perspective of mastery logic which alludes a domination to the masculine parties of the dualisms over the other. Consequently, Laura is often likened to animals by her family members, as in Everard’s glorification of her femininity by resembling Laura to a stuffed ermine (10). The fact that it is a stuffed ermine rather than a live animal suggests the passive quality, in Everard’s eyes, of both women and non-human animals, further alienating and homogenising the spheres of feminine, animal and



nature.

Even though Lady Place is charged with implications of dualisms, while in the place, Laura remains undisturbed by them. She wishes to continue her life as it is. When aunt Emily offers Laura to go with her to India, Laura thinks “She did not want to leave her father, nor did she want to leave Lady Place. Her life perfectly contented her. She had no wish for ways other than those she had grown up in. With an easy diligence she played her part as mistress of the house” (15). Laura’s refusal to leave the domestic space and her unquestioned acceptance of the dualisms, suggest that she has internalised them. As Plumwood points out, “for efficient subordination, what’s wanted is that the structure not only not appear to be a cultural artifact kept in place by human decision or custom, but that it appear natural” (34). Laura cannot become aware of her oppression until she leaves the place and moves to London. Therefore, the novel stresses the stark influence of space on shaping the ideas of female characters regarding the everyday dualisms they face.

Unlike high modernists’ understanding of the city space and London as associated with notions of anonymity and liberty,<sup>6</sup> Warner’s London further represents the subordination of woman and nature, which is in keeping with Jane Marcus’s argument that for most Western women writers, “London in particular has had the fearful phallic dominance of masculine power” (140). Laura, after she moves to Apsley Terrace, Henry’s house in London, cannot experience the city as she wishes due to her duties at home and restrictions imposed by Henry, the patriarch of the new household. To illustrate, Laura wants to visit various churches “now that she was come to London to see the world” (14), yet this request is rejected by Henry. Laura’s movement in the city is restricted to the space that is allowed to her. She can wander in the city as long as her duties at home allow her, and she is bound to a tacit curfew. As Bruce Knoll

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<sup>6</sup> Ezra Pound who spent an ample amount of time in London defines the metropolis as a place “which accepts all gifts and all heights of excellence, usually the excellence which is tabu in its own village” (qtd. in Thacker 170) Additionally, Susan Merrill Squier comments on how in *The Years* by Virginia Woolf, Rose is freed from her self-consciousness in the streets of London, as a result of an image of women from suffrage movement as an army which follows her in London (175-6). Parallel to that, Jane Marcus states that “[i]n their realistic documentary portrayal of the suffrage movement (1906-13), women novelists began to show an unmatched exhilaration about the city which was directly derived from their own experience of marching in forbidden streets by the thousands” (140).

maintains, “London society is centered on the masculine ideal, which is portrayed as an aggressive, destructive force. Such an arrangement allows only a passive role for the female characters of the novel” (344). Laura is free to stroll in the city, yet she keeps her wanderings secret to preserve her sense of identity, which is constantly tried to be diminished. Limited areas of nature in the city are also threatened by the male human. It is stated that “[t]here was a small garden at Apsley Terrace, but it had been gravelled over because Henry disliked the quality of London grass” (20). The existence of a garden in the city, as in Laura’s case, is bound to the patriarch’s wishes and its benefit for him. The male human has the right to eliminate nature when he is displeased by it.

Laura is disenchanted by the city and her role in Henry’s household gradually disturbs her sense of who she is. This transformation in Laura’s self-perception is summarised in the following passage:

But when Laura went to London she left Laura behind, and entered into a state of Aunt Lolly. She had quitted so much of herself in quitting Somerset that it seemed natural to relinquish her name also. Divested of her easily-worn honors as mistress of the household... performing unaccustomed duties, she seemed to herself to have become a different person. Or rather, she had become two persons, each different. One was Aunt Lolly, a middle-aging lady, light-footed upon stairs, and indispensable for Christmas Eve and birthday preparations. The other was Miss Willowes, “my sister-in-law Miss Willowes,” whom Caroline would introduce, and abandon to a feeling of being neither light-footed nor indispensable. But Laura was put away. When Henry asked her to witness some document for him her Laura Erminia Willowes seemed as much a thing out of common speech as the Spinster that followed it. (24)

This displays how Laura’s arrival to London initiates her realisation of the oppressions she has faced as a woman. As Marcus also points out in her article on *Lolly Willowes*, “fantasy novels of the twenties [in Britain] were the result of frustration and disappointment at the city’s refusal to accept women in the centers of patriarchal power” (140). In the domestic environment of Lady Place, Laura internalises and naturalises the roles that are attributed to her; yet in London, her alienation from home enhances her self-alienation. She is more familiarised with her roles as an aunt, a sister-in-law and a spinster than her name, which reflects her separate identity. Still, this alienation may be considered under a positive light since it enables Laura’s process of

resistance against and emancipation from the confines of the conventional understandings of womanhood.

Laura's resistance begins as a "passive" one, to use Knoll's terminology, and her methods of resistance are closely connected to nature. During her walks around London, she starts to collect flowers, which helps her create a wild room. Moreover, with her purchases Laura practices her financial independence, as well as a sense of self-identity for the first time. Her modifying of the space she lives in and financial independence become first steps towards her assertion of the self. These steps may be paralleled with Woolf's ideas. Woolf emphasises that "a woman must have money and a room of her own" (50) to be able to write. The requirements Woolf points to for writing fiction may apply to any area of life for women to practice any kind of selfhood. Moreover, Laura's daydreams might be accepted as moments of resistance against the daily flow of life in London. Through her daydreams, she withstands against hierarchical binary logic's claims on her identity. Laura's daydreams are described as follows:

At these times she was subject to a peculiar kind of day-dreaming, so vivid as to be almost a hallucination: that she was in the country, at dusk, and alone, and strangely at peace. She did not recall the places which she had visited in holiday-time, these reproached her like opportunities neglected. But while her body sat before the first fires and was cosy with Henry and Caroline, her mind walked by lonely seaboards, in marshes and fens, or came at nightfall to the edge of a wood. She never imagined herself in these places by daylight. She never thought of them as being in any way beautiful. It was not beauty at all that she wanted, or, depressed though she was, she would have bought a ticket to somewhere or other upon the Metropolitan railway and gone out to see the recumbent autumnal graces of the countryside. Her mind was groping after something that eluded her experience, a something that was shadowy and menacing, and yet in some way congenial; a something that lurked in waste places, that was hinted at by the sound of water gurgling through deep channels and by the voices of birds. (29)

Laura dreams not of the country which is commonly associated with domesticity and patriotism, but of the wilderness that transcends the dualisms' sphere of reason. Additionally, it is highlighted that Laura's longing for nature is not a romantic longing for beauty, but it is to achieve a state above binary dualisms, a state where concepts and boundaries are enmeshed together. As Marcus indicates, "Townsend Warner

envisions a ‘wilderness of one’s own, away from family control of domestic space and male control of public space’ (136). Laura finds this place in her wanderings in London, invoking the figures of the flaneur and flaneuse<sup>7</sup>, which begin to be seen more often with modernism, as Mrs. Dalloway. She finds a shop that sells hand-made products from the country, and this leads Laura to her epiphany. She “forgets that she is in London, she forgets her whole life in London” (31). She is beamed into a place of nature and remembers “squirrels” (33). Laura’s sudden mental departure from London and allusions of “not London” leads her to nature and animals, highlighting the exclusion of sphere of nature and animals from the city. In London, natural spaces are confined into parks and regulated areas, as in the case of “respectable” women at the time, who are excluded from the public sphere of the city and constrained to private spaces.

Harriet Baker states that “[w]hen Warner began writing in the 1920s, ‘the country’ was being celebrated as the apotheosis of patriotism” (49) and the perspective “claimed authority over landscape in the period between the wars” (50). Unlike Lady Place, which reflects Baker’s point, Great Mop emerges as a place where binary dualisms are dissolved, and boundaries are diminished both spatially and conceptually. Moreover, Laura’s move to Great Mop materialises her resistance against the conventional gender roles that are imposed on her. The process of Laura’s settlement into Great Mop also represents her final struggle against the logic of the binary dualisms oppressing women and finally becoming liberated from them. As Plumwood states, “[t]he resolution of dualism requires, not just recognition of difference, but recognition of a complex, interacting pattern of both continuity *and* difference (67, emphasis in the original). The time Laura spends in Great Mop, by demolishing the dualisms, promotes continuity; yet she also recognises the *difference* between man and woman as Plumwood recommends. Yet this difference is especially rooted in culture and society rather than an intrinsic one informed by dualisms such as reason versus emotion. Marcus states

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<sup>7</sup> Laurel Elkin describes the *flaneur* as “[a] figure of masculine privilege and leisure, with time and money and no immediate responsibilities to claim his attention, the flâneur understands the city as few of its inhabitants do, for he has memorised it with his feet. Every corner, alleyway and stairway has the ability to plunge him into rêverie” (7). The term *flaneuse* is later derived from the term which “began [to be used] around 1840 and peaked in the 1920s” (10) with movements such as Suffrage and modernism’s women counterparts of the term *flaneur*.

that “[i]n modern British fantasy novels, an imaginary mythological wild space is sought by women as a source of creativity and selfhood in response to the phallogentric city” (136). Laura, disappointed by the city, retires into “wild space.” Great Mop becomes the place of resistance both against phallogentricism and androcentrism.

In Great Mop, the dualisms of human/animal, human/nature and public/private are absent and the boundaries among those are dissolved. Laura’s living arrangement in Great Mop reveals the dissolution of the public/private dualism. The concept of house-sharing might be accepted as a new situation that started in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Living in a house that is outside of the domestic space, which conventionally corresponds to the traditional family life, with people that are not the part of the traditional family blurs the line between the public and the private. Sterry explains that, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century “[t]hese forms of shared housing were problematic because they meant that working single women were located outside of the traditional home and its associated domestic scripts” (34). Single women’s independent relation to space challenges the societal norms of the era, yet Great Mop is represented as free from the aforementioned concepts. Expanding upon the dissolution of binary boundaries, the novel’s perspective on the human/animal dualism is also significant in terms of boundaries. Particularly the Great Mop section of the novel blurs the boundary between the categories of human and animal. When Laura meets her neighbour Mr. Saunter, she attempts to resemble him to an animal but then decides that “he resembled no animal except man” (45). Similarly, the idea of humans’ domination over animals is also challenged. When Titus suggests Laura keep the black cat that she has found, Laura answers that “I don’t think one has much option about keeping a cat. If it wants to stay with me it shall” (60). Both the human/animal dualism and the deeply rooted hierarchical ideas are undermined by the novel. Moreover, Laura’s relationship with nature also entails the refusal of dualism and promotion of continuity. Laura spends her time in Great Mop by wandering in the woods, and in these excursions, she constantly senses that nature communicates with her. Natural entities such as the moon, the sky, trees and rocks are often personified. Through these personifications, nature and human are intermingled. The continuity between human and nature is also reflected in a scene where Laura perceives an old woman preparing the products in the shop as “[a] solitary old woman picking fruit in a darkening orchard . . . standing with

upstretched arms among her fruit trees as though she were a tree herself, growing out of the long grass, with arms stretched up like branches” (31). Laura’s imagination unites nature and human, highlighting the fact that human is indeed a part of nature and inseparable from it.

Alongside the conceptional boundaries, the novel also scrutinises physical boundaries and examines ways of interaction with space without hierarchical restrictions. The first example of this is when a black cat mysteriously enters the house when all doors and windows are closed. This seems to be symbolic of the dissolution of the idea of boundary and also the dualisms of the outside/inside or the public/private. Great Mop is described as a place that from its woods to houses is one and unified since the public and private lives are not strictly separated but a continuity of each other. In keeping with this, Laura observes that people are always outside in Great Mop regardless of the time of the day. Laura’s connection with this place also reveals the novel’s perspective on boundaries. For the first time in her life, she feels free to engage with space without any constraints. Laura’s sense of her newly-found mobility is described as “Laura knew that the Russian witches live in small huts mounted upon three giant hen's legs, all yellow and scaly. The legs can go; when the witch desires to move her dwelling the legs stalk through the forest” (49). Laura’s new identity as a witch, representing her departure from the logic of dualisms bestows on her the freedom of movement. After she gains her mobility, Laura also begins to engage with space more mindfully and aims to unshackle further from the restrictions binding her. In her wanderings in the woods, Laura gradually grows more accustomed to the place, and finally she decides to engage with the space individually, liberated from meanings and boundaries that have been assigned to nature by humans:

About this time she did an odd thing. In her wanderings she had found a disused well. It was sunk at the side of a green lane, and grass and bushes had grown up around its low rim, almost to conceal it; the wooden frame was broken and moldered, ropes and pulleys had long ago been taken away, and the water was sunk far down, only distinguishable as an uncertain reflection of the sky. Here, one evening, she brought her guide-book and her map. Pushing aside the bushes she sat down upon the low rim of the well. It was a still, mild evening towards the end of February, the birds were singing, there was a smell of growth in the air, the light lingered in the fields as though it were glad to linger. Looking into the well she watched the reflected sky grow dimmer; and when she raised her eyes

the gathering darkness of the landscape surprised her. The time had come. She took the guidebook and the map and threw them in. (44)

As Harriet Baker states, Laura's "initial investment in cartographical empiricism gives way to an alternative interaction with space" (48). Derek Gregory explains "cartographical empiricism" as follows:

Scholars engaging with critical cartography in particular have become cautious of the work that modern maps do in situating the viewer above and outside space, for such a view has been key in fostering a false sense of separateness between the viewer and what is viewed, promoting the notion of space as an object and engendering a geographical imagination where nature and its local inhabitants have become merely resources for settlement, domination and exploitation. (qtd. in Bellone et. al. 18)

Considering Gregory's ideas about the role cartographical materials might play, Laura's relationship with the map can be considered as a representation of her understanding of space. Laura's act of throwing the map enables her to connect with the space without either conceptual nor physical boundaries, hence, her aggression towards the cartographical material might be considered as a representation of her understanding of maps; to use Gregory's words, she rejects the map as a cultural signifier that distinguishes the real/represented spaces from each other.

Titus's arrival at Great Mop emerges as a threat from the outer world into this realm experienced without binaries, boundaries and with continuity. When he arrives, so do Laura's identity that is defined according to conventional gender norms as the provider of the needs of men. Laura becomes "Lolly" once again. Titus reminds Laura of her old self which was unable to practice any selfhood and of her "chains" (52). Titus's exploitative, masculine practice of Great Mop disturbs Laura's experience of the space and her connection to it. The different ways in which Laura and Titus engage with Great Mop as a space can be seen in the following passage:

It was different in kind from hers. It was comfortable, it was portable, it was a reasonable appreciative appetite, a possessive and masculine love. It almost estranged her from Great Mop that he should be able to love it so well, and express his love so easily. He loved the countryside as though it were a body.

She had not loved it so. For days at a time she had been unconscious of its outward aspect, for long before she saw it she had loved it and blessed

it. With no earnest but a name, a few lines and letters on a map, and a spray of beech-leaves, she had trusted the place and staked everything on her trust. She had struggled to come, but there had been no such struggle for Titus. It was as easy for him to quit Bloomsbury for the Chilterns as for a cat to jump from a hard chair to a soft. Now after a little scrabbling and exploration he was curled up in the green lap and purring over the landscape. The green lap was comfortable. He meant to stay in it, for he knew where he was well off. (61)

Titus's relation to Great Mop is reflected perfectly in line with the dualisms of mind against body and the masculine against the feminine. In Great Mop, Titus backgrounds both nature and Laura as motherly figures, existing simply to cater for his needs. With his domination of nature and Laura, Titus reaches a state of ease and satisfaction.

Titus's love towards the Great Mop is represented as a masculine love from the perspective of binary dualisms, for instance, it is stated that Titus loves the place "as though it were a body" (61). Yet, Laura's relation to the same place is not a contrary feminine love which is linked to nurturance and motherliness. Her connection to the place is rooted in Great Mop's individual meanings for Laura. Great Mop represents her newly-gained sense of self, individuality and resistance. A sphere that is constructed without binary hierarchies might not mean quite different connotations for the dominant because, the dominant may not be aware of their dominance since it is the natural state of being for them. Yet, the dissolution of binaries entirely liberates the subordinated. It is highlighted that Titus could find ease anywhere, yet Great Mop is the only place where Laura is emancipated and can practice a sense of self. (54). The masculine invasion of nature is also represented in a dream Laura has. After Titus's arrival, she dreams that Fuseli, a character in Titus's book, "had arrived at Mr. Saunter's poultry-farm, killed the hens, and laid out the field as a golf-course" (53). Unconsciously, Laura relates her own seizure by the will of a man to the seizure and destruction of animals and nature in the name of male pleasure.

Laura's relation to Great Mop does not rest on the problematic idea that women have an intrinsic connection to nature; it is rather a result of the meanings of emancipation and individualisation that Great Mop invokes in Laura. Laura's clash with the role of the feminine might also be seen in her denial of being a maternal figure for Titus.

Despite her love for Titus since his childhood, when Titus appears as a figure that



disrupts the harmony of Laura's life, she makes a deal with the devil to eliminate him. For Laura, the significance of her liberty is greater than her love for Titus.

Although Laura's connection with nature and the theme of witchcraft carries allusions to cultural and spiritual ecofeminism, Warner's novel moves apart from these perspectives through the employment of a satirical and realist style and the treatment of the fantastic from within a realist framework.<sup>8</sup> *Lolly Willowes* envisions a space where nature, women and animals are liberated from hierarchical binary dualisms and a feminist logic is achieved. Warner's utilisation of a realist manner of writing with fantastical themes creates a style that challenges boundaries in itself. David James states that "Warner reenvisioned the potential of realism and, in so doing, redirected a high modernist commitment to the discursive mastery of form toward fiction's ability to engage with specific social issues of her time" (114) and "she inhabited 'late modernism' with a resolute poetics, generating versions of modernity, and women's mobility within it" (129). Warner adopts the clear manner of realism through her detailed descriptions of the daily family life in England in the period and the external world in order to display and challenge the dualisms of the era and the fantasy to satirise the imputations of binary hierarchies. According to Claire Barwise, the starkest satirical figure in the novel is the devil since there is a significant contrast between the perception of Satan in Christian understanding which is dangerous and doomed, and representations of Satan in the novel. The representation of Satan in the novel merely intervenes and if he does, it is narrated as simply a comical attack of bees (104). Similarly, Warner does not treat witchcraft as a supernatural phenomenon. On the contrary, the only seemingly unnatural incident in the novel, the banishment of Titus from Great Mop, is later explained with a chain of coincidences. The devil is materialised yet in the form of a human and as a tool to channel Laura's perspective on the subject of binary hierarchies. Moreover, although Laura is transformed into a witch, she does not find witches' sabbath very different from other social gatherings and is bored by it. Hence, Warner does not utilise witchcraft as a state of womanhood that is charged with destructive, uncanny magic but as a means to achieve self-assertion. Additionally, there are also warlocks, and this is reminded to Laura by the

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<sup>8</sup> Even though treatment of the subjects differs, Warner's style is reminiscent of magical realism's treatment of reality and the supernatural.

devil. Laura's following answer to the devil emphasises the idea that the difference between man and woman is rooted in social and cultural norms:

When I think of witches, I seem to see all over England, all over Europe, women living and growing old, as common as blackberries, and as unregarded. I see them, wives and sisters of respectable men, chapel members, and blacksmiths, and small farmers, and Puritans. In places like Bedfordshire, the sort of country one sees from the train. You know. Well, there they were, there they are, child-rearing, house-keeping, hanging washed dishcloths on currant bushes; and for diversion each other's silly conversation, and listening to men talking together in the way that men talk and women listen. Quite different to the way women talk, and men listen, if they listen at all. And all the time being thrust further down into dullness when the one thing all women hate is to be thought dull. And on Sunday they put on plain stuff gowns and starched white coverings on their heads and necks—the Puritan ones did—and walked across the fields to chapel, and listened to the sermon. Sin and Grace, and God and the—” (she stopped herself just in time), “and St. Paul. All men's things, like politics, or mathematics. Nothing for them except subjection and plaiting their hair. And on the way back they listened to more talk. Talk about the sermon, or war, or cock-fighting; and when they got back, there were the potatoes to be cooked for dinner. (75)

The passage suggests that the differences between men and women stem from the fact that women throughout history have suffered due to hierarchical gender roles. Hence, the novel approaches the figure of the witch from a feminist perspective. Being a witch is positioned as an alternative to women's subordinate lives and objectification in patriarchal societies. Although feminist spirituality, as in the case of spiritual ecofeminism has faced criticism of essentialism, it is safe to claim that witchery is often reclaimed by feminists, with the intention of “‘revision’ power, authority, sexuality, and social relation” (Griffin 36). Similarly, Kate Macdonald states that, in the novel, “witchcraft as a symbol is repurposed: the witches have agency, which we are to understand as a positive demonstration of their free will” (216). Likewise, in the novel, while warlocks' reasons for making deals with the devil is related to their ambitions, as in the example of Titus who turns to witchery for his book or the young man in the sabbath who wishes to be the most important person in a party, for women, becoming witches is the way to live an emancipated life. Parallel to Plumwood's idea of the feminist logic, witches in the novel do not aim to become the superior party in the scheme of dualisms, but rather aim to set themselves free of them as in the case of Laura. Some witches such as Laura's landlady Mrs. Leak simply continue their daily

lives yet without the dominance of a masculine figure. Additionally, the simile of the common berries in the passage above highlights how woman's backgrounding runs parallel with their naturalisation. It can be said that this figure of speech displays how women are merely considered as resources through the perspective of the master identity.

To conclude, *Lolly Willowes* reflects how power relationships and dualisms affect women's interactions with space in its various forms from domestic living spaces to the wilderness. Warner's novel both displays the domination of androcentric structures and offers alternative ways to practice space in a manner that are parallel to the perspective of critical ecofeminism. While creating an ecofeminist stance and aesthetic, Warner utilises the tools of realism, satire and the fantastic. Although it significantly diverges from high modernist works in terms of its narrative style, Warner's novel is informed by the modernist emphasis on individualism. Great Mop represents a sphere where binary dualisms and boundaries are extinct; however, the place is not a product of Laura's resistance. Her resistance rather lies in her setting herself free from the imposition of dualisms and retirement into Great Mop. Laura is not involved in Great Mop's process of becoming a space free from hierarchical boundaries, which is precisely what the female protagonist, Jean, is engaged with in Aminatta Forna's *Happiness*.

## CHAPTER 4

### BINARY OPPOSITIONS AND SPATIAL INTERACTIONS IN *HAPPINESS*

The day before yesterday, I appeased a life-long ambition: I held a young fox in my arms I held him in my arms & snuffed his wild geranium smell, and suddenly he thrust his long nose under my chin, and burrowed against my shoulder, and subsided into bliss. His paws are very soft, soft as raspberries. Everything about him is elegant—an Adonis of an animal.

(Townsend Warner, Sylvia. *Letters*, London: Chatto and Wilnus, 1982.)

This chapter aims to examine *Happiness* (2018) by Aminatta Forna through the lens of ecofeminism, focusing on the dualisms that have diminished, transformed or remained intact in the new millennium. The chapter deals specifically with the spatial elements of the text, how they are represented, and how their representations change according to the characters' relationship with binary oppositions. Furthermore, it analyses the relations characters build with space, each other, and non-humans in their environment from an ecofeminist perspective. Additionally, the chapter will explore how the ecofeminist tools of subverting binary dualisms have changed in time compared to the era when Warner's novel was published.

*Happiness* is a multistranded novel composed of several intermingled stories that take place in various times and places across the world. Similarly, the narrative includes many characters from different backgrounds. The novel begins with a short section titled "The Last Wolf," which takes place in Greenhampton, USA, in 1834. In this chapter, the story of a "wolfer" who is hired by the villagers due to the fear that wolves are reappearing in the area is narrated. He hunts the wolves, killing many other animals in the meantime. The first chapter of the novel begins by the narrator's account of a fox walking in Southbank in London amongst people. Then, the two protagonists, Jean and Atilla, are introduced. Jean is an American biologist, who works in London as an urban wildlife biologist. She tracks the foxes in the city. She also has a side job: she designs "wild spaces" in the city using flowers, plants and weeds in parts of the

buildings such as balconies and terraces. Atilla is a Ghanian psychiatrist, specialising in trauma in conflict zones. He stays in London to deliver a keynote speech at a conference on trauma. Additionally, he wants to check up on his friend's daughter, Amu, in London since her family has not heard from her for a while. He learns that she is taken from her apartment by the Immigration office for interrogation and her son, Tano, is placed under temporary protection by the social services, yet he runs away. Soon it is revealed that they have no problems with Immigration since they are legal immigrants, yet Amu is hospitalised due to diabetes and since Tano has escaped they cannot be reunited. Jean and Atilla coincidentally run into each other in the city multiple times before they actually meet and soon a romantic relationship starts between the two. The novel includes some chapters written entirely in italics, which are flashbacks to certain periods in Jean's and Atilla's lives. The novel gives room to moments from Jean's past which are related to her former marriage, son and previous job in the USA. As for Atilla's past, the text returns to some moments from his marriage with his deceased wife and his job as a psychiatrist in different war zones. Jean and Atilla, together with their acquaintances in the city consisting mainly of immigrants from different parts of the world and working as sweepers, guards or traffic wardens, search the city to find Tano and eventually manage to reunite him with his mother.

In order to discuss *Happiness*, and its approach towards binary dualisms and space in the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it may be useful to review some emerging common features and values of the contemporary era. There are some elements that various critics agree on in terms of the new approaches which, in general, promote a perspective of "inclusion" and "connection" instead of postmodernism's alienation (Childish and Thomson 144), "trust" instead of postmodernism's cynicism (Hassan 54); and realism and trust instead of postmodernism's constant irony, satire and disbelief (Hassan 48). Hassan points to what is needed in the aftermath of postmodernism as follows:

Beyond postmodernism, beyond the evasions of poststructuralist theories and pieties of postcolonial studies, we need to discover new relations between selves and others, margins and centers, fragments and wholes – indeed, new relations between selves and selves, margins and margins, centers and centers – discover what I call a new, pragmatic and planetary

civility. That's the crux and issue of postmodernity. (53)

There seems to be a consensus emerging among many contemporary thinkers on the need to find ways of connecting with the Other sincerely. They also accept that this perspective might be utopian, yet as Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker assert, an “informed naivety, a pragmatic idealism” (368) is preferred in the present discourse. The sentiment of belief is longed for after the distanced manner of postmodernism. It may be said that the light-heartedness of postmodernism has persisted yet instead of postmodernism's irony or satire, it is now achieved through a hopefulness for the better days to come. Thus, these better days are to be achieved through connections. Jaishree K. Odin defines the aesthetic of the era as an aesthetic that “represents the need to switch from the linear, univocal, closed, authoritative aesthetic involving passive encounters to that of the nonlinear, multivocal, open, nonhierarchical aesthetic involving active encounters” (599).

Parallel to these contemporary perspectives, Aminatta Forna comments on the tone of *Happiness* by stating that it includes “[a] positive temperament, an inclination to humor, the passage of time, being surrounded by people who care but do not ‘catastrophize’” (420). Forna's novel does not construct its ecofeminism only around the questions of gender and environment; it also includes other marginalised and otherised groups such as immigrants and workers. The novel promotes a sense of connection both physically with the environment and emotionally with humans and non-humans in a shared space. However, while the novel includes class and marginalisation issues, its stark representation of female existence in spaces that exist outside the urban/natural dichotomy suggests that the novel provides an open space for discussions on gender. In terms of equality and justice, *Happiness*, different from *Lolly Willowes*, also highlights other dualisms that are used for alienation and subjugation by conventional logic such as race, sanity, and species are highlighted alongside gender. The novel suggests that even though in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the oppression that is based on gender is subtler, it still affects the lives of women deeply.

#### **4.1 The Problematisation of Binary Dualisms in *Happiness***

In the novel, Jean is portrayed as an independent scientist. On the surface, her husband, Ray, encourages his wife's intellectual activities. For example, when Jean has

graduated from university, “Ray had been proud of her” (45). Yet, it is also shown how he is uncomfortable with the fact that Jean needs to be engaged with her work more than Ray, and this, among other things, plays a role in their divorce. This suggests that the institution of marriage may still be shaped by some patriarchal conventions. Jean and Ray’s marital problems and Jean’s relief at the end of the marriage is described as follows:

Ray felt he could not compete with her work. If she had run her own nail salon probably they would still be together.

Jean filled the space left where her marriage had been with more work. She did not work frenetically and in order to forget, she immersed herself in work, gradually and pleurably, as though she were walking into a warm lake. She worked without guilt, freed from the negotiations over time, the couples’ curfew, the roll call of meals, she worked the way she had always wanted. If she needed to stay out all night, she did so. She began to draw up proposals and to carry out her own studies. (70)

The passage highlights how Jean’s work as a scientist renders her marriage more difficult than a job in a service industry, which is a kind of job more appropriate for women according to the conventional logic. Jean’s position as a scientist threatens the masculine side of the marriage. The ending of the marriage enables Jean to fully commit herself to a job without being constrained by the domestic sphere. Moreover, this excerpt displays that, the care of the household, such as preparing meals for the family is still considered as a responsibility of the woman. The use of the term “roll call” which is generally used in contexts such as military or prison suggests Jean’s sense of confinement due to the institution of marriage. This is also underlined in the part where it is stated Jean “cooked less and ran more” (70) after her marriage. In her marriage, Jean’s role as a caregiver surpasses her own identity and hobbies. In that sense, the novel suggests that woman’s placement in the sphere of need, and her role as the provider of need still continues in the new millennium.

In order to fully understand the oppression Jean faces in the domestic sphere, motherhood and its implications for woman are to be reviewed. According to Adrienne Rich, the resentment of woman’s ability to create a new life and “fear of her apparent power to affect the male genitals” is compensated through entrapping woman into values attributed to “motherliness” such as nurture, selflessness and sacrifice (114). She also states that it is not motherhood but the patriarchal institution of motherhood

that alienates women from their own bodies (39). In the novel, both the obligations that are related to the traditional idea of motherhood and Jean's struggle for an authentic motherhood free from the conventional logic's obligations are displayed. When Jean attends a radio show as an expert guest to answer the questions about city foxes and tries to convince the audience that they are not dangerous, an audience member asks her if she is a mother. Jean answers that she is, and the audience member says "well, then you should know better" (73). Here it can be seen that society expects mothers to be responsible for others, even when the other is hypothetical. According to this audience member who gives voice to the conventional logic, being a mother means to be watchful and prioritise others' hypothetical safety over her own beliefs. Since only women with biological female bodies are able to become mothers, motherhood is used as a tool to further subjugate women. In addition to that, it is mentioned that the only time Jean stops running is during her pregnancy and after the birth of his son. As Rich maintains, pregnancy and birth become a process for Jean that disrupts her connection to her own body. Running is reflected as a coping mechanism and as a window to practice selfhood for Jean, who "run[s] all the way through her marriage. Four years ago she ran out of her marriage" (21). It might be said that pregnancy and birth is a period that she is not able to run, hence a period that she cannot practice selfhood.

Jean's resistance against traditional motherhood gives harm to her relationship with her son, Luke. Jean is represented as an attentive mother, yet as Luke grows, he becomes closer to his dad. She considers this as a natural transition, and she realises that she has missed solitude and being able to do her job independently. As a consequence of Jean's immersion into her job, this transitory period becomes permanent. Jean's move to London for her job creates a physical distance between Jean and Luke, which enhances their emotional distance. They rarely speak, and in these rare conversations, technological problems occur during the connection. The disruptions in the internet and telephone connections represent not only the physical difficulty of communication between the mother and son but also an emotional one. In one of these conversations, Luke refers to Jean as "Jean" and his father as "pops" (100). This suggests that Jean's prioritising her work displaces her from the position of traditional motherhood. Through her immersion into her intellectual activities/the



sphere of reason, her participation in the sphere of femininity which is tied to motherhood is weakened. Yet she tries and finds channels of communication with Luke in time. The strengthening of Jean and Luke's relationship is not rooted in traditional roles and responsibilities of mother-child relations but in her persistence and willingness to communicate and connect. Telling her "I've missed you, Mom" (277), Luke decides to visit Jean in London. Their overcoming of the emotional barrier leads to the overcoming of the physical distance. Accordingly, their process of reconnection displays that dualisms that maintain daily life in its every aspect as personal relationships can be subverted through intimate connections. Jean's return to the position of "mom" for Luke whilst she continues her job as a scientist might prove that it is possible to exist in the world without building an either/or relationship with the sides of binary dualisms. As opposed to what we see in *Lolly Willowes* in the relationship between Laura and Titus, where Laura has to banish Titus to be able to exist freely, in Forna's novel, an alternative way to challenge the binary dualisms is exhibited. As Plumwood states, "liberatory or subversive reconstruction without total demolition and abandonment" of social identities is possible ("Mastery" 63).

Another dualism interrogated by the novel is that of reason versus emotion. It is shown that especially from the perspective of Western society, the spheres of reason and emotion are completely separated, which plays a part in the diagnosis of emotions as symptomatic of mental disruptions. Plumwood claims that one of the traps of challenging the binary dualisms is to abandon the subordinated sphere in favour of the dominant sphere, meaning that, for instance, to deny feminine-accepted qualities completely to achieve a human ideal in which everyone is in the sphere of the dominant, as in the strategy of second-wave feminism (31). It might be possible to claim that, in the Western society of the 21<sup>st</sup> century this strategy of dissolution is applied to emotions. In the novel, this is reflected through what happens to an immigrant character named Adama and Atilla's research on trauma. As a trauma specialist, Atilla is assigned the case of Adama Sherrif, who burns down her house after the death of her husband, to consult the possibility of PTSD in her. Adama's lawyer uses the PTSD claim in order to settle a milder penalty for Adama. Yet, Atilla disagrees. He thinks Adama's action is not rooted in a mental problem, but simply in her emotions. The claim is not the result of a careful assessment of Adama's

psychological state, Attila thinks, but rather an invention of the defendant based on some formulaic judgements about Adama's race and possible reactions in the case of the loss of a spouse. Attila's response to the pathologization of Adama's emotions is reflected in the following excerpt:

In Adama Sherriff's case the predominant response is sadness and anger, symptoms of complicated or pathological grief.'

'Emotions,' said Attila.

'I beg your pardon?'

'You call them symptoms, I call them emotions.' He felt tired. He wondered if one day every feeling in the world would be identified, catalogued and marked for eradication. Was there no human experience that did not merit treatment now? (241)

Attila problematises the perspective, common in the Western world, that approaches emotions as symptoms of mental health problems. He thinks the consequences of a society's alienation from emotions are very serious:

A society went numb, Attila thought as he waited for the lights to change, as often from being battered by fate as from never being touched. The untouched, who were raised under glass, who had never felt the rain or the wind, had never been caught in a storm, or run from the thunder and lightning, could not bear to be reminded of their own mortality. They lived in terror of what they could not control and in their terror they tried to control everything, to harness the wind. The women for whom Adama sewed clothes, upon whose bodies she fitted dresses, so afraid of their own mortality they would cross the road rather than confront a reminder of it. No shadow could be allowed to darken their lives as they imagined them. They were terrified of the slightest hurt, afraid of fear itself. (217)

This passage comments on the total demolishing of emotions from daily life in order to avoid unpleasant feelings. The idea of the human is altered according to the dominant side of the binary dualisms, excluding emotions from the human existence, and this prevents a holistic experience of the world we live in. While reviewing *Happiness* through a Foucauldian perspective, in terms of the idea of mental health, Christina Fogarasi states that "[m]oments of disclosure [of the claimed mental illness] always arise at the bidding of an authority figure" (53), meaning that the psychological problem is not a condition that manifests itself but an imputation of the authorial figures. Hence, it separates the individual from its own existence, physically and mentally. As a consequence, Fogarasi states, "[t]his hermeneutic... reinstalls the

disciplinary power of an oppressive regime, by inviting the individual to see her behavior through the lens of ‘madness’ or ‘sin’. Indeed, instead of resolving these concerns, disclosure before the authority figure ‘produces’ them” (53). So, diagnosis does not benefit the individual; on the contrary, it reassures the influence of the dominant perspective, in this case of binary dualisms.

The idea of race is also integrated into the discussions concerning mental health as Adama’s race is used as a way to strengthen the claim of mental illness. According to the first psychiatrist who examines Adama, her past life in Africa causes “an accumulation of traumas” (203). Yet, Atilla states that “I never know an African who did,” meaning getting traumatised by difficult events. Hence, Atilla sees the scholarship on trauma as largely dominated by Western understandings since he considers the pathologizing of human emotions as an invention of the Western separation of emotions from the sphere of the mortal. Moreover, although Adama has a relationship with her neighbours before the death of her husband, Ibrahim, the first psychiatrist ties the neighbours’ distanced behaviour after his death to racism, ignoring other possibilities. The ready-made claim of racism may be a consequence of the ideas on what is typically expected to happen to an immigrant family in England, which in itself harbours the sharp distinction between judgements based on race. The problems an African person faces is automatically connected to race without any further analysis since she is regarded inferior in the scheme of binary dualisms. Yet, as Atilla points out, in this specific case, the race and where she comes from do not render her weaker but more resilient. This might show how the subordinated side of the dualisms cannot be attributed positive qualities by the dominant side, which is, in this case, a white English psychiatrist and a lawyer. Moreover, authorities consider deportation as a penalty for Adama, yet Adama and Ibrahim have already made plans for moving back to Sierra Leone, another example of attributing only negative qualities to Africa. What the English authorities see as a penalty is actually a dream for Adama and Ibrahim. Atilla also comments on how the dualism of normal/abnormal dualisms which is rooted in the idea of rationality, is a Western concept as follows:

By what measure do we define normality? Where do we draw the line? Do we take the life experiences of the people of Cuckfield as the measure and decide all else is deviant? Statistically that might just about hold up around the British Isles, but even then ... Adama Sherriff lost a husband at a young

age, a very common occurrence in many, if not most, countries in the world.’ How to construe normality was not a new argument, but it remained the fact that preventing practitioners in places like this from defaulting to the values of the West was to wage an unending campaign. Atilla suspected that Greyforth was the kind of person who when he said ‘people’ meant ‘white people’. (240)

Atilla points out how “normality” is defined in the discipline of psychiatry on the basis of the criteria set by white people. As Plumwood indicates, applying one prescription to all, ignoring the contextual difference, does not produce effective or constructive consequences (42). Therefore, as highlighted by the critical ecofeminist perspective, a stance that considers difference apart from the hierarchal binaries is necessary. In the case of Adama, Atilla concludes that “[t]he death of a spouse is a natural life event and Adama, the patient’s, response to it is wholly proportionate, requiring neither diagnosis nor treatment” (239) unlike the previous psychiatrist’s diagnosis of “complicated grief” (240) that pathologises normal emotions. On the contrary, what is significant for Atilla is not Adama’s grief but her neighbours’ instinct to avoid negative emotions without any empathy for Adama.

A related dualism that is explored in the novel is the dualism of civilised/savage. Plumwood explains the idea of savagery, which is closely related to race that places the White civilised man against the non-White uncivilised savage as follows:

With the rise of colonial conquest and expansion and the ideology of progress as technological conquest, nature as the primitive and as the past from which certain ‘advanced’ human cultures have supposedly risen is also represented as the dualised underside of the concept of civilisation, in the contrast of civilisation (reason) versus primitivism (barbarism or savagery), and in the ideology of racism as the contrast of higher, civilised races to lower, backward races. (“Mastery” 107)

In *Happiness*, it is shown how this idea is still alive in our contemporary world. The first instance of this occurs while Atilla is on duty in the war between Bosnia and Serbia between the years 1992-1995. Although this war took place between two Eastern European nations, one of these nations was considered “naturally” European while other was not seen or treated so:

Clinton said U.S. allies in Europe blocked proposals to adjust or remove the embargo. They justified their opposition on plausible humanitarian

grounds, arguing that more arms would only fuel the bloodshed, but privately, said the president, key allies objected that an independent Bosnia would be "unnatural" as the only Muslim nation in Europe... He said President François Mitterrand of France had been especially blunt in saying that Bosnia did not belong, and that British officials also spoke of a painful but realistic restoration of Christian Europe. (Branch 18)

In the novel, Atilla tries to negotiate peace and the Kenyan UN general supports the idea of peace. He states that his "men have no wish to be here" (64). Yet when Atilla speaks to the leader of the other side, he rejects it:

He said to Atilla in French: 'It is impossible. My men do not accept it.'

'And you?' Atilla answered in the same language.

'I do not accept it either.'

'What is the nature of your objection, if I may ask?'

A short, incredulous laugh. 'To take orders from dirty, uncivilised savages.' Only now did the militia commander look Atilla in the eye. (67)

The fact that the side that is defined as the savage by the French-speaking leader contains a Kenyan general and Atilla, another African man, is significant in the context. Though the sides of the war are racially close nations as Eastern Europeans, it might be said that while one side represents the dominant side of the binary dualisms, which is the European in this context, the other side represents the colonised savage. Despite their similar nationality, they represent two different sides of the binary oppositions. This proves the arbitrariness and constructedness of the hierarchies between them. Additionally, the attribution of the savagery and some atrocious actions of the side that deems the other side savage are highlighted in the novel. Atilla concludes that there will always be people who commit violence, and violence's coming to surface is not connected to race or any other factor but to the opportunity to bringing it to the surface. The perspective that deems Africans savage is also satirised in a conversation between Jean and Atilla after their intercourse, while they are talking about scars on each other's bodies as follows:

She ran her fingertips along a scar on his shoulder, back and over the wax-smooth ridge.

'A spear tip,' he said. 'A raid by a rival tribe. My grandmother saved me.'

'Bullshit,' she said. (237)

Jean and Atilla's exchange subverts the stereotypical perspectives on Africa and Africans by displaying the absurdity of such views in a conversation between an African person and a person from the Global North. The novel both exhibits and undermines the civilised/savage dualism.

The novel also deals with the human/animal dualism. Animals are represented facing constant threat from humans. Additionally, the novel draws parallels between the ways in which socially marginalised characters such as immigrants and animals are othered. In the opening section, "The Last Wolf," the wolfer is invited by the villagers who are worried that wolves, which they thought had been driven to extinction, have reappeared. Firstly, the fact that wolves are killed en masse by humans displays the fact that animals are under the threat of humans and not vice versa. The Wolfer, in the process of hunting the wolves uses and kills several other animals. For instance, he uses deer and foxes to attract wolves to traps and uses dogs to track the wolves (8), and all those animals are also killed. This displays how, alongside the direct violence against animals, they are also used as tools in human activities without any regard for their lives. After the death of the dog, which is owned by a human, the Wolfer thinks to himself that "[t]he mangled corpse of the dog testified to the brute strength of the wolf, would make it easier to face the owner who with luck would waive the cost of two dead dogs" (10). Here, it is highlighted how animals are only valued materially as tools to be used by humans. Moreover, when the Wolfer enters the village dragging dead animals at the back of his horse, little boys kick the dead animals, showing human hostility may not be rooted solely in humans' fear of the animals and instincts of self-protection but also in a desire for domination upon them. The theme of hostility towards animals continues in other settings of the novel. For instance, in the Bosnia section of the novel, the soldiers make a bet on killing a fox that wanders around their base since someone used to give it food. After shooting the fox, the soldier bursts into laughter, displaying the pleasure they take from violence against the animal. This part follows the cruelty that humans show towards each other in the war. The parallelism that is drawn between cruelty towards Other humans who are previously labelled as "savages" by one of the characters in the novel and animals proves the connections between violence and pushing some beings into the sphere of the Other through various strategies such as animalising humans or objectifying animals. Similarly, in

the part of the novel set in London in 2014, we see how a beggar and his dog are harassed by two boys. They attack them with firecrackers for amusement. Similar to the case in Bosnia, the targeting of a beggar who is dehumanised by the society and his dog shows how humans are prone to practice dominance over the other whom they see weak and/or inferior. The continuous theme of violence against animals from Greenhampton, 1834 to London, 2014 underlines humans' everlasting desire for dominance over animals and the maintaining of the dualism of human/animal. Additionally, as Dominic O'Key maintains, "[b]y moving across space and time from the figure of the wolf to the coyote and then to the fox, *Happiness* tracks a historically shifting rejection of the wild" (571).

#### **4.2 Intersections of Space and Critical Ecofeminism in *Happiness***

In *Happiness*, as in *Lolly Willowes*, representations of space carry significance in terms of displaying the role of binary dualisms in shaping the interactions between humans and between humans and animals. In Forna's novel, as a consequence of the changing world over one hundred years, dualisms have gained some additional layers alongside the existing ones such as the opposition between man and woman or human and animal. In this light, examining various spaces and how their perceptions and meanings are shaped by the characters' identities might be integrated into a critical ecofeminist perspective. As *Lolly Willowes* reflects some modernist concepts and perspectives thematically and structurally, *Happiness* reflects some of the sentiments of the post-postmodern era in which it was published. The novel emphasises how spaces are constructed through the mutual activities, interactions and connections of every being by which they are inhabited. Although this perspective may not seem to be much different from that of *Lolly Willowes*, the main difference might be found in the emphasis on the notion of connection and characters' willing collaboration in the process of constructing space. To put it in Hannerz's words, "willingness to become involved with the Other, and the concern with achieving competence in cultures which are initially alien" (240) emerges as a major concern in the later novel. *Happiness* demonstrates how binary dualisms are ingrained in space and how these dualisms are manifested through interactions within these spaces among humans and different species. Massey states that "the social relations of space are experienced differently, and variously interpreted by those holding different positions as part of it" (3); yet, the

novel shows how the collaboration of the ones who are subordinated by binary dualisms also considerably affects the construction of space.

Simultaneity emerges as another significant aspect of the novel in terms of promoting contemporary perspectives such as inclusivity and connection. Massey explains her conceptualisation of space as follows:

Such a way of conceptualizing the spatial, moreover, inherently implies the existence in the lived world of a simultaneous multiplicity of spaces: cross-cutting, intersecting, aligning with one another, or existing in relations of paradox or antagonism. Most evidently this is so because the social relations of space are experienced differently, and variously interpreted, by those holding different positions as part of it. (3)

From the vantage point of Massey's understanding of space and the simultaneity of it, spatial perspectives on literature allow us to recognise the multiple lives and perspectives in a given space. Consequently, this multidimensional approach cultivates a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness and interdependence of humans and non-humans in various social and cultural narratives. By acknowledging the coexistence of multiple realities and viewpoints, dominant narratives of binary dualisms can be challenged, and a more inclusive and nuanced interpretation of human and non-human experiences might be achieved.

In *Happiness*, some formal features of the novel bring to the fore the notion of simultaneity. The opening scene of the novel gives an account of the path a fox follows while walking in London amongst people and while the narrative is focused on the fox, some other incidents, human beings and entities that construct the space are also mentioned. Some smokers outside the buildings and security guards notice the fox, for example; we see people walk on the Waterloo Bridge passing by the fox, or a silver man performing his show nearby, a cameraman filming the river at the time, and so on (12-13). In this scene, Atilla and Jean are also introduced, yet while Atilla is mentioned by his name, Jean is first introduced as the woman who runs into Atilla. The initial focus of the narrative is on the movements of the fox, and then it moves onto Atilla. Then, with the sentence "[h]alf a mile south-east of the Bricklayers' Arms Jean, an American and resident of the city for a year, sat on the roof of her apartment and raised her binoculars to watch a fox as it danced along the boundary wall of the property



where she lived,” (19) the focus shifts to Jean. The shifts in the focus and inclusion of various entities -human and non-human- in space reflect simultaneity. This might show how simultaneity promotes inclusion and connections. Throughout the novel, various characters such as the fox, Jean, Atilla or the silver man, who may first appear as unconnected to each other, come to be connected in the lived space. Similarly, the narrative often moves through space with the help of phrases such as “half a mile away” (19) and “several miles away” (27). Through these shifts, as in Massey’s idea of simultaneity, various lives in the space and their interconnectedness are reflected.

Similar to *Lolly Willowes*, *Happiness*, too, deals with the idea of home, yet the novel also reflects how the ways in which the same notion is treated have transformed in a hundred-year time period between the two novels. This change of perspectives of home might be traced especially through Jean and Atilla. Jean is reflected as a woman who does not have a sentimental idea of home since her childhood. It is stated that “[t]he outdoors for Jean began as a refuge from the boredom of home and transformed into a passion” (85). This suggests how the idea of home does not connote safety or family for Jean but instead boredom. Additionally, the word “refuge” which is commonly tied to the idea of home is used to describe an escape from home. The contrast that is created between conventional associations of the word and Jean’s perspective problematises the former. Similarly, when Jean freely works outdoors after her divorce, the narrator remarks that “she did not wish to be at home. She wished only to be here” (46). This might show that Jean rejects the conventional logic’s chosen spheres for women not only with regard to home, but also the idea of family which is generally tied to similar conceptions. Laura’s search for a home in *Lolly Willowes* is replaced by a denial of the idea by Jean in *Happiness*. On the other hand, Jean’s embracing of the outdoors as a refuge, and Laura’s finding the idea of home in the wilderness of Great Marsh might be paralleled. The approaches of both women to the idea of home deconstruct the binary dualism’s placement of the woman within the dualism of outside/inside.

Atilla is also a character through whom the novel interrogates the notion of home, yet in a wider, more global context. Unlike *Lolly Willowes*’s limited movement in space inside the borders of England, *Happiness* includes various countries as a setting such as the US, Bosnia and Ghana, and different characters from these countries. Atilla,

though he identifies Accra as his home, can be named a “postcolonial flâneur,” which is defined by his cosmopolitanism. Simon Gikandi describes the cosmopolitanism of an intellectual, elite group as follows:

Cosmopolitans are the flâneurs of our age, walking the cities of the world, convinced that their identity can only be mirrored through their engagement with others, sure of their mastery of global cultural flows and their secure place within it... [t]he cosmopolitans’ engagement with the Other is enabled by their own privileged position within global culture. Unlike the refugees who opened my discussion, cosmopolitans are not stateless; they move freely across boundaries; they are autonomous subjects; they can choose when to engage with the Other and when to retreat. (32)

As a psychiatrist who was educated in a world metropolis, in London, Atilla fits into Gikandi’s definition of the cosmopolitan flâneur. Due to his education and his job that allows him to work in various parts of the world, Atilla subverts the boundaries by fluidly passing among them and this act of subversion also subverts the boundaries of binary dualisms by blurring the lines between self and other, or local and foreign.

As in *Lolly Willowes*, space is an integral component in *Happiness*, too, reflecting a critical ecofeminist perspective with the novel’s emphasis upon continuity, interrelatedness and interconnections in space. In her critical commentary on her own novel, Forna explains her approach to space as follows:

In particular, I’m interested in the way individuals are shaped by their environment. The physical world in which my characters have been raised and live informs their choices, models their behavior, and ultimately shapes their outlook on life, one that is contextualized in tradition, culture, and history... Throughout *Happiness* I chose to depict a natural world coexisting, often unseen and yet frequently intruding upon and connecting the lives of the humans in the city. (418)

As Forna states, in *Happiness*, space is a significant element in shaping the characters. Moreover, the coexistence of nature and the city acts as a facilitator of the coexistence of humans and animals. In addition to Forna’s statement, as the city constructs the characters, the characters construct the city, both physically and metaphorically, from the physical structures of the city to social and cultural ones.

In the novel, it is possible to observe how one’s position in binary oppositions affects

the way they exist in space and how they interact with it. The mentioned dualisms might be exemplified as man/woman or sanity/insanity as an extension of the dualism of rationality/animality. Interactions that are based on the dualism of man/woman might be observed through Jean and Atilla's movements in the city. Since both Jean and Atilla are foreigners in London, it is possible to consider them as others to the city. Therefore, it is possible to make a comparison based on their genders. Yet, for both, there are factors that ease their mobility in the city and all across the world. Jean as a citizen of the Global North and Atilla, as a cosmopolitan flaneur, both move more easily in London compared to, for instance, immigrants in the city. Atilla's movement in the city and the ease in his movements and interactions in the city are highlighted throughout the novel. For instance, Atilla's way of walking is described as "unheeded" (36) despite the late hour at the scene he encounters Jean. Atilla's comfort in his interactions with people in various places of the city is observed by "Jean, who had never been inside a place like this before, found it remarkable that this man, a black man no less, seemed so at ease in the world" in a scene where they go to an American bar together at Savoy Hotel. Jean's surprise in the face of Atilla's comfort reflects how in daily life dualisms might affect one's interaction with space and, moreover, how their effect is accepted as ordinary. Being a black man still connotes otherness in London, and Jean is surprised when this otherness is not mirrored in Atilla's movements. Compared to Atilla's sense of ease in his movements around the city, Jean does not have the same freedom as regards moving in the city, which shows the influence of the man/woman dualism in shaping our interactions with space. When Jean is searching for Tano, she notices some men who illegally hunt foxes in the park. When she comes across them, they harass Jean. The scene is narrated as follows:

The second man spoke: 'Listen, love, you're not in Kansas any more. So why don't you fuck off home? Go on, get your ruby slippers and piss off.

Behind the two men lights flashed. Momentarily the wind died and at the same time the dogs started up again. Jean dived past and started to run, she sprinted, fuelled by adrenalin and cold, heavily because she couldn't see where she was placing her feet. The wind seemed to be coming from everywhere. Shadows crossed in and out of the beams of the flashlight. The dogs had been loosed. She could almost feel the vibration of the ground caused by their galloping feet. (131)

The fact that Atilla is able to move in the city with ease while Jean is disturbed when

she does so reveals how, as in *Lolly Willowes*, women's movement in the city is still restricted. The dualism of outside/inside, which excludes women from the public space might be still observed. Additionally, Jean's escape from the hunters and their dogs is narrated as a hunting scene, creating a parallel between urban foxes and Jean. It can be claimed, therefore, that the novel shows how androcentricism bestows the freedom of movement in the city to the male human, while threatening women and animals. Moreover, although Jean is from the Global North, men still otherize her due to the fact that she is a woman and a foreigner and deny the possibility that London might be a home for her.

A similar situation in terms of the limitations of the spatial movement of individuals who are located in the subordinated sides of dualism can also be observed in relation to Rose, who is Attila's former girlfriend. When she is diagnosed with Alzheimer, she is placed in a care centre, which reflects how Rose's movements in space are restricted due to her illness. When Attila visits Rose, he wonders "if Rosie had been outside at all since she had become a resident of Three Valleys" (77). Rose's inability to go outside shows how as women, people who are excluded from the sphere of reason is also restricted to the "inside." When Attila and Rose go out to the garden, she looks around and "[s]he seemed to be adjusting to the sense of space" (78). This line displays how the freedom of practicing space, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, too, belongs to the dominant parties of the binary dualism which are in this case, the ones who are accepted as mentally intact. Due to her mental limitations, practicing space is denied to Rose. Additionally, the novel also displays how the gradual exclusion of emotion from daily life in modern life affects the spatial structure of the city. When Attila arrives in London, he visits a psychiatry centre. His first impression of the place is narrated as follows:

Below the clinics were listed the following services: Affective Disorders Service. Anxiety Service. Chronic Fatigue Service. Challenging Behaviour Service. Conduct Problems Service. Eating Disorders Service. Depersonalisation Disorder Service. Female Hormone Clinic. Mood Disorder Service. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Unit. Party Drugs Clinic. Psychosexual Service. Self Harm Service. Attila let his eyes skim over the sign, which grew longer every year. (24)

The fact that the number of polyclinics increases and diversifies every year displays

that exclusion, repression and pathologizing of emotions cause an increase in situations that are accepted as mental problems, and they also begin to take up more space and visibility. In addition to limiting the movements of those who are deemed to be outside of the sphere of reason and shaping the physical space according to the dominant ideas of binary dualisms, it is also shown, as in *Lolly Willowes*, how space is mentally distributed among individuals according to the dominant discourse. The following dialogue between Attila and another participant in the conference gathering reflects this idea:

From Accra,' said Attila.  
'Ah, Africa! And do you go back often?'  
'I live there,' replied Attila.  
'Oh!' The man blinked as if this news was surprising. 'Never mind,' he said. (32)

The surprise of the man at where Attila lives might show that it is expected from Attila, as a scientist inhabiting the sphere of reason, to live somewhere in the global north. So, "reason," "intellect," or "mind" seem to have spatial implications, as well. Spaces are not only shaped by the binary dualisms but are also associated with them. As women are positioned in the domestic sphere and their movements are restricted, reason itself is associated with the Western world.

The human desire to control the other, from animals and nature to other humans is a recurring theme in the novel. Throughout the novel, it is reflected how humans constantly try to maintain, restrain and contain what is accepted as the other in the scheme of binary dualisms. On this issue, Plumwood states that "[t]he characteristics traditionally associated with dominant masculinism are also those used to define what is distinctively human: for example, transcendence and intervention in and domination and control of nature, as opposed to passive immersion in it" (39). Illustrative of Plumwood's statement, in *Happiness*, nature is exposed to constant human intervention. Humans' treatment of wild animals such as coyotes, wolves and foxes act as mirrors reflecting this anthropocentric desire. The novel shows how these animals try to be banished from the city, in line with the city/country dualism. When Jean works with coyotes, she realises how humans use fear of getting hurt by the animals as an excuse for their hostility towards them since in most cases there is no real danger. Jean reflects on the underlying reason of hostility towards these animals

as follows:

No, the real driving emotion was something more base, less worthy by far than fear. It was hate. Some people hated coyotes for being what they were, and what they were was beyond the control of humans. Next to the right of humans to do exactly as they pleased, next to the outrage of the woman with the Gerber jar, a coyote had no rights. Not even the right to its own existence. (167)

The idea of control is highlighted, and it is stated that the entities which are placed outside the sphere of the master are denied any kind of right or any way of existence except for what is assented by the master.

The foxes in the city are in a similar situation. Though they do not threaten humans, many people think that they do not belong to the city. When Attila asks Jean what people associate foxes with in three words, Jean answers “urban, disease, destruction” (80). Jean addresses all the concerns raised in relation to foxes on a radio show she attends, yet neither the host nor the audience feel convinced. Although Jean explains that “the fox is an animal completely adapted to urban living,” (229) the desire to exclude foxes from the city continues. The radio show and its consequences do not only show the unreasoned hostility towards animals but also proves that the perspective that places women within the sphere of emotion and animality still exists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The mayor who joins the show arguing that foxes should not be in the city describes Jean as a “sympathizer,” showing that her arguments cannot reach the mayor since he does not see her as an expert. Even though Jean states she is a scientist, the mayor continues with his argument as if he did not hear Jean. She is directly placed into the sphere of emotion and excluded from the sphere of reason. Similarly, after the show, reactions on social media to Jean’s interview do not focus on her arguments. She is labelled as the “crazy fox woman” (232). Her solidarity with animals causes her to be dismissed from the sphere of reason and as a woman, she is not taken seriously as a scientist. Instead, she is associated with emotions and irrationality despite her scientific explanations on the subject.

People’s disregarding Jean as a scientist and their easy demand to cull the foxes exemplify what Gruen states: “[b]ecause women and animals are judged unable to comprehend science and are thus relegated to the position of passive object, their

suffering and deaths are tolerable in the name of profit and progress” (67). In the novel, one shop owner who is disturbed by foxes states that “[t]he foxes are animals, animals belong in the countryside, not in the city” (51), repeating the common judgement on foxes. Yet, “The Last Wolf” chapter indicates that wild animals are not welcomed in the country, either. They face hostility there, as well. So, it can be said that humans’ expectation is to completely exterminate wild animals. Similar to Jean’s statement on coyotes, what security guards who help Attila and Jean to find Tano, Olu and Ayo, say reveals the underlying reason for humans’ hostility towards foxes. They explain that “Anything they cannot use or control, they want to kill... or make money from...cannot become rich from them, cannot control them, not even kill them. That’s why the foxes make some people angry” (263), again showing humans’ desire to control animals. In parallel to this, the lives of the animals that are not regarded as wild are also manipulated by humans. For instance, the act of addling bird eggs is described as follows in the novel:

The man at the top of the ladder wore a hard hat and an industrial dust mask. He had his arm up to the elbow in one of the hollows of the tree. Jean knew what he was doing. He was addling the eggs, removing newly laid eggs from the birds’ nests, rubbing them with corn oil and replacing them. The birds would sit on them through the spring but the eggs would never hatch. Jean had addled eggs in the past as part of her job, in places where populations of Canada geese had got out of control. Their droppings contaminated water and the birds could be aggressive. But why oil the eggs of the parakeets?

‘They’ve had complaints, so they say,’ said a woman in a green oilskin. ‘Noise. Damage.’ (96)

The animals that do not threaten humans or the environment are also kept under the control of humans. The rationale provided for exterminating the animals can be simply noise or natural wastes of the animals, highlighting that the underlying reason is the mere comfort of humans rather than a need for protection. Alongside the hostility toward animals due to the desire for control, another consequence of this desire is also indicated in the novel. The narrator states that “[p]eople paid money to swim with dolphins, they went on safari, took their children to petting zoos, some, the deranged ones, climbed into the enclosures at zoos, tried to join packs of wolves or live with grizzly bears” (257). This willingness to engage with wild animals might again prove that humans tolerate animals as long as they remain within the boundaries drawn by

humans.

The novel also exhibits humans' intervention in nature. While describing Greenhampton, the narrator remarks that “[f]or the first time in two hundred years the forests grew back, only to be hacked down a second time early in the next century for soft pine to feed the new mills that brought prosperity briefly back to Greenhampton” (5). This description indicates humans' constant manipulation of nature to make more room for human comfort and profit. In parallel to this, the novel emphasises the restriction of natural places into the human-made areas in London, which is another similarity between this novel and *Lolly Willowes*. While observing the parakeets on a dead tree in her garden, Jean thinks that “[t]hey rest there for a moment, then take off in unison, joined by six or seven others, to fly across the city, who knows to which parks, gardens and squares” (284). Jean's reflection suggests that nature is allowed in the city only if it is constrained or tamed through certain places designed specifically for that purpose.

Related to humans' desire to control the environment, *Happiness* also reflects the displacement of animals from their natural habitats for human pleasure and benefit. This displacement might be accepted as an extension of ecological imperialism, which is also observed in *Lolly Willowes*. Jean mentions two stories she has heard of for the existence of the parakeets in London:

Jean might have given the story some credence but for the fact that exactly the same story was told about the parakeets in different parts of the States, the difference being that the parakeets there all made their escape from Petco. The second story had it that the parakeets were escaped pets. Having flown their cages they banded together in the green spaces of the city to form colonies of the free. Every month or so they were joined by new arrivals. (97)

The parakeets in London reflect the effect of human activities on biodiversity. In their studies, Jérôme M. W. Gippeta and Cleo Bertelsmeier highlight that the commercial success of the pet trade might become a threat in the long term due to the displacement of alien species since, as in the case of parakeets in *Happiness*, as a result of various factors, these animals can be released into the natural habitat of the area to which they are brought (1). Consequently, the existing biodiversity of this particular habitat might



be harmed for the sake of human profit. Similarly, the novel includes some instances of the displacement of plants by humans such as Chinese ailanthuses or chestnuts. The following extract from *Happiness* draws attention to the effects of the practice of importing plants:

It's a tree of heaven, Chinese ailanthus, they're everywhere on the East Coast.' Jean had been interested to see them growing in London alongside the ubiquitous plane trees. 'Imported. Big, big mistake! They're an invasive species, basically giant weeds. A tree like this will produce several hundred thousand seeds a year, and they'll root in any crack they can find. Sycamores are the same. It costs city councils a fortune to control them.' In theory removing humans from the playing field should even things out and give biodiversity a chance, after all humans were the ones who had culled and controlled so obsessively for centuries. (125)

The extract both emphasises the obsession with control and its consequences. Human intervention prevents the natural processes of biodiversity and may cause financial loss to humans who aim for gain, alluding to unpredicted results of intervention. In the novel, it is also explained that chestnut trees are first wiped out in the US, and then restocked by humans (110), again displaying humans' intervention.

While exhibiting the anthropocentric desire to have control over animals from culling to restriction of their living spaces, the novel also highlights the adaptation of animals against human hostility and intervention. The novel shows how wild animals such as wolves, coyotes and foxes, although they are culled en masse by humans throughout history, repopulate and manage to survive. For instance, in "The Last Wolf" chapter wolves reappear after they are driven to extinction by humans. Similarly, Jean states that the culling attempts of humans are in vain since both coyotes and foxes reproduce at a faster rate when they face extinction. As O'Key states, "[a] liminal figure, the fox undermines efforts to regulate and suppress nature" (571). Additionally, Jean also says that "[h]umans do it after a war. The last time it happened we called it the 'baby boom'" (167). As Ernest Dominic Cole points out, Jean's remark "achieves two objectives: that animals are outside the control of humans, and that humans and animals are essentially the same when it comes to evolution and preservation of the species" (6). Hence, the novel attacks both the dualism and hierarchy between humans and animals. Moreover, while human intervention in the shape of displacement of the species and their movement to alien habitats is criticised in the novel, the novel's

approach to its consequences is hopeful. Jean, for example, thinks animals “were an example of nature’s immeasurable adaptability. Animals adjusted to survive, some were especially successful, despite the efforts of man” (96). Daniel Simberloff points out that some approaches towards the introduced species are paralleled with ideas on xenophobia and immigration (19). Thereby, the novel challenges both conceptual and physical boundaries, which are dictated by the hierarchical binary dualisms, it promotes the adaptation of species to the new region and co-existence of the species.

*Happiness* envisions a world where both conceptual and physical boundaries are rejected and a sense of connection and solidarity among humans and between humans and nonhumans is achieved. To this end, the novel uses several thematic and formal strategies. Firstly, the novel constantly draws parallels between the spatial restriction of animals and nature *and* of humans who are perceived as others. For instance, after a scene in which Attila and Jean’s discuss the fox existence in the city, a fox and “Immigration Enforcement” van are pointed out as follows:

The side door of the van slid open and two uniformed and helmeted men stepped out onto the pavement and walked towards a shuttered recess in the building. Attila saw the light of a torch. The driver of the van shifted his vehicle out of the way. The taxi squeezed past. On the side of the van the words: ‘Immigration Enforcement’.

The taxi drove on and twice Attila saw a movement, a shadow in the crease of building and pavement, and once the driver braked causing Attila to lurch forward in his seat. In the road, the opalescent eye shine of an animal. (41)

The scene implicitly draws attention to the oppression both foxes and immigrants face in the city. While immigrants are enforced out of the city, foxes hide in the “creases” of the city. The novel, while highlighting the exclusion of the other from the city, which is regarded as the space of the dominant in keeping with the logic of binary dualisms, subverts the dualism of human/animal by drawing parallels between their oppression. This scene scrutinises the idea of borders and spatial restrictions that are forced by binary dualisms. Throughout the novel, animals and humans are connected both through these indications and more direct comments. One example of this is Jean’s constant comparison of romantic relationships of humans to those of animals. For instance, she thinks that Attila’s grief towards the loss of his spouse will come to an end, and a search for another mate will start as in the case of animals. Additionally,

she wonders how it would be to be able to “go out into the night and howl for sex” (93). Through these comparisons, it is highlighted that intrinsically, humans and animals are not very different from each other. Similarly, while searching for Tano, Jean adapts the same strategies that she adapts while searching for the foxes:

Jean crossed the room and returned with the map she carried for work, reinforced with tape and marked with coloured pencils. She pushed the remainder of the dishes to one side and spread it across the table. ‘Her apartment is here, yes?’

Attila leaned in and peered at the street name. ‘Correct.’

‘The boy, how old?’

‘Ten.’

‘Now hear me out, okay? Look at it as a place to start.’

‘I’m listening,’ said Attila.

‘Once he had run away he’d head home obviously, all animals do, he’d head back to the den. But he can’t get home because the locks to the apartment have been changed. He doesn’t know his mother’s in hospital, he thinks she’s in some sort of trouble and so therefore is he, to his mind, so he’s going to stay out of sight. That’s what you’ve just told me.’

Attila nodded again.

‘But he’s going to stay close by and not just because of his mother. These – and she indicated the markings on the map – ‘are all fox territories. Foxes stake out an area and then they stay in it. Why? Because that’s how they sustain themselves, they know where to hunt, where to find’ (81)

Again, it is suggested that the instincts of humans and animals are close to each other since this strategy is successful in finding Tano. As Cole indicates, “human manifestations of animal character traits reposition humans and animals in a state of intersubjectivity and environmental identification. This position ascertains the concept of shared values in a shared space, attests to the connections between the human world and animals or non-human” (4). Additionally, this scene carries allusions to the idea of mapping. Jean takes an ordinary map and subverts it to reflect not the political ideas of borders, but a natural sense of space that is common in humans and animals. Similar to Laura’s disposal of the map in *Lolly Willowes*, this act indicates an idea of space that promotes interconnections in nature between humans and non-humans as opposed to separations promoted by cartographical empiricism.

Jean’s occupation as an “urban wildlife biologist” and a designer of “wild spaces” also destabilise the dualisms of city/country and human/nature. Significantly, in contrast to *Lolly Willowes*’ theme of retirement to the wilderness, which represents a secluded

space in which hierarchal binary dualisms are extinct, *Happiness* displays an activism in terms of subverting the dualisms. Jean actively highlights the commonalities between humans and animals and defends the rights of every being on earth. Likewise, her project of “Wild Spaces” actively erases the boundaries between the city and nature. How she comes up with this idea is described as follows:

The song going around Jean’s head was a song about grass, not the kind you rolled, the kind that grew on lawns, and, as Seeger sang, just about anywhere it could find a spot. He’d sung about all the ways man had tried to smother nature with concrete, and somehow the grass always found a crevice or a corner to start to grow again. Maybe the song was about inevitability, or Mother Nature, or just grass, but Jean liked it and thanks to Nunhead Cemetery and Pete Seeger the idea for Wild Spaces had seeded. She thought about the city, the Old Kent Road where she lived, the sidewalks, flowered with discarded gum, in the warm weather they smelled like it had rained sour beer. The areas further south and north and east where clusters of mirrored monoliths had sprouted, full of expensive new apartments, and then those neighbourhoods Jean used to think of when she thought about London, of houses crammed together in a row, like a mouthful of broken teeth. Jean would bring back the wildness, create wild spaces in the air. (50)

With the project, Jean envisions to actively bring the wilderness into the city and reawaken the biodiversity and she achieves this end through an act of space creation. As Cole states, “‘Wild Spaces’ is an attempt to reclaim nature and preserve it in a fast-changing ecological environment where man’s action threatens to upset and destroy it. It is therefore a direct affront to the ideology of anthropocentrism” (5). Although both *Lolly Willows* and *Happiness* share the aesthetics and ethics of critical ecofeminism, the ideas of retiring from the city to the wilderness and bringing the wilderness into the city creates a perfect juxtaposition in that it helps clarify the difference between the dominant perspectives of both literary eras, the modernist period and the contemporary post-postmodern era. In *Lolly Willows*, a novel participating in modernist aesthetics, a wild place freed from binary dualisms is imagined, yet its approach is more individualistic and escapist, focusing specifically on Laura. *Happiness*, on the other hand, integrates the notions that come to the fore in the new millennium such as connection and “willingness to engage” with the aim of dissolution of hierarchical binaries and achieving solidarity.

Jean’s approach to the consumption of animals is in keeping with Plumwood’s idea of

ecological animalism. Jean states that she eats meat but “not a lot” (128) and it is also expressed that her measured consumption is based on an ethical stance. When Jean prepares chicken to eat with Tano, it is emphasised that the chicken is free-range. As Plumwood promotes with her notion of ecological animalism, Jean “affirms an ecological universe of mutual use, and sees humans and animals as mutually available for respectful use in conditions of equality” (“Ecofeminism” 53). Jean mostly avoids consuming animals and while she does, she opts for the meat that is produced with more ethical methods. Additionally, again in line with Plumwood’s ideas, the novel recognises the fact that the choice of avoiding eating animals is a denominational one and is not available for people in various areas of the world in the following scene where characters from different backgrounds discuss meat-eating and food cultures:

‘You don’t eat meat, Jean?’ said James the doorman.

‘I do, just not a lot,’ said Jean and slid a chunk of the meat from the skewer with her fingers.

‘What kind of person doesn’t eat meat?’ said Olu. ‘Meat is the food of life.’ He stamped a foot.

‘Lots of people don’t eat meat,’ replied Osman.

‘Not in Nigeria!’

‘Not in Nigeria,’ concurred James. ‘But here, yes. At the hotel we have many people who don’t eat this thing or that thing.’

‘Like Jews and Muslims,’ said Osman. The Nigerian looked at him, mollified, for that much he understood. ‘Some Hindus don’t eat meat.’

‘So you are a Hindu, Jean?’

Jean shook her head.

‘Yes, yes.’ James was still talking. ‘They want to have food delivered, made with only certain ingredients. Some won’t eat animals. Others they want different things. Some will not eat vegetables, some will only eat vegetables. Some want all their food raw, some— (81)

The scene displays the perspectives on meat consumption in various cultures. It is expressed that for some cultures it is unconceivable to avoid meat consumption. This might be related to availability of food in the Global South. It may be said that in the Global North where capitalism is more dominant, it is possible to access a wide range of choices for food. Hence, it is also seen that the ethical choice of avoiding meat is paralleled with other avoidances that might simply be related to choices in terms of

food, displaying the fact that availability and opportunity is an important factor for this ethical stance.

Alongside the idea of the coexistence of humans, animals and nature, the novel also emphasises the coexistence of humans from different parts of the world and portrays London as a city that is created and maintained by residents of the city who come from various backgrounds and are generally considered as the other. In Forna's novel, London is portrayed as a cosmopolitan city. Emily Johansen states that "[p]laces become cosmopolitan through the presence of diverse groups of people; visible presence signals cosmopolitanism" (43). *Happiness* indicates that London does not merely contain diverse groups, but it is constructed by these groups. "You are an American," Attila tells Jean, "I am a West African. The barman is South American. And here we are in the middle of London. Not one of us was born here, but we each have a reason to be here" (41), highlighting London's cosmopolitanism. Additionally, how the city depends on the labour of diverse immigrant groups is highlighted. The doorman of the hotel where Attila stays tells him:

The doormen and security people, they are my friends. Most of those boys who work in security are Nigerian. We Ghanaians, we prefer the hospitality industry. Many of the doormen at these hotels you see around here are our countrymen. The street-sweepers, the traffic wardens are mainly boys from Sierra Leone, they came here after their war so for them the work is okay. Some Nigerians do warden work when they get here, before their friends in the security business find them something with greater job satisfaction and a seat inside. (108)

This passage suggests that the existence of diverse groups in the city is vital for the maintenance of the city. Groups which are othered and denied a right to exist equally in the city or practice a sense of space are shown to play an essential role in the well-functioning of the very same structure. This further subverts the binary dualisms and their spatial restrictions. Moreover, the solidarity between various groups in the city solves one of the main problems in the story, i.e. finding Tano. While searching for the missing boy, one of the parking attendants remarks that "[t]hese are our streets, we know them" (120). It might be said that the novel approaches the idea of ownership of the city not in terms of the impositions of binary dualisms but rather, in terms of practices of living in the city. According to Ursula Heise, the "Earth's inhabitants, regardless of their national and cultural differences, are bound together by a global

ecosystem whose functioning transcends humanmade borders” (25). It might be said that the novel’s insistence upon connection among humans and humans’ connection to the ecosystem reflects an eco-cosmopolitan stance. As O’Key maintains, “[t]he novel articulates an impulse to relax the divisions between political subjectivities, cityscapes, and species. In a time of border-tightening and biodiversity loss, this is an appealing conception of eco-cosmopolitanism” (582).

The formal features of *Happiness* also contribute to its thematic concerns. *Happiness* is a multi-stranded novel that narrates the lives of various characters from different perspectives. Throughout the novel, characters who are first portrayed as separate from each other come to connect to each other as the narrative progresses. For instance, first given as a part of London’s descriptions in the journey of the fox, the silver man then becomes a part of the search party for Tano and introduced as Osman. (77). A background figure in the narrative becomes a character further in the novel. Hence, the idea of connection is further highlighted through the structure, with the text’s play with the idea of background and foreground and the emphasis on their inevitable connectedness. As in the deconstruction of the backgrounding of woman and nature to the male human, Forna’s novel also deconstructs the idea of backgrounding in itself. Additionally, there is frequent use of flashbacks, as a consequence of which the story is set in various parts of the world in different time periods. This enables the novel to be inclusive, welcoming characters and their stories from different parts of the world. As mentioned earlier, simultaneity can also be regarded as a narrative strategy that challenges the hierarchical ideas and boundaries. Through simultaneity, the novel includes various stories, places and humans brought together on an equal plane. Lastly, nature imagery is commonly used to connect the inhabitants of the earth to one another. The sections of the story are tied to each other through movements of animals across different scenes. To illustrate, Attila’s introduction to the narrative follows the fox’s movement in the city (11). As O’Key states, “Forna explicitly incorporates nature across the novel’s plotted, descriptive, and thematic levels. Here animals become both objects of narrative description and subjects who propel the plot” (570). In parallel, Forna states that throughout *Happiness* she chooses to “depict a natural world coexisting, often unseen and yet frequently intruding upon and connecting the lives of the humans in the city” (421), confirming the role of nature in the narrative as a facilitator alongside its thematical connotations. Lastly, one more layer of activism is

hinted at in the novel. In a dialogue between Attila and Jean, Attila mentions a children's book which is about the "inter-species relationships" (79) to Jean, called *Belstone Fox*. He explains that the book had a great impact on activism against foxhunting. Forna's novel, too, can be considered as another fictional project to achieve a sense of connection between humans and animals, and also among humans.

To conclude, *Happiness* by Aminatta Forna envisions a state of existence in which hierarchical dualisms are dissolved. To this end, and as in *Lolly Willowes*, the novel displays how dualisms impact the ways in which all beings interact with space, and, additionally, how these dualisms construct spaces. Yet, different from *Lolly Willowes*, *Happiness* emphasises the significance of active participation in dissolving the binary dualisms both conceptually and spatially, especially through Jean's occupation. The novel, in line with perspectives coming to the fore in the new millennium, promotes ideas such as connection and solidarity among humans and between humans and nonhumans, which have long been considered inferior to humans as a consequence of the anthropocentric mindset. It can also be held that the notion of bioregionalism that we see in *Lolly Willowes* is replaced by eco-cosmopolitanism in *Happiness*. Alongside its thematical engagement with the notion of interconnectivity in the ecosystem, the narrative strategies Forna employs such as the novel's multi-stranded structure and simultaneity in the description of characters function to emphasise its thematical concerns.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

This study argues that both Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* (1926) and Aminatta Forna's *Happiness* (2018) show how binary oppositions, which are a part of the conventional logic, have an impact on the ways humans and non-humans interact with space and the processes of creation of space. In these novels, it is seen that dualisms restrict the movement of those who they position as the inferior category such as women and animals. Both these novels also highlight that while affecting the interactions of entities on Earth with space, dualisms shape space mostly in a way that endows domination and freedom of movement to the superior side of the dualism. Additionally, the analysis has revealed that dualisms transform and take new shapes in time, which comes to the fore when two novels such as *Lolly Willowes* and *Happiness*, written about ninety years apart, are juxtaposed.

The theoretical framework of this study is constituted by ecofeminist approaches, specifically their treatment of binary oppositions. The discussion begins with a focus on the concept of conventional logic and binary oppositions by reviewing some major ideas from classical period philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato to the humanist philosophy of Renaissance, Cartesianism and the Enlightenment. It is discussed that there is a significant commonality among them in their acknowledgement and glorification of dualisms such as man/woman, human/nature, human/animal, reason/emotion, mind/body and culture/nature as an undeniable truth. These dualisms are also a vantage point for the creation of some other dualisms such as city/country, which constitutes a significant context for this study. It is possible to say that dualisms assign superiority to man against woman and nature. While the superior parties of dualisms are positioned at the centre of life, the subordinated parties are reduced to the position of providers for the maintenance of the centre.

Due to dualisms' common positioning of woman and nature as subordinate, this study

adopts the stance of critical ecofeminism against the dualisms of the conventional logic as a part of its theoretical framework. In order to reflect a thorough understanding of critical ecofeminism, the study first gives a general overview of feminist thought. This overview reveals that from its beginnings on, feminist thought has taken a stance against the impositions of the conventional logic. Regarding ecofeminism, first, some of the pitfalls in early ecofeminist approaches have been discussed, in that how they are informed by the dualisms of the conventional logic is pointed out. Second, the chapter moves onto critical ecofeminism, and especially Val Plumwood's ideas, aiming to demolish dualisms to liberate nature, woman and all other subordinated parties. Plumwood contextualises the characteristics of dualisms and their influence on shaping the world. the strategy of critical ecofeminism for subverting binary oppositions is to promote continuity and connection rather than claims of sharp separation between the spheres, constructed by dualisms.

To examine the impact of binary dualisms on space, this study also benefits from theoretical approaches towards space. Scholars distinguish place from space based on the idea that space is the experienced version of place shaped by interactions and lives it consists of. There exists a body of literature on space which analyses how space is experienced and shaped. This study makes use of bioregionalism, eco-cosmopolitanism and Doreen Massey's ideas on space practices since they align with the concern of this study, which is to reveal the relations between dualisms and space practices. Bioregionalism promotes a locality-focused understanding of space, aiming a life in sync with cycles, habitat and flora of the lived ecological region. This understanding subverts especially human/nature dualism by praising continuity and unitedness between humans and nature, yet on a local scale. Eco-cosmopolitanism, on the other hand, carries this understanding of continuity to a global scale, and includes interconnectedness among humans. Eco-cosmopolitanism highlights humans' dependence on nature, and interdependence among humans. Doreen Massey's ideas especially emphasize how gender and other power relations have an influence on space practices.

Within this scope, Chapter 3 analyses how the man/woman dualism is treated in *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman*. It is argued that the novel displays the strong impact of dualisms on positioning woman in maintaining the needs of man; yet, it also shows

how rising feminist ideas, specifically the idea of the new woman, function as a means of resistance against these dualisms. In the novel, the titular character Laura, Lolly Willowes, appears as a representation of the new woman of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For 40 years, she lives in line with the impositions of dualisms. The analysis highlights how Laura's life revolves around the male characters of the novel, who see her as a caretaker. The influence of the dualisms in her life has been seen since her childhood: with the death of her mother, she takes over her roles in the household, which continues in the household of her brother as the aunt of his children. The analysis also shows that space both influences the characters and is influenced by them. Additionally, the creation of spaces is closely tied to the binary concepts as seen in the portrayal of three main places in the novel, Lady Place in Sommerset, Apsley Terrace in London, and Great Mop in Chilterns. Lady Place is reflected as the domestic space in which the binary dualisms are imposed on Laura. This chapter reveals that different from its representations in high modernist works written at the time, London in this novel is not treated as a city that enhances anonymity and hence freedom, but, instead, as a masculine space where women's movement is restricted. Additionally, it is seen that parallel to woman's restriction, nature is constrained into parks in London. Laura's interactions with these spaces, parallel to Massey's ideas, display how gender affects space practices. Great Mop to which Laura retires, on the other hand, is represented as a wild space where the influence of binary dualisms is absent and people, whether man or woman, live harmoniously with nature. In the novel's representation of Great Mop, it is possible to observe some bioregionalist ideas such as "living in space." Lastly, it is observed that the novel makes an ambiguous use of the supernatural. Although it is not clear if a supernatural event really occurs in the novel, the novel seems to suggest that Laura's witchery can function as an outlet for Laura to practice liberation and selfhood as the new woman.

Chapter 4 discusses *Happiness* by Aminatta Forna and argues that the novel is informed by contemporary ideas of interconnectedness and solidarity alongside the approaches towards space. As in *Lolly Willowes*, Forna's novel, too, draws attention to the effects of binary dualisms on interactions with space, yet, in keeping with critical ecofeminism, the concerns of the novel become wider and not limited to the problematization of dualisms. *Happiness* is especially interested in how spaces are

created. London, in the novel, is represented as a cosmopolitan city that is constructed and maintained by a web of connections between immigrant groups. The novel constantly highlights the interdependency between humans and between humans and nature. It is also shown that binary dualisms are still intact in humans' interactions with space and women and non-humans are still restricted in their movement in space. Yet, the novel also displays an active resistance against these restrictions. Jean's occupation and characters' "willingness to engage with the other" and with the environment have a great impact on subverting the dualisms. Additionally, the novel also promotes its thematical concerns of interconnectedness and non-hierarchical interdependency through its narrative techniques such as simultaneity and multi-stranded structure. The narrative reflects the perspectives of various characters on an equal plane and renders animals and nature constantly visible.

To conclude, this study has explored two novels which were written 92 years apart, *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* (1926) by Sylvia Townsend Warner and *Happiness* (2018) by Aminatta Forna in terms of the impact of dualisms on interactions with space and the creation processes of space from a critical ecofeminist perspective. The study has revealed that binary dualisms have a great impact on both interactions with space and creation of spaces; nevertheless, women in both novels strive to subvert these binaries to make it possible to interact with the spaces, liberated from the impositions of dualisms. It is also highlighted that the impact of dualisms as well as the strategies of resistance against them evolve in time. While in *Lolly Willowes*, Laura retires into wilderness, in which dualisms are absent, Jean in *Happiness* actively challenges dualisms both by creating "wild spaces" in the city and through webs of connections among the parties that have long been regarded as the Other and associated with the hierarchically lower side of the of the dualisms.

Ecofeminist ideas might be observed in texts that were written or produced before the theorisation of ecofeminist theory, one example of which, this study argues, is *Lolly Willowes*. This thesis shows how such older representations have stark similarities with contemporary novels that explicitly engage with ecofeminist theory and discussions such as *Happiness* by Forna. Therefore, the thesis concludes by putting forward the idea there might be many other examples in which similar relationships might be observed. Hence, this study also aims to promote further research on the

exploration of ecofeminist ideas in older texts and the examination of women's writing and ecological writing in different periods. Warner's works, specifically, carry allusions to ecofeminist ideas. For instance, *The Corner That Held Them*, with its use of *Black Death* and its critical approach to the structure of society and patriarchy might be analysed in relation to the contemporary phenomena of eco-disaster from an ecofeminist perspective.

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## APPENDICES

### A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez Sylvia Townsend Warner'ın *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* (1926) ve Aminatta Forna'nın *Happiness* (2018) adlı romanlarını eleştirel ekofeminizm ve biyobölgecilik ve eko-kozmopolitanizm gibi mekânın ekolojik ve cinsiyetlendirilmiş yönlerine ilişkin mekân teorileri ışığında incelemektedir. Bu iki romanı birlikte incelemek, yaklaşık doksan yıl arayla yazılmış romanlarda toplumsal cinsiyet ve çevre konularının ele alınış biçimlerindeki farklılıklara ışık tutabilir. Bu tezde, ev, şehir, doğa ve toplumsal cinsiyet hakkındaki bazı fikirler zaman içinde değişmiş olsa da, bu fikirlerin altında yatan ana yapının, yani erkek/kadın ve insan/doğa gibi geleneksel mantığın dualizmlerinin değişmeden kaldığı savunulmaktadır. *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* ve *Happiness* üzerine yapılan bu karşılaştırmalı çalışma, iki roman arasında büyük bir zaman farkı olmasına rağmen, her ikisinin de dualizmlerin, romanların yazıldığı dönemlere göre değişen şekillerde de olsa, kadınların ve insan olmayanların mekanla etkileşimleri ve mekanların inşa edilme süreçleri üzerindeki ana etkilerini nasıl sürdürdüklerini göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Buna ek olarak, her iki romandaki başlıca kadın karakterlerin geleneksel dualist zihniyeti istikrarsızlaştıracak şekilde davrandıkları ve düşündükleri iddia edilmektedir.

Warner'ın ilk romanı olan *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman*, kırk yıl boyunca bir kız evlat, bir kız kardeş ve sonra da bir hala olduktan sonra doğaya çekilen yaşlı bir bakire/cadı hakkındadır. Baş karakter Laura, daha sonra kendi hayatını kurmaya başlar ve insanlar, hayvanlar ve cansız maddi dünya da dahil olmak üzere çevresiyle bütüncül bağlantılar kurar; ancak Laura'nın eski hayatı ve dış dünyanın baskısı yeni hayatına da girdiğinde bu mutlu varoluş durumu kesintiye uğrar. *Lolly Willowes*, tüm canlılar ve onları çevreleyen doğa arasında eşitliğin ve bağlantının olduğu bir dünyanın resmini çizer. Ancak Lolly'nin emeklilik adresi Great Mop'un bu mutlu düzeni, hiyerarşileri ve etkileşim biçimleriyle dış dünya tarafından tahribata uğratılmaya

çalışılır.

Şaşırtıcı bir şekilde, neredeyse yüz yıl önce yayımlanmış modernist bir metin olan *Lolly Willowes* üzerine eleştirel literatür sınırlı kalmıştır. Warner'ın yaşadığı dönemde tanındığı ve başarı kazandığı düşünüldüğünde bu durum ilgi çekicidir. Aslında, *Lolly Willowes* yayımlandıktan kısa bir süre sonra edebiyat tarihinin ve kanonun dışında bırakılmıştır, ta ki 1978'de feminist bir canlanmanın parçası olarak yeniden keşfedilene kadar (Marcus 531). Marcus, *Lolly Willowes*'un ihmal edilmesini iki faktöre bağlamaktadır. Bunlardan ilki, "1930'ların edebiyat tarihçilerinin kadınları büyük ölçüde sol tarihin dışında bırakmış olmaları"; ikincisi ise "metropol modernizm çağında Warner'ın pastoral olanı siyasallaştırması" (533), yani Warner'ın kentsel ve modernist temaların yaygın olduğu bir dönemde, geleneksel olarak kırsal yaşamla ilişkilendirilen pastoral temayı özellikle kadının konumu açısından siyasi meselelerle ilgilenmek için kullanmasıdır. Marcus'un tespit ettiği bu iki nokta, yazarın ve metnin erkek/kadın ve kültür/doğa ikiliklerine dayanan adaletsizliklerle yüzleşmesi nedeniyle bu çalışma için önemli çıkarımlara imkan tanır. *Lolly Willowes* üzerine yapılan çalışmalar, hem romanın teması hem de yukarıda bahsedilen modernist dönemin metropolizmi nedeniyle genellikle "pastoral" ve "kırsal" terimleri etrafında döner; ancak romanı feminist ve queer perspektiflerden ele alan çok sayıda çalışma da bulunur. Modernizmin metropolitenlikle ilişkilendirilmesi, Viktorya Dönemi'nde hızlı bir dönüşüm sürecine tanık olduktan sonra, modernist dönemin tam anlamıyla oluşmuş bir kent yaşamına ve metropoliten deneyime yönelik tepkilerin başlangıcı olmasının doğrudan bir sonucu olabilir. Pastoral ve kırsal tartışmalarının metindeki öneminin bir diğer nedeni de "İngilizlik" fikri ve bunun kırsalla olan bağlantısıdır. David Matless'in de belirttiği gibi, "İngiltere'de doğanın korunması, ulusal kimliğin sembolü olarak kırsalı korumaya ve yansıtmaya çalışırken, bizzat İngilizlik tanımlarını yürürlüğe koyar ve üretir" (179). Romanın yayımlandığı dönemde kırsal ve pastoral, vatanseverlik ve milliyetçiliğin sembolleri haline gelmiştir. Bununla bağlantılı olarak Harriet Baker, Warner'ın romanlarının "doğaya yönelik normatif erkek egemen yaklaşımların ayrıntılı bir reddini sunduğunu, bunun yerine feminist ve queer kimlik üzerine inşa edilmiş alternatif bir kırsalcılığı benimsediğini" belirtir (51). Bu iddia bizi mekânı da hesaba katan ekofeminist bir bakış açısına yaklaştırır zira doğaya yaklaşımların gerçekten de cinsiyetlendirilmiş olduğunu vurgular. Toplumsal cinsiyet,

ekoloji ve mekân arasındaki bağlantılarla ilgili olarak Jane Feaver, Warner'ın kadın ve işçi sınıfı yazarlarını "edebiyata kiler penceresinden girenler" olarak tanımladığı "Yazar Olarak Kadın" konuşmasını yorumlar (384). Feaver'a göre bu ifade aynı zamanda pastoral olana da bir gönderme içerir çünkü üst sınıf erkekler "çalışma" ya da "misafir odalarından" gerçek dünyayla etkileşime geçemezken, kadınlar ve işçi sınıfı "düzensiz 'tabiat'ın" içinde olanlardır (3). Jennifer Poulos Nesbitt de *Lolly Willowes'u* feminist jeopolitik bir bakış açısıyla ele alır. Nesbitt'e göre, "Warner, *Lolly Willowes'ta* "buradalığın" hem jeopolitiğini hem de cinsiyetlendirilmesini gösterir" (455). Tüm bu çalışmalar, roman üzerine yapılacak diğer çalışmalar için değerli bir başlangıç noktası sağlamaktadır. Doğa ve mekânın cinsiyetlendirilmiş yapısını ve bu cinsiyetlendirme sürecinin anlamını irdelemektedir; yine de, romanın ekofeminist bir bakış açısıyla incelenmesi, romanın tabiatın cinsiyetlendirilmesine ve toplumsal cinsiyetin mekânsallığına yaptığı vurguyu daha iyi görmeye yardımcı olur ve her ikisi de hem kadınları hem de doğayı ezen dualizmlerin yapısöküme uğratılmasına katkıda bulunur.

Aminatta Forna'nın (1964-) *Mutluluk* adlı romanı 2018 yılında yayımlanmış çağdaş bir romandır. Aminatta Forna, Sierra Leone ve İskoç kökenli bir yazardır. Farklı kültürlerden oluşan kendi mirasının, çeşitli kültürler arasında köprüler kurma becerisine yansıdığı söylenebilir. *Aşkın Hafızası* (2010), *Ata Taşları* (2006) ve *Kiralık Adam* (2013) gibi romanlarında farklı geçmişlere sahip karakterlere yer verir ve bu karakterler arasında iletişim kanalları yaratır. Forna'nın karakterleri, karşılaşmaları sayesinde yeryüzünde daha mutlu bir şekilde var olmayı başarır. Böylece sadece kültürler arasında değil, karakterler arasında da köprüler kurulur. Bu inşa *Happiness'ta* da gözlemlenebilir. Romanda farklı geçmişlerden gelen bir dizi karakter yer alır. Anlatı, birbiriyle iç içe geçen birden fazla hikâyeden oluşur. Kahramanlardan biri olan Jean, şehir tilkilerini izlemek için Londra'ya gelen Amerikalı bir "şehir yaban hayatı biyoloğu"dur. Jean'in aynı zamanda kentin binalarındaki balkon ve teras gibi yerlerde "vahşi alanlar" yaratmak gibi bir yan işi de vardır. Romanın hem tematik kaygıları hem de anlatı yapısı, dualizmler tarafından yaratılan hiyerarşilere meydan okur. Roman, çevresel ve toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı hiyerarşilerin nasıl işlediğini sergilemekle kalmaz, özellikle Jean'in mesleği ve Londra'daki farklı geçmişlerden gelen karakterler arasındaki dayanışma aracılığıyla bunlara aktif bir şekilde meydan

okur. Karakterlerin karşılaştığı sorunlar doğayla, hayvanlarla ve insanlarla işbirliği yoluyla çözülür.

Nispeten yeni bir roman olmasına rağmen, *Happiness* üzerine yapılan çalışmalar az değildir. Forna'nın eserlerinde travmanın özel bir yeri vardır ve *Happiness*'ta olduğu gibi önceki romanları da kayıp ve tarihsel travma gibi konuları ele alır. Forna ayrıca *The Devil That Danced on the Water* adlı bir anı kitabı da yayımlamıştır: *A Daughter's Quest* (2002) adlı anı kitabında babasını kaybedişinin hikâyesini anlatır. Dolayısıyla, *Happiness* üzerine eleştirel literatür de ağırlıklı olarak travmaya odaklanmaktadır. Bu çalışmalar, düalizmlere ve hiyerarşik yapılara meydan okuyan ekolojik ve antroposentrik bakış açıları nedeniyle bu çalışma bağlamında önemli olsa da, roman üzerine kapsamlı bir ekofeminist çalışma henüz yapılmamıştır. Buna ek olarak, metindeki mekânsallık temsilleri, örneğin ev, şehir ve doğa fikirlerinin farklı türlere ve cinsiyetlere göre nasıl anlam değiştirdiğinin henüz keşfedilmemiş olduğunu söylemek mümkündür.

Bu çalışma, ekofeminizmin mekânsal yönlerini, yani *Lolly Willowes* ve *Happiness*'ta mekânın ekofeminist perspektiflerle nasıl ilişkilendirilebileceğini ortaya çıkarmayı ve böylece her iki metinde de mekânın bileşenleriyle sürekli bir etkileşim döngüsü içinde olması nedeniyle, romanların mevcut ekofeminist okumalarına katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Mekânın yaratım süreci, insanmerkezci ataerkil toplum yapısının ikiliklerinden ve hiyerarşilerinden de etkilenir. Doreen Maseey'in işaret ettiği gibi, "mekânların/yerlerin sembolik anlamından ve ilettikleri açıkça cinsiyetlendirilmiş mesajlardan, şiddet yoluyla doğrudan dışlanmaya kadar, mekânlar ve yerler yalnızca kendileri cinsiyetlendirilmiş olmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda bu halleriyle toplumsal cinsiyetin inşa edilme ve anlaşılma biçimlerini hem yansıtır hem de etkilerler" (179). Bu bakış açısı "dünyanın ötekileri"ni kapsayacak şekilde genişletilebilir. Evlerden ülkelere, mekânlar ve yerler insanların diğer türlerle olan ilişkilerini yansıtır, şekillendirir ve bunlar tarafından şekillendirilir.

Bu çalışmada, *Lolly Willowes* ve *Mutluluk*, edebiyatta ekofeminizm ve mekânsallık fikirlerini, hem bu bakış açılarındaki tarihsel farklılıkları hem de hiyerarşik



dualizmlerin süregelen mantıksal yapısını, görünüşte iki zıt ortam olan şehir ve kırsalda vurgulayacak şekilde yansıtıkları için birlikte incelenmiştir. Warner ve Forna'nın metinleri her iki mekânı da kuşatarak insanın çevresinden ayıramaz varoluşunu ve insanın çevresindeki her varlıkla iç içe geçmiş yapısını vurgular. Aralarında doksan yıllık bir zaman aralığı bulunan bu iki romanı birlikte incelemek, edebiyatta kadının mekânla ilişkisine ve insanın paylaştığı mekânlarda yoldaş türlerle ilişki ve etkileşimine dair anlayışların zaman içinde nasıl değiştiği sorusuna ışık tutabilir. İki romanın mekânı ele alışındaki zıtlık özellikle fikir yürütmeye açıktır çünkü *Lolly Willowes'da* Lolly Londra'dan "doğaya" çekilirken, *Happiness'ta* Jean Londra'da vahşi kabul edilen türleri gözlemler ve Londra binalarında "vahşi alanlar" yaratır. Romanlar detaylı bir şekilde incelendiğinde, bazı mekan fikirleri, mekanla etkileşim yolları ve mekanların içindeki varlıkların etkileşimleri zaman içinde değişmiş olsa da, düalizm ve hiyerarşinin altında yatan yapı ve söylemlerin incelenmeye ve sorgulanmaya muhtaç bir şekilde daim kaldığı görülmektedir.

İnsan-merkezci ve erkek-merkezci dünya görüşleri uzun zamandır dünyayı erkeğin alanı, kadını bu alanda var olan bir nesne ve doğayı da sürekli meydan okunması ve hükmedilmesi gereken bir Öteki olarak görürken, insan ile doğa ve kadın ile erkek arasındaki ilişkiye dair daha çağdaş fikirler, ötekileştirilmiş varlıkların failliğini kendinden menkul kabul ederek bu eğilimleri sorunsallaştırmaktadır. Feminist filozoflar, değişen şekillerde de olsa, bu bakış açısına en başından beri meydan okumuşlardır. Buna ek olarak, ekoeleştirel akademisyenler, doğanın yalnızca insanlarla olan ilişkisini değil, aynı zamanda insanlığa faydalı olup olmadığına bakılmaksızın var olan ayrı bir varlık olarak konumunu destekleyen karşıt fikirler üretmişlerdir. Dolayısıyla, ekofeminist kuramlar ortaya çıktıkları bağlamlar içinde değerlendirilmelidir. Bu amaçla, bu çalışma eleştirel bir altyapı sağlamak için geleneksel mantıktan ve muhafazakâr fikirlerden yararlanırken, teorik çerçeve olarak çağdaş ekofeminist fikirleri kullanmaktadır. Çalışmada, Sylvia Warner Townsend'in *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* ve Aminatta Forna'nın *Happiness* adlı eserlerini ekofeminist bir perspektiften analiz edebilmek için öncelikle ekofeminizmin incelediği, tartıştığı ve itiraz ettiği düşünce sistemini inşa eden geleneksel mantık perspektifini incelenmiştir. Ardından, ekofeminizm ve mekân kuramlarının karşılıklı ilişkilerine odaklanılmıştır.

Baskı, hiyerarşi ve bunlara yol açan dualizmleri tartışmak üzere ekofeminist bir perspektife yönelmeden önce, bu fikirlerin kökenlerini incelemek gerekir. Geleneksel mantık olarak adlandırılan düşüncenin başlangıcını saptamak zor olsa da, en iyi Aristoteles, Platon, Thomas Aquinas, Descartes ve Kant gibi klasik filozofların, hümanist bilginlerin ve aydınlanma düşünürlerinin yazılarında gözlemlenebilir. Beden ve zihin arasındaki ayrılıklar ve ortaklıklar sorusunu yanıtlamaya yönelik bir sorgulama olarak başlamış olsa da, bu düşünce sistemi zamanla bir dualizmler ve hiyerarşiler sistemi haline gelmiştir. Düalizmler, mevcut insan çağının koşullarına göre evrim geçirmiş ve çoğalmıştır. Ayrıca, Yahudi-Hıristiyan dinleri de bu düalizmleri geliştirmiştir. Bu düalizmler ruh/beden, kadın/erkek, kültür/doğa, medeni/barbar vb. olarak örneklendirilebilir. Bu düalizmlerde, birincisi her zaman ikincisinden daha üstün konumlandırılır.

Geleneksel mantık ve kuralları hayatın her döneminde derin bir etkiye sahip olsa da, başta feministler, post-hümanistler ve ekoeleştirmenler olmak üzere bu bakış açısını eleştiren ve meydan okuyan akademisyenler de her zaman var olmuştur. Bu akademisyenlerin bakış açıları arasındaki ortak nokta, hepsinin erkek insanı merkezin dışına itmesidir. Örneğin, bir profeminist olan Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), Rousseau'nun dualist gerekçelendirmelerine meydan okur ve hem erkekler hem de kadınlar için kamusal imajın "genellikle erdem tarafından desteklenmeyen, bir görevin alışkanlık haline gelmiş ihlalini tüm ahlak yasasının ihlali haline getiren o yüce ahlak tarafından desteklenmeyen bir duygu" olduğunu belirtir (169). Her ne kadar o dönem düşünüldüğünde düalizme doğrudan meydan okumak düşünülemez bir tavır olsa da, Wollstonecraft konuyu cinsiyete göre yorumlamak yerine daha bütüncül bir bakış açısıyla ele alır. Ayrıca Wollstonecraft, kadınların erkek bakış açısı tarafından nasıl hayvanlaştırıldığını ve hayvanlıklarından gelen "içgüdülerinin" akıl üstün yol gösterici olduğu için bir rehber olarak reddedildiğini de tespit eder (71). Daha sonra feminist akademisyenler ikiliklere meydan okurken post-yapısalcı yapısöküm yöntemini benimsemişlerdir. Postyapısalcı feministler, anlamları ve atıfları önceden belirlenmiş bir toplumsal cinsiyet kimliğini reddetmişlerdir. Örneğin Judith Butler, toplumsal cinsiyetin performatif olduğunu, yani aslında var olmadığını ancak belirli toplumsal cinsiyet fikirleriyle ilişkili eylemler aracılığıyla toplumsal olarak inşa edildiğini çözümlenmiştir. Bu bakış açısı dualizmleri ortadan kaldırırsa da, toplumsal cinsiyete

dayalı tarihsel adaletsizliklerin göz ardı edilmesine neden olabileceği ve feminist harekete zarar verebileceği için bazı endişelere neden olmuştur. Birkeland'ın da belirttiği gibi, "toplumsal cinsiyet körü bir prizma güç, egemenlik ve erkeklik merkezli sorunları gizler" (26).

Hem posthümanist hem de ekoeleştirel akademisyenler androsentrizme meydan okumuşlardır, ancak cinsiyetten ziyade türlere ve çevreye odaklandıkları söylenebilir. Mads Rosendhal Thomsen ve Jacob Wamberg, postantroposentrik bir bakış açısıyla posthümanizmi "çoğu zaman kabul edilmese yaygın, insanlığın bir şekilde evrenin geri kalanından ayrı olduğu ve bir yönelim merkezi oluşturduğu varsayımından kopuş" şeklinde tanımlamaktadır (1). Bu tanım, posthümanizmin insanı merkezden uzaklaştırmayı amaçlayan yönüne odaklanmaktadır. Benzer bir düşünceyle Greg Garrard, "ekoeleştiri konusunun en geniş tanımının, insan kültür tarihi boyunca insan ve insan olmayan arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi olduğunu ve 'insan' teriminin kendisinin eleştirel analizini gerektirdiğini" belirtir (5). (Erkek) insan egemenliğine meydan okunması gerektiği genel olarak kabul görünürken, ekoeleştiri aynı zamanda yeryüzündeki tüm varlıklar arasındaki bağlantıları da vurgular.

Ataerkillik ve insanmerkezciliğin mi geleneksel mantığı, yoksa geleneksel mantığın mı ataerkillik ve insanmerkezciliği yarattığını tespit etmek zor olsa da, geleneksel mantık, insanmerkezcilik ve ataerkinin sürekli birbirini besleyen bir döngü içinde olduğu söylenebilir. Ataerkillik, varlık ağının merkezine erkek insanı koyan bir bakış açısıyla tanımlanmakta ve düalizmin sözde olumlu özelliklerle ilgili tarafı erkekler olduğu için kadınları sadece erkeklerle ilişkili olarak tanımlamaktadır. Erkek referans noktası iken kadın ötekidir, dolayısıyla hükmedilendir. Erkek tanımlayan iken, kadın tanımlanandır. Birkeland ataerkil kültürleri "gerçekliğin cinsiyete göre bölündüğü ve erkeklikle ilişkilendirilen özelliklere daha fazla değer verildiği" kültürler olarak açıklar (18). Dolayısıyla, gerçeklik tasarımıdaki her şey bu hiyerarşik düalizme ve bu düalizmdeki özelliklerin (eril ve dişil gibi) keyfi paylaşılmasına dayanır. Aynı şekilde, insanmerkezcilik de insanı diğer tüm varlıklar arasında merkeze yerleştiren bakış açısıdır. İnsanmerkezcilik insanı tüm varlıkların efendisi olarak görür ve çevrenin ve bileşenlerinin değerini insanlığa olan faydalarına göre ölçer. Bu bakış açısı sonuç olarak birçok sorunu beraberinde getirmiş ve dikkatleri üzerine çekmiştir, çünkü

bunun karşılığında insanlık da çevresel felaketlerden etkilenmiştir. Bu bağlamda ataerkillik ve insanmerkezciliğin birbiriyle nasıl ilişkili olduğu ve mevcut dünya düzenini nasıl birlikte inşa ettikleri görülebilir. Ataerkillik ve insanmerkezcilik arasında doğrudan bir bağlantı vardır. İki görüş de erkek insanı diğer tüm varlıkların efendisi olarak kabul eder. Bu bakış açıları insan erkeğini merkezileştirir ve diğer her şey evrende ikincil olarak görülür, bu da androsentrizme yol açar. Birçok feminist düşünürün savunduğu gibi, kadınların ezilmesi ve doğa arasındaki ilişki tekil bir düşünce bütünüdür, sonucudur değil, tekil bir paradigmanın, yani androsentrizmin doğrudan bir sonucudur. Dolayısıyla feminist akademisyenler, feminist bir düşünme biçiminin yalnızca toplumsal cinsiyetle ilgili sorunları sorgulamayı gerektirmediği ya da ekolojik bir düşünme biçiminin yalnızca çevre sorunlarıyla ilgili olmadığı; her ikisinin de mevcut varlıklar ve düşünme biçimleri hiyerarşisini yaratan temel varsayımları sorgulaması gerektiği sonucuna varmıştır. Marti Kheel, "ihtiyaç duyulan şeyin, tüm eski hikayelerin ve anlatıların çok yönlü bir goblende yeniden dokunması olduğunu" vurgulamaktadır (Kheel 272). Daha eşitlikçi bir bakış açısına ulaşmak için geleneksel bakış açıları yeniden düşünülmeli ve anlatılar yeniden ele alınmalıdır. Bu yeni düşünme biçimi Val Plumwood tarafından *Representing Reason, Feminist Theory and Formal Logic* (2002) kitabında "feminist mantık" olarak adlandırılmıştır.

Tüm ekofeminizmlerin temeli, ekofeminist akademisyenler tarafından Karen Warren'ın "ekolojik feministler ("ekofeministler") kadınların, beyaz olmayanların, çocukların ve yoksulların haksız tahakkümleri ile doğanın haksız tahakkümü arasında önemli bağlantılar olduğunu iddia ederler" ifadesinde dile getirilir ve bu açıklama yaygın olarak kullanılır (1). Eleştirel ekofeminizm özellikle tahakküm mantığına ve bu mantığa dayanan çeşitli baskıların birbirleriyle olan bağlantılarına odaklanır. Hem bu mantık hem de ekofeminizm bağlamında, hiyerarşik düalizmler önemli unsurlar olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır, bu nedenle düalizmin ne olduğunu ve söz konusu düalizmlerin neler olduğunu anlamak değerlidir. Plumwood, "düalizmlerin farklılaşmanın yabancılaşmış biçimi olarak görülebileceğini" ("Mastery" 42), yani düalizmlerin taraflarının sadece farklı değil, aynı zamanda birbirlerine yabancı olduklarını belirtir. Bu noktada Plumwood, düalizm, ikilik ve hatta hiyerarşi arasındaki farkın altını çizer çünkü "hiyerarşide olduğu gibi düalist inşada da, ikileştirilmiş ötekiyle ilişkilendirilen nitelikler (gerçek ya da varsayılan), kültür, değerler ve yaşam

alanları sistematik ve yaygın bir şekilde inşa edilir ve aşağı olarak tasvir edilir" ("Mastery" 47). Oysa hiyerarşide güç yapıları belirli durumlarda değişebilirken, düalizmin keyfi ya da gerçek özellikler inşa eden ve atfeden yapısı dinamiklerin değişmesini engeller. Ve bu süreç sadece hükmedeni gücüne değil, hükmedileni de güçsüzlüğüne ikna eder. Sonuç olarak, düalizmin taraflarının bakış açılarında herhangi bir değişiklik imkansız, hatta düşünülemez hale gelir.

Bu dualizmler kültür/doğa, akıl/doğa, erkek/kadın, zihin/beden, efendi/köle gibi dualizmlerdir. Tüm bu düalizmlerde doğanın ve doğaya ilişkin olanın her zaman aşağı tarafta konumlandırıldığını görmek mümkündür. Akıl/doğa düalizmi sistemde kilit bir role sahiptir. Plumwood, Batı kültürünün kökeninde akıl ve doğa arasındaki bu radikal ayrımın yattığını ve üstün olarak algılanan her kavramın akıl aleminin bir parçası olarak görülürken, aklın altındaki her şeyin doğa alemine, yani irrasyonelliğe ve aşağılığa ait olduğunu açıklamaktadır. Plumwood'a göre, diğer tüm dualizmler, ilk bakışta öyle görünmese de, iktidar anlayışı açısından akıl/doğa ikiliğinin cinsiyetlendirilmiş bir biçimidir. ("Mastery" 45). Akıl alemi ve onun çağrışımları, doğa alemine ait olanlara hükmeden bir efendi kimliği yaratır. Efendinin gücü, ona atfedilen ve aynı zamanda doğa alemindekilerin dışlandığı özellikleri oluşturan özelliklerden kaynaklanır. Düalizmlerde, bir düalizmin üstün tarafına atfedilen özellikler ne kadar önemliyse, diğer tarafa atfedilmeyen özellikler de o kadar önemlidir.

Bu çalışma, yeryüzündeki tüm varlıklar arasındaki karşılıklı ilişki ve etkileşimi ve bunun gerekliliğini vurgulayan bir bakış açısının, doğal olarak çevreyle, daha spesifik olarak da insanın diğer tüm varlıklarla birlikte var olduğu mekânla nasıl etkileşime girdiğimizi de içerdiğini öne sürmektedir. Mekânın ne anlama geldiği Michel de Certeau'nun sıklıkla alıntılanan tanımıyla açıklanabilir: "mekân pratik edilmiş yerdir" (117). Mekânın fizikselliği, onun yapılandırılması olarak içindeki pratiklerle ve bu bağlamda onunla olan etkileşimler ve içindeki karşılıklı ilişkilerle kavramsal anlamlar kazanır. Dolayısıyla, yer yalnızca konum, koordinatlar, yapılar olarak görülürken, mekân bu yerlerin deneyimlenme, algılanma ve üretilme biçimlerinin bir sonucu olarak oluşan bir kavram olarak kabul edilebilir. Bu çalışma mekâna ve onun çeşitli şekillerde nasıl deneyimlendiğine odaklanmayı amaçlamaktadır. Mekân, mekânsal

dönüşe kadar edebiyat çalışmalarında çoğunlukla sadece bir arka plan ya da ortam olmuştur. Lefevre, Bachelard ve Bakhtin gibi akademisyenlerin çalışmaları, mekânın ve tasarımının daha ileri düzeydeki etkilerini göstermektedir. Mekânın kendisi de, diğer tüm varlıklar gibi, anlatılardaki karakterler ve hikâye ile her zaman etkileşim halindedir. Townsend ve Forna'nın metinleri mekân fikrini şehir, ülke ve tabiat olarak bütünleştirerek insanın çevresinden ayrılmaz varoluşunu ve insan yaşamının çevresindeki her varlıkla iç içe geçmiş yapısını vurgular. Bu metinlerde, bu kesişimi göstermek için ekofeminist bir bakış açısı kullanılmaktadır. Bu çalışma, metinleri içinde geçtikleri mekânı daha iyi anlamak için kullanan jeoeleştirel bir çerçevede ele almamakla birlikte, mekânı anlatıların ve kadın deneyiminin ayrılmaz bir parçası olarak ele almayı ve metnin diğer bileşenlerinin ekofeminist bir bağlamda mekânla nasıl etkileşime girdiğini, onu nasıl şekillendirdiğini ve onun tarafından nasıl şekillendirildiğini ve toplumsal cinsiyetin ya da daha kapsamlı olarak söz konusu dualizmlerin bu etkileşim biçimlerini nasıl etkilediğini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, biyobölgecilik, eko-kozmpolitanizm ve Doreen Massey'in toplumsal cinsiyet, mekân ve çokluk perspektifi gibi mekânda dualizmler ve karşılıklı ilişkiler fikrini öne çıkaran farklı perspektiflerden yararlanılacaktır.

Doreen Massey, insanlığın ve iktidarın tek bir doğrusal ve zamansal tarihi olduğu fikrini reddederek, mekânın, özellikle varlıkların birbirleriyle kurdukları ilişkiler aracılığıyla deneyimlediğimiz gerçekliğin farklı versiyonlarını inşa etmek için çokluk ve farklı yöntemler sunduğunu belirtir. Massey'e göre mekânsal olan, "tüm mekânsal ölçeklerdeki sosyal ilişkilerin çokluğundan inşa edilir... ulusal siyasi iktidarın dokunaçlarının coğrafyasından, kasaba, yerleşim, hane ve işyeri içindeki sosyal ilişkilere kadar" (4). Massey burada ilişkiler ağının mekânı nasıl inşa ettiğini açıklamaktadır. Ek olarak, Massey mekânın çokluğunu tartışır, çünkü "mekân pratik edilen yerdir", bir yerin anlamı o yerin deneyimleri kadar çeşitlidir. Bu, tek başına, bir yerin anlamlarını çoğaltarak dualist düşünme stratejilerini sekteye uğratar. Bir varlığın birden fazla anlamı olduğunda ve bu anlamlar dışıl ve rasyonel gibi aynı sıfatlar kümesinin parçaları olmadığında, düalizmin bir varlığın çağrışımlarını sınırlama girişimi başarısız olur.

Barry Commoner'a göre ekolojinin ilk yasası "her şeyin diğer her şeyle bağlantılı

olduğudur" (8). Bu bağlantılar ağında, yalnızca tüm varlıklar her zaman bir etkileşim süreci içinde olmakla ve bu etkileşimler yoluyla evrimleşmekle kalmaz, aynı zamanda bu etkileşimleri nasıl yürüttüğümüz de politik eylemler olarak önem taşır. Teorik bir çerçeve olarak ekofeminizm, insanlar, hayvanlar ve doğa arasındaki ilişkisellikleri ve bunların inşa süreçlerinin politikasını araştırır. Mekân kuramları da insanlara ve onların çevreleriyle etkileşimlerine odaklanır ve tüm bu etkili faktörleri içeren bir mekân fikri, gerekli siyasi değerlendirmeler yoluyla yeryüzündeki varlıklar arasındaki ilişkiselliklerin anlamlarını, dolayısıyla toplumsal cinsiyet, ırk ve çevre fikirlerini aydınlatılabilir. Mekâna ekofeminist bir bakış açısı, çevreye dayatılan fiziksel ve kavramsal sınırların doğası gereği iktidar, tahakküm ve sömürü sistemleriyle iç içe geçtiğini gösterir. Ataerkil ve insanmerkezci yapıların yalnızca mekân anlayışımızı değil, aynı zamanda mekanla olan ilişkilerimizi de nasıl şekillendirdiğini, bunun da çoğu zaman hem kadınların hem de doğanın marjinalleştirilmesi ve sömürülmesiyle sonuçlandığını ortaya koyar. Ekofeminizm, mekânsal dinamikler içinde toplumsal cinsiyet, ırk ve çevrenin kesişimselliğini inceleyerek, bu güç dinamiklerinin nasıl sürdürüldüğünü ve daha eşitlikçi ve sürdürülebilir mekânsal uygulamalar yoluyla bunlara nasıl meydan okunabileceğini ortaya koyar.

Bu çalışma, hem Sylvia Townsend Warner'ın *Lolly Willowses or the Loving Huntsman* (1926) hem de Aminatta Forna'nın *Happiness* (2018) romanlarının, geleneksel mantığın bir parçası olan dualizmlerin, insanların ve insan olmayanların mekân ve mekânların yaratım süreçleriyle etkileşim biçimleri üzerinde nasıl bir etkiye sahip olduğunu gösterdiğini savunmaktadır. Bu romanlarda, ikiliklerin kadınlar ve hayvanlar gibi alt kategori olarak konumlandıklarının hareketlerini kısıtladığı görülüyor. Her iki romanda da düalizmlerin, yeryüzündeki varlıkların mekânla etkileşimlerini etkilerken, mekânı çoğunlukla düalizmin üstün tarafına tahakküm ve hareket özgürlüğü tanıyacak şekilde şekillendirdiği vurgulanmaktadır. Buna ek olarak, analiz, dualizmlerin zaman içinde dönüştüğünü ve yeni şekiller aldığını ortaya koymuştur; bu durum, *Lolly Willowses* ve *Happiness* gibi yaklaşık doksan yıl arayla yazılmış iki roman yan yana getirildiğinde öne çıkmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın kuramsal çerçevesini ekofeminist yaklaşımlar, özellikle de bu yaklaşımların dualizmleri ele alış biçimleri oluşturmaktadır. Tartışma, Aristoteles ve

Platon gibi klasik dönem filozoflarından Rönesans, Kartezyanizm ve Aydınlanma'nın hümanist felsefesine kadar bazı önemli fikirleri gözden geçirerek geleneksel mantık ve dualizm kavramlarına odaklanarak başlamaktadır. İnsan/kadın, insan/doğa, insan/hayvan, akıl/duygu, zihin/beden ve kültür/doğa gibi dualizmleri yadsınamaz bir hakikat olarak kabul etmeleri ve yüceltmeleri bakımından aralarında önemli bir ortaklık olduğu tartışılmaktadır. Bu dualizmler aynı zamanda bu çalışma için önemli bir bağlam oluşturan kent/kırsal gibi diğer bazı ikiliklerin yaratılması için de bir dayanak noktasıdır. Düalizmlerin erkeğe kadın ve doğa karşısında üstünlük atfettiğini söylemek mümkündür. Düalizmlerin üstün tarafları yaşamın merkezinde konumlanırken, ikincil taraflar merkezin idamesi için sağlayıcı konumuna indirgenmektedir.

Düalizmlerin kadını ve doğayı ikincil olarak konumlandırması nedeniyle bu çalışma, kuramsal çerçevesinin bir parçası olarak geleneksel mantığın düalizmlerine karşı eleştirel ekofeminizmin duruşunu benimsemektedir. Eleştirel ekofeminizmin tam olarak anlaşılabilmesi için, çalışmada öncelikle feminist düşünceye genel bir bakış sunulmaktadır. Bu genel bakış, feminist düşüncenin başlangıcından itibaren geleneksel mantığın dayatmalarına karşı bir duruş sergilediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Ekofeminizmle ilgili olarak, ilk olarak, erken dönem ekofeminist yaklaşımlardaki bazı tuzaklar tartışılmış ve bunların geleneksel mantığın dualizmlerinden nasıl beslendiğine işaret edilmiştir. İkinci olarak, bu çalışmada benimsenen bakış açısı olan eleştirel ekofeminizme, özellikle de Val Plumwood'un doğayı, kadını ve diğer tüm ikincilleştirilmiş tarafları özgürleştirmek için dualizmleri yıkmayı amaçlayan fikirlerine geçilmiştir. Plumwood, düalizmlerin özelliklerini ve dünyayı şekillendirmedeki etkilerini bağlamsallaştırmaktadır. Eleştirel ekofeminizmin dualizmleri yıkma stratejisi, dualizmler tarafından inşa edilen alanlar arasında keskin ayırım iddiaları yerine sürekliliği ve bağlantıyı teşvik etmektedir.

Dualizmlerin mekân üzerindeki etkisini incelemek için bu çalışma, mekâna yönelik kuramsal yaklaşımlardan da faydalanmaktadır. Akademisyenler, mekanın, etkileşimler ve içerdiği yaşamlar tarafından şekillendirilen yerin deneyimlenmiş hali olduğu fikrine dayanarak yeri mekandan ayırmaktadır. Mekân üzerine, mekânın nasıl deneyimlendiğini ve şekillendiğini analiz eden bir literatür mevcuttur. Amacı



dualizmler ve mekan pratikleri arasındaki ilişkileri ortaya çıkarmak olan bu çalışmanın kaygısıyla örtüştüğü için biyobölgecilik, eko-kozmopolitanizm ve Doreen Massey'in mekan pratikleri hakkındaki fikirlerinden faydalanılmaktadır. Biyobölgecilik, yaşanılan ekolojik bölgenin döngüleri, habitatu ve florası ile senkronize bir yaşamı hedefleyen, yerellik odaklı bir mekân anlayışını teşvik etmektedir. Bu anlayış, insan ve doğa arasındaki sürekliliği ve birlikteliği yerel ölçekte de olsa yücelterek özellikle insan/doğa dualizmini yıkmaktadır. Eko-kozmopolitanizm ise bu süreklilik anlayışını küresel ölçüğe taşır ve insanlar arasındaki bağlantılılığı da içerir. Eko-kozmopolitanizm insanın doğaya olan bağımlılığını ve insanlar arasındaki karşılıklı bağımlılığı vurgular. Doreen Massey'in fikirleri özellikle toplumsal cinsiyet ve diğer güç ilişkilerinin mekân pratikleri üzerinde nasıl bir etkiye sahip olduğunu vurgulamaktadır.

Bu kapsamda Üçüncü Bölüm, *Lolly Willowses or the Loving Huntsman*'da kadın/erkek düalizminin nasıl ele alındığını analiz etmektedir. Romanın, düalizmlerin kadını erkeğin ihtiyaçlarını karşılayacak şekilde konumlandırmadaki güçlü etkisini gösterdiği; ancak aynı zamanda yükselen feminist fikirlerin, özellikle de yeni kadın fikrinin, bu düalizmlere karşı bir direniş aracı olarak nasıl işlev gördüğünü gösterdiği savunulmaktadır. Romanın baş karakteri Laura, yani Lolly Willowses, 20. yüzyılın yeni kadınının bir temsili olarak karşımıza çıkar. Laura, kırk yıl boyunca düalizmlerin dayatmaları doğrultusunda yaşar. Analiz, Laura'nın hayatının, onu bir bakıcı olarak gören romanın erkek karakterleri etrafında nasıl döndüğünü vurgular. Hayatındaki ikiliklerin etkisi çocukluğundan beri görülür: annesinin ölümüyle birlikte annesinin evdeki rollerini üstlenir ve bu rol erkek kardeşinin evinde çocuklarının halası olarak devam eder. Analiz aynı zamanda mekânın karakterleri hem etkilediğini hem de onlardan etkilendiğini göstermektedir. Ayrıca, romandaki üç ana mekânın, Sommerset'teki Lady Place, Londra'daki Apsley Terrace ve Chilterns'teki Great Mop'un tasvirinde görüldüğü gibi, mekânların yaratılması düalizmlerle yakından bağlantılıdır. Lady Place, Laura'ya düalizmlerin dayatıldığı domestik mekân olarak yansıtılır. O dönemde yazılmış yüksek modernist eserlerdeki temsillerden farklı olarak, bu romanda Londra'nın anonimliği ve dolayısıyla özgürlüğü artıran bir şehir olarak değil, kadın hareketinin kısıtlandığı eril bir mekân olarak ele alındığı görülmektedir. Ayrıca, kadının kısıtlanmasına paralel olarak, Londra'da doğanın da

parklara hapsedildiği görülür. Laura'nın bu mekânlarla etkileşimi, Massey'in fikirlerine paralel olarak, toplumsal cinsiyetin mekân pratiklerini nasıl etkilediğini gösterir. Laura'nın inzivaya çekildiği Great Mop ise ikili ikiliklerin etkisinin olmadığı, kadın ya da erkek insanların doğayla uyumlu bir şekilde yaşadığı vahşi bir alan olarak temsil edilir. Romanın Great Mop temsilinde "mekânda yaşamak" gibi bazı biyobölgeci fikirleri gözlemek mümkün. Son olarak, romanda doğaüstünün muğlak bir şekilde kullanıldığı görülmektedir. Romanda gerçekten doğaüstü bir olayın gerçekleşip gerçekleşmediği net olmasa da, roman Laura'nın cadılığının, Laura'nın yeni kadın olarak özgürleşme ve benlik pratiği için bir çıkış noktası olarak işlev görülebileceği öne sürülür.

Dördüncü Bölüm'de Aminatta Forna'nın *Happiness* romanı ele alınmakta ve romanın, mekâna yönelik yaklaşımların yanı sıra, birbirine bağlılık ve dayanışmaya ilişkin çağdaş fikirlerden beslendiği savunulmaktadır. *Lolly Willowes'da* olduğu gibi, Forna'nın romanı da düalizmlerin mekânla etkileşimler üzerindeki etkilerine dikkat çeker, ancak eleştirel ekofeminizme uygun olarak, romanın kaygıları dualizmlerin sorunsallaştırılmasıyla sınırlı kalmayıp daha geniş bir alana yayılır. *Happiness* özellikle mekânların nasıl yaratıldığıyla ilgilenir. Romanda Londra, göçmen gruplar arasındaki bağlantılar ağı tarafından inşa edilen ve sürdürülen kozmopolit bir şehir olarak temsil edilir. Roman sürekli olarak insanlar arasındaki ve insanlarla doğa arasındaki karşılıklı bağımlılığı vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca, insanların mekânla etkileşimlerinde düalizmlerin hâlâ devam ettiği, kadınların ve insan olmayanların mekândaki hareketlerinin hâlâ kısıtlı olduğu gösterilmektedir. Yine de roman bu kısıtlamalara karşı aktif bir direniş sergiler. Jean'in mesleği ve karakterlerin "ötekiyle ve çevreyle ilişki kurma istekliliği" düalizmlerin yıkılmasında büyük bir etkiye sahiptir. Ayrıca roman, eşzamanlılık ve çok sarmallı yapı gibi anlatım teknikleri aracılığıyla birbirine bağlılık ve hiyerarşik olmayan karşılıklı bağımlılık tematik kaygılarını da desteklemektedir. Farklı karakterlerin bakış açılarını eşit bir düzlemde yansıtan anlatı, hayvanları ve doğayı da sürekli görünür kılar.

Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma 92 yıl arayla yazılmış iki romanı, Sylvia Townsend Warner'ın *Lolly Willowes or the Loving Huntsman* (1926) ve Aminatta Forna'nın *Happiness* (2018) romanlarını, düalizmlerin mekânla etkileşim ve mekân yaratma

süreçleri üzerindeki etkisi açısından eleştirel ekofeminist bakış açısıyla incelemiştir. Çalışma, düalizmlerin hem mekânla etkileşim hem de mekânların yaratımı üzerinde büyük bir etkiye sahip olduğunu ortaya koymuştur; bununla birlikte, her iki romandaki kadınlar, mekânlarla düalizmlerin dayatmalarından kurtulmuş bir etkileşimi mümkün kılmak için bu düalizmleri yıkmaya çalışmaktadır. Ayrıca, düalizmlerin etkisinin yanı sıra bunlara karşı direniş stratejilerinin de zaman içinde evrildiği vurgulanmaktadır. *Lolly Willows*'ta Laura ikiliklerin olmadığı vahşi doğaya çekilirken, *Happiness*'ta Jean hem şehirde "vahşi alanlar" yaratarak hem de uzun süredir Öteki olarak görülen ve ikiliklerin hiyerarşik olarak alt tarafıyla ilişkilendirilen taraflar arasındaki bağlantı ağları aracılığıyla düalizmlere aktif bir şekilde meydan okur.

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**TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE:** **Yüksek Lisans / Master**  **Doktora / PhD**

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