



**REPRESENTATION OF THE ANTHROPOCENE EPOCH IN DORIS  
LESSING'S *MARA AND DANN: AN ADVENTURE AND THE STORY OF  
GENERAL DANN AND MARA'S DAUGHTER, GRIOT AND THE SNOW DOG***

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**Master's Thesis**

**Department of English Language and Literature**

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**2021**



**DORIS LESSING'İN *MARA AND DANN: AN ADVENTURE VE THE STORY OF GENERAL DANN AND MARA'S DAUGHTER, GRIOT AND THE SNOW* DOĞ ADLI ESERLERİNDE ANTROPOSEN ÇAĞININ BETİMLEMESİ**

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**2021**

**T.C.**  
**TEKİRDAĞ NAMIK KEMAL ÜNİVERSİTESİ**  
**INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**  
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**TEKİRDAĞ NAMIK KEMAL ÜNİVERSİTESİ**  
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**İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI**  
**YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ**

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**TEKİRDAĞ-2021**  
**Her hakkı saklıdır.**

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Ersin AYDINOĞLU

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## ÖZET

Kurum, Enstitü, ABD : Tekirdağ Namık Kemal Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü,  
İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı  
Tez Başlığı : Doris Lessing'in *Mara and Dann: An Adventure* ve *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and the Snow Dog* Adlı Eserlerinde Antroposen Çağının Betimlemesi  
Tez Yazarı : Ersin AYDINOĞLU  
Tez Danışmanı : Doç. Dr. Cansu Özge ÖZMEN  
Tez Türü, Yılı: Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2021  
Sayfa Sayısı : 76

Antroposen, yirmi birinci yüzyılda büyük bir endişe kaynağıdır. İnsanın doğaya müdahalesini vurgular ve insanın canlı ve cansız varlıkları nasıl tahrip ettiğini ve bu müdahale nedeniyle ne gibi sonuçlar doğurabileceğini açıklar. Bir insanın müdahalesiyle yaklaşan felaketlerin imajını yaratma konusunda tutkulu olan Doris Lessing, Antroposen'in öncü yazarlarından biridir. *Mara ve Dann: Bir Macera* ve devamı olan *The Story of General Dann ve Mara's Daughter, Griot ve The Snow Dog*, eserlerinde kıyamet sonrası dünyanın yakın gelecekteki temsilcileridir. Her iki romanda da olay örgüsü uzak bir gelecekte geçiyor ve romanlardaki karakterler atalarının yaptığı hatalardan dolayı acı çekiyor. Bu çalışma, Antroposen'in romanlar üzerinden nasıl anlatıldığını, insan üzerindeki etkilerinin neler olduğunu ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Romanlar boyunca yazarın, insanların doğaya karşı tepkilerini nasıl kontrol edeceklerini öğrenene kadar hatalarından acı çekmeye devam edeceğini bize göstermeyi başardığı açıktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Antroposen, Doris Lessing, Yıkım, Çevrebilim, İnsan Dünyası, Kıyamet Sonrası

## ABSTRACT

Institution, Institute, : Tekirdağ Namık Kemal University, Institute of Social Sciences,  
Department

: Department of English Language and Literature

Thesis Title : Representation of the Anthropocene Epoch in Doris Lessing's  
*Mara and Dann: An Adventure* and *The Story of General Dann*  
and *Mara's Daughter, Griot and the Snow Dog*

Thesis Author : Ersin AYDINOĞLU

Thesis Advisor : Assoc. Prof. Cansu Özge ÖZMEN

Type of Thesis Year : MA Thesis, 2021

Total Number of : 76

Pages

The Anthropocene is a major concern in the twenty-first century. It highlights the human interference to nature and clarifies how human beings destroy the living and non-living things and what consequences can generate due to this interference. Doris Lessing, who is passionate about creating an image of the forthcoming disasters because of the intervention of a human, is one of the pioneer authors of the Anthropocene. In her works, *Mara and Dann: An Adventure* and its sequel *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog* are the representatives of the post-apocalyptic world in the near future. Plots in both novels are set in the distant future and the characters in the novels suffer from the mistakes made by their ancestors. This study aims at demonstrating how the Anthropocene is described through the novels, what effects demonstrate on humanity. Throughout the novels, it is obvious that the author has managed to exhibit us that human beings will continue to suffer from their mistakes until they learn how to control their reactions towards nature.

**Keywords:** Anthropocene, Doris Lessing, Disaster, Human World, Ecology, Post-Apocalyptic

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

From the bottom of my heart, I would like to express sincere gratitude and appreciation to Assoc. Prof. Cansu Özge ÖZMEN whose support, guidance, and encouragement has been invaluable throughout this study. Without her help and wise guidance, this thesis would not have been the same!

I also would like to thank my family for their never-ending positive attitudes towards me and their reliance on me, especially my lovely sister Erençül AKAN, and my friends, especially MLA Rabik for her patient and exorable support and encouragement. Thanks to her support, I managed to overcome every difficulty.

I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Münir Bey whose unrequited love has always made me relaxed and covered my heart with his innocence.

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## INTRODUCTION

How do human beings turn a blind eye to the destruction around them? When and how does humankind become aware of their mistakes on earth? Humankind is responsible for the alteration of the earth. “Therefore, naming contemporary times the ‘Holocene’ may seem insufficient to characterise the current state of the Earth system” (Bohle & Bilham, 2019, p. 1). The focal point of this thesis is to demonstrate how these two novels *Mara and Dann: An Adventure* and *The Story of General Dann and Mara’s Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog* deal with the representation of human interference with nature and how nature is destroyed by human mistakes and what the inevitable consequences of this interposition are on the human being and the non-human nature. The possible consequences and probable events which might be accurate in the near future highlight the importance of red alert about the forthcoming disasters on the planet. One of the descriptions about this is that:

Reinventing a life of dignity for all humans in a finite and disrupted Earth has become the master issue of our time. If we are entering an era beyond the experience of human beings, it is one for which there has been no biological adaptation and no cultural learning or transmission to prepare us for the kind of environmental/geological changes that loom. This constitutes a new human condition. Nothing could call more insistently for new social sciences and radically new age is above all an assemblage of social systems, institutions and representations. (Hamilton, Bonneuil, & Gemenne, 2015, p. 5).

Distinguished by its substantial influences upon the human being and the non-human nature, the Anthropocene has been defined as one of the major concerns in the twenty-first century. Air pollution, deforestation, the release of greenhouse gases, destruction of agricultural areas, depletion of freshwater, carbon emissions, and so on might be related to climate change and global warming which have significant impacts on the planet such as drought, floods, landslides, earthquakes, famine in agriculture.

Coined by Paul Crutzen, the Anthropocene has become a trending topic among the literary, scientific, and social world, and people have begun to discuss its effects and outcomes by trying to prove it. The outcomes caused by human interference with the anthropogenic world affect not only their own lives but also the non-human natural world. Most species have been mutated by human interference and their DNA also has been affected by these changes. All of these sad outcomes started along with the Industrial Revolution which a shift from a rural lifestyle to urban life, from consumption to production. With the advancement in technology in the eighteenth century, production in every field has been increased and on the one hand this has caused some destruction, but on the other hand it has helped human beings make the world a better place.

Authors address the Anthropocene through using fiction. They make it more visible for their readers through post-apocalyptic fiction and dystopian fiction. These genres have a considerable impact on demonstrating the consequences of the Anthropocene by fictionalizing the characters and the plot in the near future with the aim of establishing empathy with the destruction. Mathias Clasen defines the content of apocalyptic writing as: “Common to post-apocalyptic stories is that they depict the aftermath of a global or near-global disasters, and that they are uniquely equipped to serve specific psychological functions” (Clasen, 2019, p. 1). Its plot generally deals with the journey from a wrong place to live to a better place to survive. The disasters portrayed through the novel “threaten not just individual lives or even individual societies” (Clasen, 2019, p. 2). It asks tough questions related to the existence of the universe, the current situation of the human being, and non-human nature.

The author of these novels was born in Africa and grew up with hardship during her life. Her well-known novel, *The Grass is Singing* demonstrates the difficulties and struggles of people in Africa. Because of experiences throughout her life such as poverty, famine, matrimonial struggles with her husbands, she has dedicated herself to writing in order to unveil the unseen. That is why she is closely interested in ecological writing such as eco-feminism, post-apocalyptic and dystopian fiction in order

to criticize the world by reflecting the setting in the near future by ascribing meaning to characters. In terms of the ecological perspective, *Mara and Dann: An Adventure* and *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog* are outstanding examples of climate fiction novels. It is an undeniable fact that Doris Lessing succeeded in revealing the inevitable consequences of human interference to nature and blindfold actions by setting a plot in the near future.

*Mara and Dann: An Adventure* has been discussed through various perspectives in literature and has been interpreted in different theories. To set an example, Najra R. Aldeeb discusses it in terms of ecofeminism by focusing on women in the book, especially the main character Mara. Coined by French writer Francoise d'Eaubonne,

ecofeminism is a branch of feminism that sees environmentalism, and the relationship between women and the earth, as foundational to its analysis and practice. Ecofeminist thinkers draw on the concept of gender to analyse the relationship between humans and the natural world. (Zein & Setiawan, 2017, p. 1)

Taking women characters into account, the author has tried to demonstrate “the interconnectedness of women and nature” (Aldeeb, 2017, p. 8). Socialist ecofeminists aim at discovering the reasons for persecution and sovereignty. The author of these novels demonstrates this oppression through the events. For example, when they reach Charad, Mara is arrested because she tries to become a spy. Then, she is taken to the breeding system as a breeder. The impression of this breeding stands for the oppression of women in society. They do have any choice but to accept the offer.

Another fundamental genre analysed related to *Mara and Dann* is science fiction and dystopia. “Science fiction is a literature concerned with the process by which a depicted environment has become different from our own, with the means by which humanity finds itself there” (K, 2016, p. 206). Besides, dystopian fiction is “characterized by an oppressive social control, such as an authoritarian or totalitarian government” (K, 2016, p. 215). *Mara and Dann* witness various governments and tribes

who fight each other to dominate the region and these governments represent the dystopian feature. Most of them have been destroyed through some environmental disasters such as drought, floods and despite these challenging conditions, instead of providing a liveable place for their community, they still tend to fight each other to control and rule the region. Although Doris Lessing's *Mara and Dann: An Adventure* has been discussed through various but interrelating topics, its sequel *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and the Snow Dog* is overshadowed by the first book. It did not succeed in creating a similar effect like the previous one, which is why the second book has not been discussed through these topics mentioned above.

In the interest of brevity, this thesis tries to argue that *Mara and Dann: An Adventure* and its sequel *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog* demonstrate an extensive interest in creating awareness of the ecological concerns in the world. These two novels trace the everchanging, dynamic reality of human beings which started in the eighteenth century with the Industrial Revolution. By discussing the problems about ecology in the apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic world in the distant future, these novels prove the possibility that human beings might encounter what they did to nature. Although both novels describe a gloomy atmosphere with anthropogenic characteristics, at the ends of the novels, there is the hope for the possibility that everything may be changed if sufficient awareness is supplied.

## CHAPTER I

### 1.1. Environmental Fiction and Criticism

Ecocriticism is a collection of analytical perspectives examining the description of the connection between nature and humankind heavily on the devastation caused by human's conscious and unconscious behaviours presented in their daily lives. It objects to focusing on incorporating criticism and concrete dilemmas by concentrating on literal analysis of the depictions of nature in the books. To construct its meaning, Cheryll Glotfelty describes it as "... the study of the relationship between literature and physical environment" (Glotfelty and Fromm, 1996, p. xx). As it can be understood from the statement, ecocriticism benefits from nature and the consequences of the association between human beings and non-human things.

The expanding interest in ecological perspectives paves the way for the necessity of a philosophy which brings the outcomes of human actions towards nature to light without hiding anything. Then, it assumes responsibility for revealing the realities about our universe and possible consequences upon human beings and the non-human world. With the aim of giving an answer to the requirements of this ideology, ecocriticism has been divided into waves which enable them to explain the necessity of its periods and the concrete results showing the effects of human beings on the universe. Adam Trexler talks about ecocriticism in his book *Anthropocene Fictions the Novel in a Time of Climate Change* as follows: "Ecocriticism emerged in the early 1990s, not as a rigorous disciplinary approach, but rather as an interdisciplinary group of researchers in literature, culture and environment" (Trexler, 2015, p. 17). He puts ecocriticism in the centre of many fields which help countries make their own identities. As a consequence, no matter how similar the first wave and the second wave of ecocriticism are to each other, after the second wave, ecocriticism dwells in more distinct topics such as ecofeminism, eco-cosmopolitanism, and so on.

Another fundamental book related to ecology is *Silent Spring* written by Rachel Carson in 1962 with the aim of reflecting the damaging influences of the unconscious overuse of pesticides. She puts the blame on the chemical industry because of propagating misleading information to society which is beneficial for overproduction. Carson asserts how hazardous these artificial chemicals can be for the non-human nature: “Among the herbicides are some that are classified as ‘mutagens’, or agents capable of modifying the genes, the materials of heredity” (Carson, 1997, p. 28). She attempts to raise awareness among the society. In addition to that, Brett Clark defines her as: “Carson combined the best scientific information then available with the skills of a great writer, and had an extraordinary effect in raising public concern over this issue” (Clark, 2008, p. 1).

Before ecocriticism emerges into the daylight, Romantics and Transcendentalists also address ecological concern towards human and non-human nature. Romantic authors and poets take nature as their main concerns and write about it in their works. Kevin Hutchings asserts that:

Romantic literature often appears to value the non-human world mostly highly, celebrating nature as an beneficent antidote to the crass world of getting and spending, and lamenting its perceived destruction at the hands of technological industrialism and capitalist consumerism, Romanticism has provided much fertile ground for ecocritical theory and practice. (Hutchings, 2007, p. 172)

It is clear that Romanticism paves the way for a much more beneficial place for environmental criticism. Unlike the previous authors who used it as an aesthetic value;

Enlightenment natural philosophers sought above all to discover and demonstrate the usefulness of objects in nature’s realm. In doing so, they *instrumentalized* the things of this world (that is, they valued non-human objects and organism primarily for the “useful” role they could be made to

play as “instruments” promoting human sustenance, wellbeing, and progress. (Hutching, 2007, p. 180)

Similarly, American Transcendentalists also play a crucial role in demonstrating ecological awareness. “American transcendentalism is essentially a kind of practice by which the world of facts and the categories of common sense are temporarily exchanged for the world of ideas and the categories of imagination” (Brodrick). The main aim is to make our lives better by putting ourselves above disputes. That is why it can be regarded as another nature-oriented approach. In order to sum up its concerns, Raju Chitrakar puts forward an idea that:

American Transcendentalism unfolds several features related to human and nature relationship. These features can be summarized in three points: that human being is analogous to nature; human actions should be made proportionate to the order of nature; and that nature is the manifestation of universal soul. If ecocriticism adopts these features, it could emerge as a complete nature-oriented philosophy. (Chitrakar, 2020, p. 1504)

As he said in his article, no matter how different they look from each other, when some features come together, it will evince a thought based on nature. After the evidence of its first appearance in the Romantic period and American Transcendentalists, ecocriticism carries on the path its waves.

In the first wave of ecocriticism, it was exclusively based upon the praises of non-fiction nature literature. Pioneers such as Mary Austin, Edward Abbey, Wendell Berry founded their famous works upon the qualification of environmental inspiration. In the first wave of ecocriticism, the perspective was found to arrive at the study of nature in its own process rather than building on the notion of the raw material. In other words, it made nature the centre of their writings. By encapsulating the main principles of this wave and the bulk of eco-critics, it is an apparent fact that nowadays we still face our environmental catastrophe caused by human faults, and despite this fact, eco-critics take it as their own duty to create attention among people and to come up with an idea

that is going to solve the existing problems. Since nature would not come back and support humanity, a concern of the ecocritical study was as to pay heed to nature and point it out. The first wave has succeeded in holding the difference between person and nature in place which elevates the importance of nature above that of society.

Before starting to explain the second wave of ecocriticism, this thesis will talk about the distinction between social and deep ecology which has been surviving in the concept of ecocriticism for centuries. People who are interested in deep ecology propose a drastic shift in the way we view humanity's relation to the earth. They aim to alter the human relationship with the world radically. They follow an eco-centric angle bringing forward "biospheric egalitarianism" (Kopnina, 2014, p. 1) which is concerned with other species independent of their instrumental value for humans and refers to justice between human and non-human species. They hold the opinion that it is perceived as understanding in which we make people more aware of their peripheral recognition, proposing the idea that we can start by revealing our darkened sides in order to realize the changes in the environment. Its essential concept is the conviction that the living world should be handled in an ethical and legal manner; regardless of its instrumental advantages for human usage. It is enclosed with regard to ideas surrounding interdependence and sociability. It also acknowledges the fact that the various societies of life in the world are constituted of both biological influences and ethical interactions which must be taken into account. It is defined as deep on the grounds that its doctrines about humankind's connection with the natural life logically lead to consequences more penetrating than those of dominant ecological perspectives. It holds a comprehensive standpoint of the world in which humanity breathes and explores to apply to live the penetration that divergent pieces of the ecological system carry out a duty in the lump. All in all, Taylor Patterson Lovelle indicates the function of deep ecology by saying, "It forces us to think outside of ourselves and our own experiences to develop a deeper understanding of the natural world and our role as cohabitants of it" (Lovelle, 2018, p. 13).

Social ecologists are great believers in the fact that “the very notion of the domination of nature by man stems from the genuine domination of human by human” (Bookchin, 1982, p. 1). They believe that we are supposed first to scrutinize and resolve the issues of this social disequilibrium and brutality before we offer a solution to our disconnection from nature. It poses many ecological problems stemming primarily from communal obstacles including the hierarchy of dominance of power and the need to survive. It attempts to address those problems with a community in which human beings take into account the world in which they live, seeing it as an integral agent where progress can be achieved. In this way, humanity has become one of the newest organic creations on the earth. While the first wave of ecocriticism has mostly looked as if it is consolidated its place thanks to deep ecology by giving importance to personal association hand in hand with nature, the second wave of ecocriticism predominantly put the emphasis on social ecocriticism.

The second wave of ecocriticism triggers the more transformational path that offers the comprehension for understanding the dynamic intertwinement of nature. In addition to its focus on nature writing, the second wave lays stress on humanitarian perceptions and non-human disposition. The distinction between human and non-human nature is negotiated as construction and it is questioned how they give shape to peripheral catastrophe and its reasonable explanations.

Ecocritical thought is seen as a fusion of the concepts of waves three and four, as they intertwine through the cultural scenery. Related to third-wave ecocritical concerns, Ursula Heise comes up with the idea that it is world citizenship which binds everyone to the world by linking the various increasing dilemmas to a single universal question. Her views are based on an eco-centric ideology, which aims at bringing humanity together by collective destiny, defending against universal capitalism and bringing substantial concerns to light such as global warming. Thanks to the fourth wave of ecocriticism, material ecocriticism emerged. Formerly concentrating on influences of the environment upon the body of people, the materialist ecocriticism, today, believes

that it deals with concerns about human and non-human nature by giving importance to materialist earth. As a result of this mutual materiality, a post-human mentality emerges which is committed to studies concerning animals.

The aim of ecocriticism is to establish a philosophical structure for understanding the relationship between environmental circumstances and literature. Literature can be attributed as another section of the environment formed aesthetically, on account of the fact that literature precisely calls out to challenges of humanity like inspiration and so on which can be intertwined with the dilemmas of environmental awareness which we demand to obtain. When we take these things into account, it is obvious that eco-critics are primarily concentrated on what the dimensions of literature are and how it is conveyed through these concepts in order to promote it.

Later, ecocriticism made rapid strides and has been divided into divergent sections such as ecofeminism, posthumanism, animal studies, and so on. This provides an opportunity for identifying itself as a multidisciplinary terrain that allows people to concentrate on various types. It shoots for contrastive touch upon the studies related to ecological critique. According to Scott Slovic's ideas, the third wave ecocriticism enables people to scrutinize all aspects of human understanding with regards to environmental thinking. (Slovic, 2010, p. 5). In light of this quotation, it is obvious that third wave ecocriticism encapsulating the second wave opens a new path for people interested in ecological perspectives in different research fields. The appearance of the different branches of ecocriticism such as environmental history, environmental studies, and so on paves the way for the creation of the Anthropocene which is a premise that has sprouted cumulative abundance in conflicts with respect to environmental thinking in Europe and North America.

Taking Scott's ideas into account, the basic qualifications of the third wave ecocriticism are:

global concepts of place are being explored in fruitful tension with neo-bio-regionalist attachments to specific locales, producing such neologisms as

“eco-cosmopolitanism, “rooted cosmopolitanism,” “the global soul,” and “translocality”); strong comparatist impulses are raising questions about the possibility of post-national and post-ethnic visions of human experience of the environment. (Scot, 2010)

Hence, as it can be understood from the quotation, the area of the third wave ecocriticism has been widened and it shows the way for both a preferable comprehension of the concerns relevant to the environment and the position of the human being in the hands of it and a smooth way in order to connect the culture with it. By means of the integration of the second and third wave ecocriticism, the area of utilization of ecocriticism has been enlarged and it has paved the way for the main issue discussed these days which is questioning how literature can help people recognize the immediate necessity of the environmental consciousness and how it connects the attitudes of people towards nature by especially touching upon climate change.

## **1.2. Anthropocene Fiction**

Expirations are not epoch-making. The human being is conversant with them. In the real world, everything will reach the end of the road. Most likely, endings keep a conceivable reason behind the fact. Each period has a brand-new beginning and an inevitable ending. Life has always been in the same time cycle and probably it will ever be. For this reason, it is bewildering why human beings seem to be obsessed with concentrating upon the eventual ending; the last point of the world, and above all, what actually will come to pass after the inevitable ultimate end. Just like Brad Evans and Julian Reid said, “Human are today recognized to profoundly shape their living environment, for better or worse, more than any other species” (Evans & Reid, 2014, p. 2), the length of the time and limits of people have been drawn by their own choices both intentionally and unintentionally. The so-called Anthropocene, which is a word “from the Greek words for human “‘human’ and ‘new’” (Waters et al., 2015, p. 47) and is the age starting in the eighteenth century with the sprouting of the industrial

revolution to the nineteenth century, has been lying at the heart of humanity and because of the advancements in modernization, an increase in focus from rural areas to urban areas, Anthropocene can be still observed today's world. Furthermore, what is worse, "The effects of human perturbation will continue for centuries and millennia; some will have permanent effects" (Zalasiewicz, Williams, Steffen, & Crutzen, 2010, p. 2230).

The Anthropocene, representing the intervention of humans in the natural habitat of non-human things, has come in possession of one of the basic relevancies of human beings throughout the world. Estela Nadal-Romore and Erik L.H. Cammeraat talk about the human impacts on earth by saying:

Human activity is now global and induced changes to the lithosphere, hydrosphere, cryosphere, pedosphere, biosphere, and atmosphere. Here we list some of the impacts associated with a high variety of anthropogenic processes: (i) land use changes and vegetation distribution, (ii) changes in biodiversity (both on land and in the sea) as a result of habitat change/loss, predation and invasive species, (iii) changes in number, magnitude, and intensity of fires, (iv) changes in the hydrological cycle, and (v) changes in soil dynamics, geomorphological and erosion processes and sediment transport dynamics. (Nadal-Romore & Cammeraat, 2018, pp. 8-9)

It is evident that the Anthropocene can be encountered in every part of the world with the deadly consequences from air pollution to the extinction of many species of animals. Similarly, "Anthropogenically modified ground can also offer a record of landscape evolution and the impacts of humans on the natural environment" (Ford, Price, Hooper, & Waters, 2014, p. 55). It is symbolic of the growing problem of water-pollution, emissions of carbon dioxide and the end of the non-human world, the loss of forest, falling-away of rivers. When these inevitable consequences of the Anthropocene are taken into account, one of the significant influences of the Anthropocene on this non-human world is climate change which "creates serious risks for human wellbeing, often through the exacerbation of extreme weather events" (Oldfield & Staffen, 2014, p. 2). It

encircles both implicitly and forthrightly deep-scaled effects of global warming such as starvation, lack of water, natural disasters like earthquakes, floods, some illness caused by human beings' struggle to survive, and so on. To set an example, Roy Scranton mentions climate change in his book *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene* by saying:

Climate change is too big to be reduced to a single narrative, and the problems it presents us with demand that we transcend visually representative “picture thinking” and work instead to create a sense of collective humanity that exist beyond any one place, life, or time. (Scranton, 2015, p. 17)

In this age, people do not have the right to absurd assumptions because it has played a significant role in their daily routines. Related to this topic, Timothy Morton defines this situation as “the weather no longer exists as a neutral-seeming background against which events takes place” (Morton, 2010, p. 20). It is obvious that the weather plays a crucial part in human life because it has a decision-maker status upon the human being.

The Holocene began approximately eleven thousand years ago with the completion of the Last Glacial Maximum and it still has been in the process of continuing, and that is why The Anthropocene is regarded as the next epoch after the Holocene. It also matches up with the impacts of humans in modern societies on the world and it encapsulates the upheaval of agriculture and the consequences of it. In the near future, many scientists have put forward an idea that we have been witnessing the latest period: that is the Anthropocene. It is not wrong to indicate that “the transition into the Anthropocene is much sharper, involving order of magnitude changes in a short time” (Foley et al., 2013, p. 84). Mostly concentrating upon climate change, the consequence of technology upon the lives of human beings and non-human beings. After the slow alteration in the Holocene age, the marks of anthropocentric progress start to be observed by means of the evolutions that happened during the Industrial Revolution and thus, it dominates these times and puts the society and their lifestyles into a form.

Fredrick Albritton Jonsson mentions the relationship between the Industrial Revolution and Anthropocene epoch as:

The idea of the Anthropocene suggests that the Industrial Revolution constituted not a conclusive escape from material limits but a temporary reprieve bought with finite fossil fuel stuck, which in turn may be undone by climate change and other environmental threats unleashed unwillingly by economic development. (Jonsson, 2012, p. 2-3)

It is an obvious fact that the Industrial Revolution not only has not played a significant role in economic advancement but also has had an adverse impact on human beings and non-human nature. Moreover, Andreas Malm and Alf Hornbog claim that “According to the standard Anthropocene narrative, the Industrial Revolution marks the onset of large-scale human modification of the Earth System, primarily in the form of climate change, the most salient and perilous transgression of Holocene parameters” (Malm, & Hornbog, 2014, p. 2). From these times until now, the twenty-first century has still been facing the same problems but with more permanent and deleterious influences upon the world.

Menaces of the Anthropocene such as the destructive power of human beings upon non-human nature has been witnessed. For centuries, human beings have always been disposed to be wild to nature because of their comfort zone in their lives and have constantly abused the natural beauty of the world, and thus it has paved the way for an expected ending and devastation in the natural order especially with regards to non-human nature. In the last couple of hundred years, the environment in which we live has changed into a place that is unlivable for human beings and the actuality of transformation related to geological concerns have risen to the occasion so as to exhibit various reflections upon the non-human nature and humanity. With these transformations formed by their own will and unconscious attitudes towards nature in the world, it is inevitable for them to realize the fact that they might start to discuss the possibilities of how they can save the rest of them to make the world in which they live perdurable for living. It is a really crucial issue to be taken into account that human

beings are about to come to an end no matter how much they care. Thus, when they are aware of the fact that they can change the world's destiny with their attitudes towards nature, they can leave a more liveable planet to the children in the world.

With the rise of the Anthropocene, the evidence related to the reflections of the Anthropocene can be observed all over the world. In terms of its range in society, Frank Biermann indicates that “The Anthropocene is an epoch that sees the human species with extreme variations in wealth, health, living standards, education, and most other indicators that define wellbeing” (Biermann, 2014, p. 58). It is difficult to identify the present critical condition of the earth resulting from the flaws of human beings primarily influenced by the ongoing technological advancements in urban life, intense urbanization in many countries. That is why this current position of it makes an explanation about conjectures about flora and fauna with regards to various fields such as economic, environmental crises. In terms of the economic perspective of the Anthropocene epoch, it lights the way for clarifying how the association between nature and culture is becoming more substantial because of the transition from rural areas to urban areas. As a result of this, the breakthrough changes in the environment show up such as the loss of unspoilt and impeccable elements of pristine nature. At this point, the significance of the relationship between nature and culture can be observed in a more straightforward way. In order to make their lives easier and more comfortable, the usage of fertilizers to enhance agricultural production, dealing carelessly with garbage, an ever-increasing growth in plastic usage, and other artificial fertilizers have caused the devastation of the geological order on the face of the earth. Consequently, natural disasters such as floods, volcanic eruptions, tornadoes, hurricanes, tsunamis, and so on have become a part of daily life. This has paved the way for scarcity, drought, deforestation, the loss of flora and fauna, some deadly diseases which are representative of the Anthropocene epoch. Considering these alterations both on non-human nature and human beings, another construct for explaining the interference of human beings to non-human nature is the techno-sphere which is the conjoining of nature with the technology. On the ground of the technological improvement in the century, the pure nature of the

non-human sphere has been demolished by human beings as it detracts from the richness of other various species of fauna and flora. Moreover, it is obvious that:

In many economies in the developed world rapid technological changes is leading to increases in efficiency, reduction in wastes and dematerialization (producing ore with less materials), which in turn are leading to a decoupling between economic growth in major sectors and the resource usage and emissions into the environment. This is becoming evident in the energy, industry and food provision sectors. (Steffen et al., 2005, p. 89)

No matter how constructive impacts on some species and other things may be, their overall influence has always been adverse, because realizing the impacts of it necessitates time.

One of the other impacts of the technological improvement upon nature in the Anthropocene epoch is to lose the manifoldness of plant cover. While scientists have tried to save some types of species, others face the danger of extinction. In conjunction with the flora, the disturbance of human beings to nature can be frankly observed in the alteration of the woodlands and variation of the plant species. To make their lives easier, they use the woods in various fields without taking notice of the future of the world. At this point, Mark Whitehead asserts that “In many ways, forests are key places within which to explore the issues that confront us in the Anthropocene” (Whitehead, 2014, p. 81). As it can be understood from the quotation above, the significance of forests has a strong impact upon human beings such as confronting the reality which will sooner or later be faced.

Along with the depredation of greenfield land, humanity has been faced with the water loss, drought, landslide and other natural disasters. From the eighteenth century until now, people have used fossil fuel with different aims such as heating their homes up, transportation. The by-products of fossil fuels have directly penetrated the air, the soil, and the water. Because of the chemicals in fossil fuels, the air has been

damaged and directly has allowed for the creation of various viruses and illnesses in the countries. Mark Whitehead addresses an air problem in his book by saying:

The smoke produced by the burning of coal and charcoal, the smells and the odours emanating from slaughterhouses, and the acidic chemical compounds released from tanneries, collectively produced these atmospheric nuisances. But what made these air pollution activities problematic was that they were no longer occurring within isolated rural locations, but within bustling, and often overcrowded, urban communities where they posed a threat to human health and wellbeing (Whitehead, 2014, p. 48).

As is evident from this quotation, Whitehead has put forward the significance of unrestrained usage of fuel coal in terms of its effects upon human being's health.

As a consequence of the transformation of green land, the soil has made a change and has lost its productivity because of excessive and insensible usage of fertilizers by farmers. "According to FAO, an estimated 33% soils are moderately to highly degraded due to erosion, nutrient depletion, acidification, salinization, compaction and chemical pollution (Westhoek, Ingram, Berkum, Özay, & Hajer, 2016, p. 76). The quotation above mentions that the reason why the soil has been modified has been clarified. Especially along with the improvements in agriculture started in the Industrial Revolution, the rate of harm upon the soil has gradually increased. Thus, it is obvious that "increasing fractions of Earth's soil are manipulated for residential, industrial, transportation, and recreational development; altered in hydrology; chemically contaminated; and used for waste disposal" (Richter, 2007, p. 957). Related to the soil, Mark Whitehead speaks for the development of fertilizers in agriculture in his books. He says:

During the industrial revolution that started in Britain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, agriculturalists became increasingly aware of the benefits of adding inorganic and artificial fertilizers to soils. Farmers have been adding fertilizers to soils for centuries. These so-called organic

fertilizers include animal manure, compost and seaweed, among other things, and essentially result in the natural cycling of nutrients that are already present in the biosphere. During the industrial revolution, however, new opportunities emerged for the application of inorganic fertilizers. (Whitehead, 2014, p. 68)

The treatment of the soil with artificial things has resulted in the loss of varieties of productivity of agriculture and some plant species. Whitehead defines this situation as “Soil degradation involves a loss of organic matter, nutrients and water from land. There are various process that contribute to soil” (Whitehead, 2014, p. 70).

Another detriment caused by human being’s interference is on water which is a tangible thing in the human and non-human world. With regards to the quality of water, Richard E. Benedick expresses that “Poor quality drinking water affects the health of hundreds of millions of people in developing world and is a major factor in infant and child mortality” (Benedick, 2000, p. 11). If we look from the viewpoint of poor quality of water, contamination in it can be brought forth by the use of fertilizers in agriculture, polluting the seas and the oceans, the discharge of chemical waste. The usage of water is directly related to the number of people using it and the demand for it. Whitehead considers that “increasing demand for water is not only a product of increasing population, however, but also of relative increases in the level of per capita water use in the region” (Whitehead, 2014, p. 37). He highlights the association between the usage of water and the population in the area. With the problem of drought, some illnesses and viruses appear in the community. In addition to its vitality for humans, water is a crucial element for non-human nature. While it gives life to flora and fauna, it has a distorting influence on them in its absence. Due to the deforestation in the cities, when it rains a lot, it causes floods, storms, hurricanes, tornadoes and so on. On these grounds, it is accurate to indicate that “the future of course of geological evolution, with both natural and human feedbacks, will inevitably be shaped by the anthropogenic perturbations that have taken place to date” (Zalasiewicz, Williams, & Waters, 2014, p. 47).

After the Second World War, a new stage of the Anthropocene showed its face primarily because of the technology of the countries in order to achieve superiority among them. Because serving driving force is the reality that “technology helped people survive and reproduce, and humans increasingly invented their efforts in inventing, fabricating and protecting as possessions their technological implements” (Williams, Zalasiewicz, Haff, Schwagerl, Barnosky, & Ellis, 2015, p. 13). No matter how beneficial it looks like, it also has devastating influences on societies. The number of people starts to increase since fewer people are killed in wars. After the wars, the governments seek alternative ways to protect themselves and succeed in superiority, and in order to do it, they prefer more violent ways like some nuclear weapons which pull non-human beings into a struggle. The second stage of the Anthropocene can be interpreted as the consequences of the first stage at a slow pace. To epitomize, the releasing of carbon dioxide in the first stage will cause the ice cover and glaciers to gradually melt. Such slow but ever-increasing phases will result in changes, especially in climates. Along with the changes in climate, some animal species have become, or are on the verge of becoming, extinct.

Starting in 2015, the third stage of the Anthropocene began when the interference of human beings with nature has increased. Now, we live in a century whose consequences will be much more hazardous than in previous centuries. No matter how beneficial and fast technology we have in today’s world, the outcomes of it will be much more permanent. In the twenty-first century, the technological advancements in science exhibit the fact that if we want to live in a world without feeling the lack of any vital elements such as air and water and without wrecking non-human nature, we have to take some responsibilities to save the world. Associated with this need, a new type of genre has been a trend in order to raise awareness about the destruction caused by human interference.

It is no longer reasonable to deny the fact that there is a growing threat of climate change. Serpil Opperman and Serenella Iovino assert that:

One of the daunting consequences of the dissociative thinking that we are currently experiencing is global climate change, which affects the Earth's living fabric with melting glaciers, ocean acidification, extreme heats, droughts, floods, increased tornado and hurricane activity and intensity. (Opperman & Iovino, 2017, p. 4)

Therefore, it is imperative that we have to consider this as an essential topic necessitating to be tackled. In order to take the impacts of human interference to nature and describe a similar disaster in the foreseeable future into account, the so-called cli-fi genre has emerged in the literature. Sophia David describes this genre as "The climate novel, as opposed to the traditional, realist novel, might prioritise its purpose – to promote change, bring about engagement with a global issue – over other considerations" (David, 2016, p. 24). The climate fiction genre paves the way for the writers to let themselves be the mirror of the near future for the human being. The definition of eco-fiction defined by The Cambridge History of the American novel is that "ecofiction is an elastic term, capacious enough to accommodate a variety of fictional works that address the relationship between natural settings and the human communities that dwell within them" (Levin, 2011). Since the earliest records, the interpretations of climatological shifts can be observed as attempts to conjure up consequences of global warming upon people's lives and its narration can be placed as past, present or future. In terms of its likely setting, cities in danger of extinction, or Arctic regions may be good locations in which to consider the climate fiction genre. Related to its setting, Matthew Schneider Mayerson highlights the fact that:

Most climate fiction novels set in the future contain passages in which narrators or protagonists speak to the present-day reader by reflecting on the errors of their past, but works that deliberately connected possible futures to specific contemporary activities were more likely to encourage such shifts in apperception and perspective. (Mayerson, 2018, p. 488)

The incidents taking place in the story are generally related to extreme natural disasters and their consequences upon human lives such as floods, hurricanes, drought, earthquakes, and so on. Caren Irr indicates that “Cli-fi shares with this nonfictional writing a fascination with subjective human responses: its perplexed, injured, or physically damaged heroes often participate in this eremitic tradition” (Irr, 2017, p. 5). She highlights what type of qualities heroes have in this fiction. Along with contemporary topics with regards to the consequences of human interference with nature, as mentioned in Instituted for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) in 2016 “The term cli-fi has not only been proliferating at recent international conferences, but also within university curricula as educators in many disciplines embrace the recent spate of fiction and film dealing with climate change in humanities courses and beyond” (Leyda, Loock, Starre, & Barbosa, 2016, p. 12), the prevalence of the genre has widened.

Another subgenre of climate fiction I would like to take into account is apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fiction which concerns dystopia which is “the genre of novels contrasting with the original optimistic visions and pessimistically depicting destroyed or morally deprived societies” (Minaric, 2009, p. 10) or destruction constituted by human beings. Another definition of post-apocalyptic fiction and its function as described by Katherina Houfkova is that:

Post-apocalyptic science fiction is a specific sub-genre which depicts Earth’s civilization as collapsing or collapsed. The fictional post-apocalyptic worlds reflect possible dangers and threats related to contemporary politics, environmental politics, culture, technologies or society. Just as science fiction has the ability to predict the future and inspire scientists, post-apocalyptic fiction can potentially prevent a dystopian future by depicting the worst possible ways of the society’s downfall. (Houfkova, 2019, p. 59)

With this definition, as can be understood from its name, the post-apocalyptic genre has been dealing with the consequences of dangers caused by the human being, and

foreseeing the future helps scientists guess what will happen in the future. Under this circumstance, the bridge among past, present, and future has an important key role in defining the danger happening. To put it mildly, one thing we should remember about history is that none of us is secure. At this point, Brett Samuel Stifflemire says “Apocalypticism shapes how history perceived and why change and progress are sought” (Stifflemire, 2017, p. 43). The cause for this genre coming into view is hidden in history and people have tried to see an answer for these problems. At this point, Eckard Voigts puts forward the fact that is:

Since then, narratives of a future societal collapse or crisis have responded to a set of urgent challenges that, if anything, have increased at the beginning of the 21st century: climate change; the shortage of resources and other ecological disasters; the unipolar new world order after the end of the Cold War; the global spread of failed states; global overpopulation; demographic crises; inequality and terrorism; as a result: migration and displacement; wild urbanisation; rampant consumerism; the social and economic disasters of global capitalism; religious, ethnic and cultural strife; fundamentalist counter-reactions to modernity; unchecked scientific dynamics in biotechnology, cloning and ‘reprogenetics’; nuclear proliferation; the rise of illiberalism; unchecked surveillance and Big Data; viral pandemics; human regression and trans- or posthuman displacement by computers, robots, and so forth. (Voigts & Boller, 2019, p. 2).

With the ever-growing technology, the twenty-first century has been dealing with these problems and has been seeking solutions and trying to prevent human beings from being harmed.

On the grounds of the fact that post-apocalyptic fiction has constituted a bridge generally between past and present, it enables observers to calculate the damage and

realize its inevitable results upon their own and non-human environment. At this point, Katherine Houfkova brings forward an idea about this connection:

Post-apocalyptic fiction creates a link between a possible future and the current state of the Earth and humanity. It reminds the reader that their choices and interactions contribute to generating the future. The reader is offered a great opportunity to consider the visions of the future that they want to become reality and those they do not, and how their actions contribute to one or the other. (Houfkova, 2019, p. 64)

It is reasonable to say that the quotation above shows the reality that post-apocalyptic fiction aims at combining fiction and reality by establishing a connection between times in order to make the reader aware of the possible events in the future. By this, it is expected that the readers are aware of the fact that they have a perfect chance for setting forth what might happen in the future. It should not be forgotten that “the key challenge for the future is to ensure that the negative changes do not outweigh the positive ones” (Oldfield et al., 2014, p. 5).

All in all, when ecocriticism and its subgenres are taken into account, the impacts and their consequences can be seen clearly. With the aim of seeking an answer for a better world, critics and scientists have exhibited the results of the damage caused by human beings to both their own lives and non-human nature. That is why it is not appropriate to say that “human activity is leaving a pervasive and persistent signature on Earth” (Waters et al., 2016, p. 138). No matter how explicit the consequences are, as Tim Caro et al. (2011, p. aad2622-2) asserts that “We have a duty to future generations to enhance their quality of life by providing them with the opportunity to observe the wonders of nature”. In this thesis, Doris Lessing’s *Mara and Dann* and *The Story of General Dann and Mara’s Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog* are going to be discussed in terms of how the human being has interfered both in their own environment and non-human nature. The novels take place in the distant future but actually epitomize today’s

world road to this distant future and what human beings will face in the immediate future.



## CHAPTER II

### **Reflections of Anthropocene on *Mara and Dann: An Adventure* by Doris Lessing**

Doris Lessing brings a distorting and pathetic world full of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, water shortage, and various diseases into existence thanks to *Mara and Dann: An Adventure*. The novel talks about significant transformations in terms of geological and environmental perspective from Ifrik where the story begins. The world in which they live is circled by an ever-growing natural disaster caused by their ancestors' mistakes in the past. In the novel, coming up against the challenges because of climate change, global warming, and other disasters is a prognostication for what actually the author foresees may happen in the near future. From one place to another, the main characters seek an alternative way to survive despite the hardship they come across. Contrasting with their ancestors, their primitive lifestyle lacks technological advancements, and in the book, Mara says:

It was all free of ice, and there were cities and very large numbers of people. They think that for fifteen thousand years all this area was free of ice, and during that time there were civilisations. They were much more advanced than anything we know. (Lessing, 1999, p. 199)

She admits the reality that their ancestors used technology more efficiently than they do and this fact drags her into a pessimistic frame of mind.

Doris Lessing's life is full of extraordinary events from her childhood to the grown-up ages which help her give shape to her career and her purpose for writing. After experiencing tough conditions in Africa, she became closely familiar with the severe concerns in there. Ester Gendusa attributes Lessing's fondness to Africa as:

Lessing managed to absorb some elements of African culture which, together with the knowledge of the physical environment she acquired during her adolescence, prevented her fiction from both depicting African

nature as exotic and romanticizing African people, thus challenging the paternalistic approach characterizing most Western literature set in the colonies. (Gendusa, 2014, p. 133)

In her advanced adulthood, after getting married and divorced in four years, she came out with her first publication, so-called *The Grass is Singing*, in 1950. Throughout her fruitful periods, she became successful in producing more than fifty remarkable works under different styles such as short stories, poems, novels, and so on. She actually became famous with the publications of *Children of Violence* and her outstanding novel *The Golden Notebook*, *Alfred and Emily* and had the chance to win Nobel Prize in Literature in 2007. The years she lived in Africa led her to write in fiction style in order to imagine what they actually experienced and transmit this to the reader with the powerful descriptions in her books like *Mara and Dann: An Adventure*. Imran Majeed Bhat mentions Doris Lessing as:

She, by her own account had been a rather introverted imaginative and neurotic child and these traits look to be helpful in her career. Her imaginative power helped her to see and show things in their proper perspective. Her introverted bent of mind helped her to be free from patriarchy, free from her two husbands and free from any other authoritarian hand. (Bhat, 2016, p. 8)

In her autobiographies, Lessing discussed a topic related to matrimonial ideas, thoughts she experienced before, love, and human affairs. It may be why she did not let Mara get married through her challenging journey with her brother Dann because she was strictly against marriage and was the supporter of the woman during her life. In her short stories, she took matrimonial issues again into account. Related to her short stories, Margaret Moan Rowe claims that:

Lessing presents the father as the dreamer, the mother as regulator; the father associated with countryside and the natural world, the mother bound to the city values and social expectations; the father able to detach himself from the

mundane to gaze at the stars, the mother clutching domestic objects; the father talking about the universe, the mother complaining about school grades. Lessing's fiction resonates with his parental division. (Rowe, 1994, p. 6)

In the interest of brevity, Lessing has demonstrated colossal success through her life with various genres and has been recognised with prizes such as Somerset Maugham Award, the Austrian State Prize for European Literature, David Cohen Prize, and other remarkable awards. When her experiences in Africa are taken into account, it is not unreasonable to indicate that Lessing has fictionalized *Mara and Dann: An Adventure and The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog* with the purpose of demonstrating the situation of people in Africa by creating their setting in the near future.

The story is fictionalized in Ifrik in the near future despite the fact that the probabilities of the events and the life portrayed in the novel might be seen in the present or in near future. That is why she mentions her intention clearly in the preface: "*Mara and Dann* is an attempt to imagine what some of the consequences might be when ice returns and life must retreat to the middle and southern latitudes. Our past experiences help to picture the future" (Lessing, 1999, p. viii). To put it in a different way, the improvements in agriculture and technology are responsible for the destructive impacts upon human and non-human nature. Romadhon asserts that "human think that wild environment or nature is menace and hideous place. They see nature as the enemy that should be taken over. They prepare themselves to do invasion with the high technology" (Romadhon, 2011, p. 29). No matter how successful they have been in developing every field for a long time, they are still at the peril of extinction. When this fact is taken into account, it can be concluded that the novel aims at indicating the consequences of the human attempt to the non-human environment, the need for seeking food, water, and a liveable place, and their migration from one place to another in order to stay alive.

At the beginning of the novel, the description of Ifrik and main characters Mara and Dann are portrayed in pitiful scenery, especially Rustam where they are from. The northern part is encircled with the ice even as the other part gets dry. The impacts of climate change can be observed immediately, and this affects how people live on their land. Chakrabarty indicates that “climate scientist posit that the human being has become something much larger than the simple biological agent that he or she always has been. Humans now wield a geological force” (Chakrabarty, 2009, p. 206). To illustrate, people in Rustam generally come up against the floods, heavy rains, drought and the author says: “it was soft underfoot, this path: it was only dust” (Lessing, 1999, p. 9). The events and natural disasters are like loops and people know what will happen after the storm or heavy rain. A few pages later, Mara and Dann, who are taken by Garth whose primary mission is to reach them to Daima living in the Rock Village where the same destructive features of nature take place appear in the novel. Seven-year-old Mara and six-year-old Dann actually are the last members of a royal family, which is the reason why Shahana and Shahman, their real names, are turned into Mara and Dann so as to protect them from gloating people. This suggests the fact that the novel presents us an introduction which is dealing with a touching struggle narration of humanity in Mara and Dann’s eyes.

After Daima calls them her grandchildren, they have thorny six years with people living in the Rock Village who are totally different from their own peoples. Lessing says “they were People, her people, being tall, and thin, and nice looking” (Lessing, 1999, p. 4). It is obvious that Rock people are the opposite of their own peoples as they are thick, short, and ugly. Daima and her grandchildren are coming from the Mahondi family who ruled Ifrik once upon a time. Because of the fact that Rock people live in harsh conditions, they are good at dealing with challenging issues. During the novel, so-called Kulik, who is from the Rock Village and will be in trouble for them, does not believe the reality that they are the grandchildren of Daima. As a matter of fact, Kulik “owns the only male milk beast” (Lessing, 1999, p. 51). That is the reason why he does not want Daima to raise a cow and to earn money. In order not to have difficulty in

the future, Daima teaches everything she is supposed to know about the cow, so-called Mishka. After nearly five years, Dann escapes with two men, but Mara chooses to stay and live with Daima. Lessing describes Mara's hard choice by saying:

Because of the rain, some people who had to decide to leave stayed a little longer; but now no one was left, only the two women. Mara would have gone with the last group, even though Kulik was one of them, if it had not been for Daima, who could not walk. (Lessing, 1999, p. 65)

Everyone is moving north because the fire is coming closer to the Rock Village. After six years later, Dann appears, and now he is fifteen. Upon the death of Daima, they begin a journey for a more liveable place for themselves, but this journey is not going to be as easy as they think. After making essential preparations for the journey, Mara comes across Dann's calmness about killing and eating animals on the road:

Dann set down his can, told Mara to do the same, and caught two frogs, killed them with his knife, which he took from under his tunic, and skinned them - all in a moment. She had never seen anything so quick and so skilful. He gave her some pink meat to eat. She had not eaten meat, or could not remember doing so. (Lessing, 1999, p. 83)

Mara is more sensitive about non-human nature than Dann and she prefers not to eat animals unless it is vital. On the other hand, Dann eats animals just for the sake of surviving in a harsh environment. It is therefore essential that "Food supplies have always played a central role in determining the migration and expansion of human populations in response to environmental and climate change" (Foley et al., 2013, p. 85).

During their trip to the North, they have to stop by various cities around it. The first place they reach is Chelops. Chelops is a place in which the exclusive class of the society reigns over the slaveries. After reaching an agreement with sky skimmers, on the score of getting in the boundaries of Chelops without permission, they get arrested and soldiers take them to the justice of people, named Juba. After a short time, Mara and

Juba get on well with each other, and then she is taken to the city with the aim of doing a service for Hadrons and these Hadrons differ from Mahondis in terms of their physical appearance and their perspective on life. In Chelops, Hadrons are in the position of administrator and they hire Mahondis in order to serve them. About slavery, Dann says:

East was a town where he had seen monkeys, and people, in cages. He had seen the cages slung between work beasts, like the water cans on a carrying pole, people clinging to the bars and crying and begging, women and children as well as men, particularly children: they were to be sold in the towns along the coast. (Lessing, 1999, p. 129)

It is clear that when the resources are limited in the future, people having control of the resources will abuse the others as slaves whether they are the first rulers of the land or not. This can coincide with the intermingling of rural and urban life. The people who have the power over the weak stand for a more civilized society. It is not appropriate to note that:

The reach of urbanization is so pervasive now that only few social-ecological systems worldwide are untouched by some component of its process, be it the extraction of raw materials and energy, production of food and other goods, waste assimilation, or changes in values and consumption patterns. A salient feature of modern urbanization is that physical and economic landscape are becoming more intertwined, and that we see a greater integration of rural and urban economies. Urbanization is thus a classic manifestation of the changing human-environment relationship conceptualized by the Anthropocene. (Biermann et al., 2016, p. 345).

When Mara is taken into the room by Ida, she feels that all of Hadrons looks at her and she abhors them. Like other cities they come across, people who hold power are the rulers of the state or place. In the anthropogenic world, power is a highly fundamental concern, because a human being has always wanted to have more than they do. As a result, it culminates in the destruction of the lives of people and the demolition of non-

human nature. Mara says “Power. The ruthlessness, just hidden by smiles and courtesies” (Lessing, 1999, p. 370) and these sentences actually explain the reason why she is fed up with abuse of power.

One of the most challenging parts of the Anthropocene has been to accept the harsh reality for centuries. In the conversation with Juba, Mara says:

Majab’s emptying now, so the travellers are saying. I heard it in the eating house. There’s almost no one left. When we flew over it a year ago there were still people and things seemed not too bad. Then it was like what Chelops is like now. It happens so fast. In the Rock Village we heard that Rustam was empty and filling with sand. The Rock Village must be, by now. The sand is blowing into Majab, so they say. (Lessing, 1999, p. 187)

It is an apparent reality that no matter how Mara tries to convince them to go to the north because of the dangers coming to them, they are contented with what they have, what they are busy with, and they do not care about natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods and their consequences like drought, lack of freshwater, maybe famine. No matter how far the author foresees in her novel and describes it as a near-future-novel, big organizations and institutions of the twenty-first century do not pay attention to the possible consequences of the Anthropocene upon human and non-human nature. To add more, Mahondis and Hadrons are representative of society in which people are contented about what they have, and also, they do not care about the non-human nature and people apart from their own land. The truth is that the novel consisting of such societies actually tries to shed light on how human beings treat to nature and non-human being intentionally or unintentionally and also exhibits “specific social transformations that deeply affected the future of societies” (Luciano, 2018, p. 41).

Another way to notice the effects of Anthropocene is to see and come up against death and to feel it, and also it “shows the lineaments of not of ignorance but of denial” (Plumwood, 2005, p. 15). During their whole journey, they often discover dead bodies of people, animals, or other non-human things. Although Mara hurts animals and

feels guilty about the dead animal when she sees them, through their journey from Ifrik to the north, she gets accustomed to seeing them. The serious problem here is not about seeing the reality, but it is about realizing and comprehending the reality. In the twenty-first century, people are facing more severe and devastating concerns than in the past, but they are not aware of it, they just see. At this point, as the features of the dystopian novels necessitate, they are “strong tools for shaping societies. They arouse curiosity and force the public to question concerns of social, political, and cultural content” (Tan, 2019, p. 52). To illustrate, Mara demonstrates the fact how people ignore nature and why they abuse the trees and the natural habitats of animals:

Over the sand blew earth, and then seeds, and then again instead of sands were forests, deep forests. But people came to live in the forests, and they began to cut down the trees, and what you see now is that stage, people making towns among the forests and cutting trees and – everything always is a stage, one way of being changes into another. (Lessing, 1999, p. 322)

It is evident in the quotation above that every end is combined with another starting point. In other words, everything has various steps to reach the end, and then a new starting point comes into existences with all its possible consequences.

Mara and Dann, who want to proceed on their way, leave Chelops and on the road they are seized by Agre, who are General Shabis’s soldiers. Shabis wants to talk with Mara and day by day, she joins them in their journey to the north with Dann with Shabis. She mentions their daily routines in Rustam, why and how they take to the roads, people from Chelops, what happened there, the forthcoming disasters that happened in their own hometown like fire, floods, drought. She meets Meryx, who actually does not believe Mara about the forthcoming disasters and she gets pregnant by him. Mara decides to go away and Mara and Dann rent a boat to the River Towns. On the road, they see a number of pieces of dead animals eaten and get attacked by dragons and other creatures in the River. Because of this dirtiness, Mara becomes sick and she wants to get rid of her baby, and she asks two women to abort it in return for money.

After being attacked by Agre soldiers again, Mara and Dann are taken to a breeding program in Charad. While Dann is trained as a soldier with Darian who is also a successful soldier and proves to be one of the most reliable men in the army for Shabis, Mara and Shabis start to become close friends. After several years later, Dann becomes indebted himself and he gambles Mara and everything he has away and loses. Once Mara is taken to the brothel, the board of the manager of Bilma, Daulis saves Mara from there and helps them continue to their journey to the north. Through the end of the novel, the reality of this oppression they are exposed to is the fact that their family are actually loyal people and they are the last members of the family. Their duty is to maintain their generation and the only way to achieve this is to have intercourse with each other. No matter how eager Dann is, Mara disagrees.

After the journey with Felix and Felizza to the center, Felix says “We are on the verge of another great age of discovery and invention. And in Centre we have prototypes of the inventions of the past” (Lessing, 1999, p. 375). This statement sheds light on the advancements of technology in the anthropogenic world and the seeking for the truth. To put it in another way, from the very starting point of the book till the end of it, Mara and Dann ache to learn the truth. They do not have any idea about where they are from, about what technology their ancestors used once upon a time, about what the north is: more importantly, why all of these disasters and their pitiless consequences upon human and non-human nature are so apparent. Such questions drag the need for knowledge behind the scene. That is why the loss of knowledge is a significant issue in the anthropogenic world. To illustrate, Mara never understands what the meaning of the word “thousand” is. “Only a moment ago she had been trying to work out: Ten years ago is three years before I was born, and the three years had seemed to her a very long time” (Lessing, 1999, p. 34). It can be concluded from the quotation above, while Mara cannot comprehend the meaning of the time exactly, she is terrified about the knowledge she does not have. The things she sees enthral her because she is baffled at what technology and weapons their ancestors used in the past. To tell the truth, while Mara and Dann are living in the distant future, living in a much more primitive way than the past is the most

surprising part of it. Similarly, it is not wrong to indicate that “the Anthropocene is mostly characterized by future scenarios” (Luciano, 2018, p. 54).

The deficiency of knowledge has an impact on both people’s lives and their motivation to progress. Rather than improving themselves and making their lives more comfortable, people in these villages are tied blindly to their own traditions and routines. The expressions of Daulis reveal their blind allegiance:

The shrine, Daulis said, housed a machine that was certainly many thousands of years old, of a metal now unknown, and it had survived vicissitudes, which included falling to earth like a leaf in whirlwind, but into a swamp, which saved it. It was believed that Gods had descended to Ifrik in this machine, and the bones of two of these Gods had been sealed inside jars and set inside the machine. (Lessing, 1999, p. 354)

Likewise, the knowledge about ancient literature and their wise ancestors are also limited. They do not move beyond the knowledge they have. The stories of “Mam Bova”, the powerful women “Ankrena”, and “Larissa” (Lessing, 1999, p. 166) are the representatives of their limited knowledge. Moreover, because of the fact that people are satisfied with their lives and they do not want to learn deep knowledge about what they have, particular people in societies have a duty which is to memorize it and transfer the knowledge they have to the society. In the conversation with Candance, Mara asks “And we are the same as those old people that had all that knowledge” (Lessing, 1999, p. 169) and she tries to understand why she feels insufficient in terms of knowledge she has. Upon this question, Candance says “Yes, we think so. One of the old records said that. Human beings are the same, but we become different according to how we have to live” (Lessing, 1999, p. 169). It is apparent that their choices of life are the reflection of why they feel that they know less than their ancestors. Interestingly, every person does not have the chance of education and is not trained as a wise person. As a consequence of lack of written sources, people create a game in the society so-called “What did you see” in order to learn what the children do during the day and help them move the knowledge

to the future. First of all, the questions are chosen easy, but then much more complicated questions are asked upon the answers given. This game functions both as a tool for children to talk with their families and as a vehicle that helps them transfer the knowledge they have.

The museum they see excites their eagerness for knowledge, and from one room to another, they discover what their ancestors' lifestyles are and the technology they reach. They explore America's borders historical heritages about the past of human beings such as inventions, clothes, and the wreckages of spaceships. Mara says "The machines they invented were ever more subtle and complex, using techniques that no one has matched since. These machines it is now believed destroyed their minds, or altered their thinking so they became crazed" (Lessing, 1999, p. 381). Mara considers ancient documents as dangerous because she believes that they are experiencing the consequences of their mistakes in the past. Along with all of the evidence they see, their minds become confused and they become terrified about the chain of events about human beings during history. Tereza Střížová claims that "Mara and Dann reveal the existence of an unknown advanced civilization that was also ruined by the Ice Age. This mysterious civilization is thought to have been much more technologically advanced than the currently living people" (Střížová, 2015, p. 28).

The dilapidated nature of Mara and Dann has to stand face to face with the reality that women have difficulty in procreation. Their journey, which started in poor soils in Ifrik presents us with the fruitlessness of everything. Because of excessive rain periods, floods, extreme drought, the natural balance of human and non-human nature has undergone a change. At this point, it is not sailent to indicate that "ecocriticism is concerned not only with the attitude to nature expressed by the author of a text, but also with its patterns of interrelatedness, both between the human and the nonhuman, and between the different parts of the non-human world" (Romadhon, 2011, p. 28). Animals eat each other in order to survive and most species are about to become extinct. In terms of human beings, along with the poor quality of water and soil, many diseases and

viruses appear and start to spread all over the areas around the northern hemisphere. These reasons caused the alteration of the DNA of people and women to have difficulty in giving birth. On their journey, Mara encounters a child sitting between two men and Lessing says “Mara thought that she hadn’t seen a child for... it was certainly months. She knew this child would not live – how could it?” (Lessing, 1999, p. 118). She knows that the child and his family are on the road with the aim of surviving because fires start to take control everywhere and because of the natural disasters liveable place are destroyed for human and non-human beings. Similarly, in the dialogue between Shabis and Mara, they discuss why human beings become like that:

But when their children are born, they are not like us. At first you think that this is a Mahondi baby, and then you take another look. So what happened? Why? Nobody knows. Why are those scorpions you told me about, and the spiders and lizards, changing? (Lessing, 1999, p. 251)

It is a harsh reality that Mahondi babies do not resemble their earlier appearances anymore because the changes in climate change and changes in living conditions as a necessity affect human nature and some genes mutate because of famine, draughtiness, and other deadly reasons. Similarly, these changes affect people’s food habits and their digestive systems directly. It is obvious that “nature is the dominant power which determines the fate of humanity” (Tan, 2019, p. 55). The novel indicates that people in Ifrik are affected by the poor climatic conditions:

Mara went off a little way into the grass, squatted, and the stuff poured out. Last time there had only been pellets, Like Mishka and Mishka’s black, round pellets. She was losing the water to the earth. This was how people began to the drought sickness, wet shit pouring from their backsides. (Lessing, 1999, p. 83)

These number of changes in nature indicate collective depredation of human beings and non-human nature. Before human beings reach the end of the world which is expected, this distortion ends human divergency which leaves human beings desperate

and alone. No matter how close the end is, people are the primary factors in this destruction. Clive Hamilton describes this situation as:

They always speak of the Earth as a total system, and humans as a ‘force of nature’ like the other great forces of nature that determine the evolution of the Earth System. They speak humans as a force of nature because we have changed the *functioning* of the Earth System. (Hamilton, 2015, p. 2)

Directed by the environmental problems, human beings start to ignore the rules in societies and begin to change the rules by basing them upon environmental problems in order to survive, in view of the fact that showing compassion to people and animals can be regarded as luxurious in the society. For instance, the water becomes more of an issue in Ifrik because of sudden floods or excessive rains and Mara learns how fundamental it is during their journey. On the road, Mara encounters people who fight against themselves for a bit of water, food and this proves the fact that when people show mercy to human and non-human nature, then they become a part of living creatures who are miserable and are about to die. Tereza Střížová supports this idea by saying that “*Mara and Dann*’s cruel world has no mercy for children – the people struggle for their bare lives and do not have enough strength to protect their own children” (Střížová, 2015, p. 48).

Another result of the Anthropocene Epoch is the disunited nature of cities, collectivism instead of individualism, and thus, there is no central management among cities and each city has its own government. In Ifrik, there are many tiny cities and villages, and some of them rule their people by their unique regime. However, many of them are conducted by a particular group that has had the power over the last thousand years. Everyone fights for various reasons. In the anthropogenic world, “the land-use change is now the major driver of terrestrial species and population extinctions” (Boggs, 2016, p. 29). Except for certain cities, others fight each other for food, freshwater, livable habitats and this causes an endless circle to continue life. Commander in Chelops says “We fight each other. The war has been going on for years. It is a stalemate”

(Lessing,1999, p. 241). It is clear that the vicious cycle never ends and people in Ifrik never strike a balance among them because “urbanization is both a driver of change as well as one of the prime sites where global change will affect the wellbeing of people” (Biermann et. al., 2016, p. 347) However, Shabis believes the fact that soldiers who died in wars are the victims and they can be used in different fields for social welfare and he explains: “Building towns. Improving farms. Clearing rivers. Making children. Growing food” (Lessing,1999, p. 268).

Under these hard conditions, people forget to hope for the future. Candace indicates how desperate they are about the future by saying: “None of us has seen the sea, and probably will not ever see it. I know some of you have not heard of it” (Lessing, 1999, p. 200). In such hopeless circumstances, people do not avoid comparing themselves with people who lived a long time ago. Mara highlights the fact about who women lived in ancient times that “They were free. We would never be free, in that way” (Lessing,1999, p. 261). At this point, she remembers the times when she runs away from Kulik and feels the incapableness. No matter how weak she feels, Lessing actually epitomizes an adamant woman despite her thin and petite body.

Another trait in the apocalyptic world is to deny the facts that people actually experience and encounter. M.J. Daymond asserts that:

What Lessing stresses in her treatment of the challenges posed by this gradual, natural catastrophe is that a capacity for individual choice, for making assessments and decisions, is not only vital to survival but is what will shape the future. (Daymond, 1999, p. 85)

As the quotation asserts, the gradual disaster the siblings come across emphasizes the idea that human being’s blindness to reality will gradually be the end of the world. Unlike human beings, Mara becomes aware of the fact that change in climate is the reason for this survival story by saying that “all around was this enormous, flat country covered with grass, a yellow, drying grass that she could easily see over. No trees. Here and there were little rocky hills, but not one tree” (Lessing, 1999, p. 10). As she knows

that the degradation of nature is interrelated to her own degradation, her freedom is up to the freedom of nature from the patriarchal society. Associated with this awareness, Mara sees the destruction of nature as a significant threat leading her to think of submission of nature and women in the society to make them silent.

Mara accuses people of doing the same thing in their life to damage the earth. She explains the reason why she blames people:

These were peoples who had no interest in the results of their actions. They killed out the animals. They poisoned the fish in the sea. They cut down forests, so that country after country, once forested, became desert or arid... There was probably something wrong with their brains. (Lessing, 1999, p. 381)

Their actions causing their unhappiness breed the degradation of nature. The disappearance of nature is because of the will of people: that is controlling everything. They have forced themselves to go to the North but in fact, they literally prepare their own end literally. In short, “humans are a powerful force in reshaping” (Eagle, 2016, p.23) the world they live in. That Lessing suffered from poverty during her childhood may have pushed her to create an apocalyptic world struggling with poverty as well. With her experiences in life, she might want people to face how to cope with these serious problems.

All in all, depicted in the near future, *Mara and Dann* is the representative of a climate fiction novel and what the author foresees about the world in the immediate future, exhibits the evolutions and ramification of the Anthropocene. The novel demonstrates the journey of Mara and Dann who are striving to survive and reveals how people’s lives have changed because of climate change and how they manage to survive their arduous journeys. When it is taken into account, *Mara and Dann* unveils the unfavourable impacts of a human being upon both themselves and non-human nature, and reveals the fact that although the novel is set in the near future, it actually might not be in distant future, it can be regarded as fragment about what human being will face.

Through natural disasters such as drought, floods, hurricanes, the novel invites us to comprehend the emergency of consciousness about the environment. Because of these disasters, “food production is a major source of emissions through land degradation, fertilizer use, or fire, which eventually contributes to ocean acidification and climate change, with again a feedback loop on fires, food production, and use of nitrogen fertilizers” (Biermann et al., 2016, p. 347). Moreover, towards the end of the novel, the ancient remnants such as spaceships, weapons actually symbolizing the advanced technology which their ancestors had used draw attention to the facts of the twenty-first century. This fact is that the Anthropocene makes progress in the fast lane, and its pace is related to the technology we use today. Unless we notice this unfortunate reality, everything will face extinction like in the novel.

## CHAPTER III

### **Reflections of Anthropocene on *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and the Snow Dog* by Doris Lessing**

Throughout the years, human beings have been forced to migrate from one place to another because of ecological disasters. The reasons for immigration can be attributed to various dilemmas, but they are mainly related to the new age. Chakrabarty asserts that:

The period of human history usually associated with what we today think of as the institutions of civilization – the beginnings of agriculture, the founding of cities, the rise of the religions we know, the invention of writing – began about ten thousand years ago, as the planet moved from one geological period, the last ice age or the Pleistocene, to the more recent and warmer Holocene. The Holocene is the period we are supposed to be in; but the possibility of anthropogenic climate change has raised the question of its termination. Now that humans – thanks to our numbers, the burning of fossil fuel, and other related activities – have become a geological agent on the planet, some scientists have proposed that we recognize the beginning of a new geological era, one in which humans act as a main determinant of the environment of the planet. (Chakrabarty, 2009, p. 209)

Use of fertilizers, deforestation, rising sea levels, global warming, changes in carbon dioxide level in the atmosphere, urbanization, wars, and natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, drought can be regarded as another main reason for human being's displacement for survival. *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog*, the sequel of Lessing's 1999 novel *Mara and Dann*, focuses on the ongoing journey of adult Dann, but this time without Mara, instead with her daughter Tamar; a brave soldier who helps him create an army and become a leader of its Griot;

and Ruff, the snow dog. In both novels, the author addresses a problem which is that the ice age has shaped the world. Erick W. Wolff describes ice sheets as:

Ice sheets are a major facet of the Earth system. Their existence (or not) on Earth is one of the signs of global climate state that is visible from outer space. Ice sheets, mainly because of their impact on albedo, form a very important climate feedback. (Wolff, 2016, p. 256)

In the first novel, Mara and Dann travel from Ifrik to the north by witnessing different types of ecological problems through their journey. At the end of their journey, they learn the fact that they are the last members of the royal family and their duty is to provide for their people's continuance. Although Mara refuses to accept it, Dann is more willing to carry out this duty. At the end of the novel, Dann claims:

Mara, tell me honestly, no truthfully, the real truth: when you wake up in the morning, isn't it the first thing of – how far you're going to today, one foot after another, another little bit of the way up Ifrik? (Lessing, 1999, p. 407)

Although Mara accepts that it is true, Dann refuses to stay there. It is an apparent reality that the author creates a novel that focuses on the process rather than the trip. Dann refuses to stay in the centre and accept his fate. For this reason, the sequel can be interpreted as another repeated cycle in its plot because Dann again comes up against many problems during his journey such as wars and floods. In the same vein, "humans are now a geological force in and of themselves, driving planetary change at an unprecedented rate" (Moore, 2015, p. 32).

In her sequel, the author concentrates on the themes such as the loss, the importance of companionship, expectation, vanity, and she also sets this novel in the near future by showing another type of climate change. The reader comes across an ever-evolving scene of weather such as excessive rains and humidity instead of seeing a lack of water. Bruce Erickson asserts that:

Anthropocene becomes the link that connects the environmental changes of the last 500 years together, from global warming and ozone depletion to biodiversity collapse and habitat loss. In the way that it has been used to represent a problem that “we all know already exists. (Erickson, 2020, p. 117)

Upon realizing the soliloquy on the farm, Dann wants to begin a journey to see ice cliffs in Europe in the centre. Centre again means the door for the liveable place, water, a place without war. The novel begins with the descriptions of ice cliffs, flashbacks of Dann about cities underwater now, and lands that have already gone dry. The author describes this sudden climate change effects by saying that:

Only such a short time ago he and Mara had been here together, and he could swear that he remembered dry where now there was wet. Perhaps things were speeding up? Once it had taken generations for a city to sink down into the mud, but now, much less? (Lessing, 2005, p. 12)

One of the most essential things in the novel is the depiction of the vicious circle of human mistakes and their consequences and influences on the human being. It is undeniable reality that:

Human feel superior toward nature and that makes them arrogant and feels like they own the environment. Human only look at nature as the profitable object if only they can work on it and turn the environment into something better. They think the environment, especially the wild one, is menace and hideous place so they should take it over in order to control it. This mindset makes human feel hideous to the environment and, in turn, makes themselves be apart from it. (Romadhon, 2011, p. 60).

Related to this awareness, Dann is aware of this circle and its inevitable loop:

Griot, do you ever think of - the cities – the cities under the marshes? Did you know they were all copies of the cities that long ago – long, long ago –

were all Yerrup? That was before the Ice. They were built here on permafrost. That is, permanent frost, that would last forever – that is how we think, you see Griot, that the things we have will last. But they don't last. The cities sank down into the water. All of us, we live up here and just down there are the old dead cities. (Lessing, 2005, p. 130)

On the grounds that Dann knows what might happen after these terrible disasters on human and non-human nature, he is much more aware of forthcoming disasters and “large damages such as human and animal mortality, loss of property, and negative consequences on long-term land productivity, fresh water supply, and climate” (Biermann et al., 2016, p. 346). But sadly, he is alone this time and he carries his pain in his heart about Mara and he always wonders about what Mara is doing while he is on his own journey. With grief, he has no aim in life anymore and he does not aim at making the world a better place. During his journey to the centre, Dann encounters Griot, who is a brave soldier in wars and will be Dann's main squeeze at a later part of the novel. Griot is willing to help Dann and is always ready to discharge any duty given by him. Dann wants Griot to concern himself about every refugee who comes to the centre with the aim of protecting themselves, finding something to eat, somewhere to sleep.

From the very early part of the novel to the end of it, Dann has difficulty in finding the balance between the past and the present. In the anthropogenic world, “the Anthropocene recasts both the past and the future through the lens of an ecological crisis” (Erickson, 2020, p. 119). It might be the reason that “humans are a force of nature in the geological sense” (Chakrabarty, 2009, p. 207). All of his thoughts are impeded by his own perspective which is that he believes everything is ruined. In the anthropogenic world, helplessness can be interpreted as one of the main consequences and his helpless situation appears with the question “What for” (Lessing, 2005, p. 14). In order to get rid of this pessimistic feeling, the only way for Dann is to travel from one place to another as he and his sister Mara have done before. No matter how far he tries to go, people or places that he encounters remind him of his past and cause him to make connections

between his present situation with his earlier experiences with Mara. It is apparent that he is in pain about his past:

Perhaps this weight of sorrow on him was simply that: he was ashamed, surrounded always by a past so much more clever and wonderful and rich than anything they had now. Always now you came up against *long ago . . . long, long ago . . . once there was . . . once there were*, people, cities and, above all, knowledge had gone. (Lessing, 2005, p. 24)

Moreover, this helplessness is not exclusive to him; rather it is a familiar feeling among refugees. People feel tired because of trying to find a place to stay or eat something and they are about to lose their hopes. During his journey, he comes across siblings like him and Mara. This again reminds him of his past troubles, poverty, drought, and other disasters. Along with his memories,

He knelt by them, opened his sack, took out some bread, poured water on it to make it easier to eat. He put a morsel in the girl's mouth. She did not eat it: had reached that stage of starvation where the stomach no longer recognizes its function. He tried with the boy – the same. (Lessing, 2005, p. 40)

Then, he notices the fact that they are about to die and leaves them to their fate. At this point, it is obvious that “nature becomes the teacher and readers become interpreters of these hidden, albeit, natural laws” (Lankford, 2007, p.16). When Dann is compared to Dann in the previous novel, it is obvious that he is much more compassionate about helping people. In the first novel, although Dann is represented as brutal and selfish young, in its sequel he is depicted as desperate, gentle, royal. His compassion lives both for human beings and also non-human things which he never cared about in the previous novel. On his way, he finds a puppy in the marsh which is about to die, and wonders about the alteration of its body and takes it to the woman who will save its life. Dann who had never wondered about any non-human thing during his life wants to learn whether he is going to live or not:

What was wrong with him? He did not cry. This was an animal, out of luck, and he had watched so many die, with dry eyes. But he could not bear it, this young thing that wanted to live and was so helpless. (Lessing, 2005, p. 31)

Dann, who becomes much more merciful, meets with Kass to help him save the puppy's life. Snow dog, which can hardly breathe, is fed milk by Kass. At that point, the novel demonstrates that the motherlike nature of women and some humanitarian qualities still exist in this apocalyptic world. During her efforts to rescue it, they talk about her life and how she lost her family during the wars. After getting better, Dann and a snow dog named Ruff start a journey to the north and they encounter many people on the road.

People still continue their journey just for the sake of surviving because “the loss of a species, or even the loss of genetic diversity within a species, is the loss forever of a potential opportunity to improve human welfare” (Holdren, & Ehrlick, 1974, p. 283). On the other hand, this longing for the past is not acceptable for some people. On one of his journeys, Dann encounters a group of people who never care about the possible consequences of climate change and never listen to what Dann talks about his experiences. The author highlights that “They were safe, at least for a time. They were comfortable and safe, well fed and safe, and Dann was seeing them as children, as a childlike people” (Lessing, 2005, p. 49). The loss of knowledge is described as childish because their ignorance, their choice of life epitomizes a child's world. To put it in a different way, “Anthropocene societies could thus be characterized as involving humans being basically in conflict with themselves through the structures and the systems that they have themselves created in order to improve their lifestyles and well-being” (Palsson et al., 2013, p. 8). No matter how pitiless they damage nature, as long as they are not aware of their mistakes, nothing will go further because “Anthropocene really commences when humans become aware of their global role in shaping the earth and, consequently, when this awareness shapes their relationship with the natural environment” (Palsson et al., 2013, p. 8).

After learning of the death of Mara, Dann who has already been living in sadness loses his hope for the future and suffers from mental problems. Now all his efforts to survive have gone and he has lost his way. The only desire of Dann is to live with his dog named Ruff in a room until he dies. His situation is so severe that Leta strives to persuade him that he and Mara achieved many things and how powerful he was in the past, but it did not work out. Dann loses his self-belief:

The thing is, you see, Leta, I was too far gone to want to live then. And now I don't want to get better – I think. You must understand, Leta. It's such a hard grind, living. When I think of what Mara and I did together, the effort and the drudge of it, how did we do it? (Lessing, 2005, p. 160)

The quotation above exhibits that the feelings of people become more sensitive in the anthropogenic world because they become aware of the loneliness in the evaporating world. Although Dann is more courageous when he encounters dead animals in the first novel, he becomes more sensitive in the sequel.

One of the thematic aspects of the apocalyptic world is the representation of nonsensicalness of severity. In this novel, the novel epitomizes war as the basic reason behind all of these ongoing wars and struggles among societies. Both Dann, who had been head of Shabis's army once upon a time, and Shabis are now against the use of violence and they want peace and to live in a richer environment in terms of fruitfulness and usability. However, Griot wants to create an army in order to prevent any probable attack from other cities. Dann summarizes his military experience in one sentence to Griot:

I see. I seem to have been here before. I spoke against the invasion of Shari. That is why I became the enemy of the other three generals. And I was right. Nothing was achieved except the usual tale of refugees and deaths. In my experience easy talk about wars and invasions means weakness, not strength. (Lessing, 2005, p. 111)

No matter how the author tries to picture most people as free from violence, she attributes barbaric feelings to Leta who is Dann's wife and his daughter's mother. In the novel, the army is the only way to provide peace in society and that is why the army can be interpreted as an equalizer in the novel. On the one hand, the army for Dann and Griot means a power so as to protect the habitants from attacks by other cities. On the other hand, the army for Leta and her daughter Rhea stands for their everlasting lust for more lands and more dominance over the region. Shortly, the author ascribes both a positive and a negative aspect to the army in order not to be forgotten in the apocalyptic world.

During the development of Dann's character, the novel demonstrates that even after the emotional down, a new alteration emerges in human relations. In the first novel, the relationship between Mara and Dann has always been steady no matter how many difficulties they overcome. Nevertheless, in this novel, the most striking thing is the appearance of wholesome and unselfish companionships. All of the characters in the novel exhibit loyalty to each other. Griot is one of the central characters in the novel because he is ready to do whatever Dann says. Moreover, no matter how cruel Dann is when he is under the opium, he is willing to rescue him from his desperation. The only thing Griot wants is companionship, and Dann is like a chief for him: "But to be with Dann, working for him, serving him, seemed to Griot not only a reward for his long worship of Dann, but it had a special rightness, like a gift from – Fate or, whatever you called it" (Lessing, 2005, p. 104). Another example of a strong relationship is between Dann and Durk whom he encounters during his journey through the ices of Yerrup. He helps him find his way in the ice cliffs of Yerrup and they become close friends. The diversity in fauna and flora is one of the most critical parts of the Anthropocene. Amelia Moore claims that "anthropogenic climate change has possibly surpassed biodiversity loss as the most widely recognized form of global transformation" (Moore, 2015, p. 35). In contrast to the first novel, on one of the visits to the ice cliffs, Dann encounters forest on his way and he is fascinated by the beauty of nature which he has never seen in his life:

He could not at first understand what it was he was experiencing, a refreshment of his whole self, a provisioning, like a fine and heady food. Then he did. He had not seen ever in his life whole forests of healthy trees, but only trees standing in dust, trees dying of dryness, trees that seemed whole and well until you saw a limpness in their leaves and knew that drought was attacking their roots. And here were trees of a kind he had never seen, dark trees that spired up, their boughs made of masses of thin sharp needles, sending out a brisk aromatic sent; and light graceful trees with white trunks that shivered and shimmered in the smallest breeze. (Lessing, 2005, p. 51)

Despite the gloomy atmosphere of nature in the first novel, the novel portrays forests in such an adoring manner rather than describing their weak condition around the tundra. Chakrabarty claims that “nature was mainly repetitive” (Chakrabarty, 2009, p. 205). It is clear in the quotation that nature renovates itself when it is left alone, and it has the power to get better despite the unfavorable conditions in nature. Durk is represented as a patient, wise character in this novel. Like in the previous novel, wise people are supposed to transfer the knowledge they have to the other generations. In this novel, he mentions how Dann can climb the cliffs of Yerrup and what he can see. Dann who starts to widen his circle of friends admires his friendship and companionship during his journey around the cliffs and he says “*We have been together all this time, he stayed away from his island and his girl because of me, he is my friend*” (Lessing, 2005, p. 79). Furthermore, Dann constructs a close friendship not only with a human being but also with non-human animals such as Ruff. In addition to depicting animals that are on the verge of death, the snow dog, Ruff, does not hope for anything from its owner. Although it is presented as desperate in the first scene, day by day it is shown as a friendly dog that always comprehends Dann’s feelings and requests.

Another post-apocalyptic feature the author frequently discusses is the starting of an encouraging, idyllic world. She regards time as a vicious circle starting with the

destruction and ending with a brand-new beginning. It is a kind of transformation rather than an end. To put it in another way, the novel offers us a different way of fluctuant creation upon collapses of the disasters of the past. So, this novel talks about the conflict of the human being with the aim of establishing a preferable world along with the memories of the past. To make it clear, in the novel the good always beats bad, expectancy always prevails over despair, passion is always ahead of inactivity. The novel begins with the destroyed nature of the centre, and it comes to an end with a preferable and happy place for the human being.

Another important person in the novel is Ali, another wise man helping Dann during his journey. During the discovery of the ancient museum, Griot discovers some hidden places holding some valuable resources, ancient machines, and some helpful information about how the city can be built. They also find old books and records belonging to their ancestors, but no one understands what they actually say. Like in the first novel, unattainable knowledge comes to light again, and Dann gets stuck in dark considerations between the supremacy of the past and the humiliating situation of the present by saying “We are against human nature” (Lessing, 2005, p. 183). However, as a wise person, Lessing defines Ali by pointing out:

He believed the need to preserve these records of the past – and remember these were the only records of the main reason for building the centre for not only books and papers were found in the sandpits but every kind of artefact and machine. (Lessing, 2005, p. 174)

For Ali, the records and other ruins are valuable in terms of deciphering how their ancestors dealt with disasters or wars and also for transmitting the knowledge for other generations. However, for Dann, it is really complicated to accept the reality that they are again less knowledgeable than their ancestors despite his experiences with Mara, and Dann explains this: “‘They knew it all, those old people,’ said Dann. ‘But we know nothing at all. I can’t bear it, Ali,’” (Lessing, 2005, p. 177). In order to complete the missing part of the rest, they collaborate and solve the secret knowledge in the books.

Despite the qualities of an apocalyptic world, hope always appears in this novel. The hope comes to light with Mara's daughter whose name is Tamar. Like Mara, she has so much self-confidence that she escapes from the farm. Dann, who encounters many societies, desires Tamara to rule the tundra and he makes an effort for an essential education supplied by Ali. She learns several different languages and gets ancient knowledge about dried-up parts of the Centre. By putting Tamara in front of the reader as a powerful character, the novel indicates that such a powerful character like Mara will rule the tundra and then the other side of the cycle, which will turn everything into dark, will come back and everything will be the same. In other words, no matter how powerful and believing about the future Tamar is, the end will face an endless circle, because the central theme of the apocalyptic world is the everlasting dark side of people or the environment around characters. This can be observed through Dann's behaviours primarily when he uses opium. The thing Lessing wants to prove is the fact that when the dark side of people appears, it can ruin everything around it. The dark side of Dann also appears in the first novel when he gambles at Mara. Dann is aware of his dark side: "I am afraid of – *the other one*" (Lessing, 1999, p. 306). In this novel, it is also an apparent reality that he has again the other one but with much more violence when compared to the situations in the first novel. Now, he has a tendency to hit or attack someone. Moreover, he attacks Tamar and Ruff prevents Tamar from getting hurt. No matter how wild he seems, he is aware of everything he has done: "– 'Don't worry, Griot, there's no need to be afraid. I've got *Him* well in hand, yes I promise you'" (Lessing, 2005, p. 274).

At the end of the novel, they establish a place called the College of Learning, where all of the knowledge saved from ancient times is stored. It is obvious that "the need to design and construct the cities of tomorrow presents a major window of opportunity, but also a challenge to existing values and power relations" (Biermann et al., 2016, p. 346). When people get in, they come across a gigantic wall saying:

This great white expanse represents the area of knowledge of the Ancient World. The small black square in the lower right-hand corner represents the amount of knowledge we have. All visitors are asked to reflect for a few moments, asking themselves if they perhaps have information or learning which is not general, and which could be added to our common store. There was once, long ago, a shared culture covering the whole world: remember, we have only fragments of it. (Lessing, 2005, p. 272)

Susan Watkins claims that “the idea of culture as the work of preservation, recovery, and homogeneity is juxtaposed at the novel’s end with an understanding of it as provisional, oral, and local” (Watkins, 2007, p. 258). The novel asserts that written knowledge is much more permanent than oral knowledge in the apocalyptic world.

Finally, they succeeded in creating a liveable place for everyone who comes from lengthy journeys to survive. Ali sings a song about Mara and Dann’s adventure, and Tamar accompanies them by singing and dancing. Even reaching the end of it, Dann remembers Mara and says, “Mara never danced in all her life. She was too busy – surviving. Poor Mara” (Lessing, 2005, p. 278). No matter how Dann and Griot manage to establish an army and rule the tundra with Tamar, Lessing does not forget to create an opposite side of the good end which is the army of Dann’s ex-wife Kira and her daughter who want to hegemonize over all the tundra. That is why “the novel ends with the threat of a pointless war in order to make clear Lessing’s distrust of such myths and the harm they can do” (Watkins, 2007, p. 259). Griot carrying the spirit of war even considers the war as vain:

‘You see, sir, I can’t believe they would be so stupid. Tundra is very prosperous, we provide stability for all the Northlands and to the south and east too. We grow so much food there are always surpluses for sale. We are an example to everyone. So there would be no advantage in attacking us. I mean, it would be too stupid. I am pretty sure there is no need to lose sleep over it.’ (Lessing, 2005, p. 282)

On the whole, Doris Lessing's sequel, *The Story of Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog* represents a journey having similar characteristics of *Mara and Dann* from the farm to the centre by mature Dann. The novel had much more positive sides and hope for the future depicts not only the possible consequences of global warming and climate change on regions but also warns us about the fact that all of these things will go on unless human beings remember why they fight against each other and they do something to rescue the rest immediately. Reaching a happy end is put into the shadow of forthcoming wars between Dann and his wife in order to control the whole tundra. The novel leaves the door open for upcoming events of the vicious circle in which people live and "the focus on ecological collapse tempts us to forget the other issues of the world" (Erickson, 2020, p. 119).

## CONCLUSION

*Mara and Dann: An Adventure* and *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog* are two climate change novels aiming at touching upon environmental, communal, financial frames of their ages along with the main characters struggling to survive in the anthropogenic and the apocalyptic world. The Anthropocene which first became evident in the eighteenth century along with the advancements in technology, demonstrates its influences such as natural disasters like floods, earthquakes, landslides, drought, the extinction of some species of flora and fauna, inevitable diseases on the human being and the non-human nature because of excessive production of carbon dioxide, climate changes and global warming, unconsciousness about the environment and how it can be prevented. When human interference is taken into account, most of the effects of the Anthropocene can be clearly observed in the northern parts of the world because of the melting of ice. With the growth of its impacts on the earth, the Anthropocene has become an important trend topic in governmental agendas and people's lives.

From this point of view, this thesis aimed at demonstrating the portrayal of the alterations in nature, the human being and non-human nature and their possible effects on people's lives through the novels *Mara and Dann: An Adventure* and *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog*. In the novels, the consequences of the anthropogenic world are unfolded by messages and metaphors for the reader. The first novel, *Mara and Dann*, gives us some information about Lessing's thoughts and beliefs about universal and social concerns and her estimations about what will happen in the near future and strives to transmit her social message through the characters and the setting of the novel. The novel can be regarded as a journey that makes them an adult and lets them survive in the challenges of Ifrik such as floods, drought, famine within the apocalyptic perspective. Similarly, Susan Watkins describes this novel as:

*Mara and Dann* is dominated by the eponymous siblings' struggle to survive as they travel slowly from the drought-stricken south to the temperate north of the continent of Africa or Ifrik, encountering the wreckage of former civilizations as they go. (Watkins, 2012, p. 121)

The main problems of the twenty-first century such as global warming, melting ice, climate change are the main themes in the novels, and people in the novels have to face their consequences.

In both novels, technology and culture become history, and the only thing they have is memories and some remnants from their ancestors. With their limited knowledge about their ancestors, people in these novels define modern people as the creator of technology and regard them as the annihilating power for the devastation of everything around them. It is apparent that the author actually warns modern people about what consequences their unconscious behaviours can cause to the world and about how important it actually is that human beings should be aware of what they can cause with their actions. It should be noted that "there is a shared perception within ecocriticism that we are living in a time of environmental crisis that requires us to reassess with some urgency our modes of being in the world" (Marland, 2013, p. 847).

The intensity of climate changes appears as the heavy rains, floods, hurricanes, storms, drought, extreme temperature in both novels. In the first novel, while Mara and Dann try to reach the north by passing through the hardship of extreme weather conditions, in its sequel, Dann is alone and tries to complete his loneliness by an endless willingness to journey. Moreover, the famine occurring because of these disasters is much more distinct in the sequel because endless wars never end, and people maintain their desires to control everything around them. This desire inevitably results in the destruction of human beings and fauna and flora.

The aim of this thesis was to reveal that humanity is responsible for the destruction of nature and as a result of this deprivation, not only human beings but also non-human nature is obliged to submit to these inevitable consequences. This thesis tried

to discover possible consequences of human interference to nature through the books *Mara and Dann: An Adventure* and its sequel *The Story of General Dann and Mara's Daughter, Griot and The Snow Dog* by basing them upon the post-apocalyptic fiction. In order not to get off the point, some fundamental topics related to the books have been ignored. For instance, the sequel can be discussed through women characters. While the most durable and powerful woman described in the first book is Mara, in the sequel, despite her deficiency, Kira assumes the leadership role for women in the book. She is depicted as a determined, ambitious, and reckless character by Lessing. The author always tends to highlight the powerful woman in her works. The second book can also be analysed through the power of women.

Another topic that can be discussed through the novels is colonialism. In both novels, there are many tribes and they try to dominate each other in order to gain power in the region. Just like white settlers, Mara and Dann always change their place to reach the best and they come across some pitiless consequences of it which are enslavements of Mahondis, the breeding system of women, and so on. In the sequel, Griot and Dann create an army and give a place for them to stay in return for their knowledge and acceptance to be a member of their army. In this sense, both novels can be interpreted through colonial issues represented in the novels.

All in all, Doris Lessing, who had difficulty in her life, substantiates the reality that all of these struggles in human and non-human nature encounter demonstrate that humankind is directly responsible for its illogical, thoughtless attitudes towards nature. Upon upsetting the natural balance, people massacre non-human nature and lead them to live without their natural habitats. Moreover, the author exhibits her accomplishment about fictionalizing the future with the apocalyptic perspective and as a female writer, she achieves to picture strong female characters in her novels. Taking into account all of these, thanks to the sequel of *Mara and Dann*, the author manages to convince the reader of the fact that if the human being wants to make a better world with fruitful soils, without ecological problems, this lies in their power, and that can be actualized by

impressing an ecological awareness upon people. Moreover, these novels consolidate the pitiful reality that we are at war with nature, if we win, we will lose. It's better to remember that "the 'naïve' belief in human 'mastery' of the forces of nature must be tempered by responsibility and humility, by respect for other agents, cultural differences, and other disciplines. This is the crux of Anthropocene society, the new human condition" (Palsson et al., 2013, p. 11).



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