MULTIPLE EXTINCTION IN THE CONTEMPORARY ARABIC NOVEL: INAAM BIOUD'S *HAWARIA* LIGHT IN OF THE ECOCRITICAL APPROACH

الانقراض المتعدد في الرواية العربية المعاصرة: رواية "هواريا" لإنعام بيوض - في ضوء المنهج النقدي البيئي

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Abstract:
In an era where environmental crises manifest as existential threats to the planet, literature has transcended its role as a mere space for aesthetic contemplation. Instead, it has evolved into a diagnostic tool and a symbolic framework that reshapes the dialectical relationship between humanity and nature. From this vantage point, Ecocriticism emerges as a revolutionary critical approach, dedicated to deconstructing literary discourses that have historically entrenched environmental exploitation, while simultaneously highlighting alternative visions for sustainable coexistence.This study examines the novel *Hawaria* (2023) by Algerian author Inaam Bioud, wherein the city is depicted as a lacerated body, a witness to environmental and social degradation. The research seeks to demonstrate literature's capacity to dissect the socio-ecological crisis and open new horizons for reimagining our relationship with the environment, thereby fostering a shift in collective consciousness toward a more equitable balance with the natural world.

***keywords**:* Apocalyptic Narratives; Ecocriticism; Literature; Urban Environment; The Black Decade.

ملخص :

في عصرٍ تتجلى فيه الأزمات البيئية كتهديدات وجودية لكوكب الأرض، تجاوز الأدب دوره كمجرد فضاء للتأمل الجمالي، ليصبح أداة تشخيصية وإطارًا رمزيًا يُعيد تشكيل العلاقة الجدلية بين الإنسان والطبيعة. من هذا المنطلق، يبرز النقد البيئي كنهج نقدي ثوري، مُكرس لتفكيك الخطابات الأدبية التي رسخت تاريخيًا الاستغلال البيئي، مع تسليط الضوء في الوقت نفسه على رؤى بديلة للتعايش المستدام، إذ تتناول هذه الدراسة رواية "حوارية" (2023) للكاتب الجزائري إنعام بيود، حيث تُصوَّر المدينة كجسدٍ مُمزق، شاهد على التدهور البيئي والاجتماعي. يسعى البحث إلى إثبات قدرة الأدب على تحليل الأزمة الاجتماعية-البيئية وفتح آفاق جديدة لإعادة تصور علاقتنا بالبيئة، مما يُعزز تحولًا في الوعي الجمعي نحو توازن أكثر عدلًا مع العالم الطبيعي.

الكلمات المفاتيح: الأدب؛ النقد البيئي؛ الروايات الكارثية؛ البيئة الحضرية؛ العقد الأسود

INTRODUCTION

At the heart of the Anthropocene, a geological epoch defined by" Paul Crutzen in 2000 "1 ، to describe the planetary transformation resulting from dominant human intervention, the human footprint is no longer a transient trace but the primary source of existential ecological crises. From climate change to the loss of biodiversity, a fundamental question arises: What is the role of cultural discourses, particularly literature, in confronting this critical juncture?

Literature is no longer a neutral aesthetic medium; it has been transformed into an analytical laboratory that exposes the roots of the crisis within the human cultural subconscious. It serves as an alarmist platform awakening collective conscience, drawing upon an intellectual heritage ranging from William Rueckert and Cheryll Glotfelty to contemporary thinkers like Timothy Morton, who conceptualizes nature as a "hyper object", entities so vast and multidimensional that they defy traditional human perception yet impose themselves upon our awareness.

Within this intricate context, Ecocriticism asserts itself as a vanguard methodology. Originating in the 1970s with scholars such as Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, it has evolved to probe the philosophical and cultural foundations that legitimized human hegemony over nature, from Cartesian anthropocentrism to extractive capitalism, which reduced the Earth to a

mere consumable resource. This critical lens seeks to reread literary texts not merely as mirrors of the human condition, but as webs of relations that reveal the environmental impacts of the cultural imagination, thus transforming narrative into an instrument of resistance.

Accordingly, this study provides an in-depth reading of Inaam Bioud's *Hawaria* through an ecocritical lens. It interrogates the representation of the urban environment in Oran, an ancient coastal city, as a living entity suffering from a dual "moral and material extinction." The former stems from the erosion of collective memory and cultural alienation, while the latter manifests in pollution and unregulated urban sprawl. The narrative contributes to dismantling traditional discourses of dominance, those that view the city as a vacuum to be filled by human desires, and constructs a new literary imagination that restores the equilibrium between man and place. In doing so, it invokes concepts such as David Abram's "phenomenology of perception," where urban space becomes a participant in the narrative rather than a mere backdrop.

Research Questions:

1. How does Hawaria provide a literary diagnosis of moral and spatial extinction in Oran during the Black Decade?
2. How does ecocriticism, through the concept of the built environment, reveal the dialectical link between urban destruction and the distortion of identity and the body in the text?

1. The Scope of Ecocriticism

Environmental communication researchers are concerned with the production of knowledge addressing the complex, intertwined relationships between humans and the environment, aiming to understand how these relations are shaped through discourse and cultural practice. In common perception:

"The environment may be viewed as something external nature, wilderness, or pristine landscapes, or something separate from humans, the scenery or background against which we live our daily lives. This dualistic perception, separating man from nature, is rooted in modern Western philosophy, particularly Cartesian thought, which sharply distinguished between mind and matter, contributing to an exploitative worldview."2

In the field of Environmental Studies, the environment is more than a remote wilderness or a contextual backdrop; it is a constellation of ecological relations, encompassing humans, animals, air, water, plants, and mountains, that constitute the planet. This relational concept of the environment transcends the mechanistic view, emphasizing that humans are an integral part of the web of life rather than separate entities superior to it.3

Consequently, the discipline of Environmental Communication investigates the "constitutive and pragmatic modes of expression, naming, framing, orienting, and negotiating, of our ecological relationships in the world, including those with non-human systems, elements, and species." 4 Through language, imagery, and discourse, we do not merely describe the environment; we socially construct it and define our ethical stance toward it.

Furthermore, environmental communication encompasses several sub-disciplines that reflect the diversity of approaches within the field. These range from interpersonal communication, which examines how environmental values and practices are formed within families and small groups, to media communication, which analyzes how the media frames ecological issues and influences public opinion. It also extends to organizational communication, studying corporate environmental policies, and strategic communication, which designs awareness and mobilization campaigns for specific environmental issues.5

One cannot overlook the pivotal role of rhetorical communication, which provides a historical and critical analysis of major environmental discourses, ranging from John Muir's seminal writings on the wilderness to the manifestos of contemporary climate activists. This methodological diversity establishes environmental communication as a vital field for examining the most pressing exigencies of our era, from anthropogenic climate change to the catastrophic loss of biodiversity.

Furthermore, ecocritics have interrogated the function of rhetoric in mediating human-environment relations through multiple interpretive lenses. These analyses are almost invariably situated within the context of specific ecological crises, injustices, or alternative epistemologies. Such contexts encompass: climate change, energy regimes, environmental justice, toxicity and pollution, food systems, social movements, activism and counter-publics, animal rhetoric, conservation ethics, the evolution of environmentalism, recreational politics in national parks, environmental controversy, and Indigenous environmentalism, as well as public participation in environmental decision-making.

he methodological expansion that ecocriticism has undergone over the past two decades, moving beyond nature-oriented readings toward more intersectional approaches that engage with environmental justice, urban space, the body, and political discourse. However, the heavy reliance on environmental communication theory risks blurring the disciplinary boundaries of literary ecocriticism. The core strength of ecocriticism lies not in analyzing environmental discourse as a communicative practice, but in examining how literary form metaphor, narrative structure, genre, and rhetorical figuration actively shapes ecological perception and ethical

imagination. As Clark argues, ecocriticism must attend to the texture of language itself, not merely its informational content. Therefore, a more productive approach would be to foreground the poetics of space and violence in literary texts, revealing how narrative strategies produce, contest, or subvert environmental meanings, rather than treating literature as a transparent vehicle for ecological arguments

Theoretical Dominative Axioms

Notwithstanding this expansive research scope, three fundamental axioms dominate the field of ecocriticism, providing the theoretical and methodological frameworks for decoding environmental texts and discourses: the Nature/Culture dualism, more-than-human rhetoric, and the crisis/care methodology.

I. Deconstructing the Nature/Culture Dualism

The interrogation of the Nature/Culture binary, whether explicitly articulated or latently present, constitutes the ontological core of much ecocritical inquiry. Anthropocentric belief systems presuppose that Nature is distinct from Culture, thereby elevating the human to an exceptional status outside the realm of ecology, fauna, and non-human entities. This bifurcation manifests in several corollary dualisms, such as: the material/the symbolic, prey/predator, environment/body, and animal/human.

In this vein, Schutten (2008) analyzed Werner Herzog's acclaimed documentary Grizzly *Man*, demonstrating how the film, which chronicles a man living among bears in Alaska before being consumed by them, upholds the Nature/Culture dualism through a narrative of recovery and narcissistic embodiment. This serves as a salient example of how dominant discourse reifies an anthropocentric concept that depicts the human as fundamentally alienated from the natural world.

However, shifting the analytical focus to other literary genres, such as the novel, reveals works that offer a more sophisticated critique of this binary. In Abdul Rahman Munif's pentalogy *Cities of Salt* (1984), we observe a radical shift in the human-environment dialectic resulting from oil discovery in the Arabian Desert. In the first volume, *Al-Teeh* (The Wilderness), Munif portrays Bedouin life as characterized by ecological harmony, where the camel, the oasis, and the sands are integral threads in the fabric of daily existence, leaving no stark ontological gap between the human and the natural milieu.

Conversely, with the arrival of American oil conglomerates and the transformation of the desert into a site of extractivism, the dualism begins to crystallize. Nature is reduced to a "resource" to be subjugated, while Culture is framed as a "civilization" diametrically opposed to "primordiality." Munif describes the desecration of the desert's symbolic sanctity as it is rendered

into measurable, divisible land. Meanwhile, humans are relegated to industrial centers like "Harran," constructed in antithesis to the natural environment. As ecocritic Sulaiman Al-Theeb observes, the novel depicts the transition from an integrative relationship with the environment to an exploitative one, where Nature becomes a distinct object to be plundered in the name of progress.6

Ecocritics underscore the perils of this Nature/Culture dualism, identifying it as a root cause of ecological degradation. Julia Corbett (2018) reflects on this divide, stating: "What a cultural system! We're not on the same team [even though] we share the same planet."7 In contrast, Ecocentrism offers an alternative to the dualism inherent in Anthropocentrism.

While manifesting in diverse philosophical frameworks, such as Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), ecocentrism dissolves the partition between Nature and Culture, revealing the human as an inextricable component of the global ecosystem. Pezzullo asserts that, rather than maintaining this binary, "nature and culture can be more persuasively conceived as mutually constituting one another materially and symbolically as part of the environment.8" Perhaps Jean Giono's *The Man Who Planted Trees* (1953) provides a literary paradigm for this conception. As the shepherd Elzéard Bouffier reconstructs the forest tree by tree, he engages in a process that blurs the boundaries between the cultural act (agriculture) and natural growth; the human becomes an agent within the life cycle rather than its master 9. Commenting on this narrative, critic Gary Knapp noted that it reimagines the relationship between the human and the earth as a collaborative ethos, where human identity is forged through environmental stewardship rather than dominion.10

II. More-than-Human Rhetoric

The second axiom in ecocriticism concerns more-than-human rhetoric, which expands rhetorical boundaries to include non-human beings and ecosystems. Here, analysis is not restricted to how humans communicate *about* the environment, but extends to how the environment itself "speaks" or "listens" through natural signs and processes. This concept is predicated on the notion that rhetorical agency is not a human monopoly; it extends to non-human subjectivities (animals, plants, rivers, mountains) that participate in the co-construction of meaning.

A vivid illustration of this is found in Yann Martel's Life of Pi (2001), where the protagonist, Pi, survives on a lifeboat with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. Their relationship is not merely a struggle for survival but a mutual rhetorical interaction. The tiger conveys messages through kinesis and vocalization, which Pi learns to decipher and respond to. Scholar Ursula

Heise, in her study of the novel, argues that Life of Pi presents a model of environmental rhetoric that recognizes the agency of non-human beings, where the tiger is no longer a mere symbol but a participant in building a shared world.11

Moreover, this concept transcends inter-species relations to encompass the inanimate. This is evident in the poetry of Gary Snyder, which reimagines mountains and rivers as sentient entities with a rhetorical presence, or in the works of Annie Dillard. In *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (1974), Dillard describes how rivers and forests communicate with humans through their aesthetics and rhythms, transforming Nature into a "text" that demands to be read and listened to with profound attention.12

III. The Crisis/Care Methodology

Regarding the third premise, it concerns a dual methodology that synthesizes a focus on ecological crises (such as pollution and anthropogenic global warming) with environmental care (an attentiveness to everyday relationality with nature). Ecocriticism does not merely diagnose catastrophes; rather, it endeavors to explore practices of "care" and "coexistence"that offer viable alternatives. In *The Road* (2006) by American novelist Cormac McCarthy, we are presented with a harrowing depiction of a comprehensive ecological collapse, a post-apocalyptic landscape where life is rendered nearly impossible. Nevertheless, the narrative is punctuated by moments of profound care, exemplified by the father's protection of his son and the boy's symbolic "carrying of the fire"13 (a metaphor for hope) toward the south. This duality between crisis and care mirrors the methodology of ecocriticism itself. As Alex Smith elucidates: "In *The Road*, care becomes the only possible human act in the face of ecological disintegration, reminding us that ecocriticism cannot function solely as a cautionary tale; it must also serve as a clarion call to reconstruct our broken bonds".14

Furthermore, within the context of Arabic literature, Amin Maalouf's *the Disoriented* (or *Siraat al-Ma'*, Water *Memoirs*, 2017) portrays the journey of a Syrian migrant on an island, meditating on water scarcity and the ramifications of climate change on human existence, while interwoven with inquiries into care, memory, and territorial belonging.

Ultimately, these three premises, the deconstruction of the Nature/Culture binary, non-human rhetoric, and the Crisis/Care methodology, do not operate in isolation. On the contrary, they intersect to form an integrated critical framework that facilitates an "ecological reading" of literary and cultural texts. Through the analysis of both Arabic and international novels, it becomes evident that literature does not merely reflect environmental issues; it actively reshapes our perceptions of them, providing symbolic

instruments to reconceptualize our relationship with a planet we share with billions of other sentient beings.

2. The Ontological Roots of the Ecological Crisis in Western Thought

A. Foundational Origins: Between the Grecian Legacy and Judeo-Christian Theology

The roots of the current crisis are intertwined with a major foundational moment in Western consciousness, merging Greek philosophy with Judeo-Christian theology. Greek philosophy contributed to the reification of Anthropocentrism within the Great Chain of Being. Rationality bestowed a sense of nobility upon man, distinguishing him from other entities and positioning him as the steward of nature and the locus of all value. Consequently, this conceptualization led man to think in isolation from nature, achieving a state of epistemic self-sufficiency that authorized the subjugation of those perceived as lower in the ontological hierarchy.15

Moreover, the historical roots of our ecological crisis were famously critiqued by historian Lynn White Jr. in 1968. White argues that Western Christianity, by breaking with paganism and the "spirituality of nature," bears a heavy "burden of guilt" for the environmental crisis. While pagan traditions sacralized the natural world, attributing a guardian spirit to every tree or spring, Christianity sought to dismantle this animism. It elevated man as the sole creature made in the *imago Dei* (image of God), to whom all other creatures were subjected. In doing so, it established rigid boundaries between humanity and nature, effectively dissolving the ethical taboos that once safeguarded the environment.16

B. The Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution: Man as Master and Architect

With the advent of the Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution, anthropocentrism transitioned from a contemplative stance to a pragmatic program for the domination of nature. The project of Francis Bacon represents a radical turning point; he advocated for the understanding of nature not for aesthetic contemplation, but for mastery and utility. Bacon aimed to produce vast encyclopedias that placed science and technology at the service of humanity, thereby paving the way for the transformation of science into an instrument of power over the biosphere.

Similarly, René Descartes provided the metaphysical justification for this hegemony through his famous dualism between the *res cogitans* (the thinking self/mind) and the *res extensa* (extended matter/body/nature). Descartes perceived nature, including animals, as mere "complex machinery" that could be disassembled and understood via the rigorous laws of mechanics.17 This perception rendered nature inert (inanimate), subsequently stripping it of any moral consideration.

C. Modernity, the Industrial Revolution, and the Hegemony of Instrumental Reason

The onset of the Industrial Revolution deepened this vision, transforming it into a comprehensive daily praxis. Thinkers of the Frankfurt School, particularly Theodor Adorno, critiqued the "mechanized mind." In the West, reason evolved into Instrumental Reason (*instrumentelle Vernunft*). Instead of being a vehicle for liberation and enlightenment, it became a tool for regulation, organization, and the domination of both nature and society alike. This mode of reasoning views the world strictly through the lens of human utility, leading to the objectification of nature and its reduction to mere "resources."18

By the turn of the nineteenth century, Romanticism emerged as a reactionary movement against this mechanistic worldview. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) can be regarded as a precursor to the critique of science and technology. In the novel, the human creation (the machine/monster) becomes a curse upon its creator, symbolizing technology's departure from human control and its eventual rebellion against both nature and humanity.

D. The Emergence of Ecological Consciousness: Self-Critique and Transcendence

In response to the exacerbation of the crisis, new ecological philosophies emerged in the twentieth century seeking to transcend these Western intellectual roots, most notably:19

Theoretical Frameworks and Critical Evolutions in Contemporary Ecocriticism

1. Deep Ecology Founded by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess in the 1970s, Deep Ecology constitutes a radical critique of anthropocentrism. It advocates for an "ecocentric" posture that situates the human being as an inseparable strand within the intricate web of life. Furthermore, it calls for a transition toward Self-realization, not through the mastery of nature, but through a profound identification with the non-human world.

2. Environmental Ethics A paradigm shift was inaugurated by Aldo Leopold in his seminal work, *A Sand County Almanac*, particularly through his concept of the Land Ethic." This framework expands the boundaries of the moral community to encompass soils, waters, plants, and animals; collectively referred to as "the land." Consequently, Leopold urges a fundamental transformation of the human role from "conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it."20

The contemporary ecological crisis is, fundamentally, a systemic crisis threatening the very foundations of terrestrial life. It cannot be reduced to isolated phenomena; rather, it is the cumulative byproduct of centuries of Western thought that reified the nature/culture dualism and established

narratives of dominance. The roots of this crisis lie in a philosophical and economic paradigm that views nature strictly as "resources" to be exploited. This vision has been historically manifested in colonial discourses and the modern novel, where the land was depicted as a "vacant space" awaiting subjugation. Thus, ecocriticism emerges to deconstruct these narratives and expose the dialectical relationship between environmental degradation and social fragmentation.

3. Ecocriticism as an Analytical Lens in the Age of Extinction Ecocriticism represents one of the most prominent contemporary critical movements, positioning the human-environment nexus at the heart of its inquiry. However, this field has undergone radical ontological shifts in recent years. Classical ecocritical approaches have moved beyond traditional questions regarding the "representation of nature" toward more complex inquiries involving Environmental Justice, ecopolitics, Posthumanism, and Extinction Studies.

In this context, Peter Sands, in his 2025 annual critical reviews, provides a profound insight into the field's evolution. He notes that while the concept of the "Anthropocene" remains central to ecological debates, scholars increasingly approach it with critical skepticism. This is particularly evident in light of Claire Colebrook's observations regarding how the Anthropocene allows for the re-inscription of "Man" as a grand narrative with geological agency. This tendency risks homogenizing the "we" responsible for planetary crises while simultaneously solidifying the human as the ultimate planetary actor.

I. The Age of Extinction as a Theoretical and Epistemological Challenge

A. Narratives of Extinction: Between Representation and Diagnosis the Sixth Mass Extinction currently unfolding constitutes an epistemological and existential challenge that transcends the limits of a passing environmental crisis. With the accelerating pace of biological and cultural loss, Extinction Studies has emerged as an independent transdisciplinary field intersecting with ecocriticism and the Environmental Humanities.

In this regard, *Fiction and the Sixth Mass Extinction* (2020), edited by Jonathan Elmore, stands as a foundational work focusing on the novel's engagement with anthropogenic extinction. The contributors operate under the central hypothesis that narrative lies at the heart of extinction studies; that is, the way we narrate stories of loss determines our comprehension of, and response to, this catastrophic event. Scholars in this domain distinguish between several modes of extinction narratives, categorizing the interpretive patterns into four major conceptualizations:21

- **Apocalyptic/Catastrophic Discourse:** Frames extinction as a spectacular, high-stakes event defined by a decisive rupture and sudden collapse.
- **Post-Apocalyptic Narratives:** Focus on exploring the possibilities of worlds-after, moving beyond the event's completion to contemplate its residues and transformations.
- **Narratives of Slow Catastrophe or Ongoing Disaster:** Establish a divergent perception, monitoring collapse as an everyday, lived process—not an exceptional event, but an existential fabric that permeates and erodes daily life from within.
- **Political Fiction:** Represents another turn in the field by exploring alternatives to our current environmental relationship, proposing a re-imagining of the biological ties between humans and the biosphere in an attempt to transcend the logic of **ecocide**.

B. Ecocriticism and the Problem of Methodology Sands indicates that contemporary ecocriticism is characterized by a collective drive to rethink traditional methodologies and the modes through which stories of ecological crisis are told. He discusses several emerging trajectories:22

- **Affective Ecocriticism:** Investigates the limits of criticism as a tool capable of generating "hope" in the face of omnipresent **pervasive toxicity**.
- **Storying Blue Extinction:** Examines how marine life complicates the conventional anthropocentric structures of extinction narratives.
- **The Problem of Deep Time:** Challenges the prevailing assumption that geological timescales are inherently resistant to human understanding or incompatible with human phenomena.

4. The Novel "Hawaria" and the Context of Multi-Dimensional Extinction

4.1 Extinction as a Multidimensional Concept In the novel *Hawaria*, extinction is not confined to the ecological/natural level but extends to include:23

- **Extinction of Intimate Human Relations:** Under the weight of violence and patriarchal/religious surveillance.
- **Extinction of Safe Natural Spaces:** The transformation of beaches and public spheres into theaters of dread and mortality.
- **Extinction of Languages and Cultures:** The hegemony of monological religious discourse at the expense of cultural pluralism.
- **Extinction of Hope and the Future:** Characters existing in a state of "suspended time" and imminent death.
- **Extinction of the Female/Nature:** The systematic destruction of both the female body and the natural world.

- **Extinction of Childhood and Innocence:** Children rendered as witnesses to, or victims of, systemic violence.
- **Extinction of Human Biodiversity:** The erasure of individual differences through forced homogenization (e.g., the imposition of specific religious attire).

4.2 Algeria in the 1990s: The Decade of Extinction The 1990s in Algeria (the "Black Decade")

serves as the historical catalyst for the novel. This period witnessed:24

- **Human Extinction:** Hundreds of thousands of deaths and forced disappearances.
- **Extinction of Public Spaces:** The conversion of cafes, beaches, and universities into sites of assassination.
- **Extinction of the Culture of Tolerance:** The rise of extremist religious rhetoric.
- **Extinction of the Future:** An entire generation deprived of the prospect of a "normal" life.
- **Extinction of the State:** The erosion of state prestige and the fragmentation of its institutions.
- **Extinction of Collective Memory:** Attempts to obliterate the history of Algerian cultural diversity.

4.3. Representations of Extinction in the Narrative of "Hawaria"

I. The Extinction of Natural Spaces: The Beach as a Case Study

The novelist captures a pivotal moment of spatial erosion, stating:

"It was enough for me to go to the beach with Hisham, like all lovers who find no place more suitable for caressing and stealing intimate touches and fleeting kisses. It is true that most of them today no longer venture to frequent such beaches, because the police and the gendarmerie pursue them and imprison them until a family member of the girls comes and pledges to discipline them."25

Ecocritical Analysis through the Lens of Extinction:

- **The Beach as an Endangered Natural Space:** The beach is no longer accessible for intimate human connection; it has undergone a topographical shift from a biophilic space (a site of romantic encounter) to a necrotic space (a site of abduction and homicide).
- **The Semantics of "Adventure":** Visiting the coast is framed as an "adventure", a term laden with connotations of peril and exploration, suggesting that nature itself has been reconfigured into a **contested war zone**.
- **Institutional Erasure:** State apparatuses (police and gendarmerie) participate in the annihilation of intimate natural topographies. This

is achieved not through physical demolition, but through the criminalization of spatial engagement.

- **The Normalization of Domestic Discipline:** The family's pledge to "discipline" the girls represent a normalization of gendered violence under the guise of morality, echoing broader political and religious repressions.

Consequently, this scene epitomizes what Rob Nixon (2011) terms Slow Violence, a form of violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and dispersed across time. The extinction of natural spaces occurs gradually through administrative and daily practices before culminating in the overt violence of slaughter and abduction.

II. The Convergence of Extinction: Woman and Nature

The narrative describes a chilling reality:

"The bearded ones, obsessed with a lethal deity, are said to first rape the girls before the eyes of their lovers, and then slit their throats in front of the terrified girls."26

The narrative passage presents a visceral scene that encapsulates what ecocritic Patrick Lawler identifies as the age of multiple extinctions where the extinction of non-human species converges with the extinction of human ethical and existential values. In Hawaria, this convergence is dramatized through the systematic violation and annihilation of the female body, which functions as a powerful ecological metaphor.

1. The Woman-Nature Nexus as a Site of Extincti The depiction of "bearded ones, obsessed with a lethal deity," who rape and murder girls before their lovers, establishes a double extinction: the physical extinction of the female body and the moral extinction of communal bonds. This aligns with ecofeminist critiques that expose how patriarchal and fundamentalist ideologies treat both women and nature as passive territories to be conquered, dominated, and ultimately destroyed .The act of rape and throat-slitting is not merely individual violence but a ritualistic performance of power that seeks to annihilate the very possibility of love, intimacy, and human connection values that constitute the ethical fabric of humanity.

2. The Collapse of the Human into the Inhuman

The presence of helpless lovers as witnesses amplifies the existential horror. It signifies the extinction of love as a redemptive human value, replaced by a nihilistic logic of absolute force. The novel thus asks: What remains of the human when the ethical and affective structures that define it are systematically erased?

3. The "Bearded Ones" as Agents of Ecological and Moral Annihilation

The reference to "bearded ones" anchors the scene in the specific historical context of Algeria's Black Decade (1990), where armed groups perpetrated extreme violence against women. However, within the novel's ecocritical framework, these figures transcend their historical referent to embody a toxic ideology that severs the sacred bond between humans and the living world echoing.

Ecofeminist Critical Analysis:

- **Dual Extinction:** This passage represents the zenith of a synchronized erasure: the biological extinction of the female and the spatial extinction of the natural/intimate realm.
- **The Lethal Deity:** The attribute of the "lethal" (often a predatory trait in nature) is projected onto a divinity, yet directed *against* nature itself, targeting the female body and the capacity for love.
- **The Violation-Extermination Cycle:** The act of rape followed by murder constitutes a double destruction: first of the female as a sexual subject, and second as a living entity. This represents a "pollution" of the feminine environment prior to its total liquidation.
- **The Spectacle of Violence:** The trauma inflicted upon the "terrified girls" serves as a performative violence designed to instill a culture of fear, ensuring the extinction of any potential resistance.

As Val Plumwood argues, the degradation of nature and the subjugation of women are two sides of the same coin, "Western Masculine Dominance." In the text,26 this is manifested through:

1. **Objectification:** Reducing women to rapeable bodies.
2. **Normalization of Brutality:** Rendering violence against the feminine mundane or religiously sanctioned.
3. **The Erasure of Safe Havens:** Transforming every sanctuary into a potential site of atrocity.

III. The Extinction of Temporality and the Future

The author reflects:

"She sees what will come. What will not come. She sees the 'sentence' of waiting."

This condensed phrasing carries a vision of arrested time. In an era of extinction, the protagonist perceives:

- **The Possible Future:** (What will come).
- **The Impossible Future:** (What will not come).
- **The Frozen Present:** (The sentence/state of waiting).

In the extinction epoch, time ceases to be generative. The "sentence of waiting" functions as a polysemic metaphor:

- **Spatial Metaphor:** A "train" or "caravan" of waiting in a barren landscape.

- **Linguistic Metaphor:** Time as a mere grammatical construct, an endless prolongation in syntax.

Ultimately, the future itself is in a state of extinction; characters do not aspire toward a "tomorrow," but rather inhabit a state of terminal anticipation.

IV. Linguistic Extinction and the Loss of Diversity

The narrative highlights the rise of a monolithic discourse:

"The bearded ones, obsessed with a lethal deity" 27

"Allah Akbar... an expression we used to hear only in the call to prayer."28

he passage resonates with Bachelard's phenomenology of space and time in three key respects.

First, the intrusion of violence enacted by the bearded ones, obsessed with a lethal deity exemplifies what Bachelard terms the time of catastrophe an instantaneous rupture that shatters the continuity of everyday duration and reconfigures familiar space into a hostile enclosure.

Second, the distortion of the sacred phrase "Allahu Akbar" transformed from a devotional call into a war cry illustrates Bachelard's notion of material imagination,29 wherein language functions not merely as communication but as a material habitat for collective memory and meaning. When linguistic signs are perverted, the house of being collapses, signaling an ontological extinction that precedes physical annihilation.

Third, the forced spectatorship of lovers witnessing the violation of their partners evokes Bachelard's concept of topophobia the experience of space as a trap, where every corner becomes a site of dread rather than shelter This spatial disorientation deepens the existential crisis, as the protagonists are deprived of both temporal continuity and spatial refuge.

Thus, the narrative stages a convergence of extinctions linguistic, ethical, and physical that mirrors Bachelard's philosophical diagnosis of modernity" when sacred rhythms break and familiar spaces turn hostile, the human ceases to dwell poetically and enters a state of radical dispossession."30

Eco-linguistic Analysis:

The ascending religious discourse signals an extinction of cultural and linguistic semiotics:31

- **Semantic Depletion:** Phrases like "The Straight Path" are stripped of their original spiritual depth, becoming terroristic signifiers.
- **Acoustic Annihilation:** The shouting of the radicals drowns out the voices of women in the communal courtyards, representing a sonic cleansing of domestic and feminine spaces.

- **Morphological Uniformity:** The imposition of beards and veils serves as a forced homogenization of the human landscape, eradicating the natural diversity of faces and bodies.

Greta Gaard (2012) posits that biodiversity and cultural diversity are intrinsically linked. In this text, the extinction of religious and cultural pluralism directly mirrors the extinction of natural and feminine spaces.32

V. The Extinction of Childhood and Innocence

The trauma is encapsulated in the child's gaze:

"I was small; I used to cover my face with my palms so as not to see the blood flowing from her nose while she curled up, receiving his maddened punches, gasping in pain."33

This scene signifies the extinction of childhood as a developmental stage. The child here is:34

1. **A Witness to Atrocity:** Forced to observe the unobservable.
2. **Agency-Deprived:** He hides his face instead of protecting the mother.
3. **Inheritor of Violence:** Ultimately assuming the "responsibility" of the adult through the cycle of revenge.

Childhood in the text is an extinct topography. There is no authentic childhood in a world defined by alienation and poverty; children are either born aged by trauma or perish before they can mature.

The Extinction of Dwelling and Domesticity

"What does it mean to be eighteen, rising each morning in search of a mere foothold, cautious not to trample upon bodies of all ages, huddled together under makeshift shelters, whether in the searing heat of summer or the biting cold of winter?"35. This opening passage from Hisham's chapter vividly delineates the extinction of private space, a phenomenon that encompasses the following thematic dimensions:36

- **Hyper-congestion:** Bodies are depicted as tightly packed, evoking the morbid imagery of a mass grave.
- **A-topianism (Non-place):** The desperate quest for a "foothold" signifies that space itself has become a scarce commodity, akin to an endangered species.
- **The Utopia of Domesticity:** The "grand house where inhabitants meet only by chance" remains an unattainable chimera within an epoch of spatial depletion.

In this context, the "dwelling" (the home) is divested of its ontological function as a sanctuary of repose and security. Instead, it is reconfigured as a site of daily struggle for terrestrial survival. This represents a fundamental extinction of spatial intimacy, the very element essential for dignified human existence.

The Dissolution of Cyclical Time

Within traditional cultural frameworks, time is inherently cyclical, characterized by the rhythmic recurrence of seasons and festivities. However, in the text, these rituals are subverted into harbingers of mortality. Consequently, time is transformed into a rectilinear trajectory leading toward an ultimate terminus.

The author notes: "She follows the sun throughout the day, wherever it travels, wherever it turns" 37. Here, the sun, a primordial symbol of vitality and recurrence, is transmuted into an object of pursuit rather than a source of life. The protagonist tracks the sun much like a condemned prisoner clings to the final flickers of daylight.

Furthermore, the demise of her maternal figure, "Aunt Bakhta," signals the definitive collapse of cyclical time:

"In the past, when anxieties overwhelmed me and I felt my heart would plummet to the ground, I would flee to the embrace of my caregiver, Aunt Bakhta, to cast my burdens into her lap... But she has departed" 38.

The absence of this "maternal embrace" (symbolizing Nature/The Mother/The Nurturer) marks the end of the possibility of return, the cessation of that cyclical temporality which once offered sanctuary and ontological retreat.

Environmental Transformations in the Epoch of Extinction

The semantic shift of narrative space (and nature at large) reflects a profound ecological crisis characterized by:

1. The contamination of the natural environment by human violence.
2. The extinction of the intimate bond between man and nature.
3. The metamorphosis of natural landscapes into thanatopic theaters (stages for death).

Reflections of Transformation:

- **The Maritime Space:** The sea shifts from a symbol of life, "He embraces her with his gaze, and the sea turns green in his eyes" 35, to a site of visceral gore. By the novel's conclusion, the sea recedes, replaced by "flayed sacrifices... dripping blood... the air thick with the stench of raw flesh" 39.
- **The Solar Element:** Light is supplanted by fire "under the scorching rays of the sun" 40. In apocalyptic narratives, the sun often functions as a dual entity: it bestows life yet ultimately incinerates. Here, it provides a "sacred shimmer," yet it is a shimmer of impending death.
- **The Terrestrial Element:** The earth evolves from "Mother" to "Tomb." As "the dust of the earth absorbs him" 41, the traditional archetype of Mother Earth (the source of fertility) is subverted. The earth now devours blood and swallows the deceased, representing a

tragic ecological inversion where the giver of life becomes the recipient of death.

Symbolic Zoomorphism

The fauna within the text carries profound **eco-symbolic** weight:

- **The Ants:** "Armies of ants crawling over her body" serve as agents of decomposition and harbingers of biological decay.
- **The Bird:** The "giant bird soaring with her on a bed of cloud-flakes" symbolizes a transcendental escape from the reality of extinction, a flight toward freedom.
- **The Sheep:** "Flayed sacrifices" represent ritualistic victims, mirroring the human condition during eras of systemic terror.
- **The Horse (Abash):** Representing continuity amidst erosion, the horse, and the son who inherits his likeness, signifies the lingering tether between past and present.
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Botanical Markers: Ecological Signifiers

- **The "Disheveled" Beard:** The beard is likened to wild, erratic desert flora.
- **Henna:** Though a plant associated with adornment, the "henna-dyed beard" is here depicted as stained with blood, subverting its traditional aesthetic value.
- **Green Mint:** Chewed by Hadia to "mask the pungent scent of liquor," the plant is relegated to a veil for vice rather than a symbol of vitality.

Poverty as an Extinct Environment

The novelist remarks: "I have never experienced affluence in my life. As my mother says: 'He who is accustomed to bare footedness forgets his shoes'" 41. In this narrative, poverty is not merely an economic state; it is an entire **ecosystem** with its own climate and inhabitants.

- **"Accustomed to bare footedness":** Denotes a profound adaptation to deprivation.
- **"Forgets his shoes":** Signifies the erasure of the very concept of luxury or basic comfort.

Ultimately, poverty is treated as a second nature, a deterministic environment in which the human subject resides, much like a biologic.

Institutional Ecology: The Degradation of Social Systems

Within the narrative fabric, institutions are repositioned as **environmental forces** that either sustain or erode the human ecosystem:

1. **The Religious Institution:**

The mosque functions as an ambivalent environmental power, manifesting through:

- **Cosmological Interpretation:** Offering a spiritual paradigm for understanding the world.
- **Therapeutic Rituals:** Providing a framework for healing (instruction in prayer).
- **Terroristic Affect:** Operating as a source of existential dread through the imagery of "the torment of the grave" and "hellfire."

2. **The Security Apparatus:**

The police are portrayed as a degraded institutional environment:

- **The Extinction of Meritocracy:** The relaxation of recruitment standards.
- **The Inversion of Integrity:** The inclusion of the physically frail and those with criminal antecedents.
- **Systemic Dysfunction:** The institution transmutes from a mechanism of resolution into an inherent component of the crisis itself.

3. **The Medical Institution:**

The hospital is rendered as a **hostile ecological space**:

- **Chemical Pollution:** Characterized by the pervasive, acerbic scent of pharmaceuticals.
- **Photophobia:** The total absence of natural light, replaced by abyssal darkness.
- **Material Rigidity:** Iron beds serve as a stark, inorganic contrast to biological life.
- **Ethical Collapse:** The appearance of the physician in the "nocturnal underworld" (the nightclub) symbolizes the disintegration of medical sanctity and its entanglement in moral decadence.

Conclusion:

The novel *Hawaria* emerges as a pioneering model of Algerian literature in the Age of Extinction. Through a sophisticated network of ecological symbols, fractured personas, moribund spaces, and fragmented temporality, the narrative offers an indelible testament to an era where the very essence of "life" undergoes extinction even before the biological demise of its creatures.

In summary, *Hawaria* provides a unique narrative laboratory to test the hypotheses of Ecocriticism within a complex Arab-Algerian context. By depicting a "protracted catastrophe," the novel examines the intersection between spatial (environmental) devastation and psychological (human) erosion, exploring how literature can establish new ethical imaginaries predicated on the recognition of loss and the labor of mourning.

In light of contemporary scholarship, the reading of *Hawaria* can be framed within a broader Ecocritical Project that seeks to:

1. **Deconstruct Binary Oppositions:** Transcending the dualisms of Human/Nature, Subject/Object, and Interior/Exterior by illuminating the profound entanglement between human destiny and spatial fate.
2. **Expand the Concept of Violence:** Shifting from direct, kinetic violence between individuals to a broader understanding of "Slow Violence", the gradual, environmental destruction of places.
3. **Reclaim Non-Linear Temporality:** Acknowledging that the "time of catastrophe" is not a teleological progression toward redemption, but a cyclical temporality that daily reproduces loss and dispossession.
4. **Establish Post-Catastrophic Ethics:** Searching for new possibilities of cohabitation following the collapse of the old world, by forging alternative relationalities with the deceased, the landscape, and the collective memory.

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