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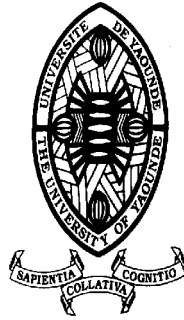
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DEPARTEMENT D'ANGLAIS

NATURALISM IN SELECTED SHORT STORIES BY STEPHEN CRANE AND JACK LONDON

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of a
Master's Degree in English Modern Letters

Specialisation: American and Commonwealth Literature

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DEDICATION

To my Mother, Mbuwill Bridgett Kible.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation, entitled “Naturalism in Selected Short Stories by Stephen Crane and Jack London” resituates debates that dominated the intellectual and social life of the Gilded Age in contemporary society. This work argues that naturalist authors like Stephen Crane and Jack London portray a scientific worldview in which the hostile relationship between the environment and man, heredity and man, and the absence of God and man are exposed. These naturalist tendencies impinge on the characters in the selected short stories. Besides, this work shows how the selected short stories by both authors outline crises such as climate change, class, labour, poverty, gender, and instincts that have victimized humanity across time and space. The analyses in this work are based on the theory of New Historicism. The theory allows the researchers to look at how the naturalist ideology has transcended time and space and affected social and intellectual life universally. The study was based on the hypothesis that the tendencies of naturalism, such as environment, heredity, and the absence of God, are responsible for the problems that characters face in the selected short stories: “The Open Boat,” “An Experiment in Misery,” “The Men in the Storm” by Stephen Crane, and “The Law of Life,” “To Build A Fire,” and “The White Silence” by Jack London. A close reading of these short stories found that Crane and London’s characters live lives with a persistent sense of foreboding and loss due to their hostile environmental condition and heredity factors. Under these circumstances, the characters may rely on divine providence, but there is no God within their environment to help them. When the characters recognize that the deity is absent, they intensify the struggle for their survival. However, not all the characters always survive at the end of the story. From the findings, it can be deduced that the scientific worldview may push man to become innovative and find solutions for the problems that they face in the universe. Based on the findings of this study we recommend that man should combine scientific principles and divine principles in the face of adversities.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce mémoire, intitulée "Le Naturalisme dans une Sélection de Nouvelles de Stephen Crane et Jack London", replace les débats qui ont dominé la vie intellectuelle et sociale de l'âge doré dans la société contemporaine. Ce travail soutient que les auteurs naturalistes tels que Stephen Crane et Jack London présentent une vision du monde scientifique dans laquelle la relation hostile entre l'environnement et l'homme, l'hérédité de l'homme et l'homme, et l'absence de Dieu et l'homme sont exposées. Ces tendances naturalistes ont un impact sur les personnages des nouvelles sélectionnées. De plus, ce travail montre comment les nouvelles sélectionnées des deux auteurs soulignent les crises telles que le changement climatique, la classe sociale, le travail, la pauvreté, le genre et les instincts qui ont victimisé l'humanité à travers le temps et l'espace. Les analyses dans ce travail sont basées sur la théorie du Nouvel Historicisme. Cette théorie permet aux chercheurs d'examiner comment l'idéologie naturaliste a transcendé le temps et l'espace et a affecté la vie sociale et intellectuelle de manière universelle. L'étude était basée sur l'hypothèse que les tendances du naturalisme, telles que l'environnement, l'hérédité et l'absence de Dieu, sont responsables des problèmes auxquels les personnages sont confrontés dans les nouvelles sélectionnées, y compris "Le bateau Ouvert", "Une Expérience de Misère", "Les Hommes dans la Tempête" de Stephen Crane, ainsi que "La Loi de la Vie", "Construire un Feu" et "Le Silence Blanc" de Jack London. Une lecture attentive de ces nouvelles a révélé que les personnages de Crane et London vivent des vies marquées par un sentiment persistant de menace et de perte en raison d'environnements hostiles et de facteurs héréditaires. Dans ces circonstances, les personnages peuvent compter sur la providence divine, mais il n'y a pas de divinité à proximité. Lorsque les personnages reconnaissent l'absence de divinité, ils luttent pour survivre de manière persistante. Cependant, tous les personnages ne survivent pas toujours à la fin de l'histoire. À partir de ces résultats, on peut déduire que la vision du monde scientifique peut pousser l'homme à devenir innovant et à trouver des solutions aux problèmes auxquels il est confronté dans l'univers. Sur la base de l'étude, nous recommandons à l'homme de combiner les principes scientifiques et les principes divins face aux adversités.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Our environment's realities call for rethinking how we perceive nature and its relationship with humans. This study intends to explore the idea that a scientific worldview pushes this rethinking by recognizing the heredity of man, their environment, and the absence of God as the sources of victimization they face in the cosmos. This study analyses selected short stories by Stephen Crane and Jack London as primary material sources. In these stories, we see how the lives lived by the characters represent man's life on Earth. The authors wrote the selected short stories in the second half of the 19th century, but their writings reflect contemporary realities. Because fiction reflects and occasionally anticipates the thought of the culture in which it is produced, it will be very significant, to begin with, a synopsis of the period and the various factors in late nineteenth-century American society that created an upsurge in the appearance of literary naturalism.

The American society was profoundly affected in the years between the Civil War and the onset of the twentieth century (the Gilded Age). These years provided, at least in part, the stimulation for the writings of Crane, London, and other writers like Dreiser and Norris and their critical acceptance. A pervasive transition occurred in the United States of America within these decades; the prevailing culture uprooted institutions, politics was reconsidered, and the economy was restructured. The social and intellectual climate of the Gilded Age, the period of United States history from the end of the Civil War to the end of the 19th century or the latter decades of the nineteenth century, cannot be easily characterized. It is a broad period with multiple and divergent thoughts that go far beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, it seems inappropriate to ignore it entirely because the views of the age shed much light on the theory and literary works considered.

Among the divergent thoughts that emerged from the transcendentalists to the determinists, a potent pessimistic strain of thought emerged that is particularly relevant to naturalism. Such thinking did not necessarily predominate before the tumultuous Gilded Age. New evidence in various areas of thought suggests, through reference to the sciences, that man might not have a special place in the universe. Such ideas challenged the Judeo-Christian belief that man existed in a privileged position between the divine on the one hand and the animal kingdom on the other. The proposed modes of interpretation, seemingly placing man at the centre as a privileged individual, were interrogated. People started to question Man's

providential conception of the universe. Scientific evidence and abstract reasoning cast doubt on traditional value assumptions derived from a dualistic perception of the universe. All these contributed to the appearance of literary naturalism and also inspired the works considered for this study.

Besides, during the Gilded Age, America was in a period of religious, political, intellectual, social, and economic turmoil. Challenging the country's established norms was the dominant feature of the nineteenth century's last three and a half decades. A characteristic pre-Civil War faith in individualism, progress, and a democracy solidly founded on a Christian moral order was given a second thought. New ideas put old beliefs into doubt. Industrialization made a mockery of individualism and progress as self-employed crafts disappeared, overcrowding and poverty spread, work became scarce, and agrarian spaciousness and self-reliance gave way to urban confinement. This influenced the coming of naturalism as a mode of writing because writers were interested in representing the changes that surrounded them.

The philosophical debates that characterized the 19th century in America followed the publication of *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859) and *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871) by Charles Darwin. These publications created famous debates over evolution, natural selection, and man's origin. These debates uphold scientific thoughts that were and are the force behind many innovations that we have today. Men of science, or naturalists, started to explain the roots of living things based on research on natural processes and biological experimentation rather than faith in the supernatural or God. These publications also activated previous secularist thoughts of the Renaissance, like humanism and positivism. The former is a concept focusing on improving humanity's social conditions by increasing the autonomy and dignity of all humans, and the latter is a philosophy that rejects ways of knowing, such as theology and introspection, in favour of reason and experience.

The thoughts that emerged in the 19th century mentioned in the preceding paragraphs greatly expanded the socio-economic life of the United States of America (U.S.A.). According to Nina Baym, there was an increase in population and economic expansion in America during this period. One of the main factors that influenced economic expansion was agriculture. The increases in population also contributed to the rapid industrialization. For instance, in 1870, the U.S. population was 38.5 million; by 1910, it had grown to 92 million, and by 1920, to 123 million. Immigration also influenced the population increase and the population shift from county to city. Statistics by Nina Baym indicate that 25 million people, mostly Europeans,

entered America between the Civil War and the First World War (1861–1914). Most of these newcomers settled in cities, but some tried farming. The aftermath of the economic expansion was the creation of a capitalist system in which money was in the hands of fewer individuals, and consequently, the millions of people who moved into the cities became jobless, and those who secured jobs were lowly paid. Joblessness resulted in misery and also led to the development of urban slums, as seen in Stephen Crane’s “An Experiment in Misery”- one of the short stories under study. In this story, the protagonist, the Youth, has to move downtown to a setting inhabited by people experiencing poverty. Here, he meets people of his kind, what to eat, and where to sleep.

In addition, the American Civil War (1861–1865), which resulted from growing economic, political, social, and cultural divisions between the North and the South of the United States of America, also facilitated economic changes. Nina Baym portrays this in the excerpt below:

The war effort stimulated technological innovations and developed new methods of efficiently organizing and managing movements of large numbers of people, raw materials, and goods. After the war, these accomplishments were adapted to industrial modernization on a massive scale. The first transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869; industrial output grew exponentially; agriculture productivity increased dramatically; electricity was introduced on a large scale; new means of communication such as the telephone, revolutionized many aspects of daily life. Coal, oil, iron, gold, silver, and other kinds of mineral wealth were discovered and extracted, producing large number of individual fortunes, making the nation rich enough, for the first time, to capitalize its own further development. (P. 122)

This extract shows how developments during the American Civil War stimulated the growth of the United States of America. With the development in road infrastructure, people and goods could now move from rural areas to the cities. Overcrowding in major cities limited the number of available jobs and the cities at this time became jungles where only the strongest and the most ruthless survived. The discovery and extraction of minerals increased the gap between the rich and the poor because industrial workers used the advantage of high demand for jobs to exploit the workers under them. This was very important to naturalism as it rendered life very difficult in the social environment, an aspect that one finds almost in all texts that one may consider naturalistic. On a positive note, these developments, like in the electricity and road infrastructure, were harnessed after the war and used for other purposes, resulting partly in American society’s evolution into what one may find today.

The socio-economic changes led to the emergence of financial giants who continued to accumulate wealth. William Dean Howell’s *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885) aptly illustrates this period. The novel, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, centers on the Laphams, who have made much

wealth in Boston. The craze for material wealth in this novel is seemingly a typical characteristic of man and society, which can be traced far back to the years of travels and discoveries in the new world, wherein the explorers, in their letters to their monarchs back at home, had to indicate that they found lands rich in gold and minerals. Also, this is representative of today's society, where everyone strives to accumulate wealth. Hence creating a kind of money economy, an economy in which some people are very wealthy whereas some very poor.

The changes mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, like the publication of *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859), the American Civil War (1861–1865), and increased industrialization, paved the way for a new generation of American writers who emphasized truth and a realistic representation of events in the arts. This new generation of writers included Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Mary Wilkins Freeman, and John William De Forest. They rejected the sugar-coated representation of human experience familiar with transcendental writers of the previous century. Their new style of writing was based on a movement called realism. The movement was supported by William Dean Howells, one of its proponents, as quoted by Gary Scharnhorst and Tom Quirk:

let fiction not lie, let it portray men and women as they are, actuated by the motives and passions in the measures we all know... let it not put on fine literary airs; let it speak the dialect, the language, that most Americans know—the language of unaffected people everywhere. (P. 3)

According to Howells in the extract, a literary work should be realistic and present people as they are. It should avoid sugar coating the plight, sufferings, and the passions of the people that it represents. The extract shows that realism as a literary movement focuses on the way the people it represents speak, their language, their day to day life, their looks, and the kind of food they eat. According to Howells in the extract, it is clear that if fiction fails to do all of these, one may say that it has failed to create the appeal that one needs to see in every work work be it a poem, novel, or play.

Ambrose Bierce, quoted by Scharnhorst and Tom Quirk, defines realism in his *Devil's Dictionary* as “the art of depicting nature as it is seen by toads” (P. 3). This quotation supports the previous one by Howells and reiterates the view that literature should be a true representation of life. Still, in the same book and the same line of discourse, Henry James compares realistic writing to painting in an endeavour to defend the art of realism. He further states that the reason for a novel to exist is: “that it does attempt to represent life. When it relinquishes this attempt, the same attempt that we see on the canvas of a painter, it will have arrived at a very strange

pass” (P. 4). Here, we see that James' perception of realism is imagistic. Linking realism to painting insinuates that he yearns for a work of art that genuinely imitates life and not the imaginative and sensational literature of the past. Based on these views, realism takes literature in the same direction as naturalism.

The Link between Realism and Naturalism

Having looked at Realism, we must establish its connection with naturalism, which is the core of the present study.

According to Donald Pitzer, Realism and naturalism are related in that “naturalism comes after realism, and since it seems to take literature in the same direction as realism, it is simply an ‘extension’ or a continuation of Realism only a little different” (P. 9). Realism and naturalism aim to represent the actual condition of man through the use of characters that are true to life, realistic and reflect the life lived by the common man. Emile Zola, who coined the term naturalism in France to name a body of literature that flourished during his time, writes in *The Experimental Novel (1893)* that “we teach the bitter science of life, we give the lesson of reality. Here is what exists; endeavor to repair it” (P. 127). This quotation insinuates that naturalism is based on objectivity, not idealism. Some of the bitter ideas indicated in the reference that was articulated in 19th-century American literature are: man living in a cold, indifferent, and essentially godless world with no freedom and limited chances of survival against aggressive environmental or natural forces.

Even though Realism and naturalism are often used interchangeably, there is a significant distinction between them. While the naturalists supported the realists’ aim of observation and mimetic condition of the outer world, their view of the human condition and specific method of writing is enormously indebted to advances in the natural sciences, especially the impact of Darwin’s theory of evolution. For instance, naturalism relies on man’s instincts and how they influence him. According to Ruth Nesvold, quoted by Fang Zei, the naturalist’s biological view of the human being is as indicated in the quotation below:

The human animal was a creature conditioned by influences beyond his/her control and therefore largely devoid of free will or moral choice; a creature shaped by external forces and internal forces such as environment, and heredity, and the pressure of immediate circumstances. (P. 4)

In this quotation, it is noticed that in naturalism, man is viewed as a creature that has no free will. He is conditioned by his passions, instincts; environment. The external forces mentioned in the extract maybe linked to realism, while the internal forces are related to naturalism. The external

features could be the environment that surrounds an individual while the internal forces can be human instincts. These external and internal forces constitute one of the differences between realism and naturalism.

Problem Statement

The socio-environmental realities and evolutionary tendencies make man to question his essence as part of nature, whose uncontrollable forces intrude on his life. Environmental discrepancies associated with climatic changes such as flooding, volcanic eruptions, temperatures, global warming, tornadoes, landslides, and heredity challenges such as instincts, materialism, greed, personality, poverty, racism, discrimination, brutality, and gender inequality, marginalisation, are universal and have dominated human life and thought for as long as life itself has existed. Stephen Crane in “The Open Boat” (1897), “The Men in the Storm” (1894), “An Experiment in Misery” (1871), and Jack London in “To Build a Fire” (1902), “The White Silence” (1899), and “The Law of Life” (1901) represent or present scientific determinism as a force that was and is still dominating thought in contemporary society.

The victimisation of man by the environmental factors, heredity and the absence of God has been and is still one of the greatest discrepancies faced by man universally. Based on the literature reviewed, the theory new historicism was chosen to analyse the selected short stories by Stephen Crane and Jack London understudy.

Research Questions

This work attempts answers to the following questions in chapters two, three, and four.

How does environment, Heredity, and the Absence of God influence characters’ lives in the selected short stories by Stephen Crane understudy?

How does environment, Heredity, and the Absence of God influence characters’ lives in the selected short stories by Jack London understudy?

What are the comparative dimensions of environment, heredity, and the absence of God in Stephen Crane and Jack London’s works under study?

Hypothesis

This work is informed by the hypothetical premise that a scientific worldview or naturalism portrayed through concepts like the environment in which characters are enclosed, their heredity, and the absence of God is responsible for the adversities they encounter in Stephen Crane’s “The Open Boat” (1897), “An Experiment in Misery” (1871), “The Men in the

Storm” (1894), and Jack London’s “To Build a Fire” (1902), “The White Silence” (1899), and “The Law of Life” (1901).

Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to show that naturalistic tendencies like the environment, heredity, and the absence of God victimise characters in the selected short stories by Stephen Crane and Jack London. The study also shows that man’s victimisation by these naturalistic tendencies is a timeless and universal phenomenon. The study also has as objective to compare naturalistic tendencies in the selected works of Stephen Crane and Jack London under study. The intention is to say who amongst the two writers is more naturalistic. The selected short stories are: “The Open Boat” (1897), “An Experiment in Misery” (1871), “The Men in the Storm” (1894), by Stephen Crane and “To Build a Fire” (1902), “The White Silence” (1899), and “The Law of Life” (1901) by Jack London.

Motivation for the Study

Studies in American literary naturalism reveal current cosmic trends that keep humanity troubled daily. As a student reading literature produced in a society considered the world’s best, I felt the urge to offer insights into the problems of our time. Reading within naturalism or scientific determinism, one sees nature as a force that impinges on man and man as a force that has an ingrained desire to conquer nature.

Stephen Crane and Jack London offer something different from current debates on the environment and climate change, heredity, and the absence of God, which the world has failed to see. They expose the roots of our crises by projecting inevitable problems like environmental indifference. These are the views of Stephen Crane and Jack London, which have cut across time and space. The complexities surrounding the present discourses between man and climate change, man and heredity, and man and God motivated the present study.

Significance of the Study

Though this is not the first naturalistic study on some of the selected short stories by Crane and London under study, this study holds that by using characters from the middle and lower classes of society in the selected short stories, Crane and London reinforce the view that all individuals are endowed with skills that enable them to struggle resiliently in the world, succeed in life, fail, and also face the consequences of their decisions.

Besides, this study found that late 19th-century American literary naturalism sees the female as a weaker sex to take part in the struggle for survival. This is explained by the view that Crane and London rarely use female characters in the stories under study. Also, characters are named according to their origins, kind, or type. For example, the Indian girl referring to Ruth in “The White Silence” and the man in “To Build a Fire”. By naming characters according to their origins, this study significantly outlines the ethnocentricity of naturalism: the belief that where one comes from shapes behaviour. The general term “man” used as the title of a short story is a metaphor which signifies that the circumstances the character faces represent man’s universal situation. This study adds the “absence of God” to reinforce scientific objectivity, which can lead to innovation and expansion in development to find solutions to the predicaments faced by man. This study is also significant because it brings together two authors considered by critics as proponents of American literary naturalism and shows to what extent they are similar or different.

The Scope of the Study

This study is essentially based on a critical analysis of the short stories “The Open Boat”, “An Experiment in Misery”, “The Men in the Storm”, “To Build a Fire”, “The White Silence”, and “The Law of Life” by Stephen Crane and Jack London, respectively.

Stephen Crane’s biography

Stephen Crane, his family, childhood, education, literary career, and death

Stephen Crane is considered by Harold Blooms to be one of the leading American writers of excellent reputation, despite succumbing to illness and eventually dying at the very young age of 28. As a writer, he wrote several novels, poems, and short stories. Given the many controversies surrounding Crane’s biography, with each biographer feeding on what they consider to be the weaknesses of the other, one can only rely on several biographers and internet sources to attempt a biography of a controversial figure like Crane.

According to Paul Sorrentino, Stephen Crane was born in Newark, New Jersey, on November 1, 1871. He lived from 1871 to 1900. His roots and early beginnings show that he was the fourteenth and ninth surviving child of Jonathan Townley Crane and Mary Helen Crane. Some of the children of Jonathan and Mary were given birth before Crane died at a very young age. However, the family celebrated another of God’s holy children when Crane was born. On the evening of the day he was born, a proud father wrote in his diary that the baby would be

named after two other Stephen Cranes. They desire to call their children after family ancestors. This was a likely sign of heritage and family continuity. The tragedy of Crane's family lineage can be the reason Crane relies so much on portraying the bleak picture of life in his fiction. His father was a Methodist church elder and an author committed to producing 10 pages a day, while his mother was a devoted social activist. Crane grew up in a strong Christian home whose members were committed to the teachings of the church. However, he would later become a rebel or a revolutionist against the core values of Christianity inculcated in him by his parents' religion.

It is clear that the difficult, ugly, and smelly life he saw made him consider the teachings of his parent's religion irrelevant. In an enlightened and industrial age, when people were free to think and question religious worldviews, Crane started to look at the church's teachings in relation to real life. The urbanization of the United States of America at the time he wrote also influenced his writings. Urbanization made life extremely difficult for the many immigrants in the main cities. This explains why Crane portrays ugly environmental situations in "An Experiment in Misery" and "The Men in the Storm".

Crane's maternal ancestry was deeply rooted in Methodism. During the Revolution, some of his family members or ancestors proudly joined the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution. By the nineteenth century, many the Pecks were spreading the good news of God across America as Methodist ministers. Stephen Crane, quoted by Paul Sorrentino, once wrote this about his maternal family: "Upon my mother's side," "everybody, as soon as he could walk, became a Methodist clergyman". (P. 21)

According to Paul Sorrentino, Stephen Crane was probably raised as an only child, and before he was one, he had already begun trying to walk by pushing a chair around the house. However, his health soon became a significant concern for his parents. His intelligence was also noticed, as before the age of two, he could write letters to his "grandma" and spell and pronounce words of five and six syllables.

As the son of a Methodist clergyman subject to frequent transfer, Stephen Crane was moved from Newark to Paterson, New Jersey, before he was old enough to attend school and to Port Jervis, New York, shortly before he began school. His novels *The Third Violet* (1897) and *Whilomville Stories* (1900) are set in villages modeled after Port Jervis. Crane's father, Reverend Jonathan Townley, died in 1880 when the boy was eight years old, and in 1883, Stephen and his mother moved to Asbury Park, New Jersey, a seaside resort some sixty miles

from New York City, to be near the Methodist camp community of Ocean Grove, a town adjacent to Asbury Park, which Jonathan Crane had been instrumental in establishing. Stephen's brother, Townley, already ran a press bureau in Asbury Park, and soon their sister Agnes moved there to teach in the public schools.

Stephen started to disregard the religious teachings of the Methodist Church, and his mother became concerned about his spiritual welfare. In 1885, she sent him to Pennington Seminary, some ten miles from both Trenton and Princeton, in the hope that he would receive a solid academic background and would simultaneously grow closer to the Church. Crane's father had been principal of Pennington Seminary for the decade from 1848 to 1858, and his mother had spent the first ten years of her marriage at Pennington. Stephen, a handsome, dark-haired youth with a prominent nose, sensuous lips, and deep, dark eyes, rankled under Pennington's strong religious emphasis.

In 1888, he enrolled in the Hudson River Institute in Claverack, New York, a coeducational institution with a military emphasis for its male students. Perhaps it was during this period that Crane became extremely interested in war. During the summers, Crane assisted his brother in his news bureau, learning something about journalism as he went about his work. He entered Lafayette College in 1890 to study engineering but failed in his work there and left after the Christmas holiday to attend Syracuse University, where he played baseball, managed the baseball team, and worked on the school newspaper. He was not a strong student, and he left school in 1891 to seek his fortune in New York City. His mother died on December 7, 1891.

Stephen, who had met and established a friendship with Hamlin Garland in the summer of 1891, tried to make his living as a newspaperman, but he was not initially successful in this work. In 1892, however, the serial publication of seven of his "Sullivan County Sketches" gave him the encouragement he needed to push forward his literary career. In 1893, Crane printed *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1893), a book gleaned from his experience of living in New York City's Bowery during the preceding two years. This early work was highly shocking in its time because it views with sympathy a girl who becomes pregnant out of wedlock and shows the hypocrisy of her lower-class family's morality. The work was first published under the pseudonym Johnston Smith. *Maggie* was naturalistic, somewhat in the tradition of Émile Zola. It sold hardly any copies in its original edition. In 1896, however, Crane revised it, cutting out much of its offensive profanity, omitting some of its graphic descriptions, and regularizing the grammar and punctuation. His reputation had by this time been established with the publication in October of *The Red Badge of Courage*, a book that grew out of Crane's fascination with war,

battles, and men in combat. *The Red Badge of Courage* was initially published in an abbreviated form in 1894 as a serial appearing in the Bachelier Syndicate's newspapers.

After the publication of both *The Black Riders and Other Lines* and *The Red Badge of Courage* in 1895, Crane became an overnight celebrity. In March of 1895, he also went to Mexico for the first time, and the trip made a substantial impression on him. With the appearance of *George's Mother, Maggie*, "The Little Regiment" and *Other Episodes of the American Civil War* (1896), it was quite apparent that Crane, still only twenty-five years old, was on the way to becoming one of the leading literary figures in the United States. If readers complained because he wrote about subjects that depressed them, they could not reasonably contend that the conditions about which he wrote did not exist or that he wrote badly about them. Although Crane was fascinated by war and by 1896 had written much about the subject, he had never known the battlefield, and he was keenly aware of this lack in his experience. Therefore, when the Bachelier Syndicate offered to send him as a correspondent to join the insurgents who were fighting against Spanish rule in Cuba, Crane enthusiastically accepted the assignment. He went first to Jacksonville, Florida, to wait for a ship, the *Commodore*, to be outfitted for the short trip to Cuba. Arriving in Jacksonville in November, he met Cora Stewart, who owned a brothel and nightclub. It took until December 31 for the *Commodore* to be ready to sail, and by that time, Crane and Stewart, who already had a husband, had fallen in love. Nevertheless, Crane sailed for Cuba as planned. The ship, however, got only several miles down the St. John's River before it drowned. Crane and some of his shipmates were forced to put themselves in a small, flimsy lifeboat before the *Commodore* capsized, causing some loss of life.

It was fifty-four hours before Crane and his companions could ride the heavy surf to shore. One of his companions drowned as they came to beach. From his frightening lifeboat experience, Crane wrote his best-known and most artistically confident short story, "The Open Boat." The shipwreck scuttled, for the time, Crane's plans to go to Cuba. Instead, he and Stewart sailed for Greece in late March to report on Greece's war with Turkey. In mid-1897, Crane and Stewart, who was six years older than he, went to England, where he wrote some of his most memorable short fiction, including the novella "The Monster," the short stories "Death and the Child," and his much-anthologized "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky." He introduced Cora Stewart as his wife, although the two had never been married because she was not free to do so. At this time, Crane met Joseph Conrad and became his close friend.

After Crane's collection *The Open Boat and Other Tales of Adventure* (1898) was published, the author returned to the United States to join the armed forces in the Spanish-

American War, which the United States had just entered. He was, however, rejected for military service and instead went to Cuba as a war correspondent for Joseph Pulitzer. He was fearless in combat situations, but his health began to fail. He did some work in Puerto Rico and Cuba for the Hearst newspapers, but in 1899, the year in which “War Is Kind” (1899), “Active Service” (1899), and “The Monster and Other Stories” (1899) were published, he returned to England, this time to live in the stately Brede Place in Sussex. While celebrating Christmas, Crane had a massive hemorrhage brought on by tuberculosis.

In the spring of 1900, the year in which “Whilomville Stories” and “Wounds in the Rain” were published, Crane's health declined, and in May, he and Cora went to Badenweiler in Germany's Black Forest, hoping that the climate would benefit the ailing writer's health. Theresa Crane died on June 5. Three of his works, “The Great Battles of the World” (1901), “Last Words” (1902), and “The O’Ruddy” (1903), were published shortly after his death.

Based on the opinion that Stephen Crane mainly wrote from his experience in society at the time, we judge it well to interpret his writings using New Historicism. Through New Historicism, we show how the various ideologies of Crane transcend time and space to become dominant in contemporary times.

Jack London’s biography

Jack London, his family, childhood, education, literary career, and death

According to Reesman, Jack London, whose real name is John Griffith Chaney, was born in San Francisco on January 12, 1876. He died on November 22, 1916, in Glen Ellen, California. His mother was Flora Wellman, the fifth child of a Pennsylvania Canal builder, Maeshall Wellman. Flora worked as a spiritualist in San Francisco. The biographer, Clerice Stasz, believes that Jack London’s father was William Chaney. Flora was living with Chaney in San Francisco when she became pregnant. In Flora Wellman's account recorded in the San Francisco Chronicle of June 4, 1875, Chaney wanted an abortion, but Flora resisted, so he denied taking the baby.

In 1876, Flora married John London, a partially disabled Civil War veteran. She lived with her son, Jack London, and her husband. The family settled in Oakland, where London completed public grade school. Flora attempted suicide when Chaney refused responsibility for her pregnancy. Jack London learned about this in 1897 after reading the accounts of his mother, who was then 21 and a student at the University of California, Berkeley. He wrote to Chaney, who said he could not be his father because he was impotent and his mother had been sleeping with other women. London was traumatized by the letter from Chaney and later went to school and

went to the Klondike during the gold rush boom, a decision that gave him the experience he recounts in some of his stories, like “To Build a Fire”.

In his childhood, London read books to educate himself. In 1885, London read Ouida's long Victorian novel, *Singa*. This was the seed of his creative success. In 1889, he went to the Oakland Public Library and met a sympathetic librarian who encouraged his learning. In 1889, London began working 12 to 18 hours a day at Hickmott's Cannery. He also signed on to the sealing schooner bound for the coast of Japan. After some time, he returned to Oakland and attended Oakland High School. During his stay at the school, he contributed several articles to the school magazine, *The Aegis*.

As a schoolboy, London used to read or study in a port-side bar in Oakland. At 17, he expressed his desire to attend university and pursue a career as a writer to the bar tender who lent him tuition money to go to college. He attended the University of California, located in Berkeley, but would leave the university without graduating due to financial challenges. While at the university, he continued to study and spend time in Heinold's Saloon, where he met and was introduced to sailors and adventurers who would later influence his writings. Alexander McLean, a cruel sea captain he met in Heinold's, would later appear in his novel *The Sea Wolf* as a protagonist by the name of Wolf Larson.

In 1897, London sailed to join the Klondike Gold Rush. This would later be the setting of some of his short stories in the following year. For example, one of his short stories used in this study, “To Build a Fire,” is set in the Klondike. His journey to the Klondike was, however, detrimental to his health. He developed scurvy like so many other men who went on the Gold Rush. His gums became swollen, and he later lost his four front teeth.

When London returned to Oakland, he became an activist for socialism. He once said that his only hope was to get a good education and sell his brain. This, to him, was a way out of poverty. He went to California in 1898 and began working to get published. It was a struggle that he would later describe in his novel, *Martin Eden*. The struggles during this time almost made him quit his writing career. He would fully engage in writing again when new technologies enabled lower production costs.

As a writer, Jack London was the innovator of what would be called science fiction in later years. Jack London was part of the radical literary group in San Francisco called The Crowd. He was also an advocate of worker's rights, animal rights, and socialism. Jack London wrote about dystopian topics. He was also a writer of nonfiction, with works such as “The People of

the Abyss". He wrote a famous work, *The Call of the Wild* and *White Fang*, "To Build a Fire," all set in Alaska and Yukon during the Klondike Gold Rush.

London married Elizabeth Mae "Bessie" in 1900, the same day his novel *The Son of the Wolf* was published. Elizabeth Mae had been his friend for some time. According to Stasz, they did not marry out of love but because they were comfortable with each other and thought they would make good children. It is believed that Jack told her he did not love her but liked her enough to make a successful marriage.

On July 24, 1903, London decided to leave Bessie. In 1904, London and Bess negotiated the terms of a divorce, and the decree was granted in November 1904. The San Francisco Examiner assigned London to cover the Russo-Japanese War in early 1904. He arrived in Yokohama on January 25, 1904, and was arrested by Japanese authorities in Shimonoseki but was released through the intervention of American ambassador Lloyd Griscom. He would be charged again by the same Japanese authorities after he travelled to Korea. He was arrested for straying too close to the border with Manchuria without official permission and was sent back to Seoul. Rereleased, London could travel with the Imperial Japanese Army to the border and observe the Battle of the Yalu.

Jack London asked the owner of the San Francisco Examiner to allow him to transfer to the Imperial Russian Army, where he felt that restrictions on his reporting and his movements would be less severe. But before this could be arranged, he was arrested for the third time in four months, this time for assaulting his Japanese assistants, whom he accused of stealing the fodder for his horse. He was later released through the personal intervention of President Theodore Roosevelt, and he exited the front in June 1904. London became a Bohemian Club member and participated in many activities. Other members of the Bohemian Club during this time included Ambrose Bierce, Gelett Burgess, Allan Dunn, John Muir, and Frank Norris.

London married another woman, Charmian Kittredge, in 1905. London had been introduced to Kittredge by her aunt, Netta Eames, an editor at Overland Monthly magazine in San Francisco. The two met before his first marriage but became lovers years after Jack and Bessie London visited Wake Robin, Netta Eames' Sonoma County resort, in 1903. London was injured when he fell from a buggy, and Netta arranged for Charmian to care for him. The two became friends. Biographer Russ Kingman called Charmian Jack's soulmate, always at his side, and a perfect match.

London bought a 1,000-acre (4.0 km²) ranch in Glen Ellen, Sonoma County, California, on the eastern slope of Sonoma Mountain in 1905. To London, the farm was the second-dearest thing in the world after his wife. He desperately wanted the ranch to become a successful business enterprise. Writing to London was a means to end poverty and acquire more property.

According to Stasz, London had taken fully to heart the vision, expressed in his agrarian fiction, of the land as the closest earthly version of Eden. He educated himself through the study of agricultural manuals and scientific tomes. He conceived of a system of ranching that today would be praised for its ecological wisdom. He was proud to own the first concrete silo in California. He hoped to adapt the wisdom of Asian sustainable agriculture to the United States. He hired Italian and Chinese stonemasons, whose distinctly different styles are apparent.

The ranch was an economic failure. Sympathetic observers like Stasz treat his projects as potentially feasible and ascribe their failure to bad luck or to being ahead of their time. However, unsympathetic historians such as Kevin Starr suggest that he was a bad manager, distracted by other concerns, and impaired by his alcoholism. Starr notes that London was absent from his ranch for about six months a year between 1910 and 1916.

Jack London and Animal Activism

London was an animal activist because he noticed the cruelty against animals. In 1918, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the American Human Education Society teamed up to create the Jack London Club, which sought to inform the public about cruelty to circus animals and encourage them to protest it.

Jack London died on November 22, 1916, on a sleeping porch in a cottage on his ranch. London had been a robust man but had suffered several serious illnesses, including scurvy in the Klondike. He had also been beaten during numerous travels by unspecified tropical infections and diseases, including yaws. At the time of his demise, he suffered from dysentery, late-stage alcoholism, and uremia.

London was buried on his property, not far from the Wolf House. His funeral occurred on November 26, 1916, and was attended only by close friends, relatives, and property workers. Following his wishes, he was cremated and buried next to some pioneer children under a rock that belonged to the Wolf House. After Charmian died in 1955, she was also cremated and buried with her husband in the same spot she had chosen. A mossy boulder marks the grave. The buildings and property were later preserved as Jack London State Historic Park in Glen Ellen,

California. Many believe that London committed suicide because he was using morphine. This, however, appears to be a rumor or speculation based on incidents in his fiction writings.

The biographer Stasz says that following London's death, for several reasons, a biographical myth developed in which he was portrayed as an alcoholic womanizer who committed suicide. Recent scholarship based on first-hand documents challenges this caricature. Most biographers, including Russ Kingman, now agree he died of uraemia aggravated by an accidental morphine overdose.

In terms of belief, Stewart Gabel says that London was an atheist. Warren Allen Smith quotes him, saying, "I believe that when I am dead, I am dead. I believe that with my death, I am just as much obliterated as the last mosquito you and I squashed." (p. 80).

London was equally a socialist. He wrote from a socialist viewpoint, evident in his novel *The Iron Heel*. Neither a theorist nor an intellectual socialist, London's socialism grew out of his life experience. As he explained in his essay, "How I Became a Socialist," His views were greatly influenced by his experiences with people of the lower class. London became a member of the Socialist Labor Party in April 1896. In the same year, the San Francisco Chronicle published a story about the twenty-year-old London's giving nightly speeches in Oakland's City Hall Park, an activity he was arrested for a year later.

Jack London's stories have been read by many and seen as outstanding. "To Build a Fire", one of his short stories used in this work, is the best known of all his stories. Set in the harsh Klondike, it recounts the haphazard trek of a new arrival who has ignored an old-timer's warning about the risks of traveling alone. Falling through the ice into a creek in 75-degree weather, the unnamed man is keenly aware that survival depends on his untested skills at quickly building a fire to dry his clothes and warm his extremities. His other stories from the Klondike period include "All Gold Canyon", about a battle between a gold prospector and a claim jumper; "The Law of Life", equally used in this study, is about an aging American Indian man abandoned by his tribe and left to die; and "Love of Life", about a trek by a prospector across the Canadian tundra.

His stories would today be considered science fiction. "The Unparalleled Invasion" describes germ warfare against China; "Goliath" is about an irresistible energy weapon; "The Shadow and the Flash" is a tale about two brothers who take different routes to achieving invisibility; "A Relic of the Pliocene" is a tall tale about the encounter of a modern-day man with a mammoth.

Some nineteen original collections of short stories were published during London's brief life or shortly after his death. There have been several posthumous anthologies drawn from this pool of stories. Many of these stories were located in the Klondike and the Pacific. Jack London's adventure in the Klondike where he sets most of the short stories under study makes his biography and indispensable element in this work.

Definition of Key Terms

The understanding of any scholarly work rests on the clarity of key terms and phrases. We endeavor to give a concise definition and explanation of key terms and phrases used in the study. The terms to be defined here are naturalism, environment, heredity, the absence of God.

Naturalism

The pre-classical history of naturalism

Naturalism is not a literary movement that fully began in the 19th century or sprang from Zola's brain but was the result of man's encounter with the world around him and centuries of social, scientific, and philosophical development. When Emil Zola, to whom credit is given when it comes to naturalism, declared in *The Experimental Novel* that he only named a literary movement as old as man, he meant that ideas of naturalism existed before he ever coined the term. For instance, during the 17th and 18th centuries, during the period of Enlightenment, when rationality replaced dogmatism, naturalist's thoughts already existed. By this time, intellectuals had read much of the natural sciences, which tilted them away from theological and supernatural explanations of natural phenomena toward a natural description of the universe. This was a step toward the philosophy of naturalism. One of the contributors to naturalism during this time was John Lock. In Lock's teachings and philosophy, he and his followers originated the doctrine of empiricism, which attributed the origin of all knowledge to experience. Empiricism encompasses the idea of positivism, which is one of the early influences of naturalism. Positivists say that the only source of authentic knowledge is scientific knowledge and that such knowledge can only come from the positive affirmation of theories through strict scientific methods. Positivism has had a significant impact on the thinking of Emil Zola, as it insisted on scientific findings as the ultimate source of knowledge.

Suppose the ideas of naturalism have existed as indicated above. In that case, it is an indication that the naturalist's thoughts have been part of human life from the day we evolved from the ape, butterfly, or whatever it might be. Following this thinking, one of the earliest

naturalistic incidents was the biblical flood in the days of Noah. These naturalistic tendencies have continued to victimize man.

Classical Naturalism

With a brief history of naturalism highlighted, we endeavour to look at the movement in 19th-century Europe which we call classic naturalism. The word classic as used here in relation to naturalism should be perceived as the first significant phase of the movement. Naturalism is said to have begun in France before spreading to other nations like Britain, Germany, and the United States of America. In France, naturalism was championed by Balzac and Stendhal, even though Emile Zola soon became the main leader of the movement. When he published *The Experimental Novel* in 1893. The book exhibited the characteristics of a naturalist novel. These characteristics are, among others, truthfulness, objectivity, and passion for scientific representation of factual details about the human condition.

According to Pitzer, Frank Norris became the first North American author to introduce naturalism to the local culture. Pitzer adds that according to Norris, “naturalism helped to resolve the conflict between realism and romanticism by choosing the best approach to implement one constituent ignored by both” (P. 13). Other writers who championed naturalism in American literature were Stephen Crane, Jack London, and Theodore Dreiser. These writers wrote because they saw that realist literature was inadequate to depict the social problems they saw. The helplessness of man influenced the naturalist’s writers, his insignificance in the cold world, and his lack of dignity in the face of the crushing forces of the environment and their biology. Their stories were mostly set in urban slums and harsh wilderness, with characters whose fates were determined by their heredity and environment. Naturalists were truthful, objective, accurate, and passionate about the scientific representation of factual details about all life forms. The writers mentioned here saw naturalism as a return to nature, not to produce emotional and sensationalized stories that idealized the world like the transcendentalists, but to return to man’s nature to depict their realities. Closer to human nature, naturalism shows the indifference of human beings towards other creatures in the universe: the continuous indifference that has created the epoch of the Anthropocene, an age in which man’s activities has a powerful effect on the global environment.

The naturalists portrayed the lives and conditions of the working class and people experiencing poverty in great detail that sent shivers down the spines of their readers. Naturalism highlighted inequality in the social system operated in the United States of America and other

Western nations. It was also able to reiterate the crises of the American people by using true-to-life characters but without any attack on the state leaders for not addressing the social problems that contributed to the slum development and poverty. For instance, John Steinbeck used his characters to communicate his radical views to the state. Another feature that characterized the works of naturalists was deep pessimism or hopelessness and a sense of fear of impending danger. Death was also a key concept in the writings of these writers. In Jack London's "To Build a Fire," like elsewhere in his fiction, he demonstrates the slow process that man takes to die by freezing in the snow. The perception of American naturalism towards reality was radical and was not distracted by glamour, wealth, or economic developments that were also evident in turn-of-the-century society. Naturalism insinuates that real life is unattractive, pessimistic, and decadent. Naturalists were proponents of the view that human nature was infested by vices that could not be ignored or avoided by wearing better clothes or living in beautiful houses. This explains why naturalist writers like Jack London and Stephen Crane decided to focus on the poor, gutter dwellers, and marginalized in their societies. The naturalists were looking for the truth, the objective truth, and they found it only when their glances were directed toward the most vulnerable population group in society.

Naturalism in the 21st Century

The 21st century is a naturalistic age. This century is marked by constant strife to seek scientific solutions to pressing happenings rather than relying on dogma and ideologies. It is a period in which the human mind is tilted towards believing in what it sees, not faith in an unknown God. According to Guido O. Perez, naturalism in the 21st century has "a political, moral, and spiritual dimension compatible with the humanist manifesto". (p. 1) The humanist manifesto is a document that lays out the aspirations of humanism. Simply put, humanism is a human-centred approach to developing a harmonious society. In line with this quotation, naturalism in the 21st century goes along with humanism.

The term naturalism is used in several different fields. *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language* specifies a philosophical, theological, and literary meaning. These meanings are closely related; nevertheless, they may be distinguished one from the other. According to the dictionary, Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language, naturalism in philosophy is:

The doctrine which expands conceptions drawn from the natural sciences into a world view, denying that anything in reality has a supernatural or more than natural

significance especially the doctrine that caused and effect Laws, such as those of physics and chemistry, are adequate to account for all phenomena of life. (P. 1)

The denial of the supernatural in the definition of naturalism in philosophy is also integral to the term's meaning when it is used in theology. In theology, naturalism is “the doctrine that religious truth is derived from nature and not from miraculous or supernatural sources in religion.” (p. 2) When the term naturalism is used in literature, it implies a general and a specific meaning. In its general literary sense, naturalism is the theory that art and literature should conform to nature; more specifically, however, it is the principles and characteristics professed or represented by a nineteenth-century school of realistic writers, notably by Zola and Maupassant, who aimed to give a literal transcription of reality and laid stress on the analytic study of character and the scientific and experimental nature of their observation of life.

Other scholars and naturalists continue to give their views on what naturalism is. According to Frederick A. Olafson, naturalism is:

A movement of thought that not only takes its name from “nature” but assigns an unqualifiedly positive valence to the fact of our being part of nature. In the tradition of the Enlightenment from which it is itself descended, naturalism was originally a reaction against religious ideas of a supernatural domain to which human beings were supposed to be somehow akin. It was also directed against philosophical systems like idealism that were thought to have much too strong an affinity with a religious view of the world and to do scant justice to the role in our lives of the natural world into which we are born.(p. 5)

The quotation overtly states the antonym of naturalism, supernaturalism. The link between naturalism and supernaturalism is that the former is based on scientific explanations of situations, while the latter is based on spiritual descriptions of circumstances. Besides, the quotation portrays naturalism as a movement which is directed against philosophical systems like idealism. This explains why naturalism is more objective in its thinking compared to other philosophies that war very subjective. Philosophers like Dewey saw naturalism as liberating the human being from religious and social orthodoxies that seem to have blocked the development of human powers and potentialities for self-realization. This was a step towards scientific objectivity. In this sense, scientific objectivity led to expanding knowledge and developing the individual and society.

Naturalism is a literary movement created by Emile Zola (1840–1902) and further developed by writers working under his influence (1870s–1890s in Europe). Zola published several critical essays in which he defined the goals of naturalism. The most famous of them is *The Experimental Novel* (1893). In this text, Zola writes that naturalism marks a new period in

the development of literary realism; it provides a scientifically based view of society and human beings; his methodological model is drawn from the empirical sciences, especially medicine, and the scope of naturalism extends beyond literature. Thus, naturalism favors a scientific approach to social reality. The goals of naturalism according to Zola are in the proceeding paragraphs.

Naturalism marks a new period in the development of literary realism.

It provides a scientifically based view of society and human beings. Its methodological model is drawn from the empirical sciences—medicine, particularly (Zola admired the work of medical researcher Claude Bernard).

Its scope extends beyond literature; the ultimate goal of naturalism is to pave the way for social reform.

Naturalism favors a scientific approach to social reality, thereby leading writers to endorse a pessimistic variety of determinism.

Human beings in naturalist texts are no longer depicted according to the optimistic principles of idealism, which assumes that humans have a god-given soul or an entirely rational consciousness. The stereotypical naturalist character is a “human beast” (cf. Zola's novel bearing the same title). Therefore, naturalist works often contain a grotesque dimension.

Elaborating on Zola's principles, Vernon Louis Parrington offers the following definition of this literary movement: Naturalism is “a pessimistic realism with a philosophy that sets man in a mechanical world and conceives of him as victimized by that world.” (P.7). This is arguably one of the best formulations of the classic definition because it contains all the characteristics of the movement in its classic sense.

In the classic definition, naturalism is defined as a literary movement with clear chronological boundaries: a specific era during which the movement developed. In Europe, the naturalist decades are traditionally thought to stretch from the 1870s to the 1890s. In the US, naturalism is thought to begin with the generation in the 1890s, stretching until the First World War. We have seen that naturalist fiction was still produced later than WWI, however. Naturalist writing was revived in the US in the 1930s (second-generation naturalism). Still, in aesthetic terms, naturalism was no longer the literary vanguard at the time.

According to Donald Pitzer, a traditional and widely acceptable definition of naturalism is that “it is essentially realism infused with a pessimistic determinism”. (p. 9) This definition is an approach to naturalism through realism. It is historically justifiable but has handicapped thinking

about the movement as a whole and about works within the movement. Because of its limitations, Pitzer proposes approaches to defining American naturalism. He suggests that the naturalist novel usually contains two tensions or contradictions and the two in conjunction, comprise both an interpretation of experience and a particular aesthetic recreation of experience. The first tension is between the naturalistic novel and the concept of man. The second tension involves the theme of the naturalistic novel. The naturalist often describes his characters as if the environment, heredity, instincts, or chance condition them.

Furthermore, M.H. Abrams in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (2005) holds that naturalism is “a mode of fiction that was developed by a school of writers in accordance with a particular philosophical thesis”. (P. 304) Abrams reiterates that this thesis is a post-Darwinian biology in the 19th century which held that a human being exists within the caprices of nature and does not have access to the spiritual world. This view slightly elevates man above the animal and shows that the environment and heredity determine man's life and behavior. To Abrams, man inherits compulsive instincts like hunger, the drive to accumulate possession, and sexual drives. He is therefore subjected to the social and economic forces in the family, the class, and the environment where the person is born.

Abram's definition only adds to the other definitions already given. Going by determinism, it shows that man is not free to act the way he wants. Determinism also establishes a link between naturalism and 17th-century Calvinism, which saw human life as predetermined and that no amount of good done could secure eternal salvation in paradise.

Vernon Louis Parrington defines naturalism as “a pessimistic realism, with a philosophy that sets man in a mechanical world and conceives of him as victimized by the world”. (P.325) The naturalist school aimed to turn novelists into “men of science” able to analyze the interaction of individuals with their social environment.

After examining the various definitions above by different philosophers and proponents of naturalism from Europe in general and America in particular, this study holds that naturalism is a scientific worldview of man and the human condition. This worldview in any way does not rely on the supernatural to explain and find solutions to man's problems in the world.

The interface between Positivism, Humanism, and Naturalism

Naturalism, positivism, and humanism share similar concerns regarding the origin and belief in a scientific worldview as an antithesis to theism. Andrew Comte, a prominent humanist, defines humanism as naturalistic in its understanding of the universe. It upholds the principles

that science and free inquiry into the nature of things will help us comprehend more about what surrounds us. The scientific-oriented stance in phenomena around us shared by the humanists and the naturalists is also a significant belief in the philosophy of positivism. Positivism is an empiricist theory that believes that genuine knowledge comes from reason and logic, not sensory experience. It, therefore, rejects other ways of knowing, such as theology, metaphysics, intuition, or introspection. According to August Comte's school of sociological positivism, society, the physical world, operates according to general law. Positivism transcends disciplines in the humanities—psychology, economics, and logic. In these disciplines, the positivists attempt to introduce scientific methods for decoding the meaning of events.

Besides, naturalism, positivism, and humanism emphasize liberal thinking. The movements reject dogmatism and see humans as capable of intellectually emancipating themselves. As such, the dogmas of religion are meaningless to these movements. For instance, while religion relies on supernatural beings to explain natural happenings in society, humanists see that man can make the community better and, by so doing, make his life worth living for everyone. It believes in the human entity's ability to shape life and alleviate poverty. This is a similar concern in naturalists' thinking, where brotherliness is also emphasized as a necessary prerequisite to alleviate poverty and mitigate the crises man faces.

The Environment

According to the online Encyclopaedia Britannica, the environment is the complex of physical, chemical, and biotic factors that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival. The actions of the environment upon organisms and the ecological community indicate that the environment or society influences people's worldviews at a given period in a given community.

Besides, *Merriam Webster Online Dictionary* defines environment as “the complex physical, chemical, and biotic factors (such as climate, soil, and living things) that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival” The same dictionary also sees the environment as, “the aggregate of social and cultural conditions that influence the life of an individual or community.” These definitions show that an environment can be physical as well as social.

According to A. S. Hornby in the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, the meaning of the word “environment” is got as “conditions, circumstances affecting

lives”. This makes it seem difficult to separate the environment from the theme of victimization of man.

According to Marc A. Rosen and Mohsen Darabi, the environment “generally refers to all living and non-living things that occur naturally on Earth, that is, the natural environment” (p.3). They also add that: “The environment can also refer, in a more restricted sense, to the surroundings of an object. This is typical in disciplines such as thermodynamics”. (P.3) This definitions insinuates that man, animals plants are part of nature, the place is part of nature.

The environment can be divided into social and physical environments. An organism's social environment comprises its immediate surroundings, like its family, friends, context, historical background, and the people or things it relates with, while the physical environment refers to the rivers, trees, and seas surrounding an organism. The political environment also has to do with government policies that control a state. Again, the psychological environment looks at the link between man's psychology and the external world. The term "environment" in this study is interchangeable with its synonym, nature.

In this study, we hold that the term “environment” refers to the social surroundings of an organism, that is, society or family. It is also the physical surroundings, like the sea, weather, trees, and sun. In the context of this study, man is also part of nature.

Heredity

Agnes Malinowska holds that:

We have no thoughts or opinions of our own; they are transmitted to us and trained into us. All that is original in us, and therefore fairly creditable or discreditable to us, can be covered up and hidden by the point of a cambric needle, all the rest being atoms contributed by, and inherited from, a procession of ancestors that stretches back a billion years to the Adam-clam, grasshopper, or monkey from whom our race has been so tediously, ostentatiously, and unprofitably developed. (P. 102)

According to the quotation, heredity is the training, thoughts, and anything else an offspring inherits from his parents. The source further states how we think and behave originated with our ancestors. The quotation shows that man’s actions are completely influenced by the little bites of inheritable traits from his ancestors. The extract brings out the theme of determination which is very important in naturalistic discourses.

According to Ernest R. Hilgard et al., “many physical characteristics, such as height, bone structure, and hair and eye color, are inherited”. (P. 54) He further states that “all behavior depends on the interaction between heredity and environment”. (P. 54) The two quotations only

reiterate the view that humans are products of their surroundings and their heredity. This also insinuates that a child born in the slums and who grows up in the slums will probably have a different view of life compared to a child born and raised in a well-to-do family. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, heredity is the process by which mental and physical characteristics are passed from parents to their children. This shows that a more significant part of our actions is determined by what we inherited from our parents, grandparents, and ancestors. Gender inequality, fear, anger, brutality, sexual drive, and hunger are traits an individual can inherit from their parents.

Absence of God

In naturalism, God might be said to have no place. Naturalism or physicalism, as indicated in “nature” and “physics,” refers to what is in the physical world. In other words, naturalism foregrounds what is physical or natural over what is supernatural. This explains why the absence of God becomes very necessary in a study that deals with naturalism.

Structure of the Work

This study is divided into an introduction, a conclusion, and four chapters. The introduction aims to situate the reader within the study's historical, social, economic, political, and literary context. The introduction also comprises a statement of the research problem, motivation for the study, the aim of the study, the scope of the study, justification for the study, an overview of the study, research questions, hypotheses, and the definition of key terms.

Chapter one, “Theoretical Framework and Review of Critical Literature,” serves two purposes. First, it examines the theoretical framework chosen for the study: new historicism. Second, it explores literature related to the study. The review of related literature lays a solid foundation for the present study.

Chapter Two, entitled “The Naturalism of Stephen Crane,” examines how the environment, heredity, and absence of God influence characters in Stephen Crane's “The Open Boat” (1897), “An Experiment in Misery” (1894) and “The Men in the Storm” (1894). It argues that the problems faced by the characters in the second half of the 19th century transcend time and space to what men face in contemporary society.

Chapter Three, captioned “The Naturalism of Jack London,” focuses on the analysis of Jack London's “To Build a Fire” (1902), “The White Silence” (1899), and “The Law of Life” (1901), with intentions to show that naturalism, or the scientific worldview of the human condition portrayed through character victimization by the environment, heredity, and the

absence of God, is a timeless and universal reality. It posits that this view is not a formulation of Jack London but a replica of what has been and is the reality of the human condition

Chapter four, entitled “The Similarities and Differences between Naturalism in Selected Short Stories by Stephen Crane and Jack London,” compares the naturalistic tendencies in the works of Stephen Crane and Jack London. By doing this, this chapter says who is more naturalistic and who is not.

The Conclusion summarizes the entire study. It states the findings of the study and validates the hypothesis. It also reiterates that naturalistic techniques and perspectives are valid for explaining the human condition. The scientific worldview pushes for scientific innovation and, consequently, human development. The conclusion outlines gaps in the present study, suggesting areas for future scientific arguments.

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Theoretical framework

In literary studies, theory is fundamental to making an analysis. A theory is a set of general principles that guide the researcher in reading, interpreting, judging, and evaluating literary works. Literary criticism, the act of defining, classifying, analysing, interpreting and evaluating works of literature would be ineffective without the use of literary theory. This therefore shows the position that theory occupies in literary studies. New Historicism is used as the theoretical approach for an easier understanding of this work. This theory is chosen on bases that it gives an insight into the context of the characters and history and how the ideologies expressed in the works reflect universal and timeless experiences. This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework and review of the literature on naturalism in the works of Stephen Crane, Jack London, and other naturalist authors.

The weaknesses of already existing theories usually influence most developments in critical theory. In this case, new historicism resulted from the inadequacies of formalism propounded by Roman Jakobson, Viktor Shklovsky, and I.A. Richard. This is because formalism reiterates the independence of literary works from historical and authorial influence. The new historicists probably saw this as a discrepancy and exploited it to build a theoretical approach that opens other avenues for decoding the meaning of a literary work. Besides the weaknesses of formalism, the name new historicism signifies that this is another version of an existing historicism. This is true because new historicism is an updated version of a theory called traditional historicism. The new historicists were not happy with how traditional historicism generalized time periods and conducted epochal analysis. Also, the new historicists seemed discontented with the binary opposition between literature and history created by traditional historicism. For the traditional historian, history was primary, while literature was a subset of history. It is on these weaknesses or shortcomings of formalism and traditional historicism that Stephen Greenblatt, considered by many to be the founder of new historicism, coined the term “New Historicism” to baptize a theoretical approach that opens other ways of interpreting meaning.

Stephen Greenblatt, a Renaissance scholar and founding editor of the *Journal of Renaissance Studies*, is credited with coining the term “New Historicism,” also called cultural poetics. He coined the term in 1982 to describe work by himself and others in the Renaissance period. Other precursors of the theory are Michel Foucault, Louis Montrose, Fredric Jameson, Alan Sinfield, Jonathan Dollimore, and Catherine Gallagher. We must state here that Greenblatt's *Renaissance self-fashioning: from More to Shakespeare*, published in 1980, is usually regarded as the beginning of New Historicism. Other significant works on new historicism and their authors are: *The Forms of Power and the Power of Forms in the Renaissance* (1982) by Stephen Greenblatt; *Shakespearean Negotiation: The Curriculum of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (1988) by Stephen Greenblatt; *Learning to Curse* (1990) by Stephen Greenblatt; *The Journal of Renaissance Studies* (1982) by Stephen Greenblatt; and Louis Montrose wrote essays and papers, amongst which are *Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture* (1989), *Eliza, Queen of Shepherds, and the Pastoral of Power* (1980), and Fredric Jameson's *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (1981)

To begin with, Louis Montrose writes in his book *Professing the Renaissance* that New Historicism focuses on “the historicity of texts and the textuality of history.” (P. 588) This phrase means that history is also a text, and texts are also historical. The phrase can be divided into two parts: “Textuality of history” means that history is a text, and whatever a historian writes is a story that he chooses to tell according to his interpretation in the form of narrative through the medium of language. Following this line of thought, we do not have access to authentic lived experiences because the writer writes according to his interpretation and also because the language they use is affected by the ideological structures of society. The other part of the phrase “the historicity of texts” means that literary texts are products of the historical, social, and political circumstances under which they were produced. For instance, when we read Stephen Crane's short story “An Experiment in Misery”, we can know what was happening in society at the time of its production. By proving that history is texts and textuality is history, new historicism annuls the boundary between history and texts that traditional historicism had erected.

The point above is supported by Peter Barry in *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism*, in which he defines New Historicism as “a method based on parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts, usually of the same historical period” (P. 166). Inferred from his view, New Historicism does not foreground a literary text or history. But it views the two as interwoven. The fictional and historical texts are given a balanced pedestal and

frequently question or inform each other. He quotes Louis Monstroses' views already stated above to support his view: "New Historicism is a combined interest in the textuality of history and the historicity of texts" (*quoted by Barry, 116*). To Greenblatt, the founder of New Historicism, New historicism is "an intensified willingness to read all the textual traces of the past with the attention traditionally conferred only on literary texts" (*quoted by Barry, 116*).

Essays written using this approach place the literary text within the frame of historical texts and the historical text within the frame of history.

Besides, the objectivity of history is a myth in new historicist thinking. Traditional historians had tried to force the argument that history is an objective enterprise. It gives the truth about what happens during a given period. New historicism opposes this view and pushes forward the argument that every narrative is already affected by the circumstances and ideological factors of the time it was produced. This tenet is supported by a new historicist, Harold Aram Veaser, who says that no imaginative or archival discourse gives access to unchanging truths or expresses inalterable human nature. Those who think that any discourse, be it history or literature, is revealing of authentic human nature are believing simplistically. History is therefore, the sum total of what the historian chooses to say and how he chooses to say it; thus, history is partially subjective.

History is not a linear and progressive account of past events. According to tradition, historians believe history is moving linearly. That is, a cause-and-effect relationship exists between one event and the other that comes after it. This is called the progressive view of history. They also believed that human beings tend to progress as time passes, so history is progressive. New historicism rejects this notion. They think that at specific points in history, a given culture may be making progress in some areas while regressing in others. Also, what is progressing and what is regressing are only matters of interpretation because one person can say that a certain culture is progressing, and another person may say that it is regressing. Two critics may differ when it comes to homosexuality. One may argue that homosexuality is evil and should not be accepted in a progressive society. Society is regressing if such activities are allowed for this type of scholar. Another critic who is current with recent debates may say that homosexuality is normal and will see it as progress in more liberal inter-continental geopolitics. This indicates that two people will utterly disagree on what constitutes progress and what does not.

In addition, new historicists put forward the argument that power relations are the most important context for interpreting texts. We read texts to examine the workings of power. New historicism treats literary texts as a place where power relations are made visible. The literary text plays a significant role in revealing the power structures that govern society. Literary texts either support or reveal power structures. They also have the power to subvert power structures. The ideologies of the governing class, which form part of the power structures, are made visible in a literary text. The powerful decide what is suitable for the weak in a given context. When a role is not in line with the thinking of those in power, they consider it criminal and savage. This tenet shows how colonial power defined the colonized: savagery, barbarism, beasts, insaneness, animalism, and uncivilization. All these terms were meant to legitimize their control over the colonized. The colonized people consented to their exploitation because they believed they were being civilized by the whites ruling them. A careful between-the-lines reading of a literary text will reveal these power relations, which aid in interpreting the text. Stephen Crane reveals the power relations that exist in society in “An Experiment in Misery”.

Besides, new historicism focuses on marginalized voices and texts. These voices and texts have been marginalized and not considered to feature in mainstream history and grand narratives. In his essay *Counter history and the Anecdote*, Greenblatt discusses the new historicist focus on the voices that have been excluded, silenced, or considered too ridiculous or insignificant to be included in history. He talks about the deluded follower of Joanna Southcott, the utopian artisan excluded by mainstream history. New historicism focuses on marginalized voices and texts because they want to bring the plurality of voices and ideologies to studying history. If we keep reading mainstream history, the focus is only on the doctrines of the dominant power, and the other ideologies are suppressed. It is only by including marginalized voices that we are made to know that there is another side of the story from what the mainstream history is saying. The tenet makes new historicism to stay relevant because when the focus is placed on minor voices, grand narratives are challenged and one has a diverse view on the various histories around the world. It is on these bases that we study race, caste, gender, sexuality, disability, animal study, and homosexuality.

Furthermore, new historicism put texts and context together. Here, the literary text is not the primary object of analysis. The textual and the cultural become co-texts to each other. To study the literary text and context as co-texts, new historicism situates a text or event in its cultural milieu (motifs, practices, and customs) to know how the text was received and read in its context. Based on this tenet, we can see why a literary text came to be interpreted the way it was

interpreted. The non-literary text is thus the context that surrounds the production of that literary text. And the literary text derives its meaning from the context- the time, place that it was produced. Herder, quoted by Catherine and Greenblatt, supports this when he says that:

In poetries gallery of diverse ways of thinking, diverse aspirations, and diverse desires, we come to know periods and nations far more intimately than we can through the misleading pathetic method of studying their political and military history. In this latter kind of history, we rarely learn more about a people than how it was ruled and how it was wiped out. From its poetry, we learn about its way of thinking, its desires and wants, the ways it rejoiced, and the ways it was guided either by its principles or its inclinations (P. 7).

The quotation reaffirms the topic sentence to show that literature combines the text and context to know what happened in a society at a given period. That is, how the people of a particular age conceived their world. The historical document Greenblatt terms 'anecdotes' evokes the quality of lived experience rather than history. The historical document is not viewed as context but as equal text, or better yet, co-text. The text and co-texts are, therefore an idiom of the historical moment. Again, new historicism includes culture in the field of history. This view is supported by Greenblatt, who says that new historicism is a criticism centered on cultural artifacts. Cultural matters are, therefore, part of the new historicism. Furthermore, New Historicism criticizes corporate Derrida's view that there is nothing outside the text, in the sense that anything about the text is only available in textual form. These things could be an ideology and discursive practices of their own time, then those of our time. From this view, what is written in texts is remade in the form of history. New historicism aims not to represent the past as it was but to describe the truth by resituating events in the past.

According to Wilfred L. Guerin et al., as a return to historical scholarship, new historicism concerns itself with extra-literal matters—letters, diaries, films, paintings, and medical treaties—looking to reveal opposing historical tensions in a text. He further states that new historicists seek "surprising coincidences" that may cross generic, historical, and cultural lines in borrowings of metaphors, ceremonies, or popular culture (P.283). New historicism sees such cross-cultural phenomena as texts in themselves.

New Historicism asserts that our consciousness always conducts our understanding of the past; it is not only the author's background and that of his time that shapes our understanding of literature. Our consciousness also shapes our interpretation of literature. Based on this view, the critic's ethics and values can influence the meaning and conclusions he draws from the literary text.

Following the argument put forward by Louis Tyson that New Historicism demonstrates the traditional oppositions between histories (traditionally thought of as factual), To her, New Historicism considers history a text that can be interpreted in the same way literary critics interpret texts. It considers literary texts cultural artifacts that tell us something about the interplay of discourses and the web of social meanings operating at the time and place in which those texts were written (*quoted* in M.H. Abrams, 283). Thus, when literature records history, it distorts some historical facts, and since a literary text relies on some of these historical facts, it cannot be regarded entirely as fiction; hence, the short stories of Stephen Crane and Jack London under study are both literary and historical.

Despite New Historicism's position in literary studies, critics have criticized it for its inability to generate political action. In contrast, the theory can be given credit for its outstanding contribution to contemporary literary criticism. It addresses current heritable issues, such as race, class, and gender, which are the very determinants of culture. It also rewrites cultural history to champion the marginal, the outcast, and the free from all forms of torture, oppressed, and discrimination. It has allowed the literature student to read history through literature and vice versa to see how the past influenced contemporary realities.

We have chosen this theory based on its perspective that a literary text is situated within social practices, institutions, and discourses that dominate the culture of a given period; with this, we can interpret the source texts to show that naturalistic tendencies like environmental victimization of man were, are, and will always be part of the problems faced by the human species. Naturalism was a cultural movement that began in France and spread to the United States of America and other parts of the Western world. It was based on the premise that man's environment and biological factors determine his destiny. Today, we are at the apex of man's victimization by environmental forces (present-day environmental crises); hence, naturalism is a force to reckon with to understand the world. New historicism helps us in this endeavor because it relies on the context of the historical document and that of the critic to analyze literature. This is because human culture and intellectual ideologies are progressing and are being altered with time.

Review of literature

This section focuses on scientific articles and reviews written on Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat" (1897), "An Experiment in Misery" (1894), and "The Men in the Storm" (1894) and Jack London's "The Law of Life" (1901), "The White Silence" (1899), and "To Build a Fire" (1802).

General literature on naturalism and other works by Crane and London will also be reviewed in this section.

Stephen Crane and Jack London had relatively short careers before being snatched by the cold hands of death. Crane lived from 1871–1900 (age 24) and in London from 1876–1916 (age 40). Both left a number of novels and short stories that have received a lot of critical attention, especially after their eternal journeys. Today, Crane and London are regarded as prominent figures of American literary naturalism, one by virtue of the fact that they lived and wrote during this period and, secondly, because they utilized the tenets of this movement in their works. Beginning with Stephen Crane, Crane's art in general and the short stories under study have garnered a lot of praise as well as condemnation since their publication, starting with his 1879 war tale, *The Red Badge of Courage*. George Wyndham, in an article considered by critics as one of the most perceptive scientific pieces written on Crane's works, appearing in January 1896 in the London New Review, praised his picture of war as more complete than Tolstoy's and more true than Zola's. Crane, as he insinuates in this phrase, outweighed the great literati of the period in depicting a vivid picture of human instincts and carnage through Henry Fleming, the protagonist of the novel.

Besides, John Northern Hilliard (*quoted* by R. W. Stallman) stated in the Rochester Union Advertiser on February 8, 1896, that Crane had “revealed the utter hideousness of warfare as no writer has yet done, not even the microscopic Zola in his realistic and sanguinary or bloody descriptions of carnage”. The critic praised Crane's insurrectionism through the comparison. Dorr opposes the view that Crane does not spare his readers the grisly pictures of war any more than the French novelist. His limited perspective made him regard Crane's novel, *The Red Badge of Courage*, as an imitative attempt to beat Zola at his own game. Dorr leaves no doubt about his personal subjective repugnance to a picturesque representation of the horrors of war, but he is reasonable enough not to let it interfere with his final evaluation of the novel and therefore prefers to suspend a definitive value judgment. He ends on a positive note by drawing attention to the fact that other, more recently published works of Crane's have been receiving a great deal of praise.

Furthermore, Melissa, in her article entitled “Fleming's Escape” in “The Red Badge of Courage,” begins by making reference to Alfred Kazin's introduction to *The Red Badge of Courage*, in which he sees the novel handling less external violence than in mental states, with emphasis on its being a psychological novel as much as it is a novel of war. Melissa contrarily holds that psychological analysis of Crane's protagonist is archaic in scientific inquiry, and the

archetypal perspective may provide the most fertile ground for explaining the experience of Fleming in the novel. She cites Leland Krauth, who notes that Fleming embodies Crane's two competing visions of the heroic ideal, the one demanding selfless action on behalf of fellow men and the other calling forth vain self-serving. Krauth concludes that this is an authorial problem that reveals Crane's inability to reconcile his own views of heroism with traditional ideals. To Melissa, the contradiction in Fleming's character can be fully understood only if it is separated from any ethos obstacles on Crane's part. She holds that it is, essentially, an archetypal problem. She proceeds to say that Fleming's conflict is not just that he is confronted by a difference between self-motivation and collective motivation but that his psyche is subject to a fusion of two very different and mutually opposed archetypes, that is, the hero and the initiation. This fusion therefore poses a problem of development and mutes the young soldier's role and identity. His findings reveal Fleming's inability to distinguish the archetypes of hero and initiation and create a mythos in which he can live out both. He continues that Fleming's ultimate reality is, more aptly, an endless teeter-totter of non-identity. A self-lost in the web of archetypes.

Besides, Holly E. Schreiber, in her article "Journalistic Critique through Parody in Stephen Crane's *An Experiment in Misery*," considers Stephen Crane's 1894 "An Experiment in Misery" as both an example and a critique of immersion-style "experiment" writing. Contrary to several interpretations, Holly views the sketch under the rubric of parody. Parody is a creative repurposing of an established genre with the goal of both celebrating the genre's strengths and exposing its weaknesses. In terms of structure, he first describes the ways in which Crane's text fits the genre, then analyzes the ironic narrative distance that signals the presence of parody. To him, the text ultimately offers a journalistic meta-critique by replicating and lampooning common acts of journalistic practice, such as the use of an exemplar to stand in for an entire class, the expectation that the lives of the poor can be easily observed, and the presumption that insight gained through experience could be adequately transmitted to a middle-class readership. His problem stems from the fact that, despite the general acknowledgement of Crane's artistic achievement, literary analysis has been unevenly applied to Crane's journalism as compared to his fiction, especially in terms of the use of parody. He cites the monograph "Stephen Crane: From Parody to Realism," in which Eric Solomon only briefly mentions Crane's journalism and only points out that it contains much more straightforward social critique than his fiction. He reiterates that the consequences of this blind spot regarding Crane's nonfiction reflect the strict division between journalism and fiction common in many contemporary readings of Crane's work.

Donna Gerstenberger in *“The Open Boat: Additional Perspectives”* observes that Stephen Crane's short story, “The Open Boat”, is generally acknowledged to be among the masterpieces of the modern short story, but he differs from this view of the short story. His objective is to show that Crane's intentions include a demonstration of the impossibility of knowing anything with objective certainty given that humans are subjective in their perception. He finds out that the absurdity of the universe is the reason for man's inability to ever know anything about the complex whole of experience. He uses, among others, the perceptions of the correspondent when he, looking shoreward, contemplates the tall white windmill amidst the deserted cottages and picturesquely sees it as a giant, standing with its back to the plight of the ants. This is reality translated from his perception; thus, it is infused with subjectivity, which makes it different from the actual meaning that one may be attributed to the statement to buttress objectivity. The Tower can be interpreted as a symbol of nature's indifference to man's plight in a universe where man is cut off from any divine intervention.

Peter Buitenhuis, in “The Essentials of Life: *The Open Boat* as Existentialist Fiction,” posits that the story is not naturalistic. He points out that the story transcends the limits of naturalistic fiction to make a kind of affirmation familiar with the works of the existentialist Albert Camus. Therefore, the article aims to show how Crane brings his protagonist to the realization of the absurdity of the experience and then to the realization of the human condition.

Salma Haque, in his article "Nature's Paradoxicality in Stephen Crane's “The Open Boat”: A Critical Overview,” argues that in “The Open Boat”, nature is paradoxical as well as unpredictable. He says that the sea represents nature, while the struggles of the men in the boat represent those of man in the vast universe. He also holds that throughout the story, the reader sees nature's antagonism and indifference and how the boatmen try their best to overcome the adversaries of nature.

Still, on the Open Boat, Stephanie Bate Eye holds that the story is not more fictional or invented than Crane's own story and that both narratives follow the historical sequence of events surrounding the commodore disaster as verified in contemporary reports, the ship's log and other shipping records, and accounts by witnesses. Bathes' views, as portrayed in this article, are that the critic should read the story as Crane's consistency with the art of truth-telling. He, therefore, sees *The Open Boat* as one of the earliest nonfiction works of Stephen Crane. Reading “The Open Boat” from such a narrow-minded angle evades the text's numerous avenues.

In addition, in an article titled “Society and Nature in Stephen Crane’s *The Men in the Storm*”, George Monteiro peruses the dilemma visible in Crane’s intellectual life as a naturalist and the internal forces of his childhood religion, methodism. He argues that due to Crane’s ancestral religion with its emphasis on strict respect of the teachings of the Bible, Crane is caught between two folds: on the one hand, a full application of the naturalist’s deterministic philosophy and, on the other, the principles of the religion of his birth. This is illustrated in the following quotation:

For the truth is that at no time was Crane able to commit himself fully to the implications of the determinism he so much wanted to accept. The difficulty lay in his inability to resolve the conflict between his intellectual commitment to naturalism and his emotional tie to the nineteenth-century Protestantism of his family. If Crane could not embrace his ancestors’ Methodism, with its strong emphasis on scriptural authority, neither could he free himself from its nagging influence. (p. 1)

In the same article, Monteiro brings out an extract from “The men in the storm” to support the view he has expressed in the previous extract.

The men began to come from their shelter-places and mass in front of the doors of charity. They were of all types... Many were strong, healthy, clear-skinned fellows, with that stamp of countenance which is not frequently seen upon seekers after charity. There were men of undoubted patience, industry, and temperance, who, in time of ill-fortune, do not habitually rail at the state of society, snarling at the arrogance of the rich, and bemoaning the cowardice of the poor, but who at these times are apt to wear a sudden and singular meekness, as if they saw the world's progress marching from them, and were trying to perceive where they had failed, what they lacked, to be thus vanquished in the race. (P. 230)

True to his family’s Methodism, Crane in these lines alludes to the Book of Ecclesiastes when he mentions the word race. “The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong,” warns the Preacher. “Neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill,” he adds, “but time and chance happeneth to them all”.

On naturalism in “The Men in the Storm”, Monteiro says that Crane focuses on the difficulties inherent in a world where social and economic responsibility exist in the face of naturalism. He writes that every man’s fate, as Crane sees it, is to be a social animal and, at the same time, almost incomprehensibly, a naturalistic being totally at loose in the universe. That is to say; Crane sees man as a being locked into participating in two incompatible angles. In the one, man’s social milieu, he is responsible for his every move; in the other, the naturalistic-cosmic, he is determined and hence without responsibility for his behavior. “The Men in the Storm” chronicles a story of dual victims—of society and of nature. On a critical note, the conflict handled in this article insinuates that man cannot wholly forgo the doctrine of his

ancestors and embrace an ideology that contrasts it. Crane's struggle to abandon what is original to him, that is, Protestantism, to embrace the artificial naturalism, has caused the intellectual debate to determine if Crane is genuinely a naturalist or a hybrid product of Methodism and naturalism. Crane's struggle with these two cultures mimics the struggle of man to abandon what is his heredity.

Laurence J. Marriot, in his thesis titled "The Literary Development of Stephen Crane," examines the emergence of literary naturalism in France from its beginnings in the fiction of the Goncourt brothers, the positivist philosophy of Comte, and the literary criticism of Hippolyte. He also focused on the reception of the genre in England and the rise of the genre in the new world from 1890 right up to the period of its critical acceptance and success in the early decades of the 20th century. He then proceeds to peruse the reasons for the success of American literary naturalistic writings at a time when such writings have become outdated in Europe. The study is valuable as it gives an in-depth investigation of the development of naturalism.

Winifred Allison Bailey, in her dissertation "The Heroic Image in a Modern World: Enlightened Naturalism in Ernest Hemingway's", holds that Hemingway's attributing the qualities of a hero to his protagonist poses a problem to what naturalism is known for, which is the impossibility of the heroism of man in a universe in which all forces act against him. To tackle the problem, he begins by examining the definitions and dictums of naturalism as discernible in the works of the French naturalist Emile Zola. His findings reveal that Hemingway's protagonist reconciles elements of naturalism with a modern heroic ethic to bring about the enlightened naturalism he describes in *Farewell to Arms*.

In addition, Imogen Simons, in her thesis "The City in Late-Nineteenth Century American Literature: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," examines representations of the city in works by Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, and Theodore Dreiser. His focus is on *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1893), *McTeague* (1899), and *Sister Carrie* (1900) by Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, and Theodore Dreiser, respectively. He holds that the three novelists give the American public a new kind of fiction that is filled with first-hand information about the changing world around them. His findings show that the three cities are similarly represented as places embraced for their modernity and as places of opportunity, which attracted many Americans.

Fatna Kendir, in her dissertation "The Study of the Major Principles of Naturalism through The Open Boat by Stephen Crane," seeks to show how Stephen Crane's short story, "The Open Boat", is representative of the most salient features of American Naturalism. She holds that not

only the content but also the form of the short story are examples of naturalist features. She examines the characteristics of naturalism, styles, and themes of naturalist writers, American society, its industries, immigration, science, the emergence of the city, Crane's life. She works, Crane's language and style, the use of literary devices in the story, and naturalistic elements in the story.

Furthermore, James B. Colvert observes in his dissertation that Crane has been the subject of two biographies and many critical essays, but his unique literary style has not been fully explained. To him, Crane cannot be fully understood based on the literary canons of the time, and many historians who attempt to interpret Crane's literary career have likened him to Tolstoy and Zola. Still, there is strong evidence that Crane knew very little about them. He holds that Crane's sudden appearance on the literary landscape gave rise to the notion that he was an inexplicable genius who instituted and developed an approach through sheer instinct and a brilliant and revolutionary style. The purpose of his work is to determine, insofar as possible, the origins and nature of Crane's art and to show, in terms of literary materials, method, and style, his development from its beginnings in 1892 to his death in 1900.

Agnes Malinowska, in her dissertation "Technocratic Evolution: Experimental Naturalism and American Biopolitics Around 1900," resituates vital social and political debates of American modernity within the discourses of the nonhuman that dominated turn-of-the-century intellectual life-evolution and the technologies of industrial capital. He argues that prominent writers like Jack London, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Mark Twain, and Frank Norris sought to investigate and discursively shape the new modern nation by first settling the proper human relationship to our nonhuman others, both organic and technological. He says the result is an experimental naturalism that uses a wide range of evolutionary hypotheses as starting premises for fiction that intervenes in the period's contentious debates surrounding gender and sex, race and ethnicity, class and labor, empire, and global corporate capital. While helping launch American modernity, its 'experiments' also issue in national and international futures that run counter to the period's dominant narratives and the ones that seem inevitable from our vantage point today.

Kristin Ladd's thesis, *Jack London: Landscape, Love, and Place*, focuses on the relationship between literature and place-based learning, as well as how Jack London's life and works are essential to American history and literature. The thesis first establishes a theoretical framework for its agrarian masculinity-based theoretical interpretation of London's later works. A word that has evolved since Thomas Jefferson and served as a lens for interpreting Americanism and American ideals rooted in hard work, community, farm life, and harmony with

nature far into the modern day. The thesis then uses this framework to examine two of London's works and his biography. Following the analysis, it offers suggestions for how other educators can incorporate these crucial concepts into place-based education practices.

In the book *Human Heredity in the Twentieth Century*, Bernd Gausemeier, Staffan Muller-Wille, and Edmund Ramsden (eds.) present debates on the different topics related to the history of human heredity. This edited collection gathers academics from Europe, North America, and South America. The result is a work that is theoretically inspiring and intellectually stimulating. The preface provides important historiographic background information. The editors discuss the broader epistemological limitations of such a challenging issue in a lucid and convincing style—the history of heredity cuts across numerous subjects and academic fields.

There are sixteen chapters in this book; all spread throughout different parts. The examination of the hereditary nature of tuberculosis disputes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by Bernd Gausemeier serves as its introduction. There was no agreement among geneticists about the issue of hereditary vulnerability to tuberculosis because, as Gausemeier correctly notes, the line between the hereditary and the non-hereditary was sometimes blurred. The following chapter by Philip K. Wilson focuses on eugenicists, particularly those in the USA, and their interest in human heredity. The Medical Genetics Clinic was established at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in the 1950s, replacing plans by Harry H. Laughlin for a clinic of human heredity devoted to genetic consultation, research, and education.

The second part of the book deals with ideas of human diversity as expressed by physicians. As discussed by Veronika Lipphardt, institutions for the study of human variation were established after the Second World War to identify patterns of inheritance in groups of allegedly 'isolated populations', both in exotic locations and within their own national space. Serological investigations replaced quaint anthropometric measurements. New quantitative approaches based on mathematical models were adopted, thus signaling the transition from the 'race paradigm' and 'physical anthropology' to the 'population paradigm' and 'population genetics'. In turn, Jenny Bangham highlights the importance of the work carried out by the Galton Serological Laboratory, later named the Galton Serum Unit, at University College London during the war. The unit's investigations of blood group distributions further eroded the use of 'race' in defining populations, opening up new vistas for research about human inheritance. Yet, this was not a straightforward process, as aptly discussed by Pascal Germann in his chapter on genetic research on human diversity in Switzerland during the 1950s and by Edna

Suárez-Díaz and Ana Barahona in their overview of medical genetics and social anthropology in Mexico in the post-war period.

The volume's third part takes the reader into the heart of the laboratory. Alexander von Schwerin and Mara Jess Santesmases discuss animal, plant, and human genetics in two consecutive chapters. In addition to serving as early models for eugenics, animal and plant breeding was also crucial for early genetic studies on the mechanics of inheritance. These beneficial summaries are a foundation for Soraya de Chadarevian's in-depth analysis of chromosomal and karyotyping studies during the 1950s and 1970s. Chadarevian reminds us that contextualizing such scientific endeavors within far broader discoveries in radiobiology, cancer research, criminology, and, of course, population studies is also crucial.

Diomède Niyuhire, in his dissertation “Naturalism in Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*,” focuses on the concerns that connect Crane to traditional understandings of naturalism, such as humans' helplessness in the face of the environment. He hypothesizes that nature, through its aspects—heredity and environment—is the source of all problems encountered by human beings in their lives. The work also examines how human life is a permanent struggle and proves that naturalists attempt to give a scientific interpretation of life events in the universe. However beautifully written, his work fails to go beyond the most pressing question of our time: what can man do to overcome his struggles?

Stella Fang Zei, in her dissertation “Naturalism and Social Realism: A Study of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*,” examines the fact that Hardy portrays ideas in close relationship to lived experiences in the novel. She argues that in this novel, the individual is destined for disappointment and disillusionment by forces beyond his control. He struggles to exist, but his choices and circumstances often result in doom. To Zei, man is placed face-to-face with the hard realities of life.

In a similar study titled “Social and Environmental Determinism: A Study of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *The Return of the Native*”, Zei departs from the one above to show that human existence is meaningless and that life is hard, as expressed in the selected texts. She examines the forces beyond human suffering, focusing more on the environment. Zei uses new historicism and ecocriticism as critical tools to analyze her work. She hypothesizes that the characters in Hardy's novel under study have a tragic experiences. The findings they come up with confirm the hypothesis: characters in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *The Return of the Native* live a sad incident, irrespective of their hard struggle and determination to survive. They

assert that social and environmental factors contribute to the tragic lived experiences in the novels. Though a good study that attempts some of the most heated debate that has pluralized 21st-century intellectual life, after going through the work, one has the impression that Zei needs to contextualize her study to the current view of the human being. The absence of motivation for the survey also makes her study short but not completely lacking the intellectual vigor it deserves.

Anita Wase Elangwe's research project, "Industrialization and Struggle for Survival in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*," focuses on Hardy's characters who are bound, caught up between the shocking effects of industrialization and a cruel fate. She holds that characters develop strong survival instincts to overcome the misery imposed on them by nature and the environment.

In the introduction to *Bloom's Modern Critical Views* on Stephen Crane, Bloom holds that Stephen Crane's contribution to the canon of American literature is not that little or that much: one classic short novel, three vivid stories, and two or three ironic lyrics. *The Red Badge of Courage*, "The Open Boat", "The Blue Hotel", "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky"; "War is Kind"; and "A Man Adrift on a Slim Spar". Though Crane was dead at twenty-eight, after a frantic life, a more extended existence probably would not have enhanced his achievement. He observes that Crane was an exemplary American writer, flaring in the forehead of the morning sky and vanishing in the high noon of our evening land. An original, if not quite a great original. He says that Crane prophesied Hemingway and other journalists and novelists and still seems a forerunner of much to come.

Donna Campbell, in *American Literary Naturalism: Critical Perspectives*, provides an overview and reinterpretation of American literary naturalism as practiced by classic naturalists Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Theodore Dreiser, and Jack London; by later naturalists such as Phillips and Steinbeck; and by women writers and writers of color such as Paul Laurence Dunbar and Ann Petry. Campbell structures this article into four parts. The first part focuses on defining classic naturalism through four of its essential characteristics, each illustrated by the fiction of one of the significant turn-of-the-century naturalists: urban poverty, violence, and parody in Crane; theories of heredity and capitalism in Norris; and he reviews the problems of definition that have formed the critical discourse over naturalism since its inception, including distinguishing naturalism from other literary forms and surveying the late 19th-century controversy over realism and romance. The third section discusses critical trends in scholarship on naturalism, particularly concerning criticism published from 1980 to the present (2011). To

investigate the complex ideological and cultural work of naturalism during its classic phase and into the 20th century, the fourth section theorizes four thematic groupings: space and place, corporeality, mechanisms and technology, and lines and boundaries. To him, when the groups are deployed as a series of interpretive lenses, they expand the possibilities for reading classic naturalist authors and provide a means of inclusion for those whose naturalistic writings have been little discussed.

James R. Giles, in an article titled “Beneficial Atavism in Frank Norris and Jack London,” holds that the two literary kingpins of the turn of the century, Jack London and Frank Norris, feared the growth of industrialism and the city. They expressed this fear primarily through the concept of atavism (the evolution-related belief that behind the civilized man lurks the primitive Anglo-Saxon brute, which may come to the surface in times of stress). To him, London and Norris made a distinction between beneficial atavism and destructive atavism, mainly depending on the setting of the stories: if the reversal occurs in the city, it is usually disastrous, while a similar reversal on the high seas or on any "frontier" is generally beneficial. His article concerns the two writers' treatment of beneficial atavism and, specifically, with the influence of Norris' first published novel, *Moran of the Lady Letty* (1898), upon London's earliest fiction.

A publication of the *Project Muse* on Jack London's "*To Build a Fire*" posits that a common misconception has it that the dog's survival in "*To Build a Fire*" metaphorically demonstrates London's belief that man should, upon occasion, rely on his intuitive truths rather than follow his rational thought processes. The author says that seeing the story this way misses the subtle irony of "*To Build a Fire*". Therefore, he pinpoints that rather than signaling a victory for solid instinct over weak reason, London offers a third alternative for human survival: the old man's advice about traveling in the snow. To him, what London seems to be suggesting in "*To Build a Fire*" is not any animalistic return for man to a pre-symbolic state of existence to survive; on the contrary, he seems to imply that animals survive through instinct strongly; men of limited mental capacity fail; and that human beings who exercise good judgment are the human beings who win out over a hostile environment. The old man's advice shows that brotherliness and relying on each other could also be instrumental in the quest for survival in nature.

Tony Williams, in reviewing Christopher Gair's book *Complicity and Resistance in Jack London's Novels*, holds that in this book-length collection of essays, Gair attempts a rigorous examination of a constant tension between dominant and counterhegemonic voices in London's fiction, arguing that it is precisely this tension that makes his work such a rich seam for the cultural historian. To him, Gair, by situating early London stories and novels such as *South*

of the Slot, The Call of the Wild, The Sea Wolf, To Build a Fire, White Fang, and The Iron Heel within a "naturalistic" framework, underlines *Martin Eden* as a novel about the problems affecting the professionalization of the author and concludes by interrogating the flawed authorial attempts within *Burning Daylight, The Valley of the Moon, and The Star Rover* of a writer seeking to escape from hegemonic control. Gair begins by using *South of the Slot* to introduce his book's theme and reveal the dilemma facing London as an author constraining against and constrained by the literary market demands of his era, a dilemma affecting most of his fiction. In this essay and his chapters on *The Call of the Wild* and *Martin Eden*, Gair produces far more astute and concise readings of contemporary, relevant cultural, and historical issues affecting authorship. He says that although Gair reveals London's attempts to escape "nascent global capitalism" in *The Valley of the Moon, Burning Daylight, and The Star Rover*, he argues for their partial failure by their narration's "dependence on contemporary patterns of thought and linguistic convention" (P. 43).

He further states that Gair's work is provocative and stimulating. Although his dismissal of other London novels is debatable, he reveals that contemporary cultural and historical forces may "hurt" traditional interpretations like Frederic Jameson defines history in *The Political Unconscious*. Rather than engaging in the forced desperation of Jungian readings, he says Gair purifies over more fertile realms involving culture and history. Tony Williams, therefore, sees this book as an indispensable body of work necessitating serious consideration by all London scholars.

Svetlana Kovalevskaya, Ksenia Ibatulina, and Natalia Laletina, in the article "The Concept of White Silence in the Northern Stories by Jack London," give a perusal of the concept of "white silence" in the works of Jack London, bringing out other layers (figurative meaning) of the concept: territorial area, ice, cold, snow, frost, silence, mental illnesses, famine, pain, physical death, and micro concepts like landscape, northern nature, and northern life conditions. These different layers are crucial in analyzing the works of Jack London and deconstructing archetypal images in the works.

In his thesis titled "Character in Later Nineteenth-Century American Naturalism," Semmens Dan considers American literary naturalism written at the close of the nineteenth century. He focuses on Stephen Crane's *Maggie* and *The Red Badge of Courage*, Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*, and Frank Norris' *McTeague*. In this work, he argues that the intellectual postulates and physical realities emerging during the latter nineteenth century in America encouraged the appearance of literary naturalism and that evolutionary thought and

industrialization contributed conspicuously to the strain of pessimism that naturalism propounds. He also contends that naturalism is a combination of realism and romance. It utilizes a realistic presentation. He finds out that Dreiser and Norris refuse to engage in a language that lends character to willed thought or action.

In her book *God, Value, and Nature*, Fiona Ellis defends a form of naturalism that can accommodate God. According to her, the natural world is God-involving. In essence, she wants to show that one can be a naturalist and a theist at the same time. Her view takes naturalism beyond the scientific paradigm that has defined the movement since its conception. In this book, she rejects the notion that there is no more to the natural world than what a scientist can understand. Her work is a kind of liberal naturalism wherein she thinks out of the concepts that the movement has made many base their views on for so long. If naturalism is a liberal philosophy, this kind of book is undoubtedly a salutary effort to bring two opposites to center stage. Her position, therefore, does not create worries only on the naturalist's side. It does create confusion for the theist, who might be confused when trying to put together two binary oppositions (naturalism and God). In simple terms, Fiona proposes a kind of naturalism that transcends the physical for the spiritual.

Identification of Gaps or Discrepancies in the Literature, and establishment of the scientific position of the study

The conceptual and empirical review highlight that, there is no work within the literature that is directly treating the relationship and differences between the works of Stephen Crane and Jack London. Some of the works focus on naturalism in the works under study but completely neglect treating the absence of God as a key concept in naturalism. None of the works reviewed uses the new historicism as a theory to analyse the selected short stories. There is also no work that links the experiences of the characters to the experiences of man in the 21st century. This study fills the gaps by treating the similarities and differences between Stephen Crane's naturalism and the naturalism of Jack London. The study links the experiences of the characters in the story to the experiences of man in the 21st Century. The study also treats the absence of God as a key concept in naturalism.

This chapter focused on the theoretical framework and the review of the related literature. It also outlines the discrepancies found in the review of the related literature in order to show the scientific position of the study. The review of the related literature focuses on what has been done on naturalism in the selected short stories and other works of the authors under study.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NATURALISM OF STEPHEN CRANE

In this chapter, we shall examine the following naturalistic tendencies: environment, heredity, and the absence of God in Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat 1897", "An Experiment in Misery 1894" and "The Men in the Storm 1894". Our overall thesis holds that these tendencies victimize characters in the selected stories. The victimization faced by these characters is a reflection of what men face in contemporary society. Since authors write about society and fictional human subjects, Crane's characters symbolize man in society. Our interest is sustained in this chapter by how naturalist tendencies exploit man. Hence, we seek to expose these problems that have continued to influence humanity. We also intend to show that, though these stories were written in the 1890s, the concepts that are treated in the stories are recurring in the 21st century.

We shall divide this chapter into subheadings like the environment, heredity, and the absence of God. Under the subheading titled "environment, we shall talk about the relationship between physical environmental concepts and man; these environmental concepts include the sea, sea waves, temperatures, the indifference of birds and other sea animals, time, and storms. Besides physical environmental concepts, social and environmental concepts like bystander apathy in the social milieu, the social company where the characters find themselves, class stratification, and place setting will be examined. Under heredity, we shall look at heredity in human nature, or DNA, and cultural heredity, while under the subheading, the absence of God, We shall capitalize on the view that the stories are scientific and do not present God as a solution to man's problems. We shall also examine the correspondent's thoughts when he faces the sea animal in "The Open Boat" to bolster the absence.

The environment's victimization of man has long been examined by various critics who relied on biblical teachings. According to Ralph E. Ancil, "the creationist recognizes that man was created perfect and placed in a perfect, friendly environment designed to be his home". This view outlines their belief in a God-designed cosmos where man is in perfect relationship with his environment. This contrasts with the naturalist view, wherein man's relationship with the environment is hostile. The existentialist Albert Einstein quoted by Fang Zei, reiterates the relationship between the environment and how it contributes to shaping man's personality in the following quotation:

The personality that finally emerges is largely formed by the environment in which a man happens to find himself during his development, by the structure of the society in which he grows up by the tradition of that society, and by its appraisal of particular types of behavior. (P.1)

The first quotation above supports the view that God created man and placed him in a comfortable environment. The progress of society has proven the contrary because the comfortable environment has influenced the human beings enclosed in it, as indicated in the second quotation. The quotation brings to light the evolutionary challenges that have continued to exploit humanity.

The victimization of man by heredity based on the creationist standpoint can be traced in the book of Genesis of the Judeo-Christian Bible. In Genesis 3:14–21, we are told that some crises, such as the pains a woman goes through during pregnancy and childbirth, sexual drive, gender inequality, suffering, hardship in life, the killing of wild animals, and death, come as a result of the curse placed on humanity by God. This curse has been transferred from generation to generation, making it an inherited trait.

Still, in the same story, man is sent out of the Garden of Eden into the world, where he becomes what we find today. Based on the biblical perception of man's tragicomic life, it is apparent that the problems man faces today are the aftermath of the crises Adam and Eve (our original ancestors) encountered in the Garden of Eden. The Garden of Eden is believed to have been a paradise of enjoyment filled with trees of all kinds of fruit, and man was placed at the helm to control the garden. God instructed man not to eat from a tree in the middle of the garden. Man is believed to have disrespected God, which explains why he sent him out of the garden. Man inherited the suffering he goes through in the world from his original ancestors, Adam and Eve.

Furthermore, the killing of Abel by Cain in the Bible portrays jealousy as an inherited trait. According to the story, Cain kills Abel because God accepted Abel's sacrifice and rejected his (Cain's). We may, however, differ from this interpretation by saying that Cain kills Abel because he is jealous of the position he occupies in God's eyes. Another view may posit that Cain feared God might elevate Abel to a status more excellent than his. To further show how jealousy becomes an inherited trait, it is worth mentioning here that it is the same jealousy responsible for the sending out of their parents from the Garden of Eden. Eve is tricked into believing that if she eats the apple from the Tree of Knowledge, she will know God. Therefore, accepting to eat the apple shows that she is jealous of God's position and wants to be like them.

In naturalism, God might be said to have no place. Naturalism, or physicalism, refers to the study of physical reality. It foregrounds what is physical or natural over what is supernatural. This explains why the absence of God becomes very necessary in a study that deals with naturalism.

When examining literature or a literary work, be it a novel, a poem, or a play, the reader or the critic looks at both the historical context in which the work was written and the time and place of the person reading it. This helps to show how the ideology in the work has developed. This view of the new historicists is supported by Greenblatt and Gallaher, who say that the new historicists are concerned with finding the creative power that shapes literary works outside the narrow boundaries in which it has hitherto been located and within those boundaries.

The short stories by Stephen Crane under study are classic examples of realistic fiction because they embody all the ideologies of this genre. They depict the unappealing aspects of life faced by the characters as a result of their natural and social environments. Like most naturalist writers, Crane does not openly criticize what the characters go through in the environment; he detaches himself from the text to avoid being compassionate about his characters' reality. Through this narrative style, the reader can see how environmental factors, such as heredity and the absence of God, affect feelings.

The Environment

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, this concept of the environment is divided into the physical environment and the social environment.

The brutal nature of the sea in "The Open Boat" is one of the physical environmental factors that poses a devastating effect throughout the story's plot, wherein each event experienced by the characters on board is particularly depressing. The first thing the reader notices is how the sea captures the sight of the characters on board. This is portrayed in the opening line that reads as follows: "None of them knew the color of the sky" (P. 451). This quotation presupposes that the sea poses great danger to the characters. They are probably not taking their eyes off it because they feel they can overcome the threat if they see it coming. Besides, we are introduced to an already wounded ship captain. He likely sustained the wounds during the experiences of the sinking Commodore that we find in the prologue to the story. The wounded captain suffers from depression, as his mind is said to be deeply rooted in his lost ship. The narrator reveals this when he uses the stream-of-consciousness technique to peruse the captain's thoughts: "The injured captain, lying in the bow, was at this time buried in that profound dejection and indifference

which comes, temporarily at least, to even the bravest and most enduring when, willy-nilly, the firm fails, the army loses, and the ship goes down" (P. 451). This quotation affirms that the captain goes through depression, which likely comes from losing his ship to the sea and the troubling episodes that he and his crew face. Throughout the entire plot of the story, one depressing event follows the next. This makes the lives of the characters a struggle for survival. In addition, it brings out the concept of suffering that runs throughout the short story.

Closely linked to depression is the concept of dehumanization that the characters suffer in the sea. The sea vehemently denies the feelings the dignity they possess as human beings and the position they may occupy in the eyes of creationists as creatures of fortune. This aligns with the naturalist's view that the human being has no autonomy over nature and, consequently, can be controlled by nature. The story tells us via its narrator that the main disadvantage of the sea is the way its waves come; after successfully dealing with one wave, there is another one beside it impatiently waiting to sink the boat, as illustrated in the following quotation: "A singular disadvantage of the sea lies in the fact that after successfully surmounting one wave, you discover that there is another behind it just as important and just as nervously anxious to do something effective in the way of swamping boats" (P. 452). This quotation makes it clear that the sea does not give the occupants of the boat the dignity they deserve as human beings. Based on the assumption that the sea is a microcosm of the environment in which we are enclosed, it is believable that the environment does not regard man as anything worth living and, as such, is always determined to dehumanize, maim, or mutilate the human species and make it uncomfortable.

The sea "The Open Boat" demoralizes Crane's characters. To demoralize someone is to cause that person to lose hope or confidence. The loss of hope or pessimism is a characteristic of American literary naturalism, as the authors believed that characters could not control their destiny or what happens to them; hence, what they encounter in their lives is most often against what they want. Xiaofen Zhang, in his analysis of American naturalism, implies that very often, in a naturalistic novel or short story, a specific line or phrase is repeated with a pessimistic connotation throughout the entire text, highlighting the inevitability of death, failure, or defeat (P. 196). Under these circumstances, happiness and hope are difficult to find. Crane, in "The Open Boat" shares this view through his portrayal of what the characters face and what goes on in their minds. As the characters endure the difficult moments in the sea, the narrator captures how the sea demoralizes them through a refrain that occurs three times in the short story. In this refrain, the narrator exposes how the characters regard their condition in the sea. The refrain goes

thus: “If I am going to be drowned—if I am going to be drowned, why, in the name of the seven mad gods who rule the sea, was I allowed to come thus far and contemplate sand and trees?” (P. 468). This refrain shows how the situation causes the characters to become pessimistic. Deeply rooted in the tone of this quotation is the fear of death, failure, and defeat. This is the pessimism that characterizes human life in the 21st century because of the crisis that man faces in the world. Hopelessness results in suicide and other associated social ills rampant in society today.

Furthermore, the sea "The Open Boat" symbolizes purgatory or hell. Unless stated otherwise, the sea is a tormenting place where man suffers. Unlike purgatory in the teachings of the Roman Catholic religion, wherein one stops after death in a particular place to suffer the punishment for the sins he had committed before dying, and after prayer and mass offered by the living, he crosses to heaven, our sea in “The Open Boat” is merciless. No amount of prayer seems necessary to save the sinless people trapped in it. The captain's condition justifies the view that the sea is a place of torment and death.

The injured captain, lying in the bow, was at this time buried in that profound dejection and indifference which comes, temporarily at least, to even the bravest and most enduring when, willy-nilly, the firm fails, the army loses, the ship goes down. And this captain had on him the stern impression of a scene in the greys of dawn of seven turned faces, and later a stump of a topmast with a white ball on it, that slashed to and fro at the waves, went low and lower, and down. (P.451)

This quotation states two main concerns: the suffering of the wounded captain and the fact that the sea had claimed the lives of three members of the captain's ship (the Sunk Steamer Commodore) during the shipwreck. Also, the cook, in response to a question asked by the captain on their ability to get to the shore, says, "If we don't catch hell in the surf" (P. 462). The denotative meaning of hell here brings in the idea of purgatory. The characters' suffering in their quest for survival, from when the shipwreck occurs to when they finally reach the shore, mimics man's suffering in Roman Catholic purgatory before his admission to heaven.

To add to this, the sea is a breathing ground for aquatic organisms like sharks and other dangerous creatures that can harm the characters. In "The Open Boat", the correspondent comes across a shark at night, frightening him. The shark comes to the correspondent when the captain, the Oiler, and the cook sleep. The speed the shark uses on the water is compared to the flash of a shadow. Upon seeing it, the correspondent turns to the captain, but he is asleep. The correspondent wishes one of his companions was up to see the shark. The shark creates fear in the correspondent. The shark symbolizes wild nature or other harmful animals or creatures that inhabit the environment. This instance shows how such creatures are most often frightful in

terms of structure and appearance and can humble men into submission to them. This instance shows that nature is wild and a potential source of threats to man.

The time that the events in the story take place also contributes to the exploitation of man. We are told that the "The Open Boat" is set in January. This period in Europe is characterized by cold and sometimes frozen temperatures depending on the specific location that one finds himself in. In the United States of America, rainfall is higher around this period. In "The open Boat" we learn of the January water which is said to be cold and frozen. The high rainfall and the general temperatures of the city probably influence this. Given these cold atmospheric conditions, the characters probably find navigating the small boat hard because their hands get frozen. Time is considered a factor that victimizes characters here because the characters would not be faced with the same temperatures if they were to take to the sea in a different month. This shows that the victimization of man by the environment depends on the time period. Today, winter has remained a season that poses many difficulties to man. In the Guardian edition of Friday, 4 February 2022, the paper reported that the Northeast residents were urged to stay off the road because temperatures were beginning to drop as winter storms turned slippery streets and sidewalks into ice-covered hazards. Given that time can be this dangerous, one may conceive it as a factor that exploits man.

In addition, the sea waves exploit characters throughout the storyline of "The Open Boat". Crane opens the short story with a clause highlighting the waves' influence on the characters' visions. The story states that the four-person crew has their eyes focused on the sea, and they need to be made aware of the color of the sky. Their eyes are focused on the sea, probably because of the brutal waves that sweep toward them. To show how ferocious the waves are, the narrator says, "These waves were most wrongfully and barbarously abrupt and tall, and each froth-top was a problem in small-boat navigation" (P. 451). The adjectives "wrongfully", "barbarously", "tall", and "abrupt" used in this quotation show the uncivilized nature of the waves' actions. The narrator tells us that when each wave approaches, it blocks the vision of the men in the boat. This single act of nature in the indifferent waves causes the characters to regard the wave as one that has come to an end all waves. In the climax of the story, the victimization by the waves increases. Upon seeing the intensity of the waves at this point, the narrator comments that "the billows that came at this time were more formidable. They always seemed just about to break and roll over the little boat in a turmoil of foam" (p. 460). The entire action of the waves in the story shows that man has little control over what he can do and where he can go in the environment; thus, he is a victim of the environment he is enclosed in. In this instance, we

notice Crane's use of vivid descriptions as a narrative strategy to expose the realities that the characters encounter. The use of vivid descriptions is a typical characteristic of a naturalist novel.

The sea waves kill the Oiler when the boat drowns. When the characters become aware of the fact that they are insignificant in the face of nature and nature does not care about them, and that the subtle brotherhood that they share in the sea can only sustain their existence but not save them, they decide to sink the boat and struggle to the shore. We are told that in this process, the Oiler is the first to get to the shore; but when the other crew members get to the shore they found him dead. His death which is probably caused by the sea waves enforces the idea that nature (the waves) is capricious or whimsical in its relationship with man. The death of the Oiler indicates that death is a by-product of man's efforts to overcome natural forces. The Oiler's death tells the reader there is a limit to what working together can achieve and that in life's journey, all men end alone. Besides, the death of the Oiler enforces one characteristic of a naturalistic novel which is a negative resolution of the novel's events. This negative ending of the short story denies the characters of heroism, indicating that man cannot become a hero. It also enforces the idea of the survival of the fittest in naturalist philosophy.

Furthermore, the story makes it clear that the correspondent, while paddling to the shore, is trapped by the waves, as indicated in this quotation: "But finally he arrived at a place in the sea where travel was beset with difficulty. He did not pause swimming to inquire what manner of current had caught him, but there his progress ceased" (p. 474). He stays in this grip for a moment, and during this moment, the refrain "if I am going to drown..." (P. 474) comes to his head. The first quotation shows how the sea waves exploit him; this exploitation likely causes a loss of strength and hope. Pessimism thus forces the refrain into his head. This refrain shows how the character is desperate to survive. In addition, it shows the general fear of death that runs through his mind at this time. Again, it reveals his mental disintegration because of the waves. This instance demonstrates the thoughts that go through a man's mind when he is in difficulty or is faced with a challenging situation.

Behind the actions of the sea waves is the wind. The wind is responsible for the speed at which the waves come. The higher the intensity of the wind, the higher the intensity of the waves, which will, in turn, inflict pain on the characters. "The Open Boat" states that the wind causes the water to splash on them. When this happens, the crest of each of the waves is like a hill, which is likely a problem in small boat navigation. Besides being a force that pushes the waves to move with intensity, we are told that as the boat bounced on the water, struggling to

survive the waves, the wind tore through the hair of the hatless men. In addition, the role of the wind in the victimization of the characters is seen when the men are about to advance toward the shore. We are told that a change in tide tries to force the boat southward, in the direction of the lifesaving station, but the wind and the waves push them northward. The wind and the waves thus determine the direction the boat must take, quite against the will of the person paddling it. Still in the story, we are told that the wind has a sad voice on the night the correspondent encounters the shark while others are sleeping: "Presently it seemed that even the captain dozed, and the correspondent thought that he was the one-man boat on all the oceans. The wind had a voice as it came over the waves, and it was sadder than the end" (P467). The sad message or content of the wind's voice in this quotation can be a warning given to man about his place in nature. It may also be an indicator of impending danger. The personification in "The Wind Had a Voice" makes the experience of the correspondent relatable by tapping into the experience and senses of the reader.

Another aspect of nature that victimizes the characters in "The Open Boat" is cold temperatures. Throughout the short story, the characters battles with the cold temperatures. When the characters are about to go north following what they assume is the content of the gestures of the man in the shore, we are told that the shadows on the sea slowly deepened and the wind comes with cold that makes the men to shiver. The sea water is also very cold, depriving them of the normal temperature. This instance tells that man may have to operate only under certain environmental constraints.

Cold temperatures are also evident in "The Men in the Storm". The effects of the cold temperatures can be seen on the characters when the narrator says, "Under the stairs that led to the elevated railway station, there were six or eight, their hands stuffed deep in their pockets, their shoulders stooped, jiggling their feet" (P. 229). According to this quotation, the cold temperatures cause the characters to shiver. Furthermore, the narrator remarks about the effects of cold on the characters: "The feet of the men were all wet and cold..." (P. 231). The imagistic portrayal of the feet of the characters in the quotation throws more light on how cold temperatures exploit them. This tells man that, by nature, he can only feel comfortable under certain circumstances.

The windmill and the star in "The Open Boat" are the symbols of nature's indifference to man. The windmill is portrayed far away from the voyages and is among other cottages on the beach. The narrator paints a picture of the windmill in the following words: "On the distant dunes were set many little black cottages, and a tall white windmill reared above them. No man,

dog, or bicycle appeared on the beach. The cottages might have formed a deserted village” (P.471). This quotation shows how nature distances itself from suffering human beings. The correspondent further stresses the distance between man and nature when we are told that:

The correspondent wondered if none ever ascended the tall wind-tower, and if then they never looked seaward. This tower was a giant, standing with its back to the plight of the ants. It represented in a degree, to the correspondent, the serenity of nature amid the struggles of the individual—nature in the wind, and nature in the vision of men. She did not seem cruel to him then, nor beneficent, nor treacherous, nor wise. But she was indifferent, flatly indifferent. (P. 471)

Furthermore, the narrator portrays the image of a star, which he says is a high and cold star on a winter night. The star, though an archetypal image of hope, is used here to show how nature is distant from the men in the boat. The star is presented with a cold phase, which could mean that nature has a lucky warm attitude towards the voyages in “The Open Boat”.

Also, the gulls in the story symbolize how capricious nature is towards man. They are said to fly far and near, sometimes sitting on the sea. They are comfortable in groups and are envied by the suffering men in the small boat. They are presented as being uncanny and sinister in their unblinking scrutiny of the men. The freedom the birds enjoy contrasts with the imprisonment imposed on the men by the sea. Based on the actions of the birds, they do not care about the men who have exhausted their strength battling with the sea waves to remain afloat in the boat. The men envy the birds and are angered by their actions; the captain wishes to knock over the one that perches on his head. However, he fears that this action may cause the boat to sink. The role of the birds reiterates the view that man is alone in the vast universe. The birds victimize the characters in the sense that they lure them into admiring the freedom they enjoy, and wish to enjoy it but cannot. In addition, the birds are predatory creatures and can destroy men if they are given the opportunity to do so.

The snow in Crane’s “The Men in the Storm” is also a problem for the characters. The story makes it clear that the snow acts as drivers during the afternoon storm, like men with whips. In addition, we are told that the snow sought out the men hiding from the storm, beat them, and drenched their bodies with water. These instances present one of the naturalistic tendencies in the story, which holds that the environment determines the condition of the characters. The environmental forces determine if the characters will survive or not if they will be happy or sad, and most often, the latter takes a hundred percent. In addition, Crane portrays the snow as pitiless, like a human being. By being pitiless, we mean that the snow does not sympathize with the suffering man, and because of this, it threatens to kill him. The narrator in

“The Men in the Storm” remarks, “the crushing of the crowd grew terrific toward the last. The men, in keen pain from the blasts, began almost to fight. With the pitiless whirl of snow upon them, the battle for shelter was going to the strong” (P.233). This quotation indicates that as the storm increases, the snow also follows. In addition, it shows how desperate the characters are to survive, and the desperation could be why they almost start a fight. Still, in this story, we are told that the snow beats mercilessly upon the heads of the characters.

The winds seemed to grow fiercer as time wore on. Some of the gusts of snow that came down on the close, collection of heads cut like knives and needles, and the men huddled, and swore, not like dark assassins, but in a sort of American fashion, grimly and desperately, it is true, but yet with a wondrous under-effect, indefinable and mystic, as if there was some kind of humour in this catastrophe, in this situation in a night of snow-laden wind. (P. 232)

The quotation says that the wind or storm increases as time passes. In addition, the increased intensity of the storm also increases the rate at which the snow comes down. They feel desperate because the storm keeps increasing. Like the characters in the open boat, they are victims of unfriendly environmental factors.

The lexical item, storm in the short story's title stands for victimization because the word ‘storm’ symbolizes disorder, destruction, and unpleasant weather. In “The Men in the Storm,” we learn that the blizzard swirls great clouds and makes pedestrians' faces tingle. The storm is also portrayed as having shut down circulation in the town when we are told that it causes the characters to gather in groups while some lurk behind buildings and under the stairs leading to the rail station. Again, the storm reduces the brightness of the lamps. The role of the storm in this short story is thus to destroy the characters and other things found in the environment that make man's life comfortable.

Furthermore, in “An Experiment in Misery”, rain dehumanizes the youth. The narrator in the story's opening lines makes it clear that the rain saturated the old velvet collar of the character's overcoat, and as the wet cloth pressed against his neck, he felt that there could no longer be pleasure in life. He becomes a victim because the rain is not working for his good but to his disadvantage. In addition, it causes him to lose hope in life. In contemporary society, several natural disasters like landslides and floods are reported daily, and their causes are usually heavy rains. This tells us that rain may sometimes not work for the good of man.

The Social Environment

The characters in Crane's "The Open Boat" are victimized by a social and environmental factor called bystander apathy, portrayed by the people on the shore. Bystander apathy means the indifference of the people around a particular scene, for instance, an accident scene. In this short story, the people in the social environment (shore) include the man the voyagers see on the shore and the many people who later meet him. The shore represents their social environment because it is where the characters gather before going to the sea. Again, it is where the lifesaving station is located. The bystander indifference of the people on the shore towards the people in the boat is revealed when they do not intervene to save them. The non-intervention of these people shows that they are indifferent to the plight of the people in the boat. Several factors account for why such indifference occurs; one is the interpretation of the risk involved in the scene. If the bystander thinks intervening might cost his life, he risks not interfering. Hence, the person involved in the scene is victimized.

The social company of characters in "The Open Boat" The social interaction or company that the characters share in the sea preys on them because the pluralism of their views and overdependence on one character delay decisions that could save them if they were taken at the right time. This is seen in "The Open Boat," where the characters talk about the people on the shore and when the oiler and the correspondent depend on the hurt captain to explain how they should control the boat. This delays them from taking actions that can lead to their safety. According to the social psychologist Ernest Hilgard, one person may react more quickly to an emergency than a group of people because of the diffusion of responsibilities (p. 521). According to Hilgard in this quotation, the delay of action usually happens because the people involved define their specific responsibilities in the group. In another dimension, when something happens to one person, he can easily take a decision as compared to when it happens to a group of people, where the leader of the group must be consulted before any action plan is taken. This usually slows the decision-making process. Based on this, one may say that the diffusion of responsibilities by the characters and their overdependence on the captain delay action, exhaust their strength, and probably account for why the oiler dies when the decision to swim to the shore is finally taken.

In "An Experiment in Misery", the socio-economic status of the characters, we meet two wanderers who live in deplorable conditions; their situation contrasts that of the rich in the community. We are told that in City Hall Park, the rich move in their good clothes and do not have time for the two wanderers. They become victims of this environment because they are

born in the lower middle class, with extremely low living standards. Hence, the socio-economic organization of that society deprives them of comfort and happy life. The suffering of the characters is, therefore, the aftermath of the class divisions in the environment in which they are enclosed.

To continue, the setting of “An Experiment in Misery” contributes to the strain of pessimism in the characters. This is because the short story is set in a period of evolutionary thought and industrialization. Evolutionary thought in literary studies means identifying basic human needs to explain their behavior. As mentioned in this study, the second half of the 19th century, when this work is set, is a period of industrialization and rapid transformation in the United States of America. During this period, people focused more on how to survive against the crude environmental changes. People experiencing poverty became extremely poor, and this led to hopelessness. In “An Experiment in Misery”, we find a hopeless youth because he cannot live well like other people in society. We are told that as he moves to places where food is sold at cheaper rates, he feels that there is never pleasure in life. This shows how the setting influences pessimistic thoughts in characters.

Furthermore, social settings influence characters to become beggars. One of the characters in “An Experiment in Misery” appears to be a beggar. We are introduced to him when the youth meets with the seedy man and inquires if he could take him to a place where he can have a bed. They are approached by a man named the Assassin; he looks like someone guilty of crimes. When the Assassin sees them, he starts singing a charity song. Here, we notice that despite the highly developed New York City of Crane's time, people still resorted to begging because they needed help to withstand the cost of living in the city. This problem was and is still the experience of many people living in big cities worldwide.

Again, social settings influence characters to become drunkards and drug addicts. Through the exchanges between the youth and the Assassin, we come to know that the Assassin is a drunkard. The narrator tells us that his expressions are full of drunken woe. One way in which the social setting influences the Assassin could be that the poor wage rates offered by industrialists frustrate him, and to cure the frustration, the only option left is to indulge in alcohol consumption. This has often been the case in novels set in societies experiencing social problems. For instance, in Alex La Guma's “A Walk in the Night”, the reader meets Michel

Adonise, who, in an attempt to cure his frustration with the apartheid system in South Africa, resorts to drinking alcohol. This goes to show how far the environment can influence characters.

The central thrust of “The Men in the Storm” is how man is exposed to natural storms. The opening clause of the short story, “The blizzard began to swirl clouds of snow along the streets, sweeping it down from the roofs and up from the pavements until the faces of pedestrians tingled and burned as from a thousand needle-prickings”,(P. 228) shows that the story deals with the effects of the storm on the characters. In other stages of the plot, the storm's effects can be seen as it shuts downlight by reducing the street lamb to impotent blindness. The storm also shuts down the entire city and stops the characters from performing their duties. The storm is, therefore destructive, as portrayed here. Besides, the storm makes the characters very desperate. Like the waves in “The Open Boat”, the storm's intensity increases with time. The effect of this increase is the desperation that the characters face. As the plot develops, the storm becomes very strong. The narrator makes this remark about the wind.

Heredity

Exploring the idea of heredity and human nature was another characteristic of naturalism. The authors, like Crane, were interested in what humans inherit regarding human nature because they agreed with Darwin's theories of evolutionary biology. Before the discipline of genetics made significant strides, researchers might have started to draw correlations between the likelihood that a person would inherit traits like depression or alcohol and drug addiction. It is accepted that a person's parents may pass down some features to their offspring. Thus, personality traits (authoritarianism, need for achievement), genetics, and the interplay between psychology and physiology were examined in naturalist fiction. According to such authors as Stephen Crane, man inherits pessimism, fear, and shortsightedness. In this section, we shall peruse how some of these heredity traits and human nature, independently of the will of the concerned, contribute to or cause numerous problems that the characters face in the stories. In this study, we divide heredity into heredity in genetics, and cultural heredity.

Heredity in Genetics

In simple terms, heredity is the transmission of traits from parents to their children. This means that traits like body size, fear, hunger, and eye color found in the parent can be transferred to the offspring. These characteristics and more are perused below, showing how they influence characters.

Man is born with instincts of fear that push him to make some decisions that result in catastrophic outcomes. In this context, in “The Open Boat,” the characters fear making a quick decision and swimming to the shore. This fear indirectly victimizes them by prolonging their decision-making process. While creating a frustrating destiny for the characters in the short story, Crane demonstrates how their fears delay the decisions they ought to make and free themselves from the ferocious waves. The story's characters should have taken to the shore by swimming in the water. Still, given that they are afraid of drowning, they delay in the sea, probably hoping that the waves will reduce or that people from the lifesaving station will see them and rescue them.

At last, their hopes are frustrated, and they resolve to swim to the shore; however, this is done only when their strength has been exhausted, leading to their tragic end. In the opening lines of “The Open Boat,” fear is announced when we are told that the eyes of the characters are all upon the waves: “None of them knew the color of the sky. Their eyes glanced level and were fastened upon the waves that swept towards them. These waves were of the hue of slate, save for the tops, which were of foaming white, and all of the men knew the colors of the sea” (p. 451). The characters may keep their eyes on the waves because they are afraid of them. By watching the waves for a long time, they likely satisfy the hope within them—what they need to survive.

Through the refrain, “If I am going to be drowned—if I am going to be drowned—if I am going to be drowned, why, in the name of the seven mad gods who rule the sea, was I allowed to come thus far and contemplate sand and trees?” (P. 468), Crane demonstrates how the fear of death preys on the characters. In this refrain, the narrator peruses the fear of death in the characters' minds. The fear of death makes them start regarding themselves in front of the waves as useless things, illustrated in phrases like “when it occurs to a man that nature does not regard him as important and that she feels she will not maim...” (P.468). This quotation shows that fear makes man blame God and nature for his misfortunes. Hence, fear is a biological factor that can influence Crane's character negatively. It is worth noting here that fear is one of the features inherited and transmitted from parents and ancestors. Thus, the character's confrontation with fear shows how heredity can hamper human life. It is clear that the fear of death characteristically marks every human being. It is also noted here that the fear of death is what everyone will feel when facing the most difficult circumstances.

The narrator continues to demonstrate how fear affects the characters when we are made to know that their eyes remain focused on the sea throughout the story. This is made clear in “the sun steadily rose in the sky, and they knew it was a broad day because the color of the sea

changed from slate to emerald-green streaked with amber lights, and the foam was like tumbling snow” (p. 453). In this quotation, we are made to know that the characters have not taken their eyes off the sea; this is probably since the story opens. When the story opens, we are told that “None of them knew the color of the sky; their eyes glanced level and remained upon the waves that swept toward them”. (P. 451) If we compare this opening sentence with other quotations, we may conclude that the characters are still afraid of the waves. Based on the reference, it is clear that when humans fear something may happen to them, they usually focus on the direction they suspect. Here we notice how the fear of impending danger causes the characters to focus their vision on the sea. It is also important to notice here how hereditary instincts of fear determine the character's life decisions.

“The Open Boat” also shows man's desperation for hope. One characteristic of Homo sapiens is that he always hopes that there is a way out when he is destitute. This was always intended to satisfy the inner desire for peace. However, they always encounter illusions as the outcome of his hope. Crane demonstrates This kind of desperation for hope in The Open Boat. This is made clear in the short story when the cook says, “There is a house of refuge just north of the mosquitoes inlet, and as soon as they see us, they will come off in their boat and pick us up”. (P. 453) The hope expressed in this quotation is an illusion because no positive outcome is made or attained.

The tragedy of hope is expressed when the narrator says that.

To express any particular optimism at this time they felt to be childish and stupid, but they all doubles possessed this sense of the situation in their minds. A young man thinks doggedly at such times. On the other hand, the ethics of their condition was decidedly against any open suggestion of hopelessness. (p. 454)

This quotation indicates that for the characters to express such a kind of optimism in this condition shows that they are not different from children. It further suggests that the moral of their condition presupposes that they should be hopeful. This is an indication that they want to satisfy their inner peace. Hope is one characteristic the human being inherited from his ancestors and always consoles them in a world of multiple challenges. Still, in line with the desperation for hope, we are told that the captain soothes his boys by assuring them that they will get to the shore. This is likely intended to calm them down and instill hope in their hearts during the scary moments in the sea.

Another aspect of heredity that Crane explores in “The Open Boat”: the limited nature of human sight. Most often, our sense of sight deceives us into seeing things that are not there. This is seen in the following quotation:

The captain, rearing cautiously in the bow after the dinghy soared on a great swell, said that he had seen the lighthouse at Mosquito Inlet. Presently the cook remarked that he had seen it. The correspondent was at the oars then, and for some reason he too wished to look at the lighthouse; but his back was toward the far shore, and the waves were important, and for some time he could not seize an opportunity to turn his head. But at last there came a wave more gentle than the others, and when at the crest of it he swiftly scoured the western horizon. (P. 455)

The quotation discusses the lighthouse the characters claim to have seen at Mosquito Inlet. They are deceived by their sight because there is no lighthouse in reality.

The sight of the characters continues to deceive them throughout the story's plot. We see this when the characters claim they can see a lifesaving station and the land on the shore. Refuting this claim, the narrator says:

It is fair to say here that there was not a lifesaving station within twenty miles in either direction; but the men did not know this fact, and in consequence they made dark and opprobrious remarks concerning the eyesight of the nation's lifesavers. Four scowling men sat in the dinghy and surpassed records in the invention of epithets. (P. 459)

The quotation says there is no lifesaving station in either direction of the shore. This indicates that the lifesaving station is their invention, intended to satisfy an inner urge for hope. It also shows the limitations of human sight, an inherited trait common to all humans.

Humanity is helpless in the face of mortality, as illustrated in the verse that comes to the correspondent's mind when he is faced with the violent sea. We are told that the correspondent, in an attempt to chime with his emotions, flashed back to a verse from his youth (Carolyn E.S. Norton's “Bingers on the Rhine”), a poem he had forgotten. The verse is about a soldier who lay dying in the field.

*A soldier of the Legion lay dying in Algiers.
There was a lack of women's nursing; there was a dearth of women's tears;
But a comrade stood beside him, and he took that comrade's hand.
And he said, “I never more shall see my own, my native land”.
(P. 469)*

This verse shows how the soldier lay helpless in the field. It reiterates the point that man is helpless in the face of nature. The verse is rich in imagery “women's tears” “soldier lay dying”. These images are emotional and evoke sympathy in the reader. The verse brings out the theme of hopelessness and suffering which cuts across the entire story.

Furthermore, the correspondent can picturesquely see the soldier as he lies on the sand with his feet straight and still and his right hand on his chest.

The correspondent plainly saw the soldier. He lay on the sand with his feet out straight and still. While his pale left hand was upon his chest in an attempt to thwart the going of his life, the blood came between his fingers. In the far Algerian distance, a city of low square forms was set against a sky that was faint with the last sunset hues. (P. 469)

Based on the quotation, the soldier tries to stop himself from succumbing to death by putting his hand on his chest. The narrative strategy (flashback) used here shows how the correspondent recognizes his fragile nature in the face of mortality. When the characters finally go overboard, the correspondent clutches the lifebelt and puts it across his chest. This mirrors the soldier who puts his hand on his chest. This is likely intended to make him feel how life leaves his mortal self. Mortality is the tragedy of existence that man inherited from his ancestors.

Hunger is one of the factors that is deeply rooted in every human being. We always desire to eat something, even when we do not have it. This is what happens in "The Men in the Storm". The characters in the storm are driven by hunger. We are told that the expression of a hot dinner is on every character's face. This shows that they are seeking security not only from the storm but also from their bellies. The struggle to secure food is illustrated in the following quotation:

There was an absolute expression of hot dinners in the pace of the people. If one dared to speculate upon the destination of those who came trooping, he lost himself in a maze of social calculation; he might fling a handful of sand and attempt to follow the flight of each particular grain. But as to the suggestion of hot dinners, he was in firm lines of thought, for it was upon every hurrying face. It is a matter of tradition; it is from the tales of childhood. (P. 229)

This quotation shows that the need for food is clearly visible among the people in the storm. If one looks at the faces of those who come, he may be lost in thought, but he is on the right path about the need for food. This indicates that the people are also persuaded by hunger and not only by the storm. The storm in the short story is thus a physical storm and a heredity storm. The theme of hunger makes one to think that the characters are from the lower level of the society who may have little or nothing to eat.

Human life is characterized by suffering and pain. It always has been and will always be. Crane captures this in his story's understudy. From a title like "An Experiment in Misery", the reader is certain to meet characters who go through miserable, dehumanizing, or insane experiences in their daily lives. The description of the characters sleeping in the hall affirms the central focus of this paragraph. The narrator says

And all through the room could be seen the tawny hues naked flesh limbs thrust into the darkness, projecting beyond the cots; up reared knees, arms hanging long and this over the cot edges. For the most part, they were statue-squad, carven, dead. With the curious lockers standing all about like tombstones, there was a strange effect of a grave yard were bodies were merely flung. (p. 183)

The quotation describes the environment in which the characters sleep and how they sleep is compared to corpses in the graveyard. This echoes the theme of suffering in the short story. Naturalism sees suffering as an indispensable part of human existence, which explains why writers like Crane are considered the flag bearers of this movement. Man does not choose before birth the type of life that he wants to live, nor can he fully determine what his life will turn out to be when he lives. They only adapt to the way of life lived by his ancestors.

Besides, the characters in “The Men in the Storm” go through similar circumstances in life. The word storm in the story's title does not mean “wind” but the characters' suffering. The narrator comments on the situation of the characters in the following words: “All the clatter of the street was softened by the masses that lay upon the cobbles, until even to one who looked from a window, it became important music, a melody of life made necessary to the ear by the dreariness of the pitiless beat and sweep of the storm” (p. 228). The storm in this quotation could mean difficulties; in this way, the quotation talks about the challenges men face in life. The storm is, therefore, a symbol of human suffering. The phrase "dreariness of the pitiless beat" in the quotation enhances the view that life is characterized by dark circumstances, which in this case can be suffering.

Cultural Heredity

Cultural heredity can be the land, way of life, songs, libraries, and language people inherited from their parents and will pass on to future generations. These concepts, like language, can victimize a man if they invite insults. In other words, if you speak a particular language in a place and people laugh at you because of that, it shows that that specific language victimizes you, the speaker.

First and foremost, the cultural hereditary element developed in “The Open Boat” is the search for commonness, or the search for togetherness. This is a feature of heredity that is common to humans, especially when facing a difficult or dangerous situation. It is natural that in cases of terrible or fearful circumstances, people have the tendency to rely on groups or masses as the only source from which, as they perceive it, courage is gained. Some passages in the novel are effective in showing the feature of togetherness. This feature of togetherness through the

brotherhood born in danger can be seen in Crane's short story "The Open Boat," when one of the four men, the correspondent, threatened by loneliness, wishes for at least one of his companions to awaken and keep him company. We can see it in the passage below:

The presence of this biding thing did not affect the man with the same horror that it would if he had been a picnicker. He simply looked at the sea dully and swore in an undertone. Nevertheless, it is true that he did not wish to be alone with the thing. He wished one of his companions to awake by chance and keep him company with it. (P. 468)

However, this feature of togetherness does not always result in men's safety. Instead, more often than not, men become victims of it. It is essential to mention here that the correspondent's wish for companionship is not satisfied, which brings out his isolation and alienation.

Still on companionship and togetherness, the bond that the characters share on the sea is a trait common to all human beings, wherein man believes that when people face a situation as a group, they emerge victorious. The strong bond of togetherness is expressed in the following quotation:

It would be difficult to describe the subtle brotherhood of men that was here established on the seas. No one said that it was so. No one mentioned it. But it dwelt in the boat, and each man felt it warm him. They were a captain, an oiler, a cook, and a correspondent, and they were friends—friends in a more curiously ironbound degree than may be common. (P. 456)

This quotation reiterates the togetherness that the characters felt when on the sea. However, this togetherness does not favor all of them. After struggling in the sea, the oiler dies when he gets to the shore. This is likely an indication that despite the togetherness that we share with each other, man is alone with his god, being whatever he chooses him to be in the universe. Togetherness may also delay action and cause people to feel comfortable even when in danger.

In the following verse, the correspondent goes on to express the human need for companionship that every human faces.

*A soldier of the Legion lay dying in Algiers;
There was lack of woman's nursing, there was dearth of woman's tears;
But a comrade stood beside him, and he took that comrade's hand,
And he said, "I never more shall see my own, my native land (P. 469).*

The correspondent has just now considered the verse important when he is faced with a challenge and the need for companionship. The plight of the soldier who lay abandoned in the fields mirrors that of the correspondent in the sea. The correspondent, in his thoughts, paints the picture of the soldier on the sand in the following lines:

The correspondent plainly saw the soldier. He lay on the sand with his feet out straight and still. While his pale left hand was upon his chest in an attempt to thwart the going of his life, the blood came between his fingers. In the far Algerian distance, a city of low square forms was set against a sky that was faint with the last sunset hues. The correspondent, plying the oars and dreaming of the slow and slower movements of the lips of the soldier, was moved by a profound and perfectly impersonal comprehension. He was sorry for the soldier of the Legion who lay dying in Algiers (P. 469).

The quotation paints a picture of the manner in which the soldier lay dying in the field. His situation evokes pathos in the reader. The correspondent in this quotation shows how a lack of companionship thwarts the soldier's life. He thus, like the soldier, meditates upon his predicaments in a similar kind of situation.

The Absence of God

Nature is an autonomous and self-explanatory system. Nature can be used to explain everything that happens in the natural world. This indicates that the supernatural has no place in the naturalist's philosophy. Reading through the selected short stories by Stephen Crane under study, one notices that the characters stay mute in their desperation to survive. They hardly call on God to intervene and save them because they recognize no God to intervene in human affairs. Therefore, they choose to battle with the problems they face and find solutions to them. This recognition of the inexistence of God is a driving force behind technological innovation because man strives to look for better ways to mitigate the problems that he faces or to survive despite the difficulties that he faces.

Besides, God seemingly does not respond when the characters call on him for help, making them doubt his existence. The correspondent, on the night he is frightened by the animal in the sea, blames God for not being there for him. This is portrayed in:

When it occurs to a man that nature does not regard him as important, and that she feels she would not maim the universe by disposing of him, he at first wishes to throw bricks at the temple, and he hates deeply the fact that there are no bricks and no temples. Any visible expression of nature would surely be pelleted with his jeers. (P. 468)

The temple referred to in the quotation is the temple of God, while the bricks are man's prayers. The phrase "there are no bricks and no temple" indicates that there is no means to get to God that works for man, and there is no temple where one can find God. This makes one surrender his fate to the hands of nature, which is cruel and barbaric. This quotation thus indicates that there is no God in the stories to save the suffering characters from drowning.

The chapter discusses the naturalism of Stephen Crane. The focused is on how Crane portrays the victimization of man by heredity, the environment and the absence of God in the selected short stories understudy. The chapter also shows how the victimization of characters by these forces transcends time and space to become what we face in the world today.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NATURALISM OF JACK LONDON

The preceding chapter has focused on issues of environment, heredity, and the absence of God expressed in the works by Stephen Crane as building blocks to interpret our own time. The chapter showed that Stephen Crane's writing in the second half of the 19th century, was talking about timeless and universal discrepancies that man will face in the coming decades. In this light, we delineate the same concepts and how Jack London exploits them in some selected short stories. This permits us in the next chapter to draw the dichotomy and the consensus between the naturalism of Stephen Crane and that of Jack London. Our focus in this chapter is exclusively on how Jack London handles man's victimization by the environment, heredity, and the Absence of God.

Naturalism is grounded on the thesis that environment heredity and the absence of God influence on man. These issues are central to the current debates of the 21st-century literary discourse. The environmental discourse out of literary setting has been the international community's preoccupation. Environmental indifference to man has significant untold effects on man's life. We are indirectly talking about the effects of climate change, which, as mentioned earlier in the statement of the problem, is creating panic worldwide. This chapter examines the environment, heredity, and absence of God in the selected works of Jack London.

The Environment

First and foremost, the natural or the physical setting of Jack London's "To Build a Fire" portrays the extreme side of nature or the environment. Nature, in this sense, is harsh, deadly, and unforgiving. In the opening lines, London paints a picture of the harsh nature of the Yukon via the poor weather. Weather refers to the atmospheric conditions of a place over a short period. It is one of the sources of adversity for the nameless protagonist. This man has undertaken the trial to check the possibility of removing logs from Yukon during the spring. The weather is portrayed in the opening lines, thus

Day had broken cold and grey, exceedingly cold and grey, when the man turned aside from the main Yukon trail and climbed the high earth-bank, where a dim and little-travelled trail led eastward through the fat spruce timberland. It was a steep bank, and he paused for breath at the top, excusing the act to himself by looking at his watch. It was nine o'clock. There was no sun nor hint of sun, though there was not a cloud in the sky. It was a clear day, and yet there seemed an intangible pall over the face of things, a subtle gloom that made the day dark, and that was due to the absence of sun. (P. 853)

Based on the quotation, the weather is extremely cold when the man sets out on trial. At 9 o'clock, when the nameless protagonist stops to check his time, the sun is absent from the sky. The absence of the sun from the sky makes the day seem gloomy. The lack of the sun, the intangible pall that seems to be on the face of things, likely makes the characters uncomfortable. In addition, the quotation uses adjectives like "grey," which is used to modify dawn; this modification reinforces the idea of harsh weather. The adjectives also vividly describe the bleak face of dawn, hence victimizing whoever may be in the current environment. Though the nameless protagonist probably does not understand the significance of the poor atmospheric condition, it may be a warning to him about the cold that he will later encounter in the story. The environmental crises that this character faces in the story are the same as those faced by men in contemporary society.

The poor weather cuts across "To Build a Fire" and "The Law of Life." In "The Law of Life," his son informs the visually impaired Old Koskoosh about the morning weather. He tells him, "the morning is gray" (P. 290). The adjective "gray," which is also used to describe the weather in "To Build a Fire," creates a mental picture of the dreary weather of Yukon, where Old Koskoosh is abandoned. The gloomy environment is cold, likely one of the environmental factors responsible for his tragic end in the story. This shows that weather is one of the main ecological concerns that trouble the characters in the story. Since the beginning of the 21st century, environmental conditions like weather have adversely affected man; sometimes, we are facing cold, and sometimes, we are facing heat. This is also an indication that changes in the natural conditions are constant. Thus, man seems to be constantly at loggerheads with environmental or natural occurrences.

The landscape of Yukon, the physical setting of the short story, was considered a wasteland. According to Prentice Hall literature, US Secretary of State William Seward purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867. Many Americans considered it a wasteland, but the discovery of a rich lode of gold led to the Klondike stampede of 1897–1898. Thousands of Americans flooded into this frozen land to explore the gold. However, after traveling to Yukon, London commented that "true, the new territory was mostly barren" (P. 608). This explains why he presents the landscape in the

extract below as void of assertions that can sustain the life of the nameless protagonist. The barren landscape is presented in the following words:

The Yukon lay a mile wide and hidden under three feet of ice. On top of this ice were as many feet of snow. It was all pure white, rolling in gentle undulations where the ice-jams of the freeze-up had formed. North and south, as far as his eye could see, it was unbroken white, save for a dark hair-line that curved and twisted from around the spruce-covered island to the south, and that curved and twisted away into the north, where it disappeared behind another spruce-covered island. (P.853)

This quotation outlines the landscape of Yukon, which is seemingly barren and will subsequently create more problems for the protagonist. The Yukon's barren land represents the universal landscape in the sense that our assumed rich lands are veiled with difficulties or circumstances that prevent us from harnessing them for our own use. This is likely because nature does not recognize any extra force intruding on its internal core. This reiterates the indifference to natural occurrences that the human race is exposed to.

Like in Crane's "The Men in the Storm," the snow appears to be a problem for the protagonist in Jack London's "To Build a Fire". Snow refers to the frozen, crystalline state of water that falls as precipitation. In Yukon, where the physical setting of the short story takes place, places are depicted as covered with ice. On top of the ice, the narrator tells us there are many feet of snow. The ice and snow cover almost all of the trail, and the trail is not visible at some points. The snow frustrates the man's attempt to trace the trail, thus making it difficult for him to move. In addition, when the protagonist arrives at Henderson Creek, the traces are not visible because it is covered with snow. The presence of snow delays the trial by making movement difficult, leading to the protagonist's eschatological end.

Besides, the concept of white silence in Jack London's "The White Silence" symbolizes snow. Snow, as stated in the preceding paragraph, is a problem for man. In this short story, we discover that the snow is capable of stopping the characters from moving on with the trial. The narrator confirms this by saying that "at every step, the great webbed shoe sinks till the snow is level with the knee. Then up, straight up, the deviation of a fraction of an inch being a certain precursor of disaster." (p. 19). This quotation shows that at every step that the travelers make, their shoe sinks into the snow. This becomes the cause of disaster, as it can lead to a fracture. The snowshoes must be lifted whenever this incident occurs until the surface is cleared. We are told that anyone who goes through this and avoids putting his feet together will be tired after one hundred yards. In addition, we are told that as the travelers move in the snow, the awe of the white silence causes them to stop talking. Besides, the snow causes Manson to fall off his feet when his shoes are

affected. Based on these instances, the snow is what controls them, not vice versa. From a universal perspective, snow may affect human activities like movement and make man uncomfortable in the environment in which he is enclosed.

Furthermore, the time setting of the short story “To Build a Fire” portrays seasonal changes as factors that contribute to man's tragedy. The story is set in the winter. This season in Europe is characterized by snowy weather, rainfall, and frozen temperatures. During this period, the nameless protagonist in London's story embarks on a journey to meet others in the camp. Such trips are not undertaken during this period, especially if the person concerned is traveling alone, according to the old man's advice in the story. Seasonal periods may hamper men's activities when they become overdue or do not change at the required time. Winter becomes a source of problems for man because it gives birth to frozen temperatures, cold, and rainfall, which all victimize him. Besides “To Build a Fire,” “The Law of Life” also portrays winter as a season that preys on man. In the story, we see the influence of the season through the snowy, dreary, and gloomy weather. The season causes people to go camping, where they will have to build big fires and stay warm. The characteristics of this season mentioned here are uncomfortable for men. “In The Law of Life,” Old Koskoosh may have been abandoned because the season cannot permit an old man like him to embark on the trail.

In addition, cold temperatures are part of the problems faced by the characters in “To Build a Fire.” The major conflict in the story “To Build a Fire” is the battle with cold temperatures. Man is fragile and can only live under given temperatures, hot or cold. The story states that 50 degrees below zero is extremely cold and must be guarded against with the use of mittens. Unfortunately, the temperatures in the story are colder than fifty degrees, which automatically signals difficulties for the characters' survival. To ascertain the level of cold, the nameless protagonist, who is aware that at fifty below, spittle cracks on the snow, conducts an experiment to know how cold places are. This is indicated in “He knew that at fifty below, the spittle crackled in the snow, but this spittle had cracked in the air. Undoubtedly, it was colder than fifty below—how much colder he did not know”. (P. 853) When it is fifty degrees cold, spittle cracks on the snow, but the quotation shows that his spittle cracks in the air, hence it is colder than fifty. This indicates that the temperatures are too cold for the man to survive. The cold temperatures are further emphasized in “It was not merely colder than fifty below zero; it was colder than sixty below seventy below. It was 75 below zero. Since the freezing point is thirty-two degrees above zero, it means that one hundred and seven degrees of frost have been obtained” (P. 854). This quotation emphasizes the level of cold that the nameless protagonist, a man, and his dog face in the short story. The cold temperatures are said to

have struck the man's fingers, causing them and his nose to become numb. To show how cold it is, we are further told that the hair on his face is too little to protect him from the cold temperature. These show how indifferent nature is to man. In addition, the cold makes it difficult for the protagonist to walk. The victimization of the character in "To Build a Fire" heightens when his feet become numb because of the cold. We are told that he stands up and does not feel his feet on the earth when he fails to build another fire. At this point, the numbness continues to increase. The protagonist decides to run to the camp, but he needs more endurance. Consequently, he reaches a point where he cannot walk again. This is one of the difficulties that the cold temperatures pose to the short story's protagonist. It emphasizes that his volition does not determine how far a man can go in the environment.

The theme of cold temperatures is also portrayed in "The White Silence." The temperatures are said to be cold, making it difficult to survive. When Manson falls in the snow, the narrator tells us that the temperatures are sixty below zero, and a man cannot lie for many minutes in the snow and live. The theme of temperatures recurrent in these stories indicates that one of man's biggest problems in the universe is climate change, which is often noticed via cold and hot temperatures.

Furthermore, London in "To Build a Fire" demonstrates how nature slowly kills the protagonist through freezing temperatures. The story opens with a description of the poor Yukon weather conditions. The protagonist embarks on a trail to meet the other boys in Henderson Creek. On his way, he becomes aware of the coldness of the environment. It is cold in a way that he has never felt before. The tremendously cold temperatures cause the man to freeze as he struggles to move on. The man continues to freeze until he makes the last decision to sleep forever. The death of the man in this short story indicates that climate change is a threat to humanity. Many critics seem to agree that nature is slowly breaking down the human species via climate change. Today, climate change is noticed through heating temperatures. This reiterates the view that temperatures change constantly and are detrimental to humans.

The dog in "To Build a Fire" forms part of the environment that preys on man. Even though the dog moves with the man on the trail as his companion, its understanding of nature makes it more part of the environment than the man. For instance, the dog understands that there is a need for fire and that it is not time to travel, while the man does not understand the environmental conditions or what can be done to solve them. The dog-like part of nature contributes to man's downfall by not communicating via action its instincts to man. People often travel with dogs for their protection and to help identify danger. But the dog in To Build a Fire expects the man to build a fire but does not devise a method to let him understand what its instincts tell it.

The dogs in “The White Silence” are carnivorous and can eat any of their human masters at any time. The travelers have been on the journey for days, and due to the food shortage, they decide to starve the dogs. At certain points, the dogs become hungry and eat their fellow dogs. We are exposed to a scene where the dogs devour one of their kind; this happens when the Malemute kid leaves them with Ruth and goes hunting. In addition, Malemute Kids tells Manson and Ruth that they must keep a close eye on the dogs because they are becoming very destructive and can pull down someone if they have the chance. The presents of the dogs victimize man in the sense that he constantly feels his security is endangered.

As part of the natural world, the spruce tree contributes to the protagonist's downfall in “To Build a Fire.” The spruce tree is the source of the snow, which capsizes and kills the fire. Even though the story states that it is the man's fault to have built a fire under a tree rather than in an open area, the action of the tree can be blamed based on the fact that it only releases the snow when the fire has started glowing. This action is enough to support the view that the tree, like any other aspect of nature, is indifferent to the characters' plight in “To Build a Fire.”

Jack London in “To Build a Fire” shows that man's attempt to succeed in nature is doomed to fail. During the first fire, the man does everything that is needed for the fire to catch him and make him warm. Despite his success in building the fire by gathering twigs and other materials, he needs to consider everything. He does not see a danger that could destroy his fire. This shows that man only sometimes sees the whole picture of what nature can do to him. This parallels what happens in contemporary society and suggests that man's success in emitting gases into the atmosphere yields only momentary satisfaction because he is doomed to fail. The fire in “To Build a Fire” symbolizes man's attempts, which are bound to fail. The same way nature takes the character in “To Build a Fire” before killing him seems to suggest the same sad reality about man in contemporary society.

Besides, seawater in “The White Silence” is portrayed as rough. Its effects on the characters are articulated by Manson in the following words while talking to Ruth:

We'll take the White Man's canoe and go to the Salt Water. Yes, bad water, rough water, — great mountains dance up and down all the time. And so big, so far, so far away, — you travel ten sleep, twenty sleep, forty sleep" (he graphically enumerated the days on his fingers), "all the time water, bad water. Then you come to great village, plenty people, just the same mosquitoes next summer. (p. 19)

The words “canoe” and “saltwater” in the italicized portion indicate that he is talking about a sea. Like in “The Open Boat”, the sea is seen here as rough and bad. This is a similarity between the

two authors. The quotation also reiterates the naturalist view of a dangerous environment or nature that runs throughout the works of London and Crane.

Nature in “The White Silence” is unpredictable and a murderer. At first sight, nature tells man it is less harmful and shows him a promising phase, but when he falls victim, nature kills him. London's narrator says this in the following words:

Nature has many tricks wherewith she convinces man of his finity, — the ceaseless flow of the tides, the fury of the storm, the shock of the earthquake, the long roll of heaven's artillery, — but the most tremendous, the most stupefying of all, is the passive phase of the White Silence. All movement ceases, the sky clears, the heavens are as brass; the slightest whisper seems sacrilege, and man becomes timid, affrighted at the sound of his own voice. Sole speck of life journeying across the ghostly wastes of a dead world, he trembles at his audacity, realizes that his is a maggot's life, nothing more. Strange thoughts arise unsummoned, and the mystery of all things strives for utterance. (P. 19)

The quotation says that nature convinces man of his limitedness, and when man trespasses on its internal core, it exploits him and makes him yearn for survival. During this time, man realizes that his life is like that of a maggot—fragile, useless, or nonsensical in the environment, which regards him as a cipher. Words and expressions like “shock of the earthquake” and “fury of the storm” reiterate the theme of nature's indifference, hence victimizing man.

In general, nature in “The White Silence” does not care about human life. This is portrayed throughout the entire story. Sometimes nature seems to be good, to be fair, and sometimes it is terrible. In this short story, we are told that when man is exposed to the different faces of the white silence, he recognizes that his life is a “maggot's life” (P. 20). This metaphor can be intended to change our perception of how we are regarded—as something worthless, something whose life does not matter. London's naturalistic view of man is central to the crises he faces in the environment.

In addition, Jack London also reiterates the indifference of nature to man in “The Law of Life”. This is expressed through Old Koskoosh's views that nature is not kind to the individual. He tells the reader that nature gives one task to the individual; if he performs it, he will die, and if he does not, he will also die. Old Koskoosh says many people obey nature, but it does not matter. In the story, it is stated that nature gives life a task and a law. This task is to perpetuate, and the law is death. These views show that no matter the efforts one makes to continue living in the environment, nature is always ready to crush him.

The cultural or social environment

In “The Law of Life”, Old Koskoosh is exploited by the cultural values of his society. In this society, culture presupposes that the young should abandon the old to face the law of life (death) in the event of a disaster. This is the situation of Old Koskoosh, who is abandoned to face death by his granddaughter and son. The story tells us that his granddaughter, Sit-cum-to-ha, is very busy with the things of this life and does not spend time with her grandfather, who is abandoned in the snow. The son of Old Koskoosh, who doubles as the chief of the tribe and the head of the tribespeople, also leaves his father in the snow and leads the village people to camp. His father, Old Koskoosh, made his father a victim of this same culture when he was young. These developments make it clear that the culture passed from generation to generation in this society says that the old have no value and should be abandoned to face death alone because it is the law of life. Hence Old Koskoosh is a representative picture of the old people of this society who are victimized by their cultural values.

Besides, Ruth in “The White Silence” is considered primitive because of her cultural background. Manson, in his words to Kid, shortly before he is abandoned to face death in the snow, tells him to remember that the ways of Faith's people are not good ways. He pleads with Malemute Kid to care for Faith and the baby she will deliver. He says it would not be suitable for Faith to taste their ways (the culture of Manson and the Malemute Kid) and return to her people and their primitive ways. Faith is a victim of her culture based on these statements made by her husband. If someone considers your culture primitive, so do you. This is because people are molded by their culture; if someone's culture is primitive, so is the person.

Heredity

The weakness of human judgment is one of the factors that man inherits. London portrays the weaknesses of human judgment in “To Build a Fire”. The man embarks on the journey with a dog. The man places his judgment in a superior position as he tries to overcome the effects of the harsh weather. This results in the tragic ending, in which the reader finds him at the end of the story. The Old Timer has told him never to travel alone during poor weather conditions, but he thought that being smart and prepared, he could dominate nature and meet the other boys in the camp. London portrays the loopholes of human judgment when he tells the reader, “The trouble with him was that he was without imagination. He was quick and alert in the things of life, but only in the things and not in their significance” (P. 853). This quotation shows that, though man is aware that the environment is cold, he does not think it can take away his life. This is because of his poor

judgment. When the man finally succumbs to the environment towards the end of the story, this is totally blamed on the poor judgment of the environmental condition. The 21st-century man is convinced that he can harness and control the environment. This is seemingly a poor or weak judgment of what man can do in nature, given that nature needs not to recognize man. The poor judgment of situations, a common characteristic of men, is, therefore a source of adversity for him.

When one decides to stop beside a restaurant to get some food after the smell in the vicinity captures his attention, he is purely pushed to do so by his instincts. A man's instincts play a significant role in his decisions. The power of instincts is seen in "To Build a Fire," when we are told that the dog understands that it is not time to travel like his human companion. The male companion has weak instincts or likely does not even have instincts, and this causes his downfall. When the man wants to leave the burning fire to embark on the journey, the dog wants to stay by the fire because it knows it is not time to travel, as portrayed in these lines: "The dog was disappointed and yearned back toward the fire. This man did not know the cold. Possibly all the generations of his ancestry had been ignorant of cold, of real cold, of cold one hundred and seven degrees below freezing point" (p. 359). From this quotation, it is clear that man inherits his weak instincts from his ancestry; hence, he is open to victimization by fate, not his own doings. The dog on the opposite side knows, as indicated here.

But the dog knew; all its ancestry knew, and it had inherited the knowledge. And it knew that it was not good to walk abroad in such fearful cold. It was the time to lie snug in a hole in the snow and wait for a curtain of cloud to be drawn across the face of outer space whence this cold came. (P. 359)

This extract indicates that the dog has powerful instincts as opposed to his human companion's, as previously shown here. It knows it is not time to travel because it inherited this knowledge from its ancestors. London upholds the view that animals have more powerful instincts than humans. The weak nature of human instincts is a force behind his constant victimization.

Besides, self-confidence, self-reliance, individualism, and freedom are detrimental to survival. These concepts are very significant in American history and thought. The man inherits these concepts from his social background, and they are the reason for his downfall. The man upholds self-reliance and confidence when he goes beyond the Old Timers' advice that one should not travel alone under poor environmental conditions like these. He pushes forward when the journey gets tough and exercises patience, courage, and determination. Also, the man's confidence that he can travel alone is bolstered by the fact that he opts to travel the roundabout alone to check the possibility of getting logs in the spring from the islands in Yukon. At the same time, the boys go through a different road. Self-confidence and individualism are so buried in human nature that

they often contribute to the downfall. If the man dies as it happens, this likely indicates that men should rely on each other rather than relying on themselves. If the man had relied on the old timer's advice, he would have survived because his companion would have helped him. This instance overturns the American belief in the self as finding its way out of life's woes through determination. Therefore, the times of our lives require a surrender of the individualistic self for a more holistic whole so that we can mitigate the adversities that we are prone to.

In addition, the character in "To Build a Fire" is pushed to embark on the journey by his materialistic desire to explore Yukon. By materialistic desire, we mean the desire to amass wealth and material possessions with little interest in ethical or spiritual aspects. The characters in London's "To Build a Fire" travel to the Yukon to explore the island. This is clear when the narrator says this: "They had come over across the divide from the Indian Creek country, while he had come the roundabout way to take a look at the possibilities of getting out logs in the spring from the islands in the Yukon" (p. 854). The mission to Yukon is clearly stated here: to explore and amaze themselves with its wealth. This is a feature of human nature, as man always desires to make money under whatever conditions. Materialism closes our eyes to the dangers of our actions and also leads to futility, as indicated in this short story. In the Judeo-Christian bible, Paul talks about how materialism leads to futility when he says that the rich should not "put their hopes in wealth, which is so uncertain, but... in God, who richly provides" (1 Timothy 6:17). By focusing on earthly riches, we are likely to open to more insecurities because such riches are uncertain, as indicated in this biblical verse. Historically, American society has been built on the philosophy of wealth acquisition. This can be inferred from the accounts of European explorers in Africa and other parts of the world. These accounts detail the richness of the lands they had seen and the need for their home governments to colonize these territories. Other American realist tradition literary texts, like *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, support the materialistic habit. The eponymous protagonist of this novel has taken advantage of his partner when he gives him the choice of buying out or going out of business, as seen in the last part of chapter three. This is likely because Silas wants to control the paint business alone. The gratification of the ego's materialistic instincts is one trait that man would be required to deal with to survive.

Man's quest to dominate other natural creatures For many years, man has been the forerunner in destroying and killing other animals, wild and domestic. This is likely because he sees himself as superior to them. These killings have overturned the narrative in the 21st century, as species seem to have migrated across the earth. Man has thus become a victim of his woes due to his quest to brutalize all humans, dominate, and survive. In "To Build a Fire" this dominant

spirit is portrayed when the man wants to kill the dog, as seen here: “The sight of the dog put a wild idea into his head. He remembered the tale of the man caught in a blizzard who killed a steer, crawled inside the carcass, and so was saved. He would kill the dog and bury his hands in the warm body until the numbness went out of them” (p. 364). The quotation says that when the man is attacked by numbness, he thinks about killing the dog and burying his hands in the carcasses of its skin. He flashed back to a story about a man who had carried out a similar act. The flashback shows how the quest to kill other creatures to survive is rooted in human nature. This killing preys on him in the 21st century as he battles with the fight to restore some natural species. The killings are, however, not to be blamed on man because he is driven by survival instincts beyond his control and understanding.

The fragile nature of human beings is one aspect of naturalism. By this, we mean humans cannot overcome fate because of nature. In “To Build a Fire”, man is projected as a creature capable of surviving only under certain environmental conditions. This is portrayed in “It did not lead him to meditate upon his frailty as a creature of temperature, and upon man's frailty in general, able only to live within certain narrow limits of heat and cold; and from there on, it did not lead him to the conjectural field of immortality and man's place in the universe” (P. 854). The point of this quotation is that man is fragile. Various authors have compared human life to flowers and shadows to buttress the idea of human fragility. One of these authors is Shakespeare, who says

*Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing. (p. 219)*

Shakespeare hopes to show how fragile man is by comparing life to a shadow. This fragility is deeply rooted in heredity. Man inherits it and is also passing it over to his offspring.

The fear of death is inherent in every human being. We spent most of our lives thinking about it, trying to avoid it, and cursing the day we were born. But London answers our worries in “The Law of Life”. In this short story, he portrays death as one of the things that are certain about human life. London calls it “The Law of Life” to show how fundamental it is. Death makes human life seem to have intrinsic value, not less than other animals and insects occupying the environment. Jack London supports this view of life when he says in “The Law of Life” that “to perpetuate was the task of life; its law was death.” (P. 291). This short quotation clearly outlines what London considers to be the law of life and death. Every human being who looms over the

earth's surface is exposed to this harsh reality of our existence. The corpus of literature that we term naturalistic literature shares this view entirely. It projects death as a tragic loss of life. In death, there is no redemption or possibility of living again. Death poses a threat to human survival universally and timelessly.

The fear of death transcends to other short stories like “To Build a Fire”. The protagonist of this short story fears death and continues to resist it. The narrator says, “A certain fear of death, dull and oppressive, came to him. This fear quickly became poignant as he realized that it was no longer a mere matter of freezing his fingers and toes or of losing his hands and feet, but that it was a matter of life and death with the odds against him” (P. 365). This quotation shows how the fear of death oppresses the protagonist.

Besides, London’s message in “The Law of Life” that death is the law of life is further illuminated when he outlines the process that leads to death through the metaphor in the extract below.

The measure of his life was a handful with fagots. One by one they would go to the fire, and just so, step by step, death would creep upon him. When the last sticks surrendered up its heat, the frost would begin to gather strength first his feet would yield, then his hands, and the numbness would travel, slowly, from the extremities to the body. His head would fall forward upon his knees and he would rest. It was easy. All men must die. (p.290)

This extract contains what one can term the "metaphor of the fagot." It compares life to a handful of fagots to show that as the fagots get burned and finish, life would also be finished for Old Koskoosh. In the extract, we are told that when the fagots are finished, death will start to attack Old Koskoosh from his feet, then from his hands, and then the end will take its course. It is seemingly clear that death is a general problem all humans face.

The same view of death expressed in “The Law of Life” is similar to that in “To Build a Fire”. The anonymous protagonist sees death as something that cannot be avoided. We may prolong it, but we cannot avoid it. In a moment of self-realization, or what is termed a literary epiphany, his slow freezing to death is accompanied by the quotation, “Well, he was bound to freeze anyway, and he might as well take it decently. With this new-found peace of mind came the first glimmerings of drowsiness. A good idea, he thought, to sleep off to death” (p. 867). According to this quotation, death cannot be avoided. The protagonist attempts to prolong it but discovers he cannot do it forever. Leo Tolstoy portrays a similar situation in “The Death of Ivan Ilyich”. Ilyich says this during his moment of self-realization:

And suddenly everything was clear to him: what had been oppressing him and would not go away was now going away, all at once, on two sides, ten sides, all sides. He felt sorry for them, and he must do something to stop hurting them. Set them free, and free himself from all these suffering. (P. 12)

This quotation shows that after Ilyich suffers from a disease for a long time, he finally realizes death is the ultimate end. These two characters in different literary works are used to portray that the law of life is death. It is the ultimate end to all.

As a fundamental part of our heredity, aging is associated with weaknesses in sight and strength. This is one of Old Koskoosh's weaknesses in London's "The Law of Life" faces. We are told in the story's opening lines that "Old Koskoosh listened greedily. Though his sight had long faded..." (p. 289). Old Koskoosh's predicament, as indicated in this quotation, is likely the result of his age. He further stresses, "I am the last year's leaf, clinging tightly to the stem. The first breath blows, and I fall. My voice has become like an old woman's own. My eyes no longer show me the way of my feet, and my feet are heavy, and I am tired" (p. 290). This quotation shows that Old Kooskosh is affected by his sight, as he cannot see his way. Besides, he also lacks strength because his feet have become heavy. Like Old Kooskosh, every human is likely to face such changes as he grows older. This is an indication that man is a victim of his nature. While Old Kooskosh struggles with his impaired sight, his granddaughter does not face any of these problems; hence, old age preys on men. Old Kooskosh represents the people of his age group, as they are likely to face similar challenges when they get old.

Cultural Heredity

Training is one of the factors that influence a man's destiny in the works of Jack London. We have no thoughts, ideas, or opinions; they are transmitted to us and trained in us. This is the situation of Ruth in "White Silence". While pleading that Malemute Kid should care for Ruth when he dies, Manson emphasizes Ruth's upbringing and her way of life.

Don't send her back to her people, Kid. It's beastly hard for a woman to go back. Think of it!—nearly four years on our bacon and beans and flour and dried fruit, and then to go back to her fish and caribou. It's not good for her to have tried our ways, to come to know they're better than her people's, and then return to them. Take care of her, Kid, why don't you—but no, you always fought shy of them and you never told me why you came to this country. Be kind to her, and send her back to the States as soon as you can. But fix it so she can come back—liable to get homesick, you know. (P. 23)

In this quotation, Manson outlines why it is inappropriate for Ruth to return to her people and live the kind of life that she lived before and eat the kind of food that she ate before after testing the

ways of Manson. He pleads that Malemute Kid should keep her in the States. This attempt is to emphasize the importance of training in the determination of human life and destiny. This kind of training is a cultural inheritance. When a child is born and raised in a family that gives him training on how to be compassionate, he is bound to grow up with such attitudes that will help them know how to sympathize with people in society when they are faced with the adversities of life.

The predicaments of Old Koskoosh disclose some peculiarities about the society he comes from. The people of community inherit a cultural feature from their social background or ancestry that enables the young to abandon the old behind in times of natural disaster or ugly ecology. The elderly, for instance, might be left because they can no longer participate in community development and lack the natural strength to keep themselves going in the face of disaster. This can also mean that they have lived their lives and ought to give away to the generation they have produced. The Darwinist concept of survival of the fittest applies here, as the weaker ones are bound to succumb to heredity forces while the stronger survive. Old Koskoosh meditation upon how he abandoned his father is portrayed in the following words: “He remembered how he had abandoned his father on an upper reach of the Klondike one winter, the winter before the missionary came with his talk books and his box of medicines” (P. 291). According to the quotation, he abandoned his father in the Klondike during the winter. This has applied to him during his turn. Since it is their culture, future generations will inherit the practice and continue to pass it on to other generations. This will also be a kind of cultural sustainability that shows how people are victims of the culture they inherit from their ancestry. Today, we find some characteristics of our cultures inherited from our ancestry that prey on us.

Absence of God

Naturalism is a philosophical and literary movement that focuses on the physical nature of things. It does not see the world as operating under the influence of some metaphysical or supernatural forces. Therefore, The naturalist is a scientist who accurately reports what he sees and that can be proven not through faith but through experimentation. This view of the naturalist has led to the advancement of society because we live in an age when innovations are scientifically driven. The absence of God in naturalistic studies is thus pertinent.

To begin with, Jack London avoids the subject of God in his stories. He is noted in the stories as a man in the wild struggling to survive under challenging environmental conditions and the forces of heredity. In “To Build a Fire”, he prioritizes strong instincts over God as what can help man or animal make good decisions at the right time. He archives this by juxtaposing the

powerful instincts of the dog, seen through its ability to know that it is not time to travel, with the instincts of the man, which are seemingly weak and communicate nothing to him. This deliberate presentation of the power of instincts in contributing to the survival of an organism is seemingly a way of telling the reader that God has no place in human affairs. If he were present, then characters would call on him to intervene and take them out of the woes that they find themselves in. Avoiding the subject of God is thus a voluntary attempt to show that man can rely on himself for survival rather than on a metaphysical or supernatural being that is nowhere to be found.

Adapting to the environment and relying on one another is another point that Jack London raises to show the absence of God in human affairs. As portrayed in “To Build a Fire”, man should not travel or go on a trail alone when temperatures are under 50 degrees below zero. However, London's protagonist goes against this law and consequently experiences doom. The point that London wants to raise here is that we exist on a planet in which we are the ones to battle for our survival. To achieve this, we ought to comprehensively understand our surroundings and rely on the human entity for survival. In “The Law of Life”, Old Koskoosh could prolong his stay here on earth if his son and granddaughter took care of him. He dies because of negligence because no one can help him make fire. These show the importance of adapting to environmental changes and the importance of the human company in attaining survival in life.

In addition, there is no evidence anywhere in the stories to show that prayers work. The characters understand this and avoid praying at all. In situations like the one the anonymous protagonist faces in “To Build a Fire”, Old Koskoosh in “The Law of Life”, and Malemute Kid in “The White Silence”, where arrogant forces of fate threaten existence, one is more likely to pray to God for mercy, as Judeo-Christian religion teaches us. In cases where one is aware that prayer does not work, possibly because there is no God, he may cease to pray because one cannot seek help from where it does not exist. London's characters understand this worldview, which is why they do not pray despite the challenging circumstances surrounding their lives. The belief that people can address their problems by themselves is typical of positivists and humanists, who perceive from a human-centric point of view.

This chapter focused on the naturalism of Jack London. It discusses the victimization of man by the environment, heredity and the absence of God in the works of Jack London understudy.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SIMILARITIES AND THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STEPHEN CRANE

AND JACK LONDON'S NATURALISM

The previous two chapters have perused naturalism in some selected short stories by Stephen Crane and Jack London. In their works, the intention has been to show how the authors portray man's victimization by environment, heredity, and the absence of the supernatural. Having done this, the present chapter shall bring together the various works by the two authors to show to what extent they are similar and different from each other vis-à-vis naturalism. By doing so, we can say if there is, on the one hand, "a naturalism of Stephen Crane" and, on the other hand, "a naturalism of Jack London". If there is, then what constitutes Crane's naturalism and what constitutes London's naturalism.

The Similarities of the Two Authors and Texts

According to Christophe Den Tandt, critics of the mid-twentieth century, see Parrington's definition of naturalism as "a pessimistic realism, with a philosophy that sets man in a mechanical world and conceives of him as victimized by that world" (P. 325) as one that summarizes the ambitions of novelists such as Stephen Crane, Hamlin Garland, Theodore Dreiser, Frank Norris, Jack London, and Upton Sinclair. To this effect, it is clear that we are concerned with texts and writers that critics classify as naturalists. For a work to be considered naturalistic, it must portray the various tenets of naturalism—environment, heredity, and the atheistic aspect—and how they relate with man. In other words, the work puts its characters in the world and portrays how the world preys on them. In such a work, the narrator reports accurately and objectively the difficulties of the characters as they struggle against heredity and natural and social environmental forces. In Stephen Crane's story, "The Open Boat", characters battle against being killed by the forces of nature, like sea waves, which are completely indifferent to their plight. The physical environment in "The Open Boat" is the sea, which threatens to exterminate the characters through its constant waves. The narrator laments their plight in the following extract when he outlines the disadvantages of the sea and other related experiences:

A singular disadvantage of the sea lies in the fact that after successfully surmounting one wave you discover that there is another behind it just as important and just as nervously anxious to do something effective in the way of swamping boats. In a ten-foot dinghy one can get an idea of the resources of the sea in the line of waves that is not probable to the average experience, which is never at sea in a dinghy. As each slaty wall of water approached, it shut all else from the view of the men in the boat, and it was not difficult to imagine that this particular wave was the final outburst of the ocean, the last effort of the grim water. There was a terrible grace in the move of the waves, and they came in silence, save for the snarling of the crests. (p. 452)

In this extract, one notices that the sea produces waves that are ready to clear any obstacle that comes its way. This is exactly what Parrington means when he points out that naturalism puts man in the world and sees him as victimized by the world. In such texts as “The Open Boat”, the characters have little or no chance of survival as all attempts to get to the shore are seemingly fruitless. The kind of environment the characters are flung into in “The Open Boat” is the same as the one we find in “The Men in the Storm”. Like the title suggests, this story is about a group of poor folk battling to survive a terrible blizzard. The blizzard causes them so much pain as they struggle to secure comfort in and around charity buildings. Jack London does not relent in presenting the environment as the naturalist desires in short stories like “The Law of Life”. In the story, the reader comes in contact with the realities of Old Koskoosh's social environment. The realities are that the old are abandoned in natural disaster situations while the young, or those still strong, go out to fight for survival. One may argue that this follows the naturalist's belief in “survival of the fittest”. In other short stories like “To Build a Fire”, we see how natural environmental forces like landscape, snow, and cold prey on the protagonist, who finds it challenging to overcome these hazards and finally dies. These instances, drawn from the stories and supported by other critics, confirm the view that the authors and the work's understudy are truly naturalistic.

Besides, the authors of the works under study handle the theme of courage, a central focus in naturalist works. The naturalist recognizes the hopelessness that plagues the human race, but one of the lessons one can get is that one should push forward for survival until one dies. This explains why, despite the difficulties faced, the characters do relentlessly try to survive in the face of despair. Courage is brought to the forefront in Crane's “The Open Boat”. The characters find themselves in the sea in a small dingy after a shipwreck that saw all their belongings consumed by the sea. Despite the challenge and the persistent waves that seem ever-ready to overturn their boat, they keep fighting to survive until they arrive at the shore. In the same line, Jack London upholds the concept of courage in “To Build a Fire”. The man finds himself in a

situation where he regrets having ignored the teachings of an old man who probably understands the environment better than him. After recognizing his failure and the impending danger, the man struggled to survive by running to free himself from the ice until he finally dies. This is the kind of courage that naturalists support. Hence, this point makes the two authors and their works typical examples of naturalistic fiction. One draws from such experiences that the troubles that man comes across on a daily basis should be faced with courage rather than fear. It is clear that by doing this, one fights to become a better person in the days ahead while also waiting for the day he or she shall die.

In addition, the authors present a bleak picture of life where, at the end of some of the stories, at least one character dies. In "To Build a Fire", the anonymous protagonist dies on his way to meet his friends in the camp. This is the same case with Old KosKoosh in "The Law of Life". Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat" also portrays this via the death of the oiler, which is evident in the following lines: "In the shallow, face downward, lay the oiler. His forehead touched sand that was periodically, between each wave, clear of the sea" (P. 475). In this quotation, one notices that after the struggle of the oiler to survive, he cannot enjoy what he has suffered to achieve. Given that these stories seek to portray life as it is or as realistic as possible, we may say that no matter what man does to survive, death is an inevitable part of his nature. The characters who die symbolize the human species. This aspect of the story seemingly denies man heroism because he is too weak to beat death, which will always be his greatest threat.

Again, both authors uphold the idea of the survival of the fittest or the struggle for survival. In Charles Darwin's view, "Nothing is easier than to admit in words the universal struggle for survival". This quote indicates that in nature, all organisms struggle to survive. In Darwin's view, the weaker species in the context of this struggle perish while the strongest ones survive. This survival is intricately linked to what he calls natural selection," a process that attempts to shed light on why some species survive in a state of nature. In contrast; others do not. The struggle for survival is clear in "The Men in the Storm". The characters fight to secure their safety in the middle of a storm. The same applies in "An Experiment in Misery," wherein the youth tries to survive in a class-segregated society. The stratification is noticed when one comes across the instance where a youth cannot identify with the rich Brooklyn people and with other avenues where they sell food because they are expensive for him. In "To Build a Fire", the protagonist and the dog struggle to survive in the harsh environment that they are enclosed in. Following their struggle, the dog survives while the man dies. This is probably an indication that the law of natural selection favors the dog and also that, between dog and man, the animal has

more survival instincts that are authentic and accurate than those of the man. One may also argue that the dog more easily adapts to changes in the environment than the man.

The perspective of general setting indicates that the two authors rely on real-life historical events in creating the setting of some of the stories and the events that take place in the stories. A look at the background of London's stories reveals their historical backing. According to an anthology of American literature titled *Prentice Hall Literature: Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes*, the United States Secretary of State bought Alaska from Russia in 1867, and following the discovery of rich gold deposits in the Yukon, many Americans traveled there. Jack London is one of the Americans who took part in these travels, and this is why his stories like "To Build a Fire" take place in the Yukon. The Yukon setting enhances the view that most Americans, like London, traveled there to look for minerals. This is evident when we are told that our anonymous protagonist takes the road through Henderson Crack alone because he wants to check the possibility of removing timber during the spring. Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat" is also based on a real-life experience by the author. The story centers on Crane's experiences when he is shipwrecked off the coast of Florida on his way to Cuba to write about the discrepancies that led to the Cuban insurrection in 1898. These instances show that both authors draw from past individual experiences to situate the setting and situations in the stories.

Furthermore, we find in both stories that there is no emotional link between the narrator and the characters who endure difficult moments. In other words, the authors simply show what the characters go through for the readers to see and judge, rather than say it. This is clear in the opening lines of "The Open Boat", when the narrator says that "none of them knew the color of the sky. Their eyes glanced level and were fastened upon the waves that swept toward them". (P. 451) The statement is open for the reader to see the condition of the characters. This kind of hyper-realistic portrayal of characters enhances objectivity, which is one of the features of a naturalistic novel. In the same way, Jack London presents his incidents objectively. In the opening lines of "To Build a Fire", this is made clear when we are told that: "Day had broken cold and gray, exceedingly cold and gray, when the man turned aside from the main Yukon trail and climbed the high earth-bank, where a dim and little-traveled trail led eastward through the fat spruce timberland". (P. 853) In this quotation, the theme of objectivity is enhanced because we are made to see the environment as it truly is. These show that both authors are truly naturalists.

The two authors place themselves at the feet of naturalists. This is because both authors carry the spirit of naturalism with which they are linked. This is captured through their struggling

characters, whose efforts for a better life are qualified by futility. They also embrace the characteristics of naturalism and incorporate them into their work. One of such characteristics is the fact that they embrace the characteristics of realism as they follow the development of the main characters in the short stories under study. For instance, Jack London follows the man in “To Build a Fire” from when he embarks on the Klondike trail, how he struggles with the cold weather, and how he finally dies. This is a similar case in other short stories by the same authors under study. Stephen Crane also traces the development of characters like Jack London. This is seen in “An Experiment in Misery”, as he traces the development of the youth from when he sets out on his journey to experiment with how the lower class of society lives to when he returns. This is a similar case in “The Open Boat”, as the author traces the development of the characters from when they found themselves in the small boat to when they arrive at the shore. Other characteristics of naturalism evident in works by the two authors are pessimism, determinism, despair, objectivity, and unfair social, economic, and environmental forces.

In the different short stories under study, the authors view life and death from a similar position. It seems that to them, there is a time to be born; there is a time to prolong death by taking away life; but there is also a time to die—a time that cannot be avoided. In “To Build a Fire”, Jack London presents a nameless protagonist who struggles to avoid being killed by cold by attempting to build a fire, trying to kill his only companion, the dog, to put his hands inside its skin, and trying to escape cold by running to the camp, but in the end, he finds out that there is no way he can avoid death but rather there is an option, which is to welcome it decently. A similar instance is portrayed in “The Law of Life”, where it is stated that nature sets to life one task and one law, as indicated in this short quote: “To perpetuate was the task of life; its law was death”. (p. 291). The quotation indicates that the existence of man or life can be preserved from extinction, but the law that must be followed after death is death. Stephen Crane views death and life from a similar position but may differ in his way of portraying them. In “The Open Boat”, one sees characters fighting against sea waves to survive, but in the end, it seems that they can only preserve their existence for some time as one of them, the Oiler, succumbs to death after having been able to reach the shore. This indicates that Stephen Crane shares London's view expressed in “The Law of Life”, which says that nature gives life one task and one law. “To perpetuate was the task of life; its law was death”. (p. 291) This is thus an indication that Stephen Crane and Jack London view life and death from a similar angle.

To add, the two authors use young characters in their works. This may indicate that there is a possibility of continuity for the human species. In Jack London's short stories, Understudy,

Sit-Cum-tu-ha represents the young or children who are to take from the old. Her grandfather, Old Koshkoosh, is abandoned and will soon face death. She does not care about him, probably because he has done his part. She is the person to take the family lineage forward. Manson in "The White Silence" instructs Kid to take care of his yet-to-be born child. This might be influenced by the view that the child is going to continue with his lineage. In Stephen Crane's "An Experiment in Misery", the protagonist is a young man referred to as the youth. The use of young characters by the two authors is likely to indicate that they see the young as able to continue where the old may stop.

Both authors address the problems of their contemporaries by describing them honestly and straightforwardly. The authors managed to direct their focus on the problems about which they knew and wished to change. Both Stephen Crane and Jack London are concerned about the state of American society in the 19th century, which praised wealth and consumerism while the common man suffered in the social environment. While each author depicted issues that are either personal or well known, their collective contribution to American society's social and cultural development is easily noticeable. Naturalism has become a harmonious and reliable literary movement from the second half of the 19th century to the 20th century and beyond. The authors captured their reality and interpreted it according to their own beliefs.

Stephen Crane and Jack London took a more personal approach to their works. Their personal experience with life can explain this. As a result, their works highlight socio-economic and cultural problems in American society more effectively. For example, Stephen Crane focuses on the lives of the common men in "The Open Boat", "The Men in the Storm", and "An Experiment in Misery", depending on which category he falls into. In the same way, Jack London writes mostly about adventures and the Klondike trials. Activities he is said to have carried out in his life. By doing this, the authors highlight the cultural and ideological problems evident in American society at the time. For instance, it is a cultural ideology in "The Law of Life" that the old are abandoned to face their fate in times of disaster.

Another concept that makes the two authors similar is their endorsement of what might be termed atheistic naturalism. This is because they rarely mention God in the selected works under study, and even when they do, it is mockery-like, like in Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat," when the correspondent talks about the seven mad gods of the sea. If the gods exist and are mad, it simply shows that the characters cannot feel their presence. Thus they are absent. Going through London's biography, it is indicated that he was an atheist. Perhaps he does not make his characters talk about what is not there.

Differences between Stephen Crane's and Jack London's Naturalism

The setting is one of the major literary elements that outline the difference between the two authors. Stephen Crane sets some of his stories in urban cities. In contrast, Jack London sets in a rural environment. Stephen Crane's "An Experiment in Misery" is set in an urban city. The presence of slums, wanderers, or people who do not have a place to sleep, like the youth, the Sede man, and the Assassin, justifies this view. This setting is significant in this work as it enhances concepts like pessimism in the lower-class people who find themselves in such environments. Jack London, for his part, sets in the rural environment. Under this setting, the reader finds characters mostly going on trials under tough environmental situations like poor weather, as evident in "To Build a Fire", "The White Silence" and "The Law of Life". In these journeys, some of the characters are killed by environmental forces; for instance, The Man in "To Build a Fire". The deaths of characters reinforce the idea of victimization. The difference in setting could be linked to the characters' early lives. It is alleged that in May 1877, Reverend Crane took his young son, Stephen Crane, to "Children's Day", an annual celebration organized by the American Sunday School Union held in Brooklyn. If it is true that Crane attended the celebration, he must have noticed the difference between the happy children at the celebration and the many slum children that he came across in his later life. This would have given him the experience to present slum settings as seen in "An Experiment in Misery" and in *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*. Crane's attitude towards the slums shows that he had a great interest in humanitarian causes, which also didactically reformed the period's literature. Jack London was also set in an environment where it is believed he lived. He participated in the Klondike trials in 1898, when the U.S. secretary of state purchased Alaska from Russia and many U.S. nationals had to travel into the region in search of gold. His experiences must have given him the material to write stories set in the Klondike, featuring characters embarking on such journeys as seen in "To Build a Fire" and "The White Silence".

In short stories, Stephen Crane demonstrates an indifferent attitude toward using female characters. Reading through some of his short stories like "The Men in the Storm", "An Experiment in Misery", and "The Open Boat", one comes across male characters undergoing physical and psychological torture while female characters do not exist. However, Jack London uses female characters like Ruth in "The White Silence" and Sit-cum-to-ha in "The Law of Life". Jack London likely uses these characters to show that they are the ones to continue to increase the human race through childbirth. For instance, Ruth in "The White Silence" is pregnant with a child who is going to take after her husband, Manson. In "The Law of Life", Sit-

Cum-ha will also ensure that the lineage of Old Koskoosh survives. In Jack London's view, the human race can survive through ancestral continuity. One may see Stephen Crane's attitude towards female characters as supportive of Darwin's view that in the struggle of life, the stronger ones survive while the weaker ones die. Women are most often considered weak by nature. Even though Jack London uses female characters, his usage is still minimal as compared to male characters. Additionally, female characters do not perform difficult tasks or embark on challenging journeys compared to male characters. This might be a yardstick to prove that he is a naturalist like Crane and others, though it still establishes a difference between them given that one of them completely does not use female characters while one uses them in a minute way.

The two authors demonstrate different attitudes toward death and dying. In Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat", the characters demonstrate the following attitudes towards death: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. As the characters become knowledgeable of their impending doom, they reuse its reality, become angry with other creatures like the birds, become depressed with the idea of death, and finally accept that nature is indifferent to man and death is not a choice but a way to go. This is the case with every human being. When one is aware that he will die, he goes through preparatory stages. He may start in denial, fight to prevent it, cry, and refuse visitors until death gulfs him. Stephen Crane, however, does not celebrate death; he sees it as an end to the human being, and like his characters, one must vehemently condemn it. Jack London shares the views of Stephen Crane to an extent. He sees the possibility of death in every circumstance, and he goes further to term it "The Law of Life". One is bound to perpetuate life, but he cannot overcome death, according to the line of thought put forward by Jack London. However, one may say that there is a possibility of overcoming death if humans ensure the continuity of ancestral lineage through birth. These views create a divergence between the two authors.

In addition, the two authors view survival against nature from different perspectives. To Stephen Crane, as portrayed in "The Open Boat", man must rely on his fellow man or any of his companions to survive in the hostilities poised by nature or the environment in which he finds himself. This runs throughout some of his short stories under study, like "The Men in the Storm" and "An Experiment in Misery". Even though Jack London also puts his characters in the natural environment and presents them trying to survive like Stephen Crane, the methods his characters use to search for survival are different from the ones portrayed by Stephen Crane. In Jack London's "To Build a Fire", the unnamed protagonist struggles to survive freezing in his attempt to travel to the Klondike in search of wealth during the Klondike Gold Rush of 1897. When he

becomes aware that nature might kill him, he attempts to kill his only companion, the dog. Crane would protect the dog because he believes our companion can help us survive in the environment. London does not share this view; he presents a character who attempts to kill his only companion and rejects an elderly woman's advice not to travel alone under difficult environmental circumstances. Jack London promotes individualism as a means to survive against hostile nature. At the same time, Stephen Crane sees survival against nature as a joint act or something that requires all collaboration. It can also be that Crane wants to show that the need to survive is a uniting factor, and Jack London's character is simply greedy for gold, which is why he decides to travel alone without a companion.

The reactions of Crane's characters differ from those of London's when they are placed in similar turbulent situations. The characters in "The Open Boat" and "To Build a Fire" are placed under similar environmental conditions but react differently. For instance, the man in "To Build a Fire" cares only about himself and the need to survive alone. This might be said to be a survival mechanism common to many human beings as people turn to thinking more about themselves and the things that they value most when they are faced with difficult situations. In this case, the character in Jack London's story is a universal figure. The characters in "The Men in the Storm" and "The Open Boat" differ. They push together and use all their material to help each other survive. Even though human beings are self-centered when it comes to fighting to survive, they may develop some communal bond if they have been with each other, lived as a group for a long time, or have a common course they pursue. This seems to be the case in "The Open Boat," as these characters seem to have been in the sea for some time, and the communal bond they share thus binds them together to fight for each other's survival against the dangerous sea waves.

Jack London's works "The White Silence" and "The Law of Life" carry hope for the survival of the human species against the hostile environment in which the characters find themselves. This hope is archived through childbirth to represent the survival of the human species. Sit-cum-tu-ha is used in "The Law of Life" to show that she is the one to take the generation of Old Koskoosh further. A similar instance is evident in "The White Silence" when Manson, on his dying bed, pleads that his friend, Malemute Kid, should take care of his unborn child and send him to a good school to become a better boy. It would be too shallow to see this as a simple act of love for the baby rather than an indication that we can only survive by giving birth to children who will take over from us in the coming days, months, or years. Stephen Crane does not portray any hope. To him, man is undoubtedly moving towards extinction. Throughout

his stories under study, there is no childbirth, and no character is pregnant. He instead alludes to a temple that does not exist, as seen in “The Open Boat,” to show that man might want to look up to the holy temple when he has challenges, but he may be shocked that there is no temple. This is a sign of shattered hope for man and the entire human race, which is bound to be extinct at any moment.

Furthermore, Jack London uses animal characters in his works. In stories like “To Build a Fire”, “The White Silence”, and “The Law of Life”, Jack London uses animal characters like dogs. This might be because he wants to show that animals and humans occupy the same position in nature. Another way might be to show that animals more easily understand and adapt to their environment than men. This point is valid because man quickly dies when placed in the same environment as an animal while the animal survives. For instance, the dog in “To Build a Fire” survives while the human character dies. Stephen Crane does not use animal characters. This might be because he sets most of his stories in urban settings compared to London, where characters mostly go on trials in natural settings.

Naturalism foregrounds primitive instincts over reason. Even though the two authors under study write from a naturalistic point of view, Jack London demonstrates the power of instincts as a necessary tool for human survival more than Stephen Crane. To Jack London, as portrayed in “To Build a Fire”, man must rely on his instincts to survive. He succeeds in doing this by contrasting the dog that relies on its instincts and survives death and the man who relies on reason and dies. This is a lesson to man that he may always trust his instincts because judgment and reason can fail humans. Stephen Crane's characters trust reason, logic, and teamwork more than primitive instincts. In “The Men in the Storm”, under a strong blizzard, the characters decide to gather in one place and fight for survival together. This is a similar case in “The Open Boat,” where characters in a small boat form a very strong friendship bond after a shipwreck. Crane's characters are influenced by the idea that he should not fight for himself until one ensures the survival of all around him. This thinking, however good, seems not to go without demerits because when one fails to trust himself, he may be heading toward destruction.

Cultural heredity is one factor that differentiates the two authors handling of naturalism. Jack London is writing in the past, as he presents characters who are very rooted in their culture and seem not to have forgotten their ancestral way of life. Though this way of life causes them some difficulties, they hold it dear. In “The Law of Life”, it is a culture for the young to abandon the old and seek safety during times of difficulty. Old Koshkoosh is abandoned the same way he did to his father, as indicated in this flashback: “He remembered how he had abandoned his

father on an upper reach of the Klondike one winter, the winter before the missionary came with his talk-books and his box of medicines” (p. 291). The center of this flashback is how Old KoshKoosh abandoned his father under similar circumstances that his son abandoned him in when he was young. In a similar instance from the same short story, the narrator talks about a maiden who will be left under such circumstances when she becomes old. This is portrayed in the following extract:

A maiden was a good creature to look upon, full-breasted and strong, with spring to her step and light in her eyes. But her task was yet before her. The light in her eyes brightened, her step quickened, she was now bold with the young men, now timid, and she gave them of her own unrest. And ever she grew fairer and yet fairer to look upon, till some hunter, able no longer to withhold himself, took her to his lodge to cook and toil for him and to become the mother of his children. And with the coming of her offspring her looks left her. Her limbs dragged and shuffled, her eyes dimmed and bleared, and only the little children found joy against the withered cheek of the old squaw by the fire. Her task was done. But a little while, on the first pinch of famine or the first long trail, and she would be left, even as he had been left, in the snow, with a little pile of wood. (P. 291)

The quotation indicates that after the young maiden's beauty has faded, she would likely be abandoned in the snow in case of famine or during a trial. Stephen Crane, on his part, does not portray cultural heredity in the same way as London. He sees it from a more humanitarian angle, focusing on the commonality humans share. In his view, one human cannot abandon another in the snow, as in London's works. Instead, he presents characters who struggle to save their kin, as in “The Open Boat”. Hence, both authors handle cultural heredity from different points of view.

In “To Build a Fire” Jack London also promotes self-reliance and individualism. Unless stated otherwise, his character is so confident that he can succeed without the assistance of any other person. The validity of this is proven when the narrator sets out for a trail under bad weather conditions with a dog as a companion after ignoring a veteran's advice that he should not travel alone. At some points on the way, he considers the old man who advised him to be too fearful. Though his attempts to reach the camp before 6 p.m. fail and he is killed due to the absence of someone who could help him make a fire, he may be credited for being a character London relies on to portray the concept of self-reliance, which is very important in American thought. Stephen Crane, on his part, does not promote self-reliance. His characters rely on each other and the community to survive. In “An Experiment in Misery”, the youth depends on the Assassin to have somewhere to sleep, and the Assassin relies on him for money for food. A similar case is in “The Men in the Storm,” where the characters have to come together so that the

heat from the friction with each other can help them overcome the cold breeze that troubles them. One may interpret here that Crane is a humanitarian who promotes human values like solidarity, while London is an American who finds it difficult to escape American cultural values.

Stephen Crane's naturalism is socially based. A basic requirement for a complete understanding of a Stephen Crane short story like "An Experiment in Misery" is a detailed study of the story as a criticism of town or city life. After reading the work, it is a work of social criticism. As a criticism of town life or social criticism, the work is, therefore part of an important literary trend involving naturalism and local color. This story shows how Crane sees city life, particularly the poverty of the common men or the poor, as championed by the youth. This work, as one may argue, sets society against the individual as a way to criticize American society and other societies where life exists because the events in the story are timeless and universal. Based on this story, Crane is not just a naturalist but a committed writer, that is, one who speaks to the problems of his people. The social criticism noticed in this story is also evident in his novella *Maggie: A Girl of the Street*. This indicates that Crane's naturalism is society-based compared to Jack London, who focuses on adventure stories and the gold rush. Based on this point, one may argue that there is a naturalism between Stephen Crane and Jack London.

Though a naturalist, Jack London incorporates the concept of the Anthropocene. According to Timothy Clark, the Anthropocene is:

Characterized by the unprecedented fact that humanity has come to play decisive, if still largely incalculable, role in the planet's ecology and geology, that human activities have become so pervasive and profound that they rival the great forces of nature and are pushing the Earth as a whole into planetary terra incognita. (P. 1)

This quotation shows that human activities are contributing to the changes experienced by man in the environment. These human activities could be farming or timber exploitation. Jack London portrays the Anthropocene in "To Build a Fire," when the narrator travels to the Yukon in winter because he wants to find a possibility to harvest timber. One also notices that the aim of traveling to Yukon by many Americans at the time was because of the gold discovered there. Jack London, therefore probably wants to make the reader see that man has influence over nature, which contributes to the effects that nature may impose on him.

The point above shows that man's greed and desire to materialize the environment cause harm

to the planet, which also affects him. In this way, the calamities faced by man in the environment may be considered retributive justice. In the stories under study, Stephen Crane does not portray the Anthropocene to the level of Jack London. Instead, he focuses more on how the environment preys on his characters to shed light on the general human condition vis-à-vis the environment. Based on the views expressed here, one is likely to argue in support of the view that, though these authors are classic naturalists, there is something more to London's naturalism than Crane's naturalism.

This chapter brings together the authors and the short stories under study to show to what extent they are similar and different. It argues that one factor which brings the two authors together is that, they are classic naturalist writers. Both of them also use young characters in their works. The authors are however different in the way that they handle the subject, naturalism. One of the differences between them is that, Crane sets most of his stories in the urban city and in slum areas while Jack London sets in the rural environment.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Literary naturalism replicates real-life experiences of man in the world. In doing so, naturalism exposes threats man faces by revealing humanity's biological, social, and environmental crises. Through interrogating sites where scenes of fragility can most clearly be observed, one can then be able to not only encounter the subject, naturalism but, through the subject, interpret man's vulnerability and further question our relationship with the environment in which we find ourselves. This work focuses on naturalism as a medium to interpret the relationship between man and his heredity, man and his environment, and man and his God. This focus motivates more scientific thinking that serves as a driving force for innovations.

This dissertation has shown that naturalism in American literature constituted a reaction to the escapism of Romantic literature. According to this analysis, American literature naturalists chose to be more radical by committing to the detailed description of the lives of the most vulnerable population groups as portrayed in "An Experiment in Misery" and "The Men in the Storm". Naturalism in American literature gained clear and well-identified characteristic elements that could be traced in all genre works. This analysis recognizes that such prominent naturalistic elements as the detachment of an author from the narrative, pessimism, the concept of determinism, interest in the problems of the lower socio-economic classes, lack of direct moral criticism, the notion of heredity, and a tendency toward pessimistic outcomes can be noticed in the works by Stephen Crane and Jack London. Though these two authors have certain differences in their handling of the subject matter, substantial naturalistic elements can be found in both.

This work is comprised of a General introduction, Four Chapters, and a General Conclusion. The General introduction consisted in situating the study within context, stating the research problem, the significance of the study, the research questions, the hypothesis, the objectives of the study, the scope of the study, the structure of the work, and the definition of key terms used in the study.

Chapter One, "Theoretical Framework and Review of critical literature" served two purposes. First, it examined the theoretical framework chosen for the study- new historicism. Second, it explored literature related to the study. The review of related literature achieved the intention to lay a solid foundation for the study.

Chapter Two entitled “The Naturalism of Stephen Crane” examines how the environment, heredity, and the absence of God influences characters in Stephen Crane’s “The Open Boat 1897”, “An Experiment in Misery 1894” and “The Men in the Storm 1894”. It argued that the problems faced by the characters in the second half of the 19th century transcend time and space to what man face in contemporary society.

Chapter Three captioned “The Naturalism of Jack London” focused on the analysis of Jack London’s “To Build a Fire 1902”, “The White Silence 1899”, and “The Law of Life 1901” with intentions to show that naturalism or the scientific worldview of the human condition portrayed through character victimization by the environment, heredity and the absence of God is a timeless and universal reality. It posits that this view is not a formulation of Jack London but a replica of what has been and is the realities of the human condition.

Chapter Four entitled “The Similarities and Differences between Naturalism in Selected Short Stories by Stephen Crane and Jack London” compares the naturalistic tendencies in the works of Stephen Crane and Jack London. By doing this, this chapter says who is more naturalistic and who is not.

The conclusion summarizes the entire study. It states the findings of the study, and validates the hypothesis. It also reiterates that naturalistic techniques and perspectives are valid in explaining the human condition. The scientific worldview pushes for scientific innovation and, consequently, human development. The conclusion outlines gaps discovered in the course of the present study hence suggesting areas for future scientific arguments.

This study was formulated on the hypothesis that scientific thinking or naturalism or physicalism portrayed through concepts like the environment in which characters are enclosed, their heredity, and the absence of God is responsible for the problems characters encounter in Stephen Crane’s “The Open Boat 1897”, “An Experiment in Misery 1871”, “The Men in the Storm 1894”, and Jack London's “To Build a Fire 1902”, “The White Silence 1899”, and “The Law of Life 1901”.

This study aimed to examine how the environment, heredity and the absence of God victimize characters in the selected short stories. The findings have revealed that Crane and London’s characters live lives with a persistent sense of foreboding and loss due to hostile environmental, social, and heredity factors. Under these circumstances, they find refuge in talking to God whom they belief is the only source of solace. But unfortunately, even God is not with them. They are in their world and are the ones to fend for their survival. This research

comes to rely on a single premise that a scientific worldview is a reliable driver of personal and scientific development. If man depends on it, he will find solutions to the daily problems faced through innovations.

The present study has, however, not completely exhausted thematic concerns in the works under study. Researchers interested in naturalism and environmental studies will want to question the ideas of the anthropogenic raised by Stephen Crane and Jack London. It will also be interesting for researchers to interrogate the short stories to find out if a person can believe in God and naturalism.

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