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A Criticism of Anthropocentrism in *An Island to Oneself* by Tom Neale

Tom Neale'nin An Island to Oneself Eserinde Antroposantrizm Eleştirisi

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Abstract

Tom Neale's autobiography *An Island to Oneself* (1966) reflects a deeply human-centred perspective that places mankind at the top of a natural hierarchy, where the environment and animals are valued only in relation to human needs. Neale's attempt to create a liveable space on the remote island of Suwarrow demonstrates a mindset that seeks to control, reshape, and dominate the natural world. His efforts to clear the land, build a garden, fence off areas, tame animals, and eliminate species he deems threatening – such as pigs and crabs – reveal an attitude of ownership and superiority over nature. Nature and non-human beings are not treated as a valuable partner in his experience but as something to be subdued and reordered for personal benefit. The text reveals how this way of thinking, which treats the environment as a tool for human use, leads to the disruption of ecological balance. Neale's relationship with the island mirrors a broader theoretical and philosophical context, where nature is often reduced to a resource to be managed, used, or overcome. Rather than offering a harmonious coexistence, the narrative underscores the consequences of placing human desires above the needs of the natural world, exposing the limitations and dangers of an anthropocentric worldview.

Keywords: Tom Neale, anthropocentrism, humans, nature, animals

Paper Type: Research

Öz

Tom Neale'in otobiyografisi *An Island to Oneself* (1966) insanı doğa hiyerarşisinin en üstüne yerleştiren, derin bir insan merkezli bakış açısını yansıtır. Bu bakış açısında çevre ve hayvanlar yalnızca insan ihtiyaçlarıyla ilişkili oldukları ölçüde değer taşır. Neale'in ıssız Suwarrow Adası'nda yaşanabilir bir alan oluşturma çabası, doğayı kontrol altına alma, yeniden şekillendirme ve ona hükmetme düşüncesini açıkça ortaya koyar. Toprağı temizlemesi, bir bahçe kurması, alanları çitle çevirmesi, hayvanları evcilleştirmeye çalışması ve tehdit olarak gördüğü domuzlar ve yengeçler gibi türleri yok etme girişimleri, doğa üzerinde sahiplenici ve üstünlükçü bir tavrı gözler önüne serer. Doğa ve insan dışı varlıklar, onun tecrübesinde değerli bir ortak olarak değil, kişisel çıkarlar doğrultusunda boyun eğdirilmesi ve yeniden düzenlenmesi gereken unsurlar olarak ele alınır. Metin, çevreyi insanın hizmetine sunulacak bir araç gibi gören bu düşünce biçiminin, ekolojik dengenin bozulmasına yol açtığını ortaya koyar. Neale'in ada ile kurduğu ilişki, doğanın genellikle yönetilecek, kullanılacak ya da aşılacak bir kaynak olarak görüldüğü daha geniş teorik ve felsefi bir bağlamın yansımasıdır. Anlatı, insan arzularını doğanın ihtiyaçlarının önüne koymanın sonuçlarını vurgularken, insan merkezli dünya görüşünün sınırlarını ve tehlikelerini de açığa çıkarır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tom Neale, antroposantrizm, insan, tabiat, hayvanlar

Makale Türü: Araştırma

Introduction

The autobiography *An Island to Oneself* (1966) by Tom Neale remains an unexamined work, offering opportunities for in-depth analyses and interpretations. The story is set on the tiny Cook Island atoll of Suwarrow (also known as Suvorov) in the mid-20th century. The work provides the reader with significant insights into the feelings one may experience on an island

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where nobody lives, the challenges that may be encountered, and the potential responses to these challenges. Living far from the technological conveniences of modern civilization, Neale both struggles for survival and finds satisfaction in it. The author demonstrates what a human being can achieve despite loneliness and deprivation under harsh living conditions.

By choosing to voluntarily maroon himself and settle on the desert island, the author undertakes a rare and remarkable endeavour. Apart from the limited and basic equipment he brought with him, he lacks any other material to sustain his life. According to Summers, Neale "allowed himself only a brief exploration of the impulse to spend so much time alone on an island, attributing much of it the influence of Robert Dean Frisbee, an American writer who once spent a year there" (2019). Morton states: "Neale did not take kindly to being back among the comforts of civilization. Clocks were an intrusive nuisance, cars moved noisily and too fast, and trousers compared unfavourably with the comfort of a cotton loincloth" (2015). Through this adventure, the author illustrates that people may not always find happiness in the comforts and conveniences of modern life and may seek new pursuits under conditions often labelled as primitive. According to Matthias (2021), his goal was to escape human society and return to nature in order to live a life he believed to be more meaningful – one in which he could coexist peacefully and harmoniously with the natural world while utilizing all of his own resources, skills, and abilities to survive. When Noel Barber asks Neale why he decided to settle on the island, Neale replies: "I'd been growing towards the idea for thirty years… I like people – I honestly do. I'm not just evading responsibilities. I suppose really – honestly – I don't quite know why I did come here in the first place" (Barber, 1966, p. 13). The fundamental reason for the author's preference to live away from people by leading a solitary life on the island is not a hatred against humans or a sense of alienation from them.

In order to survive on the island, the author frequently has to deal with inclement weather, especially rain and storms, as well as run-ins with wild animals. Beyond just displaying the bravery and heroism of an adventurous spirit, the work offers fresh insights on the relationship between humans and nature in the context of modernity. Particularly noteworthy are the author's attempts to control nature and animals as soon as he sets foot on the island, as well as his attempts to mould the island to suit his preferences. We are reminded of anthropocentric paradigms by the autobiography's reflection of human-centeredness toward nature. Anthropocentrism's philosophical framework and the author's destructive and oppressive attitude toward nature are nearly identical.

An anthropocentric worldview that prioritizes human needs over ecological harmony is illustrated in Tom Neale's 1966 autobiography, *An Island to Oneself*, which offers an engaging but unsettling account of human dominance over nature. This essay critically examines Neale's actions and thoughts on the remote island of Suwarrow and argues that his attempts to control and modify the surroundings are a perfect illustration of the negative effects of anthropocentrism. By analysing Neale's interventions—which include eradicating species, domesticating animals, enforcing order through gardening, and viewing nature as an enemy to be exploited and controlled—this study explores how his philosophy reflects broader philosophical and ecological crises. How does Neale's anthropocentric approach to Suwarrow Island survival highlight the constraints and perils of human dominance over nature, and what implications does this have for current environmental discourse? This is the main research question that drives this analysis. We can find ample data to examine the work in light of these philosophical discourses.

A Brief Biography of Tom Neale

Although Thomas Francis Neale was born in New Zealand, he left to explore the Pacific islands as soon as he was offered a position in the Royal New Zealand Navy. He worked at a variety of jobs and lived in many different locations throughout the Pacific, including Tahiti for a few years as a shopkeeper. He only made his first brief visit to Suwarrow with a supply ship in 1945, at the age of 43, and he knew right away that this was the place he wanted to call home.

Unfortunately, he was unable to move to the island at this time due to the ongoing Second World War. A small hut on the island housed a small group of soldiers who were on duty at a military outpost. Only much later, in 1952, following the conclusion of the war, did Tom Neale eventually find a way to the island. He had never been wealthy. He had little desire for material possessions or a more secure career path, and he was content to work odd jobs that gave him enough free time to daydream about living outside of civilization. If it weren't for the sporadic friends who visited the islands and spent long evenings telling him about the peaceful and pristine places everywhere, particularly the island of his dreams, Suwarrow, he might have lived forever (Matthias 2021).

1. Methods

1.1. Definition of Anthropocentrism

Anthropocentric discussions have long been made concerning human-nature relations within the framework of ecological movements. Humans' detrimental impact on nature and animals has provoked environmentalists and other green activists to research human-nature interaction by focusing on the historical development and definition of anthropocentrism along with its underlying philosophical context.

Anthropocentric philosophy is in the front line of ecocritical criticism due to its alienation from all entities other than humans. Savannah Kuper claims anthropocentrism holds that humans are "the most superior species" in the universe; thus, this "mode of thought" establishes a "hierarchy" that elevates "humans" "above all nonhuman species" (2015, p. 268). This movement "manifests itself through the exploitation of natural resources and general prioritization of human self-interest over the environment" (Kupek, 2015, p. 267). According to anthropocentric views, nature and its resources exist for the extravagant consumption and luxury of human beings. This perspective often relies on the assumption that only humans possess uniquely valuable faculties such as reason or morality. As Gümüş states, "Animals are seen to be lacking certain features for status, some of which are capacity of reasoning, ability of language, and morality" (Gümüş, 2022, p. 1150). Such hierarchies serve to justify the moral and practical exclusion of non-human beings from ethical consideration, reinforcing human dominance over nature. Timothy Clark also argues any position, viewpoint, or idea that views people as the "centre" or standard is referred to as anthropocentrism; therefore, even the "aesthetics" of appreciating a "landscape" can be anthropocentric because an "anthropocentric" view of the natural world sees it only in relation to humans, for example, "as a resource for economic use" or as an "expression of particular social or cultural values;" (2011, p. 3). In "environmental discourse," "anthropocentrism" refers to the belief that humans and their interests are exclusively valuable and always take precedence over those of "non-human" species (Clark, 2011, p. 3). Non-human beings lose their significance when compared with humans and carry the risk of extinction at the hands of selfish and egoist humanity. Anthropocentric notions have encouraged humans to find themselves at liberty to act so boldly that nature is now face to face with any global catastrophes because of the extinction of some species. Stripped of its sacred value, nature assumes the role of satisfying human beings by serving their unending interests and demands.

Anthropocentric arguments have not been brought up recently. Gary Steiner discusses that anthropocentric views "have their roots in Aristotle, and particularly in the thought of the Stoics, Saint Augustine, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, and Kant" (2005, p. 2). According to William Leiss, "the Judaeo-Christian" tradition separated the concept of "spirit" from "nature," asserting that human beings are distinct from all other creatures precisely because they alone possess "spirit," thereby participating, in part, in "God's transcendence" over "nature" (1994, p. 34). In *The Great Instauration of the Dominion of Man over the Universe* (1561–1626), advocating for the reclamation of human authority over nature through the advancement of scientific knowledge, technological development, and the systematic application of empirical inquiry, Francis Bacon articulated a vision for humanity to re-establish its dominion over the universe, a role symbolically linked to the Garden of Eden lost by Adam in the Fall (Bacon, 1964). Rene Descartes, through his emphasis on rationalist philosophy determining human-nature

divisions, appears as one of the figures who occupy a central position in the discussions of anthropocentrism.

Rene Descartes, one of the pioneering figures of modern philosophy, is a philosopher who has been discussed and criticized beginning from his contemporary period to the present time. Descartes is well-known for rationalist thinking, Cartesian philosophy, and dualism. One of the most striking aspects of his philosophical views is that he adds a new dimension to human-nature and human-animal relations. Descartes attempts to revise and redefine human-nature relations on the basis of his rationalist philosophy. His notion that we should "render ourselves the masters and possessors of nature" (2003, p. 41) explains much about his approach to nature. By treating "original matter as chaos, the mindless material or primitive form of the world on which rational order must be imposed," he intensified "human/nature dualism" whose roots go back to Plato (Plumwood, 2003, p. 107). Manicardi discusses that the rationalist views of Descartes led nature to have lost its value and become a dead "object" that could be manipulated by the human "subject" (2013, p. 76). In the works of modern philosophers like Descartes, "the concept of nature as a machine emerged, as an entity separate from and inferior to human rational capacities, as a material object meant for human use" (Mayer, 2006, p. 115-16). Therefore, the dualistic understanding of Descartes forged an ego-centric perception which situates human beings at a central position where their mind can determine the final decision about nature. Humans began to lose a holistic view of human-nature relations and forgot that domination of natural resources at their will would bring about detrimental and destructive effects not only on nature but also on themselves.

Descartes touched upon human-animal relations as well and expressed his philosophical notions on how animals could be approached. DeMello claims that since "animals are incapable of using language, Descartes considered them to be essentially machines – mindless automata which operate without higher thought or consciousness" (2012, p. 39). Because Descartes accepted "animals as mechanical bodies with no soul or mind and no ability to feel pain," "anaesthesia was not developed until the mid-nineteenth century, so animals were cut apart while fully conscious and, as we know now, were fully able to feel pain" (DeMello, 2012, p. 171). Descartes intends to emphasize that the human or animal body's "functioning and behavioural responses" can be explained solely by the intricately ordered "structure of its internal parts" in conjunction with the proper "external stimuli" by characterizing it as "a machine or natural automaton" (Cottingham 1993, p. 20). As a result of supposing that animals are automatons that have no spiritual side, "Descartes dissected live, conscious dogs and interpreted their screams, not as pain, but as instinctive noises that a machine might make" (DeMello, 2012, p. 380). Descartes is regarded as one of the key figures who contributed to the growing divide between humans and animals, thereby influencing the development of a detached and impassive relationship between the two. This has resulted in a lack of emotional connection and affection towards animals. The animal body became a space in which humans exerted control and exploitation, presented as a form of examination and curiosity.

Anthropocentrism, also known as the idea of human supremacy, refers to a worldview that centres existential and moral concerns around humanity. While historically rooted in various cultural and intellectual traditions, its most salient philosophical articulation, as noted by Goralnik and Nelson, asserts that intrinsic moral worth is attributed exclusively to human beings while all other non-human beings are ascribed value only insofar as they contribute to human purposes or possess instrumental utility (2012, p. 145). According to this framework, the rest of the natural world is viewed primarily in terms of its utility to human goals, while humans are said to be intrinsically deserving of moral consideration.

2. Anthropocentrism in *An Island to Oneself*

The author's desire to assert control over the surrounding flora and fauna as soon as he arrives on the island is a clear sign that he sees himself as the island's ruler. It is possible to read

his desire to create a garden on the island and try to fence it off from its surroundings as an attempt to draw a line between himself and the wild. His attempts to domesticate the island's poultry demonstrate an interventionist attitude toward the natural order. An anthropocentric idea of human dominance over nature can be linked to his view of pigs and crabs as threats, his desire to eradicate them, and his battle against them. In a similar vein, the author views storms, rain, and sharks as challenges that must be surmounted.

When Tom arrives on the island, he encounters a pre-constructed shack with a garden built by World War II coast watchers. When Tom notices the shack and the garden, the first thing that catches his attention is the garden's state of neglect and the need for it to be restored. He expresses: "Now I took a look at the garden, or rather the remains of the garden, overgrown with weeds and thick creepers" (Neale, 1966, p. 49). The fact that the garden has been almost entirely overrun by weeds and thick creepers unsettles Tom, and since restoring the garden is essential for his needs, its reconstruction becomes a persistent concern in his mind. He tells us that "a garden was an absolute necessity. I could start to make a fence but my real problem lay in transporting the topsoil I had discovered by the depression at the southern end of the island" (Neale, 1966, p. 67). Tom's concern for the garden and his establishment of a defined area on the island are not solely related to his needs.

Considering the deeper meanings underlying the act of owning and cultivating the garden, Tom's relationship with nature becomes more clearly understood. According to Bauman, who argues that "wild cultures" were transformed into "garden cultures" with the onset of modernity, the areas outside the garden and the undesirable elements within it belong to "the wilderness," whereas the order and discipline established within the garden symbolize modern thought (1987, p. 51). Constructing a garden is not a physical activity but could also be "linked to other means of ordering life: codifying and ritualizing social time and space, creating political orders and social hierarchies" (Stewart, 1998, p. 111). Seed argues: "As a sign of possession, the garden represented the entire colonial ambition to possess the land by establishing a part of the project in a central and visible way" (1995, p. 29). Since the garden involves the enclosure of a space and its separation from the outside through boundaries, it seems implausible to consider it unrelated to the enclosure movement. As the "enclosure movement" advanced, it fostered a formidable "anthropocentric" drive for dominance, one committed to employing "aggressive" methods to exploit and regulate "nature" and "the world's environmental resources," often with little regard for the consequences (Marzec, 2015, p. 24). Tom's desire to build a garden can also be viewed within the framework of these discussions.

Tom thinks he can restore order to the island's chaotic state by building a garden. He creates a social hierarchy on the island by putting his own ideas and plans at the center of this new order. In a way, this garden is an intervention into the lives of the island's flora and fauna as well as a modification of the land and vegetation. As a result, the possibility of upsetting the natural equilibrium appears unavoidable. Tom limits the animals' freedom and mobility in this garden in an effort to domesticate them. Tom has become the owner and master of the plants and animals in the garden, so his decisions determine the boundaries of their lives. This garden's existence is a sign that Tom wants to rule the entire island in addition to controlling the area inside its borders. The ecological life outside of Tom's rebuilt garden assumes a secondary role in relation to this centre, sometimes taking on the role of an area in need of intervention as it becomes the focal point of the island. By cultivating the plant and animal species he wants and eliminating those he does not, the garden serves as a place for Tom to satiate his ego. Tom's preferences are catered to by the order within the garden's boundaries, and the structure and requirements of the garden also shape the order outside.

Tom perceives the wild pigs on the island as a threat and obstacle to the self-centred system he intends to establish, and thus decides to extirpate them from the island. He begins to hear unsettling and frightening noises at night, realizing that these sounds belong to the wild pigs: "Only once did I wake during the night, when a sudden squeal, half human, half animal, made me

jump up, frozen with fear. It was succeeded by a series of grunts – and then I knew the sounds and relaxed" (Neale, 1966: 51). Aware that wild pigs are fast, agile, and strong animals, Tom understands that confronting them will not be an easy task. The wild pigs start devouring Tom's crops, which enrages him. He comes to the realization that, due to the presence of the wild pigs, he will be unable to build his garden and raise crops or livestock within it:

> There were five of them – five monsters dedicated to a continuous and determined onslaught on any attempt I might make at a garden. Every green thing I wanted to plant would be doomed to be gobbled up, and since a garden was a necessity, it had come to a state where it was either me or the pigs (Neale, 1966, p. 76).

This problem, which occupied Tom's mind for a long time, drives him to devise plans to completely exterminating the wild pig population on the island. After contemplating various strategies for setting traps, he resolves to climb a tree at night and kill the boars by hurling spears from above. In the end, Tom kills each of the boars one by one, eradicating the species from the island.

Another species that evokes fear and anxiety in Tom is the coconut crabs. The potential of coconut crabs to bite humans and cause pain is one of the factors that disturbs Tom's peace. Moreover, by consuming the plants and vegetables he cultivates, the coconut crabs pose a risk to the dominion he intends to establish over his garden. He recounts: "I could see no evidence of bees or insects, no reptiles; nothing more dangerous than the coconut crabs, and an occasional rat" (Neale, 1966, p. 53). While the fence Tom builds around the garden may prevent certain animals, it does not function as a solution to the invasion of the coconut crabs. Since the fence is constructed against bigger animals, it cannot stop the crabs, which can climb over the fence or pass through it, from accessing vegetables like tomatoes and garlic in the garden. Tom says: "Rows of my precious plants were lying uprooted on a bare patch of ground near the onion bed. And round the plants, scores and scores of hermit crabs – some as tiny as a thumb nail – were having the feast of their lives" (Neale, 1966, p. 97). The author awakens in the middle of the night, suddenly feeling pain and bleeding, realizing that he has been bitten by a crab:

> I woke with a yell in the middle of the night as a sudden pain transfixed my leg so violently that it felt as though my calf had been slashed open with a knife. There was no moon, and I was without a lamp, but as instinctively I bent down to touch my leg I felt a sticky wetness of blood in the darkness and became aware of something moving and shuffling close beside my hand.
>
> I had forgotten those damned coconut crabs! The cruel nip didn't appear to have done any serious damage, but I got no more sleep that night after washing my wound in salt water (Neale, 1966, p. 164).

The coconut crabs not only damage the plants Tom has cultivated but also pose a significant peril to his health and safety. Tom will not be able to sleep soundly if this situation continues, and the possibility of his wounds getting infected could keep him from staying healthy. In order to deal with this, Tom places traps to capture the crabs and then moves them to the opposite side of the island. By limiting their habitat and interfering with their natural ecosystem, he controls the number of crabs.

Perhaps the most dangerous threat to Tom's life on the island is the sharks, which can be menacing creatures. On several occasions, Tom comes face-to-face with death due to shark attacks, narrowly escaping at the last moment. He narrates the moment:

> Without a moment's warning, three sharks were charging towards me. Each looked about three feet long – the type which thrives in comparatively shallow water. For a moment I was almost paralysed and then instinctively I backed hastily out of the pool, banging the water furiously with my rod. It was only a

> matter of two or three steps, but those seconds deemed a long, long time. Fortunately, my desperately thrashing rod seemed to scare the sharks, who turned away. After that, I took care to cross the pool where the water was only ankle-deep (Neale, 1966, p. 81).

While fishing in a pool near the island, Tom is attacked but managed to scare off the sharks by frantically striking the water with his rod. After this harrowing experience, Tom learns his lesson and begins to favour shallow waters over deeper areas when fishing. Realizing that he cannot defend himself in the deep waters ruled by sharks, Tom wisely avoids these treacherous depths. Another encounter with a shark occurs one night when Tom goes fishing: "The lure had vanished. I could see my bamboo rod floating in the water. The shark must have missed my hand by inches as it took the fish, and in passing had hit me with its tail" (Neale, 1966, p. 82). As a shark snaps at the fish caught on his line, it nearly severs his hand. The shark takes what it wants, then swims off, hitting Tom with its tail. For Tom, fishing turns into a potentially fatal pastime. This risk increases at night, when visibility is poor and the underwater environment is obscured.

In addition to fighting tenaciously against the island's untamed fauna, Tom works to shield his shack, garden, and himself from the harsh tropical weather. Despite his precautions, the order he has laboriously established on the island is destroyed in a single night by a violent storm. Tom finds the sound of the storm overwhelming all other sounds and the sound of trees being uprooted to be extremely frightening.: "The wind was so strong that it blotted out almost all other sounds, though every now and then, I could hear the crash of another tree falling" (Neale, 1966, p. 123). Confronted with this overwhelming challenge and unable to take any meaningful action, Tom barely manages to reach his hut, navigating with difficulty through the branches scattered everywhere: "There was nothing I could do. Somehow I struggled back to the shack, fighting my way across the yard, already littered with the smashed branches of trees" (Neale, 1966, p. 122). On the morning after the storm, the scene Tom discovers is one of utter devastation, which makes him very upset: "Four old trees had crashed across the yard. Half the fowl-run fence looked as though it had been torn up by a giant's fingers. One banana tree had been uprooted, the roots sticking into the air" (Neale, 1966, p. 124). Furthermore, when he sees that the pier he has built with months of labour is destroyed by the storm, he gets very depressed: "My pier was gone. I just stood and stared. Six months of back-breaking labour had vanished in six hours" (Neale, 1966, p. 124). The destruction brought by the violent storm is portrayed as a factor that threatens Tom's dominance and control over the island. It seems that compensating for the damage and restoring the wreckage entails considerable time for Tome. His shack has barely withstood the storm.

Tom's condescending attitude toward the fowls on the island and his intent to tame and confine them to his garden reveal that his relationship with animals is driven by self-interest. While attempting to communicate with the fowls, Tom uses derogatory language when the fowls fail to comprehend his intentions. For instance, he says that "the exasperatingly stupid creatures did not seem to grasp the idea that their meals were being served up at regular times… but the stupid birds did not seem to understand English" (Neale, 1966, p. 92). Tom takes a different tack in an effort to find a long-term solution because the fowls lay their eggs in far-off, hidden places that are difficult for him to reach. Tom intends to take advantage of the fowls' meat and eggs by domesticating them and making sure they reside in the garden, which will greatly facilitate his search for food on the island. Tom comes up with a novel solution after feeding the fowls on a regular basis is unable to entice them into the garden. He scatters "the split uto nuts on the square of ground" and bangs "lustily on the old iron crowbar" (Neale, 1966, p. 93). This method proves highly effective: "Up till now I had spent weeks unsuccessfully trying to cajole the fowls into a regular feeding time. Now, within a week, they were recognising the familiar sound of the beaten crowbar, and came running as fast as they could" (Neale, 1966, p. 93). Now that they are accustomed to the sound of the gong, the birds come to feed without hesitation as soon as they hear it. Tom finds an excuse to establish his dominance over the birds because he believes they

are beings without language or reason. The ecological processes will probably be impacted by the birds, their young, and their eggs being confined to the garden.

3. Conclusion and Suggestions

Beyond just celebrating daring bravery and heroism, *An Island to Oneself* reflects anthropocentric paradigms in the human-nature dynamic, suggesting a human-centred setting in which animals and nature play a supporting role. Anthropocentric arguments are closely mirrored in the author's destructive and dominating approach to nature, providing ample material for analysing the text in light of these philosophical frameworks. Tom Neale gives the impression that he is willing to upset the island's natural equilibrium throughout his autobiography.

An ego-centric worldview that prioritizes humans and holds that their logical minds are capable of making the final decisions about nature was fostered by anthropocentric viewpoints. This viewpoint caused people to lose a comprehensive grasp of the relationship between humans and nature, ignoring the reality that unbridled control over natural resources would have detrimental effects on both the environment and humanity. A detached and indifferent relationship between humans and animals developed as a result of such an approach that gave humans a central role in the universe. The animal body became a domain for human control and exploitation, framed as a matter of scientific inquiry and curiosity, which led to a diminished emotional connection and empathy toward animals.

Particularly notable are Tom's attempts to manipulate animals and the natural world as soon as he gets to the island, as well as his attempts to change the island to fit his tastes. The author's battle to survive on the island frequently entails dealing with inclement weather, especially storms, and coming into contact with untamed animals. The author's desire to claim ownership and control over the local flora and fauna as soon as he arrives on the island makes it obvious that he views himself as the island's master. It is possible to interpret his plan to grow a garden and isolate it from the wild as an effort to establish a barrier between himself and the wild surroundings. An interventionist approach to the natural order is exemplified by his attempts to domesticate the island's birds. Moreover, his anthropocentric conception of human dominance over nature is reflected in his perception of pigs and crabs as threats and his resolve to eradicate them. Similarly, natural phenomena like storms and sharks are presented as challenges that the writer hopes to overcome.

An Island to Oneself becomes a warning against anthropocentrism in addition to being a survival memoir. Neale's insistence on controlling nature is indicative of a mindset that has brought humanity dangerously close to ecological disaster. His narrative resonates with current debates about sustainability, conservation, and non-human rights by asking readers to reconsider humanity's place within natural systems rather than above them. The criticism of anthropocentrism is even more urgent in light of the present environmental crises. From industrial agriculture to urban sprawl, habitat destruction and exploitation continue to be justified by the notion that humans are masters of nature. Neale's failures on Suwarrow—his never-ending battles with loneliness, pests, and storms—showcase the stubbornness of nature's independence and the conceit of human dominance. This analysis contributes to the field of environmental humanities by showing how literary texts can highlight the moral implications of human-nature relationships. *An Island to Oneself* ultimately asks us to imagine a future in which humanity will prioritize stewardship over dominance to secure the planet's and humanity's survival.

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