Hacettepe
University
Department
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English Language
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Journal

of

British

Literature

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Culture

Foreword

We introduce the third issue of our online journal *Journal of British Literature and Culture* with great pleasure. This journal continues the successful publishing tradition established by the *Journal of British Literature and Culture* (1990-2010) and intends to keep up the standards of publishing quality scholarly articles about British literature and culture.

We would like to thank you all who made this issue possible, namely the contributors and their reviewers, the editorial board and especially Dr. Merve Sarı Tüzün and Research Assistant Onur Çiffiliz for their enthusiasm, energy and time they very generously devoted to the publication of this issue.

The third issue of Journal of British Literature and Culture offers three research articles on a variety of literary genres and periods of British literature. These articles illustrate the wide scope and variety of methods of analysis JBLC advocates.

We expect your contributions as readers and authors to the future issues of our journal. We accept your contributions throughout the year via jblc@hacettepe.edu.tr.

With best wishes

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Prof. Dr. Huriye Reis
Editor

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Articles

A Green Reading of Euripides' *The Bacchae*: Wrath of Mother Earth and Downfall of Humankind[1]

Euripides'in *Bakkhalar*'ının Yeşil Bir Okuması: Doğa Ana'nın Gazabı ve İnsanlığın Düşüşü

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Abstract: Ecology increasingly occupies literature due to the growing ecocritical attitude and environmental consciousness delineated in literary texts. In this context, the relationship between drama and ecology has become the focus of many critics. The roots of ecodrama can be traced to ancient Greek theatre, and the Theatre of Dionysus, largely acknowledged as one of the first theatre spaces. Nature, an albatross or a healer to humankind at different times, embodies the greatest enigma to people which has beaten a path to the rise of anthropocentric and ecocritical ideologies. This article chases after this everlasting conundrum in Euripides' *The Bacchae* which presents the clash between nature and humankind, featuring ecocritical and anthropocentric ideology respectively, ending with the triumph of nature.

Keywords: Euripides, *The Bacchae*, Dionysus, nature, ecocentrism, anthropocentricism

Özet: Ekoloji, edebi metinlerde giderek daha çok ele alınan ekoeleştirel tutum ve çevre bilinci nedeniyle kendine edebiyatta gün geçtikçe daha fazla yer bulmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, drama ve ekoloji arasındaki ilişki birçok eleştirmenin odak noktası haline gelmiştir. Ekodramanın kökleri antik Yunan tiyatrosuna ve büyük ölçüde ilk tiyatro mekanlarından biri olarak kabul edilen Dionysos Tiyatrosu'na kadar uzanmaktadır. Farklı zamanlarda bazen bir baş belası bazen de bir şifacı olarak görülen doğanın insanoğlu için çözülemeyen bir bilmeceyi temsil etmesi insan merkezli ve ekoeleştirel ideolojilerin ortaya çıkmasına ön ayak olmuştur. Bu makale, bu çözülemeyen bilmecenin izini doğanın zaferiyle sonuçlanan doğa ve insanoğlu arasındaki çatışmayı resmeden Euripides'in *Bakkhalar*'ında ekoeleştirel ve insan merkezli ideolojiler üzerinden sürmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Euripides, *Bakkhalar*, Dionysos, doğa, ekosantrizm, antroposantrizm

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In his renowned article "Walking" (1851), Henry David Thoreau proposes that people should be a part of nature rather than civilization and society, pointing to a timeworn warfare between nature and humankind. Another celebrated work, Rachel Carson's "A Fable for Tomorrow" in *Silent Spring* (1962), which underscores the harmony of humanity with nature, is often cited as the origin of modern environmentalism. Considering where humanity has arrived, Thoreau's wish and Carlson's desire have not come true by a long shot, placing terms such as anthropocentrism and ecocentrism at the forefront of academia. Anthropocentrism dates back to the 1860s and refers to, in the simplest terms, the conviction that humans are at the centre of the universe. The term anthropocene (anthropo (human) cene (new, age)), termed by Nobel Prize-winning scientist Paul Crutzen in 2000, is used to describe the human-centred period in the world. This geological era, prompted by the discovery of the steam turbine in 1784, is the period in which humanity is acknowledged to have transformed the world's order and caused negative geological and climatic changes. This era embraces the fact that humanity has begun to play a decisive and negative role in the ecology and geology of the planet, although it is still largely incalculable. During this period, human activities became so widespread and efficacious that humans competed with the great powers of nature (Steffen, Crutzen and McNeill 614).[2] In contrast to anthropocentrism, as Ashton Nichols foregrounds, ecocentrism dates back to the pre-Socratic era and the Middle Ages. Contrary to conventional theological beliefs regarding the medieval period, the Middle Ages' therapeutic plants and animal tales highlighted life's organic and dynamic structure, in which various species closely interacted.[3] Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm define ecocriticism as the relationship

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[2] For the details of the term Anthropocene see, among others, Bronislaw Szerszynski, "The End of Nature: The Anthropocene and the Fate of the Human", *Oxford Literary Review*, Vol. 34, No. 2, 2012, pp. 165-84.

[3] One cannot overlook medieval bestiaries when discussing the interaction between humans and nature in the Middle Ages. Medieval bestiaries are collections of short tales about various animals (at times encompassing plants and stones), typically depicted in vivid colours, and frequently imparting symbolic or moral messages. To medieval people, the world of animals offered a microcosm through which we could view the human condition as mirrored in

between literature and the physical environment (xviii). In a similar vein, Serpil Opperman notes that ecocriticism aims to transform literary studies by combining literary criticism and theory focusing on ecological issues (29). In this sense, ecocriticism addresses environmental problems that concern all living things, such as global warming, earthquakes, air, soil and water pollution, overpopulation and acid rain. The destructive effects of the anthropocene, which seems to be at the centre of these problems, on humans and other beings are also examined in literary texts. In opposition to the long-established nature-focused philosophy of ecocriticism, Richard Louv states that today human beings have grown into the "enemy of nature" since they view themselves as rulers (130) in line with anthropocentrism which brings about their own devastation. In contrast to this anthropocentric stance, the reciprocal relationship between humans and the non-human world is enacted in ecodrama [4] in an effort to increase awareness or demand change regarding environmental concerns. In the light of these discussions, through Athens's great tragic dramatist Euripides' *The Bacchae*, which illustrates how people's hostility toward nature can lead to their demise, this article addresses the everlasting scrimmage between nature (Dionysus) and humanity (Pentheus), drawing on ecocritical and anthropocentric ideologies.

Referred to as a "pupil of Anaxagoras" and a "philosopher of the theatre" by Vitruvius and "the iconoclastic and unconventional dramatist" by modern critics (Storey and Allan 131, 133), Euripides (c. 480 – c. 406 BC) is one of the three ancient Greek tragedians, together with

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bestiaries, providing humanity with a fulcrum of guidance. The notion that all that exists is the creative word of God and that every living thing has a special meaning was exhibited by those bestiaries. For example, it was believed that the pelican, which tears open its breast to use its own blood to resuscitate its offspring, was a representation of Jesus (Hawkes and Newhauser xiv-xv).

[4] For a detailed discussion, please refer to, among others, *Ekodrama: Çevrevi Tiyatro, Sahne ve Performans Ekolojileri* edited by Barış Ağır and Mehmet Akif Balkaya, the first ecodrama book written in Turkish, which examines the relationship between literature and the environment, environmental issues and themes, especially to what extent they are represented in the field of theatre and Sibel İzmir's PhD Dissertation "Postdramatic Tendencies on the British Stage: The Plays of Mark Ravenhill" Atılım University, 2014.

Aeschylus and Sophocles. We have around ninety titles by Euripides, which indicates roughly twenty-two performances at the City Dionysia (Parker ix). In 455 BC, Euripides participated in the renowned Athenian drama festival for the first time. However, he did not take first place until 441 BC. In 408 BC, he competed in his last tournament in Athens. He was given his first prize posthumously for the performance of *The Bacchae* and *Iphigenia in Aulis* in 405 BC. He took home the top prize five times. Almost 80 percent of his plays are in a fragment or somewhat lost (including *Peliades* (455 BC), *Dictys* (431 BC), *Phaethon* (c. 420 BC) and *Andromeda* (412 BC)) among which the most well-received ones are *Medea*, *Children of Heracles*, *Hecuba*, *The Trojan Women*, *Orestes* and *The Bacchae*.[5] Together with Homer, Demosthenes, and Menander, Euripides evolved into a pillar of classical literature education in the Hellenistic Age (Parker ix). In his later years, according to ancient biographies, Euripides is said to have chosen a willing exile and died in Macedonia, although more recent research questions these accounts (Page ix).

Euripides was an undervalued talent in his own day because of his avant-garde stance and the dominance of human characters in his plays. He is credited with theatrical inventions that have had a significant bearing on drama up to the present day, particularly in the way that mythical heroes are portrayed as everyday individuals in exceptional situations as in *The Bacchae*. *The Bacchae*, Euripides' final play acknowledged as one of his best works, first premiered posthumously in 405 BCE, one year after his death, is a play of caveat about disobeying the gods. The gods often showed up as cosmic forces in Greek drama. In *The Bacchae,* however, the God,

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[5] We have, for example, several hundred lines from a late play, *Hypsipyle*, which included two of his cherished themes: a scene where a mother and her long-lost children are recognised and a woman in trouble is rescued. His *Phaethon*, which tells the tale of the Sun's child who asked to borrow his father's chariot and experienced a tragic end, is partly survived on papyrus. We possess conventional and papyrus pieces of a play called *Erechtheus*, which is set in Athens and has a less than joyful conclusion but where a mother agrees to sacrifice her daughter in order to rescue the government from ruin. The bulk of *Alexandros*, a play performed in 415 with *Trojan Women* and dramatizing the discovery of Hecuba's lost son Alexandros (Paris), has been preserved in a papyrus. Given that the other tragedy of 415, *Pamamedes*, was also set in Troy and that this play shared at least two characters with *Trojan Women*, there is some indication that Euripides was working on a loosely connected "Trojan War Trilogy" that year (Storey and Allan 136-137).

Dionysus, is a character, the protagonist of the play. Euripides' humanisation of Dionysus by making him the protagonist of *The Bacchae* contributes much to the tragic nature of the play and gives the drama greater depth. That is how Euripides reshaped the common understanding of mythological heroes and gods. The chorus, moreover, is woven into the storyline of *The Bacchae*, which sets it apart from other plays ("Euripides Famous Playwright" par.2) *The Bacchae* tells of the conflict between Pentheus, the King of Thebes, and the deity Dionysus (Pentheus's cousin). At the play's opening, Dionysus makes an appearance and declares his intention to exact revenge on those who assert he is not the son of Zeus. He brings Dionysian rituals to the city to prove to the king, Pentheus, and Thebes that he was born a god. At the play's conclusion, Dionysos penalises the deniers of his existence in Thebes, upends the social order, and leads the deniers, particularly Pentheus, to a definite doom. *The Bacchae* is widely examined as a text of power, religion, revenge and the conflict between gods and humans, passion and reason, order and disorder besides a play glorifying the female uprising against a male-dominated society. Yet, as H. S. Versnel argues, *The Bacchae* embodies much more: "Every reader gets *the Bacchae* he deserves. No two scholars agree on the meaning of the play, let alone on the intention of the author" (96).[6] Charles Segal points out how ageless *The Bacchae* is as follows:

> The play is deeply rooted in the intellectual, artistic, and religious life of the late fifth century, yet also speaks to our time with extraordinary clear and powerful voice. It remains one of the most contemporary of ancient Greek texts. Its concern with the dissolution of order and boundaries- makes it unusually accessible and particularly important to the closing decades of the twentieth century. (3)

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[6] A favourite play of modern stages, *The Bacchae*, among others, was performed creatively by the National Theatre of Scotland at the Edinburgh International Festival in 2008, staged at the British Museum by UCL Classics students in 2015 and at The Athens Epidaurus Festival in 2023. For details and images, please visit the websites of The National Theatre of Scotland at https://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com/past-performances/the-bacchae, The Idle Woman at https://theidlewoman.net/2015/07/25/bacchae-euripides/ and The Athens Epidaurus Festival at https://aefestival.gr/festival_events/vakches/?lang=en.

This dateless play reaches out to the contemporary world and explores the timeworn warfare between nature and civilization coupled with the confrontation between ecological concerns and anthropocentric ideologies. That is the conflict between Dionysus and Pentheus in *The Bacchae* is more than a story of a clash between a deity and a human being. A full understanding of the play requires familiarity with the myth and cult of Dionysus embodying an ecocritical standpoint. To the well-acknowledged myth, Dionysos is a twice-born god. Zeus and Semele, a daughter of Cadmus, the king of Thebes, were the parents of Dionysus. Envious of her husband, Zeus, Hera convinced the pregnant Semele to verify Zeus's divinity by asking that he show up as himself. Zeus obeyed, but thunderbolts struck the mortal Semele because Zeus's might was too much for her. Zeus, on the other hand, preserved his son by stitching him up in his thigh and leaving him there until he grew up, resulting in his being born twice. The god Hermes then sent Dionysus to be raised by the bacchantes (maenads, or thyiads) of Nysa, an entirely fictional place (Fischer-Lichte 2).

Dionysus' cult held particular significance for literature and the arts because of his ability to promote creativity and induce ecstasy. The Lenaea and the City Dionysia were two Dionysus festivals in Athens, where plays of tragedy and comedy were presented (Fischer-Lichte 2). In *The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music* (1872), Nietzsche speaks of the cult of Dionysus in ancient Greek theatre:

> Greek tragedy in its oldest form dealt with the sufferings of Dionysus […] all the celebrated characters of the Greek stage- Prometheus, Oedipus and so on- are merely masks of that original hero… [T]his hero is the suffering Dionysus of the mysteries, the God who himself experiences the suffering of individuation. (51-52)

Dionysus adherents comprised fecundity spirits like the satyrs and sileni. He was connected to various animals and frequently assumed a bestial form. His symbols were the thyrsus, associated with the natural world, vegetation and fertility, and the *kantharos*, a big goblet with two handles,

and an ivy wreath ("Dionysus" par. 2-3). He was portrayed as a bearded man in early Greek art, but subsequently, he was seen as young and feminine. Dionysus, also called Bacchus, is associated with disguise and transformation and is the Greek deity of theatre, wild celebration, grape harvesting, winemaking, fertility, and vegetation. The deity of nature and symbol of both birth and death, Dionysus is the god of the sky, and the rain. Rivers, grasslands, vegetation, and animals are all part of the untamed, remote world that is Dionysus' domain (Hawthornes 18, 23). To Ian C. Storey and Arlene Allan, Dionysos is far more than a god of wine and the unrestrained party, he is an elemental force in the life of creation:

> In *The Bacchae*, Teiresias considers him as the principle of the "wet," as opposed to the "dry" of Demeter, the goddess of agriculture, and he is very much a god of the liquid life force, not just the grape and wine, but of all plants (his titles include dendrites, "of trees," and *anthios*, "of flowers") and of animals. (25)

More to the point of the paper, in *The Bacchae,* Dionysus is more than a god whose goal is to upend the status quo to destroy the tyranny of Pentheus through his rituals of dancing and reckless sexual behaviour and to ask for revenge against those who humiliated his mother and rejected his authority but a god of nature, plants and animals, embodied an ecocritical stance, and who, in a sense, is the representative of life on earth, brings about the end of anthropocentric-oriented human beings who oppose his existence and rule and do not give due importance to nature. *The Bacchae* thus serves the role of drama that Theresa J. May italicised in "Greening the Theater: Taking Ecocriticism from Page to Stage" where she argues that ecodrama not only delineates environmental issues but also explores "the existence of the natural world" (95) and that in both ways it reinforces consciousness and self-awareness, making people leave the theatre more aware of the world around them (95). Hence, theatre acts as a platform where people negotiate and establish relationships with their environments (wild, cultivated, industrial, virtual) (May 86-95).

As an example of ecodrama, at the beginning of the play, Dionysus, wearing a fawnskin and carrying a thyrsus,[7] as the very symbol of nature, arrives at the palace of Thebes, a massive man-made building in the centre of the city and a symbol of civilization and anthropocentric viewpoint, this is where Pentheus rules. He tells the reader/audience that he has disguised himself as a human and returned to his birthplace to avenge the dishonour of his deceased mother, Semele:

> I am Dionysus, the son of Zeus,
> come back to Thebes, this land where I was born.
> My mother was Cadmus' daughter, Semele by name,
> midwived by fire, delivered by the lightning's
> blast.
> And here I stand, a god incognito,
> disguised as man, beside the stream of Dirce
> and the waters of Ismenus. There before the palace
> I see my lightning-married mother's grave,
> and there upon the ruins of her shattered house
> the living fire of Zeus still smolders on
> in deathless witness of Hera's violence and rage
> against my mother. (lines 1-13)

Dionysus is adamant that Thebes will take a lesson from him and honour him as a god. He is distraught with Pentheus, the King of Thebes, his cousin, for not bringing him an offering or a blessing. He has already driven the ladies of the city insane, counting the sisters of his mother who rejected him and fled to the highlands. There, the Bacchae or Maenads ("the mad women"), female followers of Dionysus whom he refers to as his newest Bacchae, perform euphoric rituals that infuriate Pentheus, who then kidnaps them due to their disobedience:

> I happened to be away, out of the city,

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[7] During Greek festivals and religious rituals, a thyrsus was a staff or wand adorned with ivy vines and leaves, occasionally crowned with fruits and berries. The Greek god Dionysus is commonly linked to the thyrsus, a sign of fertility, abundance, and hedonism. It is particularly used to identify the Maenads, his female followers (Olszewski 153).

but reports reached me of some strange mischief here,
stories of our women leaving home to frisk
in mock ecstasies among the thickets on the mountain,
dancing in honor of the latest divinity,
a certain Dionysus, whoever he may be! (lines 214-219)

I have captured some of them; my jailers
have locked them away in the safety of our prison.
Those who run at large shall be hunted down
out of the mountains like the animals they are-
yes, my own mother Agave, and Ino
and Autonoe, the mother of Actaeon. (lines 225-230)

Pentheus likens women, including his mother and aunts, Agave, Ino, and Autonoe, to wild animals that must be hunted and boasts that he has already put some of these wild women in jail and would go after others on the mountain. At this point, it would be appropriate to draw a parallel between the text and ecofeminism which contends that male dominance is the shared problem between women and the environment. The 1970s were the times when the relationship between women and the environment was emphasized more than in previous periods, leading to the emergence of ecofeminism, and in 1974, Françoise d'Eaubonne coined the term ecofeminism. This term includes the ecological revolution that women will lead to save the world. According to the ecofeminists, women and nature can be liberated together. In parallel with this, ecofeminism has two basic arguments: 1- Women and nature are historically close to each other. 2- The patriarchal capitalist system is jointly responsible for the problems of women and nature (Burgan, "Ekofeminizm" par. 2). Returning to the text, Pentheus, symbolising male domination, imprisons women, representing nature because they opposed his domination and defended freedom. Pentheus holds the novel religion's proponent, a foreigner (Dionysus in human form) who has arrived in Thebes, responsible for this female rebellion. He calls him a "charlatan magician" and laments his feminine hair and

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perfume: "one of those charlatan magicians, / with long yellow curls smelling of perfumes, / with flushed cheeks and the spells of Aphrodite/ in his eyes" (lines 233-236). Pentheus, in fact, is presented as a despot who maintains power by inciting dread and horror as he has outlawed free speech (Erika Fischer-Lichte 6). For example, the messenger asks Pentheus whether he can speak freely while he provides facts about disobedient women and Pentheus replies: "Speak freely/You have my promise: I shall not punish you" (lines 672-673). Similarly, the new order Dionysus introduces to Thebes is strongly disapproved by Pentheus, who sees it as an assault on his tyrannical rule. He imprisons the disguised Dionysus, posing as a priest and taking human form, ignoring his father Cadmus's cautions. However, the man known as "the stranger" is inexplicably set free from his binds. In return for this humiliation, Dionysus, in god's form, demolishes the palace of Pentheus—an emblem of civilization and the anthropocentric way of thinking—by an earthquake:

> Dionysus
> Let the earthquake come! Shatter the floor of the world!
> Chorus
> - Look there, how the palace of Pentheus totters.
> - Look, the palace is collapsing!
> -Dionysus is within. Adore him!
> -We adore him!
> -Look there!
> -Above the pillars, how the great stones
> gape and crack!
> -Listen. Bromius cries his victory!
> Dionysus
> Launch the blazing thunderbolt of god! O lightings,
> come! Consume with flame the palace of Pentheus! (lines 587-597)

The devastation of the palace is simply the start of humanity's demise, which is personified in the figure of Pentheus, who defies nature and chooses not to coexist with it:

> And then, once again, the god humiliated him.
> He razed the palace to the ground where it lies, shattered
> in utter ruin-his reward for my imprisonment.
> At that bitter sight, Pentheus dropped his sword, exhausted
> by the struggle. A man, a man, and nothing more,
> yet he presumed to wage a war with god. (lines 632- 637)

Thus, Storey and Allan read *the Bacchae* as a play of "battleground" between a "human antagonist" and a deity, "who is essentially hostile to human culture" (145). Humanity's demise was inevitable from the start, just like that of a human who rebels against god. Pentheus, the human who does not take any lessons from the fact that nature demolished his palace, is unyielding about carrying on the battle, though. Pentheus is given a further opportunity to save himself from fighting a god, Dionysus, who is still posing as a priest. Dionysus threatens Pentheus with dire repercussions should he attempt to push the Bacchae from Mount Cithaeron by force. He asks that Pentheus make a sacrifice. Pentheus fails to believe him, summons his armour, and sets the stage for his demise. At the end of the play, instead of making a sacrifice, Pentheus himself turns into a sacrifice. Thus, human beings who challenge the power of nature will incur its wrath rather than its healing side and will be demolished by nature. Put another way, it is up to humanity to either experience nature's wrath or attain its grace. Pentheus opts for the fury of nature. George Maximilian Antony Grube accentuates the two opposite aspects of Dionysus standing for nature, as such:

> Dionysus in the prologue and throughout the first part of the play, is a benevolent god, the bringer of a joyful worship. He remains so even after the palace miracle […] and his more terrible aspect is no more than hinted at. It is only after every effort to conciliate Pentheus has failed that he becomes the terrible and ruthless fiend of the later part. (37)

Unlike Pentheus, we see the Bacchae in nature, actually being with nature. According to the first messenger, Agave, Ino, and Autonoe head up the other women in the country. They drift off soundly at first, as though they were worn out from their raucous antics and dancing. However, Agave wakes the other Bacchae by calling out to them when she notices the roar of an oncoming herd of cattle. The Bacchae tie snakes onto their fawnskins, unfasten their hair, and cover their

heads with ivy. While some of them care for wild animals, others strike rocks and the earth with their thyrsus to generate honey, wine, and water:

> First they let their hair and loose, down
> over their shoulders, and those whose straps had slipped
> fastened their skins of fawn with writhing snakes
> that licked their cheeks. Breasts swollen with milk,
> new mothers who had left their babies behind at home
> nestled gazelles and young wolves in their arms,
> suckling them. Then they crowned their hair with leaves,
> ivy and oak and flowering bryony. One woman
> struck her thyrsus against a rock and a fountain
> of cool water came bubbling up. Another drove
> her fennel in the ground, and where it struck the earth,
> at the touch of god, a spring of wine poured out.
> Those who wanted milk scratched at the soil
> with bare fingers and the white milk came welling up. (lines 691-708)

The women on the mountain are a part of and in harmony with nature. They look like animals as they are the followers of Dionysus. They dress in fawn-skins, carry the thyrsus, raise milk and honey from the earth and look after wild animals. The female followers of Dionysus in the forest are offered autonomy and unity with the natural world, free from the confines of civilization and its male-dominated origins embodied in Dionysus. Women, then, are most drawn to the cult of Dionysus because being one with nature symbolizes liberation for them in line with an ecofeminist stance. Dionysus himself is widely associated with animals in the play, too. Pentheus, for example, finds a bull in jail instead of Dionysus in human form. Later in the play, while Dionysus tries to disguise Pentheus as a woman to approach the women in the forest, Pentheus sees him in the shape of a bull:

> 1 seem to see two suns blazing in the heavens.
> And now two Thebes, two cities, and each
> with seven gates. And you-you are a bull
>
> who walks before me there. Horns have sprouted

> from your head. Have you always been a beast?
>
> But now I see a bull. (lines 915-920)

Dionysus replies: "It is the god you see. /Though hostile formerly, he now declares a truce/ and goes with us. / You see what you could not/when you were blind" (lines 921- 924). When Pentheus, blinded by hostility towards nature, entered the path of reconciliation, he began to see god in his true form, and this god is nothing but nature itself in the form of a bull. Drawing on Fischer-Lichte's words, it can be asserted that people who are prisoners of civilization (like Pentheus) have become estranged from their own nature, and Dionysus is bringing them back to their true selves, which is intertwined with nature:

> Great was his power by then to charm and bewitch, to take from men their natural reserve, to unfetter within them their impulses, their primal instincts, those unuttered, forbidden longings held hostage by custom and civilization, unfulfilled except in dreams. Under his spell men and women became free as babes; their spirits soared like eagles. In their minds they were transported to realms beyond, unearthly, ethereal. Things familiar took on bizarre shapes and aspects: trees seemed as men and men as beasts, shadows as many-headed serpents, patches of fog as raging bulls. (66)

The chorus of the play also asks Dionysus to take on the might of three animals: a lion, a snake, and a bull, and throughout the play, he manifests himself in the shape of a snake, lion, and bull. What is more, similar to Pentheus, people who confront Dionysos also find themselves changed into animals. Following his death, Pentheus is informed by Dionysus that the only way to get around the women securely is to pose as a female deity worshipper. Although Pentheus finds this a disgraceful idea, he accepts the offer in order to get close to women and bring them out of the forest, standing for freedom, and into the town to civilization. Thus, Dionysus gives him instructions to dress in fawnskin, hold a thyrsus, and wear a wig of long, curling hair: "He wears a long linen dress which partially conceals his fawn-skin. He carries a thyrsus in his hand; on his head he wears a wig with long blond curls bound by a snood" (195). That is how Pentheus, the sworn enemy of Dionysus, becomes one of his followers, dressed as a representative of nature.

Drawing on Helaine L. Smith's description of the rituals of Dionysus, it can be suggested that Pentheus grows into a sacrifice and even becomes a substitute for Dionysus:

> The religious cult of Dionysus […] is a form of ecstatic worship; its followers reach the state of ecstasy through dance that involves intense rhythmic movement and the tossing of the head in ecstasy; the place of worship is in wild nature—in woods and on mountaintops. The ecstasy culminates in a ritual tearing apart (*sparagmos*) and eating (*omophagia*) of the god, represented by a god-substitute, so that the essence of the god may enter the bodies of the followers […] the god-substitute is human, a sacrificial victim who is ritually dressed in special garments for the sacrifice. (147)

Yet, Pentheus is a fake follower of nature on his way to perish by being torn apart. Dionysus in human shape leads Pentheus to the women of nature, who rend him off limb from limb even though he confesses his transgressions and pleads for forgiveness. Dionysus utilises his heavenly might to pull down the big tree and set Pentheus in its uppermost branches so that he can climb it for a better view. Next, Dionysus appears to the Bacchae and signals them to look for the man in the tree. The women get furious and driven insane by Dionysus, Pentheus's mother Agave leads them as they pull Pentheus down from the treetop, severing his head and limbs, and dismembering his body:[8]

> screaming, "No, no, Mother! I am Pentheus,
> your own son, the child you bore to Echion!
> Pity me, spare me, Mother! I have done a wrong,
> but do not kill your own son for my offense."

[8] Death of Pentheus - Luigi Ademollo, (1764-1849) - illustration from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Florence, 1832 - PD-art-100.

But she was foaming at the mouth, and her crazed eyes

rolling with frenzy. She was mad, stark mad,

possessed by Bacchus. Ignoring his cries of pity,

she seized his left arm at the wrist; then, planting

her foot upon his chest, she pulled, wrenching away

the arm at the shoulder-not by her own strength,

for the god had put inhuman power in her hands.

Ino, meanwhile, on the other side, was scratching off

his flesh. Then Autonoe and the whole horde

of Bacchae swarmed upon him. Shouts everywhere,

he screaming with what little breath was left,

they shrieking in triumph. One tore off an arm,

another a foot still warm in its shoe. His ribs

were clawed clean of flesh and every hand

was smeared with blood as they played ball with scraps

of Pentheus' body. (lines 1118-1137)

Gilbert Norwood indicates how Pentheus came under the control of Dionysus and almost lost his humanity as such:

Pentheus is now completely in the god's power. He is drunk with the beastly drunkenness of a puritan on a spree; he is stupid, childish, boastful; he has lost all self-respect and self-control-all his manhood […]. As for the god, he too has undergone a deplorable change. He now plays with his victim as a cat does with a mouse and his conduct is, as has been well said, that of a fiend. (19)

This happens to Pentheus because he does not show respect to nature, and Dionysus, in other words, nature, declares him his enemy, just as he declared him his foe. The end of Pentheus and the play are marked by this scene of dismemberment. The most dramatic part of this death is that Pentheus's mother is the leader of the women and his own mother butchers him. Under the illusion that it is the head of a lion, Agaue splits the body of her son Pentheus and returns his head to Thebes. At last, Cadmus, her father, opens her eyes to reality and she realizes what she did to her son. This scene means much if we read it following the cult of Mother Earth and the relationship between woman and nature in line with ecofeminism's chief claim that there is a correlation between women's subjugation and environmental deterioration. Just as the son, representing

anthropocentric and male-dominated ideology, who hunts his mother to imprison her finds death at her hands, the human being who goes against nature is condemned to death by Mother Earth. At the end of the play, following the demise of Pentheus, Cadmus, a follower of Dionysus, departed from Thebes with his spouse Harmonia and their daughter Agave. They arrived in Illyria, where he succeeded King Lycotherses, whom Agave had slain, and ruled till the end of his days. What is more, Dionysus appears throughout the play in two different forms. In his human form as the Stranger, he works upon people and in his divine form upon nature, revealing nature's curses and gifts at the same breadth. On the one side, devastating earthquakes and flames demolish the palace of Pentheus and wreak chaos. The Maenads, on the other hand, enjoy the good aspects of nature as they are bestowed with wine, honey, milk, and, of course, freedom. Cadmus, in a similar way, reaches the happy end as a devotee of Dionysus.

In conclusion, the main conflict of *The Bacchae* is between Dionysus (a god) and Pentheus (a human being), representing nature and civilization or ecocentric and anthropocentric perspectives respectively. Dionysos is a deity of nature, of the countryside rather than the city, and of liberation from the bonds of civilization. Pentheus is a king of Thebes who tyrannically rules the city from his palace which stands for civilization. The concluding note of the play is that there should be a space within civilization for nature and that if humans reject or oppose nature, they are doomed to destruction while those who become one with nature are reborn and grasp the secret of the earth. In the play, King Pentheus rejects Dionysus's authority, prepares his own final sleep in the hands of his mother, and is exterminated by Dionysus. That is, the conflict between nature and human beings or civilization comes to an end with the triumph of nature, termed as "environmental domination" by Sharon R. Krause. Krause defines "environmental domination" as "forms of domination that transpire in and through human interactions with more- than- human parts of nature" (4). These interactions refer to humankind which comes into existence on the

earth, as constantly highlighted in the play, and returns to earth. That is how the play depicts the clash between human (the walled city) and non-human (the wild nature) world and how nature brings death to those who oppose its domination. So, in a word, humankind reaps what s/he sows in nature and experiences the gifts or the wrath of Mother Earth.

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The Voice of the Anti-Suffragettes in Gertrude Colmore's *Suffragette Sally*

Gertrude Colmore'un *Suffragette Sally* Adlı Eserinde Anti-Süfrajetlerin Sesi

Alev Karaduman*

Abstract: The Suffragette Movement, demanding the political liberation of women, was one of the most activist movements of the early twentieth century. It was such a powerful civil disobedience that it brought together women from all parts of life, including the working and middle classes as well as the aristocracy. It united them around the same target which was to achieve their rights legally and be able to vote in the general elections. For centuries, women had asked for their socio-political rights to be equal to men's but achieved very few. In 1869, only women who could pay their property taxes were allowed to vote in some local elections but not in general ones. This discrimination was refuted by the strong and determined women of the new century. With their ambition and courage, they took radical and militant actions such as chaining themselves to the street lamps and going on hunger strikes in order to be heard by the parliament and to get what they wanted. As in many historical events, these radical and, to some extent, revolutionary actions inevitably faced much opposition from the patriarchal society in the name of the "Anti-Suffragette Movement" which never approved of these abrupt and unacceptable assertions of women. It strongly refused female suffrage and accused them all of being militants, who went against the laws and regulations of the government. These historical events have been discussed in many of the literary books, but Gertrude Colmore's historical novel *Suffragette Sally* (1911) has a significant place among them with its multi-layered narratives. In light of historical facts, the novel explores the movement from multiple perspectives, examining the varying reactions to it across the working, middle, and aristocratic classes. It delves into the contrasting viewpoints on the same issue, highlighting the differing opinions. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to analyse how anti-suffragettes refute the arguments of the suffragettes, drawing on both historical evidence and examples presented within the novel.

Keywords: Suffragette Movement, Anti-Suffragettes, Gertrude Colmore, *Suffragette Sally*, Historical Facts

Özet: Kadınlara siyasi özgürlük talep eden Süfrajet (Kadınlara Seçme Hakkı) Hareketi, yirminci yüzyılın başlarında en aktif hareketlerden biridir. Bu, işçi ve orta sınıflardan aristokrasiye kadar her seviyeden tüm kadınları birleştiren ve kadınları kendi yasal haklarını elde etmeleri ve genel seçimlerde oy kullanabilmeleri hedefi etrafında toplayan güçlü bir sivil başkaldırı hareketidir. Yüzyıllar boyunca kadınlar, erkeklerle sosyal ve politik eşitlik talep etmiş ancak çok az başarı elde edebilmişlerdir. 1869 yılında, sadece mülk vergisini ödeyebilen kadınlara bazı yerel seçimlerde oy kullanma hakkı tanınmış, ancak genel seçimlerde oy kullanmaları yasaklanmıştır. Bu ayrımcılık, yeni yüzyılın güçlü ve kararlı kadınları tarafından reddedilmektedir. Hırsları ve cesaretleriyle, duyulmak ve istediklerini elde etmek için sokak lambalarına zincirlenmek, açlık grevleri yapmak gibi radikal ve militanca eylemler gerçekleştirmişlerdir. Birçok tarihî olayda olduğu gibi, bu radikal ve kısmen militanca eylemler, kaçınılmaz olarak, erkek egemen toplumda "Anti-Süfrajet Hareketi" adı altında büyük bir karşı duruşla karşılaşmıştır. Bu hareket, kadınların hukuksal özgürlüklerini talep ettikleri bu ani ve kabul edilemez taleplerini asla onaylamamaktadır. Kadınların oy hakkını şiddetle reddedip karşı çıktığı bu kadınları ve süfrajet hareketinin her şeyini, hükümetlerin kanunlarına ve düzenlemelerine karşı gelen militan veya militanya eylemler olarak suçlamıştır. Bu tarihî olaylar birçok edebi eserde tartışılmıştır, ancak bu eserler arasında yer alan Gertrude Colmore'un tarihsel romanı *Suffragette Sally* (1911, Süfrajet Sally), bu hareketi farklı bakış açılarıyla ve tarihî gerçekler üzerinden sunan çok katmanlı anlatımlarıyla önemli bir yere sahiptir. Tarihî gerçekler ışığında, bu roman, gelişen tarihî olayları farklı bakış açılarıyla, işçi, orta ve aristokrat sınıflar arasındaki farklı tepkileri incelemektedir. Aynı konuya dair karşıt görüşleri derinlemesine ele alarak, bu farklı bakış açılarını vurgular. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmanın amacı, anti-süfrajetlerin, tarihî veriler ve romanda yer verilen örnekler ışığında, süfrajetlerin argümanlarına nasıl karşı çıktığını analiz etmektir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Süfrajet Hareketi, Anti-Süfrajetler, Gertrude Colmore, *Suffragette Sally*, Tarihî Gerçekler

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The Suffragette Movement was a civil feminist act of disobedience which advocated for political rights for women equal to men's in the patriarchal society of the early twentieth century. It "is not a casual or ordinary action which asks for a liberation of women. It turns to be not only liberal but also an outstanding revolt against the government by women who are really aware of their capabilities" (Karaduman 49). The movement gained support from various social classes, transcending gender boundaries, while the anti-suffragette movement acted as an organised socio-political oppositional assault against it. It was marked by significant milestones, including the Representation of the People Act of 1918, which granted voting rights to women over 30 meeting certain property qualifications, and the Equal Franchise Act of 1928, which equalised voting rights for men and women. Remarkably enough, anti-suffragism was defended and supported not only by men but also by women, with its complicated traditional assumptions about gender and political activism. It is rather challenging to encounter that "women's roles in the British anti-suffrage movement are important, and in some ways distinctive. Women provide a good deal of the initiative and most of the hard work behind the organized opposition, as well as the majority of its declared supporters" (Bush, *Women* 2). The anti-suffragists primarily aimed to refute the claims of the suffrages, who demanded equal voting rights for women in general elections, asserting that this political change would dismantle the established class system and destroy the gender-based patriarchal order in which men held economic and political power in their hands while women were relegated to the domestic sphere enforcing their obedience and submission to societal norms, conventions, and traditions. In other words, "anti-suffragists frame their opposition as a defense of 'traditional values,' warning that granting women the vote would lead to societal chaos and the breakdown of established norms" (Tong 101). Thus, the purpose of this paper is to illustrate how anti-suffragettes come together and form a powerful opposition against the suffragettes, as depicted in *Suffragette Sally*, written by Gertrude Colmore (1855–1926) in 1911, a novel that

emerged against this historical and socio-political backdrop and captured the struggles and tensions of this pivotal period.

It is a general assumption accepted by the anti-suffragettes that giving women extra socio-political rights would not only change but also undermine the strongly grounded hegemonic structures of society. The power holders undoubtedly seek to maintain their strong socio-cultural control over the weaker group while also preserving the enforcement measures imposed on them. Thus, this is all to say that "many opponents of suffrage see women's political involvement as a dangerous step toward the dissolution of gender roles that have long defined Western societies" (Cowman 88). As a result, the suffragette movement was recognised as a threat to traditional gender roles in Europe. Anti-suffragists argued that as women's voices grew louder, the perceived 'peaceful' and patriarchal family structure, with men as its supreme authority, would inevitably erode. That is why, this anti-suffragette movement was supported primarily by men, who believed that "the issue [is] not just about women voting but about maintaining the existing social order that place[d] women in subordinate roles" (Cobble 120). On the other hand, there existed some women who were not on the side of the suffragettes as they believed that they already had more than enough domestic responsibilities at home; therefore, engaging in politics would only add to their burdens. For them, politics was the sphere of males, not women. Thus, anti-suffragettes did not give their assent to the suffrages, arguing that women who were keen on "entering politics might neglect those duties as wives and mothers" (Colmore 11). Within this society, where dominant beliefs and values prevailed, it was widely accepted that being a wife and a mother was the supreme duty of women and could not be supplanted by anything else. They claimed that "political engagement would detract from women's duties as wives and mothers, which they [see] as a more 'natural' role" (Scherbin 57). Consequently, "women's vote [is considered] as a threat not only to the male-dominated political system but also to the traditional roles of men and women in the

private sphere" (Perrot 102). Anti-suffragists argued that the more women dealt with supposedly masculine matters and demanded equality with men, the more they would lose their femininity. Most important of all, they also assumed that "women's supposed emotional instability and their inability to make rational political decisions" (Callaway 56) would 'naturally' forestall their aspirations of public roles. They did not consider women as rational as men were. Thus, giving more privileges to women in legal terms would de-establish the orders both in politics and within the family. They feared that women's political empowerment would translate into demands for equality in domestic roles, challenging men to share household duties. Henceforth, "anti-suffragists argue that women's place is in the home, and that their participation in politics would lead to the breakdown of domesticity and family life" (Jablonsky 118). For those very reasons, they do not want women to be recognised as the equal counterparts of men. The more suffragettes resisted, the more anti-suffragettes increased their reaction which was "not a spontaneous [one], but rather a well-organized effort to maintain the existing gender hierarchies of [the] society" (Spruill 22).

In order to hinder the political demands and stop the militant actions of the suffragettes, the anti-suffragettes came together and organised a legal platform called the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League (WNASL), mirroring the organisational strategies of the suffragettes. It would turn out to be a legal medium in 1908, initiated and founded by Mary Augusta Ward (1851–1920), a prominent activist who opposed women's suffrage, believing that "women's political participation as a threat to the family structure and social order" (Wagner 71). Ironically, Ms. Ward followed in the same footsteps of her ideological counterparts, Pankhurst women (Emmeline and her daughters, Christabel and Sylvia Pankhurst), who founded the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1903 to unite women from all levels to demand their legal rights. It is so interesting that both groups, whether supporting or opposing the suffragette movement, formed

legal organisations and fought against each other with different ideas and mindsets. One could argue that "British womanhood provided common ground in some directions and weapons for attack in others, as suffragists and antisuffragettes continued to rival each other's claims to the moral and political high ground in national life" (Bush, *Women* 15). Traditional arguments against women's suffrage, supported by both women and men, emphasised women's supposed 'difference,' which was characterised in terms of "weakness and inferiority" (Bush, "British" 432). Women's right to vote was viewed as a threat to both the strength of imperial governance and the stability of British homes. It was generally acknowledged that "women's inherent maternal instinct makes them more suited . . . to their roles as wives and mothers" (Phillips 143). Under the guidance of Ms. Ward, the WNASL initiated petitions to collect signatures in favour of anti-suffragette activists who strongly felt that granting women voting rights would disrupt the traditional British lifestyle and diminish men's authority in a patriarchal society. For this purpose,

> Women [provide and collect] nearly half a million anti-suffrage petition signatures before the war, and [form] the vast majority of the 42,000 enrolled membership of the Women's League, . . . [in three years time], more than two-thirds of the direct subscribers to the anti-suffragists' central office [are] women; at branch level the proportion of women subscribers [rise] to more than five out of every six. (Bush, *Women* 2–3)

These historical events like launching organised campaigns underline the crucial role played by women in anti-suffrage activism, which remained noteworthy both before and after the Great War (1914–1918). This conflicting attitude between the opposing groups continued until the suffragettes achieved their demands in Great Britain in 1918. Even after 1918, the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League persisted in organising "a great meeting, at the Queen's Hall to protest against the parliamentary vote being given to women" (Colmore 150).

On the other hand, books, periodicals, and reviews were widely published in order to promote anti-suffrage ideas. They used all sorts of publications to articulate their positions and sharply criticise the activities of their suffragette counterparts. At that point in history,

> *The Daily Mirror* was launched in 1903 as the first newspaper devoted exclusively to women's interests . . . and the mass of textual production prompted by the suffrage [and anti- suffrage] movements in the form of poetry, sketches, polemical essays, tracts, short stories, novels, farces, burlesques, and plays makes it possible to claim that the suffrage movement was an unprecedented stimulus to women writers. Not only did suffragism motivate many women to write for the first time, many women began to take an active role in production: publishing literature through numerous suffrage presses and distributing it in suffrage shops or on street corners. (Park 450)

Such writings in *The Daily Mirror* paved the way for other publishers, such as Mills & Boon, to accept suffrage literature, including Elizabeth Robins's three-act play entitled *Votes for Women* (1907). The suffragette novels, such as Elizabeth Robins's *The Convert* (1907), Mabel Collins and Charlotte Despard's *Outlawed* (1908), Adrienne Mollwo's *A Fair Suffragette* (1909), Irene Miller's *Sekhet* (1911), Constance Maud's *No Surrender* (1911), Gertrude Colmore's *Suffragette Sally* (1911), and Annesley Kenealy's *The Poodle Women* (1913), were subsequently published (Bosmajian and Bosmajian 36). All these novels contributed to literary innovation with their new radical perspectives, challenging conventional and traditional status quos. It would not be wrong to claim that suffragette literature represents a great in-depth shift between the Victorian and Modern perspectives of life. Victorian values asked for submissive and obedient women who were dependent on men whereas modernism questioned the meaning and value of females as individuals in society. Thus, "the suffragge literature written by the females depicts the controversial feelings of their times. It is to preserve their domestic and female identities, . . . and to demand their political identies" as well. (Karaduman 50). Achieving political rights did not mean losing their feminine identities as imposed on them by societal norms. They did not want to be "represented by men as the heads of their family household" (Rubio-Marín 17). Thus, suffrage fiction was a vehicle for

them to show women's growing awareness of their significance within the public sphere and to refute the idea that women should find happiness in domestic circumstances.

With these ideas in mind, Gertrude Colmore's *Suffragette Sally*, distinct from other suffragette novels, stands out for its unique combination of socio-historical commentary and multi-layered narrative structure. The novel functions as both a historical and social-realist novel. It presents "a new epoch in the socio-cultural context of writing for women" (Park 450). It can be read on three levels.[1] It analyses and presents three diverse perspectives through its three female protagonists from different classes.

> The first and foremost important person whose name is given to the novel is Sally Simmonds. She, with her working-class background, represents a woman who works as a maid for an upper-middle-class Bilkes Family and is enchanted by the Suffragette Movement. . . . The second of these three women is Edith Carstairs, with her middle class background, takes her part in the Movement with her mother, who prefers to be in milder way and then subsequently understands the necessity of a stronger and militant action. . . . The last person is Lady Geraldine Hill, a member of the upper class and the wife of Lord Henry Hill, . . . who supports the Movement and turns to be a hot defender and a member of WSPU. All the events revolve around the characters with the factual historical events. (Karaduman 51–52)

Hence, Colmore is very successful in presenting these three different, working-class, middle-class and aristocratic mindsets about the same issue and her novel can be considered a "step in the evolution of truly radical, formally experimental text of the woman modernists" (Park 451). By bringing together these multiple perspectives, she enables the reader to make an analysis by comparing and contrasting these issues in the light of historical facts through authentic, true-to-life characters.

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[1] *Suffragette Sally* can be compared to other suffragette novels of the time, such as Elizabeth Robins's *The Convert* (1907). While both novels explore the suffrage movement, Robins's work leans toward didacticism, whereas Colmore employs a more nuanced narrative structure. Such a comparison would highlight the diversity of literary strategies used to advocate for suffrage, enriching our understanding of suffragette literature as a genre.

To make the concerns clearer, what Colmore first does in the novel is to set scenes very carefully and highlight the distinction between being "a suffragist" and "a suffragette." The former refers to someone who advocates legal and equal voting rights which should be achieved through peaceful actions like marching on the streets, distributing pamphlets, and gathering petitions while opposing militant actions. The latter is for the radical and revolting actions to achieve their legal rights. The terms "*we're suffragists, not suffragettes*" (Colmore, 55–58) are repeated several times to emphasise the dilemma among the women. "The suffragists think that women lose their femininity and womanly qualities by being a suffragette who . . . are determined to achieve what they have been longing for; that is, equal political rights between the sexes. Getting their rights is not a 'womanly' but a 'human issue'" (Karaduman 55). Colmore, by repeating these terms on several occasions, underlines the patriarchal hegemony over females who are afraid of losing their femininity. Their main purpose is to preserve feminine qualities and "to show that women can be determined without being unwomanly" (Colmore 55). Colmore constructs a dialogue between a suffragist and a man, who signs a petition to support their ideas, to illustrate the clashing attitudes towards suffragists and suffragettes:

> "Oh, we're *suffragists*, not *suffragettes*, who are here today."
>
> "I felt sure you couldn't be a suffragette."
>
> "You think they really do harm to the cause?"
>
> ". . . Haven't a doubt of it. They've put up the backs of the whole Liberal party; and who's going to give the vote if we don't? Men who haven't logical minds and can't stick to a principle, get put off from the whole thing by the outrages called militant tactics. It's people of your kind who will win the day. "
>
> "You think it will be won?"
>
> "Sooner or later—certainly." (Colmore 58)

Colmore further delivers the public opinions about the suffragette movement by letting a suffragist state that "That's why I'm a *suffragist* and not a *suffragette*. I've been told, by a member of

Parliament, that the Government will never do anything for us so long as they behave as they do" (Colmore 73). Being herself a suffragette, Colmore effectively conveys the reactions against the suffragettes from both the public and the government. The idea that their militant tactics, approved neither by the politicians nor the general public, is strongly underscored. However, sooner, interestingly enough, through these 'militant tactics' and radical behaviours, suffragettes would achieve their rights. The reserved behaviours of the suffragists do not make the politicians take them seriously in political discussions. On the other hand, "suffragettes are determined to achieve what they have been longing for; . . . as they do not trust men who talk but do nothing for the freedom of women for ages and . . . think that militancy is the only way to achieve female suffrage" (Karaduman 49–55).

Though the novel seems to be focused on mainly the suffragette movement, it is impossible to avoid addressing the anti-suffragette ideas and concerns that accompany it. Colmore very diligently presents the opposing ideas. In the plot structure, it is "The Bilkes Family" in which, for the first time, the voice of anti-suffragette ideas is heard. In the name of Mr. Bilkes, the higher-middle-class patriarchal authority is represented. "Mr. Bilkes [is] in the bosom of his family; an ample bosom, since the Bilkeses [are of] a prolific race" (Colmore 59) which has the economic and political power to dominate the socio-economic structure of society. "In Britain, anti-suffragists were often from the upper classes, who viewed the vote as a dangerous step toward the erosion of aristocratic privilege" (Bartley 88). Generally, the majority of conventional patriarchal society resists the established norms and regulations being questioned and changed, just like "Mr. Bilkes . . . like[s] things that [are] old-fashioned and, above all, English. New-fangled ideas and revolutionary politics, these he [is] dead against, such as the Licensing Bill and the suffragettes" (Colmore 59–60). Here, what Colmore refers to is the Licencing Act of 1908 (as the novel was published in 1911), which brought forward some rules and regulations governing the sale and

consumption of alcohol. This Act was aimed to control the hours of alcohol sales, to set age limits, and to regulate the behaviour of licensed premises (Janeway 45). Being a conservative who sticks to the "port: he sa[ys] it [is] a good old-fashioned English liquor" (Colmore 59), Mr. Bilkes does not like new ideas and changes to his habits. The Licencing Act can be considered a new demand that restricts the habits of people and individual freedom. More important still, Mr. Bilkes is very disturbed by the suffragette actions which he fears will soon shatter his patriarchal hegemonic power to lead and maintain control over women in a political, economic, and cultural context. It would not be wrong to claim that, through Mr. Bilkes, the sharp voice of anti-suffragettes is heard.

> Mr. Bilkes, so he declared, did not know what women [suffragettes] were coming to. Time was when they were modest, stay-at-home, not forward—"You know what I mean." They all knew.
>
> "But now—!"
>
> Hands went up, and shoulders.
>
> "Fancy if any of you gurls was to go masquerading about the streets! Why, I'd—I'd never speak to you again, much less allow you to darken my doors." (Colmore 60)

Mr. Bilkes fails to understand or appreciate what is happening to those activist women of his time. He longs for a bygone era when women were confined to domestic roles, and expected to be obedient, modest, and submissive. His aggression and disdain for the suffragette movement are so pronounced that he openly declares he would never speak to women marching on the streets, let alone allow them into his home. He is deeply unsettled by changing laws and the new demands which question the "old fashioned" conventional norms and regulations. In a way, he considers them all threats that undermine and destabilise societal structures before reconfiguring them in ways he cannot accept. He thinks that women should know their places and should not demand more or assert themselves. He states several times, while speaking to his wife, Mrs. Bilkes, articulating that:

> Well, when I was younger than I am now, the place of a woman was her home; up in the nursery looking after her children, more especially the baby; down in the kitchen, seeing to her husband's dinner— . . . time was when women stuck to their homes, not pushing forward, nor yet—as some of the deep ones do—drawing back or pretending to draw back, setting up to know better than their betters. . . . When I was a young—younger man, I mean, gurls were glad to be taken notice of, while knowing their place. (Colmore 61)

In his speech, which reveals his anti-suffragette attitude and discomfort, he directly compares and contrasts the past and the changing social conditions of the present. He not only reflects on how women's roles have changed over time but also describes a past when women were expected to stay at home, focus on caring for their families, and not challenge societal expectations. From the anti-suffragette perspective, he expresses a view that idealises traditional roles, suggesting that changing roles represents a harmful deviation. At the same time, he dismissively questions the activities of suffragettes, further illustrating his disdain for their cause. For this purpose, Mr. Bilkes does not allow himself to go to "one of those meetings, suffragettes, at the Queen's Hall the other day, just for a lark, . . . 'to hear the old cats mewing together' because they can't get married" (73). With these words, he voices his dismissive anti-suffragette attitude, targeted at these radical women who are engaged in socio-political civil disobedience for their rights. By referring to attending a suffrage meeting at Queen's Hall as a "lark," he trivialises the movement, framing it as a mere amusement or diversion. This dismissal not only belittles the movement itself but also undermines the broader and deeply significant socio-political ramifications it addresses. The phrase "old cats mewing together because they can't get married" employs a crude metaphor, considering the suffragettes as bitter, frustrated women who are unable to fulfil what is traditionally viewed as a woman's ultimate role: marriage. This imagery reduces the suffragette cause to personal dissatisfaction with "unattractive" women, thus distorting the movement's real objective of achieving social justice and gender equality.

Such reductionist rhetoric reflects a patriarchal framework that diminishes the suffragette movement's broader societal goals like achieving social justice and gender equality. It reflects a patriarchal anti-suffragette view that undermines the position of women. Furthermore, Mr. Bilkes's characterisation of the suffragette cause as a "trivial complaint" reveals an underlying contempt for the very notion of gender equality. This anti-suffragette attitude mirrors the widespread mindset of men during the era who viewed the fight for women's suffrage as a needless disruption of the status quo, rather than acknowledging it as a fundamental challenge to entrenched power structures of patriarchy. The repetitive structure of Mr. Bilkes's statements mirrors the rigidity of his beliefs, while his dismissive tone reflects the broader societal resistance to change. Through a stylistic choice of repetitions, Colmore transforms him from a mere character into a symbol of patriarchal resistance, effectively blending narrative and socio-political critique. On the flip side, Mr. Bilkes's logic underscores the contradictions within anti-suffragist arguments. While he champions traditional gender roles, he denies women autonomy in defining those roles. This inconsistency reflects the patriarchal fear of losing control, revealing how anti-suffragist rhetoric often relied on preserving power dynamics rather than engaging in rational debate.

On a broader level, Mr. Bilkes's words not only underscore the gender biases and systemic resistance women faced in their quest for political and social rights, but they also highlight the enduring cultural and ideological battles between progress and reaction. His use of humour and sarcasm as tools to dismiss serious political activism reflects a wider historical pattern in which social justice movements, particularly those advocating for marginalised groups, have often been met with ridicule, satire, and trivialisation. In contemporary discussions around social justice, the same tactics—mockery and belittlement—continue to be used to discredit movements for equality and change, demonstrating the persistence of such hostile attitudes throughout history. Nonetheless, one must remember that such impactful ideas have always resided in the heart of

intersectionality. While the anti-suffragist attitudes of Mr. Bilkes reflect class-based anxieties about societal change, they also highlight the interconnectedness of gender, class, and privilege. For working-class women like Sally Simmonds, suffrage was tied to economic empowerment, whereas upper-class women like Lady Geraldine Hill navigated societal expectations that framed political activism as unbecoming. This intersectionality complicates the binary of suffragist versus anti-suffragist, demonstrating how diverse social positions shaped women's approaches to suffrage.

In the later chapters of the novel, Colmore, in advocating for the legislative approval of the equal voting system and highlighting the flaws in the opposing ideas against it, depicts a scene of the resistance of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League against the suffragettes. Drawing on historical events for authenticity and depth, she incorporates factual evidence to enhance the narrative's credibility. She describes the event as such:

> A great meeting, organised by the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, was held at the Queen's Hall last evening, to protest against the parliamentary vote being given to women." Thus, one of the leading morning papers, on the 28th of March, and the others were in similar strain . . .. The woman president had made a declamatory speech. . .. (149–150)

The description of the meeting organised by the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League at Queen's Hall presents a real historical event, underscoring the challenges suffragettes faced. This anti-suffragette event takes place at a prestigious venue like Queen's Hall, known for its cultural and intellectual significance. This setting emphasises the importance anti-suffragists placed on their cause. The phrase "declamatory speech" is notable, as it suggests the president's speech was forceful and dramatic, possibly aimed at making her audience take a stand against the women's suffrage movement. The fact that a woman, in a leadership role, delivering such a public statement against women's suffrage adds a layer of complexity to this act of cultural conservatism. It is clear that anti-suffragist women were often motivated by a mix of internalised patriarchy and practical

concerns. Many feared that suffrage would disrupt traditional family structures, requiring them to balance additional public responsibilities with existing domestic duties. Others, reliant on male-dominated socio-economic systems, opposed suffrage out of concern for preserving their financial and social security. These motivations illustrate how deeply entrenched cultural norms could shape women's resistance to their own political liberation. The clash between suffragists and anti-suffragists, therefore, reveals how significant the struggle for women's rights is in reshaping not only political systems but also cultural understandings of gender, power, and public life. Thus, the organisation of such anti-suffragette meetings demonstrates that the suffrage movement was more than just a political issue—it was also deeply intertwined with questions of societal norms, women's roles in public life, and the way women were expected to behave. The opposition, represented by the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, reflects the era's cultural conservatism, where traditional notions of femininity were seen as incompatible with the idea of women participating in politics.

In conclusion, through the lens of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League and the Bilkes Family, the presence of the anti-suffragettes reveals the tension between modernity and tradition. While the suffragists were advocating for change and women's political participation, the anti-suffragists believed in preserving a hierarchical structure in which women were assigned domestic and moral roles, and political power was viewed as a masculine domain. This dynamic reflects both a battle over gender roles and a broader cultural anxiety about shifting power structures and the redefinition of societal norms. In Gertrude Colmore's *Suffragette Sally*, the anti-suffragette arguments and their suffragist counterparts reflect broader fears about the destabilising effects of women's increased participation in public life. By intertwining personal narratives with socio-political commentary, Colmore captures the multifaceted nature of this struggle, illustrating how individual experiences reflect wider societal shifts. Ultimately, this clash between competing

visions of gender, politics, and public life is integral to the cultural transformations that would eventually lead to women achieving the vote, challenging long-standing notions of power and identity in the process. The novel, this way, documents a pivotal historical moment while underscoring the enduring relevance of these debates in contemporary discussions about gender equality and social progress. Also moving beyond documenting historical events, *Suffragette Sally* bridges Victorian and Modernist literary traditions. While it retains Victorian moral concerns through its focus on family and societal roles, its emphasis on individual agency and political struggle aligns with Modernist preoccupations. This duality positions Colmore's work as both a historical artefact and a precursor to modern feminist literature.

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Looking into the (De)humanised Soul: Creating Posthuman Gaze in *Never Let Me Go*

İnsanlaştırıl(ma)mış Ruha Bakmak: *Beni Asla Bırakma*'da Posthuman Bakış Yaratmak

Dilara Önen*

Abstract: The Nobel prize-winner author Kazuo Ishiguro problematises one of the most universal and timeless issues about human race, value and boundaries of humanity in his much-praised science fiction novel *Never Let Me Go* (2005). In the novel, Ishiguro represents the topic of complexity of human value by foregrounding the effectiveness of gaze in its formation. The story which is reflected from the perspective of a clone named Kathy H, demonstrates the process of Kathy's discovery of her identity and function to become a donor. Set in the 1990s at a fictional boarding school for clones in England, the novel reflects the existential anxiety of these clone life forms. Kathy and her friends, Ruth and Tommy, who live under the surveillance of their teachers Miss Lucy and Miss Emily in the boarding school named Hailsham, gradually recognise that they are different than their teachers who approach the clones in a belittling manner. Kathy and her friends discern that the teachers of Hailsham raise the students of the school to be healthy bodies whose organs are of prime importance. Ishiguro brings together the perspective of humans who regard clones as tools with the viewpoint of the clones who receive life from an unbiased perspective. Indicating the blurred lines defining humanity with the device of gaze, the author emphasises a need to name this dynamic of perspectives that unsettles anthropocentric understanding on how to be a human. In this respect, this paper will analyse human and clone relations focusing on their ways of perception in *Never Let Me Go* in order to define the nature of gaze dynamics of humans and clones towards each other. Defining the multistranded way of seeing of the clones as the posthuman gaze as opposed to the single focal gaze of humans, this paper demonstrates that the frame of gaze and its inclusiveness determine the understanding of the complicated nature of humanity. The posthuman gaze, which is indicated through the art critic John Berger's argument on ways of seeing in this article, is created with the aim of demonstrating the need to formulate interdisciplinary approaches to comprehend the ever-changing meanings of human notion and the sophistication of human nature.

Keywords: Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, science fiction, posthuman theory, John Berger, gaze

Özet: Nobel ödüllü yazar Kazuo Ishiguro insanlığın değeri ve sınırları gibi insan ırkının en evrensel ve zaman üstü konularından birini, çok beğenilen bilimkurgu romanı *Beni Asla Bırakma*'da (2005) sorunsallaştırır. Romanda, Ishiguro insan değerinin karmaşıklığı konusunu, insanlığı algılama biçimleri aracılığıyla ele almaktadır. Kathy H adlı bir klonun bakış açısından yansıtılan hikaye, Kathy'nin kimliğini ve donör olma işlevini keşfetme sürecini göstermektedir. 1990'lı yıllarda İngiltere'de klonlar için kurulmuş kurgusal bir yatılı okulda geçen roman, bu klon yaşam formlarının varoluşsal kaygılarını yansıtır. Hailsham adlı yatılı okulda öğretmenleri Bayan Lucy ve Bayan Emily'nin gözetimi altında yaşayan Kathy ve arkadaşları, Ruth ve Tommy, kendilerine küçümseyici bir şekilde yaklaşan öğretmenlerinden farklı olduklarını yavaş yavaş fark ederler. Ishiguro, klonları bir araç olarak gören insanların bakış açısıyla, hayatı tarafsız bir bakış açısıyla algılayan klonların bakış açısını bir araya getirmektedir. İnsanlığı bakış vasıtasıyla tanımlayan bulanık çizgilere dikkat çeken yazar, antroposentrik nasıl insan olunur anlayışını sarsan bu bakış açısı dinamiğinin adlandırılması gerektiğini vurgular. Bu bağlamda, *Beni Asla Bırakma*'daki insanların ve klonların birbirlerine yönelik bakış dinamiklerinin doğasını bu çalışmada ortaya atılan terim olan 'posthuman bakış' olarak tanımlanabilmesi için, insan ve klon ilişkileri bu ilişkilerin algı biçimlerine odaklanılarak analiz edilecektir. Klonları, insanların tek odaklı bakışına karşı çok yönlü posthuman bakışa sahip varlıklar olarak değerlendiren bu makale, bakış çerçevesinin ve onun kapsayıcılığının, insanlığın karmaşık doğasının anlaşılmasını belirlediğini göstermektedir. Bu çalışmada, sanat eleştirmeni John Berger'in görme biçimlerine ilişkin argümanıyla işaret edilen posthuman bakış, insan kavramının sürekli değişen anlamlarını ve insan doğasının karmaşıklığını anlamak için disiplinlerarası yaklaşımlar formüle etme ihtiyacını göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Kazuo Ishiguro, *Beni Asla Bırakma*, bilim kurgu, posthuman teori, John Berger, bakış.

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1. Introduction

Named among the 100 Best English-language novels published since 1923 by the *Time*, *Never Let Me Go* (2005) comes into prominence as one of the most influential novels of Kazuo Ishiguro after his Booker Prize-winner *The Remains of the Day* (1989). Set in a speculative realm in England during the 1990s, *Never Let Me Go* is centred around the narration of Kathy H, who is a clone human and a caregiver of the other clones that are produced to be donors to unhealthy people. Kathy reflects her life in the boarding school, Hailsham, which is founded to raise and investigate the clones, along with many institutions, functioning as clone-farms. As the students of the school, Kathy H and her friends, Ruth C and Tommy D, maintain a healthy lifestyle as potential donors and are led to express themselves through artworks by their teachers including Miss Emily, Miss Lucy, and Miss Geraldine. The novel, which seems to represent identity formation of a group of young people at a boarding school along with their relationship dynamics, indeed, foregrounds a searing critique of human pride and othering of the different in society through the posthuman concept of clone life forms. By means of the confession of Miss Lucy and observations of the clones of their situation, Kathy and her friends discover themselves to be cloned from the outsiders such as criminals and prostitutes to be donor to people. In the clones' realisation of their nonhuman nature, the notion of gaze becomes effective since the clone students are confronted with themselves through the details in the way of seeing of nonclone humans of them. The focus of the nonclones of anything but the clones implies the nonclone humans' manacling and disparaging perspective of the clones. In contrast with the biased and single focal gaze of nonclone humans, Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy, all of whom face an identity crisis due to the perception of nonclone humans of them, derive a bifocal way of seeing which excludes neither the sight of humans nor the clones. Unlike the perspective of the nonclones, clones approach life in a more sympathetic manner, which is reflected in their ability to produce artworks and experience emotional crises.

Therefore, Kathy and her friends lead the reader to question the aspects of human perspective and what is the definition of human. Ishiguro, who brings two different types of gazes together, indicates the clash and dynamics of ways of seeing between nonclone and clone life forms. Stemming from the juxtaposition between the perspectives of the clone and nonclone characters, the author formulates a new kind of gaze which becomes unique to the clones as they realise who they are by observing themselves from multiple points of view which belong to nonclones and, as clones, to themselves. The clones, as posthuman subjects, develop a two-sided, or bicameral perspective, a concept derived in this study with regards to the posthuman theory. The concept of bicameral perspective, or the posthuman gaze as defined in this study, can be described through adopting the terminology of visual arts employed in the art critic John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* (1972). In his work, Berger suggests that the invention of camera brought the possibility of focusing on a multitude of images in a moment through the multiple focal points of camera whereas the human eye captures single image at a time. Concordantly, the technology of cloning reproduces organic beings, which evokes the question whether this process reshapes the ways of seeing in the cloned subjects in line with the camera effect. In this respect, the posthuman gaze problematises the issue of reproduced way of seeing and the meaning of this restructured perspective based on the gaze of Kathy the clone human in *Never Let Me Go*. This bicameral type of gaze of the clones, which is in conflict with the nonclone humans in the novel, destroys the supremacy of human to the other forms of life while marking a need to redefine humanity. This paper aims to analyse the propounded bicameral perspective, or the posthuman gaze, in Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* in order to indicate the significance of gaze in diminishing this hierarchy in terms of humaneness among lifeforms and reconsidering human nature after elaborating on the difference of this study from other works, and contextualising the posthuman gaze through posthuman theory and the concept of gaze.

2.   The Reception of *Never Let Me Go*

This paper, which employs an interdisciplinary perspective by bringing together the gaze theory of visual arts and the critical theory of posthumanism to analyse *Never Let Me Go*, stands apart from many of the studies on the novel by means of its theoretical scope. *Never Let Me Go*, which has been evaluated by many critics since its publication in 2005, has generally been the subject of arguments on its generic elements and content with regards to the concerns of memory and time, empathy, and reproduction technologies. In terms of its genre, *Never Let Me Go* is demonstrated as a piece of dystopic fiction in several studies including the article of Arnab Chatterjee, in which the author discusses the transformation of the pastoral and utopian setting of Hailsham to a dystopia where the clones are harvested to be organ donors (109). In addition to Chatterjee, Wei Lu suggests that Ishiguro puts forth a social critique of rapid advancement of science and technology through the subject of clones in the world of dystopian reality as the 2000s introduced terrifying developments in the field of cloning with Dolly the lamb (702). Unlike Chatterjee and Lu, Karl Shaddox, in "Generic Considerations in Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*," claims that the novel shows affinities with sentimental and abolitionist literature of the eighteenth century, highlighting the importance of the pervading and emotionally-motivated discourse of Kathy (448). More than any other topic, the subject of memory and time is analysed in *Never Let Me Go*. Critics such as John Mullan, Mark Currie, Rosemary Rizq, Cynthia F. Wong, Keith McDonald, and Matthew Beedham agree on the idea that the usage of unreliable narrator through Kathy foregrounds memory and non-linear time as the fundamental elements of *Never Let Me Go* since the realm of the novel is constructed by the first-person narrative of Kathy H of her recollections across flashbacks. This narrative technique, according to Beedham, shows Kathy's "naivete, her liabilities as an interpreter of what she sees, but also her deductive smarts, her sensitivity to pain and her need for affection" (138). In other words, the issue of empathy gains significance based

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on Kathy's first-person point of view that dominates the novel. According to Anne Whitehead, Ishiguro renders empathy a morally ambiguous concept by juxtaposing the authenticity of Kathy's caring mechanism towards her suffering donor friend Tommy and the "paradoxical basis of the entire system of organ donation in a mode of care or empathy, which seeks to reduce the pain and suffering of family and friends" (57). Together with arguments on the themes of memory, time, and empathy, the illustration of reproduction technologies, or cloning, preoccupies the works of some scholars including Tiffany Tsao and Rachel Carroll. Tsao supports the view that the problematisation of human nature by means of the clones, who have feelings as any human being, connects the theological faith in soul with biotechnological creation in the novel (216). On the other hand, Carroll regards the reproduction technologies depicted in *Never Let Me Go* at odds with heterosexual norms. She argues that the relationship of Kathy and her friends with the reproductive sexuality is paradoxical and queer since they are "the product[s] of technologies of assisted reproduction but genetically engineered to be unable to reproduce" (132).

Standing apart from the discussions on both the genre of the novel and its topics of memory, time, empathy, and cloning, this study prioritises the dynamics of seeing and choosing what to see in *Never Let Me Go*. While suggesting the thought that the ways of seeing signify one's level of humaneness in the novel, this article proposes the requirement of the co-existence of posthumanism and gaze theories of the British art critic John Berger to problematise the idea of human nature presented in the novel.

3. Posthumanism and Its Vision of the Other

The posthuman theory, which constructs the basic scope of this article due to the problematisation of humanity through clone and nonclone dichotomy in *Never Let Me Go*, is fundamentally based on the question of what it means to be human though the answers vary. Evaluating the nature of humanity by deliberating on what it is and what it is not, humanity is confronted with "a qualitative

shift in… thinking about what exactly is the basic unit of common reference for our species, our polity and our relationship to the other inhabitants of this planet" with posthumanism (Braidotti 1-2). In other words, posthuman theory decentres human as the reference point, attacking the habit of considering what is human at the base and what is not human as subordinate. As Braidotti explains, the notion of man, which was defined by Protagoras as the measure of all things and regarded as the universal model in the Italian Renaissance as portrayed in Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man, is the epitome of humanism as a creed that integrates the biological and moral development of human capacities into an image of teleologically predetermined, rational progress (13). At the heart of this universalist stance is the concept of difference as derogatory. Within this anthropocentric view, the subject is associated with rationality and ethical conduct while the other is identified as its negative or less-than-human. In Badmington's words, anthropocentrism always includes the terms of its own transcendence as its structure carries within itself the need for its own critique, or its other (19). Therewithal, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries' nihilist and existential philosophical doctrines and scientific developments beginning with Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection undermine the human concept as ideal. During the period, "[w]hat does it mean to be human is being asked with more urgency than ever before" (Herbrechter 76). According to Herbrechter, the end of metanarratives, the fragmentation of the subject, the dispersal of meaning, and the coexistence of the asynchronous, all of which characterise the postmodern age's emphasis on plurality, also express the crisis of the last standing metanarrative, anthropocentrism (76). As the faith in the absolute, monism, and the unified sense of subjecthood are shattered, posthuman theory's aim to abandon the "attempt to police the boundaries between the human and nonhuman and see both as enwebbed within a skein of mutual interrelations" finds its place in the new critical theory and philosophy discourses (Hayles 135). In the end, as Nayar suggests, posthumanism is concerned with the integration of embodied life forms into

environments in which the system grows with other entities, organic and inorganic. It is a philosophical standpoint that sees otherness as constitutive of the human system (73).

The other that posthuman theory foregrounds is developed around some basic ideas such as the notion of cyborg suggested by Haraway. According to the critic, the concept of cyborg brings human and machine orientations together with the aim of the transformation of the human image for the better (Haraway 7). It includes the technological modifications on the human body via practices ranging from wearing contact lenses to undergoing surgery of mechanical organs, and it thus revises the concept of human. Together with the integration of nonbiological devices to human nature as its other, Haraway marks the necessity of human-animal continuum, which considers animal as the other, through new representations of the human concept. Braidotti elaborates on the human-animal connection idea of Haraway by indicating Dolly as "[t]hinking about Dolly blurs the categories of thought we have inherited from the past – she/it stretches the longitude and latitude of thought itself, adding depth, intensity and contradiction. Because she/it embodies complexity, this entity which is no longer an animal but not yet fully a machine, is the icon of the posthuman condition" (74). In a sense, the description of Braidotti of the emblem of the posthuman condition as Dolly demonstrates the vision of posthumanism of human as a process, sharing ecosystems and genetic material with other forms.

4. The Phenomenon of Gaze and Its Creation of the Other

The issue of creating and locating the other is as essential to the gaze theories as it is to posthumanism. From the studies of Sartre to Kristeva, the act of seeing is examined with an emphasis on its function to discern oneself by creating others that help to understand what a person is and what s/he is not. The phenomenon of gaze, which began to be analysed within phenomenology in the twentieth century, formed the main argument in *Being and Nothingness* (1943) by Jean-Paul Sartre. In his seminal work, Sartre suggests that the way of being is

characterised by being-for-others, which means that an encounter with other individuals initiates reciprocal relationship in which one's self-consciousness begins to be shaped. The philosopher claims that the existence of the other individual as a conscious subject transforms my being and my reality. "Being looked at is a sign of the presence of the other as a conscious individual. Being in the face of the other in the world is a universal characteristic of our being" (Stack and Plant 369).

In a similar manner, Jacques Lacan, in his seminars on the gaze, defines the construction of the sense of self in relation with the other. He claims that an infant, during the mirror stage, observes itself in the mirror and establishes its aspired image which it wants to fulfil throughout its life. This fantasy image can be completed with others who function as the objects of desire such as idols and role models. The object of desire, or the *objet petit a* as defined by Lacan, is conceived through gaze which is explained as "point of annihilation in which is marked, in the field of the reduction of the subject, a break— which warns us of the need to introduce another reference" (Lacan 82). The objects of the gaze turn into reference points which reveal the lack within the individual.

Drawing on the Lacanian idea of gaze, the Bulgarian-French philosopher Julia Kristeva proceeds on the concept of the mirror stage in her *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (1980). The mirror stage, which enables an infant to distinguish himself/herself from the mother and see himself/herself as an individual, is a process when a person becomes oneself seeing himself/herself in relation to others. Kristeva claims that abjection takes places in this process as an individual desires to become his/her view of the other's conception of him/her; however, s/he cannot acquire such an image. Kristeva puts that "I experience abjection only if an Other has settled in place and stead of what will be 'me,'" which emphasises the lack within that is realised through gazing the others (10).

In a similar manner to Kristeva in terms of building on the deprecating function of gaze, the British filmmaker Laura Mulvey' theory of gaze elaborates on scopophilia, taking pleasure in looking at a person as an erotic object. She argues that the female is the constant *objet petit a* while the male is the subject who actively observes. To Mulvey,

In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*. (808-9)

In a way, the position of the other of the dynamics of gaze between subject and object is taken by the females in a phallocentric world as Mulvey indicates. Until it was subdued by the male subject in Mulvey's deductions from the twentieth century cinema, the object of the gaze has been interpreted in many ways. It marks the emergence of the individual consciousness to Sartre, implies what the individual is not for Lacan, and indicates the sense of abjection to Kristeva.

5. Gaze Theory of John Berger and the Posthuman Gaze

The studies on gaze proliferated with the developing technologies of photography and cinema in the twentieth century. Walter Benjamin's 1935 essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" shows the astonishing change in the experience of visual art with the introduction of digital reproduction techniques, copying or cloning, works of art and making them easy to access. Benjamin argues that the age of reproduction altered not only our aesthetic experience of art, but also the political roles of art, its commodity value, and the social contexts built around it (Bruce 67). The English art critic John Berger evaluates the ideas of Benjamin with regards to reproduction of images and creates *Ways of Seeing* (1972), which is a 30-minute-television-serials broadcasted on BBC Two and turned into an eponymous book.

In his critical work, Berger broadens the ways in which visual art can be observed and understood. The four-part television series and book explore the relations between camera and painting, women and art, painting and possessions, and fine arts and commerce. In the first chapter, Berger expands the arguments of Benjamin, suggesting that reproduction techniques separate the modern context of a painting from that which existed at the time of its creation. In the section that the critic analyses the relation between women and art, he focuses on the female nude. While the third chapter indicates the usage of oil painting to demonstrate the status of the commissioner, the fourth chapter reveals how the colour photography substituted the function of oil paint. Although the subject matter of the four parts changes, Berger emphasises throughout the work that art both mirrors and shapes our realities in which the context becomes effective in contemplation and reproduction facilities change our visual comprehension.

Beginning his arguments by explaining the way we see things, John Berger draws attention to the essential fact that "[w]e never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves" (6). While what we see is bounded by our way of connection with what is perceived, the perspective of each individual determines his/her reality. In other words, "[t]he visible world is arranged for the spectator as the universe was once thought to be arranged for God" (14). In a sense, every human being reflects his/her mindscape to what s/he sees, and is informed by the world through what s/he is able to see. Besides, in parallel with the arguments of Sartre and Mulvey, the observing subject is positioned as the authority of his/her visible realm. However, the invention of camera presents a contradiction for human perspective pertaining to the limitedness of the sight of human eye. Whilst the human eye can only be in one place at a time, camera "manoeuvr[es] in the chaotic movements, recording one movement after another in the most complex combinations. Freed from the boundaries of time and space, [it] co-ordinate[s] any and all points of the universe" (15). Stated by Berger, camera sight breaks the confines of time and

space, enabling multi-perspectives all at once without foregrounding or de-emphasising any image, which is the habit of human consciousness as demonstrated by the theorists of gaze above.

While the gaze works to discern oneself by observing the other (Sartre), identifies the lack within identity (Lacan), evokes abjection with the awareness towards lack within (Kristeva), and subjugates women in patriarchal world (Mulvey) according to the critics stated, it embraces multiplicity in terms of time, place, and forms of being in the camera sight illustrated by Berger. In a sense, as posthumanism highlights the coexistence of life forms, or the other and the self, to define the new understanding of humanity, the sight of camera indicated by Berger provides concurrency of perceptions and brings about the enlarged vision of life. Constructing the scope of this work, the posthuman gaze, exemplified by Ishiguro through narrative of a clone in *Never Let Me Go*, synthesises these two conceptions and proposes an inclusive way of seeing that contributes to an unbiased perception of life and expanding definition of humanity.

6. The Dynamics of Gaze in *Never Let Me Go*

The story in *Never Let Me Go*, which is conducted through the narrative, or the viewpoint of a clone narrator, foregrounds gaze of clone and nonclone characters as a tool to display the blurred lines defining humanity. The clash of gaze dynamics of the clone Kathy and nonclone guardians of Hailsham comes to light as Kathy approaches her environment without a baggage in her mind about the reality of cloning. Therefore, Kathy the narrator neither sees life with a biased gaze nor practises othering which is applied by nonclones to the clones. While Kathy demonstrates an unprejudiced way of seeing of people, nonclones disregard the clone students and oppress them with their hostile gaze stemming from the fact that the nonclones view clones only as body parts to be used in the ill nonclone humans. The clone students are not valued equally since they "are not seen as whole human beings or as whole bodies, but as organs that are created for medical science and organ donation" (Menteşe Kıryaman 116). The gaze of nonclones of the clones marks

the cruelty of humanity residing in the act of othering the living beings who are genetically the same with the nonclones and have emotions like them. Considering the dynamics of gaze in the gut-wrenching novel of Ishiguro, we see that *Never Let Me Go* demonstrates a structure of perspective illustrating the arguments of Berger on the changing understanding of gaze with the introduction of camera in the visual arts. The novel, which continues the trend of the focus on posthuman bodies and clones in the science fiction genre of the late twentieth century, foregrounds the element of gaze to question what makes us human. In line with the arguments of the theorists of posthumanism, the posthuman gaze of Kathy marks the changing definition of human which includes biologic and nonbiologic life forms, contributing to the debate of the period on the bioethics. The notion of bioethics is described through the correlation that "[n]ew medicines, biomedical procedures, and ways of altering plants and animals are bringing benefits to millions of people. However, these same innovations also have the potential to bring harms or to raise other kinds of ethical questions about their appropriate use" (What Is Bioethics?). *Never Let Me Go* emphasises the issue of bioethics through its focus on the narrative of a clone who is illustrated with humane qualities such as having emotional intelligence in addition to her bodily aspects which are identical with nonclones. According to Storrow, the scientists were divided on the issue of human reproductive cloning. American Society for Reproductive Medicine set out the pros and cons of cloning, concluding that it is an ethically unacceptable practice until further assurances of its safety are provided. The argument in defence of cloning was that it is a useful reproductive solution for infertile people. Opponents believed that human cloning removes the sacredness of reproduction and invalidates the genetic individuality of each person (Storrow 266). While the world of science of the period discussed the problem of preservation of genetic uniqueness of individuals and rejected the exercise of cloning humans, *Never Let Me Go* indicated that peculiarity of human race is not originated in genes but in its capacity of valuing all life forms equal to human.

In order to emphasise this idea, the novel represents different types of perspectives adopted by the nonclones and clones, which evoke John Berger's definitions of the gaze mechanics after the invention of camera. In the sense that Berger claims about human eye and camera eye, the field of gaze of the nonclone humans in the novel is limited with the viewpoint of human eye, whereas the clones, represented through the perspective of the protagonist Kathy, see the world through camera eye, which is capable of observing the world from multiple angles all at the same time. The distinction in the two different life forms' ways of seeing reveals that nonclone humans comprehend life through either/or approach based on their single focal point, which means that they either accept clones as long as they display humanly traits or despise them altogether for the fact that they are genetically reproduced beings. The knowledge of the nonclone humans is reflected in their gaze which prioritises themselves as the spectators expecting the world to be constructed around themselves. At the other end of the scale, clones appear human enough to produce artworks and develop empathy towards both clones and nonclones. Together with a humane perspective, clones also demonstrate an inhuman gaze since they are able to see themselves from the derogatory perspective of the nonclones. The bicameral mind, or perspective of the clones, which enables them to conceive both sides of things in life, is indeed based on the way of seeing that is unique to the clones and may be termed as the posthuman gaze.

The nonclone humans of the novel, including the guardians of the boarding school, Miss Emily, Miss Lucy, Miss Geraldine, and Madame the benefactress of Hailsham, develop human eye viewpoint, which is shaped by their prejudices towards clones and limited like their understanding of humanity. Their points of view are discerned from the account of Kathy on their effects in Hailsham, approaches to the students of the school, and their project of encouraging creation of artworks by the students. Run by the guardians, Hailsham comes out as an institution founded with the aim of providing a humanitarian environment and education for the clones who supposedly

live in better life standards than their peers who are trained in the inhumanely conditions of industrial centres for clones in the country as Miss Emily says while comparing Hailsham with other places as, "[a]ll around the country, at this very moment, there are students being reared in deplorable conditions, conditions you Hailsham students could hardly imagine" (255). The school which is under the control of the guardians becomes an inseparable element of their gaze towards the clones since it is depicted as a place that is "full of hiding places, indoors and out: cupboards, nooks, bushes, hedges" (43). Through its places concealing the presence of the clone students, Hailsham turns into glasses which the guardians look through to forget the existence of the beings that remind them of their non-uniqueness as humans.

Similar to the structure of Hailsham that shadows some of its places, the nonclones' gaze leaves the students out of focus and pushes them into the foreground as if they were disgusting creatures. The differences in the gaze of nonclones become obvious as Kathy recalls one of the visits of Madame to Hailsham during which they walk side by side and, as the clone students, they all realise the repulsion of Madame towards themselves. She describes this day as, "it was like we'd walked from the sun right into chilly shade. Ruth had been right: Madame *was* afraid of us. But she was afraid of us in the same way someone might be afraid of spiders… It had never occurred to us to wonder how *we* would feel, being seen like that, being the spiders" (35). Indicated by Kathy, the gaze of the nonclone humans, such as Madame's, is marked not only by their unacceptance of clones but also by depreciatory approaches towards the clone students. This type of gaze directed by nonclones to the clones maintains the effect of rejection of seeing the clones as equal beings throughout the novel. The implicit knowledge of the clone students about the issue of their exclusion is represented via Kathy's memories. For example, Kathy's rendering of the scene in which she and Tommy go to Madame's house to ask if she may relieve Ruth and Tommy of being donors since they are in love and it is enough to be freed according to rumours at

Hailsham, reveals that they are almost invisible to the nonclone humans. She remembers how Madame looked at her that day as, "Madame's gaze had drifted over to me again, but I had the feeling she was staring at something on my arm. I actually looked down to see if there was birdshit or something on my sleeve" (248). The efforts of Madame to focus on something other than the clones even when she is talking with them leads Kathy to look down on herself, too. Sensing the feeling of abomination of Madame, Kathy believes there is something wrong or hideous about her like birdshit on her sleeve. In addition to Madame, Miss Emily evades seeing Kathy and her friends. Through the end of the novel, when Kathy unveils the moment she and her friends were confronted with the fact that Hailsham was a project to prove the clones have souls, she describes how Miss Emily's gaze "remained fixed behind [them]" (254). Indeed, the nonclone characters' cancelation of the clones through their gaze comes out as a stance related to the attitude of the nonclone humans outside Hailsham. While Miss Emily discloses the project of Hailsham, she says that in the early days of human cloning, the clones were regarded as "[s]hadowy objects in test tubes" that are used to equip medical science by people (256).

Doomed to be overlooked by the nonclone human race, the clones come out of the shadows only when they accomplish the acts the nonclones deem them worthy of doing. The guardians and Madame, who turn a blind eye on the reality that the clones tear down the supremacy of human race by appearing and behaving identical to them, merely accept the presence of the clones as they produce artworks. The core of the Hailsham project, which is to prove that the clones have souls, is conducted by the products of the clones' creativity, a trait that is considered as essential to humanity. In a way, the clones, who are indicated the same as the nonclones in terms of human aspects, are exposed to the sense of rivalry of the nonclones, reducing clones to guinea pigs whose organs to be used and emotional intelligence to be approached with suspicion. In line with Berger's suggestion that humans always evaluate the connection between things and themselves as the gods

of their own realms (6), the nonclone humans in *Never Let Me Go* perceive clones as long as they create art. In a way, the perception of the nonclones is limited by the sights of the things that they think belong to human race only. As god created humanity in his own image, the nonclones assume the role of the god of clones as they created the clones who also bring out creative products through artworks, which is a sign that nonclones transferred to the clones a part from themselves. As Miss Emily explains, to prove that the clones have souls and creative impulse solely functions to show that the nonclones "did [their] job well" (255) on the clones whom the nonclones see as their products. Kathy indicates the fact that they are also evaluated by the nonclones depending on how well they do their 'job' by stating that, "[a] lot of the time, how you were regarded at Hailsham, how much you were liked and respected, had to do with how good you were at 'creating'" (16). Displayed during the exchanges and sales, and collected by Madame for her gallery, the artworks demonstrate not who the clones are but what they are in the eyes of the nonclones (Whitehead 66). By means of the artworks, the clones feel themselves as worthy subjects to their goddess, Madame. In fact, the artworks turn into "individualized quantity of measurable value" of clones who are not accepted as humas despite the aim of the Hailsham project to prove they are (Alcalá 43). Madame and the guardians of the school position the clone students as inferior beings who can only claim their presence through the divine act of creation. The clone students who cannot perform the practice, a situation indicated through the case of Tommy who "never even tried to be creative," are left to be humiliated as Tommy is mocked by his friends and is known with his tantrums by the nonclones (10).

The biased gaze or, the single focal sight in Bergerian terms, of the nonclone humans which forces the clones to discover their loathed identities in the anthropocentric world of *Never Let Me Go*, is contrasted with the way of seeing of the clones. The gaze of the students, represented by Kathy's point of view, is a concoction pertaining to its binary nature. Their way of seeing beholds both the

detesting perspective of the nonclone humans towards the clones and the culturally-uninformed viewpoint of the clone humans towards life. Raised at Hailsham until the age of sixteen, the clone students step outside of their realities, in which they are consistently looked down on, when they enter puberty by moving to the cottages. During their time in Hailsham, the students, who feel that they are hated but cannot understand why, construct a point of view that is inevitably distorted by the guardians' negative look. At the same time, the gaze of clones remains innocent as the clones are unaware of the cruelty of human race which comes out as the fact that they produce clones to use them as donors. The nonclones disregard that the clones are also individuals with soul and emotions.

The posthuman gaze of the clones, which involves both the corrupted perspective of humanity against the others and a vision seeing beyond the prejudices and inhumanness of humankind, is illustrated by Kathy's way of seeing. Her two-sided gaze processes both the insignificant details and crucial moments in her life. For instance, Kathy refers to the time when she and her friends begin to live in the cottages, which reside outside Hailsham, by describing the place as "beautiful and cosy, with overgrown grass everywhere – a novelty to [them]" (116-7). Nevertheless, she also sees in the same place the "hills in the distance that reminded us of the ones in the distance at Hailsham, but they seemed to us oddly crooked, like when you draw a picture of a friend and it's almost right but not quite, and the face on the sheet gives you the creeps" (116). The Hailsham effect, which is originated in the way of seeing of the guardians and Madame, blends with Kathy's vision as she knows the outpost presents a peaceful imagery with its stunning nature; however, it evokes the image of Hailsham that makes the place not quite right.

Moreover, the posthuman gaze as Kathy's dominates the reception of the memorable moments that reveal the existential crisis and the tragedy the clones undergo. We can see this through the end of the novel as Kathy remembers the day when she, Ruth, and Tommy pass by the billboard of open-

plan office, returning from a trip to the boat in Norfolk where the friends hope to find the person Ruth is cloned from (223). The open-plan office advertisement first appears when the friends were staying at Hailsham and Ruth saw it in a magazine and, hoped to work at such a place in the future. The image, which reappears when they search for the person Ruth is cloned from with the hope that she is working at an office, emerges the last time in the novel, leaving Ruth shaken. In this scene, when the friends show up resigned to their fate of being donors or carers, the observation of Kathy on Ruth reveals the chaotic emotional state of Ruth. Ruth is clearly suffering from an identity crisis as she is unable to express her confusion with words. Kathy reflects that, "I glanced at Ruth beside me. There was no anger in her eyes, just a kind of wariness. There was even a sort of hope, I thought, that when the poster appeared, it would be perfectly innocuous – something that reminded us of Hailsham, something like that. I could see all of this in her face, the way it didn't quite settle on any one expression, but hovered tentatively" (225). Discerning every emotion Ruth feels, Kathy reveals with her bicameral gaze that the condition of clones is marked by such co-existence of hope and prudence, the former of which is directed to find the person whom the clone is reproduced from and the latter is derived to prevent disappointment resulting from not being able to find that person ever. The clone friends, all of whom experience identity crisis either silently as in the case of Ruth or making a lot of noise about it as Tommy does, believe that finding the person who is the subject of cloning may reveal who they are in essence. In this sense, the posthuman gaze of Kathy, which helps her to broaden her understanding about life, indeed, points to the heartbreaking state of Ruth who is both fearful of the possibility that she may not find out about her true identity and hopeful since she has time to find out who she originated from until she passes away. In a way, the posthuman gaze of Kathy does not only lead her to perceive two sides of things in life as in the case of Ruth's emotions, but also to demonstrate an unbiased and

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understanding approach as she does not disregard the fact that clones have identity issues which make them more than organs.

Together with the disclosure of identity crisis, the gaze of Kathy puts forward the implicit grievance of her. Kathy mourns for the tragedy of being clone in the realm of *Never Let Me Go*. At the end of the novel when Kathy loses both Ruth and Tommy as their health conditions deteriorate after transplantations, her final sight appears as the mergence of dream and reality in order to keep going in life. She describes her glance at Norfolk for the last time in the novel as follows:

> That was the only time, I stood there, looking at that strange rubbish, feeling the wind coming across those empty fields, that I started to imagine just a little fantasy thing… and it was only a couple of weeks since I'd lost him. I was thinking about the rubbish, the flapping plastic in the branches, the shore-line of odd stuff caught along the fencing, and I half-closed my eyes and imagined this was the spot where everything I'd ever lost since my childhood has washed up, and I was now standing here in front of it, and if I waited long enough, a tiny figure would appear on the horizon across the field… I'd see it was Tommy, and he'd wave, maybe even call. (282)

Thus, Norfolk, the place which is called the lost corner of England, emerges as the centre of wish-fulfilment for Kathy after she left there with desperation since she and her friends could not find the woman Ruth is reproduced from. As Kathy reflects, Norfolk enables her to both see a hopeful fantasy based on the images in her past, and to receive her present reality which appears heartbreaking. In the last scene, Kathy sees the town with both its empty fields reminding her the loss of her friends, and its offer of the dream of one of her friends, Tommy, since she collects memories there with Ruth and Tommy. The bicameral, or posthuman, perspective of Kathy at the end of the novel unites the past and present, which indicates that she is trapped in this in-betweenness. Kathy's posthuman gaze proves that she is doomed to become a ghost of present

time since she cannot help herself but recall the tragedy of being a clone, which means losing her beloved clone friends as they are fated to become donors, or witnessing them to suffer like herself as they can also serve as carers.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the gaze, which pervades the narration in *Never Let Me Go*, does not only function to turn the novel into a memoir-like work but also becomes the primary tool to indicate that humanity is not definable in terms of genes and bodily appearance, but depends on emotions, understanding, and compassion. Bringing out the contemporary debate of genetic reproduction through the clones as central characters, *Never Let Me Go* constructs a narrative in which the differences between clones and nonclones are erased with regards to bodily aspects and having emotional intelligence. The difference suggested by humans is problematised in the ways of seeing of the nonclones and clones. The novel uses two types of gazes, one of which has single focal point and belongs to nonclone characters and the other works as bicameral perspective employed by the clones. The bicameral viewpoint, or the posthuman gaze, defies the prejudiced perspective of the nonclone humans as it enables us to see things from multiple points of view, indicating that the either/or dynamic of the gaze of the nonclones only puts forth hate and cruelty while the dynamic of the gaze of the clones allows us to accept life with its sorrows and beauties.

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