



www.turkishstudies.net/language

## Turkish Studies - Language and Literature

eISSN: 2667-5641

Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi



INTERNATIONAL  
BALKAN  
UNIVERSITY  
Sponsored by IBU

### Posthuman Ecocriticism in Carly Churchill's Plays *Far Away* and *A Number*

*Carly Churchill'in Far Away and A Number Oyunlarında İnsansonrası Ekoeleştiri*

Derya Biderci Dinç\*

**Abstract:** This article analyzes posthuman ecocriticism in two dystopic plays *Far Away* (2000) and *A Number* (2002) by the British playwright Carly Churchill. Posthuman ecocriticism challenges and dismantles traditional dichotomies. It complicates the contemporary narratives of the meaning of humans and presents a new way of understanding human subjects in relation to nonhumans in general. In her two plays, Caryl Churchill is concerned with the debate of being human and the changes in human being's perception of identification, description, and communication with each other and nonhuman entities. This article analyses how Caryl Churchill subverts the traditional boundaries between humans and nonhumans, repositions human and nonhuman relations, and builds upon the idea of nonhumans as entities independent from human beings. In *Far Away*, she presents a dystopic vision of the world, displaces anthropocentric perceptions of humans and nonhumans, and points out nonhumans' independent agency. In *A Number*, she deals with the identity of human beings and the development of nonhuman forms by human-made science, the cloning experiments. In these plays, Churchill disturbs the anthropocentric perspective by pointing out that human beings are part of a larger family with other species and their existence depends on the awareness of the existence of all living beings. She blurs the divisions and differences between human and nonhuman, culture and nature, subject and object.

**Structured Abstract:** Caryl Churchill, the British playwright, is described as one of the greatest playwrights of the contemporary world. In her plays, she dramatizes the obsession with and abuse of power, delves into feminist themes and sexual politics, and disregards the conventions of realism in her plays. She is known for her plays such as *Top Girls*, *The Skriker*, *Far Away*, *A Number*, *Serious Money*, and *Cloud 9*. In this article, her two dystopic novels, *A Number* and *Far Away*, are analyzed from the perspective of posthuman ecocriticism. This article explores what is posthuman ecocriticism in the introduction part and it applies it to the analysis of *Far Away* and *A Number* through close readings in the following parts of the article.

Posthuman ecocriticism as a theoretical approach brings the elements of posthumanism and ecocriticism together to explore the relationships between humans and nonhumans in the contemporary world. To understand posthuman ecocriticism, it is better to examine ecocriticism and posthumanism. Ecocriticism is a cultural and literary theory that appeared in the late 20th century. Its focus is on the representation of nonhumans and nature in literary works, it also explores the relationships between humans and nonhumans in them. These representations build human beings' understanding of the natural world and their places in it. It questions the idea of dualism in Western ideology, which places rational man at the center of the universe.

\* Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, İstanbul Topkapı Üniversitesi, İktisadi İdari ve Sosyal Bilimler Fakültesi, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Asst. Prof. İstanbul Topkapı University, Faculty of Economics Administrative and Social Sciences, English Language and Literature

ORCID 0000-0002-9443-7136

deryabidercidinc@topkapi.edu.tr

**Cite as/ Atıf:** Biderci Dinç, D. (2023). Posthuman ecocriticism in Carly Churchill's Plays *Far Away* and *A Number*. *Turkish Studies - Language*, 18(3), 1623-1640. <https://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.70685>

**Received/Geliş:** 16 June/Haziran 2023

Checked by plagiarism software

**Accepted/Kabul:** 25 September/Eylül 2023

© Yazar(lar)/Author(s) | CC BY- NC 4.0

**Published/Yayın:** 30 September/Eylül 2023

Posthumanism as a philosophical perspective challenges the traditional perceptions of human-centeredness and existentialism. It questions the conventional binarism of Western humanism, which divides human and nonhuman and places human beings at the center of existence. It deconstructs binary divisions by blurring the boundaries between humans and nonhumans. Both approaches question the binarism in Western ideology and emphasize the interconnectedness of humans and nonhumans. These two concepts come together as posthuman ecocriticism.

Posthuman ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary approach that applies posthumanist elements to ecocriticism. It explores how the relationships between humans and nonhumans are represented in literary works. It criticizes the hierarchical structures that place humans above all other life forms and deconstructs the anthropocentric perceptions of existence. Moreover, it examines the impact of technology, biotechnology, climate engineering, and virtual reality in reshaping the relationship between humans and nonhumans. Posthuman ecocriticism engages with the idea of identity and how identities become more fluid and hybrid in the technologically advanced world. These fluid and hybrid identities are the symbols of the deconstruction of traditional dualisms or categories and existentialism and the blend of human and nonhuman elements. It mainly focuses on narratives of change and transformation.

In *Far Away*, Churchill portrays a bleak and dystopic world. It explores the themes of abuse of power, violence, fear, and the breakdown of human and societal relationships in this dystopian world. This play includes themes such as environmental degradation, and human and nonhuman relations, that can be analyzed from posthuman ecocriticism. In the play, a new assumption about the relationship between humans and nonhuman beings is designed. The traditional dichotomous boundaries between human beings and nonhuman entities are blurred and undermined. In the play, the whole world is in a crucial situation, there is an ecological collapse and there is an unknown extraordinary war in which everything is against everything. The interactions between humans and nonhumans are disrupted unusually.

In *A Number*, Churchill deals with the themes of identity, cloning ethical implications of technological developments, and blurring of boundaries, therefore, this play is relevant to posthuman ecocriticism. the main theme of the play is the idea of human cloning, the play deals with the ethical considerations about human cloning and the treatment of cloned individuals. posthuman ecocriticism challenges and deconstructs the traditional definition of human identity and human existentialism. Churchill presents that human cloning disrupts the traditional understanding of individuality and she questions what it means to be human when there are several copies of an individual who share the same genes in the play. In *A Number*, Churchill reflects the posthumanist perception of identity which is not fixed but influenced by external factors such as technology and society. characters have fluid human identities so the cloned characters are posthuman beings.

This article explores how and why Churchill blurs the boundaries between humans and nonhumans in the plays. She questions the conventional understanding of humanism informed by anthropocentrism that assumed human dominance and centredness. She presents a non-anthropocentric worldview through the relationships of humans and nonhumans, organic and nonorganic, and matter, and clones. She presents an alternative perception of the world that is against the status quo of human beings with an ecologically oriented tone while dealing with the idea of who human beings are becoming in their increasing transformability. she creates a web of creation in which humans are with the others in their becomings in the plays. As a result of detachment from nonhumans, the characters in the plays experience fragöanettaion, alienation, and identity crisis, therefore she creates an ecologically minded posthumanism in the plays. Churchill's posthuman ecocritical narratives encourage readers to reevaluate his/her relationship with nonhumans.

**Keywords:** English literature, Posthuman ecocriticism, Carly Churchill, Traditional dichotomies, Anthropocentrism

**Öz:** Bu makale, İngiliz oyun yazarı Carly Churchill'in iki distopik oyunu *Far Away* (2000) ve *A Number* (2002)'daki insan sonrası ekoeleştiriye incelemektedir. İnsan sonrası ekoeleştiri geleneksel ikiliklere meydan okmakta ve ortadan kaldırmaktadır. Bu makale, genel olarak insanın anlamının ne olduğuna dair çağdaş anlatıları karmaşıklaştırır ve insan dışı olanla ilişkili olarak insan özneyi anlamının yeni bir yolunu sunar. Bu iki oyununda Caryl Churchill insan olma tartışmasını ve insanların birbirlerini ve insan olmayan varlıkları algılama, tanımlama ve iletişim kurma biçimlerindeki değişiklikleri konu alır. Bu makale, Caryl Churchill'in insan ve insan olmayan arasındaki geleneksel sınırları nasıl alt üst ettiğini, insan ve insan olmayan ilişkileri

nasıl yeniden konumlandığını ve insanlardan bağımsız varlıklar olarak insan olmayan varlık fikrini nasıl inşa ettiğini analiz eder. *Far Away* oyununda, dünyanın bir distopik görüntüsünü sunar ve insan-merkezli insan ve insan olmayan algısını insan olmayan bağımsız failliğine işaret ederek yerinden eder. *A Number* oyununda, insanın kimliğini ve insan yapımı bilim tarafından insan dışı formların gelişimini, klonlama deneylerini ele alır. Churchill bu oyunlarında, insanın diğer türlerle birlikte daha büyük bir ailenin parçası olduğuna ve varlığının tüm canlıların varlığının farkında olmasına bağlı olduğuna işaret ederek insan merkezli bakış açısını bozar. İnsan ve insan olmayan, kültür ve doğa, özne ve nesne arasındaki ayrımları ve farklılıkları bulanıklaştırır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İngiliz Edebiyatı, İnsansonrası ekoeleşiri, Carly Churchill, Geleneksel ikilikler, İnsanmerkezcilik

### Introduction

In her works, the British playwright Carly Churchill surfaces the realities of the contemporary world that is dichotomized and identified with social inequalities. She explores contemporary social issues such as politics, sexual politics, gender inequalities, capitalism, environmental problems, scientific and technological dangers, and wars. Churchill's two plays *A Number* (2002) and *Far Away* (2000) are charged with environmental, political, economic, and scientific issues that prove her ability to "dramatize the anxieties and terrors of contemporary life" (Aston & Diamond, 2009, p.1). In these plays, she deals with the horrible and devastating scientific, economic, and ecological issues of the contemporary world. She does not attempt to create fantasies of utopias, she dramatizes the dystopias operating within the framework of anthropocentrism and capitalism to raise consciousness. Her writing moves beyond a human-centered perception of the world. This article aims to analyze *A Number* and *Far Away* from the perspective of posthuman ecocriticism. It explores how Churchill undermines the traditional boundaries of human beings/nonhuman beings, organisms/inorganic matter, and clones and how she imagines new ways of a more-than-human world.

It is perhaps more appropriate to begin with what humanism is to explain posthuman ecocriticism. What humanism is meant or humanism's concept of what is considered as the human being is the core factor to comprehend posthuman ecocriticism. The concept of the human being is defined by Rosi Braidotti:

At the start of it all there is He: the classical ideal of 'Man', formulated first by Protagoras as 'the measure of all things', later renewed in the Italian Renaissance as a universal model and represented in Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man...An ideal of bodily perfection which, in keeping with the classical dictum mens sana in corpore sano, doubles up as a set of mental, discursive and spiritual values. Together they uphold a specific view of what is 'human' about humanity. Moreover, they assert with unshakable certainty the almost boundless capacity of humans to pursue their individual and collective perfectibility. (2013, p.13)

Humanism has been inherited from classical, Renaissance, and Enlightenment ideologies and practices, it is built upon a set of implicit distinctions. The border lines are drawn between human beings/nonhuman beings to categorize them as the self/the other, subject/object. The binary logic is the core of the cultural logic of humanism that has acquired essentialist connotations while the self/subject has been equated with rationality, the other/object has been described as its negative and reflective counterpart. The binary logic creates distinctions, differences that rest on the inferiority that reduces the other less than human status. Humanism appeals to human qualities, particularly human reason. It installs the figure of a human that is separated from the rest of the living at the center of the universe. It affirms dignity, perfectibility, autonomy, subjectivity, and agency, and constructs a notion of rights around all human beings. The aim of it is to define what is true and moral for human

beings in favor of human interests. It uses critical science and empirical reason to learn about the human's place within the natural world. Human beings have been qualified to affect and have mastery over all life on this planet and get more detached from nature. The notion of human and humanism is described as being intrinsically anthropocentric and has been formulated and implanted by Cartesian dualism. J.D. Bolter writes about the evolution of the notion of human being and humanism with time:

Humanism was by definition anthropocentric; humanism as a historical phenomenon drew on a renewed and reinterpreted appreciation for the rhetoric and civilization of Greece and Rome, in placing man (rather than God) at the center of its literary and philosophical project. Modern science beginning in the Renaissance sought to achieve an understanding of the natural world that depended on human powers of observation and reason to uncover universal laws. (2016, p. 1)

The last decades of the 20th century have witnessed the construction and development of posthumanist theory by thinkers, scholars, and critics such as Rosi Braidotti, Donna Haraway, N. Katherine Hayles, Andrew Pickering, Bruno Latour, Karen Barad, Stacy Alaimo, Roberto Marchesini, Cary Wolfe, Serpil Oppermann, Jeffrey Jerome, Heather Sullivan, Manuela Rossini, and Cohen. Posthumanist theorists engage with anthropocentrism as a problem and refer to the change of its practices and discourses through critiques, disturbance, disruption, and displacement of the status quo of human beings. They rethink anthropocentric, speciesist, and dualistic modes of knowing and experiencing the world.

Posthumanism does not simply mean an age or culture that follows humanism. The relationship between humanism and posthumanism is not based on a chronologically linear dethronement of humanism or the inauguration of posthumanism. R.L. Rusky promotes a timeless posthuman model:

The posthuman cannot simply be identified as a culture or age that comes 'after' the human, for the very idea of such a passage, however, measured or qualified it may be, continues to rely upon a humanist narrative of historical change...If, however, the posthuman truly involves a fundamental change or mutation in the concept of the human, this would seem to imply that history and culture cannot continue to be figured about this concept. (qtd. In Wolfe, 2010, p. xvii)

It has been indicated by R. L. Rutsky that posthuman is more than an extension of humans, it is based upon progressive shifting or mutation, and it cannot be restricted entirely to patterns, standards, codes, or information. Human beings are part of constant evolution, change, and progress. Posthumanism situates them in several transitional environments with no particular distinguishing or aligning feature of binarism. It engages humanism within its evolution, its being, and becoming. In her work, *The Posthumanism*, Rosi Braidotti has stressed that "[t]he posthumanist perspective rests on the assumption of the historical decline of Humanism...It works instead towards elaborating alternative ways of conceptualizing the human subject" (2013,p.37). Posthumanist theory in the simplest terms is the evolution and revision of traditional Western humanism, it is against the essentialism that has been depicted and interpreted by traditional humanism. While traditional humanism has an essentialist conception of humans, which refers to the endorsement of an eternal and unchangeable human nature notion, posthumanism proposes a non-essentialist human nature notion. For posthumanism, human beings are not part of stable categories, they are subjected to change. In *Environmentalism and Posthumanism* Thompson refers to "Heidegger's "Letter on Humanism" which argues that one should be skeptical about all claims to the effect that humanity or "the human "represents a stable or valid metaphysical category" (2013,p.63), likewise, posthumanism questions the stable and unchangeable human nature in classical humanism. It can be concluded that these two approaches are intertwined and the human is at the core of their engagements but their notion of human is different from each other.

The focal point of posthumanism consists of non-essentialism, subversion of boundaries, and hybridization of human beings with other living beings. Posthumanism is “far from surpassing or rejecting the human” (Wolfe, 2010, p.xxv), it reproduces a specific concept of the human that is removed from any particularly privileged position. It displaces the status quo of humans and subverts the centrality of the human experience in connection with the entire other living and non-living beings in several different ways. As a result of the de-centrality of human, human is no longer the basic unit of common reference or measure of all things. There is an introduction of a shift in the human relationships with other species or inhabitants of this planet, the dualistic understanding of human and nonhuman has been blurred. Posthumanism's opposition to essentialism constantly puts the boundaries between humans and nonhuman beings in flux. Postcolonial ecocritic Karen Barad engages with the radical inadequateness of humans and presents an intra-active relationship between human beings and nonhuman things or beings by challenging human superiority and dominance. She states that her use of “posthumanism” marks a refusal to take the distinction between ‘human’ and ‘nonhuman’ for granted, and to found analyses on this presumably fixed and inherent set of categories” (Barad,2007, p.32). The binary oppositions have been replaced by non-dualistic perceptions of their interaction or intra-active becoming. It challenges the consistency of categorical essences and forms and underlines a hybrid configuration, coordination, and co-evolution of nonhuman entities and human beings, organisms and inorganics, being and thing, ecological and technological. As a result, a new form of human subjectivity is forwarded. Like Barad and other posthumanists, Braidotti emphasizes that “[t]he posthuman condition urges us to think critically and creatively about who and what we are actually in the process of becoming” (2013,p.12). Posthumanism makes human beings think about who they have been for ages and who they are becoming in the process of time, therefore, it is described as a mutational form of thinking about humans.

Posthumanism's opposition to essentialism put it together with diverse social sciences and disciplines such as postmodernism, poststructuralism, postcolonialism, feminist and cultural studies, and ecocriticism. Posthumanism and ecocriticism coincide partially in terms of their addressing to the anthropocentric assumption of the idealized human, human centeredness, and control and authority over the rest of life in the universe. Ecocriticism criticizes arrogance and the dominating attitude of anthropocentrism toward nonhumans:

[A]ll ecological criticism shares the fundamental premise that human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it. Ecocriticism takes as its subject the interconnections between nature and culture, specifically the cultural artifacts of language and literature. As a critical stance, it has one foot in literature and the other on land; as a theoretical discourse, it negotiates between the human and the nonhuman. (Glotfelty, 1996,p.xix)

The breakdown of the conceptual barriers and drawing clear demarcations between human and nonhuman, the decentering of the humanist subject, reimagining of what it means to be human by more recent ecological claims have been termed posthumanism. “Posthumanism emerged directly out of work in environmental philosophy and animal ethics over the last four decades. Its focus has been to challenge the view that all moral values must be grounded in human experience” (Thompson, 2013, p.63). Posthumanism calls into question the basic assumptions of humans claiming that human beings are the only beings with agency, subjectivity, and intelligence. The anthropocentric view is deconstructed and reinterpreted through blurring boundaries between human-nonhuman, the organic-inorganic, naturally perceived, and the culturally constructed, nature-culture-subject-object, etc. Posthumanism suggests a life exceeding biology and accepts the idea that life is exceeding the bounds of the fundamental assumptions of modern Western culture about the centrality of humans, the borders or binary opposition of culture and nature, human and nonhuman are more blurred:

---

[T]he posthuman turn as an amazing opportunity to decide together what and who we are capable of becoming, and a unique opportunity for humanity to reinvent itself affirmatively, through creativity and empowering ethical relations, and not only negatively, through vulnerability and fear. (Braidotti, 2013, p.195)

As a response to people's disability to treat "the other" with respect and equality, an opportunity for a more meaningful, liberated, equal, and wider view of the universe is projected by posthumanism.

Serpil Opperman indicates that "posthumanism and ecocriticism have something in common: they introduce changes in the way materiality, agency, and nature are conceived" (2016, p.24). Posthuman ecocriticism explores new perceptions of the more-than-human world. It re-describes the connection between human beings and nonhumans, and the role of human beings in environmental changes. It embraces an ecologically considerate view by removing humans from any particularly privileged position. It points out that traditional dichotomies of human beings/nonhuman beings, culture/ nature, and the idea that human beings are entitled to understand, transform, and control nonhuman beings and environmental dynamics need to be revised. Posthuman ecocriticism presents a new perception of the universe that is post-anthropocentric, post-humanistic, and post-dualistic. The boundaries between humans and nonhuman beings (nature, animals, machines, inorganic matters) / culture and nature, subject and object, being and thing are questioned, shifted, or blurred.

Caryl Churchill can be accepted as a writer who engages with posthuman ecological themes in that she undermines the traditional boundaries between human beings and nonhuman beings. Garrard states that "Helen Feder, introduces two types of "posthumanist": one allied to an Internet movement preoccupied with renouncing humanity by technological means; the other concerned philosophically to overcome "humanity" in an idealized and anthropocentric sense" (2014,p.12). She challenges the human being's place as the referential center of being. She questions who human beings are becoming in their ongoing, immanent, and unceasing mutation and transformability. She engages with the ethical and political challenges of existence and the potential for re-shaping of human experience. As May asserts, Churchill's ecodrama looks for an answer to the question "Where am I?" rather than seeking an answer to the question "Who am I?" (2005, p.100). Through her ecodrama, she reviewed the existing system and reflected on the relationship between humans and nature. Her posthuman ecodrama helps people understand their own ecological identities.

#### **An unusual disruption of the human and nonhuman interaction in *Far Away***

Churchill's dystopias have evolved in parallel with growing societal concerns and issues such as globalization, hyper mediatization, greenness, terrorism, wars, etc. Churchill wrote the play *Far Away* in 2000, at the dawn of the 21st century, it is assumed that international conflicts and wars arose in the 90s such as The First Gulf War, the Chechen War, and the Bosnian War, all coupled with the rise of the terror, and had a relevant influence on her writing of this play. In this absurd and surreal dystopian play, Churchill refers to the reality of the world's current situation by reviewing the terrifying impacts of late capitalism and globalization on human and nonhuman beings. She indicates that our contemporary world is moving to economic and ecological wars. As a result, the whole world will be in such a constant state of global worries, terror, madness, and chaos, and all living species will become the victims of globalization and advanced capitalism:

By highlighting so starkly the gross social and ecological inequalities that pervade the planet as we enter the twenty-first century, Churchill warns in salutary tones that the dehumanizing capacities of humans to damage the nonhuman world will ultimately have repercussions on all life forms, not least on humans. (Lavery & Finburgh, 2015,p.43)

She designates a new assumption about the relationship between human beings and nonhuman entities in this play. This part of the article analyses Carly Churchill's *Far Away* from the perspective of posthuman ecocriticism. It searches how the traditional dichotomous boundary between humans

and nonhumans is blurred and undermined, and the interactions of humans and nonhumans are disrupted in an unusual way in the play.

This play has three acts, from the first act to the last, Churchill deals with the violence, oppression, and terror that is extended to include the whole universe. It begins with a frightened child Joan coming downstairs in the night, after hearing a scream, she has witnessed his uncle hitting a man and one of the children with an iron bar, blood on the ground of the shed, and a lorry in the garden. Witnessing violence is uncomfortable for the naïve and innocent child, and she feels that something is wrong and innocently asks questions to her aunt Harper about her uncle's involvement in this violent act in the garden. As Aston & Diamond claim, as a playwright Churchill, makes her characters ask questions instead of giving answers to her audience: "Her characters are incarnations of the restless questioning that informs her play, and that questioning is not despite her politics but an aesthetic strategy of her politics"(2009,10). There is something unusual in their conversation as her aunt tries to censor and manipulate the child Joan's restless and pertinent questions about the violence to conceal the truth. She tries to convince her to believe that he is helping the people, hiding in the lorry. In contrast to the child, the adults watch the violence as they get used to it. Harper says that

[y]ou're part of a big movement now to make things better. You can be proud of that. You can look at stars and think here we are in our little bit of space, and I'm on the side of the people who are putting things right, and your soul will expand right into the sky. (Churchill, 2008,s.142)

In the following parts of the play, it is seen that being a member of a big movement doesn't make things better, there is a global war. The first act introduces violence, blood, horror, and conflict, therefore, it foreshadows the dystopian world of global warfare and mass killing in the following acts of the play.

In the second act, the play moves to a working area in a totalitarian regime that relies on fear, competition, and mediatization to carry out the executions as normal, ordinary affairs. Joan appears as a grown-up woman who is working in a hat-making factory. Joan and her friend Todd are working obediently to make "far more brightly decorated" (Churchill, 2008, p.144), "very big and extravagant" (Churchill, 2008, s.146), and "enormous and preposterous" (Churchill, 2008, p.147) hats. The purpose of making these hats is brutal, these hats are made to win the competitions of 'the best hat' and they are worn by prisoners paraded to execution: "A procession of ragged, beaten, chained prisoners, each wearing a hat, on their way to execution. The finished hats are even more enormous and preposterous than in the previous scene" (Churchill, 2008, p.149). It is a parade of men, women, and children who are tortured and killed by a repressive regime. The hats are brighter and enormous to distract any onlookers from their blood and wounds. This is parallel to the violence in the first scene, but mass killing is reduced to a carnival and this proves the absurdity of the violence.

Moreover, this factory is the place of late capitalist exploitation of the workers, the adult Joan and her friend Todd are working like programmed robots who are subjected to flows that they don't have any mastery over. When they are cognizant of the fact that there is exploitation in the factory, Todd says "We could expose the corrupt financial basis of how the whole hat factory is run, not just this place, I bet the whole industry is dodgy" (Churchill, 2008, p.151). However, they don't question the corruption in the factory, as they have the fear of being caught in the act of criticizing the repressive system. They are so immersed in their social roles and very busy with their jobs. They are proud that the artistry of the hats is recognized. Rather than the lives of prisoners, they care about hats burned with the bodies: "It seems so sad to burn them with the bodies" (Churchill, 2008, p.150). The adult Joan appears desensitized and indifferent to the execution of the prisoners as she has learned to stop asking questions about relentless brutality all around her and she gets used to

witnessing and tolerating the brutality. The unspeakable brutality becomes familiar or acceptable to her and the people in society who have no control over their own lives and the process of destruction in the globalized and capitalist world. The writer criticizes human beings for ignoring the horrible brutality that they witness all around them. Except for the child Joan, no one questions society, despite all that they have witnessed. The modern lifestyle and values break human beings' ties with themselves, other people, and their environments. In their isolated world, they deal with their problems and ignore others. In addition, the contrast between the attention given to the hats and the lack of consideration for prisoners embodies the superficiality of the consumerist habit and the blindness of consumers to the damages related to mass production and their failure to respect the human rights of workers in developing countries. The consumerism of late capitalism and globalization create corruption in human relations. However, this is going to have an impact on the nonhuman world equally. The violence opens up with the child's witnesses in a house, furthers with the prisoners in a factory, and embraces the whole world outside at the end of the play. The horrors of the past are piled up in an accumulation of terror. The audience or the reader gets a glimpse of all-pervading horror in the third act.

In the third act, Churchill pushes the realities of the world that are hurtling toward war to their surreal extremes. The audience or the readers lose the tracks of war and enter the fearful realm of global terror. The global situation extends beyond human comprehension. Through the surreal portrait of nonhuman entities, natural elements, flora, fauna, animals, the child, and the women, which are seen as oppositional categories and excluded from the discourses of humanism, she reconsiders the political strategies and ecological concerns of Western ideologies. The conventional concepts that inform human beings' current relationships with nonhumans are subverted and the line that has separated humans and nonhumans is blurred. The third act takes place many years later, it tells about Joan and her husband Todd who take refuge at Harper's house as they are at the end of their lives. The whole world is led to a crucial situation, to an extraordinary war of everything against everything. At the beginning of the play, there is a familiar environment of the house, there are all sorts of birds such as owls, and golden orioles in the trees, and a dog running around. However, several years later, the audience or readers are pushed into an utterly unfamiliar world in which nonhuman beings are both victims like prisoners and threats to other nonhuman and human beings.

Churchill portrays a new surreal order in the world through Harper and Todd's dialogues:

Harper: The cats have come in on the side of the French...they've killing babies...in China.

Todd: But we're not exactly on the other side from the French. It's not as if they're the Moroccans and the ants.

Harper: it's not as if they're the Canadians, the Venezuelans, and the mosquitos.  
(Churchill, 2008, p.155)

Everyone or everything is described as either an enemy or an ally. The allies and enemies mean anything. In addition to the citizens of other nationalities, children, animals, and things inevitably take part in the war of human beings and they become enemies. Todd and Harper are talking about animals such as wasps, horses, cats, crocodiles, etc. that are taking sides and fighting alongside populations in international conflicts, even butterflies represent a threat. It is difficult for Todd and Harper to define their allies and enemies, to tell which one is with them and against them; "Churchill imagines this not just as the hostilities of all humans against all humans, but of all species against all species" (Lavery & Finburgh, 2015, p.73).

Harper has doubts about Todd's side, so she tests him to find out his ideas and side. Harper believes that deer are with them and crocodiles are on the other side who are guilty all the way. Mallards support the elephants and the Koreans commit rape and the elephants are on the side of the Dutch. Everyone wants to take part on the right side which is not clear. Todd justifies himself to



Harper by reciting violent acts and massacres he has perpetuated such as shooting cattle and children in Ethiopia, gassing mixed troops of Spanish, computer programmers, and dogs, and working in abattoirs that are stunning pigs and musicians. The increasing horror is paired with terror at the maximum level of catastrophe. People are grouped and discriminated against by one another according to unusual criteria such as “the engineers, the chefs, the children under five, the car salesmen, Russian swimmers, Thai butchers, and Latvian dentists” (Churchill, 2008, p.154). By doing this, Churchill underlines the anonymity of victims in conflicts or wars and the oversimplification of human topographies by the media.

Meanwhile, Joan, who has been walking in the middle of a war towards a place of safety to regroup, arrives at Harper's house. Harper wants them to leave her house as she thinks that ‘they’ are after Joan and she doesn't know about her side after two years. In her final speech, Joan describes her difficult journey. The account of her journey shapes a bleak landscape that is close to a wasteland with increasing horror. All beings even natural elements and things are either dying or fighting for an unknown cause. She tells her worries and fears about everyone and everything. Joan says “[o]f course birds saw me, everyone saw me walking along but nobody knew why, I could have been on a mission, everybody's moving about and nobody knows why” (Churchill, 2008, p.158). Joan commits horrible acts such as killing two cats and murdering a child under five on her way back to Harper's house as she can kill humans and nonhumans who are accepted as national or military opponents, enemies, or threats.

Joan goes on to report how human and nonhuman beings take political sides and turn against them, how global war indistinctively draws the fates of innocent human and nonhuman entities into tragic suffering. She asserts a sense of relativity and vulnerability of humans and nonhuman beings to common threats. The girls and rats are presented as examples in her last speech.

Even the inorganic and inanimate things that belong to the modern world such as coffee, heroin, hairspray, fox gloves, and smoke take part in the global conflict and damage humans and nonhumans. She says

[her journey] was tiring there because everything's been recruited, there were piles of bodies and if you stopped to find there was one killed by coffee or one by killed by pins, they were killed by heroin, petrol, chainsaws, hairspray, bleach, foxgloves, the smell of smoke. (Churchill, 2008, 159)

As seen in the quotation, like the people who are desensitized to kill any kind of life form, “all ‘things’, organic or inorganic, are, in an opposite way, animated by the power to kill” (Lavery & Finburgh, 2015, pp. 73-4).

Furthermore, natural elements and natural phenomena such as gravity, noise, light, darkness, and silence play active roles in the state of global war. They are now lethal weapons. The horror and violence in the global world are contrasted with the simplicity of nature. Joan comments that “it wasn't so much the birds I was frightened of, it was the weather” (Churchill, 2008, p.158). She is afraid of the weather that is on the side of the Japanese. By stating that “[t]here were thunderstorms all through the mountains” (Churchill, 2008, p.158), Churchill reveals her ecological concern through this covert allusion to global warming. In addition, she makes a reference to diverse nation-states' races for the control and exploitation of natural resources, she says: “The Bolivians are working with gravity, that's a secret so as not to spread the alarm. But we're getting further with noise there are thousands dead of light in Madagascar” (Churchill, 2008, p.159). Joan questions who is going to mobilize darkness and silence. This question suggests that silence and darkness can be controlled by any of the nations. This is a reference to the nations' racing with each other to gain hegemony or control over the means of sustaining life through techno-scientific developments.

Joan tells Harper and Todd about the dangers she faces when she has to cross a river. Crossing the river is dangerous when its side is not known. She says

I'd have to go straight across. But I didn't know whose side the river was, it might help me swim or it might drown me. The water laps around your ankles in any case. I stood on the bank for a long time. But I knew it was my only way of getting here so at last I put one foot in the river... When you've just stepped in you can't tell what's going to happen. (Churchill, 2008, p. 159)

After being aware that this unspecified war is affecting everything and everyone equally and everything and everyone is destined to disappear unavoidably, Joan feels distressed that she might die, too.

The last act of the play proves that the normalizing process of brutality or aggression that is asserted in the child Joan's eyewitness and hat-making scenes is still in progress to the degree of madness. In the last scene, the brutality or aggression is projected onto the nonhumans. Similarly, Chaudhuri underlines that "the concluding scene of the play is a shocking elaboration of...the possibility that the politics of division and aggression that have defined human history for so long will finally infect the nonhuman world as well" (2016, p.31). The violence against the nonhumans is acceptable for human beings who are familiar with it. The category of the victims is broadened to include figures that are defined as "the other" (children, animals, plants, force of nature). Despite the division between humans and nonhumans, they become the victims of the same widespread violence, suffering, and war. However, unusually, the victimized, poisoned, destroyed, or exploited nonhuman entities that are entwined in global conflicts fight actively against human beings. They are transformed into independent enemies. Churchill explores new alternatives to some of the central premises of humanism such as the centrality and supremacy of humans. Indeed, "a glimpse of another way of perceiving the world – a way that does not calibrate everything by the measure of man" (Aston & Diamond, 2009, p.100) is caught. The barriers between humans and nonhumans are blurred, the relationships between them go beyond the humanist perception and comprehension.

To sum up, in *Far Away*, Churchill portrays an unspecified war zone that reflects the grotesque reality and brutality of the global conflict or war. The whole world including human beings, nonhuman beings, elements, objects, etc. that have been so cruelly disconnected and lost holistic harmony, is at an extraordinary and absurd war that seems to be non-stoppable: "All creation partakes of division, discord, and violence" (Chaudhuri, 2016, p.32). The divisions that are based on nationality, age, class, and species become absurd. Being enemies or allies is not based on nations. They are drawn across species and national and geographic borders. Humans and nonhumans are sided with each other, nonhumans act on behalf of themselves and become allies to human beings. The play is full of ambiguity, who or what is on which side in this war and which side is bad or good is not clear. There is a trial to discover the right side to be on. The audience or readers are put in an ambiguous situation. However, this isn't important, Churchill's central intention is to criticize the causes of the global conflict or war by exploring the shift between humans and nonhumans. Churchill subverts the anthropocentric ideologies that divide human beings and nonhuman beings and assign human beings the right to dominate nonhuman beings that are defined as properties of human beings. Different types of nonhumans resist human beings from different nations as well as allying with them. They are grouped and fight against each other. And this represents decentering of the human beings. There is no division between the humans and the nonhumans in their interaction in the play. Human beings no longer have hegemony or control over the nonhumans. She presents a posthuman ecocritical sense of human who is interconnected with nonhuman and the agency of the nonhuman who has a place in complex systems of cause and effect. She presents an intra-active perception of the relationship between human beings and nonhuman beings.

---

**Posthuman future: Reduction of human to numbers through human cloning in *A Number***

This part of the article analyses Churchill's acclaimed sci-fi play, *A Number*, from the perspective of posthuman ecocriticism. Churchill engages with the rise of a techno-scientific posthuman future that is characterized by the improvements in modern science, technology, and information that have carried out partially artificial designs, transformations, technical constructions, and genetic modifications of human beings. She explores the possibility of human cloning and its consequences and how genetic cloning influences people's sense of self. She points out the role of genetic makeup in defining one's identity.

The main theme of this one-act play is developing clone technology which has extended consequences for the traditional understanding of the embodied subject. Churchill writes this play during a time of debate over the moral aspects of cloning, the process of producing an identical organism through the genetic modification of a cell or an organism. In the 21st century, biological science and computer technology make it possible for scientists to practice genetic engineering and cloning. As a result of biological reproduction experiments, an adult sheep has been cloned by transferring its cells into an enucleated egg. The phenomenon of Dolly, the cloned sheep, is the symbol of genetic recombination.

Thinking 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. (Braidotti, 2013, p.74)

The science of cloning has progressed since the production of the cloned sheep. It opens up new possibilities, therefore, it renews the debates, speculations, and anxieties that cloning techniques can be perfected and applied to produce human clones, a number of genetically identical human beings. The progression through and beyond the human is predicated on the development of a number of emerging techno-scientific changes or reproductions. Bio-cybernetic reproduction has provided the fantasy that human beings can reproduce themselves in entirely new ways using DNA and genome maps. The act of generating genetically identical copies of a cell or an organism for therapeutic purposes was legalized in 2001 in Britain. All these have been accompanied by changes in human beings' philosophical thinking and let them ask what makes us human. This has affected the cultural representation of biological essentialism and what constitutes humans.

Posthumanists engage with the biological world and claim that human beings firmly and deeply are ingrained or fixed in not only the biological world but also in the techno-scientific world. The boundaries of the dichotomies between the living and the techno-scientific agencies are made indistinguishable and "jeopardized by the proliferation of hybrids that science itself has produced" (Bolter, 2016, p.3). As a result, the anthropocentric essentialist human identity falls into hybridization and entanglement. Techno-scientific developments contribute to the redefinition of humanity and the development of posthuman, human beings move beyond biology and the bounds of humanism. These reimaginings through and beyond humans are inspired by the dream of creating evolved human beings or human perfectibility, on the other hand, cloning technology gives rise to arguments concerning possible human cloning.

Churchill's dealing with the genetically engineered or cloned bodies in the play is the reflection of contemporary techno-scientific thinking and reimagining. Despite the possibilities of the improvement and enhancement of the human body, Churchill's fiction rebuts the enhancement assumptions of posthuman scholars. She implies the controversial outcomes and reflects her anxiety about the potential abuse of genetic technologies that can be used to improve the human form. She engages with the ethical questions about the possibilities that cloning unleashed on the world. While

providing an overview of the deconstruction of human beings and the subject of essentialism claimed by traditional humanism, Churchill deals with existential questions ‘Who are you?’ and ‘What are you made from?’.

Churchill envisions a picture of the personal lives of several human clones in the play. Bernard (B2) and Michael Black are Salter’s cloned sons who are created from the cells of his real son Bernard (B1). Clone brothers are no longer pure natural or biological human beings, they are scientifically produced posthuman beings who bear out the meaning of other rather than human. They are produced to satisfy the interests of their father who makes the choice to clone his son. He wants his original son’s copy to be produced, therefore, he applies cloning experiments to overcome his grief and correct his parental mistakes. He is sorry for heavy drinking and neglecting his son. He intends to renew his relationship with his son as a better dad by inferring the biological system. He asks for one copy to replace his first son Bernard (B1). Nevertheless, doctors who are like the ones described in sci-fi cliché as ‘some mad scientist’ misuse cloning and unethically process an indeterminate number of other clones from the cells of the real child Bernard (B1). Salter is confronted by some of the clones who are unaware of their origins and their being clones. Through their confrontations, Churchill explores existential questions as well as issues such as alienation, parent/adult child relationships and conflicts, parental guilt, regret, and responsibility in the play.

Scene 1 is about one of the clones, Bernard 2, who is designated and commissioned as B2 by his father to replace the original Bernard (B1). Bernard 2 learns that he is one of several clones, and there are several copies of him out there after meeting his genetic double. He expresses his confusion over his identity after discovering his cloned brothers because each one of several others wanders in the country and believes himself to be the one. He feels uneasy about the uniqueness of his identity. Hillman & Maude state “For a clone to live a life that has already been lived is to copy or re-enact that life in a ‘slavish’ manner, to live an imitative life that is really a form of slavery or servitude” (2015, p.254). When he asks Salter about his origin, Salter tries to assure him that he is the original one and he is his biological father, the others can be his copies who are produced unlawfully by using his DNA. He is furious that the medical institution surreptitiously has cloned his son, and he proposes that they can sue the doctors for unethically making several more clones without his permission as “they’ve damaged [Bernard 2’s] uniqueness, weakened [his] identity” (Churchill, 2008, p.169). For Salter, each newly discovered clone damages the identity of his son, the original one diminishes in value as Salter believes that the clones are stolen from him. The number of clones functions as a measure of their weakened identities. The more products or clones mean the less the value and authenticity of them.

Cloning technology shakes the most fundamental assumptions about origin, the essentialist notion of genetic inheritance. Genetic re-coding involves DNA alterations, it is believed that humans can be reproduced in entirely new ways by using DNA and gene maps. However, DNA technology creates a new kind of essence that defines the uniqueness or the intrinsic nature of human beings. Salter admits that he longs for a chance at raising a child “someone else is the one, the first one, and the real one” (Churchill, 2008, p.166) without repeating his many parental mistakes. The idea that genetically perfect copies of human individuals produced by cloning is a form of essentialism that wrongly ascribes human behavior and personality solely to genes. In addition, it has created biological determinism. The clones are defined by what they lack, they lack individual identities as a clone is a simulation of one. Sheehan states that “the process of coding also suggests replicability, and hence loss of singularity; essence becomes non-essence, and uniqueness is converted into sameness” (Hillman & Maude, 2015, p.252). Salter identifies his son’s doubles as representative images, not as real people. He calls clones things, he asks B2 how many of these things there are. B2 corrects him that they’re not things, he says that “he think[s] [they]’ll find they’re people” (Churchill, 2008, p.166). They are all still people who have lives and desires of their own and he insists his father give information about his birth. He confesses that his wife and his son Bernard, who was four-year-

old died in a car accident, and he wants his dead son to be cloned to have the same son back. Salter replies that “[n]o but you are you because that’s who you are but I wanted one just the same because that seems to me the most perfect” (Churchill, 2008, p.174). Salter’s words prove that he believes in biological determinism, B2 is the same as his dead son. Bernard 2 learns that his knowledge of his origin is wrong, he is not the original, so B2 describes himself as just a replica or copy, for him, his life is not his own life; he says that “[he’s] just a copy. [He’s] not the real one” (Churchill, 2008, p.174). He sees himself as a part of several clones, in other words, a reflection of images. He thinks that he is produced to fill in the original lack. Salter’s intention to have a repetition of his son without difference is failed, the intention of pure seriality of the cloning is threatened and shadowed with the uncanny double. “The clone may be “the image of the perfect servant, the obedient instrument of the master creator’s will,” as W. J. T. Mitchell puts it, but it also activates “the deepest phobias about mimesis, copying, and the horror of the uncanny double.” (Wolfe, 2010, p.57). The master-slave dialectic of Hegel is destabilized, the slave is bound to revolt against the master. Now as a slave, B2 revolts his father’s will.

In scene 2, Bernard 1, the abandoned original son, visits Salter for the first time since his childhood. He discovers the clones and his father’s lie about the death of B2 in a car accident. B1, like B2, the cloned, seeks answers from his father to his questions: ‘What am I?, Which one of them is more real? What makes each unique? What leads to this situation? B1 is angry with his father for telling lies about his origin in addition to his neglectful and traumatic upbringing and the wounds of abandonment. When B1 expresses his annoyance at discovering a number of his clones, he feels the moral and emotional implications of cloning. He says, “They take this painless scrape this specky little cells of me and kept that and you threw the rest of me away ... and had a new one made” (Churchill, 2008, p.177). He wants Salter to realize that he casts his four-year-old son out in the hope of getting a genetically identical clone as a substitute for him. Salter who believes in genetic essentialism says, “I could have had a different one, a new child altogether that’s what most people but I wanted you again because I thought you were the best” (Churchill, 2008, p.182). For him, the cloned son is not the real Bernard but something that has exactly the same genetic material as him. He refers to the clones as works, they are produced from the same genetic material or “the same basic, the same raw material” (Churchill, 2008, p.182) of B1. And B1’s reproductions dilute his value. However, scientifically, a clone’s being exactly the same person is impossible since the little powerhouses of cells, mitochondria, have a good quantity of their own genes, and these genes can change when they are taken and transferred to an egg due to many circumstances. Therefore, the genetic system can be affected by various environmental factors. Epigenetics connects genetic and environmental factors to the characteristic traits of an individual, this dynamic can be explained like this “[t]he notion is that we experience periods in development when our bodies are programmed to collect information about our environment, then readjust our growth depending on what we find” (Rothstein et al., 2009, p.4). This proves that the individuals are sensitive to the epigenetic influences at their early stages of development. This lets the individuals adapt their genetic expression to the environmental situations they face in their early development.

Churchill reflects on the parental influence over a child’s identity and two moral issues; child abuse and cloning. When he is a child, B1 is ignored by his father who is the image of paternal failure. B1 asks him about his haunting childhood memory of crying out for his father at nights, “When I was shouting what I want to know if you could hear me or not because I never knew were you hearing me and not coining or could you not hear me and if I shouted enough you’d come” (Churchill, 2008, p.183). He asks why he never came. He refuses to respond to his son’s call, therefore, “[s]ometimes I’d go out and leave you” (Churchill, 2008, p.198). His lack of reaction becomes the symbol of his neglect of his son and also human beings’ moral failure and ignorance of the catastrophic world surrounding them. His father’s words frustrate B1 rather than appease him.

B1 implies that he can murder B2 before demanding his father to look at his eye and accept his existence.

In the third scene, B2 speaks to Salter about B1, whom he has just met in the park. The encounter with his aggressive brother makes him upset as he discovers his father's lying to him again because Bernard 1 didn't die at four years old in a car accident. He now hates Salter for his lies and mistakes. When B2 talks about his plan to leave the country for a while to get away from Salter and avoid meeting B1, from whom he is cloned, B1 reminds him of his replicated status, and B2 says, "I remind myself of him" (Churchill, 2008, p. 194). And he says, "like seeing yourself on the camera in a shop or you hear yourself on the answering machine" (Churchill, 2008, p.170). Not only seeing himself, he is genetically indistinct. B2 is against B1's primacy and his sense of being the secondary, not the original. He fears that B1 might try to murder him as meeting one's doppelganger is considered a sign of death according to folk belief. B2 asks Salter again to tell him the truth, and Salter tells him that his mother committed suicide when Bernard 1 was two years old. He tries to bring up B1 alone while struggling with alcohol addiction. After neglecting, abusing, and abandoning his first son B1, he has B2 produced as he desires to renew his relationship with his son. Bernard 2 has oscillating feelings for his being a loving father to him but neglectful one to Bernard 1, and he expresses his feeling by stating "I can't give you credit [for being good] if I don't give you blame for the other it's what you did it's what happened" (Churchill, 2008, p.193). B2 states that his sons hate him for his mistakes.

Cloning made human beings notice that the boundaries between human beings and nonhuman beings are elusive and question their existence and identities. In scene 4, Bernard 1, the original, confesses to killing Bernard 2 to Salter, he destroys his double B2 to feel 'the one' or second to none. He desires to be noticed by his father and his copies. Being the first one, the progenitor did not guarantee the uniqueness of the identity and the accomplishment of Salter's paternal support. Salter asked B1 for an account of the murder to learn whether B1 was planning to kill all the clones and his father. Salter reminded him that despite considering killing him when he was a child, he didn't do it, because "I remembered what you'd been like at the beginning and I spared you, I didn't want a different one, I wanted that again because you were perfect just like that and I loved you" (Churchill, 2008, p.197). He doesn't remember memories of their years together and he revealed that he heard his cries but he was unwilling to come to him. He gave details about his deteriorating condition before abandoning him. B1 committed suicide to end his loneliness and existential conflicts.

After the murder of B2 and the suicide of B1, the shaken Salter resolves to see all the other clones of his son to keep his parental bond with them. He meets his cloned son Michael, who is happily married with three children and a math teacher. Michael does not know anything about his father, and he has never met him before. During their conversation, Slater asks Michael to tell about himself to find out whether he resembles his cloned brothers or not, and if he could hear the similarity and dissimilarity of Michael with his genetically identical brothers B1 and B2. He asks Michael for something more personal from deep inside his life. He intends to know how he feels when he finds out that he is a clone. Michael's reaction to his identity is different from the others. Michael has a different attitude towards life than the others. Unlike B1 and B2, who have existential anxieties, he accepts his identity, and for him, DNA and cells don't have any significant effect. Being just one of several clones doesn't disturb him. He explains his fascination with cloning.

To Michael, it's funny and delightful about himself, it doesn't change anything about his identity, memories, family, and friends. He says:

[w]e've got ninety-nine percent the same genes as any other person. We've got ninety percent the same as a chimpanzee. I've got thirty percent the same as lettuce. Does that

---

cheer you up at all? I love about the lettuce. It makes me feel I belong. (Churchill, 2008, 205)

He becomes aware that a part of his identity belongs to nature. Nature exists in his body as DNA exists within his body from the first cells of evolution. He underlines the resemblances between human beings and nonhuman beings. As stated by Marks, the chimpanzee is more than 98% genetically identical to human beings. That similarity blurs the line between human beings and nonhuman beings. Human beings are chimpanzees, and chimpanzees are human beings (2002, p.7). Michael's sense of belonging to the nonhuman world does not make him feel estranged from life, he gets meaning from nature to have a full identity. As a result of his attachment to nature, he doesn't experience fragmentation, alienation, and identity crisis. On the contrary, he feels his connections to all living beings in the universe despite his lack of connection to his family. He is satisfied with his life despite being a product of technology. Churchill's answers to the same questions 'Who are you?' and "What are you made from?" comes in the form of a character, Michael, who defines himself by his deeds, his loved ones, his wife, and his children rather than the circumstances of his birth. He acknowledges the circumstances of his birth as an unimportant thing. He accepts that biology is not destiny. The conflicts and anxieties of the two Bernards are suppressed at the end of the play. Michael's approach to the nonhuman world makes this play a good example of posthuman ecocriticism: "[E]cological posthumanism that stresses the significance of complex environmental relations, perviousness of species boundaries, and social-ecological-scientific networks within which humans and nonhumans, knowledge practices, and material phenomena are deeply enmeshed" (Opperman, 2016, p.26). Opperman's quotation reasserts the importance of nonhumans and recognition of a more-than-human world. Understood this way, posthuman ecocriticism amplifies the belief in the intertwinement of humans and nonhumans, which suggests an ethical correspondence between them and undermines the hierarchical separation that creates an environmental crisis.

The act of cloning has an impact on simultaneous ethical and existential problems. In their search for their identities, each of Salter's sons reacts differently to the news that they are not 'the one' or biologically unique. B1 is angrier, B2 is calmer, more mild-mannered, and emotional, and Michael Black is unconcerned with being a clone. B2 and Michael are cloned or programmed to replicate the same development patterns and behavioral traits as their progenitor, B1. This is based on the widespread belief that genotype (genetic code) determines phenotype (personality or psychological makeup). This belief raises the possibility that a cloned individual could be forced to 're-enact' the life of its progenitor. It means that the cloned one lives a life that is not its own. (Hillman & Maude, 2015, p.253). However, the real son Bernard 1's iterations, Bernard 2 and Michael Black, are not imitative. They are integrated and tied together by shared identical genetic materials, and DNAs. They appear physically to be copies and share a family resemblance, nevertheless, they are independent and unique units, and each clone demonstrates distinctive personalities and has different attitudes and lifestyles. Churchill engages with the effects of biological determinism and culture on human identity, she implies that humans aren't just genes, their environments have responsibility for their identities. A part of their identities belongs to the nonhuman world so they couldn't detach themselves from it:

[Molecular biologist Lawrence E.] Hunter invites us to the study of life. While some materials (like DNA and proteins) are found in nearly all living things, it is not a special kind of stuff that makes something alive. The mere presence of any particular material (including DNA) doesn't make something alive. The materials of life, it turns out, are just fairly ordinary chemicals, in particular combinations. What makes something alive is not what it is, but what it does. (qtd. in Oppermann, 2016, p.34)

Living things aren't independent entities, therefore, they could survive by keeping their bonds with the external organizing force that is the environment. Environment is the part of what the living

things are and what they do. It is hard to treat living things as closed systems that don't have any interaction with others. Moreover, a human being isn't about genes at all.

To sum up, Churchill deals with manipulations of information and biological technologies and questions the possibility of new combinations or productions in *A Number*. She conveys her worries about the perverse extension of genetic engineering and technologies, human cloning mistakes, the production of misshapen human mutants in laboratories, and traumatic experiences. The characters B2 and Michael are posthuman characters that are genetically reconstructed by techno-science rather than being natural or biological beings. As stated by Braidotti, "the current scientific revolution, led by contemporary bio-genetic, environmental, neural and other sciences, creates powerful alternatives to established practices and definitions of subjectivity" (2013, p.54). The boundaries between naturally perceived or biological beings and culturally constructed or scientifically produced beings are shifted. On the other hand, this creates identity problems for the cloned ones and the original ones. She tries to find out which one, gene or environment, has more influence on the identity. Unlike B1 and B2, in his quest to know the self, the clone character Michael finds out that he belongs to the nonhuman world and has interrelations with nonhuman beings. And this makes it an ecologically aware posthuman play. It is hard to come to an understanding of the self when a human breaks his/her bond with nonhuman things or beings.

### Conclusion

This article has analyzed *A Number* and *Far Away* by Caryl Churchill from the perspective of posthuman ecocriticism. After the theoretical discourse of posthuman ecocriticism, in this article, two plays that involve ecological messages are brought together and examined in the context of posthuman ecocriticism. Posthuman ecocriticism is ecological critique of anthropocentrism. It "is a more engaged, more diffractive mode of reading the co-evolution of organisms and inorganic matter in their hybrid configurations" (Opperman, 2016, p.23). While the term posthuman suggests a life beyond the current boundaries of humanism, it brings new interest in biological and technological worlds. It questions what it means to be human and nonhuman by calling into question such concepts as anthropocentrism. Anthropocentric perception of the world is deconstructed by blurring boundaries between human and nonhuman, the naturally conceived and the technologically produced, the organic and inorganic, subject and object. It views nonhuman things or beings as agentic and active as human beings. It also bridges the division of human and nonhuman formulated and implemented by Cartesian dualism.

In these plays, Churchill encompasses an ecologically minded posthumanism, as a result of detachment from nature or nonhuman things and beings, and the characters experience fragmentation, alienation, and identity crisis. She challenged the conventional understanding of humanism informed by anthropocentrism that has assumed human dominance and she presented a non-anthropocentric worldview through the relationships of human beings and nonhuman beings, organisms and inorganic matters and clones. Her writing that confronted and subverted dominant views is accepted as oppositional. It conveyed an alternative mode of apprehending the world. It was "against the status quo" (Aston & Diamond, 2009, p. 1) with ecologically oriented tones while approaching the question of who human beings are becoming in their increasing transformability. She brought together the human, the animal, the plant, and the inorganic to create a much richer web of creation, human beings in these plays are with their others in their becoming.

In *Far Away*, Churchill criticizes the ecological effects of globalization and late capitalism. She presents a dystopian future world where all are in conflicts and chaotic situations. The whole world turns against everything. She has ecological and political concerns and tries to reflect the real world in this play. The play evokes a reality that is too close: the environmental crisis, senseless violence, terrorism, or wars that plague society today and threaten the entire planet. She proposes the decentring of humans and reconsiders the anthropocentric model of agency. She assigns agencies to



nonhuman entities. Her writing goes beyond anthropocentric assumptions that nonhuman entities, in all its components, appear as independent from human systems of meaning and actively ally with human actors as well as resist them. In this play, the boundaries are constantly in flux. She gives the message that human beings should replace their anthropocentric perception with an ecocentric one, and rearrange their relations with the rest of the universe.

In *A Number*, Churchill takes the audience to the near future to reflect on the possibilities of what human cloning techniques could offer. When Churchill wrote this play, cloning has been thought of as an inspiration to improve humans, it means that actual human cloning is scientifically possible. In her literary fiction that intersects with techno-scientific improvements, she points out that human is subject to change through genetic engineering or cloning.

Posthumanists believe that techno-scientific developments shake the foundations of humanism and subvert it by creating posthumans. Churchill addresses the consequences of creating posthumans through current developments in genetic engineering. She presents a critical and dissenting point of view to the dream of human perfectibility that inspires the posthumanists. She doesn't denounce the ethical failure of cloning technology, indeed, she criticizes the human beings' blindness to contemporary society's violence and ignorance of their connections with nonhuman beings or things.

### References

- Aston, E. & Diamond, E. (Eds.). (2009). *The Cambridge companion to Caryl Churchill*. Cambridge University Press.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Duke University Press.
- Braidotti, R. (2013). *The posthuman*. Polity Press.
- Bolter, J.D. (2016). Posthumanism. In K. B.Jensen & R. T. Craig (Eds.), *The international encyclopedia of communication theory and philosophy*. John Wiley & Sons. Inc. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/9781118766804.wbiect220>
- Garrard, G. (2014). *The Oxford handbook of ecocriticism*. Oxford University Press.
- Chaudhuri, U. (2016). *The stage lives of animals: zoosis and performance: Routledge studies in theatre, ecology, and performance*. Taylor & Francis.
- Churchill, C. (2008). *Plays: 4*. Nick Hern Books.
- Glotfelty, C. (1996). Introduction: literary studies in an age of environmental crisis. In C. Glotfelty & H. Fromm (Eds.), *The ecocriticism reader, landmarks in literary ecology* (pp. xv-1). The University of Georgia Press.
- Hillman, D. & Maude, U. (2015). *The Cambridge companion to the body in literature*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lavery, C. & Finburgh, C. (2015). *Rethinking the theatre of the absurd: ecology, the environment and the greening of the modern stage*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Marks, J. (2002). *What it means to be 98% chimpanzee: apes, people, and their genes*. University of California Press.

- 
- May, T. J. (2005). Greening the theater: taking ecocriticism from page to stage. *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*, 7(1), 84–103. <https://theresajmay.com/files/Greening-the-Theatre-Theresa-J-May-IDLS.pdf>
- Thompson, P. (2013). Environmentalism and posthumanism. *Essays in the Philosophy of Humanism*, 21.63-73. [https://www.academia.edu/23486055/Environmentalism\\_and\\_Posthumanism](https://www.academia.edu/23486055/Environmentalism_and_Posthumanism)
- Oppermann, S. (2016). From posthumanism to post ecocriticism. In S. Iovino, R. Marchesini, & E. Adorni (Eds.), *Special issue on past the human: narrative ontologies and ontological stories* (pp.23-37). *Relations* 4.1. [https://www.academia.edu/26632452/From\\_Posthumanism\\_to\\_Posthuman\\_Ecocriticism](https://www.academia.edu/26632452/From_Posthumanism_to_Posthuman_Ecocriticism)
- Rothstein, M. A., Cai, Y., & Marchant, G. E. (2009). The ghost in our genes: legal and ethical implications of epigenetics. *Health Matrix*, 19(1), 1–62. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3034450/>
- Wolfe, C. (2010). *What is posthumanism?*. University of Minnesota Press.