



Reimagining Woman and Nature Beyond Dualism in Ann Jellicoe's *The Rising Generation*

Ann Jellicoe'nun *The Rising Generation* Oyununda Kadını ve Doğayı Düalismin Ötesinde Yeniden Düşünmek

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Abstract

Ecofeminist philosophy has developed sophisticated critiques of the structures in western patriarchal culture that contribute to the continuing domination and oppression, not only of women but of nature as well. Drawing on ecofeminism's critique of dualist structures as its principle guiding paradigm, this paper aims to explore how Ann Jellicoe comes to terms with the anti-dualist insights of ecological feminism in *The Rising Generation* (1969). The central issues that occupy and motivate ecofeminists, including the domination of women by men and humanity's misappropriation of nature, are also Jellicoe's primary concerns in the play. Jellicoe endeavors to depict characters and settings in a manner that rejects dualisms and embraces multiplicity, offering the basic conditions required for alternative representations of all the categories concerned, 'woman,' 'man,' 'nature,' and 'culture'. In doing so, Jellicoe reconceptualizes the female/male and nature/culture relationships in configurations other than the traditional oppositions produced by the dualist strategy. In light of those preliminary observations, this paper indicates that in *The Rising Generation*, Jellicoe adopts an anti-dualist strategy to promote an egalitarian and pluralistic point of view through which all oppressive forms of domination within a culture can be unlocked.

Keywords: British drama, domination, dualism, ecofeminist literary criticism, nature, women, Ann Jellicoe, *The Rising Generation*.

Öz

Ekofeminist felsefe, batılı ataerkil kültürde var olan, yalnızca kadınların değil aynı zamanda doğanın da süregelen tahakküm ve baskılara maruz kalmasına katkıda bulunan yapılara yönelik sofistike eleştiriler geliştirmiştir. Kavramsal çerçevesine, ekofeminizmin düalist yapı eleştirisinin rehberlik ettiği bu makale, Ann Jellicoe'nun *The Rising Generation* (1969) adlı oyununda oyun yazarının ekolojik feminizmin anti-düalist öngörülerini ile nasıl uzlaştığını incelemeyi amaçlar. Erkeklerin kadınları tahakküm altına alması ve insanlığın doğayı kötüye kullanması dahil olmak üzere ekofeministleri meşgul ve hatta motive eden temel sorunlar, Jellicoe'nun adı geçen oyundaki temel ilgi alanıdır. Jellicoe, 'kadın,' 'doğa,' 'eril,' ve 'kültür' ile ilgili tüm kategorilerin farklı tasvir edilebilmesi için gerekli temel koşulları sunarak karakterleri ve mekânları, ikilikleri reddeden ve çoğulculuğu kucaklayan bir şekilde sunmaya çalışır. Bunu yaparken, Jellicoe, düalist stratejinin ürettiği geleneksel karşıtlıklar dışında, kadın/erkek ve doğa/ kültür ilişkilerini yeniden kavramsallaştırır. Bu ön gözlemlerin ışığında, bu makale, *The Rising Generation* adlı oyununda

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Jellicoe'nun, toplum içindeki tüm baskıcı tahakküm biçimlerinin kilidini açabilecek daha eşitlikçi ve çoğulcu bir bakış açısını teşvik etmek için ikilikçi olmayan bir düşünce anlayışını benimsediğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Britanya tiyatrosu, tahakküm, düalizm, ekofeminist edebi eleştiri, doğa, kadın, Ann Jellicoe, *The Rising Generation*.

Introduction

Both the question of a woman's relationship to nature and the discipline of ecofeminist literary criticism carry heavy historical burdens; while the relationship extends back to antiquity, the theory's roots are relatively young but equally divisive and controversial. The association remains a contentious issue; however, ecofeminists have been in general agreement about the interrelatedness of the domination of women and that of nature (Mellor, 1997, p. 1; Murphy, 1995, p. 48). The history of ecofeminist literary criticism begins as a political movement, according to many of the experts in the field, with Françoise d'Eaubonne, who coined the term "ecological feminism" in 1974 "call[ing] attention to women's potential to bring about an ecological revolution" (Warren, 2000, p. 21). One year later, Rosemary Radford Ruether, known as the first to highlight the interrelatedness between the ecological movement and the women's movement in her *New Woman/New Earth* (1975), draws attention to the negation both groups encounter and proposes to "unite the demands of the women's movement with those of the ecological movement to envision a radical reshaping of the basic socio-economic relations and the underlying values of this society" (p. 204). Ruether emphasizes that women's issues and ecology are intimately connected, and this union intends to envision a new framework in which the fundamental relations can be reshaped to provide liberation for women and a solution to the ecological crisis. That is, social, economic, and ecological issues have been synthesized as concerns, and then the broad lens of ecofeminism has evolved to challenge all practices of domination.

Ecofeminist philosophy, which is widely related to women's environmental writing, second-wave feminist literary criticism, and eco-cultural critique (Gaard, Estok & Oppermann, 2013, p. 3), allows for a wide range of emphases and methodologies. It is, therefore, no coincidence that the "plurality of positions" among ecofeminists is to be expected (Warren, 2000, p. 21). Due to its philosophical plurality, ecofeminist theory is criticized "for being so diverse as to have no center" (Gates, 1998, p. 21); however, this same feature, which Patrick Murphy calls "interrogative mode" (1995, p. 4), is also regarded as a strength. In this sense, it may be acknowledged that a wide range of practices and beliefs in ecofeminism produce "healthy diversity," constituting the theory's basic foundations (Gaard&Murphy, 1998, p. 6). On the one hand "[cultural ecofeminists], proponents of the 'body-based argument' claim that women, through their unique bodily experiences - ovulation, menstruation, pregnancy, child birth, and breast feeding - are closer to and can more readily connect with nature" (Archambault, 1993, p. 19) On the other hand, social ecofeminists establish a relationship between the category of woman and social relations, recognizing the interrelatedness of the "threads of gender as interwoven with those of class, race, and species" (Plumwood, 1993, p. 50).

At the heart of the earliest rejections of ecofeminism is the belief that it adopts an essentialist point of view and promotes the principle of an ontological connection between women and nature. As Warren emphasizes, this interconnection is discussed as to whether or not it might be "potentially liberating or grounds for reinforcing harmful stereotypes about women" (2000, p. 21). According to Stacey Alaimo, the essential affinity between women and nature is the product of "a (hetero)sexist ideology" (2000, p. 5), which endorses the exploitation of both women and nature, reducing them to ontological equations. In attempting to come to terms with these concerns pervading the ecofeminist agenda, Barbara T. Gates emphasizes, "Inherent in ecofeminism is a belief in the interconnectedness of all living things" (1998, p. 20), not only that between women and nature. Gates further argues that ecofeminism favors "a biocentric rather than an anthropocentric viewpoint" and desires to see "an end to dualisms like male/female, thought/action, and spiritual/natural; and a trust in process, not just product" (p. 21). So, while strategies, approaches, and perspectives may differ and create division, ecofeminists are united in their fundamental belief in the central role dualism plays in the conceptual construction of the categories of 'woman' and 'nature.' Hence, they

recognize the concomitant necessity of challenging androcentric and anthropocentric discourses that function to maintain opposition between various categories and uphold faulty conceptual frameworks that associate females with nature and nature with a debased femininity.

The origins of the conceptual link between women and nature have long histories. Certain ecofeminists have concentrated on dualist structures permeating western intellectual history in which the concepts of man and culture provide the unifying and defining contrast to the concepts of woman and nature constructed as beneath the former ones. This continual and cumulative overcoming of the domain of nature by reason can be viewed as the “far-reaching effect of the Scientific Revolution” (Merchant, 1980, p. 193), which brings the death of nature. Carolyn Merchant investigates Francis Bacon’s philosophy, which stresses rationality and designates nature as feminine by constantly employing the female pronoun, and argues that Bacon inscribes the association between woman and nature and justifies the control and exploitation of both (169). In a similar vein, Australian philosopher Val Plumwood’s critical analysis, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (1993), considered by many to be “one of the finest pieces of ecofeminist theory around,” provides an invaluable framework through which certain interrelated categories can be reimagined (Slicer, 1998, p. 54). According to Plumwood, the Cartesian mind/body dualism “widen[s] and deepen[s] the chasm between what identifies humanity and what defines the world of nature” (1993, p. 109). It is, therefore, no coincidence that the modern era, characterized by such sixteenth and seventeenth-century scientists and philosophers as Francis Bacon and René Descartes, conceptualizes nature as an entity separate from and inferior to rational human capacities (Mayer, 2006, p. 115). Susan Hekman also details the consequences of Descartes’s theories on concepts of gender and nature and writes, “Descartes created an object world of nature [...] that is ruled entirely by cause and effect forces, a world that can be explained, dominated, and controlled” (1990, p. 117). In this way, nature is reduced to docile and lifeless matter, and women are thereby “thrust outside the domain of human subjectivity, rationality, and agency” (Alaimo, 2000, p. 2). In other words, the connection between women and nature is produced by excluding women from ‘culture’ and ‘reason’, thus women and nature are mutually inferiorized.

Plumwood critically revolves her discussion around the notion of “master identity,” through which she defines those who assumedly possess reason (1993, p. 4). This anthropocentric perspective conceptualizes nature as distinct from and subordinate to the realm of culture, positioning humans within the privileged realm of culture. Plumwood also describes in detail the complex conceptual interconnections between anthropocentrism and androcentrism, insisting, “within the Western philosophical tradition, anthropocentrism has often taken the form of androcentrism” (1991, p. 22). It is pertinent and essential to note that Plumwood’s notion of ‘master identity’ foregrounds the interrelated network of dualisms that form the foundation of the exploitation of gender, race, class, and nature. Drawing on social ecofeminism, as Plumwood mentions, those forms of oppression cast sexual, racial, and ethnic differences closer to nature, constructed beneath reason and culture (1993, p. 4). In synch with Plumwood, Warren also pays particular attention to the interwoven nature of those forms, such as racism, classicism, speciesism, (neo)colonialism, and imperialism, formed by “an oppressive and patriarchal conceptual framework” to which she refers as “a logic of domination” (Warren, 2000, p. 24). Recognizing and challenging the dualisms that define women and nature is, according to the ecofeminist perspective, crucial to unlocking all oppressive dualities and exposing all the practices of domination within culture. Plumwood demonstrates how the maintenance of a dualistic structure involves a conceptual system that constructs elements into contrasting pairs that include culture/nature, reason/nature, male/female, or mind/body. It is easy to see how the key elements of dualistic thought connect and reinforce one another, making an escape from their complex logical structure difficult. Moreover, “a dualism is an intense, established and developed cultural expression of [...] a hierarchal relationship, constructing central cultural concepts and identities so as to make equality and mutuality unthinkable” (Plumwood, 1993, p. 47). Thus, the dualistic structures permeating western culture disclose continuity between dualist pairs, alerting the potential for oppression of the ‘other’. Considering this point of view, it is significant to note that the interwoven nature of all forms of domination and exploitation, including imperialism, colonialism, sexism, racism, and speciesism, illustrates a key insight of ecocritical feminist criticism. As Deborah L. Madsen highlights, the philosophy prominently interrogates “the relationship between the patriarchal oppression of women and the human domination of non-human nature”

(2000, p. 123), further aiming to replace this worldview with an alternative value system. Greta Gaard puts all this very clearly:

Drawing on the insights of ecology, ecofeminism's basic premise is that the ideology which authorizes oppressions such as those based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities, and species is the same ideology which sanctions the oppression of nature. Ecofeminism calls for an end to all oppressions, arguing that no attempt to liberate women (or any other oppressed group) will be successful without an equal attempt to liberate nature (1993, p. 1).

In their discussion of the issues of exploitation of the “others” who have subordinate status in relationships of domination and subordination, ecofeminists often, but not exclusively, emphasize women and gender oppression (Warren, 2000, p. xiv-2). Unlocking all the aforementioned oppressive forms requires the deconstruction of the dichotomous categorizations because “once nature is conceived as capable of agency and intentionality, and human identity is reconceived in less polarized and disembodied ways” (Plumwood, 1993, pp. 5), the transfer between various structures of domination can be possible. As Alaimo emphasizes, ecofeminism must challenge and reject the choices that arise from the nature/culture opposition and “affirm multiple alliances and articulations, deconstructions and reconstructions of this discursive terrain” (2000, p. 136). This strategy, in Plumwood's terms, is called “anti-dualist ecological feminism” (1993, p. 40). This strategy offers multifaceted negotiations for the literary imagination, responding to the questions and issues raised in theory. Alternatively, the literary imagination confronts, challenges, and often reconfigures the complexities of the conceptual framework that reduces women and nature to ontological equations. Cheryll Glotfelty defines ecocriticism as “a critical stance, [which] has one foot in literature and the other on land; as a theoretical discourse, [which] negotiates between the human and the nonhuman” (1996, p. xix). Hence, ecocriticism provides a fruitful framework for analyzing, critiquing, and explaining the inscriptions of nature in literary texts, demonstrating the benefits of the theory for reinterpreting and reconceptualizing humankind's relationships to the natural world. In a similar way, paying particular attention to the analogous domination of women and nature, ecofeminist criticism highlights the constructedness of gender and nature with a focus on the continuity between entities previously constructed as polar opposites. Making use of the anti-dualist strategy, ecofeminism deconstructs and reconstructs oppressive conceptual frameworks, destabilizing associations between women and nature. In light of those preliminary observations, this paper explores how Ann Jellicoe conveys the aforementioned dualisms, oppositions, and analogies created by dominative ideologies through her innovative dramatic techniques, including cross-casting and audience participation. The reason for selecting Jellicoe's prominent play *The Rising Generation* (1969) is that it has not attracted the interest it deserves as an example of an anti-dualist feminist ecocritical dramatic production. The following discussion indicates that Ann Jellicoe appears to reclaim the ‘autonomy’ and ‘agency’ both of women and nature in *The Rising Generation* and adopts an anti-dualist worldview, which is considered the central issue, occupying and motivating ecofeminists today.

An Anti-Dualist Reading of *The Rising Generation* (1969)

The 1950s were recorded as the most prolific years in which women produced many dramatic works and formed the canon of women playwrights. The female playwrights who followed consciously explored areas of experience that the stage traditionally ignored and developed styles designed as a radical contrast to the standard dramatic forms. Conventional plot structures, such as sequential scenes or patterns of cause and effect, were rejected. Ann Jellicoe introduced many innovative forms and patterns in theatrical productions of the mid-twentieth century, marking some of the dramatic material that has become characteristic of women's drama over the last two decades. In *The Sport of My Mad Mother* (1958), a play “that belongs in no known category of drama” (as cited in Rabey, 2003, p. 43), Jellicoe employs many innovative theatrical strategies such as myths, ritualized actions, repetitions, sounds, and rhythms to communicate with the spectators and enable them to participate in the play directly. In *The Rising Generation* and *The Knack*, she employs similar uses of repetition, rhythmical action or dialogue, and dance,

with an emphasis on action over dialogue to convey meaning. In her attempt to develop conceptions of direct theatre, Jellicoe's plays invite the audience to participate in the action, rather than simply to address them. By employing this strategy, the playwright aims to disrupt their passivity; thus, she raises awareness of vital human-related problems and encourages them to construct a new, hopeful future. Besides, with *The Knack* and *The Rising Generation*, Jellicoe confirms her talent for humour and discovers the importance of celebration and covertly subversive comedy, which were also popular in feminist theatre in the mid-twentieth century (Goodman, 1993, p. 238).

In 1957, *The Rising Generation* was commissioned by the Girl Guides, which required that the play be "of interest to youth" and have a "positive ending" (Taylor, 1969, p. 77). *The Rising Generation* was initially rejected by the commission, perhaps in part due to its representation of authority figures and its anti-nuclear theme, as Jellicoe herself deduces: "They turned down my play because [...] it's about the bomb" (as cited in Snyder, 2000, p. 118). In the mid-twentieth century, Britain was experiencing the post-World War II years with an idealistic goal of peace and prosperity; however, the country found itself amidst a cold war and nuclear war. Openly opposed to communism, Britain's commitments to foreign interests and participation in a major rearmament program, following in the footsteps of the United States and the United Nations, were unpopular at home. Moreover, Britain joined in the arms race and detonated its first atomic bomb in 1952. Thus, the hoped-for new age of peace never materialized in the nuclear age. The growing fears and disillusionment felt by the post-war generation are reflected in theatre, which features many talents such as Ann Jellicoe, among others. In this context, the play, which has significant socio-political connotations, criticizes militarism, nuclear technology, and oppressive order, implicating Britain's actions in the nuclear arms race and the cold war in the mid-twentieth century. In her dramatization of oppressive strategies and the arms race, Jellicoe crafts a play that criticizes the nuclear age and its effect on the post-war generation as well as the Enlightenment faith in science and reason. It is significant to note that Jellicoe's concerns reflect the ecofeminist agenda, coalescing around anti-nuclear and environmental issues. The conversion of environmentalism and feminism also connects ecofeminist philosophy to movements not explicitly feminist or environmentalist, such as anti-nuclear and peace movements (Gaard, 2011, p. 28; Philips and Rumens, 2015, p. 3). In this vein, early scholarship dates the origins of ecofeminism back to the anti-nuclear, feminist, and peace movements of the 1970s and 1980s (Mies and Shiva, 1993, p. 13). Establishing an association between the analogous domination over women and nature and the logic of patriarchal hegemony, Ynestra King argues that the threat of nuclear annihilation is the product of the same masculinist mentality, which depends on multiple systems of dominance and state power to have its way (1989, p. 26). Thus, it is worth adding that these concerns move ecofeminism forward and promote its potential as a perspective to analyze literary texts that feature a dystopic future where nuclear war has destroyed most of the planet.

The action of *The Rising Generation* is primarily constructed through a seemingly random series of dualisms that motivate ecofeminists. In the play, Jellicoe draws attention to patriarchal forms of oppression that sanction woman and nature subordination. Thus, she attempts to envision a new framework in which the concepts of 'woman', 'man', 'nature' and 'culture' can be reshaped to provide 'autonomy' and 'agency' for both women and nature. In her attempt, Jellicoe aims to inspire the audience to build a new world where women and nature, women and society, as well as women and men, can exist in harmony. To put it another way, Jellicoe, taking on board in the mid-twentieth century and challenging patriarchal forms of oppression, draws attention to the human predicaments, including cold war and nuclear age that arose from the oppressive patriarchal ideology. Affirming this position, the play embraces the philosophical plurality of ecofeminism and prioritizes ecofeminists' critique of dualism. In Plumwood's words, the play offers a framework through which "we should [...] conceive human identity in less dualistic and oppositional ways; such a critical ecofeminism would conclude that both women and men are part of both nature and culture" (1993, p. 35). In this way, the playwright aims to create a union in which women and men appear as less dualistic and less polarized entities. Hence, she intends to convey the meaning that women and men, nature and reason, are components, and they are both a part of the same culture.

The Rising Generation critically explores many problems of the twentieth century, including primarily the destructive power structures of patriarchal society, ecological deterioration, as well as the

oppression of women. Jellicoe's one-act brief play is a story of intolerance, and totalitarian rule told in a parable form (Taylor, 1969, p. 77) through which Jellicoe criticizes dualist structures permeating western culture. The play dramatizes the 'regiment of women' headed by Mother character, depicted as "*an enormous woman half-masked with padded head-dress and shoes ... [who] holds reins and she also has a whip*" (Jellicoe, 1969, p. 45). Following the appearance of Mother on stage, accompanied by half-masked girls, the charladies begin to sing "God Save the Queen" with a mindless nationalistic fervor and blind obedience to the authority figure. Mother reaches the center of the arena and addresses the crowd:

This day I proclaim the Republic of Women! [...] The Nation of Women! The Commonwealth of Women! [...] I hate niggers! I hate Jews! I hate wogs! But most of all – I hate men! [Cheers] Let us destroy men. Let us rid the world of men [...] And if any women who love men remain – and if any men or woman who is for men and against me – then the final weapon! The irrevocable! The bomb! I shall not hesitate to use the strength given to me! In defence (p. 45-46).

Jellicoe creates a dominant and oppressive character who can be identified as the embodiment of the interrelated network of dualisms that form the foundations of gender, race, class, and nature domination. Mother expresses her hatred for the 'other' and threatens to destabilize the ecological order with a nuclear blast. Here, the play coalesces around anti-nuclear and environmental issues, which occupy ecofeminists, who regard militarism as the most immediate threat to continued life on the planet (King, 1989, p. 26). For ecofeminists, militarism reflects a pervasive cultural and political situation that joins in masculinist structures and reinforces each other. It is connected with the contamination of the environment and the deterioration of humans, especially those of women. Jellicoe's use of the cross-casting technique in dramatic construction provides a more generative framework through which the play can be explored in an anti-dualist feminist ecocritical frame. In her parable form, the oppressive Mother is acted by a man on stage, a distinction pointed out in the reviews but not specified in the cast list in the script (Snyder, 2000, p. 149). Therefore, it is no coincidence that Mother also takes on destructive patriarchal societal behaviors, which enables the playwright to set up a series of parallels between Mother and the men. Mother, acted actually by a man, is transformed into a symbolic 'male character' on stage, expressing her hatred for men, blacks, and non-European people. In this regard, Mother can be regarded as the embodiment of the dualist strategy, formed by multiple exclusions. As the leader of the 'regiment of women,' Mother intends to exterminate all men. In their battle to eradicate all men from the world, Mother and the charladies, whose values are based on hatred and exclusion, can be compared to the male military leaders and soldiers through which Jellicoe refers to Britain's unpopular cold war and nuclear arms race experiences. Jellicoe uses special effects of "*machine-gun fire*" (Jellicoe, 1969, p. 46) to heighten the connection. Moreover, when Mother appears "*as an auctioneer, and a MAN standing beside her*" (p. 47), it is obvious that Mother and charladies are also assumed to take on male sexual lust. To satirize slave traders who sold blacks and women, Jellicoe depicts women whose "*voices become sharp, excited, lusting*" (p. 48) when they look at "a fine specimen of man" (p. 47) at the prospect of owning such property. Jellicoe's depiction of the model that constructs man as a passive object leaves the dualist structure intact and offers that the hierarchical model can be replaced by an alternative non-hierarchical model. In other words, in the world Jellicoe's characters inhabit, culture/nature and man/woman binaries do not remain a given, and their attendant assumptions and expectations can be transcended.

Another example of Mother and the charladies taking on destructive patriarchal societal behaviors occurs when the charladies teach the girls that: "Shakespeare was a woman [...] Milton was a woman [...] The Black Prince was a woman [...] Robin Hood was a woman [...] King John was a woman [...] Isaac Newton was a woman" (pp. 50-51). In doing so, the charladies deny those men who participate in making history by denying male existence, which seems to mirror the attempt of patriarchal culture to disregard female existence in history. By taking on all of those destructive aspects of masculinity, Mother and the charladies become men, literally. Not only is Mother played by a man, but she and other charladies are also padded, masked, and dressed in grotesque headdresses that symbolize their transformation into men,

suggesting that those women assume destructive power structures of patriarchal society. Thus, “on the grounds of orgiastic feminism” (Innes, 2002, p. 496), the play criticizes the destructive power structures of patriarchal society, the uncontrolled will to power that lead to the wars, and also “satiris[es] the extremes to which a women’s movement might go” (Keyssar, 1984, p. 45). In other words, Jellicoe’s dramatization of women who appear to represent destructive aspects of patriarchal culture draws attention to dualisms and all kinds of extreme movements that separate women and men from each other and validate the subordination of one of them to another. In the 1950s, the Women’s Theatre Company deliberately prohibited male participation, and radical feminists objected to the presence of men even in the cast, declaring that “what women create in life, men destroy” (Innes, 2002, p. 235). Jellicoe’s character breakdown and dramatic construction criticize the extremism of radical feminists, who lead to further fragmentation. Thus, Jellicoe’s strategy provides a framework through which women and men can be conceived in less dualistic and oppositional ways. The dramatization of Mother and the charladies who assume the destructive power structures blurs the line between femininity and masculinity and adopts an anti-dualist approach consistent with the one advocated by Plumwood and many other ecofeminists.

In the first part of the play, the oppressive actions of Mother and the charladies are dominant. In the second part of the play, the young girls and boys appear on stage. In this part, in which Jellicoe creates new conditions for the articulation of difference, she turns attention to the younger generation whose adventures and encounters will designate a new future. The young girls, who are being tutored by the charladies to hate men, begin the play “*all dressed in white [...] [have their hair] scraped back [...] wear[ing] enormous pairs of spectacles*” (Jellicoe 1969, p. 50). They are all expected to repeat many times the following stamps:

Men are black.
Men are thick.
Men are tall.
Men are strong.
Men will tear you, beat you, eat you.
When you’re older, you will know (p. 54).

The domination of women is one of the major issues the play addresses in this parable form. In accepting the patriarchal structures of power, the charladies control young girls’ attitudes and behaviors in a strict manner. Jellicoe’s dramatization of male hatred propagated by Mother and the charladies can enable the audience to imagine the possibility of alternative conceptual frameworks against oppressive structures. In this way, the playwright allows for a critical pathway to new possibilities that might include a shifting process of flow back and forth, a tension held in balance between subject and object, separation and connectedness, dependence, and autonomy within the primary categories. Jellicoe aims at destabilizing all forms of extremism, including “dangerous sexism” (Keyssar, 1984, p. 50) because it “does not allow for the experience of rising, for the necessities of asserting strength and taking power before weakness can be admitted and power shared” (45). The play foregrounds the idea that extremes or reversals, constructed through multiple exclusions, serve dualism and undermine the reciprocal relationships between dualist pairs. Thus, Jellicoe exposes the dichotomies of male/female as false and suggests that inferiorization of masculinity or elevation of females cannot offer a solution. To convey this meaning, Jellicoe distracts the air of extremism through repetitions, sounds, rhythms, and dance, which foreshadow the upcoming change in the course of the play. The class is divided into groups, and they repeat the same stamps many times. When the girls repeat the stamps “*thoughtfully to themselves,*” they “*take off their spectacles and loosen their hair [...] They turn, [...] see the BOYS. There is a sense of awe, surprise, and wonder*” (1969, p. 54). The boys and the girls begin to dance together, clapping, “and the entire dance finishes with the GIRLS and BOYS standing in pairs” (p. 55). All the couples join hands and utter the following lines:

The world can not be divided.
 The human race can not be split.
 What is a man without a woman?
 What is a woman without a man?
 Each needs the other.
 Men and women.
 Women and men.
 Let us remember, a threat to all is a threat to each.
 A threat to each is a threat to all (p. 55).

The play rejects extremism and dualism, which create inequality between women and men. Thus, it calls for equality between those entities. In other words, through such a holistic approach, Jellicoe endeavors to depict the primary conditions required for alternative representations of all categories concerned ‘woman,’ ‘man,’ ‘nature’ and ‘culture’ by imagining characters and settings in a manner that rejects dualisms as viable frames for conceiving the various relationships involved, and instead, embracing multiplicity. As ecofeminists suggest, privileging one side of the binary and devaluing the other “put[s] an omnipotent subject at the center and construct[s] others as sets of negative qualities” (Warren, 2000, p. 336). This assumption conceptualizes man/woman and culture/nature within traditional oppositions. Therefore, Jellicoe aims to reconceptualize female-male/nature-culture relationships in configurations other than the traditional oppositions produced by dualistic concepts and encourages the audience to construct a new, hopeful future as ecofeminists attempt to do. The above-quoted lines repeated by the girls and boys symbolize a union, which can be regarded as a rise against Mother and charladies’ oppression. Threatened by this union, Mother feels distressed and says that, “You can never beat me. I can destroy the world. Obey me, or I kill. [*She cracks her whip about her*] ...” (1969, p. 56). It is obvious that, to maintain blind obedience to her traditional authority, she threatens the girls and the boys with the bomb. They are aware of the fact that the explosion would destroy the ecological balance and poison the world. As Jellicoe’s stage direction illustrates, “*the arena has been lit to show spectre-like figures which stand still like dead trees in the quarter-light [...] The sound of a child crying*” (p. 58) following “*an intense and reverberating explosion*” (p. 57). The spectres illustrate the destruction and disruption as follows:

There is nothing, nothing left.
 That is not spoiled or broken.
 [...]
 The water is polluted,
 We can not drink water.
 [...]
 There is nothing, nothing left.
 In one terrible flash
 The world we know has disappeared.
 Everything strange and dead.
 [...]
 Rubble and a pile of ash.
 Some smoking bricks,
 Smell of fire (pp. 58-59).

The play turns attention to the ecological deterioration in the aftermath of the nuclear blast. It should be noted that, as well as the domination of women, the misappropriation of the earth’s natural resources is another major issue Jellicoe treats. Mother, who appears to represent the destructive power structures of patriarchal society, disrupts environmental balance to maintain her authority. In her depiction of ecological deterioration, Jellicoe criticizes the uncontrolled will to power that led to the wars and the nuclear age. Thus, the audience is implicated in Britain’s unpopular actions in the nuclear arms race and the cold war, as argued

above. The loudspeaker addresses the audience and informs them about the disruption and destruction. As the explosion is dramatized on the stage, the audience is told the results of the detonation in London over the loudspeaker: "The fireball of the explosion [...], driven by the great winds called forth by the changes in temperature, would burn what was no already destroyed. Nor is this all, so great would be little help for the survivors. Twelve bombs would destroy Great Britain and poison the world" (p. 58). Through audience participation, the playwright tries to make them victims of the nuclear holocaust. In this way, she intends to disrupt their passivity towards the socio-political adventures of Britain. The play, directed by Jane Howell, employs a cast of one hundred and fifty schoolchildren and uses the entire auditorium of the Royal Court as its stage (Bolar, 1984, p. 158), which makes the play spectacularly successful. As Jellicoe herself puts it, "as a shell of love and vitality and youthful enthusiasm" (as cited in Snyder, 2000, p. 124), the play reflects her developing conceptions of direct theatre through which she intends to open up ways of reconsidering power structures and injustices.

The boys and girls, who are seen to be shadowy figures after the nuclear annihilation unleashed by Mother, realize that they are alive and "[they] are not part of the destruction" (Jellicoe, 1969, p. 59). Voices utter: "I'm hungry [...] I want something to drink [...] The bomb has poisoned the earth" (p. 59). Aware of the ecological deterioration and water pollution, vital for the life cycle, they decide to leave the earth in order to construct a new future. Stephen, one of the survivors, proposes to find a "scientist" who will "build a spaceship" (p. 61) for them. Then, Stephen and Joan co-ordinate the efforts of the boys, girls, and audience to build the ship. The girls and boys co-work in perfect harmony to create a better future. Upon the entrance of the male scientist, Jellicoe maintains her critique of the Enlightenment faith in science and militarism. However, it is significant to note that Jellicoe's critique of reason does not imply abandoning all forms of reason, science, and individuality. In Plumwood's words, "rather, it involves their redefinition or reconstruction in less oppositional and hierarchical ways" (1993, p. 5). The scientist is addressed by the voice as follows: "You got us into this mess. Now you get us out of it" (Jellicoe, 1969, p. 61). Here, the scientist is identified explicitly as the subject who exhibits traits and attitudes consistent with Western Enlightenment philosophy, which created the destructive power sources that led to worldwide calamities, including World Wars, the atomic age, and the nuclear arms race. The male scientist agrees to make "a flying saucer [which is big] enough to take everyone left in the world" (p. 62). All the girls and boys co-work and follow the scientist's directions carefully to create a better future. The anti-hierarchical and anti-dualist character of their group relations emphasizes the importance of debate, cooperation, and consensus decision-making. They all contribute to the construction of the ship, called "Hope" (p. 65). The Hope will take them to a new world, as Joan illustrates: "Now we leave the earth and go outwards into the universe. When you leave this ship, when you walk out of the doors, it will be a new world, a different world" (p. 65). The utopian world they aim to arrive at through Hope poses a stark contrast to the world they leave behind. As their actions prove, the play suggests that the commitments of the group members to one another as well as to the harmonious unity show that they are all part of an interconnected whole. This anti-dualist and non-hierarchical relationship among group members reflects the ecofeminist motivation to create mutually beneficial relations. As Sam Mickey also emphasizes, "[t]he point of ecofeminism is fundamentally intersectional, attending to the multitudinous ways in which the various aspects of coexistence interconnect" (2018, p. xvii). Affirming this position and paving the way for new possibilities concerning gender and the environment, the play as a whole shows that it is significant to prioritize the basic conditions required for alternative representations, embracing diversity, egalitarianism, and pluralism. All those examples represent an attitude that resists the confining frameworks of dualism by complicating the either/or choices; as a result, the binaries required to support and transmit dualistic philosophies are destabilized.

Conclusion

The dualistic structures justify the interwoven nature of oppressive forms, including imperialism, colonialism, sexism, racism, and speciesism, illustrating a key insight of ecocritical feminist criticism. Ecofeminists, united in their fundamental belief in the central role dualism plays in the conceptual construction of the categories of 'woman' and 'nature,' recognize the concomitant necessity of challenging

the aforementioned forms of oppression. In this regard, this paper indicates that *The Rising Generation* deals with the complex terrain of patriarchy and its dominant ideals in Western society based on the dualist strategy, paying particular attention to the unjust domination of ‘woman’ and ‘nature’. *The Rising Generation*, in which Jellicoe innovates many theatrical techniques, including cross-casting and audience participation, successfully anticipates ecofeminist theatre in the mid-twentieth century. The play’s concerns reflect the ecofeminist agenda, coalescing around anti-nuclear and environmental issues as well as women’s subordination to the masculinist mentality. In the play, the central character, Mother, is depicted as “malign, sexually (feministically) Manichean and supremacist, triggering a nuclear explosion from which the survivors attempt to escape to start anew in outer space” (Rabey, 2003, p. 45). In this vein, the central female character, acted by a man on stage, opens up a more fruitful framework through which the play can be explored within an ecofeminist frame. In other words, the playwright foregrounds the idea that extremes or reversals, constructed through multiple exclusions, serve dualism and undermine the reciprocal relationships between dualist pairs. In so doing, Jellicoe exposes the dichotomies of male/female as false and suggests that inferiorization of masculinity or elevation of females cannot offer a solution. The play adopts an anti-dualist strategy to challenge the denial of agency and respect for the devalued side of dualism, whether it is a woman or the natural world. In the dramatic construction, Jellicoe does not favor male/female and culture/nature divisions and endeavors to erase the ontological differences, undermining the idea of an unbridgeable opposition between those entities in a manner that reflects many ecofeminist perspectives. Mother and the charladies represent omnipotent subjects in relation to a number of centric structures in the play, and they exhibit traits and attitudes consistent with Western patriarchal philosophy. Those dominant and oppressive characters, who can be identified as the embodiment of the interrelated network of dualism that forms the foundations of gender, race, class, and nature domination, are challenged by younger characters who reject being victims of the binary oppositions that result in lives of alienation, desperation, and fragmentation. These characters recognize and name oppressive and controlling forces, refusing the power of those who use silencing others as a major strategy for maintaining power. As the rising generation, the girls and boys bridge the gap between essentialist notions of identity and demonstrate how, through ‘agency’ and ‘autonomy’, the subjects resist, reject, and transform, leaving dualism and extremism behind. Considering this point of view, the play opens a critical pathway to beneficial alternatives to gender oppression and environmental destruction that would undoubtedly become part of a caring infrastructure that helps future generations. As many ecofeminists attempt to do, Jellicoe conveys the message that humans should value non-hierarchical thinking to promote a more egalitarian and pluralistic point of view through which all oppressive forms of domination within a culture can be unlocked.

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