

# The Epistemic and Material Violence Exerted Against Women in *The Woman in White* from a Posthuman Feminist Perspective

Posthuman Feminist Açidan Collins'in *The Woman in White* Romanında Kadınlara Karşı Uygulanan Epistemik ve Materyal Şiddet

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## Abstract

Wilkie Collins's novel *The Woman in White* (1860) can be taken as an embodiment of patriarchal dominion over-sexualized others of the discourse. In line with women's holding a "less than" status when compared to men in the text, they are reduced to *disposable bodies* in posthumanist critic Rosi Braidotti's sense of the term. The male characters' representation as the universal representative of the human falls short in embracing the female characters. Hence, Anne's imprisonment and Laura's forced marriage in the text demonstrate the working mechanism of epistemic and material violence exerted against the ones who are deprived of the politically representable status by stripping them off their agentic potentialities. In tune with these considerations, this paper aims to find an answer if male and female characters in the novel are human to the same degree against the backdrop of feminist dimensions of posthumanism by highlighting exceptionalist politics as a consolidation of patriarchal logic. By extension, this study proposes to demystify how hierarchical binary thinking excludes more than what it includes in relation to woman. The article also interrogates if a bond of solidarity among women based on nondialectical relations of the self to the other might offer a solution by instilling feminist orientations of posthumanism.

**Keywords:** posthuman feminism, epistemic and material violence, agency, *The Woman in White*, Wilkie Collins

## Öz

Wilkie Collins'in *The Woman in White* (1860) adlı romanı diskurun cinsiyet üzerinden ötekileştirilmiş varlıklar üzerinde ataerkil hükmün somutlaşması olarak ele alınabilir. Kadınların metinde erkeklere kıyasla "daha az önemli" bir yer tutmasıyla bağlantılı olarak posthümanist eleştirmen Rosi Bridotti'nin tabiriyle kadınlar "gözden çıkarılabilir bedenlere" dönüştürülmüştür (Karakaş, 2014, p. 28). Erkek karakterlerin evrensel insan kavramını temsil etmesi kadın karakterlerin insan temsilini ele almada yetersiz kalmaktadır. Bundan dolayı, metindeki Anne'in hapsedilmesi ve Laura'nın zoraki evliliği eyleyici potansiyelleri ellerinden alınarak politik olarak temsil edilebilir olma statüsünden mahrum bırakılanlara karşı uygulanan epistemik ve materyal şiddet mekanizmasını göstermektedir. Bunlarla uyumlu olarak, bu çalışma ataerkil mantığın somutlaşmasının ayrımcı politikasının altını çizerek posthümanizmin feminist boyutunu arka plana alarak romandaki erkek ve kadın karakterlerin aynı derecede insan olup olmadığı sorusuna cevap arayacaktır. Buna ek olarak, bu çalışma hiyerarşik temelli ikili düşünmenin kadın kavramını tanımlarken kavramın içine dahil ettiğinden fazlasının dışarda bırakıldığını açığa çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Aynı zamanda, bu çalışma kadınlar arasında kendiliğın ötekiyle diyalektik olmayan ilişkilerine dayanan bir dayanışmanın kurulmasının posthümanizmin feminist yönelimini içeren bir çözüm olarak sunulmasını sorgulayacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** posthüman feminizm, epistemik ve materyal şiddet, eyleycilik, *The Woman in White*, Wilkie Collins

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## Introduction

The concept of the human seems to create an illusion that “each human is human” to the same degree. Yet, when analyzed from a closer perspective, it will become obvious that its discriminative agenda does not work in the same manner for each and every human. To be more precise, it would be better to quote Rosi Braidotti, who criticizes the definition of the human in her *Posthuman Knowledges* (2019) as she reflects that philosophy

conventionally fell into a discursive pattern of dualistic opposition that defined the human mostly by what it is *not*. Thus, with Descartes: *not* an animal, *not* extended and inert matter, *not* a pre-programmed machine. These binary oppositions provided definitions by negation, structured within a humanistic vision of Man as the thinking being *par excellence*. (p. 7, emphasis in the original)

As human is defined by what it is not, one of the defining features of human is that signifies a male representative as the model human. This male reference point is consolidated in Leonardo da Vinci's *Vitruvian Man* figure. By creating a certain image of the human, his work has answered the question what it means to be human by showcasing the perfect proportions one should have. The male figure that is placed right at the center does not stand for *any* human. By extension, this central human is a male, able-bodied figure which is pregnant with some negative connotations. Braidotti (2013) remarks in *The Posthuman*:

That iconic image is the emblem of Humanism as a doctrine that combines the biological, discursive and moral expansion of human capabilities into an idea of teleologically ordained, rational progress... This model sets standards not only for individuals, but also for their cultures. Humanism developed into a civilizational model, which shaped a certain idea of Europe as coinciding with the universalizing powers of self-reflexive reason. (p. 13)

The marker on which Eurocentric humanism has been established falls short in embracing othered figures of the society. Rationality has been closely related with this central image which is postulated as a prerogative solely belonging to Man. Therefore, humanism does not function in answering the needs of various othered groups as a result of which critical posthumanist stance takes action in opening up a new space of signification for the silenced entities by denying the exclusive agenda of humanism.

Braidotti beautifully articulates her critical posthumanist view by investigating the taken for granted identity markers that establish the core of humanism since her critical posthumanism cherishes “the diversity of life - as *zoe* - as non-hierarchical matter, which recognizes the respective degrees of intelligence and creativity of all organisms. This implies that thinking is *not* the prerogative of humans alone, which allows for a form of relational and collaborative ethics” (2018, p. 340, emphasis in the original). Here, the critical posthumanist dictum falsifies the assumption that human is the only entity that is granted with rationality. As it seems crystal clear, humanist notion of the human works on a multi-hierarchical plane, positioning *Vitruvian Man* right at the top of this chain of being. Human and non-human others are excluded from this paradigm as they are not endowed with sameness with this central figure. Therefore, the idea of difference operates as the governing logic within human-centered pattern. In this respect, critical posthumanism arises as a site to negate the idea of *difference* as a negative attribute and as an urgent call for enacting “social justice and rejecting exclusion, marginalization and symbolic disqualification” (Braidotti, 2019, p. 9).

The feminist notion of critical posthumanism requires “the quest for equality between man and woman, the recognition of multiple genders, the abolition of gender identities

altogether. ... Feminism is the struggle to empower those who live along multiple axes of inequality” (Braidotti, 2022, p. 9). Feminist agenda of posthumanism strives for “creating alternative visions of ‘the human’ generated by people who were historically excluded from, or only partially included into, that category” (Braidotti, 2022, p. 9). Accordingly, the posthuman feminist perspective struggles to construct a new system based on multi-species justice, which can be actualized by shedding light on epistemic and material violence exerted against the others of the dominant discourse.

With an end to demystifying the violence against women in Wilkie Collins’s *The Woman in White*, I will delve into the posthuman feminist dimension by explicating how affirmative politics resonates well with the text. By specifying posthuman feminist tenets, I will shed light on how the text creates a polarized narrative world based on gender discrimination and question if it is possible to transgress the limits of identity markers which contain discriminative residues. In doing so, I will refer to Rosi Braidotti and Cecilia Åsberg’s posthuman feminist aspirations, which take the initiative by highlighting the inseparability of nature/culture duality on a non-hierarchical plane.

### Posthuman Feminist Quest

The discriminatory agenda of humanism that is regulated by politics of exclusion constitutes a position in which the fixed and rigid standard of the human voices the rights of a male entity. As Braidotti remarks, “this particular male is moreover assumed to be white, European, head of a heterosexual family and its children, and able-bodied. In other words, white, urbanized, speaking a standard language, heterosexually inscribed in a reproductive unit, and a full citizen of a recognized polity” (2017, p. 23). The excluded ones are open to any form of exploitation as their right to existence is not positioned on the same plane with this central human, namely anthropos of the discourse. Dialectics of self/other enables the implementation of epistemic and material violence as rationality now solely belongs to the particularly pointed out male figure of Eurocentric humanism. According to this discriminative mindset:

Subjectivity as a discursive and material practice is equated with rational, universal consciousness and self-regulating moral behavior, whereas Otherness is defined as its negative opposite. Dialectically redefined as ‘other than’, difference is inscribed on a hierarchical scale that spells inferiority and means ‘to be worth less than’. (Braidotti, 2017, p. 23, emphasis in the original)

By bearing an agenda of going beyond the dual hierarchical logic of Eurocentric humanism, the posthuman feminist perspective suggests a new way of replacing dual logic with a non-hierarchical relationality among human and non-human counterparts of the earth. With an aim to replace *situated knowledges*<sup>1</sup> of anthropocentric arrogance in Haraway’s sense of the term, posthuman feminist register “tries to overcome Eurocentric ‘epistemologies of ignorance’” (Åsberg, 2017, p. 195). The human-centered position has deliberately paid no attention to the excluded voices both on epistemological and ontological levels. Posthuman feminist dictum acknowledges these others by offering an onto-epistemological approach and redefines the category of the human as a site of posthuman amalgam. Åsberg’s posthuman feminist dictum is indicative of an approach in which it is not possible to talk about dualities as she positions her feminist agenda on the debunking of nature/culture

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<sup>1</sup> Donna Haraway coins the term *situated knowledges* to underline the fact that “disembodied scientific objectivity” cannot be freed from the governance of dominant discourse, hence assumed objectivity of science would be a false ideal (1988, p. 576).

duality. She destabilizes binary thinking by offering a kind of third space in which dialectics of self/other no longer work in offering a rational background for various forms of violence.

As the 'human' of the humanities is entangled in intricate and asymmetrical relations of reciprocity with animals, microbiota, and our environments, such exceptionalist assumptions of human nature seem increasingly difficult to sustain. In the Anthropocene, there is no self-contained individual human being to be held in a position of mastery, no divide between nature and culture, no 'advanced' civilization to master the wild Others, and no universal humanism to be practiced across the diversity of our species communalities. (Åsberg, 2017, p. 197)

In explicating their acknowledgement of posthuman feminism in *Posthuman Feminism* (2022), Braidotti and Åsberg refer to the current crisis related to exceptionalist policies of the twenty-first century. Their endeavor to blur boundaries by highlighting the anthropocentric fantasies of a post-millennial era ends up demystifying the need to eliminate the ontological superiority of the central Man figure. What I would like to suggest here is that instead of delving into contemporary literary examples as sites that showcase the fragility of boundaries, it would be more fruitful to reveal how the idea of femininity is constructed in Victorian texts. In doing so, I will question if it is possible to offer a reading by elucidating masculinist dimension of dual logic that would lead towards violence. In tune with these considerations, in the forthcoming part of this study, I will offer a reading of Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* from a posthuman feminist dimension by interrogating how the construction of femininity regulates violence on ontological and epistemological layers. Collins's novel resonates well with the idea of epistemic and material violence exerted against the others of the discourse as exemplified in women characters of the text such as Anne Catherick, Laura Fairlie, and Marian Halcombe.

### **Implementation of Epistemic and Material Violence in *The Woman in White***

Collins's novel *The Woman in White* revolves around various forms of violence that are used as a weapon in the hands of the powerful ones of the discourse. Women characters' relationality with power dynamics makes it explicit how the feminine ideal falls short in embracing women characters also opens the ground for deconstructing male dominance in the text in terms of posthuman feminist perspective. The Victorian ideal of a woman, namely the "angel in the house" figure, functions as a guiding force in designing a woman's role both in society and in her family. The pure, selfless woman figure should obey the rules of the patriarchal system by staying silent and internalizing the law of the Father. In a similar manner, Jeanette King draws attention to the construction of feminine ideals in Victorian society by comparing and contrasting Eve and Virgin Mary figures with each other in relation to their relationality with the law of the Father.

Eve, leading man away from God through the temptations of the flesh, is associated with evil and disobedience, justifying the subsequent subordination of woman to man. The contrasting image of the Virgin Mary embodies the obedience to God's wishes of which Eve was incapable, and is completely free from the taint of sexuality which surrounds representations of Eve. In addition, as the mother of Christ, Mary provides the ultimate model of maternal devotion and silent submissiveness. These two representations of women, and the narratives in which they are embedded, provide a rationale for the division of women into 'angels' and 'abortions', to use Lavater's terms. Only by being obedient, denying their bodies and seeking fulfilment in maternity can women be sure of a place within the first category. (2005, p. 10)

By creating a dual logic of feminine ideal, a woman is depicted as having two options in their societal positions, such as either behaving as a submissive angel figure or going against the orders of patriarchy as an evil disobedient one.

The Angel in the House notion that establishes an iconic figure for a model woman in the Victorian age is a poem by Coventry Patmore (1866). The poem openly articulates the division between public and private spheres by relating them with gender. Women are supposed to take control of home, a private space, whereas men are expected to deal with society by regulating the rules of public space. Hence, a woman is not given any public space and is not politically representable within the society. Instead of taking on duties in society, women should take care of their house and family. Hence, man will become more successful in performing his duties in the society.

Public and private sphere division in the construction of femininity and the Victorian ideal of the woman can be taken as an extension of *bios/zoe* division in critical posthumanism which undertakes a role in negating this hierarchical mindset. Ancient Greek society has two words for *life* as *bios* and *zoe*. Yet, their domains are different from each other as “*bios* is equated with the one who resides in the polis as a politically representable figure while *zoe* is the one that can be turned into disposable/tradable bodies” (Kasurka, 2022, p. 8). Hence, *zoe* symbolizes a kind of private sphere (in other words home, *oikos*) for slaves and women in the society. Braidotti clarifies the division between them by stating that *bios* indicates “the life of humans organized in society while *zoe* refers to the life of all living beings. *Bios* is regulated by sovereign powers and rules whereas *zoe* is unprotected and vulnerable” (2019, p. 19, italics in the original). Accordingly, *bios* offers a secure space for the politically representable one by acknowledging him as a subject, yet *zoe* is devoid of subject status and can be exposed to any form of violence as they are reduced to a less than status.

When we relate the concepts of *bios/zoe* with the Victorian construction of femininity, it is possible to see the overtones of *zoe* in the division between public and private spheres, which work hierarchically. Women here can be linked with *zoe* by being chained to the life of home, man can be related with a social sphere as being the one that is blessed with an acknowledged position in society. Bearing this in mind, Collins’s text can be taken as an amalgamation for *bios/zoe*, since the novel makes it explicit that women are forcefully confined to their homes. This situation is exemplified in Laura Fairlie, who holds a typical angel in the house position. Laura’s depiction manifests home not as a sacred place where one can feel safe and secure. Instead, home is the place of imprisonment regulated by man’s villainy. Violence is implemented both on the psychological and physical layers as she cannot regulate her own decisions about her life. Her father and then her husband speak on behalf of her by stripping off her agentic potentialities.

Laura’s beauty is depicted in such a manner that she bears the physical features of a stereotypical ideal woman of the Victorian period as the implied author depicts her “eyes of that soft, limpid, turquoise blue, so often sung by the poets, so seldom seen in real life” (Collins, 1860, p. 49). Laura’s father chooses her husband on her behalf and in this way, her life would be under the protection of her father at first, and then her husband. She behaves in line with the norms of the society by not going against the life designed for her by patriarchy. She is not able to war against the dictates of the patriarchy as a result of which she marries Sir Percival even though she is deeply in love with Walter Hartright. She cannot resist her father’s will and act in the way that she wants to live her life. Crucial decisions about her life are already settled by male partners of her life.

The absence of a woman figure in the social life also makes itself apparent in the law within the text. It is underlined that the wealth that Laura's family owns would be used by her in the absence of a male heir. It is reflected that

as events turned out, Mr. Philip Fairlie died leaving an only daughter, the Laura of this story, and the estate, in consequence, went, in course of law, to the second brother, Frederick, a single man. The third brother, Arthur, had died many years before the decease of Philip, leaving a son and a daughter. The son, at the age of eighteen, was drowned at Oxford. His death left Laura, the daughter of Mr. Philip Fairlie, presumptive heiress to the estate, with every chance of succeeding to it, in the ordinary course of nature, on her uncle Frederick's death, if the said Frederick died without leaving male issue. (Collins, 1860, p. 155)

Laura can only claim her rights to the estate in the absence of a male heir, which lays bare the epistemic violence regulated with the implementation of the legal system within the narrative world, as she is not positioned on the same plane with the male heirs of the society. After her marriage, Sir Percival's plans to get the ownership of her wealth also make it explicit that she is reduced to a *disposable* status. In a similar manner with the vulnerable status of *zoe*, Laura endures a form of inferiority on the epistemological level by being devoid of the legal system that would protect her rights to her wealth.

The novel demonstrates another female character who is devoid of her right to existence in the characterization of Anne Catherick. In the beginning of the text, Walter comes across with her, walking on the road in darkness alone. "There stood Miss Fairlie, a white figure, alone in the moonlight; in her attitude, in the turn of her head, in her complexion, in the shape of her face, the living image, at that distance and under those circumstances, of the woman in white!" (Collins, 1860, p. 60). Sir Percival later describes her by stating that Anne is "just mad enough to be shut up" (Collins, 1860, p. 337). Therefore, this woman in white, who is described as lacking rational capacity, echoes the masculinist dimension of patriarchal ideology. Anne is kept under surveillance for a long time by Sir Percival, as she knows the truth about Sir Percival's true identity that he claims to hold a position as Baronet that he does not truly have.

The depiction of her madness by Sir Percival hints at the exceptionalist policies that reduces *zoe* to a vulnerable position. In this respect, Anne can be kidnapped and kept under control by labelling her as a mad woman. Elaine Showalter points out the problematic relationality between male possession of rationality and female fragility in *The Female Malady*: "The medical belief that the instability of the female nervous and reproductive system made women vulnerable to derangement than men had extensive consequences for social policy. It was used as a reason [...] to keep them under male control in the family and in the state" (1985, p. 73). By labelling her as a mad woman that should be kept under constant control Sir Percival implements violence both on epistemic and material layers. As Anne is devoid of her social life and reduced to a position that can only exist under the surveillance mechanism of male power, her lack of agency signals the consolidation of logocentric ideology.

However, it should also be noted that the text gives narrative space to the glimpses of resistance by refuting male centrality. Anne's escape from asylum can be taken as an example that illustrates this point. Moreover, she tries to warn Laura against ill-motivated Sir Percival and her struggle in saving Laura from what she herself has experienced manifests that "she had some strong motive, originating in some deep sense of injury" (Collins, 1860, p. 101). Therefore, the concept of vulnerability does not function as lamentation over the loss by bearing residues of posthumanist affirmative aspirations in the text.

Similarly, Braidotti suggests an affirmative resistance in her posthumanist dictum which aligns well with the text's offering an opposition exemplified in Anne's escape from asylum rather than her passive acceptance of male dominance. According to Braidotti, "the generative potential of *zoe* [appears] as a notion that can engender resistance to the violent aspects of the posthuman convergence" (2019, p. 10). Hence, the acknowledgement of life as a property that solely belongs to one class of society is negated by Anne's striving to take control of her life by also claiming her right to existence.

Even though gender supremacist mindset creates a polarized world where there is no space for female voices, they can draw some cartographies in distancing themselves from oppression. It should also be noted that Collins's engagement with the dual and hierarchical logic does not only enable the depiction of violence exerted against sexualized others of the discourse, but it also arranges some space for transgressing boundaries based on gender discrimination. Among the female voices in the text, Marian's portrayal offers a more powerful way of blurring gender codes of femininity. As a matter of fact, she is not described as an angel in the house figure; in contrast, she is depicted as the one that is not in line with the beauty standards of Victorian society. Her masculinist complexion is described by Walter as follows: "The lady's complexion was almost swarthy, and the dark down on her upper lip was almost a moustache. She had a large, firm, masculine mouth and jaw" (Collins, 1860, p. 32). The difference<sup>2</sup> in her appearance is not only reflected by the others in the text, as she introduces herself by making a comparison with Laura:

My name is Marian Halcombe; and I am as inaccurate as women usually are, in calling Mr. Fairlie my uncle, and Miss Fairlie my sister. My mother was twice married: the first time to Mr. Halcombe, my father; the second time to Mr. Fairlie, my half-sister's father. Except that we are both orphans, we are in every respect as unlike each other as possible. My father was a poor man, and Miss Fairlie's father was a rich man. I have got nothing, and she has a fortune. I am dark and ugly, and she is fair and pretty. Everybody thinks me crabbed and odd (with perfect justice); and everybody thinks her sweet-tempered and charming (with more justice still). In short, she is an angel; and I am --- Try some of that marmalade, Mr. Hartright, and finish the sentence, in the name of female propriety, for yourself. (Collins, 1860, pp. 31-32)

Here, Marian directly opposes Laura regarding her appearance and kinship relations as she does not have the fortune we see in Laura; besides, her appearance does not meet the requirements of the feminine ideal. By exemplifying a kind character that blurs the boundaries based on gender politics, Marian enables the reader to have a third space that is freed from the violence of patriarchy. She can raise her voice against the system, which becomes actual when she defends herself and Laura's rights against the threats of Sir Percival:

"Take YOU care how you treat your wife, and how you threaten ME,' I broke out in the heat of my anger. 'There are laws in England to protect women from cruelty and outrage. If you hurt a hair of Laura's head, if you dare to interfere with my freedom, come what may, to those laws I will appeal'. (Collins, 1860, p. 314, capitalization in the original)

Marian refers to laws as social contracts that protect women's rights in the same way that they protect men's rights in the country. This reference opens up a space that would provide

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<sup>2</sup> Braidotti highlights the fact that Western ideology constructs itself on the idea of difference as denoting a less than situation. Yet here, I do not intend to imply Marian's difference in her physical beauty as showcasing a lower status compared to idea of femininity.

legal shelter working for othered segments of society. Demanding an equal position with man negates how life can be turned into a mere tool in the hands of the powerful ones. Thus, Marian problematizes the construction of femininity as an extension of passive acceptance.

Marian's resistance can be taken as bearing a dual logic, since she neither holds the beauty standards of feminine ideal nor behaves in line with what is expected of her. By running counter to dualism dominated-ideologies, she behaves as agentic as male characters. Posthuman feminist horizons find their voice actualized in Marian, who challenges the normative definitions of gender.

Unlike Anne and Laura, Marian cannot be reduced to the status of an object in the presence of a male subject as the governing logic. She cannot be manipulated in the same way that Anne and Laura fall victim to the expectations of society, which reflects the Victorian code of life. Marian's existence provides a ground for actualizing the generative force of life as *zoe*. This is exemplified in many instances, such as publicly expressing what she understands from marriage. As for Marian, men "take us body and soul to themselves and fasten our helpless lives to theirs as they chin up a dog to his kennel" (Collins, 1860, p. 183). As it becomes clear, she is cognizant of the unfair burden of marriage for women and what is more important here is that she can openly express this without the need for censoring her thoughts in a patriarchal society.

Braidotti categorizes *zoe* as "the life of animals and non-humans, as well as de-humanized humans" (2019, p. 12). This conceptualization stresses woman's *less than* position in the Victorian era as seen in Anne and Laura characters. Yet, a bond of solidarity among the *dehumanized* ones or the *sexualized others* can be established with an aim of disrupting power mechanisms of binarism in Braidotti's sense of the word. In this respect, Anne's struggle to escape from her imprisonment and her writing a letter to save Laura from Sir Percival's evil schemes reveal the possibility of affirmative blurring of boundaries by disrupting the working mechanism of tyrannical system.

## Conclusion

Victorian ideal of women is regulated by binary logic, which reflects the idea that not "each human is human" to the same degree. Man's status in social life being a politically representable citizen, unlike a woman's holding a domestic space, is indicative of the concept of human as bearing an exclusive agenda. Discriminative practices can be understood as an extension of a male-dominated society that implements both epistemological and material violence exerted against sexualized others. As women are devoid of their agentic potentialities, they cannot claim their right both on ontological and epistemological layers. The law does not speak for the rights of these othered figures as can be traced in Collins's novel in the case of Anne, Laura and Marian.

Sir Percival's struggling to gain a false identity in the society through the implementation of labelling women as mad and claiming their wealth for himself manifests violence on epistemological and ontological layers. The novel exemplifies the posthuman feminist dictum of Braidotti as "those who do not occupy the position of human subjects, in the fullness of the rights and entitlements that notion entails, have a unique vantage point about what counts as the unit of reference for a re-definition of the human" (2022, p. 12). From a posthumanist perspective, it needs to be highlighted that othered figures of human-centered discourse have felt the need to struggle for getting acknowledgment as a result of which they have a problematic attachment to human as a category.

Even though the text depicts exploitative practices of Sir Percival, Anne and Marian transcend boundaries of gender by also blurring the assumed distinction between public



space and private space. Anne's escape from her entrapment can be acknowledged as a step forward in public space, by rejecting the limited domestic area. Marian's rejection of Victorian idea of femininity works in the same way by erasing gender roles imposed on her. Her struggle to support Laura all throughout the text indicates an affirmative form of posthuman relationality in which solidarity among women can function in twisting boundaries of gender. The novel's enabling a space for eroding the borders is a posthuman feminist attempt which will give way to the erasure of dualism dominated ideologies such as nature/culture, human/non-human, matter/text.

Marian's position in relation to epistemic and material violence can be acknowledged as an alliance that negates discriminative aspects of Euro-centric humanism and offers a *zoe-centred justice* in Braidotti's sense of the term. This position signals a new cartography leading towards justice which is "backed by relational ethics ... [It is a form of justice that works through] social, trans-species and transnational" (2019, p. 9). Under the light of posthumanist horizons, texts will enable more narrative space for collaborative survival that will not accentuate the rights of a central figure, as texts will be guided by a horizontally aligned mindset, there will be no center to point out.

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