

**Reading Hyperreality in
Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* in the Light of Baudillard's
Simulacrum**

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Abstract:

The research is intended to investigate hyperreality in Ishiguro's novel, *Never Let Me Go* (2005), working on the intricate relationship held between the spatial setting, on one hand, and identity, reality, and social consciousness, on the other hand. The research works on exploring the bio-dystopian setting of Ishiguro's novel in such a way that sheds light on how the place is constructed to intentionally formulate people's destiny and self-image. Both setting and characters in the novel are fictitious, yet tightly held up to reflect bitter reality. Both are proven to be typical examples of Baudrillard's simulacra. Since *Never Let Me Go* focuses on the effect of biotechnology in shaping the future of humans, the representation here tends to be more of a bio-dystopian nature. The research tries to show how the theme of cloning in the novel succeeds in contextualizing hyperreality that proceeds to support reading of place and characters in the novel as bio-dystopian. The setting appears to present a chaos-free image of the world; such an image that proceeds within its hyperreal representation to introduce the readers to a worse and more depressing one. The setting and the characters supposedly stop to be mere reflection of how people actually exist. Instead, it moves toward constructing a more positive perception of what things should be, before everything is subverted towards a horrible reality. Alongside, the theme of resistance is deconstructively presented to imply compliance and conformism.

Keywords:

Never Let Me Go- Baudrillard- Hyperreality-Simulacra- Bio-dystopia- Foucault's biopolitics.

قراءة الواقعية المفرطة في رواية إيشيغورو "لا تدعني أرحل أبدا" في ضوء مفهوم المحاكاة

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المستخلص:

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة الواقعية المفرطة في رواية إيشيغورو "لا تدعني أرحل أبدا" (٢٠٠٥)، باحثاً في العلاقة المركبة بين البيئة المكانية من جهة، والهوية والواقع والوعي الاجتماعي من جهة أخرى. يستكشف البحث البيئة الديستوبية الحيوية في رواية إيشيغورو بطريقة تُلقي الضوء على كيفية تصميم المكان ووظيفته لصياغة مصير الناس وصورتهم الذاتية عمداً. كلٌّ من الأماكن والشخصيات في الرواية خيالية حيث تمثل نموذجاً للصورة الزائفة كما يُعرفها بودريار، ومع ذلك مُصاغة بدقة لتعكس الواقع المرير. وبما أن الرواية تُركز على تأثير التكنولوجيا الحيوية في تشكيل مستقبل البشر، فإن التمثيل هنا يميل إلى أن يتتبع الطابع الديستوبي الحيوي للرواية. يحاول البحث إظهار كيف نجحت فكرة الاستنساخ في الرواية في وضع الواقعية المفرطة في سياقها، مما يدعم قراءة المكان والشخصيات في الرواية في إطار ديستوبي حيوي. قد يبدو أن المكان يُقدم صورةً خاليةً من الفوضى للعالم؛ ولكنها صورةً تتقدم ضمن تمثيلها المفرط في الواقعية تُعرّف القراء على عالمٍ أسوأ وأكثر كآبةً. المكان والشخصيات لم يعودا مجرد انعكاسٍ لكيفية وجود الناس في الواقع، بل يتجهان نحو بناء تصورٍ أكثر إيجابيةً لما ينبغي أن تكون عليه الأمور قبل أن ينحرف كل شيء نحو واقعٍ مُريع، بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يتطرق البحث إلى تقديم قراءة تفكيكية لفكرة المقاومة لتضمن الامتثال والتوافق في سياق النص.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

لا تدعني أرحل أبداً - بودريار - واقعية مفرطة - المحاكاة عند بودريار (السيمولاكروم) - ديستوبيا حيوية - السياسة الحيوية عند فوكو

Reading Hyperreality in Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* in the Light of Baudillard's Simulacrum

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Never Let Me Go (NLMG) is the sixth novel written by the Japanese-American novelist Kazuo Ishiguro (1954-) in 2005 and was shortlisted for Man Booker Prize, Arthur C. Clarke and the National Book Critics Circle Award. It received an ALA Alex Award and was included by *Time* magazine in its list for the 100 Best English-Language novels published since 1923. The novel was adapted to a movie directed by Mark Romanek in 2010 and to a Japanese television drama in 2016. The novel belongs to speculative science fiction and it traces the memories of Kathy, a thirty-one-year-old cloned caregiver, who is responsible for a group of organ donors, recalling her memories concerning three important stages in her life: her childhood at a boarding school called Hailsham, her brief stay at the Cottages – a run-down building complex – and her first years taking care of organ donors. By the end of the novel, her two friends, who accompany her along the novel, are dead, and she is being moved to another place to face her destiny.

The novel attracted the critics' attention in many areas, the most significant of which are those of cloning and bio-ethics (Margaret Atwood (2005), Bruce Robbins (2007), Sarah Dillon (2011)); dystopian nature (Patricia Waugh (2006), Ursula Heise (2008)); memory and nostalgia related to the narrative voice (Barry Lewis (2007), Sebastian Groes (2011)); and posthumanism (Katherine Hayles (2006), Elaine Chambers (2013), Lisa Lowe (2015)). Nevertheless, the idea of the place as a simulacrum, that, in turn, lends the characters their true identities as other simulacra, has not been yet investigated. In addition, place has not been widely investigated as a tool of manipulation, changing the concept of resistance for the clones to imply in its core meaning the idea of compliance and conformism.

The two most influential theories of postmodernism, according to Selden, Widdowson and Brooker, are the dominance of the sign or image and consequent loss of the real, and a skepticism towards the "grand narratives" of human progress (200). To perform this reading of *Never Let Me Go*, it proves productively helpful to utilize Baudrillard concept of the 'simulacrum'. In the novel, the students and the school, which plays such a formative part in their upbringing i.e. Hailsham, can be understood in a reading informed by Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality. According to

Baudrillard, reality no longer appears as such, but rather becomes its appearances. The fact that the students in *NLMG* are clones provides us with a parallel to this proposition. The students are clones, i.e. models, or copies of their human counterparts. Early in the novel, Kathy describes the “normal” people as models: “Since each of us was copied at some point by a normal person, there must be, for each of us, somewhere out there, a model getting on with his or her life” (Ishiguro 137). The students refer to the humans as models but it is, in reality, the students who are the models. In Baudrillard’s terminology, these “models” are what he categorizes as signs, or simulations which rests on “the generation... of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal” (Baudrillard 1).

A simulacrum is an important term that has been introduced by Baudrillard within his theory of hyperreality. In its core, hyperreality aims mainly at challenging our understanding of reality and representation, since it refers to the inability of the consciousness to differentiate between what is real and what is not. It is considered a direct result of the postmodern interest in the negative impact of media technology and consumer culture, assuming that what they give is nothing but a network of images and signs. It further proposes that within the domain of their influence, representations of reality have become more important than reality itself. This goes with the main interest of postmodernism in changing the taken-for-granted perceptions and in promoting people to question the ways they were made used to in depicting the world. In his theory, Baudrillard puts into question all narrative discourses, involving in the process of questioning a pluralistic worldview of already existing entities, whether political, cultural, religious, or social. For him, hyper reality examines a state where the boundaries between the real and the simulated worlds are erased, making the distinction between them blurred.

Baudrillard states that there are four phases of hyperreality. In the first phase, the image reflects basic reality that already exists in the real world, so that readers identify it and feel familiar with it before it goes to the second phase that involves a process of masking or diverting this reality so that its main features are somehow altered. The image, then, moves to the third phase in which it seeks to mask the absence of the basic reality it mainly aimed at reflecting in such a way that compensates for the loss. This occurs to ensure that seemingly there is nothing missing. The last phase is related to the image being produced in a simulated condition that bears no relation to any reality i.e. now, it has no origin, and it exists on its own. Consequently, the result is unreal relations or representations that have no connections to the underlying reality.

Baudrillard clarifies this transformation from one phase to the other by using the map analogy. He points out that in a hyperreal context, the map always excels and erases the original territory. Explained further, one could go back to the original function of a map. The map has always been functioning as a simulation for a certain territory by determining its borders and geographical features. It has been a tool for setting the directions in order to reach that territory or investigating it. Therefore, within a traditionally real context, the map exists for the sake of the territory, which here represents the original point of departure for designing the map in the first place. From another scope, and within a hyperreal context, the map comes first and last since the original territory is completely erased; it vanishes, leaving the whole ground for the map to rule the scene. As a result, "The territory no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive it. It is nevertheless the map that precedes the territory" (Baudrillard 3), and puts the original territory into the danger of extinction. In that way, hyperreality typically works, and the map changes from just a tool to what Baudrillard calls 'simulacrum', which comes to denote the unreal image that replaces the original, constituting the fourth phase of a hyperreal representation. Here, it is worth noting that the use of the map analogy by Baudrillard is very indicative since not everything is shown on the map; what appears is only what the mapmaker chooses according to the purpose of the map. The same happens with hyperreality; not everything is exaggerated and fabricated, but only what the hyperrealist wants.

To explain what he means by simulacra, Baudrillard uses 'Disneyland' as an example. For him, Disneyland is a prototype that is established to perform a hyperreal function. It serves as "a space of the regeneration of the imaginary" (Baudrillard 11). Baudrillard proposes that in such a postmodern world, where everything is recycled, Disneyland comes as a place where dreams, phantoms, imaginary tales, children's fairylike thoughts are waste material that is to be recycled and re-produced. Disneyland, here, represents all what is realistically undone, but imaginarily performed. It is another image of the treadmill that one uses to walk for miles while remaining in the same place, or the 3D glasses that do not only take people to other places, but immerse them into different modes of existence that they never really experience. Moving from Baudrillard's Disneyland, which he calls a "play of illusions and phantasms" (10) to Ishiguro's 'Hailsham', the research tries to show how Baudrillard's hyperreality is enhanced by the bio-dystopian nature of the novel.

As a bio-dystopian literary work, *NLMG* represents a hyperreal narrative in a way that helps reshape the readers' perception and understanding of things in a world where simulations often eclipse reality, pushing the readers to navigate the hyperreal landscape with a discerning eye. Like Disney, the setting in the novel is not a copy of reality as much as it is a simulated state that works on formulating the readers' perceptions, getting them out of the automatized states of existence. It exposes the myth of 'utopia' by revealing the hidden crisis that sustains it. The novel is infused with the underlying fact that the happiness of one side in the proposed society is always haunted by the suffering of an 'Other' in another side; this does not only refer to the potential consequences of the hyperrealist illustration, but introduces a proposed panorama of what would happen if such tactics go on unchecked. Consequently, the novel paves the way for a kind of awakening that promotes the readers' critical thinking skills as they are permitted to see both sides of the illusionary world, facing, thus, the implied moral dilemma lying within. Here, the setting as well as the characters, held as simulacra, maintain in the minds of readers a proposed system of justice by posing the question: which is more necessary to go on living, selfishness or human solidarity?

Hyperreality, within a postmodern context, proposes that reality is manufactured by media such as advertisements and entertainment. It represents "a kind of genetic code that directs the mutation of the real into the hyperreal, just as the other micromolecular code controls the passage from a representative sphere of meaning to the genetic one of the programmed signals." (Baudrillard 22). Simply stated, framed within a hyperreal context, media works on formulating people's minds to accept an illusion as truth through employing its tools like advertisements and other means of entertainment as codes that are directed towards feigning truth. Here, fiction comes to awake the readers to the necessity of conscious and critical decoding. In some literary works in which hyperreality is employed, the writer does not reflect the opinions of the characters as much as he defines things in his own terms; something that sometimes present a deconstructing vision to an existing entity, bringing forth dystopian literature, including bio-dystopian, as a fertile field of investigating the hyperreal concept 'simulacra'.

By the late 1980s, many writers sought to face the "silencing and cooptation of Utopia by turning to dystopian strategies as a way to come to terms with the changing social reality. Works by Octavia E. Butler, Cadigan, Charnas, Robinson, Piercy, and Le Guin refunctioned dystopia as a critical narrative form that worked against the grain of the economic,

political, and cultural climate” (Baccolini, “Dystopia and Histories” 3). Utopian representation is, thus, turned to the extreme so that it transgresses the boundaries of the positive idealistic existence towards the threatening realistic portrayal of life in dystopian works, before it further extends to bio-dystopias that trace the catastrophic effects of genetics, cloning, bioengineering, and ecological damage on humanity in near future. In such bio-dystopias, the everlasting theme of identity formation is put into one context with the theme of the domineering power of science and biological control in which human bodies are usurped (organ farming, cloning, gene editing, etc.), raising the question of what is humanity and whether it is restricted to humans’ biological functions. Bio-dystopias include Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932), dealing with mass-engineered humans; Greg Bear’s *Blood Music* (1985), dealing with nanobiotechnology and how it may lead to post-human transformation; Octavia Butler’s *Dawn* (1987), dealing with how alien genetic manipulation reshape humanity; Margaret Atwood’s *Oryx and Crake* (2003), dealing with bio-engineering; Paolo Bacigalupi’s *The Windup Girl* (2009), dealing with bioterrorism and genetic manipulation of food; and Jeff VanderMeer’s *Borne* (2017), dealing with how biotechnology could blur the borderline between humans and creatures. Through all these works, the implied message is the fact that, “There’s too much at stake for the big biotechnology firms, and they can make life very uncomfortable for any government stupid enough to try” (D. Dickenson 7)

Bio-dystopian literature is directly concerned with criticizing the dehumanizing and oppressive societal norms and the consequences of bio-technological advancement and biological sciences linked to consumer culture and authoritarian control. Hence, it serves to be a typical context for investigating hyperreality since it is used to overexaggerate the status quo in order to criticise it. Mark Sagoff asserts this when he proposes that “the advance of biotechnology throws into confusion the settled distinction between nature and artifact” (69). In addition, hyperreality springs out from a society imbued with simulations, images, and signs that build up a kind of fake reality that only shadows authentic practices and experiences. In turn, it shadows what bio-dystopian literature, as an extension to dystopian literature, aims at reflecting. Since Baudrillard defines hyperreality as a state where “the real” is replaced by simulacra—copies or representations of things that no longer have an original (Baudrillard, 1994), it comes clear how relevant it is to read bio-dystopian literature within the framework of hyperreality and vice versa. In a hyperreal environment, individuals engage with these

fake representations rather than with authentic experiences, leading to a disconnection from reality and an altered perception of both the self and the society.

Furthermore, by introducing the readers to worlds in which reality is distorted through different tools like scientific advancements and societal structures, the authors push the readers to reflect on their own realities. The resulting sense of loss i.e. loss of identity, loss of the potential for critical thought, and loss of authenticity, serves as a warning hint employed to make the readers reconsider the status quo. As a result, investigating hyperreality in bio-dystopian works calls for critical conscious perception of reality, to the extent that hyperreality becomes itself a theme in bio-dystopian literary works. Here the writer experiences what Darko Suvin calls the "cognitive estrangement" (27), where science fiction, as a genre, is used to find an imaginary alternative to the world that s/he feels estranged in. In bio-dystopian fiction, life becomes a simulacrum through genetic mutation of the original human body that disappears leaving the stage for the unoriginal product e.g. clone to rule the scene. In such a way, bio-dystopias spots the misuse of bio-technology and investigate the catastrophic effect of dealing with human life as just a resource devoid of its true essence of humanity. Within this context, *NLMG* is an attempt at "breaking away from existing discourses of existential alarm" (Marks, 333), providing a story, plot, and characters that show how the hyperreal addresses the real in such a postmodern world where everything is blurred and scrutinized in a place that is likened to a 'hell' burdened with 'shame' epitomized in the name of the school, 'Hailsham'. This toponymic symbolism held in the name of the main setting of the novel foreshadows a lot about the bio-dystopian nature of the novel. Here, Ishiguro's repression of identity finds an outlet in making the familiar (real) unfamiliar (unreal), mixing them together to show the truth.

Against the scientific backdrop of the birth of "Dolly", the first sheep cloned at the University of Edinburgh, in 1996. Kazuo Ishiguro's *NLMG* presents a bio-dystopian narrative about a group of cloned individuals raised for organ donation. Within the framework of hyperreality, the novel works on challenging the readers' ability to confront the underlying meanings of reality, identity, and humanity in a world where the boundaries between the real and the artificial are blurred. The novel presents a kind of literary expression of the idea of the troubled outsider that Ishiguro himself symbolizes as a Japanese, born in Nagasaki in 1954 and moved to England in 1970, leaving his grandfather to die alone in Japan. His first two works: *A Pale View of Hills* (1982) and *An Artist of*

the Floating World (1986) take place in Japan resting on his own childhood memories. His third work, *The Remains of the Day* (1989) takes England as a setting, but portrays the sense of estrangement that makes one go back to his/her memories of a better past. In all his works, there remains that sense of melancholy that speaks for “the disenfranchised and the alienated” (Wong 5). Though Kathy and her fellows are not human, they are still speaking out for all the oppressed and the minority. In *NLMG*, Ishiguro has succeeded in creating out of nothing “a small community for minorities that transcend culture and ethnicity” (Z. Tao 3), trying to attract the World’s eyes to them approaching cosmopolitanism in literature. In this novel, he attempts at “transforming the unconscious into conscious “double” or “copy” to portray English life he knows.” (W. Guo 2) through the unreal setting and characters.

In the novel, Hailsham is the main, though not the only spatial setting acting as a backdrop for the actions; it is backed up by two other places that are presented alongside: the Cottages and the Clinic (Recovery/Donation centers). Hailsham, the boarding school where the main characters—Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth—grow up, is a typical biodystopian setting for investigating hyperreality. For example, the students are to be over protected under the façade of keeping them healthy for their own sake. Smoking is banned to the extent that, “There was even a rumour that some classic books—like the Sherlock Holmes ones—weren’t in ... library because the main characters smoked too much, and when you came across a page torn out of an illustrated book or magazine, this was because there’d been a picture on it of someone smoking” (Ishiguro 70). When Miss Lucy is asked whether she has ever smoked, she admitted it that she has smoked before but that they are different from her saying, “for you, all of you, it’s much, much worse to smoke than it ever was for me.... keeping yourselves very healthy inside, that’s much more important for each of you” (Ishiguro 71). The truth turns to be that they are to be kept safe for the sake of the humans whom they were created to save by giving them whatever body organs they may need to survive.

The school creates an illusion of normalcy as it portrays a perfect educational and nurturing environment for the students who are taught how to appreciate art, literature, and culture; something that provides them seemingly with a sense of identity and individuality. The teachers themselves are used as tools to enhance the hyperreal representation of the place. They are portrayed as always giving value to creativity and personal development, encouraging students to create art, which turns

later to be just a commodity. Seemingly, at the beginning, this is thought to be intended at generating a sense of self-worth, yet their art turns to be commodified and the line separating artistic authenticity from mere production becomes blurred. Here, the clones are reflected in their works of art. Like their works, they are made to be used and consumed by their originals. They do not have a value in their own as "[t]heir body is on sale along with their arts" (Sharma 53).

Though the place is designed to give the illusion of authenticity and utopian existence, it turns to be nothing but a fake construct. In a very shocking and epiphanic scene in the novel, Miss Lucy confronts the clones with their reality saying, "Your lives are set out for you. You'll become adults, then before you're old... you'll start to donate your vital organs. That's what each of you was created to do.... You were brought into this world for a purpose, and your futures, all of them, have been decided.... If you're to have decent lives, you have to know who you are and what lies ahead of you". (Ishiguro 82-83). Discussing normalcy in Hailsham, it is important to note that in *NLMG*, naming is presented intentionally as a tool of normalizing the readers into the scene. Again, it shows to be a part of the plan of deception the clones are subjected to since names anchor identity as it gives the person a tool to master, relate to, and make sense of the outside world. In this regard, Gottlob Frege says that a name is a sign and that "naming is not just attaching a label, but involves how that label invites understanding or perspective about the thing" (60). The clones are given names as if given true personalities and identities the same as the humans they are created to serve and secure.

This brings to discussion the idea of the artwork as a complementing project in Hailsham. This project is intended to be a marketing tool that would promote the establishment of more schools like that in Hailsham. When Kathy asks, "Why did we do all of that work in the first place? Why train us, encourage us, make us produce all of that? If we're just going to give donations anyway, then die, why all those lessons? Why all those books and discussions?" (Ishiguro 225). Here, the answer of Miss Emily elaborates on their true intention in Hailsham. She tells Kathy that they, at Hailsham, were trying to prove the worth of their students, not only as a store for human body organs, but as creatures having souls and sensation. They were making such exhibitions so that "'There, look!' we could say. 'Look at this art! How dare you claim these children are anything less than fully human?' Oh yes, there was a lot of support for our movement back then, the tide was with us." (Ishiguro 254). However, they failed, as the normal people began to feel threatened by such creatures who had such creative and superior abilities.

The artworks are employed to be a method of convincing the outside world that Hailsham is just a boarding school. From here springs the sense of hyperreality in Hailsham being based on the discrepancy between the creative practices of the clones in Hailsham, and the dark future they are destined to have as organs donors. The discrepancy between the description of the place and the fact of its non-existence moves to the characters whose purpose of living is merely to die. Death is always present in Hailsham: in one of their poetry lessons, the students are engaged to talk about soldiers in the second World War when one of them asks whether the fences around the camps then were electrified. The students then ironically laugh on the idea of another student who notes who strange it is to live in a place where one could easily commit suicide by touching a fence. Though the fences in Hailsham is not electrified, they still symbolize the psychological confinement that the students there are subjected to before they go to meet their predestined end i.e. death. This is implicitly referred to through the “ghostly expression come over [Miss Lucy’s] face as she watched the class in front of her.” (Ishiguro 80). The fences metaphorically reflect how those students are trapped by invisible systems whether social, ethical, or biological; the fences persist on influencing the students even after being moved to the “cottages”, another place for the clones.

The woods, surrounding Hailsham, is a very indicative spatial feature in the novel ruling supreme at foreshadowing the dark aspect beyond the seemingly dystopian representation of Hailsham as “there were all kinds of horrible stories about the woods” (Ishiguro 54). It metaphorically stands for the real world lying outside. On another hand, it serves as a warning for the students who may think of transgressing the boundaries of Hailsham, like the boy who was found tied to a tree hands and legs chopped off, and the girl who had “gone off somewhere out there, something had happened and she’d died. But her ghost was always wandering about the woods, gazing over Hailsham, pining to be let back in” ((Ishiguro 54). The guardians denied these stories as nonsense, but the older students tell the younger ones that they would be told “the ghastly truth soon enough” (Ishiguro 54) when they grow up. Such a truth is set on equal grounds with the stories told about Hailsham. The woods is an objective correlative for the horror that lies outside the fake safety of Hailsham. It is also a means of punishment among the students themselves. When they were angry with Marge K., they punished her by forcing her to look at the woods from the window pane, “and that was enough to ensure for her a sobbing night of terror” (Ishiguro 54).

The woods were at the top of the hill that rose behind Hailsham House. All we could see really was a dark fringe of trees, but I certainly wasn't the only one of my age to feel their presence day and night. When it got bad, it was like they cast a shadow over the whole of Hailsham; all you had to do was turn your head or move towards a window and there they'd be, looming in the distance. Safest was the front of the main house, because you couldn't see them from any of the windows. Even so, you never really got away from them. (Ishiguro 53-54)

The Woods represent both the physical and psychological boundaries the students are subjected to because even when they are allowed to roam, they remain emotionally and socially confined in order not to transgress the boundaries. They are located at the top to be seen by all students at any place in Hailsham and tightly surrounded with trees to echo the unknown ambiguous nature of Hailsham itself casting their shadows to hide the dark truth beyond the school. Even if one is standing in front of the only safest spot that does not see the woods, s/he never escapes them because they are implanted into their psyche. Metaphorically, Hailsham and the Woods represent William Blake's two worlds: the world of Innocence and the World of Experience. In this regard, and as proposed by Chatterjee, the woods symbolizes the world of experience the clones are banned to examine. It stands to protect the world of innocence they are brought into in Hailsham. "The image of the woods beyond the confines of Hailsham indicates the world of experience, to take it in Blakean terms" (117). Consequently, it stands for the idea of institutional control by which a society shapes and limits individuals without physical force. Here, the horrified nature of the woods foretells a bit about the destiny awaiting the clones outside it after they are taken to the clinic for organ transplantation.

The geographical isolation of Hailsham helped a lot in the process of strategic normalcy that is intended by the school. The clones are kept apart from the "normal" people and away from any attempt to be acquainted with the grim reality all at once. In other words, Hailsham, and as Sebastian Groes calls it, becomes a "closed circuit" (212), where the students are banned from seeing the 'real' as it is. Instead, the school is keen on giving them the truth step by step:

the guardians had [...] timed very carefully and deliberately everything they told us, so that we were always just too young to understand properly the latest piece of information. But of course we'd take it in at some level, so that before long all this stuff was there in our heads without us ever having examined it properly [...]

Certainly, it feels like I always knew about donations in some vague way, even as early as six or seven. And it's curious, when we were older and the guardians were giving us those talks, nothing came as a complete surprise. (Ishiguro 84)

This helps in sustaining the state of conformity by keeping them constantly into the illusion of a normal life and by guarantying the students' passivity. Hailsham is definitely set in an alternative England- a bio-dystopian world that does not actually exist on the map. Teaching her students about the different counties of England, Miss Emily is unable to locate the place of Hailsham on the map as it simply does not exist. Here, Kathy notes: "Anyway, the point is, there was a gap in Miss Emily's calendar collection: none of them had a single picture of Norfolk" (Ishiguro 68). Hailsham is created so that "any place beyond [it] was like a fantasy land; [the clones] had only the haziest notions of the world outside and about what was and wasn't possible there." (Ishiguro 69). It is very significant here to note that the readers themselves are never permitted to go out of the limited spatial boundries of the novel, or even to know if there is a real world outside and they are kept in the same status of ignorance as the trio in the novel: Kathy, Tommy and Ruth.

The clones are prepared by getting to know the truth partially till step by step they know the full reality. This truth comes to be similar to a snow ball in a terrible storm; it destroys a lot though it was originally composed of little small flakes of ice that seemed undangerous at its early stages of composition. Expressing this fact, Kathy says, speaking about Madame, "The first time you glimpse yourself through the eyes of a person like that.... It's like walking past a mirror you've walked past every day of your life, and suddenly it shows you something else, something troubling and strange." (Ishiguro 41). Here, Kathy says that looking at Madam is like looking at a mirror that gives you a glimpse of yourself each time one bypasses it till suddenly s/he confronts the epiphanic moment of who s/he really is. Each and every piece of information being given to the clones about their reality is like a shot one takes and shouts, just once, out of pain, but is eventually back again to his normal sense. Miss Lucy puts it clear as she says, "The problem, as I see it, is that you've been told and not told. You've been told, but none of you really understand, and I dare say, some people are quite happy to leave it that way" (Ishiguro 82). In such a way, the students are always kept ignorant and, consequently, under control. The students do not rebel but conform in a clear reference to the theme of resignation and the human tendency to find meaning even in suffering. Since people tend to escape what they are not able to face or solve, denial, here, is presented as a necessity. The comfort of illusion is

preferred to the uncomfortable feeling of instability. Again, the plain and calm narrative style and writing techniques used by Ishiguro in the novel asserts how the clones were made used to conform so that they do not revolt.

Here, the discussion is held further to tackle the unconscious act of forgetfulness, on the part of the students, to cope with their reality. Rodney, one of the clones, tries to sooth Ruth when she gets into a revolutionary speech about their origins, telling her, "let's forget about it" (Ishiguro 163). They are driven to conform by internalizing the feeling that it is safer to forget and go on. They must forget because remembering and facing could get them "into territory [they] weren't ready for yet" (Ishiguro 42). This asserts the fact that 'Hailsham' itself is designed to create a certain reality for the clones, shaping how they see themselves and perceiving the purpose they are made for. Forgetfulness is here a defense mechanism that keeps them going on living; it aims to "inhibit awareness of unacceptable ideas, feelings, and actions, bypassing them to protect oneself from feeling threatened." (Di Giuseppe 2). What is surprising is that even after leaving Hailsham, Kathy still holds it in her mind as a site of sweet memories. The memories she has before moving to the cottages become a safe spot for her to the extent that she calls, Norfolk, the place where Hailsham is located, the "'lost corner' where all the lost property found in the country ended up" (Ishiguro 68). Hailsham becomes a metaphor for memory itself where all forgotten things might still be found. This shows how she clings to memories in an attempt to construct a meaning for her life that is created and ruled by others.

Another strategy used to sustain the clones, in Hailsham, is developing a herd mentality inside them. The herd mentality they are grown into keeps them under control; they are always kept in groups; something that works on strengthening their sense of conformity. In Hailsham, there are many practices that are intended to cultivate submission in the students. For example, when they listen to music, the students in each ward pass around the headphones so that each one listens to just a part of the song. This would solidify the social bond among them and keeps them all under control. Again, this foreshadows the fact that they are never allowed to have a complete thing, including their lives. Another good example on this is the horror stories about the woods surrounding Hailsham. Every time the senior students affirm such stories, the school administration denies it. As if denying gives the stories more emphasis, the students fully believe them. Consequently, in case one ever thinks of rebelling, his/her colleagues get him/her back on track. As a result, any rebellious comments should be kept inside and never expressed openly, and this

helps in maintaining social control inside Hailsham. As a result, Hailsham becomes a sign where protection becomes a signifier and harm is the truly intended signified.

Another example on the success of the school in establishing such a state of normalcy is what happens in the Cottages, the second phase of the clones' development. When they turn sixteen, the clones are moved to another place which, in Kathy's case, was called the Cottages. As Chatterjee puts it, "The first part of the narrative shows the predominantly pastoral setting of Hailsham, only to deflate it with the description of the Cottages that carry with them the dark purpose of the growing up of these clones and coming to maturity and the ultimate knowledge, something that they come to know as the narrative progresses" (112). The Cottages is a place that includes a group of farm houses where the clones are given a greater degree of freedom; they do not share rooms together, there are no more guardians, they are permitted to have their own money, and they are allowed to make short excursions across the country without fear of the monsters in the woods. However, they never show any desire to run away or to escape their destiny. Kathy says, "We certainly didn't think much about our lives beyond the Cottages, or about who ran them, or how they fitted into the larger world" (Ishiguro 54). The system has completely driven them away from "their ability to imagine themselves outside the system that governs their collective lives" (Black 795). They go on as if they would get lost if ever trying to escape from their predestined roles in the matrix. This stage in their lives asserts how successful the system in Hailsham was. Since they used to be "dependent on their community for a robust sense of selfhood" (Black 795), the transition from Hailsham to the cottages leaves them rather disoriented. Hence, the Cottages, as a place, represents a transitional place of illusion where the clones seem to be freed, but are found to be haunted by the manipulation they were subjected to in Hailsham. They are here passing through a journey towards their adulthood. The clones are themselves an example of the 'simulacra', an existence without origin to go back to; they have no parents and no biological families. However, they go on throughout the process of knowing, like all humans; they watch TV, copy gestures, and mimic societal behaviors, showing their struggle to construct identities. Again, it is in the Cottages that the unity among Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy is broken down. This shows the limitedness of the Cottages and symbolizes the fragmentation of the society itself.

Here springs the idea of place as a spatial paradigm that complements the message presented. In the novel, the setting is not a place as much as it is a paradigm of three places that complement each other in function and

existence. The clones, after completing their education in Hailsham, are moved to the cottages to start spending their lives as adults, some of whom are chosen to be carers themselves to younger ones. From time to time, the readers get along with the clones as they move to the recovery or donation centers (hospitals), representing the third place along the spatial paradigm in the novel. Together, these three places complement each another, constituting a step-by-step shift from illusion to disillusionment; a journey from hope to resignation. Hailsham represents two thematic threads that are presented inseparably: childhood innocence and institutional control. It is an artistically constructed simulacrum of a normal boarding school meant to humanize clones and guarantee their conformity and controlled ignorance. It is intentionally constructed to formulate their world view in such a way that couples hope with suppression. In this regard, Sebastian Groes in his article "Something of a 'Lost Corner'" argues that Hailsham is a disciplinary institution that "produces docile subjects through a veneer of privilege and care." (211). It represents the soft power wherein control and benevolence are overlapping. The idea of the complementary nature of the relationship among the three places is clear in the persistence existence of Hailsham in the minds of the clones even after leaving it through their memories. Hailsham never dies or disappears.

The spatial paradigm in *NLMG*, acting in itself as a series of simulacra, echoes Michael Foucault's theory of biopolitics which refers to ways modern systems exert powerful acts on their people through managing life and existence more than through laws and punishment. In *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–1978*, he states: "By 'biopolitics' I mean the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power." (*Security* 317). Foucault, in earlier lectures collected in his *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976*, he marks biopolitics by the shift from sovereignty (the old power) to the modern power (new power). The old power was mainly related to the right of the king to kill through execution, war, punishment while new power becomes more interested in "the right to make live and let die" (*Society* 241) i.e. health, reproductivity, population, longevity, etc. Politics becomes concerned with how to manage life itself. In other words, the old power was after to kill or to let live while the new power is after to make live or to let die. Put more clearly, the new power helps some people live by optimizing life through public health campaigns for vaccination, hygiene, anti-smoking laws, family planning, immigration laws, etc. while it lets some

other people die through neglecting them, pushing them to wars, and exposing them to risk and racism. This implies controlling the population and their bodies through an overall process of normalization, in which people internalize what the system imposes on them without any resistance, and that of expendability which implies the notion that the lives of some people are less important than the great aim intended to be achieved by the system.

Applying this theory to the novel, Hailsham, for example, is the biopolitical institution that represents the soft power manipulating the clones through art, education and rules. The Cottages represents the stage where the controlling rules start to loosen, but the internalized state of conformity is the true ruler here. The third place i.e. the donation and recovery centers, shows how the clones are treated as just biological resources for spare biological body parts for the normal humans. They survive as long as they still have something to give to the humans. This shows Foucault's proposition that power does not prevail only through violence as much as through education and care as he writes that "subjection is not only obtained by the instruments of violence or ideology; it can also be direct, physical, pitting force against force, bearing on material elements, and yet without involving violence; it may be calculated, organized, technically thought out; it may be subtle, make use neither of weapons nor of terror and yet remain of a physical order" (*Discipline* 26). This applies perfectly to what happens to the clones at Hailsham proving it to be typical for Foucault's 'panopticon' which is "a privileged place for experiments on men, and for practice with complete certainty the transformations that may be obtained from them. The Panopticon may even provide an apparatus for supervising its own mechanisms" (*Discipline* 204). From any place and at any time, the clones are being watched thoroughly by the guardians who have an access to them "because there was always someone likely to be passing within earshot" (Ishiguro 27). This is preplanned intricately in the very structure of the school itself which "stood in a smooth hollow with fields rising on all sides. That meant that from almost any of the classroom windows in the main house—and even from the pavilion—you had a good view of the long narrow road that came down across the fields and arrived at the main gate. The gate itself was still a fair distance off" (Ishiguro 39). In spite of the fact that Hailsham has many hiding places e.g. cupboards, nooks, bushes, hedges, yet, the students were all the time under the sense of being watched either by the teachers or the guardians. They know that if it happens that they have some secrets, "the whole place seemed to sense it within minutes, and you'd have no chance" (Ishiguro 27). This

sense develops into an act of surveillance that implies observing another in order to gather evidence; something that goes with the experimenting atmosphere of the place as a panopticon. Kathy recalls how “You could go into a cupboard, close the door tight and not move a muscle, you just knew Miss Emily’s footsteps would stop outside and her voice would say: ‘All right. Out you come.’” (Ishiguro 48). Because of watching and monitoring them all the time, Miss Emily comes to know all about the students so that they can never hide from her, even if they try.

In the novel, the clones are captured within a special semiotic coding system that is developed within the matrix of the system to make sure they are kept under control. A clear example is the constant use of euphemisms that are used to present a fake reality, escaping from a blunt statement of truth. The words "normal", "donation" and "completion", “student”, “Exchanges” excessively used in the novel, show how illusionary is Hailsham functioning as a typical simulacrum. Using “such ordinary words has demonstrated in an obscurely devious way the dichotomy between ‘normal people’ and their artificial counterparts, which is a bio-power relationship between the ruler and the ruled, the consumer and the consumed” (Yan 595). The students at Hailsham are used to call the humans "normals" in a direct reference to the fact that they are themselves abnormal. Second, the process of organ transplantation from the clones to the humans is called ‘donation’ as if it is done willingly and that the clones are not forced to undergo it in the first place. The term itself is given to the process of organ harvesting, which the clones undergo until death. It serves as a metaphor for the dehumanization and exploitation that the students are subjected to. It is a milder word for death, reflecting how normalized are the students to their fate; something which stresses the theme of mortality not in relation to death as much as hinting at the fact of living a whole life knowing that death is inevitable.

Third, the word completion, that refers to the death of the clone after going through a maximum of four transplantations, implies the bitter destiny waiting for each and every student in Hailsham. This proves that all the care they are privileged with is nothing more than an illusion, as they are being set and prepared to be "complete", which is far away from perfection and mainly equivalent to death. The clones themselves are called “students” to complete the fake façade of the “school” at Hailsham. Again, there are the "Exchanges" that aim at customizing the students to giving up parts of them. The parts here are just artworks that will turn latter to be replaced by the students' real body organs. Here lies the secret idea beyond the art exhibitions i.e 'exchanges' that are made four times a

year to display the artworks of the clones. In Hailsham, most of the time, the clones are kept busy doing artworks that would enhance their creative abilities. However, they are to give away their best production, getting prepared to give away their body organs as well. This is done perfectly that the students themselves hope that their work will be chosen getting the honor “to produce the stuff that might become [...] private treasures” (Ishiguro 21), without knowing that this is a part of their orientation. Consequently, the illusion of safety and creativity promotion is, step by step, held at stake with the harsh reality of the clones getting unveiled. The use of such a language masks the horror of the fate waiting for the students at Hailsham and it denotes what Kamal Sharma calls “a tactful strategy of the dominant humans, the creators, to put the clones in the position of painful servitude” (47).

The title of the novel comes to denote a lot about the hyperreal atmosphere into which the novel typically fits. The title is taken from a song by Judy Bridgewater in her album *Songs After Dark* Kathy, in a very indicative scene in the novel, tells of this album tape as a treasure she used to keep and even after moving to the Cottages, she admits how she “appreciated having the tape—and that song—back again. Even then, it was mainly a nostalgia thing” (Ishiguro 170). Back in Hailsham and at the age of eleven, she came to know that clones are not permitted to have children. At this point, Kathy gets the song “NLMG” and starts to listen to a certain track of the song over and over again pretending that she is rocking a baby. The track goes “Oh baby, baby, NLMG...” (Ishiguro 73). When she takes the song to be about a mother and child, Kathy reveals her deep yearning for a connection she will never truly have. Because they are not original, without any point of reference, the clones cannot be an original point for any other creature, even if it is a clone too. Kathy is, then, seen by Madam while holding an imaginary baby in her arms, and Madam unconsciously weeps for her. Near the end of the novel, Kathy tells Madam that at this time back in Hailsham, “I imagined it was about this woman who’d been told she couldn’t have babies. But then she’d had one, and she was so pleased, and she was holding it ever so tightly to her breast, really afraid something might separate them, and she’s going baby, baby, NLMG. That’s not what the song’s about at all, but that’s what I had in my head that time”. (Ishiguro 263). Again, the title can be seen as a message each clone wants to direct at the world before s\he ‘completes’; a message that could be encapsulated in the novel being told in the first person by one of them. It is a message of hope in spite of all challenges and impossibilities. In the quotation, Kathy expresses her acceptance of her status and hopes that one day she might be like the woman who gets

what she aspires for in spite of the seeming impossibility at the very beginning.

The title itself becomes a metaphor for all the characters' desire to hold on to impossibly attained moments and relationships. Kathy expresses this earlier in the novel when she starts acquainting the readers with Hailsham, and how it is very important for the clones. After leaving Hailsham to the Cottages, Kathy keeps on searching for Hailsham, but she never finds it:

Driving around the country now, I still see things that will remind me of Hailsham. I might pass the corner of a misty field, or see part of a large house in the distance as I come down the side of a valley, even a particular arrangement of poplar trees up on a hillside, and I'll think: "Maybe that's it! I've found it! This actually is Hailsham!" Then I see it's impossible and I go on driving. (Ishiguro 12)

Resonating the title and on behalf of all clones, she recalls Hailsham and asks to never let her go. Hailsham, here, stands for the origins all people need to hold on in order to be able to go for a future. Without a point of origin, there can never be a future identity. Being unable to find Hailsham, Kathy's hope for a continuation vanishes and is destroyed like Hailsham itself. The melancholic tone in the title reflects clearly the nostalgia Kathy, and all the clones, feel for Hailsham.

The spatial paradigm in the novel is inseparably related to cloning as the main reason for its existence in the first space. The theme of cloning in *NLMG* is investigated as itself a tool to criticize the totalitarian society that holds its practices on justifying sacrificing some lives for the sake of others, reflecting the moral bankruptcy implied and raising the philosophical question concerning what it means to be human. Miss Emily crystalizes this fact stating that,

for a long time, people preferred to believe these organs appeared from nowhere, or at most that they grew in a kind of vacuum... But by the time people became concerned... about students, by the time they came to consider just how you were reared, whether you should have been brought into existence at all, well by then it was too late....How can you ask a world that has come to regard cancer as curable, how can you ask such a world to put away that cure, to go back to the dark days? There was no going back. However uncomfortable people were about your existence, their

overwhelming concern was that their own children, their spouses, their parents, their friends, did not die from cancer, motor neurone disease, heart disease. (Ishiguro 255).

Questioning the ethical concern beyond the Humans' usurping the clones clashes with their quest for survival. Even if the humans sympathize with their clones, the clones remain the only way out to survive in a world full of dangers and threats. Here, Ivan Lacko states that it is "questionable whether the societal benefit of prolonging the lives of non-clones by means of organ donation justifies the suffering, sacrifice, and predetermined fates of the clone donors." (22)

Here, it is worth noting that the novel does not involve a presentation of the actual scientific or medical procedures of cloning. The reference is rare as when the clones are referred to as "shadowy objects in test tubes" (Ishiguro 254). This implies the connotation of a "a dark, mysterious, almost Gothic species" (Yacko 25). The clones are, thus, considered 'Others' i.e. strange creatures with fully human physical and mental features, but are feared the "way as people are afraid of spiders and things" (Ishiguro 260). Instead, "what really concerns Ishiguro is not so much the bright prospect of medical application for biological sciences as the 'dim view' for human beings in a 'posthuman' age, which is fabricated ahead of time by the author's artistic imagination" (Yan 596). Hailsham, as a setting, is introduced as a site for an experiment that aims at proving that clones have souls, without any reference to scientific labs. The education provided in such a place aims at desensitizing them to primary human feelings of fearing from death and suffering. Within a hyperreal context, Ishiguro succeeds in blurring the line between humans and clones proposing that modern technological advancements do not ultimately lead to progress, but to the suffering of some people who are systematically denied their rights and individualized identities. They are not even allowed to show their human need to express their feelings. In this regard, Elias Schwieler states that "a major theme in Ishiguro's novel is the inability of the clones to express grief and engage in the work of mourning" (1). This theme supports their difference and otherness. For example, Kathy's emotional restraint is clear in many parts of the novel, as she rarely expresses anger or despair, even when facing loss. Here, cloning is not concerned with science as much as it is concerned with humanity. On another hand, posthumanism is dragged into the novel to address the readers, highlighting the necessity to perceive the true concept of humanity through the contrast drawn between the clones and the humans, and to promote their ability to sustain it.

Discussing the theme of cloning is inseparably related to investigating the spatial setting and the characters as simulacra in the novel. In *NLMG*, Ishiguro uses “a metaphor of cloning to create a bio-narrative that not only reflects universal human conditions but also reveals the posthuman bio-predicament.” (K. Yan 595); something that contextualizes Baudrillard's hyperreality in a significant way. In Norfolk, where Hailsham is located, rests the clones' true identity. Even after the clones leave Hailsham to the cottages, it remains a point of retrieval for them. Ruth affirms the significance of Hailsham saying, “when we lost something precious, and we'd looked and looked and still couldn't find it, then we didn't have to be completely heartbroken. We still had that last bit of comfort, thinking one day, when we were grown up, and we were free to travel around the country, we could always go and find it again in Norfolk” (69). After Tommy's death or “completion”, Kathy drives to Norfolk, trying to grasp there what she has lost. Consequently, Norfolk then as “an absent place, a lost place, but still a place where lost things can be found again” (Schwieler 6), applies strongly to Baudrillard's ‘simulacrum’.

The last paragraph of the novel asserts this relationship between the theme of cloning and the setting which, like the clones themselves has no origin and is predestined to die and disappear. The school which becomes now “empty fields” filled with rubbish of every kind remains for Kathy a memorial of each and every significant bit of her life. She goes there to re-live even in fantasy some of her true moments of existence before leaving Hailsham. She says, “if I waited long enough, a tiny figure would appear on the horizon across the field, and gradually get larger until I'd see it was Tommy, and he'd wave, maybe even call. The fantasy never got beyond that – I didn't let it – and though the tears rolled down my face, I wasn't sobbing or out of control. I... turned back to the car, to drive off to wherever it was I was supposed to be.” (Ishiguro 279-280). Ending the novel with such a feeling of acceptance and surrender proves Kathy a perfect figure of the clone who “being a mere copy of the original has to live in the shadow of its creator and often has to adapt to fit in to the normality of social living conditions” (A. Ramesh 11).

Another aspect of hyperreality in the novel, than the setting, is tightly related to the characters who turn themselves to be a group of simulacra. They have no connection, knowledge, or any sort of bond with their genetic origins in everyday life. They have no parents and are cared for primarily by the Hailsham crew, otherwise known as the guardians and teachers. Ruth, in a moment of anger says, “We all know it. We're modelled from trash, Junkies, prostitutes, winos, tramps. Convicts,

maybe, just so long as they aren't psychos. That's what we come from. We all know it." (Ishiguro 163). The students have no biological families or homes to go to. Their understanding of their reality develops to be an additional hyperreal aspect in the novel. Accepting fate without rebellion emphasizes the hyperreal atmosphere. Normalcy is an illusionary state of existence that people are to be kept in. Normalcy here is both a reason and a consequence of a sort of denial that people use to defend their unconscious desire to enjoy the collective happiness or utopian stability at the expense of others' suffering. This collective denial is emblematic of Baudrillard's idea that hyperreality allows people to engage with simulacra—representations of reality that distort moral considerations as "So we live, sheltered by signs, in the denial of the real" (34). (*The Ecstasy* 34). In *NLMG*, the clones are kept under the illusion that their creativity and emotionality grant them inherent value regardless of the fact that they are deceived in order to conform to the truth of being just spare parts integrated into human shape. Kathy reflects on their experiences, stating, "we were all very special, being Hailsham students, and so it was all the more disappointing when we behaved badly" (Ishiguro 47). Bringing up the notion of authenticity versus artistic creation, Madame, who collects the clones' artworks, raises this contradiction when she praises their creative efforts, and, thus, confusing art with authenticity and purpose. Here, Kathy observes that it is art that gives them the sense of satisfaction; they are not different from the others as they can create such artworks that all people like, "So you're waiting, even if you don't quite know it, waiting for the moment when you realise that you really are different to them; (Ishiguro 41). Here, the illusion is deepened, since the clones now are ready to accept that, sometimes, artistic works may transcend their original sources; the same as the clones themselves may transcend their human 'possibles'. Nevertheless, this does not alter the fact that the humans, on the other hand, perceive clones as inferior, and consequently, they feel a disturbing indifference towards their suffering itself.

Hyperreality is again manifested within the context of the romantic relationship hinted at in the novel. In *NLMG*, there is a more defined tragic resolution of a romantic love story whose two sides i.e. Kathy and Tommy, are denied the right to determine their predestined future in a society that gives itself the right to commodify them. However, they decide to find meaning in their life despite their predestined death through attaining their right to love. They go to Madam to take permission for a deferral (to postpone their donation operations), but they are turned down because this deferral happens to be just a rumor made to give them a sort

of hope. Here, the concept of destiny is controlled by the manipulating environment of Hailsham making it hard to tell whether their connection to each other is authentic or it is a product of their upbringing in such a hyperreal environment they are trapped in. This romantic relationship makes the novel one about clinging to humanity and love even if it is predestined to die, holding on the illusion of the ability to love. The ending of the novel, with the death of Tommy and the surrender of Kathy to her predestined fate, is open and it ultimately highlights the tragic absurdity of the characters' situation in a society that commodifies life.

Within the context of hyperreality, conformism in the novel is deconstructed to denote a form of resistance around which the main themes of control, societal structure and sacrifice revolve. In *NLMG*, accepting one's destiny is twined up with the theme of the inevitability of fate. The resonance of the phrase "NLMG" indicates the hard and persistence effort to survive and normalize in spite of the determined fate and predestined future. The clones know that they are predestined to die, but they carry on and enjoy what they have. They internalize Foucault's condition that, "the body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body" (*Discipline* 26) to the extent that they are used to congratulating each other after the fourth donation since not many are able to reach it. Actually, they resist, but in their own way. Their creativity in the produced artworks is a form of resistance; the rumors they spread and believe are another form; their forgetfulness of some facts concerning their inevitable death and sacrifice is a method of coping with the truth beyond their existence. For example, there is the rumor about deferrals i.e. if two clones are in love, they may be allowed to defer their donation for some time. However, when Kathy and Tommy try to take the permission for their deferral, they discover that it is nothing but an illusion and that they have to go with their life that "must now run the course that's been set for it" (Ishiguro 258). The idea that love could buy them extra years is a fragile form of resistance; deferrals become a myth born from hope.

In *NLMG*, as the clones are portrayed throughout their attempts to survive and keep their identities, the readers are held along the narrative to reflect on what it means to be human in such a world that subordinates empathy and compassion to pragmatic utility. When Kathy reminds Madame of the night she saw her holding her imaginary baby and listening to her song "NLMG", Madame tells her that she wept not for her but because she,

saw a new world coming rapidly. More scientific, efficient, yes. More cures for the old sicknesses. Very good. But a harsh, cruel world. And I saw a little girl, her eyes tightly closed, holding to her

breast the old kind world, one that she knew in her heart could not remain, and she was holding it and pleading, never to let her go. That is what I saw. It wasn't really you, what you were doing, I know that. But I saw you and it broke my heart. And I've never forgotten. (Ishiguro 264)

NLMG challenges the readers to reconsider the value of life and human existence proposing that humanity can turn to be just a state of stagnant living, a simulation of existence. As the clones fight for an identity, it is important to note that their attempt is inseparable from the inevitability of their fates. They were only allowed a fake identity that keeps them into the hyperreal illusion of being. Actually, the novel presents a haunting vision of a bio-dystopian society in which a group of clones are raised for the sake of organ donation putting into question the ethics of scientific advancements and the value of life.

Characters are themselves hyperreal symbols that best fit to the concept of "simulacrum" that "is never what hides the truth-it is truth that hides the fact that there is none" (Baudrillard 1). They appear to be humans, but they are individual clone characters that raise the question of the reality of their very existence. Yet, as they are raised only for organ donation, the clones' understanding of identity is imperfect and incomplete. Though fakely individualized, they symbolize the moral cost of utopia. The novel stimulates the readers to ask a critical question: what is it to be human? The clones are intended to be humans, but actually, they are not. The way the clones are brought up creates a dissonance between their perceived humanity and the societal view of them as mere commodities; something that builds up the essence of hyperreality in the novel since the characters inhabit a world that though acknowledges their personhood simultaneously deny their rights and dignity. There are two parties of characters that constitute the two sides of a binary opposition paradigm inhabiting the spatial setting of Hailsham: the ordinary humans who know well about the suffering of the clones, and the clones themselves. In *NLMG*, only one side, i.e. the clones, is considerably introduced, but the originals are not tackled in details. They are just mentioned for the sake of explaining the idea; they are not simulacra. The two sides are like two circles that have no points of intersection; nevertheless, their fates are inextricably related. The clones die for the sake of the humans whose "disintegration... proclaims that mankind has entered the posthuman identity construction" (Y. Zhang 33) because they are no longer purely human after receiving organs from the clones.

The main core of hyperreality, here, is a situational trade-off decision that implies an eventual loss experience by one side i.e. the clones, for the

sake of a desired gain by the other side i.e. the humans. Normalizing the existence of the clones and the societal acceptance of the clones within the human society are typical themes for applying Baudrillard's hyperreal condition. The clones' suffering and their fake humanity are interrelated. Their existence is bound by the benefits they provide to the "real" humans. Here, the moral complexities concerning cloning, organ donation, and humanity become obscured, resulting in producing a hyperreal state where ethical considerations are ignored and subverted subsiding with the phases Baudrillard proposed for creating a simulacrum. In this regard, Madam, seeking to defend herself and the others at Hailsham, states, "we were able to give you something ... which even now no one will ever take from you.... Hailsham would not have been Hailsham if we hadn't.... that meant we kept things from you, lied to you... we fooled you. I suppose you could even call it that. But we sheltered you during those years, and we gave you your childhoods" (Ishiguro 260). Here, she admits that they were aiming at usurping the clones, but in return, they gave them shelter and the enjoyment of childhood through the games, the artworks and galleries they held for them. They fooled them, but they gave them the chance to know how it feels to be human. Consequently, it is their turn to take the decision to accept and go on without rebellion or disapproval.

Awareness as a prerequisite for hyperreality is clearly worked on here, as happiness is constructed on the expense of a deliberate denial of a painful feeling. The individual loss is not intended to be highlighted as much as it is the moral cost of Utopia that is emphasized. In *NLMG*, for the sake of a long healthy life for the humans, the clones are created to be sacrificed. They are aware of this hyperreal plight that makes their predestined fate part of the identity intended to be raised in Hailsham. Kathy states it clear when she says, "We certainly knew...that we were different from our guardians, and also from the normal people outside; we perhaps even knew that a long way down the line there were donations waiting for us. But we didn't really know what that meant" (Ishiguro 71-72). They were also aware that they are not supposed to meet their 'possibles' i.e. the people they are duplicated from, in order to be kept under control. Kathy realizes this fact when she says, "when you saw the person you were copied from, you'd get some insight into who you were deep down, and maybe too, you'd see something of what your life held in store" (Ishiguro 136-7), and they are not allowed to have anything to cling to for a hope in life. They are to be prepared to sacrifice their lives without any hesitation, and developing such an insight would negatively affect them. Without any familial link or any future objectives, the clones are likened by Zang

to “a kite without a thread, aimlessly floating around, waiting to fall at any time. The scheduled mission, the fate that can not be rewritten deprives clones of their right to self-fulfillment, and they do not live for themselves” (35); they are to be kept aimless.

Kathy as a representative for all the clones is chosen by the writer to be the narrator of the novel. She is made to narrate the story in a stabilized clam tone which makes her plight more real and painful, without any attempt at dramatization. Sometimes, this calmness brings into the text this horror that springs from her familiarity with all these traumatic events she passed through. Again, her selective memories and fragmented storytelling bring in the theme of nostalgia and the unreliability of memory as she always uses the phrases “I’m not sure” (Ishiguro 139), “perhaps, I imagined it” (Ishiguro 244), “Or maybe I’m remembering it wrong” (Ishiguro 13). She is keen not to question the system as much as reflecting on it. This attitude on her part echoes Allan Weiss’s remarks in his discussion of Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985) when he writes, “dystopian regimes are not so much imposed from above as sought from below” (127). The oppressed are all the time kept in a constant state of fear and worry that would make them “surrender their freedom willingly to a government or other authority offering them security and freedom from uncertainty, danger, fear, hunger, etc” (A. Weiss 126). The clones here in *NLMG* realize the danger they are predestined to face, but still cling to Hailsham as their only safe spot because outside it, there is nothing but the unknown.

As Ishiguro works on showing how the system normalizes the clones through its manipulative techniques, he is keen on getting his readers normalized through the emotional depth he endows his characters with, bringing into the novel Aristotle’s cathartic effect which makes the readers sympathize with the clones. In this regard, Utami writes, “Even though the students at Hailsham are clones, they are very much alive, with their individual personality, and the ability to think for themselves. The purpose of teaching them in Hailsham is, in a way, their way to give the human clones a reason to live” (Utami 236). Just as it is important for the copy to echo the original, it is as much important for Kathy as a simulacrum to be enhanced with an emotional depth to echo her human origin. This emotional depth is clearly enriched with her relationship with both Tommy, with whom she undergoes the experience of unspoken love that is never attained, and Ruth with whom she goes through an intricate human relationship of friendship, loyalty, and rivalry. In addition, Ishiguro uses naming as a technique that makes his readers unite with the characters and sympathize with them. He gives his characters ordinary

human names that again enhances the humanness of the clones, as copies with no original points of reference. All this results in the fact that “the readers are invited to follow Kathy’s narration – which is direct, empathetic, imaginative, and psychologically astute – as if they were reading any human story.” (Lacko 26). At the end of the novel, and as Tommy approaches his “completion”, he contemplates about the emotional relationship between him and Kathy: “I keep thinking about this river somewhere, with the water moving really fast. And these two people in the water, trying to hold onto each other, holding on as hard as they can, but in the end it’s just too much. The current’s too strong. They’ve got to let go, drift apart. That’s how it is with us.” (Ishiguro 275). It is important to note here that the emotionality and metaphorical language used enhance the effect Ishiguro leaves on the readers. The way Tommy expresses how far he clings to life is very real on the human level, and the way he succumbs and accepts his fate is hyperreal on the clones’ level. This finds an accordance with Tiffany Tsao when she writes that studies on the novel “emphasize the parallels between the clones and ourselves rather than the human characters and ourselves” (220). The readers find resonance of the clones’ devotion to the code imposed on them in Hailsham in their own obligation towards school, work, or countries.

Springing from hyperreality as a concept coined by Jean Baudrillard to refer to the instant inability to set the real away from the unreal, the spatial paradigm in the novel proves a bio-dystopian setting that points literally to the real. Here, the mate between the real and the unreal engrave the readers’ sense of pain as the real is brought along with the unreal simulation. Place becomes an idealization of and a critique of the type of life people dream of. Here, and as Steven Conner says, commenting on Baudrillard’s hyperreality theory, “the space of simulation confuses the real with the model. There is no longer any critical and speculative distance between the real and the rational. The real is hyperrealised. Neither realised, nor idealised: but hyperrealised” (60). In *NLMG*, hyperreality is established in many aspects, including the constructed setting of Hailsham, the Cottages and the Donation Centers as simulacra; the characters’ understanding of their reality being themselves simulacra; and the societal acceptance of the status portrayed getting in Foucault’s concept of power and biopolitics.

The novel is set within a hyperreal context that rests on a group of signs and representations, and is held to dominate and redefine reality itself. The spatial setting, held to conceptualize Baudrillard’s hyperreal concept “simulacrum” extends on a three-place paradigm (Hailsham, the cottages,

and the donation centers) that is constructed to control how the inhabitants perceive themselves attempting to manipulate truth in order to maintain order. Through investigating the setting of the novel in such a hyperreal context, readers are found to decide and choose whether to accept their roles, or question the system. Hailsham, the Cottages, and the donation centers are interconnected as sites of control, identity formation, and resistance. Hailsham, as the spatial center of the novel, highlights how exploitation may happen under the guise of care and education. Through examining Hailsham, as a simulacrum, that affects its inhabitants, turning them to be other simulacra, many themes are being wrapped in one thematic thread to address passivity and resignation as forms of resistance. The spatial paradigm presented in the novel guides the readers into the characters' search for meaning and identity through art, love, forgetfulness and deferral as defense mechanisms. Both the setting and the characters share their lack of a past and a future.

Within this hyperreal context, there is a real map that symbolizes a contemporary forged entity that is a typical 'simulacrum'; it is the map that erases Palestine, with all its culture and history, and replaces it with a simulacrum entity that has no point of origin. Such a political fraud extends the notion of hyperreality to speak extensively about bitter reality in which Israel itself, as a place, becomes a 'simulacrum', like 'Hailsham' in *NLMG*. Working within this context, it would be insightful to apply this to the portrayals of Jewish characters and places in selected literary works written by Arabs and non-Arab writers in a comparative literary study.

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