

ContactZone

Rivista dell'Associazione italiana per lo studio della fantascienza e del fantastico

Non-human Narrators in Science Fiction

Editors: Oriana Palusci and Valentina Romanzi



(2022) Vol. N° 1 (May) – ISSN 2723-8881

PAOLO
LOFFREDO



ContactZone

n. 1 (May) 2022

ContactZone

An International Peer-Reviewed

E-Journal

CHIEF EDITOR

Oriana Palusci

aisff.starfiction@gmail.com

ADVISORY BOARD

Esterino Adami,

University of Turin, Italy

Silvia Albertazzi,

University of Bologna, Italy

Giuseppe Balirano,

University of Naples 'L'Orientale', Italy

Suparno Banerjee,

Texas State University, USA

Maria Teresa Chialant,

University of Salerno, Italy

Bianca Del Villano,

University of Naples 'L'Orientale', Italy

Vita Fortunati,

University of Bologna, Italy

Paola Gorla,

University of Naples 'L'Orientale', Italy

Giulia Iannuzzi,

University of Trieste, Italy

Carlo Pagetti,

University of Milan, Italy

Patrick Parrinder,

University of Reading, UK

Salvatore Proietti,

University of Calabria, Italy

Eric S. Rabkin,

University of Michigan, USA

Valentina Romanzi,

University of Verona

Umberto Rossi,

Independent Scholar

Darko Suvin,

McGill University, Canada

Nicoletta Vallorani,

University of Milan, Italy

COPY EDITOR

Antonio Fruttaldo - afruttaldo@unior.it

Roberta La Peruta - rlaperuta@unior.it

PUBLISHER

Paolo Loffredo Editore srl

via Ugo Palermo 6

80128 Napoli - Italy

PIVA 05014040876

R.E.A. NA 931959

+39 3248382362

www.loffredoeditore.com/it/

paololoffredoeditore@gmail.com

GRAPHIC LAYOUT

Nexus Advanced Technologies, Milano

www.nexusat.it/digital-editing

ContactZone is an international double-blind peer-reviewed e-journal which publishes scholarly work on Science Fiction and the Fantastic connecting different languages, non-mimetic genres, and fields of study. It is the journal of the Italian Association for the Study of Science Fiction and the Fantastic. The areas of research range from literature to cinema, from media to comics and video games touching a wide spectrum of critical approaches, which includes literary criticism, ecocriticism, film studies, gender studies, cultural studies, postcolonial studies, linguistics, translation studies, critical race studies, queer studies. The journal welcomes papers from scholars, authors, teachers, and librarians supporting an innovative insight into texts written in English, but also in other languages, in order to promote a lively dialogue among critics and other specialists on an international level. *ContactZone* will focus on themes and topics dealing with the representation of imaginative and/or alternative worlds in the realms of science fiction and the fantastic.

Director: Luca Sarti

Authorisation n. 60 issued by the Court of Naples on 16/04/2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 4 Introduction
Non-human Storytelling in Science Fiction
Oriana Palusci and Valentina Romanzi
- 10 Sentient Asteroids and Too Human Aliens in Fredric Brown's Fiction
Simone Pettine
- 24 Desire for Human Nature in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*
Amalia Călinescu
- 43 Beyond a Strictly Anthropocentric Vision of the Nonhuman:
Body Language in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*
Lena Crucitti
- 57 Ann Leckie's *Ancillary Trilogy* and the Revolutionary Potential of Care
Wendy Wright
- 70 The Narrator Is(n't) Human: The Presence of the Human Body in the
Nonhuman Narration of *Twin Peaks* and "The Metamorphosis"
Emily Scarrott
- 87 Home Family Future: Authenticity, the Frontier Myth, and *Dawn*
of the Planet of the Apes
Kara McCormack
- Review Essay**
- 102 Climate Cassandras
Valentina Romanzi
- Artwork**
- 106 *0m-3ro*
Claudio V. Coccoli
- 107 Notes on Contributors

Desire for Human Nature in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*

Amalia Călinescu

DOI: 10.26379/1733

Altered Ratio

The British author of Japanese origins Kazuo Ishiguro considers himself an international writer despite his bicultural education (Wong 2005: 7). The many awards he received for his outstanding talent can attest to the global quality of his career, but the culmination of his success came in 2017, when he was awarded the Nobel Prize for the emotional substratum of his novels (Nobel Prize 2021).

The lure of perfecting the human condition has grown proportionally to the advancement of technology, which makes the perspective of human transcendence an ever-tempting subject for writers (Arias 2011: 379-394). In *Never Let Me Go*, Ishiguro conveys the fusion of literature and psychology from a supernatural perspective on what means to be human. However, the science fiction plot does not depict parallel worlds in a distant future, but a familiar setting in the late 1990s (Jovanović 2016: 1-17). In an interview, the writer states that he has never thought of creating a futuristic world because he cannot imagine a prophetic alternative that readers may find it harder to identify themselves with. He also opens up about his fifteen-year-long struggle to put together "a story about an odd group of 'students' in the English countryside" with "some strange fate." The dystopian quality of the novel is determined by "a discussion on the radio about advances in biotechnology", which the writer decides to listen to, although he will "usually tune out when scientific discussions come on". According to his own words, it is only by serendipity that Ishiguro could finally "see a way of writing a story that was simple, but very fundamental, about the sadness of the human condition" (Ishiguro 2005). Inspired by "the England of [his] youth", Ishiguro depicts a bleaker version of it in order to exaggerate the functions of an entropic, disharmony-oriented Universe: "I pictured England on an overcast day, flat bare fields, weak sunshine, drab streets, abandoned farms, empty roads. Apart from Kathy's childhood memories, around which there could be a little sun and vibrancy, I wanted to paint an England with the kind of stark, chilly beauty I associate with certain remote rural areas and half-forgotten seaside towns" (Ishiguro 2005).

The novel is divided into three parts, in accordance with Kathy's three memorable life stages in retrospection: her early years at the Hailsham school, her young adult life at "the remains of a farm" turned into the pre-donation house Cottages and her experience as a carer for the clones, in Recovery Centres, who have already started organ donation (Ishiguro 2010: 116). The homodiegetic first-person storytelling

establishes, from the very beginning, the clone nature of both the narrator and the narratee while allegorising the dilemma of mimicry and the otherness for the human readers (Lee 2019: 274-276). Kathy H. basically starts sharing her recollections of her school years with a donor that decides “not just to hear about Hailsham, but to *remember* Hailsham” through his carer’s retrospection (Ishiguro 2010: 5). In a naïvely manufactured style, the non-human narrator conveys the traumatic and loss-related mechanics and ramifications of the human condition and existence, whose inherent flaws should be unanimously acknowledged rather than ignored or criticised. Already used to Ishiguro’s elliptical style, readers may expect rich emotional layers under Kathy’s memory drifting. However, this time the Ishigurian narrator has nothing to hide or repress under her “singular, and deeply unsettling blandness” (Puchner 2008: 35): “My name is Kathy H. I’m thirty-one years old, and I’ve been a carer now for over eleven years. That sounds long enough, I know, but actually they want me to go on for another eight months, until the end of the year” (Ishiguro 2010: 1). During her schoolyears, Kathy makes friends with two other colleagues, Ruth and Tommy. As part of their education, Hailsham students have to build up their Collections of personal belongings, mainly consisting in the works of art they buy from each other through the “Exchanges” (Ishiguro 2010: 16). Unlike the narrator, Ruth is a domineering, outspoken girl who loses her temper quite often and gives the impression of knowing more than she actually does. Tommy, too, has frequent temper tantrums, yet mostly due to his failure to express himself artistically, as requested by the school curriculum. Only a later discussion with one of his human teachers, Miss Lucy, about his inability to be creative will motivate Tommy to find peace with the non-artistic nature of his hybridised identity (Lee 2019: 272). Owing to its interactive nature, *Never Let Me Go* invariably involves readers in the process of filtering out Kathy’s recollections of Hailsham as well as of her childhood friends, Ruth and Tommy. The revealing-concealing nature of Kathy’s flat narrative thus plays a major part in depicting the cringing relationship between clones and their human exploiters. Poignant terminology, such as *carer*, *donor*, *guardian*, *deferral*, along with the euphemisms *completion*, *normals* and *possibles*, are first used without easily deducible specifics in order to make the controversial reality of human cloning all the more intriguing. Despite Hailsham’s patchy and limited curriculum about England’s socio-economic and cultural institutions in the great urban centres, over the first part of the novel, readers can already commence deducing students’ diversity, dreams and expectations as well as their cruel purpose and “subliminal indoctrination” (Puchner 2008: 37).

Never Let Me Go is essentially a science fiction novel about the inner worlds of human replicas with consciousness, which are both products and victims of eugenic capitalism (Garland-Thomson 2017: 133). These “manufactured human beings [...] are harvested for organs [...] needed by their human originals” and yet, “despite knowing their fates as repositories of spare parts, [they] dare to dream and to enact actual human lives” (Rishav 2017: 15). Ishiguro does not overtly write about clone heroism and staunchness; his clone characters just follow the predetermined course of their non-human life in an alternative past with different scientific outcomes: “[...] there’s a ‘dystopian’ or ‘sci-fi’ dimension. But I think of it more as an ‘alternative history’ conceit. [...] The novel offers a version of Britain that might have existed by the late twentieth century if just one or two things had gone differently on the scientific front” (Ishiguro 2005). When asked about his

source of inspiration for the boarding school and students' interaction at Hailsham, Ishiguro refers to his own memories as a schoolboy, along with observing his daughter's everyday experiences, although he admits that none of the school scenes is actually based on events that have happened to him or to anyone he knows. While writing about young people poses no special stretch of imagination, other than trying his "best to think and feel as they would", Ishiguro also admits that the setting of the Hailsham school emulates the protective bubble in which children are usually kept by grown-ups, away from the harshness of the adult world: "The school setting [...] is appealing because [...] it's a clear physical manifestation of the way all children are separated off from the adult world, and are drip-fed little pieces of information about the world that awaits them, often with generous doses of deception [...]. In other words, it serves as a very good metaphor for childhood in general" (Ishiguro 2005).

$$\frac{X}{Y} = \frac{X + Y}{X} = 1.618\dots = \phi$$

Fig. 1. Golden Ratio formula.

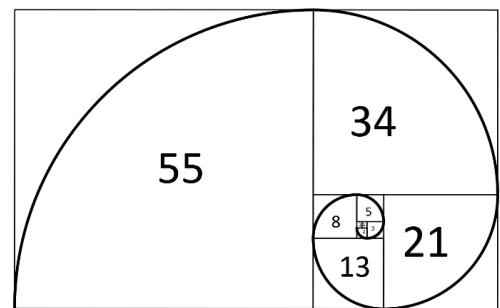


Fig. 2. The Fibonacci spiral.

For all his sympathy for his non-human characters, Ishiguro dares to depict a harsh human world, which accepts full cloning as a way of preserving the human body as long as possible (Taketomi, 2017: 5-14). In order to put so big a price on the physicality of the human being, the British society must have solved the most stringent socio-economic issues it has been confronted with throughout the history. It has been scientifically proved that nature has a mathematical way of exhibiting its symmetrical features, so any deviation from it will lead to disharmony. The golden ratio, marked by the Greek letter Phi, is the result of interaction of two lines of different dimensions in the following way: the longer line (x) divided by the smaller line (y) has the same value as the sum of the two lines divided by the longer line, that is 1.618. This is considered the harmonious proportion of natural aesthetics, since it appears everywhere in nature, from the shape of flowers, plants and galaxies to the configuration of the human body and skull (Abu-Taieh and Al-Bdour 2018). The golden ratio thus creates an infinitely repeated spiralling shape, closely similar to the spiral of the Fibonacci sequence, a series of numbers representing the last two numbers summed up: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144 ... (Singh 1985: 229-244). All designers, painters and architects use these two mathematical proportions in their creations, and the Pyramids and Mona Lisa are only a few cases in point (Abbas 2017: 51-60). According to recent studies, the human brain seems to have been subconsciously trained to recognise and admire the diagram of the golden ratio in the external environment (McMains and Jones 2019). This indicates that humans may not have very different ideas about what is beautiful after all, hence both a collective and an individual interpretation of the saying that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. If these two aesthetic values constitute the measure of balance in nature, then all parts of the overall harmony

will have to respect the divine symmetry towards each other. Consequently, any form of consciousness, whether natural or artificial, should have imprinted within its genetic code the ability to recognise beauty in nature. If the human mind also respects the divine ratio between the subconscious and conscious, the emotional and rational levels, then human development should continue even when population growth stops and humans could be upgraded only by means of cloning.

Therefore, leaving aside the ethical debate over cloning, the infallible presence of the golden ratio in any replica of nature, including human nature, already testifies for the genuine humanity in the clone characters of *Never Let Me Go*. In other words, even if their art cannot eventually prove the presence of their soul, Kathy, Tommy and Ruth should still deserve to be treated as human beings, endowed with consciousness and awareness, in accordance with the golden and Fibonacci spirals. Regarding clones as humans may thus become as pertinent an objective as seeing “humans as clones” (Walkowitz 2007: 226). Nevertheless, Ishiguro’s novel depicts a world with an altered golden ratio, contrary to the representation of harmony in nature. The state of late 1990s England has approved human cloning in order to ensure a much longer lifespan. The living replicas grow up away from the human world, attending separate schools and seldom questioning their collective life purpose, regardless of their humane or inhumane upbringing. Children at Hailsham, for instance, though more privileged than other clones, constantly need to prove their artistic and literary creativity so that a woman whom they call Madame can visit their school regularly and collect their best paintings for her personal gallery. Or so they are made to think within the loosely fenced confines of their human bubble – before the bubble bursts to reveal that “clones are humans who have been degraded by dehumanizing treatment.” As its name may suggest, the *Hail-sham* school turns out to be “a most effective means of making the students accept the truncated and limited lives that are imposed on them” (Puchner 2008: 37).

Ishiguro’s perspective on human cloning does not seem to stand, though. Firstly, there is an episode in the book in which the three protagonists, Kathy, Ruth and Tommy, along with a couple of older clones from the Cottages, Chrissie and Rodney, go to Norfolk to find Ruth’s *possible* – that is to say, the person whose DNA she carries – in order to “get some insight into who [she was] deep down,” (Lee 2019: 281; Ishiguro 2010: 140). Their unhindered trip proves that they can circulate freely through the human world and, while following Ruth’s potential model to the Portway Studio, all five of them have a conversation with the manager of the art gallery about the artwork displayed. The gallery manager even mistakes them for art students; not for a second does the human think of speaking to clones. Upset that the woman does not resemble her after all, Ruth remarks bitterly that their *originals* are human trash, “[j]unkies, prostitutes, winos, tramps” (Ishiguro 2010: 166). It is therefore too improbable for the human world to be so indifferent to the reality of having clones among them at all times, especially when a boarding school like Hailsham has failed to prove that clones are human beings too. This can only mean that exactly the opposite is true: The human world does not feel at all comfortable with the free mingling of humans and clones, not so much for the strict preservation of the expensive state-sanctioned programme as for the belief that clones are more like animals or objects (Lee 2019: 284).

Secondly, the donations seem to start only in young adulthood, as if all authentic humans needed organ replacement only after a certain age. Moreover, the adult

clones' roles of *donors* and *carers* can hardly give the impression of genuine realism. It is quite improbable that the number of grown-up clones that did not start donating their organs will always complement the number of those who did, as though they had a choice in deciding the starting point of their donation process. The reality of organ donation becomes even less credible when Ruth and Chrissie cannot go further than two donations, thus proving themselves more of a liability than an asset for the cloning programme. Once again, the apparent narrative sloppiness emphasises the implausibility of clones moving freely and jeopardising their health in any way.

Yet the most improbable reality is the state of completion, which means termination of life after having donated four organs. Death is part of life and therefore contributes to the golden ratio in nature. However, no human being can live without a vital organ, so the idea of giving away at least one vital organ and still being able to live a normal biological life cannot be accepted by the human mind, conditioned as it is to recognise both harmony and disharmony in all manifestations of nature. The possibility of living without the liver, heart or kidneys, or presumably being "kept in a vegetative state" in order to donate "more and more organs", dehumanises the clones more than the author may have intended (Puchner 2008: 36). For all intents and purposes, the act of invariably donating no more than four organs before completion seems such a waste of human resources, hence the futility of the whole cloning programme. Although a stronger relationship between the clones and their *possibles* could have better supported the plot, readers usually overlook the flagrant narrative unfeasibility based on the extreme emotions they cannot help but experience all through the book (Ray 2018: 284-288). The cathartic effect of the novel thus testifies for the author's actual intention to write a book about love and the intricacy of human interconnection rather than about the cloning ethics (Ishiguro 2005). One clever artifice that Ishiguro uses to mask all the narrative incongruence is the recollection-based storytelling technique, although Kathy uses her memories as "a source of consolation" more than the other Ishigurian narrators: "I've always liked the texture of memory. [...] I love all these subtle things you can do when you tell a story through someone's memories. But [...] Kathy's memories are more benevolent. [...] As her time runs out, as her world empties one by one of the things she holds dear, what she clings to are her memories of them" (Ishiguro 2005). In the beginning, the thirty-one-year-old carer Kathy H. mentions the length of her career in light of the significant changes that will take place after several months (Caporale 2013: 72-76). According to her own description, Kathy's caring job mainly consists in the psychological endeavour to keep donors as calm as possible, the biological implications of having vital organs removed one by one at certain intervals being completely ignored:

My donors have always tended to do much better than expected. Their recovery times have been impressive and hardly any of them have been classified as "agitated", even before fourth donation. [...] it means a lot to me, being able to do my work well, especially that bid about donors staying "calm". I've developed a kind of instinct around donors. I know when to hang around and comfort them, when to leave them to themselves, when to listen to everything they have to say, and when just to shrug and tell them to snap out of it. (Ishiguro 2010: 1)

Kathy's tending to other donors for no less than eleven years gives the false impression that clones could prolong their lives by helping other clones to recover

after each donation. Throughout the book, however, Ishiguro dismisses the idea of a vague free will by trying to demonstrate instead that clones cannot deviate from their pre-established life trajectory and therefore cannot escape their sad fate.

Owing to their roles of both information providers and parent-like counsellors, the human teachers at Hailsham are also called guardians, although they deliberately keep schoolchildren ignorant of their clone nature for as long as possible. As soon as Miss Lucy reveals the truth to the students, the young clones will try to sift out the genuine information about the donation programme from the deceiving snippets they have received up to that point. After having liberated herself from the burden, Miss Lucy leaves the school for good and without any explanation. When, before leaving, the human teacher reconsiders her position towards Tommy's lack of creativity, the boy's anguish returns. Because he has just ended his six-month-old relationship with Ruth, Kathy considers Tommy's behaviour an overt result of his suffering, but Tommy and Ruth get back together quite soon while Tommy's tantrums still persist. Miss Lucy's power to comfort and then discomfort Tommy in his desperate search for his own artistic voice emphasises the relation between master and learner, which Ishiguro conveys "not as Japanese phenomenon but as a human phenomenon (Ishiguro 1989: 10).

During their life at the Cottages, Kathy, Ruth and Tommy try to set good connections with the clones that already live there after having finished other schools. Ruth finds it harder to adapt to the new housing and social conditions and her exaggerated attempt to make herself easily accepted and admired by the veterans jeopardises her relation with her two old friends. The journey to Norfolk in search for Ruth's *possible* can also be regarded as a faint quest for freedom. Two of the veterans, Chrissie and Rodney, accompany the three Hailsham graduates in a collective attempt to find information about a singular case of donation deferral, on grounds of true love. Neither Kathy nor Tommy knows of such an exception but, to their surprise, Ruth gives the impression that she might have an idea about it. Based on such a possibility, Tommy speculates on the true purpose of students' artistic creations back at Hailsham, as being connected to the testing of true love among clone couples. His creativity is somehow unleashed through the fantastic animals he is now able to draw effortlessly. On the other hand, Ruth, who until then was dreaming of a future independent of her donation purpose, seems to have given up believing in it altogether. Her relation with the narrator deteriorates when realizing that the latter might have deeper feelings for Tommy. Kathy indeed loves Tommy and appreciates his newfound artistic potential, yet she decides to leave the Cottages and become a carer for active donors. In the last part of the novel, Kathy nurses Ruth, who cannot fully recover after her first donation. The clone narrator also finds out, from a former colleague Laura, that the Hailsham school has closed. While going to see a boat on a distant beach, Kathy and Ruth reunite with Tommy and they all recall episodes from their schooldays at Hailsham. Tommy and Kathy finally become lovers, after Tommy's third donation. Ruth openly accepts Kathy and Tommy's love for each other and suggests they should plead for a postponement of their completion in front of Madame, whose address she claims to have found. The two clone lovers decide to believe that they could indeed spend a longer time as a true couple so they go to find Madame at the address given by Ruth. The art collector indeed lives there, as does the former headmistress of Hailsham, Miss Emily. This is the moment when readers discover how much clones' ability to recognise the golden ratio in nature and reproduce it

in original paintings matters for the human world. The fact that clones are separated from humans already indicates the silent rejection of the dangerous programme that prolongs human lives artificially. This contradiction will eventually chip away at the integrity of human life, distorting its golden ratio. The proof lies in Miss Emily's extensive revelation about the Hailsham school as a special project meant to offer clones a human treatment and education while proving the human world that they have souls, directly expressed in their artwork: "We took away your art because we thought it would reveal your souls. Or to put it more finely, we did it to prove you had souls at all" (Ishiguro 2010: 237). The closing of the experimental school indicates that human prejudices cannot be altered, nor can the collective human fear of accepting an artificial golden ratio as powerful as the genuine one. Treating clones as humans would have certainly distorted the *possibles'* initial purpose of replicating human life for the betterment, not the full replacement, of the original.

The only moment of overt rebellion in the novel is when Tommy starts to scream in the woods on the way back from Madame's place. Kathy tries to console him and they hold each other in a sad embrace. After his fourth donation, Tommy completes and Kathy takes a journey to Norfolk, her mind and heart set on a distant image of her late lover. Although unacknowledged by the human world, clones' consciousness proves the existence of harmony within their structures while their relation to humans replicates the relation between the golden and the Fibonacci spirals, in accordance with the divine ratio.

Clone Transaction

Ishiguro's sixth novel has been regarded not only as a dystopian science fiction, but also as a coming-of-age story about the interconnected lives of Kathy, Ruth and Tommy, from childhood to young adulthood (Lee 2019: 270-290). However, "[u]nlike the traditional bildungsroman, which follows protagonists' growth along a temporal progression, *Never Let Me Go* describes individual development, or un-development, as interlocked oscillations between domestic and institutional spaces, which are in fact combined into the clones' residences" (Lee 2019: 272). Although Kathy's way of storytelling seems more reliable than other Ishigurian protagonists, the non-human narrator portrays her past "through a very limited perspective", which, however, leaves plenty of room for observation and interpretation (Puchner 2008: 35). Ishiguro only alludes to "the great medical breakthroughs which followed one another rapidly" (2010: 257). Trying to enlarge the minimalist setting and imagine the interconnectivity of economic agents, readers could get a bigger picture of the British world that has created the donation programme in the late 1990s. A society that can successfully support the mass production of human clones can only be an advanced machinery resulting from ideal socio-economic conditions with successful human ties and transactions: "Social networks are like lattice graphs because they have order and structure in them" (Beinhocker 2006: 146). Thus, by deduction, technical advances may have allowed enough remoteness from the clones while giving the latter enough space not to feel claustrophobic. And yet there are voices in the novel that speak about a different treatment of clones in institutions outside the education system of Hailsham. Kathy's inhuman style of storytelling thus prompts

the whole of humanity to acknowledge its “mechanical, manufactured, and replicated – in a traditional sense, not fully human” – nature in order to “escape the barbarities committed in the name of preserving purely human life” (Black 2009: 786).

The ramifications of significant novelties can be catastrophic in systems with ever-growing networking, hence the natural resistance to change in societies and, implicitly, the rejection of small worlds. In order to preserve the success of determining clones’ consciousness, Madame and Miss Emily should have replicated the matrices of macrocosmic evolution, through an efficient diversity of long-term plans to integrate clones into the human world. Leaving aside the debate on clones’ soul, clones’ personalities seem to play a more important role in the Ishigurian dystopia. The idea of a multilateral personality, made up of many interconnected or colliding sub-personalities belongs to many schools of psychotherapy, from Jungian analysis to Gestalt therapy (Dolliver 1994: 197; Cahalan, 1983: 42). A person’s mindset and worldview will therefore emerge from the interaction of many conscious and unconscious social masks (Lester 2019: 57). By the same token, Kathy’s memories reveal many different facets of Ruth and Tommy’s personalities, as well as hers during their short clone lives.

Dr Penfield’s research reveals that, when the temporal area of the brain is electrically stimulated, it triggers a series of emotionally felt memories in conscious patients (1952: 178-179). This may come in contradiction with the common belief that the remembrance of past events very much depends on the present state of mind (Adams *et al.* 2018: 340-355). Although revised later, Dr Penfield’s studies still certify the incredible power of the subconscious mind to store all information, whether or not consciously retrieved. What is currently accepted, based on Dr Penfield’s research, is that most human beings can do two acts at the moment of recollection: (1) They can relive the recalled events at their original emotional scale while (2) they can consciously analyse the past events from a present perspective (1952: 184-198). In line with Dr Penfield’s findings, Kathy’s method of recollection could also trigger her initial emotions along with her retrospective ones, hence the double nature of her unreliability while she taps into “the haze of memory”:

This was all a long time ago so I might have some of it wrong; but my memory of it is that my approaching Tommy that afternoon was part of a phase I was going through around that time – something to do with compulsively setting myself challenges – and I’d more or less forgotten all about it when Tommy stopped me a few days later. (Ishiguro 2010: 19)

Just as modern economist Eric Beinhocker believes that all economy is based on transactions between humans as economic agents (2006: 78), so too psychologist Eric Berne considers transactions as the basis of all human interconnection:

The unit of social intercourse is called a transaction. If two or more people encounter each other [...] sooner or later one of them will speak, or give some other indication of acknowledging the presence of the others. This is called transactional stimulus. Another person will then say or do something which is in some way related to the stimulus, and that is called the transactional response. (2015: 29)

Another perspective on human interconnection involves the three states that the ego can take during social transactions: the Child, the Adult and the Parent

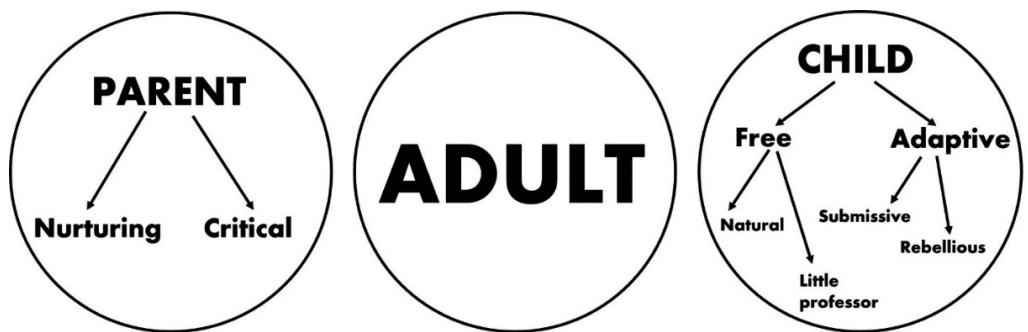


Fig. 4. Berne's three states of the ego.

(2015: 7). Thus, in Berne's view, the ego does not have a negative denotation as it represents a mixture of emotion and background information that results in a certain behavioural pattern. Its division into states and sub-states could give a pertinent and more realistic answer to the volatility of human behaviour. People could indeed change over time, yet they could also go through different states over a short period as a normal display of their sub-personalities (2015: 4). According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, personality traits are determined by unconscious processes, instinctual drives (food, sex, aggression) and early-childhood influences (parents, relatives) (1990). According to Berne, the interchangeable roles of the Parent, the Child and the Adult will lead to different sub-personalities when interacting with others' ego states (Giacolini and Sabatello 2019). Berne's transactional analysis thus represents the foundation of a new psychological approach to human networking in its finest and most accurate details. Ishiguro's great psycho-literary ability in *Never Let Me Go* is to unite different psychological approaches while placing readers in the super position of self-therapists. On the one hand, he allows his clone narrator to talk about herself and her friends in an analytical manner (Britzman 2006: 307–313); on the other hand, he employs Berne's transactional perspective, permitting readers to decipher the characters' manifold interactions based on Kathy's inner worlds.

In Berne's view, there are two Parent types in each person, a Nurturing and a Critical one. The former elicits comforting and calming behavioural patterns while the latter triggers controlling and corrective responses (2015: 13). On the other hand, the inner Child can be either Free or Adaptive, depending on the internal and external circumstances. The Free Child can also be Natural and therefore oblivious to all the dangers around, or can behave as the Little Professor, curious and willing to learn what the outside world has to offer. The Adaptive side of the inner Child, meanwhile, creates different responses to the environment, so it will always be a mixture of Submissive and Rebellious reactions to the type of stimuli displayed each time (2015: 15). As regards the Adult ego state, it can offer mature and satisfactory explanations for the intricate interplay between the Parent and the Child, thereby bridging the gap between the two ego states. In other words, the Adult is "a data-processing computer, which grinds out decisions after computing the information from three sources: the Parent, the Child, and the data which the adult has gathered and is gathering" (Harris 2004: 12). Eric Berne's theories can thus indicate how intricate human interaction really is and why the game of cooperation is so hard to play in most life circumstances, hence the emergence of major conflicts like wars, battles and insurgent attacks.

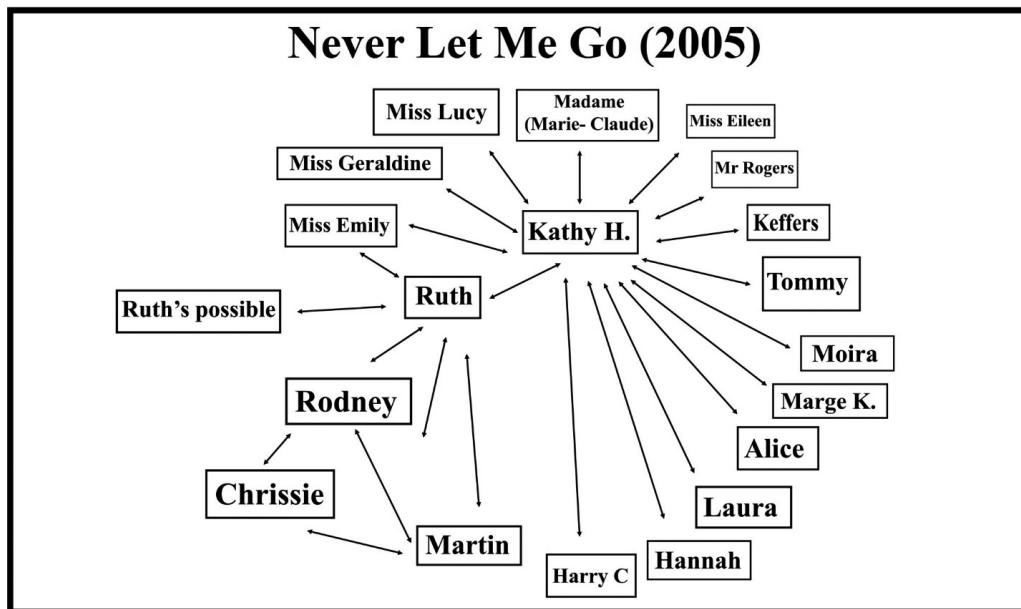


Fig. 3. *Never Let Me Go*, character relationships.

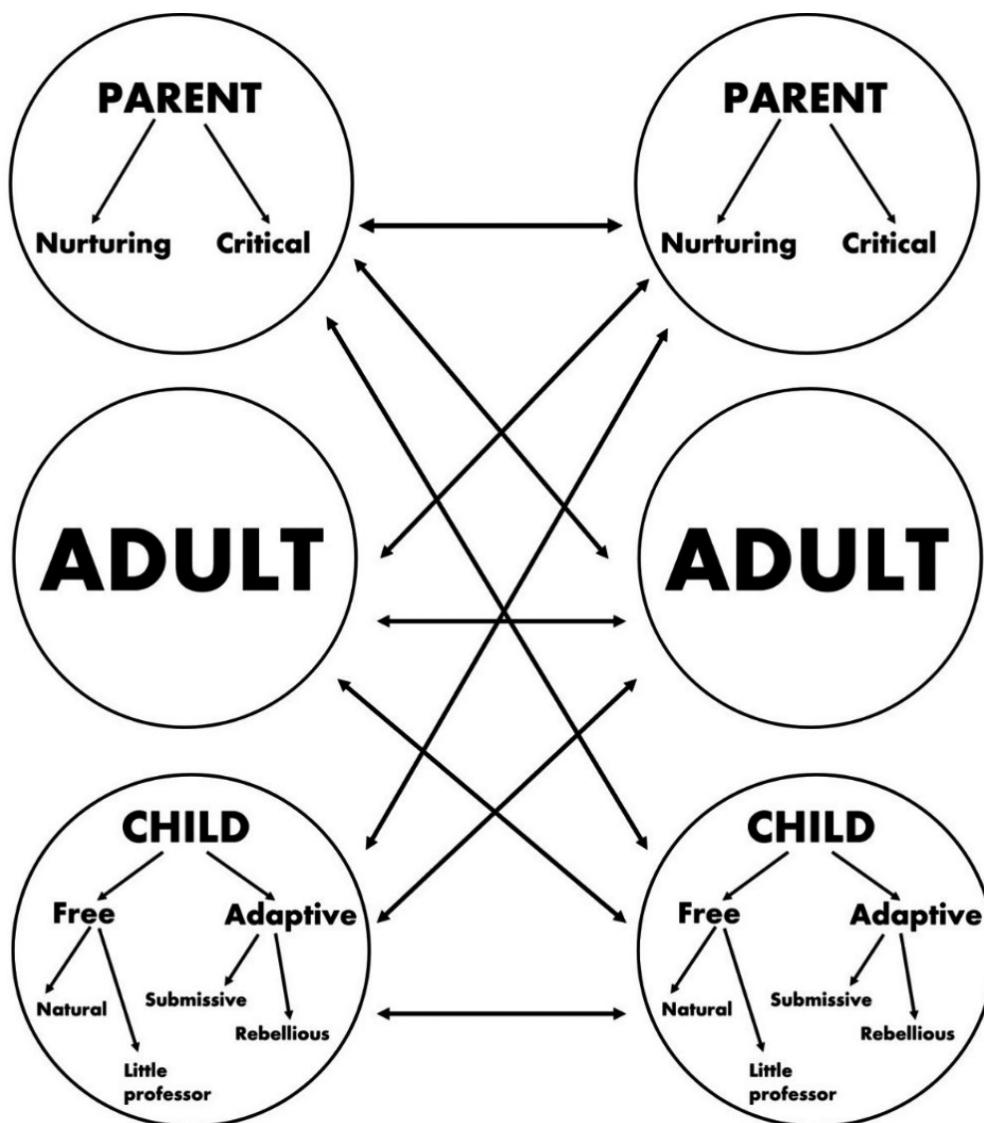


Fig. 5. Ego state interactions.

If, throughout their lives, humans interact based on three different ways of being, along with their subdivisions, Ishiguro's novel proves that clones can follow the same model of interconnection. Thus, in accordance with Berne's theory, all characters in *Never Let Me Go* exhibit characteristics of the Child, the Adult and the Parent within themselves. Although parentless, the clones at Hailsham can still emulate their guardians' behaviour, which allows the Parent state of their egos to develop until the age of five, in accordance with Berne's theories (2015). As such, all non-human schoolchildren will collect unfiltered information within their subconscious mind both from the only parent figures they have ever known – their guardians – and their own colleagues. The novelist may not have created a war-based background, as he did in his other novels, yet the interaction between his characters proves equally intricate due to the replica models he proposes. Kathy's non-human act of remembering creates a "collective sense of community among all the clones – not only the educated Hailsham clones but also the other clones who grew up in different regions" and did not have the privilege of their own Collections while immersed in liberal studies within reform schools (Lee 2019: 279).

Ruth is a mixture of the Critical Parent and the Free and Adaptive Child, although later in life she also shows the Adult's insights and behaviour. During her schoolyears, she often loses her temper and speaks her mind while manipulating or trying to organise others in a controlling way. However, she also avoids direct confrontation in important moments, preferring to say things obliquely rather than make her true emotions known to her friends. When she lets her inner Child rule, Ruth dedicates her time to creating imaginary scenarios as a subconscious form of escapism from her cloning condition. As a result, she lives in a world of confabulation, inventing special treatment for herself from the only adult in her life that she sees as a Nurturing Parent, the guardian Miss Geraldine. Her protective device, called the "secret guard business", is an innocent, heart-warming way of making peace between her Child and her Critical Parent by pretending to protect a grown-up (Ishiguro 2010: 49). In reality, Ruth cannot endure the strained responsibility of her own fate so she consciously hides behind a bossy mask. Her claim about being preferred and entrusted with secret information by Miss Geraldine infuriates Kathy at first, yet the narrator switches to the Nurturing Parent in time to protect the dreamy side of her friend. Ruth oscillates between the Rebellious and Submissive Child even when she tries to adjust to the Cottages lifestyle, and her frequent moodiness puts in jeopardy her relation with Kathy and Tommy. However, back at Hailsham, when Kathy's tape has disappeared, Ruth is also capable of being a Nurturing Parent by offering her friend another tape to compensate for the latter's loss. In the end, Ruth decides to be a mixture of the Nurturing Parent and the Adult instead of the Adaptive Child that suffers from her lack of free will. For all intents and purposes, Ruth is a deeply wounded being, unable to cope with the reality of her insignificant individuality – therefore she chooses to build up a shield under which she hides all her shattered hopes for a "dream future" (Ishiguro 2010: 130): "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. It's a shame, Kath, because we've loved each other all our lives. But in the end, we can't stay together forever" (Ishiguro 2010: 258-259). Although the most irrational

of the three clone protagonists, Ruth is also the one who offers Kathy and Tommy one last chance to a better future, by giving the two lovers Madame's address as proof of her finally accepting their romantic relationship.

During his childhood, Tommy behaves as a Rebellious Child, his Adaptive side stemming from his fear of being different from his colleagues with regard to his creative potential. Peer pressure becomes obvious from an early age, because children are awfully good at pointing out their differences. Within the confines of Hailsham, however, Tommy does not feel protected enough from his own colleagues, who cannot understand his lack of creativity. Therefore, he appeals to his Rebellious side, manifesting himself violently in order to push everyone away from him. His tantrums match the controlling nature of his friend Ruth while triggering a rational response in Kathy and thus a triangular relation is created between the dominant ego states in the three clone protagonists: Adaptive Child – Critical Parent – Adult. As an adult, Tommy starts drawing because he chooses so, and Kathy sincerely encourages his newborn confidence. His imaginary animals indicate the freedom of his spirit, even though the human world has failed to regard the artwork of his more creative colleagues as a manifestation of their souls. Kathy and Ruth make Tommy pendulate between all subdivisions of his Child ego, from its Free version to the Rebellious and even the Submissive one, which just wants to fit in. He may find it difficult to understand all the subtleties of Kathy and Ruth's troubled connection, yet he loves and respects both of his friends. With Ruth, Tommy is wild while he feels wise and comfortable around Kathy, and he needs both sides of his personality to accept his clone condition: "You have to accept that sometimes that's how things happen in this world. People's opinions, their feelings, they go one way, then the other. It just so happens you grew up at a certain point in this process" (Ishiguro 2010: 243). In the end, Tommy chooses Kathy as his lover and confidante and even allows her to take care of him before completion.

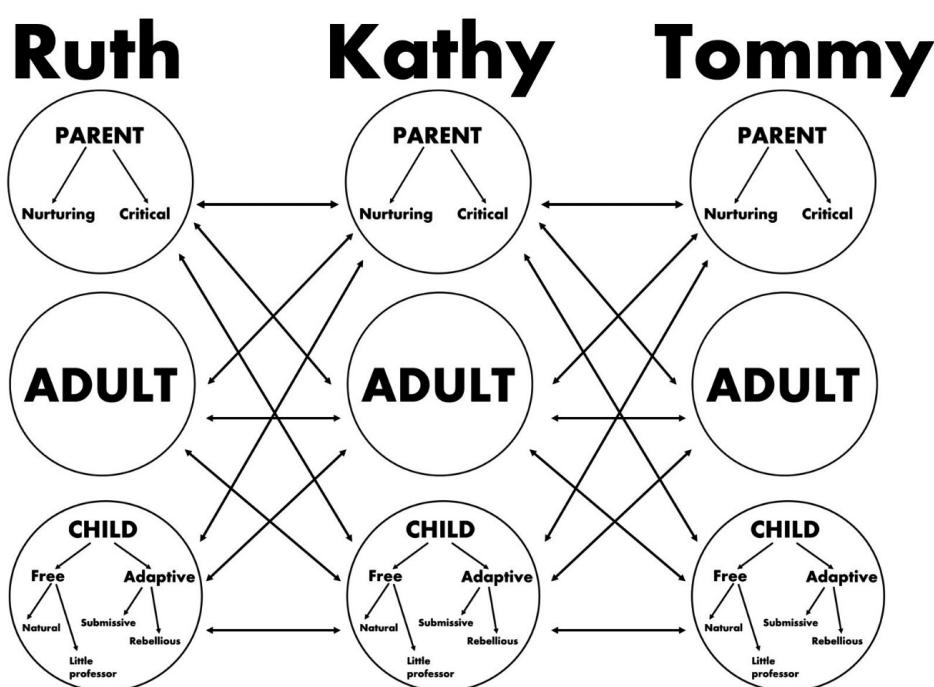


Fig. 6. Ruth, Kathy and Tommy's ego states.

Kathy H. proves her therapeutic skills from young childhood, when she feels to intervene in Tommy's crises and manages to alleviate most of them with calming arguments. Although the representative ego state of young Kathy H. is the Adult, rational and calm, when the young adult Kathy decides to become a carer, she implicitly takes on the Nurturing Parent attributes, which fit her best. The non-human narrator has reached the age of thirty-one when she commences her storytelling, and not many clones have the chance to live that long. Kathy will have been a carer for twelve years before she decides to become a donor herself, although the circumstances in which clones can choose to change their status are nowhere mentioned, if they exist at all. Much the same as an elderly lady, Kathy navigates through her memories of the interactions and transactions she has made throughout her clone life. By often admitting that her accounts may not be very accurate after all, Kathy allows her imaginary interlocutors to interpret her story individually. Also, as she flies off at a tangent quite often, the clone storyteller creates an intricate lattice of memories within memories, many times difficult to follow. Her narrative subjectivity thus becomes a protective device that guards her from others' judgmental views while revealing her true perspective on the clone world. Kathy's relationship with Tommy is much deeper than she lets on, and, based on Berne's transactional analysis, readers can see the complementarity of the Nurturing Parent and the Adaptive Child that seals their love as adults. Back at Hailsham, however, Kathy's Adult ego makes her reticent about showing her emotions, highly observant and very introspective, especially around Ruth. At other times, especially in her interaction with Tommy, she wavers between being an Adult and an Adaptive Child that feels self-conscious in public places. At the end of the novel, Kathy becomes a paternal figure for Ruth, as soon as she starts caring for her sick friend.

Always Let Go

The title of the novel represents the name of Kathy's favourite song on the album *Songs after Dark*, performed by the fictional singer Judy Bridgewater. Kathy has this audio cassette from the Sales, a regular event at the Hailsham school where students can acquire goods that come from the human world. Judging by its title, which is a more emotional way of saying "don't forsake me", the song indicates one's fear of being left by one's beloved. However, young Kathy chooses to give the song a more innocent connotation – that is, a child's need for maternal love as it stems from clones' inability to procreate like humans. In Kathy's vision, the song speaks about a mother who begs her only child never to leave her:

Because whatever the song was really about, in my head, when I was dancing, I had my own version. You see, 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, never let me go. That's not what the song's about at all, but that's what I had in my head that time. (Ishiguro 2010: 267)

When Kathy dances to her favourite song, she holds a pillow in her arms as if she were holding a baby. Madame sees Kathy dancing and cries. In retrospect, Kathy's memory is also tinged with sadness: "Maybe you read my mind, and that's

why you found it so sad. I didn't think it was so sad at the time, but now, when I think back, it does feel a bit sad" (Ishiguro 2010: 267). When seeing young Kathy dance innocently at the end of the novel, Madame explains her own sadness at the inexorable passage of time and loss of the old world:

That's most interesting. But I was no more a mind-reader then than today. I was weeping for an altogether different reason. When I watched you dancing that day, I saw something else. I 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. (Ishiguro 2010: 267)

Madame and Miss Lucy have failed to show humankind that clones can also have deep feelings as a result of their genuine souls, hence the abolishment of Hailsham. The ramifications of accepting the free movement of non-humans would go far beyond the eventuality of damaging their replicated bodies at any time. Through "biological manipulation", clones could eventually render humans mentally and emotionally inferior, which "frightened people. They recoiled from that" (Puchner 2008: 41; Ishiguro 2010: 264). An early symbol of shutting down Hailsham is the disappearance of the tape, which is most likely taken by Madame as a way of dealing with her own helplessness. Later, in Norfolk, Kathy finds a copy of her favourite album in a second-hand shop, but by then the non-human narrator will have already accepted the inevitability of loss and separation.

The most legitimate question readers may ask themselves is why Kathy, Ruth and Tommy do not try to escape their sad fate. According to Puchner, all clones "have accepted their fate; or rather they do not even recognize their attitude as that of acceptance; there simply was never any choice" because "clones have internalized their allegedly inferior status" (2008: 40): "Your lives are set for you. You'll become adults, then before you're old, before you're even middle-aged, you'll start donating your vital organs. That's what each of you was created to do. You're not like the actors you watch on your videos, you're not even like me. You were brought into this world for a purpose and your futures, all of them, have been decided" (Ishiguro 2010: 80). In his third novel, *Cloud Atlas*, British novelist David Mitchell interweaves the destinies of several people, beyond space and time, in a very touching fusion of several reincarnated manifestations of the human condition. One such story is about the tragic destiny of the fabricant Sonmi~451, one of the millions of identical clones created for the sole purpose of serving humans, from undertaking menial work and serving in the army to acting as children's toys. The lack of identity and consciousness is chemically induced by human society through the infected composition of fabricants' food called Soap. The clones are also fed false hopes for a better future into a large community of retired fabricants, after twelve years of serving humans. In reality, the non-working fabricants are killed and turned into Soap, which is then unknowingly consumed by the active clones. Unlike her peers, Sonmi~451 seems to have been given a unique chance to ascend. As such, she becomes aware of her identity and wants to protect the clone community from humans. Only later will she realise that Union is not an anti-government organisation that wants to help fabricants to become self-aware individuals, but a rebellious movement staged by the government in order to preserve the gap between humans and clones. Sonmi's sad story is an allegory of the fateful relation

between the puppet and the puppeteer, although there is also an uncontrollable variable in the deterministic fabric of reality: Sonmi may have fallen victim to a corrupt system, yet her story will inspire future generations to get enlightened and protect their freedom (Mitchell 2004; Bayer 2015: 345-354). Unlike Mitchell, Ishiguro does not transgress spatio-temporal realities in order to send the same message. His clones do not have the power to fight against their destinies, and there is no scientific explanation of the human replication programme in the novel (Shaddox 449-450). While genetic replication has made it possible for certain animals, like sheep, pet dogs or mice, to be genetically modified, human cloning has only reached the stage of preserving stem cells from replicated embryos for medical purposes and the possibility of replicating human life for maintaining human health and wellbeing still triggers ethical debates, regardless of the advances of modern technology (Loi et al. 2013: 367). However, according to Kevin Smith, a bioethicist at Abertay University, there is a high probability for a form of human genetic modification to be unanimously accepted in the near future thanks to its indisputable benefits. The current genetic breakthroughs will thus hopefully lead to the cure of genetic dysfunctions and incurable diseases, alongside the improvement of the brain functions. Such a revolutionary enhancement of human life could also alter the ethics of genetic modification with regard to crops, animals or human beings. Yet the idea of fully cloning human beings still remains unfeasible. While the nuclear transfer method, of injecting new DNA into an unfertilised egg, has been successfully used before, the prospect of growing human replicas in mother-like wombs is quite farfetched, as well as genetically impossible for the time being (Hsu 2012).

Taking into account these scientific perspectives, the clone world in *Never Let Me Go* may not seem as grim as the one depicted in *Cloud Atlas* as it deals with the relation between the transhuman and the posthuman – that is to say, with those undergoing the technologically enhanced process of becoming the perfect, faultless versions of the human being (Wolfe 2010: xiii). Being human could thus be explained through a Romantic-oriented fusion between empathy and aesthetics, which, in the Ishigurian novel, underlies a multicultural world of artistic creation and consumption (Black 2009: 785). Although it makes the object of dozens of studies throughout time, researchers are still trying to find a proper explanation for the soul (Zupko, 1997: 297-321). This indefinable energy pervading all living entities manifests itself as a form of indivisible intelligence that lacks the memory of prior experience. While everything else in the Universe is bipolar, the soul appears as a unitary, conscious whole. Medically speaking, however, consciousness can be easily mistaken for a state of wakefulness after anaesthesia or coma, hence the possibility of gaining consciousness after losing it when slowing down the function of certain organs in order to control the experience of pain (Hinterberger 2015: 143-151). It is therefore still difficult to find an adequate explanation for consciousness as a way of understanding the soul. However, being unable to find a proper explanation for something that cannot be defined, nor can it be properly understood, does not mean that the respective phenomenon ceases to exist. Likewise, deciding that, although the clones in *Never Let Me Go* are capable of deep feelings, as well as artistic creativity, they do not possess a soul does not exclude the reality of their consciousness. The state of being alive invariably begets the presence of consciousness. Sadly enough, the Hailsham students are clones with human feelings: “You say you’re sure? Sure that you’re in love? How can you know it? You

think love is so simple" (Ishiguro 2010: 207)? Unfair though it might seem, they all feel at peace with the little they know about their destiny as donors. Trying to change their fate is not an option for them, not even when Miss Lucy reveals the sad truth about their short-lived futures (Query 2015: 155-172). As such, Kathy, Ruth and Tommy will accept their fate, either as a form of helpless resignation or as an example of primal wisdom, like bending in the wind. When one understands the course of natural events, one acquires mental peace by naturally accepting whatever the cycle of life and death entails. Kathy, Ruth and Tommy may therefore have managed to experience the concept of *Wu wei* from the philosophy of Daoism. The term literally means "to do nothing" and refers to the state of acting upon things in a peacefully detached way, which leads to a sort of passive, unforced action (Slingerland 2014: 23).

As a recurrent symbol of false hope, the open-plan office represents clones' illusion of free will, which fades away once childhood is gone. It is also a metaphorical timeline of past dreams, present wakefulness and shattered future. As a child, Ruth sees the open-plan office in a magazine advertisement, which sets her dreaming of a beautiful future. As a young adult, Ruth notices the office of her "dream future" in Norfolk, when she looks for her *possible*. The glass separation between the human world and her small world represents the reiteration of her immutable destiny. Ruth cannot find her human original. Would she have changed her destiny if she had been able to make contact with the normal she had been replicated from? Would the *possible* have given up her right to own a double if she had regarded Ruth as a human being? The third time Ruth has encountered the open-plan office is when she returns from Norfolk with her two friends, after noticing the fishing boat. She is already a donor and her first donation has gone terribly wrong. She is aware that her life will not span the four donations that normally lead to completion. However, she seems to have found peace with her fate by allowing herself to hope that Tommy and Kathy's love could change their destinies (Willems 2010: 134-156). As to Norfolk, both Kathy and Ruth remember it as "England's lost corner" – "a refuge, a place of lost memories" about people long gone – and Hailsham's "the lost-and-found corner [...] where students [could] find their lost objects" (Lee 2019: 278). Beyond the clone jargon, Norfolk thus becomes a recurrent allegory of clones' hopeless search for human identity in a globalised world of both subhuman and human enhancement. Kathy's attitude at the end of the novel, of fully accepting the painful course of her meaningless life seems to emulate the fluid resiliency of water, frequently given as an example of *Wu wei* in nature:

That was the only time, as I stood there, looking at that strange rubbish, feeling the wind coming across those empty fields, that I started to imagine just a little fantasy thing, because this was Norfolk after all, and it was only a couple of weeks since I'd lost him. [...] The fantasy never got beyond that – I didn't let it – and though the tears rolled down my face, I wasn't sobbing [...]. I just waited a bit, then turned back to the car, to drive off to wherever it was I was supposed to be. (Ishiguro 2010: 282)

Although at thirty-one years old she outlives most of her peers, including her friends, Kathy can only head for completion, which entails unfulfilled desire for human nature as well as the termination of her clone life (Taketomi 2018: 114-128). However, Kathy seems to have found her human essence within her memories, which gives her a liberating dignity that not even genuine humans like Madame

and Miss Emily may possess (Ray 2018: 770-784). In the end, the non-human narrator manages to separate her non-automaton identity from her human-like experiences, which puts a stop to her resigned suffering. And, by losing her fear of loss, Kathy H. will eventually let go of everything.

Works Cited

- Abbas, Syed 2017. "Golden Ratio". *Resonance* 22 (February): 51-60. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12045-017-0432-y>.
- Abu-Taieh, Evon, Al-Bdour, Hamed S. 2018. *A Human Body Mathematical Model Biometric Using Golden Ratio: A New Algorithm*. <https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.76113>. <https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/60714>.
- Adams, Eryn J., Nguyen, Anh T, Cowan, Nelson 2018. "Theories of Working Memory: Differences in Definition, Degree of Modularity, Role of Attention, and Purpose". *Lang Speech Hear Serv Sch.* 49/3, 340-355. https://doi.org/10.1044/2018_LSHSS-17-0114.
- Arias, Rosario 2011. "Life After Man?: Posthumanity and Genetic Engineering in Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*". In Valeria Tinkler-Villani, C.C. Barfoot (eds), *Restoring the Mystery of the Rainbow: Literature's Refraction of Science. DQR Studies in Literature* 47 (January). https://doi.org/10.1163/9789401200011_021.
- Bayer, Gerd 2015. "Perpetual Apocalypses: David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas* and the Absence of Time". *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction* 56/4, 345-354. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00111619.2014.959645>.
- Beinhocker, Eric D. 2006. *The Origin of Wealth: The Radical Remaking of Economics and What It Means for Business and Society*. Boston (MA): Harvard Business School Press.
- Berne, Eric 2015. *Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy: A Systematic Individual and Social Psychiatry*. Mansfield Centre.
- Black, Shameem 2009. "Ishiguro's Inhuman Aesthetics". *Modern Fiction Studies* 55/4, 785-807.
- Britzman, Deborah P. 2006. "On Being a Slow Reader: Psychoanalytic Reading Problems in Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*". *Changing English* 13/3, 307-318. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13586840600971810>.
- Cahalan, William 1983. "An Elaboration of The Gestalt Personality Theory: The Experience of Self in Social Relations". *Gestalt Journal* 6/1, 39-53.
- Caporale, Silvia 2013. "Recollecting Memories, Reconstructing Identities: Narrators as Storytellers in Kazuo Ishiguro's *When We Were Orphans* and *Never Let Me Go*". *Atlantis* 35/2, 65-80.
- Dolliver, Robert H. 1994. "Classifying the Personality Theories and Personalities of Adler, Freud, and Jung with Introversion/Extraversion". *Individual Psychology: Journal of Adlerian Theory, Research & Practice* 50/2, 192-202.
- Freud, Sigmund 1990. *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*. New York (NY): Norton.
- Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie 2017. "Eugenic World Building and Disability: The Strange World of Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*". *J Med Humanit* 38, 133-145. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10912-015-9368-y>.
- Giacolini, Teodosio, Sabatello, Ugo 2019. "Psychoanalysis and Affective Neuroscience. The Motivational/Emotional System of Aggression in Human

- Relations.” *Frontiers in Psychology* 9/2475, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02475>.
- Harris, Thomas A. 2004. *I'm OK – You're OK*. New York (NY): Harper Perennial.
- Hinterberger, Thilo 2015. “The Science of Consciousness – Basics, Models, and Visions”. *Journal of Physiology – Paris* 109/4-6, 143-151. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jphysparis.2015.12.001>.
- Hsu, Jeremy 2012. “Could the Human Clones of *Cloud Atlas* Be in Our Future?” *NBCNews*, https://www.nbcnews.com/id/49575815/ns/technology_and_science-science/t/could-uman-clones-cloud-atlas-be-our-future/#.XzQAeCgzbIW.
- Ishiguro, Kazuo 1989. “An Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro.” Interview by Gregory Mason. *Contemporary Literature*, 30/3, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1208408>.
- Ishiguro, Kazuo 2005. “An Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro.” Interview. *BookBrowse*, October, 2005. https://www.bookbrowse.com/author_interviews/full/index.cfm/author_number/477/kazuo-ishiguro.
- Ishiguro, Kazuo 2010. *Never Let Me Go*. Faber and Faber.
- Jovanović, Iris Vidmar 2016. “Identity, Humanity and Bioethics: Philosophical Aspects of *Never Let Me Go*”. In Prnjat A., Kolarić V. (eds), *Shadows in the Cave: Film and Philosophy*. Alfa Univerzitet, Beograd.
- Lee, Ji Eun 2019. “Norfolk and the Sense of Loss: The Bildungsroman and Colonial Subjectivity in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*”. *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 61/3, 270-290. <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/732628>.
- Lester, David 2019. *Theories of Personality: A Systems Approach*. London: Routledge.
- Loi, Pasqualino et al. 2013 “Sheep: The First Large Animal Model in Nuclear Transfer Research”. *Cellular Reprogramming* 15/5, 367-373. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cell.2013.0032>.
- McMains, Vanessa, Jones, Helen 2019. “Golden Ratio Observed in Human Skulls.” *Johns Hopkins Medicine* (March).
- Mitchell, David 2004. *Cloud Atlas*. Random House.
- Nobel Prize 2021. “Biographical: Kazuo Ishiguro”. *Nobel Prize Outreach AB*. <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/2017/ishiguro/biographical/>.
- Penfield, Wilder 1952. “Memory Mechanisms”. *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 67/2, 178-198.
- Puchner, Martin 2008. “When We Were Clones”. *Raritan* 27/4, 34-49.
- Query, Patrick. R. 2015. “*Never Let Me Go* and the Horizons of the Novel”. *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction* 56/2, 155-172. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00111619.2013.868339>.
- Ray, Kasturi Sinha 2018. “Kathy H’s Identity and the Readers’ Role in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*”. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)* 6/1, 284-288.
- Ray, Kasturi Sinha 2018. “Manipulating Reading: A Detailed Study of the Mnemotechniques in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*, a Love Story”. *International Journal of English Language, Literature in Humanities (IJLLH)* 6/1, 770-784.
- Rishav, Paul 2017. “Social Other and the Self in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*”. *International Journal of English and Literature (IJEL)* 7/4, 15-20.
- Shaddox, Karl 2013 “Generic Considerations in Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*”. *Human Rights Quarterly* 35/2, 448-469. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hrq.2013.0026>.
- Singh, Parmanand 1985. “The So-called Fibonacci Numbers in Ancient and Medieval India.” *Historia Mathematica* 12 (August): 229-244.

- Slingerland, Edward 2014. *Trying Not to Try: The Art and Science of Spontaneity*. Crown.
- Taketomi, Ria 2018. "Reading *Never Let Me Go* from the Mujo Perspective of Buddhism". *American British and Canadian Studies* 31/1, 114-128. <https://doi.org/10.2478/abcsj-2018-0019>.
- Taketomi, Ria 2017. "Accepting Mortality in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*: A Thin Line between Fantasy and Reality". *Comparatio* 21 (December): 5-14. <https://doi.org/10.15017/1909543>.
- Willems, Brian 2010. *Facticity, Poverty and Clones: On Kazuo Ishiguro's Never Let Me Go*. In Schirmacher, Wolfgang (ed.). New York: Antropos.
- Wong, Cynthia F. 2005. *Kazuo Ishiguro*. Tavistock: Northcote House.
- Zupko, Jack 1997. "What Is the Science of the Soul? A Case Study in the Evolution of Late Medieval Natural Philosophy". *Synthese* 110/2, 297-334.
- Walkowitz, Rebecca L. 2007. Unimaginable Largeness: Kazuo Ishiguro, Translation, and the New World Literature. *Novel* 40/3, 216-239.
- Wolfe, Cary 2010. *What is Posthumanism?* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Abstract

This theoretical study aims to show how clones portray humanity while outlining the therapeutic quality of Kazuo Ishiguro's sixth novel *Never Let Me Go*. The world depicted accepts human cloning as a form of preserving the human body. Although the narrating character Kathy and her friends, Ruth and Tommy, seem at peace with their destiny as donors, their burning desire to be treated as human beings underlies the dystopian nature of the novel. In the first part, social distortion is explained in connection with nature's golden ratio. Clones' interaction is then analysed with the help of Eric Berne's transactional analysis and the three ego states of each human personality. Kathy, Ruth and Tommy's lack of reaction towards the (ab)normality of genetic modification is identified as a form of the Daoist *Wu wei*, in the third part of the study. By learning to master her unfulfilled desire for human nature, Kathy will eventually let go.



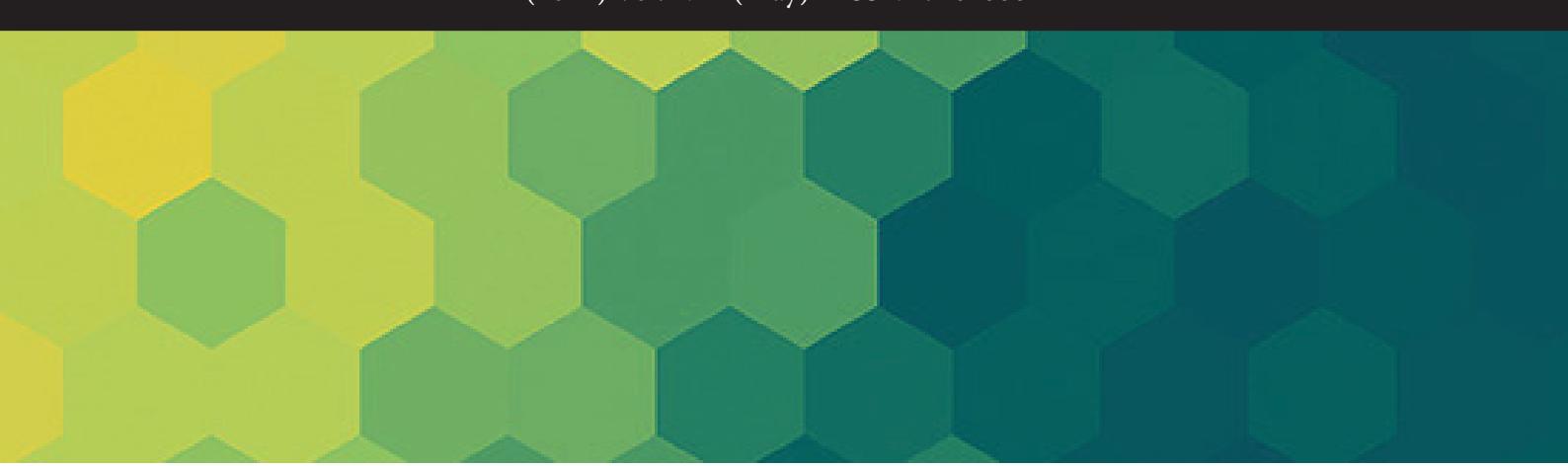
Rivista dell'Associazione italiana per lo studio della fantascienza e del fantastico

ContactZone n. 1 (May) 2022

Non-human Narrators in Science Fiction

Editors: Oriana Palusci and Valentina Romanzi

Contributi di: Oriana Palusci; Valentina Romanzi; Simone Pettine; Amalia Călinescu; Lena Crucitti; Wendy Wright; Emily Scarrott; Kara McCormack; Claudio V. Coccoli



(2022) Vol. N° 1 (May) – ISSN 2723-8881