



ECOLOGICAL ANXIETY IN LIZ JENSEN'S *THE RAPTURE*

Liz Jensen'in *Elçi* Romanında Ekolojik Kaygı

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this article is to analyze Liz Jensen's *The Rapture* from the perspective of the Anthropocene, focusing on how environmental catastrophes shape both the physical world and human psychology. By portraying the destructive impact of climate change and ecological collapse, Jensen presents a narrative where human actions such as fossil fuel consumption, deforestation, and chemical pollution are recognized as significant geological forces. This article explores the psychological consequences of living in a disintegrating world, emphasizing how natural disasters, rising sea levels, and extreme weather conditions exacerbate anxiety, trauma, and existential dread. In *The Rapture*, Jensen illustrates that the environment is not a passive backdrop but an active force that reshapes human experiences. Catastrophic events, such as storms, tsunamis, and ecosystem collapse, serve as more than plot devices; they function as material-affective agents that profoundly influence characters' emotional and mental states. In doing so, the novel highlights the inseparability of human and nonhuman elements in navigating environmental crises. On the contrary, this article argues that *The Rapture* rejects narratives that treat nature as a distant, abstract threat and instead portrays it as an ever-present reality that demands urgent attention. At the same time, as this article demonstrates, Jensen's novel decenters human sovereignty by emphasizing humanity's vulnerability within the Anthropocene.

Keywords: Liz Jensen, Anthropocene, environmental catastrophe, ecological anxiety, psychological trauma.

ÖZ

Liz Jensen'in *Elçi* adlı romanı, Antroposen Çağı perspektifinden ele alındığında, çevresel felaketlerin hem fiziksel dünyayı hem de insan psikolojisini nasıl şekillendirdiğini gözler önüne serer. Jensen, iklim değişikliği ve ekolojik çöküşün yıkıcı etkilerini betimleyerek fosil yakıt kullanımı, ormansızlaşma ve kimyasal kirlilik gibi insan faaliyetlerini önemli jeolojik güçler olarak kabul eder. Roman, doğa felaketlerinin, yükselen deniz seviyelerinin ve aşırı hava koşullarının insanlarda kaygı, travma ve varo-

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luşsal korkuları nasıl derinleştirdiğini vurgularken, çökmekte olan bir dünyada yaşamın psikolojik sonuçlarını da inceler. Jensen, *Elçi* romanında çevrenin pasif bir arka plan değil, insan deneyimlerini yeniden şekillendiren aktif bir güç olduğunu ortaya koyar. Roman boyunca fırtınalar, tsunamiler ve ekosistem çöküşleri gibi felaketler yalnızca anlatının bir parçası değil, aynı zamanda karakterlerin duygusal ve zihinsel durumlarını derinden etkileyen maddi-duygusal ajanlar olarak işlev görür. Bu bağlamda roman, çevresel krizlerin insan ve insan olmayan unsurların ayrılmaz bir bütün olduğunu vurgular. Bunun aksine, bu çalışma *Elçi* romanının, doğayı soyut ve uzak bir tehdit olarak ele alan anlatıları reddettiğini ve onu sürekli ve kaçınılmaz bir gerçeklik olarak sunduğunu savunur. Jensen'in romanı, Antroposen Çağı'nda insanın kırılganlığını ön plana çıkarırken insan merkezli egemenlik anlayışını da sorgular.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Liz Jensen, Antroposen, çevresel felaket, ekolojik kaygı, psikolojik travma.

Introduction

Climate change stands as one of the most pressing challenges humanity faces in the twenty-first century. Liz Jensen, a British author born in Oxfordshire in 1959, has a versatile literary career that spans genres such as black comedy, science fiction, and psychological suspense. On her official website, Jensen mentions her experience working as a journalist in Hong Kong and Taiwan before moving to Denmark in 2013. Among her critically acclaimed works are two ecological thrillers, *The Rapture* and *The Uninvited*, published in 2009 and 2012, respectively. Jensen transforms the instability of climate change into a narrative backdrop that explores the psychological traumas and existential anxieties of her characters. By presenting environmental collapse as an unavoidable force shaping human behavior and belief systems, the novel emphasizes the dependence of human survival on the preservation of the environment.

The Rapture narrates the story of Gabrielle Fox, a psychotherapist, who encounters Bethany Krall, a patient in a psychiatric hospital who claims to predict environmental catastrophes following electroconvulsive therapy. Set in a future shaped by climate change, the novel explores a world altered by human actions, emphasizing humanity's significant impact on the environment. Throughout *The Rapture*, Jensen depicts various environmental catastrophes that mirror real-world concerns. The narrative begins with rising temperatures so severe that "one could taste a tang of ozone on one's tongue" (Jensen, 2009: 12). This oppressive heatwave sets the tone

for a series of catastrophic events, including a hurricane that destroys Rio and causes the iconic Christ the Redeemer statue to collapse (60). Istanbul is devastated by a shattering earthquake, leaving the city “desolate as a hundred thousand Ground Zeros” (86). Moreover, the novel depicts methane drilling off Norway’s coast, a dangerous action that threatens to trigger a tsunami capable of submerging parts of northern Europe (198). The novel also highlights the psychological impacts of climate change on individuals. As Bethany’s predictions come true, the characters experience a growing sense of anxiety and existential dread. Jensen demonstrates the emotional burden of living in a world where natural disasters are no longer rare occurrences but an expected part of daily life. However, as Gifford argues, *The Rapture* relies on the reader’s belief in Bethany’s predictive abilities; otherwise, “the thrust of the narrative loses its power and the novel becomes another apocalyptic exploiter of consumers in an uncertain age” (Gifford, 2010: 719). This perspective highlights how the novel navigates the fine line between genuine ecological warning and market-driven apocalyptic sensationalism.

This study aims to explore how *The Rapture* aligns with the defining traits of climate fiction and examines how Jensen addresses themes of the Anthropocene, climate change, environmental catastrophes, and their psychological repercussions. The article first outlines key concepts such as the Anthropocene and climate fiction before analyzing the novel’s depiction of environmental crises and their effects on human psychology.

1. The Anthropocene and Climate Change Literature

The concept of the Anthropocene has emerged as a critical framework for understanding the environmental crises induced by human activity. Over the past decade, it has gained traction across multiple disciplines, including ecology, environmental science, history, anthropology, and literary studies. The term, first proposed by Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer in 2000, marks the recognition of a new geological epoch distinguished by human-driven transformations of the Earth’s systems. Crutzen argues that the Anthropocene began in the latter part of the eighteenth century, correlating its onset with the industrial revolution and the rising levels of carbon dioxide and methane trapped in polar ice (Crutzen and Stoermer, 2000: 17–18). The term itself combines the Greek word *anthropos*, meaning human, with *kainos*, meaning recent or new (Maxwell, 2010). Unlike prior geological epochs, the Anthropocene is marked by human activity as the dominant force shaping planetary conditions. This fundamental shift highlights the

extent to which industrialization, technological expansion, and resource consumption have propelled the Earth into an era of unprecedented ecological instability. As Dipesh Chakrabarty observes, the Anthropocene presents three interwoven challenges: first, it demands a planetary perspective on environmental issues; second, it necessitates a long-term examination of human-nature relations; and third, it calls for a reconsideration of human responsibilities in this new epoch, urging the humanities to reassess how they conceptualize environmental history and human identity (Chakrabarty, 2009). The Anthropocene is not merely a geological designation but also a conceptual paradigm that challenges existing methodologies across the sciences and humanities. As Pálsson et al. argue, it is the first epoch in which the dominant geological force, humanity, is aware of its impact, positioning the Anthropocene as both a scientific reality and an existential challenge for future generations (Pálsson et al., 2013: 8). Moreover, Tobias Menely and Margaret Ronda suggest that the Anthropocene represents not only the destructive consequences of global capitalism, such as pollution, deforestation, and biodiversity loss, but also the ideological tendency to commodify all natural entities as human capital, despite the glaring ecological limits of such expansion (Menely and Ronda in Clark, 2015: 2). The Anthropocene, therefore, encapsulates the paradox of an epoch defined by human agency yet marked by environmental fragility. This paradox raises significant questions about the role of environmental discourse, particularly ecocriticism, in addressing the Anthropocene's global implications. Timothy Clark critiques ecocriticism for its inability to fully address the scope of the Anthropocene, arguing that its focus on cultural imagination and ethical reflection lacks the practical force to counteract consumerist economies (Clark, 2015: 18). Similarly, Bracke contends that ecocriticism, while valuable in shaping cultural narratives, lacks a coherent critical methodology and fails to influence broader institutional structures (Bracke, 2012: 6). As Buell (2005) highlights, ecocriticism faces multiple challenges, including issues of "legitimacy," the absence of systematic models of inquiry, and difficulties in integrating its findings across disciplinary boundaries (Buell, 2005: 10). These limitations suggest that while ecocriticism contributes to an expanded understanding of the Anthropocene, its practical impact remains constrained by broader socio-political forces.

A key consequence of the Anthropocene is anthropogenic climate change, a phenomenon driven by human activities that disrupt the Earth's climatic equilibrium. Human-induced climate change has long been un-

derestimated, largely due to the gradual nature of its early effects and the difficulty of visualizing its long-term impacts. However, contemporary research increasingly highlights the urgency of the crisis. Oldfield and Steffen assert that climate change represents a fundamental destabilization of Earth's climatic systems, resulting from the accelerated consumption of fossil fuels and the overexploitation of natural resources (Oldfield and Steffen, 2014: 70). Stefan Rahmstorf distinguishes between two definitions of anthropogenic climate change: one referring to the future impacts of greenhouse gas emissions and the other recognizing the tangible effects already observed in the present (Rahmstorf, 2008: 35). Climate change, therefore, is not simply an environmental issue but a multidimensional crisis that intersects with economic, social, and political structures. Jodi Dean, in her discussion of climate politics, introduces the concept of "anamorphic politics," arguing that climate change perception is shaped by positionality and perspective. She describes climate change as a phenomenon that is simultaneously impossible and inevitable, omnipresent yet invisible, creating a psychological and political paradox that affects public engagement with environmental issues (Dean, 2016: 1). Norgaard expands on this paradox, arguing that climate denial is not necessarily a product of ignorance but rather a socially constructed mechanism for avoiding responsibility (Norgaard, 2011: 12). Public awareness of climate risks does not automatically translate into behavioral change, highlighting the need for new political and civic frameworks to address the crisis. Andrew Dobson proposes "ecological citizenship" as a model for fostering environmental responsibility, emphasizing that traditional forms of citizenship, which are largely territorial and contractual, are inadequate for addressing transnational ecological concerns (Dobson, 2003: 39). His concept of post-cosmopolitan citizenship moves beyond nation-state boundaries to recognize the global nature of ecological interdependence, proposing tools such as the "ecological footprint" to measure individual and collective environmental impact (Dobson, 2003: 100). Similarly, Johns-Putra argues that climate fiction does not form a distinct genre but represents a new category of modern literature that crosses traditional genre boundaries, appearing in science fiction, dystopian narratives, and psychological realism (Johns-Putra, 2016: 1-2). These perspectives reveal the necessity of rethinking political agency and responsibility in the Anthropocene. As climate change continues to reshape ecological and social landscapes, the need for integrated approaches that bridge scientific research, political action, and cultural transformation be-

comes increasingly apparent. The Anthropocene thus demands a shift in both perception and practice, urging scholars, policymakers, and global citizens to recognize the interwoven complexities of environmental change and human agency.

Jensen's *The Rapture* utilizes a factual and documentary style that channels scientific information through its narrative, giving it an instructional tone (Moussier, 2009: 4). Butler emphasizes that Jensen's work encourages readers to engage with climate change through an experiential process, offering a narrative that intertwines environmental themes with psychological insight (Butler, 2018: 8). Furthermore, Jensen's narrative focuses on the psychological dimension of climate change. The novel's protagonist, Gabrielle Fox, navigates a world increasingly shaped by environmental disasters. Her patient, Bethany Krall, claims to predict such catastrophes following electroconvulsive therapy. The novel opens with unsettling descriptions of rising temperatures: "one could taste a tang of ozone on one's tongue" (Jensen, 2009: 12). These environmental phenomena are not mere background details but central to the unfolding narrative, emphasizing the psychological and existential challenges of living in the Anthropocene. Frederick Buell asserts that environmental crises shape contemporary literature by influencing fictional conflicts, character development, and narrative structures (Buell, 2014: 261). Similarly, Mundler observes that characters in cli-fi novels often deal with adapting to life in a drastically altered world. Eco-anxiety, a term increasingly used in psychological and environmental discourse, refers to the persistent fear and distress associated with climate change and ecological crises. Panu Pihkala defines it as "a chronic fear of environmental doom" and emphasizes that it encompasses a range of emotions, including grief, anger, guilt, and helplessness (Pihkala, 2020: 8). This psychological burden is closely linked to the broader concept of solastalgia, which Glenn Albrecht describes as "the homesickness one gets when still at home," caused by environmental degradation and loss (Albrecht, 2005: 48). In Liz Jensen's *The Rapture*, this emotional turmoil is central to the characters' experiences as they navigate both external climate catastrophes and internal anxieties about an uncertain future. As Mundler observes, the novel explores the "psychological impact of environmental collapse," portraying characters whose fear and despair mirror real-world eco-anxiety (Mundler, 2019: 1). Jensen's narrative thus serves as both a reflection of and a response to contemporary anxieties surrounding

the Anthropocene, illustrating how individuals struggle to adapt to a world increasingly shaped by climate instability.

The novel highlights two distinct approaches in climate fiction: works that foreground environmental crises as catastrophic events and those that present ecological collapse as a persistent undercurrent shaping human anxieties. Jensen's narrative adopts the former approach, using the plot to emphasize the immediate and destructive effects of climate change. Otto suggests that Jensen's novel provide a detailed exploration of contemporary ecological issues, offering both educational insights and emotional engagement (Otto, 2012: 5). Stavris (2018) further argues that climate change is a driving force in Jensen's works, propelling the narrative toward its apocalyptic climax (Stavris, 2018: 35). In light of these studies, *The Rapture* can be considered as a significant example of Anthropocene literature. Rather than relying solely on moral reflection, the novel immerses readers in a world where environmental crises are unavoidable realities. By combining elements of the thriller genre with documentary realism, Jensen creates a narrative that compels readers to consider the psychological and social implications of living in the Anthropocene. The novel's exploration of human vulnerability in the face of ecological instability further presents the need to rethink humanity's relationship with the planet.

2. Environmental Catastrophes in *The Rapture*

In *The Rapture* Climate change plays a major role as an active force impacting the plot, the world, and the lives of the characters in a way that sets the novel apart from the reader's current reality, when in many other novels it is only a setting. The novel's opening lines establish this new life right away, demonstrating how the characters' normal lives now include surviving extreme weather:

That summer [...] June seemed to last for a thousand years. The temperatures were merciless [...] The sky pressed down like a furnace lid, shrinking the subsoil, cracking concrete, killing shrubs from the roots up... asphyxiated, you longed for rain. It didn't come' (3). Similarly, we read later: 'The heat has become so ferocious that venturing outside is an ordeal, something one must gear up to, armed with drinking water, sunglasses, cream, headgear. Items that were once optional accessories are now survival kits (Jensen, 2009: 124).

Furthermore, lines indicating a transition between the reader's reality and the fictional world are scattered throughout the novel: "Five years ago, the British season made some kind of sense. Not anymore" (54). The reference to the British season losing its familiar pattern within a short period demonstrates how rapidly climate shifts are occurring. It points to the destabilization of previously predictable seasonal cycles, reflecting the broader impact of climate change on natural rhythms and human perceptions of time.

The Rapture's plot relies on real-world environmental risks and warns against the risks of massive hurricanes caused by global warming and climate change. Bethany forecasts a forthcoming massive and uncommon hurricane that will hit South America. But Frazer does not give credit to her forecast. In the novel, the approaching of hurricane Stella, which hits South America and Rio, is narrated step by step and day by day in details: "And there's going to be a massive hurricane hitting Rio de Janeiro next week? On the twenty-ninth? She gets very specific. And it all seems to be Armageddon-related, one way or another" (52). Hurricane Stella hits Rio on the date Bethany predicted. The people watch the "Rio Christ falling on TV". Hurricane Stella concludes its two-day rampage; it wipes out" four thousand lives in Rio de Janeiro" (60). *The Rapture* uses a journalistic approach to the subject that is similar to documentary realism, combining scientific and factual information and integrating nonliterary discourses into the fictional narrative. For example, the first-person narrative shifts to a documentary-type, technical style that mirrors the scientific book the protagonist is reading as she looks into the reason for the impending tsunami Bethany states: "I have encountered the word clathrate [...] a thin coating of ice that has developed around a gas molecule, [...] When I learn what is trapped inside these ice hexagons, I put my hand to my neck and note its heat (188). Thus, as the scientific material is passed through the protagonist's thoughts, the reader is encouraged to learn facts alongside her. Otto argues that Liz Jensen's *The Rapture* is also about an impending Storegga event, the mining operation that will cause it, and the fast-paced effort to locate and evacuate its potential victims (2012: 10). In *The Rapture*, the ultimate cause of the Storegga slide is clearly the "energy giant Traxorac, who are drilling for frozen methane" off the coast of Norway and who disregard seismic data that highlights the risks they are taking (Jensen, 2009: 241). The novel gives information noticeably about a similar event that happened in the past as a documentary as the protagonist and her team locate the place of the future mining accident in a real-life location where risk assessments about the

environmental catastrophes have previously been carried out on these matters, the Storegga Slide and tsunami. This time, the facts incorporated into the story are discovered during a discussion with a climatologist:

Have you heard of the Storegga Slide? [...] It's a massive package of sand and mud off the continental shelf that stretches for hundred kilometers, from Norway to Greenland. It's the result of the biggest submarine upheaval we know of, eight thousand years ago. It generated a huge tsunami that washed over most of the British Isles. This rig is sited on the edge of the Storegga [...] A huge underwater collapse anywhere in the Storegga region will cause a tsunami that will devastate the entire area (Jensen, 2009: 254).

The climatologist's monologue transforms into an environmental risk analysis, explaining the potential for a submarine avalanche and the release of methane, a gas far more potent than CO₂. The destabilization of sediment could trigger a chain reaction across the hydrate field, leading to a massive tsunami and uncontrolled global warming. The reference to the "clathrate gun hypothesis" highlights the catastrophic impact of methane release, warning of irreversible climate consequences that exceed the worst predictions (228). In this context, *The Rapture* provides factual information based on contemporary scientific data, papers, and risk assessments about the environmental catastrophes verifiable for the reader outside of the fictional text. The narrative style shifts from the conventional literary discourse disrupts the illusion of fictionality of the novel and reminds the readers to have climate change awareness. Moussier argues that *The Rapture* draws attention to the dangers of a technique promoted as a green alternative to fossil fuels. The novel presents climate catastrophe as a hybrid crisis, linking specific environmental issues to rapid global warming. It highlights how technical, natural, and economic factors are interconnected in accelerating climate change (Moussier, 2009: 7). Thus, beyond its thriller and ci-fi elements, *The Rapture* engages with documentary realism and gives scientific data on greenhouse gases and ocean floor destabilization. Environmental issues are used not only for narrative effect but also for educational, and instructive objectives. Furthermore, *The Rapture* benefits from the conventions of science fiction, a key genre in speculative environmental writing, to project the potential consequences of current scientific developments and environmental risks.

3. Ecological Anxiety and Trauma in *The Rapture*

The Rapture constructs a psychologically charged atmosphere through depicting the emotional and cognitive struggles of its characters. As climate disasters become an unavoidable reality within the novel, the protagonists are forced to reconcile their internal anxieties with the external chaos of an unstable world. The novel's psychological depth is heightened by its narrative perspective and its engagement with the field of psychology. As Baysal notes, *The Rapture* "possesses a psychologically impactful atmosphere due to the connection of two main characters (Bethany and Gabrielle) with the field of psychology, the omnipresence of natural disasters as part of daily life, and the narration of the story from Bethany's perspective" (Baysal, 2019: 211). Through these two characters, Jensen not only captures the emotional weight of ecological catastrophe but also foregrounds the psychological dimensions of eco-anxiety. Gabrielle Fox, the protagonist of *The Rapture*, is introduced as a psychologist dealing with the aftermath of a traumatic car accident that leaves her paraplegic and emotionally fractured. Her reflection on her past life reveals a difficult process of grief and compartmentalization. The reference to the "happy drawer" (Jensen, 2009: 14), where she stores memories of her deceased partner and a token from a patient who died by suicide, demonstrates her struggle to manage trauma. The drawer symbolizes both a place for painful memories and an ironic attempt to impose order on emotional chaos. This juxtaposition reflects Gabrielle's attempt to reconcile her sense of loss with a need for psychological survival. Gabrielle's pursuit of normalcy leads her to "Oxsmith Adolescent Secure Psychiatric Hospital" (5), where she confronts Bethany Krall, a patient convicted of killing her mother. Their first interaction subverts traditional relationships between therapist and patient. Bethany's sharp, sardonic observation of Gabrielle's wheelchair, calling it "positive discrimination" (6), highlights her defiance and lack of remorse. Gabrielle's response: "I specialise in art therapy. Subscribing to the theory that art's a good way of expressing feelings when words fail" (6), suggests a professional detachment that masks her own vulnerabilities. The encounter establishes a tension between control and chaos, as Gabrielle's attempts to maintain authority are tested by Bethany's provocations. Gabrielle's internal monologue and her dialogue with Bethany expose the novel's exploration of psychological resilience. In this sense, Gabrielle's trauma is not neatly resolved but managed through a careful balancing of memory and

present reality. The narrative uses objects and exchanges to illustrate how characters negotiate their grief and trauma.

Gabrielle's perception of her identity shifts following the accident, particularly in relation to her gender and social expectations. She finds herself unable to conform to traditional notions of femininity, describing her new reality as one without a clear role or future. Gabrielle's detachment experience is similar to the disintegration of the self after a traumatic event. In this context, Michelle Balaev maintains, "although psychiatrists and psychologists disagree over the effects of the extreme experience on the survivor's memory and identity, there is general agreement that traumatic experience can disrupt or alter consciousness, memory, sense of self, and relation to community." (quoted in Stavris, 2018: 56). Gabrielle feels that she is trapped in her own version of reality, which states that she will never again be attractive, will never have the chance to become pregnant, and will never experience love. Gabrielle explains that she is unable to identify "the category [she'd] fit into as a woman with no man, no baby, no feeling below the waist, and no imaginable future" (Jensen, 2009: 109). Stavris states that Gabrielle essentially believes she has lost her gender, her sexuality, and eventually her future as a result of her personal trauma (57). After the accident, Gabrielle finds it difficult to feel at ease in her femininity. She is unable to rearrange her identity in light of her new identity and she confronts identity problems in her new life.

Gabrielle sees the green high heels she is wearing as belonging to her past life in "the world of Before" (38), and as largely meaningless in her current reality. She is unable to see herself as a woman and no longer fits the model of her previously idealized self. Gabrielle further reveals her unease about wearing a dress to the charity dinner to which she is invited elsewhere, saying, "The fact is, I feel fraudulent, undignified, and inappropriate: a non-woman pretending to be a real one. The blood-red dress, which would look elegant on an upright woman, feels brash stuffed into a wheelchair" (65). On the other hand, Gabrielle describes herself as "cleavage on wheels" as she rushes into a formal occasion in her wheelchair, looking fierce. "I'm not well. Barbie attends a party, but for reasons no one can explain, she does not get lost (56). As she dresses to kill in her wheelchair and heads to a formal event, she describes herself, "I am cleavage on wheels. I am disabled barbie goes to a party but does not get laid for reasons that escape no one" (56). Her world has ended due to the traumatic car accident, but it has also opened up a new one where Gabrielle can now

look back and observe how her previous life and the cultural situation function. On the other hand, Dr. Sheldon-Gray, Gabrielle's boss and director of the psychiatric hospital, does not feel comfortable due to Bethany's predictions and their coming true. Gabrielle is forced into open combat with Dr. Sheldon-Gray. His only concern is transferring Bethany to some other institution so she becomes someone else's problem. Butler believes that their exchange over his decision to transfer Bethany to a maximum security psychiatric prison, "modern psychiatry's death row" (144), as Gabrielle puts it, is just another imaginative allegory on the passing of blame for global warming and its consequences:

Anyway. Since you've been her most recent therapist, I just thought you should know [about the transfer]. As soon as she's free to leave our hospital, she's no longer our patient. "Or our problem." [Gabrielle responds]. He smiles. "Semantics. We do the best we can. But there's no dishonor in admitting that Bethany Krall's treatment here has been one of our most spectacular failures." (Jensen, 2009: 145).

Dr. Sheldon-Gray has an inaccurate belief that if he gets Bethany out of his hospital, she won't be there and he won't be concerned about the hospital's inability to treat her. This reflects the transfer of responsibility and systemic failures in the psychiatric institution, demonstrating broader socio-economic patterns of blame-shifting within late capitalist systems. As Şencan argues, institutions in late capitalism are primarily concerned with their own self-preservation, avoiding accountability "even in the face of potential ecological catastrophe" (2024: 1). The idea of Bethany being seen as a problem to be transferred elsewhere reflects the passing of blame for global warming and its consequences. As it looks like Dr. Sheldon-Gray wants to be away from Bethany and her predictions due to his feeling anxious about them. He looks like a person who does not want to take any responsibility for global warming and its consequences (Butler, 2018, 38).

The commodification of spirituality within late capitalist societies like Britain shapes a central theme in *The Rapture*. Liz Jensen criticizes the popular culture's appropriation of faith as a response to global crises. This phenomenon aligns with Şencan's concept of "neo-spiritual consumerism," which refers to the process by which spiritual beliefs and practices are transformed into consumer products within a capitalist framework (Şencan, 2024: 1). Jensen's depiction of the "Faith Wave" (Jensen, 2009: 13), movement situates the novel in the aftermath of a global economic collapse. As

the novel details, the Faith Wave “brought over by the British citizens who abandoned their sunshine homes in Florida and returned to the UK after the global crash,” rapidly gained popularity through “celebrity conversions and a swathe of addictive, redemption-themed TV shows” (13). Jensen’s depiction presents the movement as a cultural response to economic instability, turning existential anxieties into commodified spiritual narratives. Just as Jensen’s Faith Wave operates as a spiritual escape route for a destabilized population, it also reflects the wider patterns of blame-shifting and avoidance inherent in late capitalist systems. Rather than confronting the structural causes of environmental and economic collapse, the Faith Wave provides what Şencan describes as a “temporary emotional refuge” that capitalizes on fear and uncertainty without offering any substantive change (Şencan, 2024: 4). The narrative highlights the performative nature of such movements, wherein public figures become the face of salvation, reinforcing a cyclical pattern of crisis and superficial resolution. Through the figure of Bethany, the novel suggests that such spiritual commodification functions as a distraction from more serious social issues. This demonstrates how late capitalism appropriates even apocalyptic fears as marketable products. As Jensen reflects, redemption is not sought through ethical or social reform but through televised performances of conversion and repentance. The Faith Wave thus becomes emblematic of a broader sense of denial to engage with the root causes of ecological crises, mirroring “the pervasive logic of late capitalism’s commodification” of all aspects of life, including the sacred change (Şencan, 2024: 4). The only character who resists this cultural commodification is Gabrielle who loses her job as a result of her obvious disobedience to the transfer of Bethany. In addition, Joy McConey, the female therapist assigned to Bethany before Gabrielle, considers Bethany to do more than feel the way things flow and she is anxious about Bethany and her predictions. Joy tells Gabrielle, “She’s not just predicting things! She’s making them happen!” (82). Joy has been so shocked by Bethany that she even believes that she is to blame for her cancer diagnosis. Joy speculates that Bethany is under the influence of “some kind of force. I’m not sure what to name it. I was like you once. Not so long ago, I didn’t believe in evil. But I do now” (151). Joy’s life has been taken over by her desire to escape Bethany’s perceived evil, and her desperate attempts to do so lead Gabrielle further into the science and reality of Bethany’s prophecies. Gabrielle struggles to understand Bethany, or at least to find a way to alert others to her prophecies.

The novel's conclusion demonstrates the inescapable collapse of both ecological and social structures, situating Bethany as a tragic embodiment of apocalyptic anxieties. Her final act, falling deliberately into "yellow flames bursting from the crest of the liquid swell" (Jensen, 2009: 222), constitutes a rejection of the salvific narratives dictated by her father, Leonard Krall, and the Faith Wave movement. Gabrielle, witnessing the chaos from the helicopter, reflects on the devastating consequences of human actions and the "vicious chain of tsunamis" (213), that have reshaped the Earth into an uninhabitable wasteland. The final image of the burning ocean, filled with remnants of human civilization, "plastic Barbie dolls," "hair-curlers," and "empty Evian bottles," reveals the futility of material and spiritual aspirations in the face of ecological collapse. Consequently, Bethany's death symbolizes a disillusionment with apocalyptic promises of renewal, offering a critique of late capitalist societies that commodify both faith and survival. The novel thus refuses to offer a redemptive resolution, instead portraying the future as one of permanent uncertainty and precarious survival in a post-apocalyptic landscape irrevocably shaped by human hubris and environmental collapse.

Conclusion

Liz Jensen's *The Rapture* presents a dramatic examination of the environmental catastrophe within the context of the Anthropocene. *The Rapture* combines factual commentary on existing environmental crises with speculative scenarios about future ecological risks. By blending real and imagined environmental problems, Jensen emphasizes the urgency of addressing climate change and the unpredictability of its long-term effects. In this sense, the novel embodies "a significant amount of factual commentary about current environmental problems" as well as "imagined environmental issues" that could soon become reality (Otto, 2012: 5). *The Rapture* demonstrates how contemporary novels are breaking away from traditional genre boundaries to engage with ecological issues. Jensen's narrative shifts from personal drama to a broader focus on ecological collapse, reflecting how fiction can address the dangers of climate change. In this respect, the novel utilizes the theme of "climate change" to drive the plot toward an inevitable apocalyptic outcome, emphasizing the pressing nature of global warming within the novel's framework (Stavris, 2018: 35). By framing the plot around environmental catastrophe, the novel highlights the growing presence of climate fiction within modern literature.

The Rapture indicates the necessity of expressing the complex reality of climate change from multiple points of view. Furthermore, *The Rapture* has multiple didactic purposes and deep levels of meaning due to its use of generic conventions from science fiction and documentary realism. It channels “scientific knowledge in a journalistic, educational, and instructive manner”, giving it an almost “documentary aspect” (Moussier, 2009, 4). This broad blending reminds us of the diverse causes of environmental catastrophes, which are an interaction of economic, cultural, natural, and technical factors. *The Rapture* highlights human geological actions within the restricted boundaries of the novel genre. By doing this, it calls into question traditional dualistic concepts of what it is to be human or nonhuman and points to an entirely new viewpoint on how we interact with the natural world. Gabrielle undergoes a transformation through her childhood traumas and a car accident trauma. She tries to manage all her anxiety caused due to the challenging conditions she encounters and environmental catastrophes coming true after Behany’s forecasts. Consequently, *The Rapture* triggers an awareness of climate change and global warming. It invites the reader into the severity of climate change, encourages a non-dual relationship between the mind and its environment, and offers an interior awakening (Butler, 2018, 8). Through its compelling narrative and interesting topics, *The Rapture* functions as an appropriate reminder of the need to take action against the severe hazards facing our planet. Jensen encourages us to reconsider how we deal with the natural world and take responsibility for the planet’s future.

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