

يا صاحبَ القُبَّةِ البِيضاءِ

يا صاحبَ القُبَّةِ البِيضاءِ في النَّجَفِ

مَنْ زارَ قَبْرَكَ واسْتَشْفَى لَدَيْكَ شُفِي

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الْقَيْدِ لِلْبَيْضَانِ



فصلية تُعنى بالبحوث والدراسات الإنسانية والاجتماعية العدد (٦)

السنة الثالثة شعبان ١٤٤٦ هـ شباط ٢٠٢٥ م

تصدر عن دائرة البحوث والدراسات في ديوان الوقف الشيعي

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العنوان الموقفي

مجلة القبة البيضاء

جمهورية العراق

بغداد / باب المعظم

مقابل وزارة الصحة

دائرة البحوث والدراسات

الاتصالات

مدير التحرير

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 - ث. ملخصان أحدهما باللغة العربية والآخر باللغة الإنكليزية.
 - ج. تدرج مفاتيح الكلمات باللغة العربية بعد الملخص العربي.
- ٣- أن يكون مطبوعاً على الحاسوب بنظام (office Word ٢٠٠٧ أو ٢٠١٠) وعلى قرص ليزري مدمج (CD) على شكل ملف واحد فقط (أي لا يُجزأ البحث بأكثر من ملف على القرص) وتزوّد هيئة التحرير بثلاث نسخ ورقية وتوضع الرسوم أو الأشكال، إن وُجدت، في مكانها من البحث، على أن تكون صالحة من الناحية الفنية للطباعة.
- ٤- أن لا يزيد عدد صفحات البحث على (٢٥) خمس وعشرين صفحة من الحجم (A٤).
٥. يلتزم الباحث في ترتيب وتنسيق المصادر على الصيغة APA
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- ٧- أن يكون البحث خالياً من الأخطاء اللغوية والنحوية والإملائية.
- ٨- أن يلتزم الباحث بالخطوط وأحجامها على النحو الآتي:
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 - ب. اللغة الإنكليزية: نوع الخط (Times New Roman) عناوين البحث (١٦). والملخصات (١٢). أما فقرات البحث الأخرى؛ فبحجم (١٤) .
- ٩- أن تكون هوامش البحث بالنظام التلقائي (تعليقات ختامية) في نهاية البحث. بحجم ١٢.
- ١٠- تكون مسافة الحواشي الجانبية (٢,٥٤) سم والمسافة بين الأسطر (١) .
- ١١- في حال استعمال برنامج مصحف المدينة للآيات القرآنية يتحمل الباحث ظهور هذه الآيات المباركة بالشكل الصحيح من عدمه، لذا يفضل النسخ من المصحف الإلكتروني المتوافر على شبكة الانترنت.
- ١٢- يبلغ الباحث بقرار صلاحية النشر أو عدمها في مدّة لا تتجاوز شهرين من تاريخ وصوله إلى هيئة التحرير.
- ١٣- يلتزم الباحث بإجراء تعديلات المحكمين على بحثه وفق التقارير المرسلة إليه وموافاة المجلة بنسخة معدّلة في مدّة لا تتجاوز (١٥) خمسة عشر يوماً.
- ١٤- لا يحق للباحث المطالبة بمتطلبات البحث كافة بعد مرور سنة من تاريخ النشر.
- ١٥- لا تعاد البحوث الى أصحابها سواء قبلت أم لم تقبل.
- ١٦- دمج مصادر البحث وهوامشه في عنوان واحد يكون في نهاية البحث، مع كتابة معلومات المصدر عندما يرد لأول مرة.
- ١٧- يخضع البحث للتقويم السري من ثلاثة خبراء لبيان صلاحيته للنشر.
- ١٨- يشترط على طلبة الدراسات العليا فضلاً عن الشروط السابقة جلب ما يثبت موافقة الاستاذ المشرف على البحث وفق النموذج المعتمد في المجلة.
- ١٩- يحصل الباحث على مستل واحد لبحثه، ونسخة من المجلة، وإذا رغب في الحصول على نسخة أخرى فعليه شراؤها بسعر (١٥) ألف دينار.
- ٢٠- تعبر الأبحاث المنشورة في المجلة عن آراء أصحابها لا عن رأي المجلة.
- ٢١- ترسل البحوث على العنوان الآتي: (بغداد - شارع فلسطين المركز الوطني لعلوم القرآن) أو البريد الإلكتروني: (hus65in@Gmail.com) بعد دفع الأجور في الحساب المصرفي العائد إلى الدائرة.
- ٢٢- لا تلتزم المجلة بنشر البحوث التي تُخلّ بشروط من هذه الشروط .

مَجَلَّةُ اِنْسَانِيَّةِ اِجْتِمَاعِيَّةٍ فَصْلِيَّةٌ تَصَدَّرُ عَنْ دَائِرَةِ الْبُحُوثِ وَالْدِّرَاسَاتِ فِي ذِيَوَانِ الْوَقْفِ الشَّيْخِيِّ

العدد (٦) شعبان ١٤٤٦ هـ شباط ٢٠٢٥ م المجلد الثالث

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**Beyond Human-Centered
Narratives: An Ecocritical
Exploration of Anthropocentrism
in Richard Powers' Bewilderment
and The Overstory**

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Abstract:

This article delves into Richard Powers's novels *The Overstory* and *Bewilderment* through the lens of anthropocentrism, it shows the associations between humans and their natural world. It describes how these interactions can reveal human exploitation of nature as well as reconsidering our place in the ecosystem. Both novels show biological and spiritual interconnections through the main characters and their reactions to the natural elements. Richard Powers' use of this narrative style enhances the reader's understanding of the importance of eco-friendly life and shows how trees contribute to human life, both through emotional and environmental influence. The research criticizes human tendencies toward superiority by condemning human actions that cause the devastation of the environment as well as human civilization. *The Overstory* and *Bewilderment*, throughout their characters, become more environmentally conscious, it inspires the reader to contemplate the linkages that connect all living things, fostering a more holistic and compassionate perspective of the natural world. This study proves that the connectivity of humans and their environment may influence community values, it urges a rethinking of anthropocentrism and boosting awareness of the significance of supporting ecological balance. Powers promotes a more nuanced concept of cohabitation, bringing up new possibilities for environmental ethics. Furthermore, this investigation shows how the intertwining of all living things can reshape ethics and activities, calling for a re-evaluation of the concept of anthropocentrism and raising awareness of the importance of preserving ecological balance.

Keywords: interconnections, anthropocentrism, awareness, ecology, ethics.

المستخلص:

الملخص يتناول هذا المقال روايتي ريتشارد باورز الحيرة و"القصة الكبرى" من خلال عدسة النزعة المركزية البشرية، ويوضح الارتباطات بين البشر وعالمهم الطبيعي. ويصف كيف يمكن لهذه التفاعلات أن تكشف عن الاستغلال البشري للطبيعة، فضلاً عن إعادة النظر في مكاننا في النظام البيئي، وتُظهر كلتا الروايتين الترابطات البيولوجية والروحية من خلال الشخصيات الرئيسية وردود أفعالها تجاه العناصر الطبيعية. إن استخدام ريتشارد باورز لهذا الأسلوب السرد يعزز فهم القارئ لأهمية الحياة الصديقة للبيئة ويظهر كيف تساهم الأشجار في حياة الإنسان، سواء من خلال التأثير العاطفي أو البيئي. ينتقد البحث الميول البشرية نحو التفوق من خلال إدانة الأفعال البشرية التي تسبب دمار البيئة وكذلك الحضارة الإنسانية. أصبحت قصة الحيرة و"القصة الكبرى"، من خلال شخصياتهما، أكثر وعياً بالبيئة، فهي تلهم القارئ للتأمل في الروابط التي تربط بين جميع الكائنات الحية، وتعزز

منظوراً أكثر شمولاً وتعاطفاً للعالم الطبيعي. تثبت هذه الدراسة أن اتصال البشر وبيئتهم قد يؤثر على قيم المجتمع، وتحت على إعادة التفكير في مركزية الإنسان وتعزيز الوعي بأهمية دعم التوازن البيئي. يعزز باورز مفهومًا أكثر دقة للتعيش، مما يطرح إمكانيات جديدة للأخلاق البيئية. علاوة على ذلك، يوضح هذا البحث كيف يمكن للتشابه بين جميع الكائنات الحية أن يعيد تشكيل الأخلاق والأنشطة، مما يدعو إلى إعادة تقييم مفهوم مركزية الإنسان وزيادة الوعي بأهمية الحفاظ على التوازن البيئي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الترابطات، مركزية الإنسان، الوعي، علم البيئة، الأخلاق

Introduction:

Environmental issues in literature nowadays are crucial subjects for future generations that reflect the world's current challenges. Catastrophes such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, have appeared as prominent themes that require to be addressed in the literature. Literature on the other hand plays an important role in increasing awareness of these concerns so it allows authors to depict the complicated interaction between humans and non-human in an emotional and thought-provoking manner. Literary works especially novels, particularly those classified as environmental literature, offer a chance to grasp environmental issues as well as the ethical standpoint, encouraging the reader to consider his crucial role in confronting these challenges. Literature generally may show the social, economic, and psychological consequences of environmental disasters for entire societies, it helps readers grasp environmental concerns in a more comprehensive way than scientific reporting or news (Armstrong, 2024). The moral messages in literature also promote communal responsibility, and the text reminds us that the environment is a vital part of our entire lives. Literary works reflect the environmental changes that the region is experiencing, such as water shortages, desertification, and pollution. From this outlook, they have evolved into a tool for raising awareness and encouraging collective action for a more sustainable future.

Ecology, on the other hand, is a theoretical framework for understanding humanity's complicated interaction with nature, it focuses on the idea of anthropocentrism, which claims that man is the centre of the universe, thus destroying the natural environment. Powers highlights this idea in *The Overstory* and *Bewilderment* by depicting the conflicts because of urban expansion and economic exploitation (Armstrong, 2024). These novels invite the reader to rethink this principle, as they highlight the importance of non-





human beings and their vital role in the ecosystem. Through the novels' characters and their experiences, this study explores how ecological thinking can lead to a better understanding of the interconnected relationships between all living things. As put forward by Val Plumwood in her book *Environmental Culture*, anthropocentrism is a cultural construct that supports human dominance over nature, suggesting that the framework is rooted in literary traditions:

“Literature, reflecting and shaping dominant cultural paradigms, has long reinforced the anthropocentric view that the non-human world exists primarily to serve human needs. This perspective has perpetuated a hierarchical relationship between humans and nature, contributing to ecological degradation.” (Plumwood, 2002, p 14)

Anthropocentrism is a theory, in which humans are the centre of the universe and its most important elements, where all things, values, and standards are evaluated based on their relationship to humans and their needs. This idea is present in most literary narratives throughout history, nature and other non-human creatures are often depicted as background or resources that serve human goals (Probyn-Rapsey, 2018, p. 54). In some literary works, human characters are presented as the driving forces of events, while the natural world is marginalized or an obstacle to achieving human goals. This view reinforces the idea that humans have absolute control over nature, which leads to an imbalance between humans and the non-human world. As put forward by Greg Garrard who discusses anthropocentrism highlighting how traditional narratives often position humans as superior to other creatures:

“Anthropocentrism, the belief in human superiority and dominion over the non-human, has been a dominant paradigm in Western literature, shaping narratives that marginalize the natural world and prioritize human concerns. This anthropocentric bias has contributed to the ecological crises we now face, by fostering a cultural disregard for the intrinsic value of non-human life.” (Garrard, 2012, p13)

However, anthropocentrism in narratives reflects a broader, more comprehensive view that has been formed over centuries of scientific and cultural progress. This view has contributed to the over-

exploitation of natural resources and the neglect of environmental as well as ethical values toward the natural world, leading to the current environmental crises.

In recent decades, some literary works have begun to challenge anthropocentrism by adopting perspectives that rehabilitate nature and other beings. Both Powers' novels try to break self-centred ideas, they show trees and other living things as entities with their own lives as well as values, rather than mere complements of humans. These novels attempt to reframe the relationship between man and his surrounding world, presenting an ecological outlook in which the focus is on the interconnectedness of humans and other beings within a shared ecosystem. Narratives, especially environmental novels, stand for ethical and philosophical shifts, as they call for the recognition that humans are not the only organisms with intrinsic value or a right to exist. They promote a more holistic view that values all forms of life and looks to create an ecological balance, reconsidering the dangers of natural exploitation. Literature that refutes this notion helps to a more comprehensive picture, in which people become part of an integrated system rather than its only ruler (Mylius, 2018, p. 161).

Richard Powers, an American author, is well known for his sophisticated style of writing on environmental concerns. He combines science and his literary works, which often include scientific and philosophical issues in the cosmos of his books, showing his deep concerns and in-depth thoughts on the relationship between humans and nature, Powers' emphasis on nature is more than simply a plot device in his writings but it is a philosophical standpoint through which he advocates for broadening human awareness beyond the anthropocentric perspective. Both *Bewilderment* and *The Overstory* show humanity's negative impact on the environment as well as emphasizing the interconnectedness of all forms of life. Powers on the other hand encourages readers to look at nature with respect besides raising ethical questions about humanity's responsibility to the Earth, making him one of the prominent ecological writers in contemporary literature (Celoria, 2022).

In *The Overstory*, Powers explores the consistent stories of a various interconnected group of characters who share a passion for and advocacy for trees. Each character has a unique background and





wide experience, but they all share a deep understanding of the vital importance of trees to sustain ecosystems. Throughout telling the stories of these characters, the novel highlights how humans are part of a larger natural network, and this article investigates how the destruction of this system through human activity threatens the humans and non-humans on the earth. The narrative is a call to preserve the environment and to respect nature, rather than exploit it. As said by Power's speaker in this quotation:

"No one sees trees. We see fruit, we see nuts, we see wood, we see shade. We see ornaments or pretty fall foliage. Obstacles blocking the road or wrecking the ski slope. Dark, threatening places that must be cleared. We see branches about to crush our roof. We see a cash crop. But trees—trees are invisible." (Powers, 2021, p. 403)

This saying captures the interdependence of humanity and the environment, a prominent subject in *The Overstory*, and emphasizes the need to preserve the natural world rather than exploit it.

As for *Bewilderment*, it focuses on the story of a father and his young son who show a deep connection to the natural world and feel the impact of environmental degradation on the individuals and nature as well. Through the character of the father, who works in the field of astronomy and searches for extraterrestrial life forms, the novel invites us to think about whether humanity has the right to dominate the planet or whether we should reconsider our responsibilities towards nature. The novel raises issues such as the climate crisis, mass extinction, and the impact of human activities on the ecosystem, and shows how a human-centred view leads to disastrous consequences. As put forward by Richard Powers in this quote, when he focuses on the human-centred view that contributes to environmental degradation, then he demands the need for greater awareness and responsibility toward nature (Bromley, 2024).

"Trees know when we are close by. The chemistry of their roots and the perfumes of their leaves pump out change when we're near... when you feel good after a walk in the woods, it may be that certain species are bribing you". (Powers, 2021, p. 404).

Both *The Overstory* and *Bewilderment*, explore how the human quest to control nature leads to dire consequences, and invite readers to think about the complex relationship between humans and

the Earth, highlighting the importance of respecting nature and living in balance with it. These novels deal with the relationship between humans and non-human surroundings. They revolve around a group of characters whose fates are intertwined with the fate of non-human creatures of the United States. Through a diverse narrative that combines the stories of multiple characters, these novels weave intricate threads that highlight the impact of the environment on their lives, and vice versa. Powers uses the interconnected narrative technique to show how each character stands for part of a larger network, reflecting the concept of environmental entanglement that transcends the traditional boundaries of human experience (Grener, 2020).

This research aims to study how *The Overstory* and *Bewilderment* encounter anthropocentrism notion as well as offer a new perspective on the link between man and other creatures. The study helps to shape an ecological viewpoint that goes beyond traditional norms, emphasizing the relevance of human-nature connection. This essay will also address the ethical consequences of these relationships, as well as how these books might motivate readers to live more ecologically conscious lives (Grener, 2020). It aims to give a critical reading that reflects the richness of the novel's environmental concerns by delving into its various sides.

2. Anthropocentrism and its Environmental Consequences

2.1. Critique of Human Superiority

The Overstory introduces some significant questions about human superiority, the prevailing belief that humans are superior to all living beings, which justifies their exploitation of natural resources for their benefit. This asserts the idea of centrism in the universe, and all creatures must be under their service. In *The Overstory*, the protagonists struggle the superiority thinking in various ways. The intellectual transformation that both Adam and Douglas undergo, for example, embodies an internal struggle with this concept; these characters begin to realize that humans' superiority at the expense of other beings is unrealistic and harmful at the same time. Through the narrative, Powers looks to show how the idea of human superiority can lead to disastrous results, both for the environment and even for humanity itself, as humans face the consequences of their exploitation of the environment sooner or later.





In *Bewilderment*, human supremacy is depicted throughout the relationship between man and nature in the context of environmental as well as social crises. Powers critiques the assumptions of human dominance over the planet, showing the devastating effects of this view on the environment. Theo, an astrobiologist, and his son Robin, who has a deep emotional sensitivity to nature, represent models of anti-anthropocentric environmental consciousness. Robin, with his innate empathy for living things, stands in opposition to the human world focused on profit and control. Powers presents nature in *Bewilderment* as an independent entity with a right to exist, this is expressed throughout Robin's deep love for wildlife, and his grief over the extinction of species, reflecting a direct critique of the destruction that humans have caused to the planet through their exploitative policies. Powers reflects on humanity's self-critical tendencies of prioritizing dominance over sustainability in this quote:

"We were a species that had evolved to cooperate, and now we were trapped in our cleverness, destroying the things that gave us life." (Powers, 2021, p. 58)

The novel explores the use of science and technology, not to further human dominance, but to achieve a deeper understanding of the natural world. Robin's experiences using technology to create an emotional connection with his father reflect the need for humans to reframe their relationship with nature more humbly and respectfully. *Bewilderment* is a philosophical critique of human supremacy through its characters and events, calling for the recognition that humans are not the centre of the universe, but rather part of an interconnected web of life, and the survival of the planet requires a retreat from human dominance and a more holistic and respectful approach to nature. This questions humanity's role in the larger ecological context, urging consideration of our impact on Earth.

2.2. Environmental Exploitation and human conduct

This study investigates how the characters in *The Overstory* highlight the conflict between human development and environmental conservation, as environmental exploitation is portrayed as a product of anthropocentrism and humans' desire to exploit natural resources without regard for the long-term consequences. Through

characters like Olivia and Nicholas, the role of environmental activism as a natural resistance against these attempts to destroy forests and biodiversity is highlighted (Anderson, 2022). Powers displays these characters embrace the idea that other beings deserve protection not only for the sake of humans but because they are part of a complex web of universe. Their environmental activism is a direct response to the systematic exploitation of nature and reflects their moral transformation from individuals concerned with their interests to individuals who defend other beings. Powers in this quote captures the novel's core argument of interconnection: "You and the tree in your backyard come from a common ancestor. People aren't separate from nature. We're part of it." (Powers, 2018, p. 32).

He is challenging anthropocentric worldviews, moreover, emphasizing that humans are an integral part of nature. It reflects Olivia and Nicholas's environmental activism, which is rooted in recognizing the intrinsic value of non-human life.

In *Bewilderment*, environmental exploitation that devastates nature is critically highlighted, which combines emotion and scientific awareness. Powers presents a bleak picture of the relationship between humans and the environment, showing how man is greedy and is separated from nature, have led to environmental crises that threaten life on the planet. The novel depicts environmental exploitation as a direct result of humans' view of the Earth as a mere resource. Theo, and his son Robin, show how some individuals ignore the interconnectedness of all living things. This is a clear reference to climate change, biodiversity loss, and species extinction, which are presented as inevitable results of human behaviour that places profit and self-interest above any environmental consideration (Crowley, 2020).

Robin, as a sensitive child to nature, reflects an ecological awareness in opposition to general human conduct and greedy actions, his grief over the extinction of animals, as well as the creatures he loves, symbolizes humanity's loss of its ability to empathize with other beings. Robin is an innocent voice that condemns the destructive actions of man, he also points to urgent change, by using technology to connect Robin to the feelings of his late mother, who was an environmental activist, the novel shows how science can be





a tool for connecting with nature rather than exploiting it (Crowley, 2020). It also points to the ethical challenges facing humanity if it continues to use technology to promote dominance rather than protect the environment. Bewilderment is a clear call to rethink human behaviour toward the environment. This is put forward by Richard Power when he underlines the moral responsibility toward non-human life and the interrelation of all living beings.

“He didn’t want to save the Earth for his own sake. He wanted to save it for the species that couldn’t say what they needed.”

This quote is associated with the themes of human responsibility, environmental crisis, and the ethical dilemmas explored in the novel, the study explores the relationship between environmental exploitation and human morality, calling for a more conscious and connected view of the natural world. Powers presents a tragic picture of the consequences that await humanity if it continues to deplete the planet, but he leaves the door open to hope through the consciousness of a new generation, represented by Robin.

2.3. The Role of Environmental Activism

In *The Overstory*, environmental activism is portrayed not only as a social duty but as a moral imperative that stems from a deeper understanding of the value of non-human beings. Characters like Olivia and Nicholas develop into environmentalists, not only out of a desire to preserve nature, but because they believe that non-human beings have a right to life, and preserving the environment is part of a broader moral responsibility that goes beyond human self-interest. (Nichols, 2022). Powers portray this concept of protecting the ecosystem as a means of fostering a spiritual and intellectual connection with nature, an experience that prompts characters to re-examine their beliefs and change their lifestyles to harmonize with nature, reflecting the novel’s call for an environmental perspective based on compassion and responsibility. As put forward by Powers, the speaker highlights the consequences of man’s conduct towards nature:

“This is not our world with trees in it. It’s a world of trees, where humans have just arrived.” (Powers, 2018, p. 34).

This viewpoint dramatically alters the narrative away from human supremacy, depicting people as latecomers in a natural-ruled world. It underscores the protagonists’ support for environmental

action as a battle to restore equilibrium rather than continue exploitation.

3. Environmental Philosophies and Ethical Reflections

3.1. The Shift from Anthropocentrism to Ecocentrism

In *The Overstory*, Powers looks to push the reader to reevaluate the principle of anthropocentrism and replace it with an ecocentric philosophy. Through depicting the intellectual transformations of some characters, such as Mimi and Ray, Powers shows how a shift toward an ecological perspective can lead to a radical change in humans' understanding of their relationship with the natural world. Powers invites the reader to adopt a perspective based on the idea of equality among living beings, where non-human beings, such as trees, are viewed as actors with intrinsic value that deserve respect, he shows through his characters how this shift can lead to a more harmonious relationship between humans and nature, based on mutual respect rather than exploitation (Ryan, 2018).

3.2. Philosophical Reflections on Interdependence and Eco Conservation

The study finds out that *The Overstory* relies on the concept of interdependence between humans and non-human beings to illustrate the importance of ecological conservation. Powers uses scientific models of communication between trees as a metaphor for these interconnections, as these networks support the balance in the forest and enable trees to exchange nutrients and protect each other. This concept reflects an environmental philosophy based on the idea that the survival of species can only be achieved through the support of each other, and the destruction or weakening of one species leads to an imbalance in nature and ultimately affects humans. These reflections come as a call to stop looking at non-human beings as resources and begin to appreciate the role they play in supporting the ecosystem, which requires a joint commitment from humans to support this natural balance (Fraunhofer, 2024).

3.3. Beyond Human Rights: Towards a New Ethical Model

In *The Overstory*, Powers proposes a new ethical model based on rejecting the idea of human centrism and controllers of nature, besides adopting a more comprehensive vision. The novel calls for going beyond the human right to exploit the earth, proposing a model based on environmental values and justice towards non-hu-





man beings. The novel treats nature as an equal partner and considers that all living beings have basic rights to life, growth, and survival, regardless of their direct benefit to humans. Through the characters' experiences, Powers explores how this new ethical model can also improve the quality of human life, as embracing environmental values can mitigate the effects of global environmental crises and enhance the sustainability of life on planet Earth. In *The Overstory*, Shard Powers portrays trees as objects that play a pivotal role in history, memory, and communication, they are not just inactive natural elements. Through interwoven stories of human characters and trees, the novelist highlights how trees are witnesses to human history, as well as agents in it. Powers shows trees as living archives that carry within them the history of the Earth, where climate change, natural disasters, and even human intervention can be read through their tissues. It is a silent but powerful memory, reminding us that human time is only a small part of the extended environmental time (Ryan, 2018). Powers also explores the concept of the "Wood Wide Web" as a natural mechanism through which trees communicate, whether through roots or fungi. This scientific conception that Powers integrates into the narrative gives trees a social dimension, where they share information and resources and help each other in a way that resembles human societies. Uniquely, he uses a unique approach to giving trees roles similar to those of human characters: they have personalities, they affect and are affected, and even resist attempts at exclusion or destruction.

"There's a world beyond the human that is so much richer than we imagine. We keep destroying it because we can't even see it."

This quote critiques man's superiority by emphasizing humanity's inability to value the intricate web of life beyond human interests while it captures the philosophical basis of the novel's environmental resistance. Depicting trees as independent actors, Powers reframes the relationship between humans and natural environments, calling for a deeper vision that highlights the intertwining of their shared destinies (Crowley, 2020).

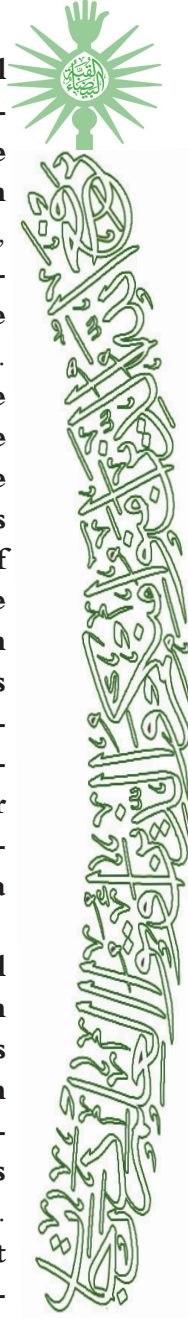
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Conclusion:

In conclusion, Richard Powers's *The Overstory* and *Bewilderment* criticizes anthropocentric thinking through many situations in

which the main characters are deeply intertwined with the natural world. Through an eco-critical analysis, the two ecological novels focus on the devastating effects of human exploitation of the environment, calling for a rethinking of the relationship between humans and non-human creatures. Richard Powers, moreover, emphasizes the importance of nature as an independent entity, deserving of protection not only for the sake of humanity but because non-human beings are integral to the interconnected web of life. In *Bewilderment*, the personal and environmental impact of the climate crisis is shown, while *The Overstory* explores the collective struggle to protect forests and biodiversity. The two novels come together in a single message: the human quest to control nature is not only destroying the planet but also threatening the survival of humanity itself. Through this vision, the two novels reimagine the relationship between humans and nature, calling for a shift from a model of domination to one of coexistence and harmony. This analysis highlights the role of literature in promoting environmental awareness and stimulating cultural change, as it shows the importance of understanding the role of humans as part of a broader system of life. In doing so, these works contribute to shaping a contemporary critical discourse on the environment, making them a cornerstone of modern ecological and literary discussions.

Richard Powers's novels figure out a profound environmental message that calls for reconsidering the relationship between man and his wide universe, rejecting the idea of human-centeredness that considers man as a supreme being in the ecosystem. Through the novel's characters and their intellectual transformations, Powers invites the reader to reflect on the impact of this centeredness and how it has contributed to the destruction of the environment. This study proves that nature does not exist only to serve man but is intertwined with his existence, which requires a moral commitment that respects the rights of other beings as well as supporting ecological balance. These novels encourage the reader to adopt a new environmental perspective that calls for preserving nature as an essential part of the web of life, not just a resource to be consumed. Powers presented, through scientific studies in the novel,





such as the root communication networks between trees, a scientific dimension that supports his environmental view, making the call to preserve nature based on scientific foundations and not just moral ones. Thus, *The Overstory* and *Bewilderment* stand for a strong call to think about environmental values as a basic driver for shaping environmental awareness and directing ecological policies towards broader sustainability. This new ethical approach can help mitigate the effects of environmental degradation and provide a more balanced and sustainable environment for future generations.

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