A POSTHUMANIST APPROACH TO *KLARA AND THE SUN* BY KAZUO ISHIGURO AND *MACHINES LIKE ME* BY IAN MCEWAN

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SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
Graduate School of Social Sciences

TEZ BEYAN FORMU

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ÖZET

DOKTORA TEZİ

KAZUO ISHIGURO'NUN *KLARA İLE GÜNEŞ* VE IAN MCEWAN'IN *BENİM GİBİ MAKİNELER* ROMANLARINA POSTHÜMANİST BİR YAKLAŞIM

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Bu tez, geleneksel hümanist felsefeye meydan okuyan, insanın ayrıcalıklı özelliklerini ve üstün konumunu reddeden posthümanizm felsefesini araştırmaktadır. İnsansı robotları başkarakter olarak tanıtan *Klara ile Güneş* ile *Benim Gibi Makineler* adlı çağdaş romanlar, insan ve insan olmayan varlıkların bir arada yaşadığı, farklı türler arasındaki çizgilerin belirsizleştiği bir posthüman toplum resmi sunar. Yapay zekânın temsili aracılığıyla insan yaşamının gelişimi ve standartları, teknolojinin insan öznelerinin ilerlemesindeki rolü ve transhümanizm süreci araştırılmaktadır. İnsan ve insan olmayan varlıklar arasındaki aşılmış sınırlar vurgulanmakta ve birbirine bağımlı, gömülü, akışkan, değişen posthüman öznellikler örneklendirilmektedir. İnsanların robotlaşması ve robotların insanlaşması ön plandadır. Bu tez, posthüman felsefenin karmaşık yanını, bir arada yaşama vaadinin hem umuda hem de korkuya yol açması ve romanların yapay zekaya duyulan derin hayranlıkla başlayıp robotların hikâyelerinin mutsuzlukla sonlanmasıyla açıklığa kavuşturuyor. Robot karakterlerin hayata katılımı çeşitli etik sorunları beraberinde getirir ve yeni etik düzenlemeleri gerekli kılar. Posthümanizm çeşitliliği benimsese de posthüman özneler olarak robotlar, kapitalist tasarımlar doğrultusunda insan üstünlüğünü sürdürmek için insan efendileri tarafından metalaştırılmakta, ötekileştirilmekte ve sömürülmektedir. Romanlar eşitlikçiliği vaat ederken, beklenenin aksine, aynı zamanda hiyerarşik düzenleri de ima ederek hümanist-posthümanist paradokslar içermektedir. Böylece, posthümanizmle uyumlu olarak, okuyucuyu arada bırakarak net varsayımlar sunmazlar. İlkin insanlık çağının sonu ima edilir, daha sonra, posthüman özneler yok edilir, yok olmaya zorlanır veya terk edilirler. Herhangi bir şeyi kanıtlamaktan uzak olan romanlar ve bu tez, günümüz ve geleceğin toplumları için ilham verici ve derin potansiyeli olan toplumsal gerçeklikler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Benim Gibi Makineler*, İnsansı robotlar, *Klara ile Güneş*, Posthümanizm, Yapay zekâ

ABSTRACT

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This thesis explores the philosophy of posthumanism, challenging traditional humanist philosophy and rejecting the exceptional traits and superior position attributed to the human being. The contemporary novels *Klara and the Sun* and *Machines Like Me,* which introduce humanoid robots as the protagonists, present a picture of posthuman society with the coexistence of human and nonhuman entities and the blurred lines between different species. The development and standards of human life, the role of technology in the advancement of human subjects, and the process of transhumanism are explored through the representation of AI. The transgressed boundaries between human and nonhuman entities are highlighted, and the interdependent, embedded, fluid, evolving posthuman subjectivities are exemplified. The robotization of humans and humanization of the robots are at the forefront. The thesis clarifies the complex side of posthuman philosophy as the promise of coexistence gives rise to both hope and fear, and the novels start with a deep fascination with AI; the robots' stories end in misery. The participation of robot characters in life brings about several ethical problems and necessitates new ethical regulations. Though posthumanism embraces diversity, the robots, as posthuman subjects, are commodified, otherised, and exploited by their human masters to sustain human superiority in line with capitalist designs. Contrary to expectations, the novels include humanist-posthumanist paradoxes while promising egalitarianism, they also imply carrying hierarchical orders. So, in line with posthumanism, they do not offer clear presumptions by leaving the readers in betweenness. Initially, the end of the human era is premised, and then the posthuman subjects are destroyed, forced to, or left to fade away. Far from proving something, the novels and this thesis offer inspiring and deep potential social realities for todays and tomorrow's society.

Keywords: *Machines Like Me,* Humanoid robots, *Klara and the Sun,* Posthumanism, Artificial intelligence

ABBREVIATIONS

AF : Artificial Friend

AI : Artificial Intelligence

Sci-fi : Science fiction

DEDICATION

To my rosy daughter, Gül Beren…

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From the deepest corner of my heart, with endless thanks…

Erzurum, 2025 **Yüsra BOYLU**

INTRODUCTION

Over time, things have changed rapidly, and it has become possible to experience profound realizations even in the briefest of moments. As people detach from their sense of self and become increasingly mechanized, we are simultaneously witnessing the robotization of humans and the humanization of robots. The ability to recognize faces, retain them in memory, and recall them when necessary was once an exclusively human trait. However, today, we coexist with machines that can perform these tasks far more effectively than humans. Therefore, traditional notions of autonomy, worth, and dignity exclusive to humans are subject to critical reevaluation.

In this regard, it is possible to see that some services, like Google's Cloud Platform, which aim to categorize the faces of different people into separate folders, may classify different people with similar dresses and makeup styles into the same folder. On the other hand, we can clean our homes even when we are outside thanks to our cleaning robots, which we can program and command down to the smallest detail, from determining how often and when each room should be vacuumed and mopped to specifying areas to be avoided. It is also very amazing to know that they can make their own decisions if necessary. They even have a name, just like us, and at times they behave so cleverly that we can feel sorry for them, strangely mistaking them for human beings. Thinking on these evolving conditions, the relationship between human and machine raises compelling questions about perception and identity in a philosophical manner, blurring the boundaries between the entities. By breaking certain categorical boundaries and classifications, such as human/animal, self/other, organism/machine, or man/woman, posthuman subjects challenge the conventional understanding of existence, agency, and gender in the presence of technological developments. Cary Wolfe draws attention to this new reality as "an increase in the vigilance, responsibility, and humility that accompany living in a world so newly, and differently, inhabited" (2010: 47). The driving force of this initiation is the inspiring motto of posthumanism: human is not the measure of all things.

To clarify, Rosi Braidotti, who pointed out the significance of constructed norms, discusses that bios, which refers to the human beings in arranged society, "is regulated by sovereign powers and rules" while zoes, which addresses a life of all other entities, "is

unprotected and vulnerable" (2019b: 19). In this connection, posthumanism simply rejects to put the human being in the center of all things and see the human as a unique, autonomous and stable entity, rather "it sees the human as an instantiation of a network of connections, exchanges, linkages and crossings with all forms of life" (Nayar, 2014: 14). Expectedly, the subjects, both human and nonhuman, in the age of technological modification, the discoveries and hybridized existences and new perception of life challenge the traditional humanist philosophy, promote reworking of humanism and invoke posthumanism by calling for a radical rethink of ontological hierarchies, uniqueness and boundedness of the human species. The intersection of human beings and technology necessitates the redefinition of subjects in a technologically advanced posthuman world. Katherine Hayles conceptualizes the subject, emphasizing the complexity:

> the posthuman implies not only a coupling with intelligent machines but a coupling so intense and multifaceted that it is no longer possible to distinguish meaningfully between the biological organism and the informational circuits in which the organism is enmeshed. (1999: 35)

Technological and scientific advancements are breaking down traditional boundaries, reshaping identities, and replacing conventional subjects with new, open, and virtual ones. Rosi Braidotti focuses on an active mutual interdependence of all entities stating that "the posthuman recomposition of human interaction that I propose is not the same as the reactive bond of vulnerability, but is an affirmative bond that locates the subject in the flow of relations with multiple others" (2013: 50). Gradual suppression or extermination of the human leads to a deep interest in other entities. Not surprisingly, at present, scholars of humanities deal with a variety of subjects such as animals, forests, dust, fungi, techno-bio-solar-hydro entities, along with software, codes, and digital profusion. Recently, the idea of posthumans, in particular, AI and cyborgs, can be found all around us, even in common discussions and street interviews.

Literature and science have progressed hand in hand, run parallel, and nurtured each other throughout history. The assumption of the emergence of new entities gives rise to their engagement in science fiction. New alternatives both come from and result in current changes. Steven Shaviro, associating the conditions with the science fiction genre, claims that the genre allows "us to feel the effects of … digital technology, or capitalism, or climate change- intimately and viscerally, on a human and personal scale, contained

within the boundaries of a finite narrative" (2011: 4). The sci-fi genre deals with advanced technology, futuristic inventions, parallel universes and time travel, so the hypothetical scientific assumptions and futuristic concepts such as robotics, AI and cybernetics are of great interest. As literature inspires science, robots first appear in the fictional world rather than in the real world. Fictional models are early versions of what will actually exist, that is, a model to follow. Films like *Blade Runner Her* (2013) and *Ich Bin Dein Mensch* (2021), TV series like *Almost Human* (2013-2014), *Next* (2020), novels like *The Robots of Dawn* (1983), *The Murderbot Diaries* (2017-2021) initiate a thought-provoking process and provide an opportunity for deep and sophisticated reasoning. So, it is extremely functional to discuss such a trendy topic through literature.

Kazuo Ishiguro and Ian McEwan explore the transformation of human identity and blurred species boundaries in their novels, addressing biological concerns through Ishiguro's clones in *Never Let Me Go* and McEwan's fetal narrator in *Nutshell*, while pushing imaginative limits with posthuman subjects in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* and McEwan's *Machines Like Me*. With their posthuman characters, their novels depict the philosophical tendency they focus on challenging the centrality of the human subjective experience and exceptional position, redefining the traditional humanist reading of the human condition, reconsidering the human-nonhuman divide, problematizing human-machine hybridization and emphasizing ethical assumptions of dealing with restrictions of the human body through artificial magnifications.

In this study, *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro and *Machines Like Me* by Ian McEwan will be analyzed from a posthumanist perspective as both novels exemplify the companionship of AI with humans, exploration of new ethical considerations, and raise numerous problems. The main question of this study is how the selected novels represent posthuman philosophy, process and conflict. In this sense, questions such as how these novels problematize the boundaries between species, and humanist ideals of autonomy, rationality and dignity, how they reflect the critique of human exceptionalism and posthuman subjectivity, what ethical dilemmas may arise in the contemporary technologically developed era, and in what ways the novels represent future assumptions of human beings and machine entities are to be followed in the context of posthuman theory.

The humanoid robots in both novels embody the posthuman bodies described by Halberstam and Livingston in *Posthuman Bodies*: "Posthuman bodies were never in the womb. Bodies are determined and operated by systems whose reproduction is – sometimes partially but always irreducibly - asexual: capitalism, culture, professions and institutions, and in fact sexuality itself" (1995: 17). Engaged in the posthuman assumption of future context with social products and implications of advanced technologies, the novels provide a wide range of materials to examine prominent posthuman concepts such as disembodiment, coexistence, subjectivity, posthuman entities, how technology impacts social context and relations, highlighting posthuman characters' embodiment of and their experiences and deconstruction of traditional humanist deals. Both of the robot protagonists, Klara and Adam, embody sincere companions and devoted servants blurring the lines between species. Occupying an ambiguous place as a man's creation to carry out certain kinds of labor for humans and acquiring human-like attributes, develop "a kind of sentience, in many of these representations, renders them unwieldy and dangerous, a liability to humans" (Glaskin, 2012: 69). By means of their nonhuman characters, the writers underline the exploration of human concept and boundaries which serve for this analysis, especially for the interrogation of human consciousness and agency. They craft novels that explore posthumanism, depicting a universe where consciousness extends to both natural and artificial entities. Their works evoke numerous possibilities through the portrayal of conscious minds in clones, AI, and other humanlike entities, challenging the notion of uniquely human properties.

Ishiguro suggests that no essential traits are "unique [to humans] and won't transfer" (Ishiguro, 2022: 233), implying that consciousness and identity can transcend biological boundaries. Both Ishiguro and McEwan depict their fictional worlds drawing attention to the increasing domination of posthumanist culture involving humanlike robots and helping us to adopt the changes through real-world applications of such subjects and contexts. The existence of the humanoid robots calls attention to the interconnection of species and corresponds to Haraway's description of cyborg as "junior siblings in the much bigger, queer family of companion species" (2003: 11). To celebrate the interdependence and coexistence of companion species, this study celebrates co-evolution, co-habitation and embodied cross-species sociality.

This study also deals with the impact of technology on life in general. As follows, according to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary, slave has two meanings, and the equivalents of these meanings can be found in both novels. The first one is "a person who is owned by another person and is forced to work for and obey them" and the second is "a person who is so strongly influenced by something that they cannot live without it or cannot make their own decisions"[1]. The first meaning can be illustrated by people using technological products as they wish for their own interests that is as slaves. Both novels present a case of the exploitation of intelligent machines. The second interpretation can be explained by the fact that the characters in the stories rely heavily on technology and are slaves to it. Kim et al. discuss the impact of technology and its rich offers claiming that it "can keep a person fully occupied for the rest of the person's life" (2010: 230). Moreover, how technology is not only reshaping our capabilities but also our emotions and perceptions is of great concern. As the machines become increasingly lifelike in their function or meaning, more and more people tend to treat them as if they are social and moral beings even at a level of biological entities.

Mostly, AI gives rise to exaggerated hope and fear for the future. Most sci-fi works prove fear, anxiety and discomfort. David Levy, one of the prominent researchers who deal with love and sex with robots in detail, predicts that by around 2050, "[r]obots will transform human notions of love and sexuality" (2008: 22). Expectedly robots will attract humans as companions due to their senses, talents, and capabilities. So, human-robot partnership is reasonable and inevitable and will become usual. Following the expansion of humanoid robots, and their enormous effect they are to be "perceived as being similar to biological creatures" (Levy, 2008: 303). With their robot characters, both novels mirror a relatively dystopian future fighting with problems such as ethics, robots' responsibility, rights, and autonomy.

Since their publication, both novels have received praise from critics and scholarly attention. Considering the reviews, the novels' portrayal of artificial intelligence and its effects on human society has been one of the main subjects of analysis. Even though they can be assumed as newborn novels, many academics have examined how the posthuman characters subvert the conventional ideas of what it means to be human and how their

[1] https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/slave_1

experiences influence the complex relationship between intelligent machines and humans. Also, the themes of morality, the human desire for immortality, the influence of technology on identities and memories, the experience of inequality and class division, exploitation, and transhumanist practices have attracted attention and analyzed additionally. The primary issues in both novels, such as existence, human dignity, morality, and personal concerns about the future of developing technologies, have been the subjects of separate studies. They also deal with futuristic scenarios where new lives and interesting worlds can be perceived from various perspectives. In addition to the fact that the novels have been examined for the same, similar, or different subjects, there are also a few cases where they are studied comparatively.

They have been studied together first in terms of the relationship between human beings and humanoid robots, posing the question about the essence of humanity and the limits of AI, problematizing the status of intelligent machines, and familiarizing readers with ethical and legal problems. The other studies have focused on emotions, associating the fear of artificial friends and the culture of fear, how ethical AI machines are portrayed, challenging the reliability of intelligent robots, and introducing readers to the moral and legal issues they raise. Furthermore, the influence of capitalism on the posthuman context has been studied. As seen, both of the novels have been analyzed in the context of several posthumanism-related subtopics, both separately and comparatively. However, not many works, in which the two have been fully assessed, have emerged in the same study within the framework of posthumanism.

Though there is a great deal for a posthumanist reading of the novels, such a study carries numerous limitations. As posthumanism challenges certain boundaries, it is hard to specify the scope of the study. Likewise, the boundary breaks between humans and machines have brought numerous suggestions, which complicate the process. The multiple interpretations of posthumanism and the fictional boundaries of the novels make the examination difficult. Last but not least, the analysis is carried out and interpreted by a human being, whereas the human is expected to be removed from the focus. The reader’s perception and approaches, the impact of anthropocentrism on the analysis, remain an enigma.

In all these eases and difficulties, this thesis addresses key challenges in literary studies by deepening representations of posthumanism and demonstrating that it is both a global philosophical debate and a theme explored in cultural productions. It offers fresh perspectives on human-machine relationships, arguing that literature powerfully challenges the boundaries between humans and robots. The study evaluates human-AI relationships through humanist and posthumanist perspectives while advancing debates on identity and embodiment by reflecting social, philosophical, and technological changes. Mainly, it builds on studies of anthropomorphism and humanism in literature in Turkey, offering a critique of their representation in a posthumanist framework. Therefore, this thesis contributes to current and original research and bridges between the literature and contemporary global issues. By developing an interdisciplinary approach, it pushes the limits of literature, philosophy, ethics, and technology and serves numerous fields of study.

In the first chapter, the philosophy of posthumanism is explained in detail. To provide a complete understanding, this part focuses on the definitions of the key concepts and the development of the theory. Its relationship with humanism, postmodernism, postcolonialism, and transhumanism are discussed as an interdisciplinary philosophy. The reflections of posthumanism in literature are expressed respectively. As a challenging issue, posthuman subjectivity is questioned and redefined. The existence of AI and the representation of cyborgs are touched upon. The approaches and formulation of ethical concerns for posthuman subjects and contexts are explored.

In the second chapter, *Klara and the Sun* is analyzed under the framework of posthumanism, celebrating the drastic influence of technology. As the focus of posthumanism, the blurred lines between humans and machines are exemplified. The participation of humanoid robots in daily life raises numerous problems. The concept of otherness of posthuman subjects is discussed despite the embedded entities and egalitarian posthumanist tendencies. The impact of capitalism and the consumer society on individuals is questioned. The basic concerns and implications of transhumanism are elaborated. The end of the human era and the exciting and expected dominance of the posthuman era are prescribed in light of the novels' characters, relationships, and conditions.

In the third chapter, *Machines Like Me* is noted with the reflections of technological determinism. How the novel deconstructs the human-centered narratives is studied. The boundaries of human identity and personhood are explored. The impact of capitalism and the examples of exploitation are criticized. The necessity of the regulation of morality and its implications in the posthuman context are illuminated. Representation of AI and consciousness is depicted through posthuman subjectivity. Future assumptions on this issue are envisioned, and the humanist-posthumanist paradoxes are rethought despite the clear posthuman subjects, relations, and contexts in the novel.

In conclusion, the results of the analysis are presented, and how two prominent science fiction novels reveal rich interpretations of posthumanism and significant points are highlighted. Their service for representations and studies of posthumanism is stressed. The posthuman conditions of the novels and those of the contemporary world, which represent the transformation of the human concept and future assumptions of society, are shown. The evolving processes and entities of all are stated. The study concludes with the contradictory, fluid, and open patterns of posthumanism and novels' presumptions.

CHAPTER ONE

POSTHUMANISM: REDEFINITION OF EXISTENCE, LIFE, AND RELATIONS

1.1. DEFINITION AND BACKGROUND

Posthumanism is an intellectual, philosophical, and cultural movement that emerged in the late 20th century as a reaction to the increasing impact of scientific and technological developments on human identity, society, and the environment, focusing on the changing relationship between humans and technology. Posthumanism interprets the human as a result of cultural construct instead of natural property and follows Lyotard's 'incredulity towards narratives', claims that "the grand narrative has lost its credibility, regardless of what mode of unification it uses, regardless of whether it is a speculative narrative or a narrative of emancipation" (Lyotard, 1984: 37). Posthumanism challenges and deconstructs the traditional humanist understanding which views human beings as the center of the universe and assumes that human nature is a fixed, unchanging essence that can be understood and identified in isolation from other beings and things. Instead, posthumanism proposes that we need to recognize the complex, interconnected, open, and constantly evolving nature of human identity and existence and that we need to reevaluate our relationships with the world around us in light of this understanding.

The theory's major goal is to decenter and remove the human concept from the center of attention. The extensive system of relations takes away the supremacy of humans as autonomous agents and requires a wider network for definition. Ihab Hassan describes posthumanism as "a sudden mutation of the times; the conjunction of imagination and science, myth and technology, have begun by firelight in the caves of Lascaux" (1977: 835-836). It is an intense way of making sense of these new situations and exploring alternatives. Jasmine Ulmer points out about posthumanism that induces "renewed attention to materiality, vitalism, ecologies, flora, fauna, climate, elements, things, and interconnections has created openings across academic fields regarding who and what has the capacity to know" (2017: 1). Posthumanism, in its most basic form, advocates for a reevaluation of various entities, novel relationships, and the quickly evolving global order. To support, Wolfe draws attention to "a new reality: that the human

occupies a new place in the universe, a universe now populated by what I am prepared to call nonhuman subjects" (2010: 47). The goal of posthumanism is to investigate new perspectives and methods of interacting with the world around us, while also challenging conventional notions of human identity, society, and the environment.

In this new context, posthuman is a key term that needs an urgent redefinition of the term human concept implying not only finality but also the renewal of the human concept. Human is no longer regarded as the god of the earth as she/he has been brought on an equal level with other beings like animals, plants, clones, or smart machines. Foucault emphasizes the transformation of the subject of humans concerning representation and identifies the human as a recent historical invention of modern thought, a finite and historically conditioned being processed by the acts of production, biology, and language rather than as a timeless essence (qtd in Best, 1994: 31). The immutability and unchangeability of human are deconstructed. Michael Foucault states in *The Order of Things*:

> One thing in any case is certain: man is neither the oldest or the most constant problem that has been posed for human knowledge… As the archeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end. (qtd in Hassan, 1977: 844)

As a result of the deconstruction of the radical concept of human, the significance of the existence of other species or cultures is emphasized. With the developments in science and technology, the certain distinctions between human and nonhuman existences, what humanism focuses on, fades away and the natural supremacy of humans begins to lose its significance. To put it more clearly:

> The posthuman subject is a multiple subject, not a unified one, and he or she (a distinction that also gets blurred in posthumanism) is not separate from his/her environment. Technologies become extensions of the self, and humans become only one type of individual in a vast ecosystem that includes digital as well as natural environmental forces. In other words, posthumanism is partly about leaving behind the old notions of liberal humanism. (Miller, 2012: 164)

Posthumanism initiates an eclectic exploration of human concept and networks of relations. In addition to the deconstruction of human concept, the integrity of humans and others is in need of deconstruction. Thus posthumanism "helps to envisage alternative conceptualizations of both the human and the posthuman and of their mutually infirming relationship" (Herbrechter & Callus, 2008: 97). Supporting them, Nayar states that the

posthuman is “an assemblage, co-evolving with other forms of life, enmeshed with the environment and technology” (2014: 4). Moreover, Halberstam and Livingstone allude to the logic and practice of the traditional and hierarchical system based on categorization and differentiation and repose on the influence of cultural factors on posthuman entities. The way they see it “posthuman bodies are the causes and effects of postmodern relations of power and pleasure, virtuality and reality, sex and its consequences” (Halberstam & Livingston, 1995: 3).

Posthumanism challenges anthropocentric humanism and necessitates an inquiry to the multiplicity of life especially to nonhuman lives from artificial intelligence to animals, plants or any other patterns of hypothetical entities in the multiverse. Nonhuman existences and experiences are of great concern. The growing complexity in most domains, including the relationship between species and the ways of life in general, requires new ways of understanding and adaptation. Employing recognition of the other, Ferrando asserts that “there is no absolute otherness” (2014b: 168) and Barad insists that “[e]xistence is not an individual affair” (2007: IX). Instead of enhancing or reformulating human entities, they draw attention to the multidimensional network of relations in the universe, reject ontological hierarchy, and search for alternative ways to welcome hybridity and coexistence. Any form of existence is intermingled and interrelated. Nothing in this sense may be autonomous or completely independent. Barad simply proposes that humans should be regarded as a part of nature and a natural part of engagement (2007: 332). It follows from this that the theory argues that existence is sustained by plurality and coexistence. Posthuman coexists harmoniously in an open system with other living (and non-living) entities. Posthumanist ideology precisely achieves the complete infection or unification of the human being with other forms of life, eliminating differences.

To develop a broad understanding of posthumanism, humanism and posthumanism should not be thought of as entirely distinct philosophies; rather, any discussion on posthumanism should include its counterpart, humanism. The theory has both continuity with and discontinuity from traditional humanism. Posthumanism is generally characterized by developing against or beyond humanism, as it offers a reconsideration of the human role and function of human beings. It is true to say that more or less it is a

sort of extended or enlarged humanism in a new era, for they have deep commonalities. Kate Soper, states the relation by claiming to view posthumanism:

> as a re-imagining of what it means to be human, than as an attempt to go beyond human exceptionalism, and the most persuasive of the posthumanist discourses are those which are prepared to recognize and talk about the lurking humanism of the forms of questioning of the nature and limits of the 'human' that are opened up through the posthumanist project. (2012: 375)

So, it is a general tendency to bridge these two trends so as to point to future development. The dominating function of the humanist era, especially the superior position of man, has nurtured the tendency to recognize other entities and their positions. At the same time, humanity has entered a new stage, that is, a posthuman stage.

The inconsistencies and deficiencies within humanism are also important for the development of discussions on posthumanism. As known, the starting point and the focus of humanism is the concept of human, however, within this context, the human does not refer to an umbrella term that can be used for all humanity, rather it is used to address white, westerner, heterosexual, man; African-American descendants, women and disabled persons or marginals would not be represented or cared by the philosophy of humanism. The racist, sexist, ethnocentric, and classist realm of humanism, in addition to the superiority of humans over non-humans, leads to human superiority over humans. In the light of the Enlightenment Philosophy centering on the value of the human, by means of the progress in science, technology, and art, the whole of humanity would be liberated from poverty, ignorance, despotism, and discrimination. Nevertheless, in the following centuries, instead of dreams of the Enlightenment, humanity has experienced great suffering resulting from discrimination and exploitation. Based on this, posthumanism is invoked and nourished by other modern philosophies like feminism and postcolonialism, which are its predecessors dealing with discrimination focus. A newly raised awareness of the flaws and limits of traditional humanistic and anthropocentric assumptions stirs such an investigation of posthumanism.

The philosophy of posthumanism has been created and nurtured by cultural and critical theories. For a meaningful discussion, it should be considered from a wider history of philosophical thoughts surrounding posthumanism. The term posthumanism was coined in the late 20th century with other post-movements in the humanities. As an interdisciplinary philosophy, it has a great deal of common premises with postmodernism,

poststructuralism, and postcolonialism. Like the other post philosophies, it emerges as a way of responding to the intellectual and social trends of the late 19th and 20th centuries. To clarify, all forms of discrimination are entangled and set predicament as Braidotti exemplifies "animals are sold as exotic commodities and constitute the largest illegal trade in the world today, after drugs and arms but ahead of women" (2013: 8). Accordingly, posthumanism, influenced by philosophies derived from the oppression of discriminated and marginalized subjects, again addresses discrimination and marginalization from a broader perspective.

Posthumanism takes its roots from feminist reflections and is nurtured by other 'post' studies, especially those of discrimination and differences. As stated by Peta Hinton and Pat Treusch "revealing and negotiating inequalities conceived along the break-line of a binary logic that has characterized and sedimented Western traditions of thought" (2015: 1) has long been a preoccupation of feminist theorists. In the 1970s, reexamination of the human concept and relationships as a reaction to sexist discrimination gave rise to awareness towards the marginals such as female, black, gay, etc. the concepts which are culturally constructed by Western hegemonic thought system. However, in the nineties, the key texts that brought posthumanism to the forefront drew broad international attention. As a matter of course, the theoretical background of posthumanism is first shaped by feminist critics Donna Haraway, Judith Butler, and Katherine K. Hayles. It simply originates in the radical deconstruction of the human concept, which is identified in a specific type of embodiment as Westerner, male, white, and heterosexual. After that, several categories of humanity are tried to put to the forefront. Acknowledging the diversities of the human species itself, with all its individual, gender, ethnic, and racial varieties, posthumanism produces its kernels of decentralization and multiplicity. In effect, as no certain type of human can solely represent humanity, no species can or should hold the whole supremacy.

The essence and meaning of posthumanism have required and brought about extensive debates. Generated from postmodernism, it is difficult to be defined under certain methods or frames with the critique of absolute truth and objective knowledge. The relationship between humanism and posthumanism is very similar to that of modernism and postmodernism. Lyotard suggests that:

> Postmodernity is not a new age, but the rewriting of the some of the features claimed by modernity, and first of all modernity's claim to ground its legitimacy in the project of liberating humanity as a whole through science and technology. But as I have said, that rewriting has been at work, for a long time now, in modernity itself. (qtd in Badminton, 2003: 20**)**

Posthumanism simply refuses the ontological primacy of human existence. In doing so, to quote Ferrando, "more than an *anti* … posthumanism is a *post, meta, trans*" (2012: 11) (italic in original). It does not prioritize the discrepancies, instead, it blurs the boundaries, and embraces expansion and multiplicity. The ambiguity and confusion inherent in posthumanism are also reflected in the meaning of the post prefix. While it may indicate a historical sequence, as is often thought, it also carries deeper meanings. The 'post' of posthumanism does not or should not specify an obsolete break from the heritage of humanism. Instead, they are mutually inclusive as Badminton asserts "the new secretes the old then" (2003: 14). Furthermore, Herbrechter determines that we can define posthumanism by using the expression in which Lyotard defines the post suffix when defining postmodernism (2013: 56). Lyotard explains the meaning of the word postmodern in *The Postmodern Explained* and interprets:

> The "post-" of "postmodern" does not signify a movement of *comeback, flashback* or *feedback*, that is not a movement of repetition but a procedure in "ana-": a procedure of analysis, anamnesis, anagogy, and anamorphosis that elaborates an initial forgetting. (1984: 80)

The post- of posthumanism as Lyotard proposes for that of postmodernism can be regarded as having "a sense of simple succession, a diachronic sequence of periods in which each one is identifiable. The post- indicates something like a conversion: a new direction from the previous one" (1984: 76). The 'post' allows humanism to branch out to traditional domains combining both traditional humanist and non-humanist matters of the study, initiates collaboration between humanities and non-humanities.

Though the term seems to be a relatively new invention, posthumanist theories of sentiments go a long way back to Ancient Greece. Having their roots in ancient times, entangled histories of humanism and posthumanism are not linear (Keeling & Lehman, 2018: 2). Katherine Hayles draws attention to this long-standing fact with her famous assertion "We have always been posthuman" (1999: 291). Accordingly, we should go back in time to the 17th century and trace one of the founders of humanism, Descartes, who mainly deals with what it means to be human. He, at the beginning of *Discourse on*

Method, keynotes reason as "the only thing that makes us man and distinguishes us from the beasts" (Descartes, 1988: 21). Descartes clarifies the essential ability which supplies "the power of judging well and distinguishing the true from the false … is naturally equal in all man" (1988: 20). This ability is the precise point determining the condition that shapes Descartes's famous description of human "I think, therefore I am" (1988: 36). From this point of view, it would be impossible for an inhuman, an animal or a machine or something else, to comply with the unpredictability of daily life despite possessing various organs or abilities. However, the obvious distinction between human and inhuman entities begins to fade away, and certain norms of humanism start to unsettle and slip into posthumanism. Regarding the radically changing condition of human form and desire, Hassan proposes the necessity of revisioning the conditions, urging that "we need to understand that five years of humanism may be coming to an end, as humanism transforms itself into something that we must helplessly call posthumanism" (1977: 843). The second part of the 20th century endeavors to bring wider respect and recognition of ways of being human. The general humanist tendency to view man as superior to other species is challenged and has been relocated at least partly by artificial intelligence. As explained, the history of posthumanism has no clear beginning, and "we are still becoming posthuman" (Miah, 2008: 89). As a slippery trend, Posthumanism is settled on a zone that is divided into two parts: one full of humanity's extinction scenarios, the other coexistence. Following the Industrial Revolution, with the participation of machines in everyday life and the ongoing developments, the relationship between human entities and other existences challenges obsolete discrimination. With the extension of the computer, one of the main concerns of humanity comes to the stage: whether the computer/AI replaces humans or not. Without a deliberate effect, we are experiencing Miah's proposal of "perpetual becoming" (Miah, 2008: 92) for a philosophical stance.

1.2. KEY CONCEPTS OF POSTHUMANISM

Though the theory can be subdivided into cultural, critical, and philosophical posthumanism and new materialism, generally it is rated as posthumanism or post-anthropocentrism that rejects the traditional understanding of the human privileged entity and fixed notion to reveal that human is not the measure of all things. Notwithstanding,

brief descriptions of the contexts are included. In addition, transhumanism, which is generally confused with posthumanism, is shortly defined.

1.2.1. Cultural Posthumanism

Cultural Posthumanism is the theory that explores cultural discourses, practices, and representations in shaping the understanding of the unstable human concept in the context of scientific, technological, and social developments. Marginal individuals and groups, narratives of otherness, and agency are of great concern. Miah underlines that human embodiment and subjectivity have become the focal point rather than the prospect of species transgression or human enhancement (2008: 85). Additionally, the theory seeks to go beyond traditional conceptions of human nature by generating new ones that are continuously updated to reflect advances in technoscientific knowledge.

1.2.2. Critical Posthumanism

Critical posthumanism is an intellectual trend that challenges traditional humanist perspectives and urges us to reevaluate the human concept in the context of technology and socio-cultural changes. It can be mainly thought of as "the way of thinking the human 'or as' implicated in the ongoing critique of what it means to be human" (Simon, 2003: 8). Critical posthumanists advocate a more inclusive understanding of agency, identity, and ethics. Hence, the purpose is "to re-evaluate established forms of antihumanist critique, to adapt them to the current, changed conditions, and where possible to radicalize them" (Herbrechter, 2013: 8). Political implications and historical parameters of traditional humanism are also other concerns of critical posthumanists.

1.2.3. Philosophical Posthumanism

Philosophical Posthumanism deals with engineered or modified human by means of the employment of technology concerning ethical implications. It is the general posthumanist approach that avoids restricted, fixed, and generalized understanding of human entities and experiences and embraces plurality and subjectivity. Philosophical posthumanists question the traditional understanding of human nature, identity, and

consciousness regarding the impact of technological developments and social transformations such as biotechnology and artificial intelligence.

1.2.4. New Materialism

New materialism, a specific branch of posthumanism, deals with the coexistence and interactions of the events and structures resulting from both nature and culture. The entanglements of human and nonhuman are critically the chief focus in the age of the Anthropocene which Braidotti clarifies as a "multi-layered posthuman predicament that includes the environmental, socio-economic and affective and psychic dimension of our ecologies of belonging" (2019b: 2). The rejection of humanism, representationalism, and the inherent separation between subjectivity and knowledge are common traits of New Materialism.

1.2.5. Transhumanism

Transhumanism is often confused and sometimes even used interchangeably with posthumanism due to its common themes, such as human progress, which refers fundamentally to a very different context. Their common point is that technology, as a characteristic of human invention or development, causes slippery identification.

The main focus of transhumanism is the reformulation of the human concept through science and technology to enhance human capacity. Transhumanism obviously promotes human enhancement and transgression. It addresses the process of reformulation of humans and in this sense, the posthuman is used to phrase the product of this process. The trans- in transhumanism signifies "evolutionary 'beyond' of the human, as in 'beyond-human'" (Keeling & Lehman, 2018: 15). According to proponents of transhumanism, advancements in genetic engineering, brain-computer interfaces, and artificial intelligence may help humans reach their full potential as a species and lead longer healthier lives.

While transhumanism suggests a transcendent position for humankind, posthumanism offers critical engagement. The main discrepancy that sets them apart is the embedded tendencies of humanism with transhumanism. For transhumanism, the posthuman refers to the output of the transformation of humans, that is, the evaluated,

advanced, and improved humanity utilizing technology. Unlike posthumanism's focus on the decentralization of humankind and embracing multiplicity, complexity, and heterogeneity, transhumanism reinforces humanist ideals, like human superiority in the natural order. By doing this, transhumanism "combines a humanistic belief in the perfectibility of man through scientific rationality, with a program of human enhancement" (Colombino, 2022: 390). Once and for all, transhumanism promises to advance humanity and enhance social progress together.

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF POSTHUMANISM IN LITERATURE

Contemporary literature, especially science fiction and speculative fiction, has been greatly influenced by posthumanism. Posthumanism has opened up new avenues for examining the relationship between humans and technology by challenging conventional notions of human identity. It has also inspired authors to envision alternate worlds and life forms. The philosophy has established new possibilities for literary exploration and inspired authors to address some of the most important issues confronting humanity today, including ethical implications, power and control, agency, and autonomy in the face of social and technological limitations by blurring the lines between human and non-human entities. Therefore, in addition to the philosophers or scholars who are interested in distinguishing humans from other species, a great number of authors are interested in this distinction and include it in their literary works. Following the growing number of seminars and conferences addressing issues related to nonhumans, posthuman, posthuman culture, or posthumanism, literary critics and historians have contributed much to the development of posthumanism. Literary critics and historians, in addition to the writers, have brought a wide range of theoretical and methodological advances to the examination of posthumanism and the development of posthumanities. For contemporary perception, literary scholar Ihab Hassan's article "Prometheus as Performer: Toward a Posthumanist Culture? A University Masque in Five Scene" published in 1977, is often accepted as the original announcement of the advent of posthumanist culture. He declares:

> At present, posthumanism may appear variously as a dubious neologism the latest slogan, or simply another image of man's recurrent self-hate. Yet posthumanism may also hint at a potential in our culture, hint at a tendency struggling to become more than a trend… (1977: 843)

Posthumanism is more than just a fad; its concepts have been prominent for a considerable amount of time. The mythical and fantastical ideas about human and non-human creators have been of great concern throughout history, especially from the 19th-century human and artificially created entities, and in the 20th century and lately, artificial intelligence or humanoid robots genetically engineered humans have been on stage. These new entities draw attention to coexistence in the universe and ethical considerations of modern technologies. Correspondingly, the characteristics of posthumanism appreciate the interest between fact and fiction.

Bruce Clarke and Manuela Rossini compile the chronological list of literary works that can be regarded as early modern predecessors to contemporary posthuman subjects including posthuman themes, image characters, or tendencies starting from "Letter on the Cynocephali" (865) by Ratramnus of Corbie and include anonymous works and various works of different writers from different times such as "Nun's Priest's Tale" (1400) by Geoffrey Chaucer, Anonymous "Disputation between the Body and Worms" (1400s), *Doctor Faustus* (1604) by Christopher Marlowe, *The Tempest* (1610) by William Shakespeare, *Frankenstein* (1818) and "The Mortal Immortal" (1833) by Mary Shelley, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) by James Joyce, *Jacob's Room* (1922) by Virginia Woolf, *Brave New World* (1932) by Aldous Huxley, *Murphy* (1938) by Samuel Beckett, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) by George Orwell, *Dr. Bloodmoney* (1965) and *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) by Philip K. Dick and so on (2017: XXV-XXVII). Considering the works chronologically, one realizes that the posthuman or posthumanism implied in ancient times is very different from that studied in the present age. Early literary works contain plenty of superheroes who are a mixture of imagination and reality. The goal in ancient works generally is to distinguish the human from other living creatures, in particular from the other animals. Immortality, the transformation of species that are human and animal and free will, and the perfection of humans are the common concerns of these works.

Karl Steel states that human language and body are key sites of discrimination for having rational souls, the human body has the chance of immortality, and the ability to speak provides human superiority (qtd in Clarke & Rossini, 2017: 8-9). Humans have always been thoroughly interdependent on their environments and other tools, so their dream of intelligent machines, for that time intelligent tools dates back a long time. Kevin

Lagrandeur associates the foundation of the idea of posthuman with ancient Rome and Greece, preceding these terms in Aristotle's *Polities* (about 350) and quotes him:

> For every instrument could accomplish its own work, obeying or anticipating the will of others, like the statues of Daedalus, or the tripods of Hephaestus, which says the poet, 'of their own accord entered the assembly of the Gods;' if in like manner, the shuttle would weave and the plectrum touch the lyre, chief workman would not want servant, nor masters slaves. (qtd in Clarke & Rossini, 2017: 16-17)

Aristotle's envision is a prototype of the master-slave relationship model, which is of great concern in contemporary posthuman issues. Up to now, the concepts of control, mastery, and slavery have continued to attract constant attention in the early periods by magic or supernatural effects and in the later years in connection with science and technology.

Ron Broglio writes on the posthumanist traces in the Romantic period, emphasizing the development of the particular construction of the self, mostly a self with a privileged interiority (qtd in Clarke & Rossini, 2017: 29). The emphasis on the interiority of human subject dominates the works of the period. However, it is *Frankenstein* that is generally marked as the pioneering work of this movement, as containing many posthuman elements in the contemporary sense. Human capacity, reason, and power, human production of an entity, the creative as a posthuman subject, as an agent of action, social judgment, social construct, and values pose questions about social rights. It is an important work that deconstructs traditional perceptions of human nature and human privilege and hints at human-technology assemblage.

Since then, many experimental works with scientific theories have been written. Lisa Yaszek and Jason W. Ellis who are contemporary academics in the field of science fiction having interdisciplinary research historically categorize the genre in two ways: the early stories about the posthuman throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries "dramatized Enlightenment ideas about unlimited perfectibility, extrapolating from developments in surgery and theories of evolution to" discover the possible outcomes of these new contexts and since World War II, science-fiction works inspired by cognitive science and computational technologies exploring mutability and multiplicity of the human condition (qtd in Clarke & Rossini, 2017: 71). The case of variety and multiplicity of the entities and conditions helps to provide a fragment of a future world or an anticipated world regarding social and ethical issues.

The future of human societies, the relations of the species, the moral landscape of the universe, artificial intelligence, the abstract being, genetically engineered humans, and humanlike machines play important roles in modern literature. Posthuman literary works try to warn and alarm about how the participation of posthuman creatures can invite a disaster. Scenarios of the biological transformation of humans and the rise of machines often bring along the narratives of uncertainty and fear offered by the sense of insecurity of losing human control or sharing the control with something else, like machines or cyborgs. The participation of such species is seen as a huge threat to humanity. Accordingly, literary pieces convey this fear and exemplify the assumptions. These works generally show or try to convince that being natural and alive is good and being artificial and mechanical is problematic and bad. The reason is that mechanical entities are represented as nondurable and akin to causing chaos, whereas human creatures are stable and reliable.

Scholars and science fiction authors are also akin to or willing to imagine how the human body and his/her relations are shaped as a result of scientific and technological developments in this connection. Science fiction is the best way of dramatizing the implications and outcomes of new technologies. It has a great effect on culture and promotes different responses to the new conditions. Many fundamental themes and subjects of posthumanism, such as clones, cyborgs, androids, human-machine hybrids, or human-animal hybrids and aliens, are best represented in this genre. To put it more clearly, "science fiction is particularly suited to exploring the question of the posthuman because it is a discourse that allows us to concretely imagine bodies and selves otherwise, a discourse defined by its ability to estrange our commonplace perceptions of reality" (qtd in Gomel, 2011: 340). Despite the differences in their aims and procession, science fiction works share common ethical and social matters. Complex ethical and social dilemmas originate from emerging technologies. For this context, dystopias exemplify the socially constructed empirical universes where fear and distress are dominant. While first or canonical works such as *Brave New World* or *Nineteen Eighty-Four* weigh heavily with oppressive ruling, constant surveillance, and lack of freedom, pressure, control, enslavement, and reliance on technology, twenty-first-century literature has drawn considerable interest in scientific advancement.

Posthumanism and science fiction are two closely related concepts that complement and enrich each other. Posthuman entities and themes nurture the science fiction genre. Because contemporary science fiction, as Haraway states, "is full of cyborgs—creatures simultaneously animal and machine, who populate worlds ambiguously natural and crafted" (1991: 149). This genre blends science and literature and offers alternative scenarios for the future. Through imagination, science fiction helps people to perceive the future and to assume the actual formation of reality. In Albert Einstein's own words, "Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world" (qtd in Ferrando, 2014a: 6). Gomel asserts that what determines ethical thinking boundaries, drawn between humans and nonhumans, ultimately political; but it is science fiction which provides a common basis for ethical system avoiding both anthropocentrism and universalism (2011: 353). Taking these claims into consideration, it becomes clear that posthumanist theories encourage writers to explore new ideas and themes and to imagine alternative lives and futures by challenging the traditional sense of human agency and identity. Since posthuman literature stands for a great source that offers new insights into the nature of existence and possible challenges, it may be regarded as a stage of rehearsal for everyday life or future life.

1.4. POSTHUMAN SUBJECTIVITY

Subjectivity mainly refers to personal feelings, opinions, and perspectives uncovered by individual experiences. However, it is not meaningful to reduce subjectivities to codes, mechanics, or informational flows, as the posthuman subject is a dynamic configuration. On the production of subjectivities, the significant point is not the final result but "the fact that the multicomponential cartographic method can co-exist with the process of subjectivation, and that a reappropriation, an autopoiesis, of the means of production of subjectivity can be made possible" (Guattari, 1995: 13). Within this sense, complex interactions of social and technical systems generate the subjects by means of the combination of various forces and components. According to posthumanism subjectivities, far from a natural fact, are produced, explored as a locus of social change, and examined how emerging subjectivities remake our social worlds (Blackman et al, 2008: 1). Subjectivity is a wide investigation of nature of identity, consciousness, and subjective experience in the context of developing technology and the erasing distinctions

between humans and machines. It is not limited to human beings anymore but is perceived as fluid and dynamic in posthumanist theory, encompassing non-human things like artificial intelligence, cyborgs, and other hybrid forms of existence. Guattari introduces the concept of machinic subjectivity within a broader critique of the traditional meaning of self and identity calling "for a departure from structuralist reductionism and a refoundation of the problematic of subjectivity. A partial subjectivity- pre-personal, polyphonic, collective and machinic" (1995: 21). The concept refers to the connections of any systems or flows from a computer to a structure or ideology.

In the past, subjectivity was perceived as a unique property bestowed upon humankind like other tenets, and it was believed to be a static entity that was located in the human mind or ego. However, posthumanist subjectivity includes challenging conventional ideas of the self and identity. Felix Guattari offers a radical rethinking of subjectivity by rejecting the structuralist and "the overrated psychogenesis of Freudian complexes, which have been presented as the structural 'Universals' of subjectivity (1995: 6). The distinctions between self and other, human and machine, are becoming blurrier as technology makes it possible to modify and manipulate bodies and brains. Theorists of posthumanism question the idea of a stable, core identity as they investigate how these changes impact our perception of individuality and agency. As the human subject is no longer regarded as occupying a given place within an obsolete structure, subjectivity is not just a characteristic attributed to humans but becomes a phenomenon that focuses on experience. In the opening of Chaosmosis, Guattari emphasizes "subjectivity as the product of individuals, groups and institutions" (1995: 1). So, in the modern world, entities, accordingly, their subjectivities, can be investigated not only for humans but also for a variety of social actors such as animals, machines, and other things. Influenced by Guattari, Haraway, in *When Species Meet*, provides a theoretical framework for non-anthropocentric forms of address and subjectivities stating that "… human beings are not uniquely obligated to and gifted with responsibility; … animals in all their worlds, are response-able in the same sense as people are …" (2013: 71).

As different entities acquire agency and autonomy, concerns about the allocation of privileges and duties emerge. Anthropocentric prejudices are criticized by posthumanist viewpoints, which also push for more inclusive ethical frameworks that take into account the interests of non-human and human actors. Based on this assumption, Herbrechter

confirms this posthuman condition, implying a "prolification of subjectivity, ideology and address or forms and instances of interpellation" (2012: 333) instead of an end to subjectivity. Furthermore, posthumanist discourses on embodiment and sensory experience interact with subjectivity. "The acceleration of the technological and data-processing revolutions, as prefigured in the phenomenal growth of a computer-aided subjectivity" (Guattari, 2000: 37) influences both the individuals and the collective versions of being. There are new ways to see the environment and create subjective experiences thanks to technologies like virtual reality, brain-computer interfaces, and sensory augmentation devices. Posthumanist research explores how these technologies modify our experience and our conceptions of embodiment, awareness, and reality itself.

Cary Wolfe highlights the new position of entities occupying a new place in the universe occupied by nonhuman subjects and explains in his own words "post-humanism means not the triumphal surpassing or unmasking of something but an increase in the vigilance, responsibility, and humility that accompany living in a world so newly, and differently, inhabited" (2010: 47). In line with him, Halberstam and Livingstone persist that the posthuman is engaged in "re-distribution of difference and identity disregarding the obsolescence or devolution of the human" (1995: 10). That is to say, posthuman condition helps to create new subjectivities by means of interdependencies and interactions.

However, subjectivities, like other issues of posthumanism, create conflicts and contradictions. The effects of these conditions on subjectivity are again contradictory. Sometimes, interaction and integration of humans and machines are thought to destroy individuality and, accordingly, subjectivity. In contrast, as subjectivity is frequently influenced by individual experiences, feelings, and biases, the social context supplied by pluralities inherently becomes less objective. On one hand, the multiplicity of the various entities welcomes posthuman subjects, but on the other hand, it may be thought to damage subjectivity. As of today, let's take ChatGPT, which is a language processing tool driven by artificial intelligence technology that enables human-like conversations and much more, with ChatGPT exemplifying the stretch of artificial intelligence that has made the whole world go around. When I ask ChatGPT, "How are you?" the answer is "I am just a computer program and I don't have feelings, but I am here and ready to assist you. How can I help you today?" (ChatGPT, in 12.01.2024). Considering its subjectivity in this

situation would be absurd and pointless. Accordingly, as being generated through technological and scientific developments, preprogrammed, posthuman subjectivity is generally questioned and remains undecidable and indefinable.

However, especially with the participation of Artificial Intelligence in everyday life, the AI's godlike abilities overriding humankind reveal various conflicts. The questions of interiority, variety, and authenticity of experiences are raised. Posthumanism monitors and deals with the fact of change and positions technology concerning this change to explain human subjectivity and embodiment. Guattari asserts that:

> The heterogeneity of components (verbal, corporeal, spatial...) engenders an ontological heterogenesis all the more vertiginous when combined, as it is today with the proliferation of new materials, new electronic representations, and with a shrinking of distances and an enlargement of points of view. (1995: 96)

As the subject is still in the process of becoming, subjectivity is seen as an active agent that shapes and is shaped by cultural, social, and political parameters. Since the posthuman subjects are not fixed, bounded or closed entities, "[s]ubjectivity is always unfinished, partial, non-linear" (Blackman et al, 2008: 16) as a consequence of existing "only in the present, … making of the real-time unfolding materiality of our body, … interrupt[ing] the linear determination and colonization of the present from the past" (qtd in Blackman et al, 2008: 16). Overall, subjectivity in posthumanism represents a paradigm change away from human distinctiveness and toward a more inclusive and varied conception of agency, identity, and awareness in a world mediated by technology. It challenges people to critically consider how technological developments may affect both the wider network of life and humankind in the future.

1.5. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND CYBORGS

Technological development, Verbeek observes, "has reached a stage in which technology has started to interfere explicitly with the nature of human beings" (2008: 394). Accordingly, contemporary society is akin to shaping, rather, reshaping, species along with other social realities, disregarding fixed notions and objective reality. Posthumanism is a philosophical approach that emphasizes the possibility of a dramatic technological revolution while challenging conventional ideas about existence. AI and

cyborg, two significant posthuman subjects, are derived from human knowledge and other capabilities. Unlike their human ancestors, who are seen as fixed notions, they are more dynamic and constantly evolving entities. In fact, these two prominent subjects are the responses to human enhancement and alteration. They function as the key figures to understand what it means to be human in the recent technological realm.

The intriguing subject of artificial intelligence in the framework of posthumanism explores the junction of technology, humanity, and their mutual future development. Artificial intelligence is a form of developed computer systems that perform tasks as humans typically operate autonomously. William F. Clocksin defines artificial intelligence as "a branch of computer science with the objective of equipping machines with reasoning and perceptual abilities" (2003: 1721). The main function of artificial intelligence is generally assumed to make human life easier and more practical.

The importance of artificial intelligence, which occupies every aspect of our daily lives, is increasing day by day. This relatively new and stunning companion brings convenience as well as complexity. It is a matter of great curiosity how artificial intelligence will be handled in this new order, how it should be treated, and on what foundations this coexistence should be established. The legal scholar and sociologist Gunther Teubner states that these special social systems are established as communitive interactions between nonhuman actors and humans and claims that under specific, restricted circumstances, these systems can be personified as actors in their own right, and after that, they become a part of a larger social system (2006: 15). To speak of mind, the uploading of a conscious mind from brain to a non-biological substance has already been accomplished. Even if today, there are many samples of this system around us, in comparison with future expectations, artificial intelligence systems are still at an elementary level, however, intelligent robots with human appearance are today only seen in books or movies. Overall, the incorporation of artificial intelligence into posthumanist discourse challenges us to reconsider our conceptions of what it is to be human, the nature of consciousness and identity, and the prospects for coexistence and future evolution with advanced technologies.

Posthumanism also revolves around the idea of the cyborg, which represents the idea of erasing the conventional lines that separate humans and technology. The word

cyborg was first coined by Manfred Clynes and Nathan S. Kline referring to deliberately incorporating "exogenous components extending the self-regulatory control function of the organism in order to adapt it to new environments" (1960: 27). It is also defined by Haraway as "a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism" (1991: 149). That is, it stands for the embodiment of half machine and half human, so it is the combination of both natural and artificial structures. Through the integration of technology into human life and adaptation to modern lifestyle, it becomes common to have artificial mechanical parts inserted in humans to support people physically, psychologically, and mentally, in short, to advance biological capacity. There are too many of them in our lives today. As Hayles explains, this is a phenomenon that has been going on for a long time:

> Cyborgs actually exist. About 10 percent of the current U.S. population are estimated to be cyborgs in the technical sense, including people with electronic pacemakers, artificial joints, drug-implant systems, implanted corneal lenses, and artificial skin. A much higher percentage participates in occupations that make them into metaphoric cyborgs, including the computer keyboarder joined in a cybernetic circuit with the screen, the neurosurgeon guided by fiber-optic microscopy during an operation, and the adolescent game player in the local video-game arcade. (Hayles, 1999: 115)

Cyborgs are viewed in posthuman discourse as a type of hybrid existence that blurs the boundaries between the biological and the artificial. These entities could use a variety of technologies to enhance their physical, mental, or sensory capacities, such as artificial limbs, implants, or neural interfaces. A cyborg could, for instance, have direct access to digital information through implanted devices, higher strength, or improved vision. Kevin Warwick, who is known as the first cyborg to insert a microchip and perform research in biomedical engineering, artificial intelligence, and robotics, writes down his experiences as becoming the machinic other in *I, Cyborg,* and proposes that:

> What matters is performance. Whether we like it or not, we know that machines can perform aspects of intelligence with a performance that outshines those of humans. The question we can then ask ourselves is, okay, rather than admit defeat, can we join forces? After all, partnerships and alliances are often the most powerful combinations of all. In this instance, can we upgrade the human form, directly linking with technology to become cyborgs? (2000: VIII)

Haraway additionally emphasizes the impressive and complex nature of the cyborg entity expressing, "it means both building and destroying machines, identities, categories, relationships, space stories" and concludes that "though both are bound in the spiral dance, I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess" (1991: 181). The idea of the cyborg

questions accepted ideas about human identity and embodiment by implying that technological enhancement can enlarge or redefine the limits of the self. This creates the potential for new kinds of existence in which people have more power over their bodies and brains, and the distinction between humans and machines is increasingly hazy.

When talking about cyborgs in a posthuman setting, ethical issues are crucial. Issues such as the effects of technology integration, the possibility of access-based injustice, and the moral obligations of people and society in navigating the shift to a future when cyborgs are part of society all come up. Since, the ethical aspects of cyborgs and AI, along with their subjectivities, future assumptions raise great interest and major concerns. Because the traditional relationship between humans and machines has reversed. Wang states that it is not the human who rules the machine rather, the machine is in the control of the human's destiny (2018: 5). It is not easy to overcome this new and very different situation. So, suggestions are being developed from many different perspectives for this new current situation and the more complex future situation. These new posthuman entities draw attention to how technology has the power to fundamentally alter human life and challenge us to reevaluate our interactions with machines and the definition of what it means to be human.

1.6. ETHICAL CONCERNS

Bauman questions the requirement of new approaches and modes of thought, politics, and morality to appropriately reply to the new social conditions. The issue of ethics has been reconstructed in philosophical and cultural studies so as to respond to the changing conditions of contemporary society. The contemporary ethical discourse, which tried hard to abolish individual responsibility, has been supposed to be replaced with subjective postmodern ethical values. Today, the diversity and disunity of moral voices are likely to silence others and provoke individual subjectivity to become "the only ultimate ethical authority", resulting in "irreparable relativism of any moral code" (Bauman, 1992: XXII). In this condition, "morality has been privatized; like everything else that shared this fate, ethics has become a matter of individual discretion, risk-taking, chronic uncertainty, and never-placated qualms" (Bauman, 1992: XXIII). As is seen, the world is characterized by overwhelmingly uncertain, frightening, and uncontrollable

conditions that threaten the consistency and stability of society. These circumstances lead to disbelief towards the universality of moral rules, and the results of the situation are legalizing ethical uncertainty, engendering existential insecurity, and ontological contingency of being.

Posthumanism, within this context, can be best interpreted as an interaction of competing ideas and responses to the entities and events with moral dilemmas, as well as embracing welcoming. The philosophy deals with the moral imperatives to overcome various kinds of changes as facing the other, totality, and infidelity. Not only the new entities but also the network of the new stretch of the relations necessitate the revision of the fundamental ethical norms. Posthuman ethics accounts for the human basically as a co-participant in the universe instead of a creator, master, or implementor force. It commits to putting the human entity on the same stage as all of the non-humans, as they have and share almost the same influence on shaping the relations. No wonder why, Nietzsche recorded humans as an intermediate form instead of an ultimate being, claiming that "[m]an is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman - a rope over an abyss" (2006: 4). Ethics has a history that is equivalent to human history. As seen, its main concern is the traditional human concept as human rights shape its core values. However, technological developments and scientific enhancements such as genetic engineering, cloning, or stem-cell research take humans out of focus and require them to seek new moral frameworks. Felipe Fernandez–Armesto summarizes the condition:

> Over the last thirty or forty years, we have invested an enormous amount of thought, emotion, treasure and blood in what we call human values, human rights, the defense of human dignity and of human rights. Over the same period, quietly but devastating, science and philosophy have combined to undermine our traditional concept of humankind. (qtd in Gomel, 2011: 1)

New inventions and existences in the social environment as products of technological and scientific developments have urged to creation of a new ethical system from human-like animals and animal-like humans to machine-like humans or human-like machines. The emergence of subjects like artificial intelligence or genetically engineered organisms raises extensive ethical and political problems. Ethics dealing with the new posthuman entities is a quite wide concept, including a variety of notions from responsibility, trustworthiness, justice, sustainability to risks, evolution, guidelines, assessment, and challenge. Changwu Huang, a specialist in artificial intelligence and his fellows interested

in computer science and trustworthiness theory, emphasize the ethical conflicts caused by the features of AI as transparency which means the accountability or the opacity of algorithms of AI, data security and privacy drawing attention to the misuse of the data, the autonomy referring to the ability to operate without human intervention, intentionality addressing to the ability to act deliberately and responsibility that means fulfilling social rules and assumed responsibility (2022: 3-4). The ethical issues arise not only on an individual level but also on the societal level. Safety, privacy and data protection, freedom and autonomy and human dignity are main ethical issues at individual level while fairness and justice, responsibility and accountability, transparency, surveillance and datafication, controllability of AI, democracy and civil rights, job replacement and human relationship stand for societal level (Huang et al, 2022: 8). Regarding ethical values, it is of great concern to be able to understand and interpret the processes of AI, to determine the just and fair outcomes of AI, and to ensure the responsibilities of its results without harming human dignity. Ethics' key function is determining what is good or moral and what is bad or immoral.

The main goal of posthuman ethics is to formulate ethical standards for posthuman subjects benefiting from the existing ethical principles. Thomas Foster, addressing the contradictions in functions, argues that "posthumanism has critical potential, that is or can be part of struggles for freedom and social justice, and the argument that posthumanism dismisses such struggles or even makes them obsolete" (qtd in Gomel, 2011: 342). In response, Gomel asks a more disturbing question: "[w]hat if the 'struggles for freedom and social justice' become politically unfeasible or undesirable in a postmodern world?" (2011: 342). Here, rather than answer, more questions arise, such as 'Whose freedom and justice?' or 'Who will struggle for freedom and justice?' and so on.

Not surprisingly, autonomous, adaptable, and interactive robots demand new debates on ethical discussions. Robots' involvement in daily life as simple things or complicated entities is hard to imagine, given the intricacy of the problem. When discussing roboethics, the key issues revolve around agency and accountability. The consciousness of nonhuman entities was focused on beforehand, but now the morality, responsibility, and liability of robot agents are questioned. Regarding this intricate matter, a variety of perspectives have been expressed, some of which contradict or reinforce one another. One significant idea is that humans are responsible for the conduct of robots,

including their mistakes and guilt, as it is unclear what they are capable of because robots are the entities that represent human targets. In this uncertainty, it seems best to entrust the duty to someone; otherwise, the situation of anonymity will make matters worse.

Legal liability for the actions of robots is probably going to be taken into account, but owners and designers usually bear the brunt of the liability. Pagallo brings to our attention the idea that slaves in ancient Rome were regarded like objects, and he takes the point that it makes sense to emphasize the owner's responsibilities as it was in those days, raising the question of whether any lessons can be learned from such antiquated ideas (2010: 400). Since the situation persists and reinforces the hierarchical system that places humans at the top of the social structure, robot slavery is fundamentally at odds with the posthumanist movement as a whole. But still, it is possible to respect and not interfere with the logical wants of engineered robots, there is a viewpoint that regards robot enslavement as legitimate and separate from human slavery. These contradictions support one another and inspire fresh ideas. Within this context, ethics is not only necessary but inevitable, so "[e]thics has evolved as a mechanism of social cohesion, without which a society disintegrates" (Bryson, 1998: 386). Accordingly, in a posthuman context, the ethical question matters more than it might first appear.

Regarding the structure of a society, the lives of all beings in the community must be valued. Inherently, posthumanism conflicts with humans' tendency to place themselves at the top of this social system and demands a new social order. The defining factor of ethics is human logos, which is mostly influenced by humanist tendencies. Traditional cultural systems are akin to privileged human entities. Aristotle specifically restricts ethics to human beings. Human beings are seen as more valuable than other beings as a human is seen as a unique entity capable of rational activity and the capacity to reason. According to Singer, this distinction is based on human rationality, the ability to use language, self-awareness, and free will (qtd in Gomel, 2011: 343). However, Alan Turing's invention is a milestone in this issue. With the arrival of self-conscious machines, the new agency to perform new radical ethical subjects entails a new ethical approach.

Gomel specifies that the figure of artificial intelligence is to be drawn across the spatial continuum of imitation rather than the temporal axis of descent (2011: 348). Here,

the case of imitation draws attention to Jean Baudrillard's notion of the simulacrum, which refers to the copies having no reference to the original and multiplying endlessly. Baudrillard focuses on the disparity between the real and the sign in the contemporary world as the sign demands its reality. According to *The Baudrillard Dictionary*, Baudrillard "understands simulacra not as false images, not as obscuring truth behind a facade, but as that which 'hides the truth's non-existence"; therefore, "the simulacrum is 'true'" (Pawlett, 2010: 196). Contemporary society is overwhelmed by simulacra. The ordinariness of this atmosphere and the order of the process are convincing and well-accepted situations. The process of a gradual turn of the image is stated as starting from a reflection of a profound reality, following on as masking and denaturing that reality, masking the absence of a profound reality, having no relation to any reality, ending up with "its own pure simulacra" (Baudrillard, 1994: 6). Participation of them in life brings about several risks and ethical problems. As a result, some other problems arise, like the fear of replacement of the real or of the loss of the real. The subjectivity and responsibility of the machine, and the ethical boundaries between the original and the copy, are of significant concern. This situation calls into question the position of artificial intelligence, which is one of the most significant points of this subject, how it is, and how it may/should be. In this case, however, many questions, contradictions, and dilemmas arise in the new setting, such as may or should the machine, as a posthuman subject, have rights, or which rights it may or should have, etc.

What dominates the ethical conditions in this field generally revolves around the issues of consciousness, responsibility problems, and moral agents. The responsibility problem remains the most debatable problem. Who is responsible, or who should be: the human as the creator or the posthuman agent? One other question is how to integrate ethical principles with artificial intelligence. Regarding the ethical treatment of robots' souls, which are typically confused with their consciousness, it is believed that humanlike intelligence or consciousness, which forms the foundation of animal ethics, is insufficient. The general tendency is that, as robots are something dependent on human agency, their reactions are predetermined by humans; they cannot and should not be considered moral agents or worthy of rights. We should never talk about machines making ethical decisions, but rather about machines operating properly within the limitations we set for them**.** One suggestion is to put the moral obligations of robots on their users, and another is on their

producers. Rejecting ethical responsibilities toward robots Bryson says that we can employ robots since we are the designer, manufacturer, owner, and operator of them and in line with the critics that believe the unnecessariness of providing rights to robots or AI, giving legal or moral responsibilities to them, he rejects robots' companionship with us, defends that robots should be used like slaves as they are fully owned and directly or indirectly specified with intelligence by us as we wish (2009: 1). While not quite human, today's humanoid robots are just in their early stages of development. Contrary to Bryson, Stephan Petersen whose specialties are in the intersection of the philosophy of artificial intelligence and the philosophy of science argues that "slavery is wrong for any creature of any degree of intelligence" and concludes that "moral worth is not a matter of material constitution, and enslaving a person is wrong" (2007: 45). In other words, he associates robots' servitude with human servitude and concludes that as they are analogues, robots' servitude would be unethical (Petersen, 2007: 47). In addition to the conflicting discussions on robot servitude and companionship, a significant impasse on this subject arises as cruelty towards the robots in servitude may give way to the desensitization of humans with genuine moral agency. To illustrate, Kant exemplifies a similar case with a dog lacking autonomy, and states that it might still be immoral to treat it cruelly when it is no longer useful to us:

> If a man shoots his dog because the animal is no longer capable of service, he does not fail in his duty to the dog, for the dog cannot judge, but his act is inhuman and damages in himself that humanity which it is his duty to show towards mankind. If he is not to stifle his human feelings, he must practice kindness towards animals, for he who is cruel to animals becomes hard also in his dealings with man. (qtd in Petersen, 2007: 48)

Posthumanism needs to redefine the dimensions of moral agency both in the positive and negative sense. Some think that posthumans are not sufficient to become genuine moral agents, whereas some other asserts that, being devoid of emotions, they can perform more objectively. Posthumanism touches upon scientific objectivity in the ethical domain rather than humanistic subjectivity. Here, it is necessary to enhance the boundaries beyond traditional humanism, exploring new dimensions of rationality and intelligence. One suggestion is a top-down approach, which means ethical principles are programmed into machines, and the other is a bottom-up approach in which machines are expected to learn how to make ethical decisions through observation of human behavior in actual conditions (Etzioni & Etzioni, 2017: 405-406). A top-down approach, following

preprogrammed principles, reveals more inflexible and obligatory morality, whereas the bottom-up approach provides more dynamic and subjective morality. Both have negative and positive effects on the predictability and interpretability of the ethical enactment process. Combining the advantages of both approaches, Huang and his fellows suggest a third system, a hybrid approach that embodies different features of morality, sustaining "the dynamic and flexible morality of bottom-up approach while obeying the top-down principles" (2022: 812). In short, it is asserted that the collaboration of various or all ethical theories may be the most favorable approach for ethical implementation.

As for awareness, all invented things are not aware of their actions like humans, but undoubtedly these actions will impact human civilization. It is extremely difficult to define posthuman ethics, at least convincingly. It has been a major dilemma to determine the place of artificial intelligence, as it has not been easy to decide whether it should be treated like a human, an ordinary machine, or another living creature. For this reason, many regulations and laws have been made by organizations and governments to direct the development of AI, particularly for the sake of privacy and data protection (Huang et al, 2022: 15). However, these attempts are not sufficient to handle the artificial systems effectively. For now, it is preferable to determine the consequences of their participation in life as moral or immoral.

It is known that the developed artificial intelligence can do what humans do lately; it can override human capacity, but at the same time, being a human production strengthens these contradictions. However, posthuman entities like robots or clones are almost always regarded as inferior to humans, yet it is a crystal-clear fact that they are more than machines, and the contradiction remains powerful.

Traditionally, robots are focused on a commercial level, specified for taking the roles in the household or scientific studies, however, they are discussed on an individual level as a moral agent with emotional engagement in their new roles of companionship to humans. They are not purely human or barely robots, but produce multiple associative social and legal effects. Ugo Pagallo, a former lawyer and current professor of Jurisprudence, also interested in artificial intelligence, law, and legal theory, concludes that "whether or not you admit their moral agency, robots *legally* act" (2010: 403). It is undeniable that the situation and status of all posthuman entities should be considered in any conversation about modern ethics. Therefore, the question of human or robot

accountability, as well as the direction of roboethics, continues and will continue to be very important. The chain of causes and effects determines the direction.

CHAPTER TWO

CHALLENGING HUMAN-CENTERED NARRATIVES IN *KLARA AND THE SUN*

2.1. THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Kazuo Ishiguro presents a picture of a techno society, which is overwhelmingly driven and shaped by technology, in *Klara and the Sun*. Technology is integrated into almost every field, from work and education to caretaking. The novel proves how rapid and constant innovations, accordingly, new systems and tools change people's way of teaching, communicating, laboring, and relationships, in short, their way of life. Klara's depiction of the environment of the waterfall also helps to identify the society, "[t]here were adults, children, AFs, dogs sitting at the tables, or running, walking, and standing around them. Just beyond the tables was the waterfall" (Ishiguro, 2022: 114). As exemplified, the rise of digital networks and advanced technological machines facilitates social interactions with robots, education through mobile machines like tablet computers, labour by machines. Because the robots are available, they are "bound to find a home soon" (Ishiguro, 2022: 5). The influence of technology, especially digitalization and automation, gives rise to not only economic or educational transformation, and social change but also ethical concerns resulting from the alteration of the traditional constitutions. Having a sexual or emotional relationship with a robot, ordinarily, reminds social outcasts or social misfits, however, as David Levy believes, "those who are devastated by the breakdown of their most significant human relationship will be able to speed their emotional recovery by rapidly indulging their desire to love, courtesy of a robot with the appropriately chosen specifications" (2007: 304). The focus on and fascination with humans has been shifted to machines in the contemporary world and is exemplified in the novel.

Ishiguro writes his last novel, *Klara and the Sun,* with a shared interest in contemporary individuals on appealing posthuman subjects and possible posthuman contexts. The possibility of applying human intelligence and other properties to machines, producing humanlike creatures, demands the construction of new ways of relationships and reshaping the social frames. In a posthumanist setting, the use of the nonhuman

protagonist and narrator, Klara, raises serious concerns related to the human condition and the central query of what it is to be human. While challenging the traditional properties of human beings, the novel invokes the tempting probabilities of the coexistence of humans and machines or the prospect of the replacement of both. As for Josie and Rick's relationship, Klara hopes her "presence will never come in the way of such a good friendship" (Ishiguro, 2022: 71).

Appreciating the posthuman tenets, the plot and setting present immense developments in the fields of robotics, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and genetic engineering. The existence of intelligent robots, especially the participation of a highly sensitive, solar-powered humanoid robot, Klara, in life as an artificial friend, and the transformation of children, namely lifting the children in the novel, recall Stefan Herbrechter's description of the period of posthumanism:

> The century of the gene, therefore, but also the century of neuro-and cognitive science and thus equally the century of the brain. The particular challenge for science currently is to connect the diverse strands of innovative technologies, namely digital, and nanotechnologies, neuro-cognitive medicine, robotics and digital mechanics and genetics in order to make the new image of the human more palatable for the public and for potential investors and for politics; and there is no lack of initiatives. (2013: 35)

Ishiguro also reveals how transformative technologies that aim to ensure a positive and lasting effect on humans' emotional, physical, and social context, "can change their inner life and relationships" (Turkle, 2021: 184). Klara's companionship brings the longstanding fantasy of the possibility of social robots to life as artificial companions and caretakers. The novel introduces new versions of existence that construct new and unfamiliar relationships under the great impact of technology. While deconstructing the traditional humanist understanding of human concept, existential boundaries, relationships, and hierarchies, the author implies various possibilities on the potential of the recent social context.

The novel celebrates many recent trending issues of transhumanism and posthumanism by introducing intelligence, affection, empathy, devotion, and care not solely attributed to human beings but to machines. The manager's remarks on Klara clarify the claim:

> You know, Klara. Of all the AFs I looked after, you were certainly one of the most remarkable. You had such unusual insight. And observational abilities. I noticed it

> right away. I'm so glad to hear it all went well. Because you never know, even with abilities as remarkable as yours. (Ishiguro, 2022: 336)

The existence of the humanoid robot Klara as a companion and caretaker challenges traditional humanist ideals that center on the human concept and brings about several fresh ethical problems about the othering and disposability of this new type of companion. Because the participation of sensitive robots in life reconstructs the status of traditional forms of human, together with their status. The posthuman subjects are situated within ontological, social, and affective relationships. Klara does her duty: "I believe I gave good service and prevented Josie from becoming lonely" (Ishiguro, 2022: 336). Thus, the human subject, in a transformation period, is presented as fluid, changing, unstable, and contextual so, the artificial subjects that have existed with a promise of replacement with human beings are created as "so useful, so dynamic and multivalent" (Kakaudaki, 2014: 219).

The coexistence phase is ongoing, and humans' reaction to these artificial friends is uncanny. An internalized form of automaticity, the uncanny is explained by Sigmund Freud, as "an intentional, embodied (even if symptomatic) response to something which ought to have remained hidden but has come to light" instead of "a simple reaction to technology" (qtd in Ravetto-Bigagoli, 2016: 1). Regarding uncertainties for the place of nonhuman subjective robots in the social context and the status of human being resulting from technological developments, the human characters confuse how to behave and treat the nonhuman entities. The posthuman entities evoke complex and contradictory emotions such as fear, anxiety, admiration, enthusiasm, and confusion. Advanced technological humanlike products initiate deep questions about humanity, existence, and dignity.

Despite posthumanism's rich content, the novel reveals contradictions of traditional humanism, discrimination, marginalization, and exploitation. The AFs are worthy of empathetic reactions as they have empathic responses and sincere care for humans. When Klara apologizes for upsetting Josie and asks whether they are still good friends, Josie answers "[y]ou're my AF. So we must be good friends" (Ishiguro, 2022: 124). However, contradicting general posthumanist tenets, the posthuman entities, namely Klara, are devalued, marginalized, and exploited. Klara is aware of her responsibilities: "I knew my best course was to work harder than ever to be a good AF to Josie until the shadows

receded" (Ishiguro, 2022: 127). Eventually, posthumanism appreciates the egalitarianism of all species; however, the novel mirrors human dealings of mastership and servitude by trying to sustain their dominance over other species.

2.2. THE BLURRED LINES BETWEEN HUMAN AND MACHINE

The coexistence of humans and machines challenges the thinking of humans as exceptional, superior, dominating over other existences, or separate from them. Human identity and the capability and status of posthuman subjects are greatly influenced and redefined due to technological developments and new modes of relationships. At the centre of posthumanism, the concept of cyborg emerges. The cyborg appears where the boundaries between humans and other entities, currently in particular machines, are transgressed. Haraway defines the image as a hybrid being, a combination "of machine and organism" (1991: 149), and "a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction" (1991: 149). As an output of a combination of natural and crafted mirroring technological developments and cultural transformations, and mapping our social realities, this new entity gains importance in a broad sense from the relationship between the human body and technology, enhancements of human capacity, to assumptions of future entities and relationships. First and foremost, blurring the lines between human and machine, "the cyborg is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity" (Haraway, 1991: 151). Appreciating Haraway, the AFs are hybrid figures combining both artificiality- mechanicalness- and organicity- human properties- which demand different statuses not only from humans but also from machines.

In *Klara and the Sun,* the story revolves around the symbiotic co-evolution of biology and technology. For that matter, Klara is told that "[y]ou're not being required simply to mimic Josie's outward behavior. You're being asked to continue her for Chrissie. And for everyone who loves Josie" (Ishiguro, 2022: 233). Decentering the human concept, Nayar suggests the human as "an instantiation of a network of connections, exchanges, linkages and crossings with all forms of life" (2014: 14). Posthumanism is akin to blurring the boundaries between these forms and succeeding the evolving and fluid entities rejecting rigid categories, hybrids of human and machine which addresses an end to the position of the superior human species. Human is by no means regarded as a self-contained or independent entity, as Pepperell clearly states:

> If we can start to see how the most 'sacred' of human attributes, such as conscious experience, creativity, and aesthetic appreciation, operate in ways not dissected from other functions in the universe, then we are moving away from the notion of humans as unique, isolated entities and towards a conception of existence in which the human is totally integrated with the world in all its manifestations, including nature, technology, and other beings. (2003: 100)

The core of what it means to be human, the human essence, the essential human qualities that is, the very complexity and the complex interactions of solely human properties such as reason, moral choice, and broad emotional gamut, what distinguish human beings from other entities corresponds to Fukuyama's definition of Factor X (2002: 172). The transmission and possession of Factor X by other entities imply equality for definition and exclude certain restrictions and categorizations like tribes, races, classes, or sexes. In a nutshell, "[f]actor X is the human essence" (Fukuyama, 2002: 150). As long as it is attributed to nonhumans, it makes no sense to regard humankind as pure and complete, it is more acceptable to regard different species with equal dignity. The AFs are not human; however, they cannot be specified as ordinary machines like a television or a washing machine; rather, they stand for an assemblage, a combination.

In addition to the capability or possession of moral choice, consciousness, sentience, reason, and sociability, it is about human dignity. While human reason and moral choice are generally regarded as the most essential human characteristics providing species dignity, Fukuyama attaches importance to the possession of a full emotional gamut. Klara's pure love, affection, and sincerity toward Josie echo Fukuyama's definition "human gamut of emotions" which produces human purposes, objectives, goals, needs, wants, desires, aversions, likes, fears, and so what, "is the human value" (Fukuyama, 2002: 169). Klara's determination to heal Josie reveals her human value. She reinforces her human value with a prominent sign of her self-sacrifice, Klara sacrifices some of her precious solution and jeopardizes her cognitive abilities in spite of probable effects on her cognitive abilities on behalf of her belief in healing Josie. In her own words, "I made my sacrifice, which I was only too pleased to do, even if now my abilities aren't perhaps what they were" (Ishiguro, 2022: 301).

One of the starting points of posthumanism is challenging the traditional and stable human-oriented understanding of existence, self, and mind. The posthuman, accordingly transhuman, is resolutely committed to change, progress, partiality, and interdependence.

Being conscious, the long-lasting adjective attributed to humans proposes a wider view including animals, machines, and artificial intelligence, addressing memory, thinking, intelligence, self-awareness, and emotionality. It is consciousness that is traditionally used to isolate humans from other living and non-living entities. In plain words, biologists and cognitive ethnologists have signified that those properties we think to be uniquely human -consciousness and altruism- are also features exhibited by nonhuman animals and machines. Nayar, encouragingly, acknowledges that "[h]uman consciousness itself, they have demonstrated, is an epiphenomenon" (2014: 12). All those traits associated with sentient humans such as emotion, intelligence, thought, awareness, a sense of being, and self-knowledge which Pepperell lines up, come into existence with artificial companions (2003: 13). Being aware of both internal conditions such as memories, feelings, and thoughts and external factors around the traits are witnessed in these nonhuman beings of the novel. With their high quality of self-awareness, the robots recognize their existence, distinguishing themselves from others and the environment. They can deal with their problems and follow their thoughts, desires, and goals intentionally. In particular, Klara is self-aware of her existence, knowing her status well and being able to differentiate herself from other AFs. Her self-awareness is reflected through comparing herself with other robots: "Unlike most AFs, unlike Rosa, I'd always longed to see more of the outside - and to see it in all its detail" (Ishiguro, 2022: 9). Together with self-awareness, reason is more granted to robots instead of humans. AFs in general and Klara in particular are depicted as having inner lives, constantly developing minds, and feeling emotions similar to human beings.

Posthumanism is engaged in the matter of cognitively and morally advanced machines with greater abilities of ethical responsibility, empathy, and selflessness. Inasmuch as the human and nonhuman relationship is based on connectedness and interdependence. Life, for Braidotti, "is not exclusively human: it encompasses both bios and zoe forces, as well as geo- and techno relations that defy our collective and singular powers of perception and understanding" (2019b: 96). Likewise, Nayar describes empathy as a "key element" (2014: 134) for enabling to break the boundaries and attempting of human race's colonization of other species. Its value is specified by serving as the foundation of intersubjectivities of posthuman entities. The posthumans are dependent and interconnected entities evolving in cooperation by blurring the boundaries.

Klara represents selfless love and self-sacrificing attitudes, qualifying kindness, humility, faith, and hope, revealing that these are not the special patterns of humanity. She even begs the sun as "[p]lease show your special kindness to Josie" (Ishiguro, 2022: 306). Stressing intersubjectivities, posthumanism ardently decenters the subjectivity of human beings. Through technological and scientific developments, it appreciates the creation of new entities like human clones or machines with artificial intelligence.

Braidotti asserts that the posthuman condition includes the convergence of advanced technologies like biotechnology, nanotechnology, robotics and artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things which serve to blur the biological, physical, and digital boundaries between the existences (2019b: 15). Ishiguro, without hesitation, attributes human qualities to machine existences and succeeds nonhuman entities which are more human than human entities. The manager describes Klara as noticing and absorbing so much and as remarkable. Klara's humanlike appearance and her ability to understand and hear are amazing. When Josie asks Klara whether she can hear her or not, Klara "return[s] her smile and nod[s] encouragingly" (Ishiguro: 2022: 13), and this impresses Josie much. It is strange to attribute human qualities to non-human subjects, but what makes the context more believable is that it also projects negative characteristics onto non-human subjects. The boy AF Rex, Klara's companion, also labels her greedy for trying to utilize much energy from the floorboard.

More than negative properties, however, she embodies the positive sides of humanity. She is sincerely loyal to her companion, the owner. She follows her morals, keeping her promise with determination, which reflects her internal principles and personal qualities that nurture her humanity. Klara is also equipped with pure human qualities and superstitious beliefs. The unhesitant faith and hope for Josie's healing, even when people around them lose theirs, presents the sophisticated properties of the human condition. Early in the story, the manager praises the robots, saying they are "beautiful and dignified in the window" (Ishiguro, 2022: 11). Also, her dedication to the sun, one of the oldest Gods worshiped by humans, evokes human religion. The sun is the source of her life, pouring its nourishment into the solar-powered robots and humans as well. It is not surprising that she attributes magical powers to it as she witnesses its transforming power on humans in addition to the robots. Faith is one of the constructive parts of her personality; she distinctly follows her way to reach her goal, admitting that

> I don't mind that I lost precious fluid. I'd willingly have given more, given it all, if it meant your providing special help to Josie. As you know, since I was last here, I've discovered about the other way to save Josie, and if that was all that was left, I'd do my very utmost. (Ishiguro, 2022: 302)

Klara reveals she never stops believing and confesses how she makes her sacrifice, which she is only so pleased to do, even if her abilities are damaged.

The robots' case of being "quasi" subjects, semi-humans, estop them to be addressed with the impersonal pronoun 'it', furthermore, they are given names and addressed with the personal pronouns 'he' or 'she' and when humans talk about these robots, they equate themselves with the robots and use 'we' pronoun to refer both to the humans and the machines (Coeckelbergh, 2011: 64). So, the categories and boundaries between the species are blurred using language in discourse. The language determines the way they are treated, overvalued, or devalued. Addressing them like humans, with personal pronouns, on equality with humans rejects the purities and binaries and brings about hybridity. Humanlike names make them more convincing and evoke an absolute undecidability for their status.

Klara is, beyond any doubt, a machine, a robot. However, she cannot be identified as a plain machine, as she is something more than a mechanical tool, having broad subjective experiences with her complex psychological life. Several times, in the novel, she illustrates faith, hope, compassion, happiness, longing, and empathy, sometimes to a higher extent than humans. In spite of the controversies between the reviewers of the novel about whether to treat her like a vacuum cleaner or not, Klara is worthy of being described as 'her' instead of 'it'. She fails to satisfy the basic process of human existence; however, she appears to fulfil almost anything humans can do. Because of the fact that the "AFs are magnificent. We're discovering things we'd never have believed possible" (Ishiguro, 2022: 329).

Transhumanist processes such as implanting artificial organs, prostheses, or life-extending treatments also take major roles in blurring the boundaries between mortal humans and immortal machines. Thus, humans and sentient robots cannot dramatically differ from each other. While robots are portrayed with almost perfection, human beings are represented with imperfections, both with physical and moral flaws. Klara's selflessness, her agape love, and her intimacy with Josie are also appealing. Despite her

unfortunate experiences, she does not regret her wish and opportunity to be Josie's artificial friend. She states her thoughts and feelings repeatedly: "It's never dull to be with Josie. … It was my wish to be Josie's AF. And the wish came true. … I'm very happy here. I have no wish other than to be Josie's AF" (Ishiguro, 2022: 152).

Klara embodies a perfect companion, having human properties. However, people in the novel seem mechanized, a bit careless, and insensitive, far from presenting kindness attributed to humanity. During the interaction meeting, the children humiliate Rick however, Klara empathizes with him and cares for him. Moreover, Klara, with her highly developed sensitivity, capability of eagerly learning through observation and quick comprehension, seems more human and appealing than an ordinary human. Also, the eagerness and excitement of AF Rosa as an observer are stressed while Klara's curiosity and complexity are likened to quick learning children rather than an artificial being. Both humans and robots are melting together with technological developments, which open ways for cyborg existence. By means of blurred lines between these entities, machines become humans more than humans, and humans become machines more than machines. So, semi-human and semi-machine entities are expected to wipe out the otherness, or sharp categorizations. The robots resemble human beings as much as possible, with almost equal qualities of an ordinary human.

From the very beginning, Klara is introduced as an excellent artificial friend with her abilities to observe and learn extraordinarily, and her deep interest in her environment, which makes her tolerably human. Blurring the lines and equating species destroys the human superior position as users who lose their control over robot entities. Eventually and not surprisingly, people are confused about how to treat artificial friends, like a human or a machine. Rick's mother confesses that "one never knows how to greet a guest like you. After all, are you a guest at all? Or do I treat you like a vacuum cleaner?" (Ishiguro, 2022: 162).

As seen, through the transgressed boundaries between entities and species, the transhumans and the posthumans, that is, the cyborgs, all of the classifications and restrictions are to fail. The holocaust of racism, imperialism, capitalism, and so on is expectedly challenged. *A Cyborg Manifesto* is an output of resistance against these oppressive systems. Haraway employs the term 'equality' not to refer to biological

sameness, instead, she uses it to address to level of the entities by extinguishing the hitches and thanks to the transformation process (Haraway, 1991: 56). Still and all, the novel presents a great deal of discrimination despite the transformation process existing as posthuman subjects.

2.3. THE CONCEPT OF OTHERNESS IN A POSTHUMAN WORLD

Among the endless possible outcomes of the coexistence of human and robot species, otherness is the one that leads the relationships. Even though the participation of interactive robots is not over as presumed, they are rapidly participating in humans' daily lives for the purpose of health care, entertainment, companionship, sex, and labor with the roles of artificial carers, toys, companions, partners, servants, or slaves. Science fiction works introduce a great deal of content on this matter and offer several different possibilities. However, the social and personal status of these social and sensitive robots remains controversial, and Rick's mother emphasizes the controversy: "I've no idea. It's so unclear, the etiquette. If one was borrowing a vacuum cleaner" (Ishiguro, 2022: 132). The concepts of both identity and otherness become crucial through the confrontation of humans and robots. The robots created as artificial companions are defined as social robots, both playing a role in human society and participating "in 'social' interactions with humans" (Coeckelbergh, 2011: 62). Regarding their capabilities, their humanlike styles and roles, they become something more than a machine or an instrument. They appear as just a "quasi-other" (Coeckelbergh, 2011: 62). Klara introduces Rosa, an AF, with the characteristics generally attributed to human beings "she was, in her own way, excited and observant, and as anxious as I was to prepare herself to be as kind and helpful an AF as possible" (Ishiguro, 2022: 20). The selfhood and identities of the artificial entities are shaped by their otherness as well as similarities. Both the humanity-humanlike properties, like subjectivity, intelligence, sensitivity, and anthropomorphic presence, and their disparity engender their personality. Their resemblance to human beings distinguishes them from things; however, they sustain otherness for humanity as well. Whether they are interpreted or experienced as quasi-other subjects or as mere machines is a vital point, as it changes the judgment process.

Despite their selfhood and identity, there is a strong consensus about robots' otherness in detail. Negating their identities brings about prejudice and damages their

dignity. They are labeled as technological others by Sun (2023: 1), artificial others by Ihde, mechanical others by Kim (2018: 321), quasi-other by Coeckelbergh (2011: 61), cultural others, subhuman others, frightening others, sentient others, and divine others by Kim and Kim (2013: 309), racial and ethnical others by Kakoudaki (2014: 117) and moral others by Chen and Liang (2024: 185). Everything, both the perfections and imperfections of the robots, is used to discriminate them. While their imperfections are emphasized, humans' superiority is aimed to glorify, and their perfections are highlighted as they can provoke predicaments resulting from fear of suppression or replacement. In doing so, they are generally described and treated as unworthy of spiritual concern and human respect. Among all the reasons for robots' otherness, their existential otherness in the novel is at the top. What exemplifies this situation most obviously is that a lady in the theatre addresses Klara, "this machine" (Ishiguro, 2022: 268). This existential otherness is elaborated by highlighting their gender and species, such as Boy AF Rex or Girl AF Kiku. This terminology and many other things explained below make the robots, particularly Klara, the other.

In spite of the whole cohabitation and the blurred lines between the species of human and nonhuman entities, the readers encounter a dominant case of discrimination, otherness, and marginalization in *Klara and the Sun*. However, this condition contradicts with cyborg writing, which is about the significance for all groups, that "is about the power to survive, not on the basis of original innocence, but on the basis of seizing the tools to mark the world that marked them as other" (Haraway, 1991: 175). The robots are becoming more intelligent, conscious, and capable, which makes them more humanlike. In response, they are more otherised from different perspectives with diverse purposes. Despite the advancements in the field of robotics, the idea of living together or working closely with intelligent machines still seems unrealistic for most humans. Robots are the mechanical embodiments of artificial intelligence functioning in humanlike practices. Through these developments, the holiness or uniqueness of human beings is deeply challenged. Their advanced capabilities of robots, such as emotional and communicational qualifications, bring about new types of relations between humans and robots.

The relationships with new others give rise to several complicated issues and feelings like anxiety, fear, and suffering. Since these others have the chance to reach such

a line, they become autonomous and out of control. As Kim & Kim imply, the unknown (the far or the other), incites the threatening different enemy, the familiarly different friend, and the radically different savage requiring reproduction and redefinitions (2013: 310). At the end of the novel, Mr. Capaldi confirms this fact:

> [T]here's growing and widespread concern about AFs right now. People saying how you've become too clever. They're afraid because they can't follow what's going on inside anymore. They can see what you do. They accept that your decisions, your recommendations, are sound and dependable, almost always correct… You AFs, you're magnificent. We're discovering things we'd never have believed possible. (Ishiguro, 2022: 328-329)

On the flip side, where the unknown is regarded as a threat, the possible case of perfection fails in the novel as well regarding social impact, job displacement, loss of human uniqueness, difficulty of control and autonomy, and raising ethical concerns.

Indeed, any form of the 'other' is regarded as a threat or risk. While defining the robots as threatening others, science fiction novels and films construct racial prejudice and promote their frightening effect as these works foreshadow the future and coexistence of humans with robots and possible outcomes like the inclusion of robots revolting against or robots damaging their human masters. Accordingly, Kakoudaki stresses that even if the robots are nonhuman subjects, they are exposed to ethnic and racial otherness; some of their properties, like their metalness, are rated with some traits of the Africans, like their blackness that assures their slave position (2014: 117). In this sense, the robots are otherised as they are regarded as carrying risks and threats to human superiority or causing damage to humanity. There is always a possibility of suppression of humanity under synthetic, plastic, or metal substances through mechanical functionality and convenience. Both humanness and otherness, within this context, can clarify the position of the robots. Robots are risky for humans' sustaining their humanist values as the main subjects all over society and philosophy. The novel presents the same sense of otherness: Josie's father loses his job at the refrigeration village due to technological advancement and the replacement of machines with human labor, which substantiates the fear of humans losing superiority and the possibility of replacement. Similarly, the reason why Melania treats Klara rudely is that robots like Klara may eliminate the need for human support. Moreover, the woman in the theatre expresses racial discrimination with the same inspiration "[t]hese are sought-after seats …They shouldn't be taken by machines.

If you take this machine into the theater, we'll have to raise an objection" (Ishiguro, 2022: 268). The same conditions remind similar fears or discomfort, "[f]irst they take the jobs. Then they take the seats at the theater?" (Ishiguro, 2022: 269).

Like most previous stories, including nonhuman artificial subjects, *Klara and the Sun* frames allegories of otherness. Though humanoid robots have many fundamental human properties like dignity, interpersonal warmth, and flexibility, humans are inclined to deny these properties, treat them as machines for sale, and reinforce their technological otherness. Klara's inferiority caused by her mechanicalness is seen through Chrissie's comments on her emotions "[i]t must be nice sometimes to have no feelings. I envy you", and Klara answers: "I believe I have many feelings" (Ishiguro, 2022: 111). Whatever distinguishes a robot from human beings is glorified to dehumanize them. That is, robots' mechanicalness, rigid forms, lack of feelings, warmth, and flexibility are the properties that make them inferior and subhuman. Their sub-humanity categorizes them as mechanical others who rationalize treating them as others.

The traditional thought of having the combination of a soul and a body is historically overvalued, and humans are put at the top of the hierarchy. In contrast, robots' lack of soul places the robots at the bottom as inferior even to other living subjects, such as animals and plants. This is one of the great challenges in the posthuman context which appreciates "everything is really sentient being" including "not only humans and animals but also stones, bronze lanterns, the pillar of the temple, and …, even the rumble-filled walls" (Cook, 1989: 20). The robots as promising posthuman entities experience challenging and staggering treatments. Klara depicts a scene where she watches a girl of fourteen with a boy AF walking three paces behind and even in that small instant, she realizes that "he hadn't lagged behind by chance; that this was how the girl had decided they would always walk - she in front and he a few steps behind" (Ishiguro, 2022: 20). This depiction represents how the robots are despised by their owners in this difficult situation, going on with a friend who does not love the robot or wants him to go. Klara is also despised as she is regarded as just an entity that may substitute for Josie, so her identity or dignity is disregarded as usual. Her main reason for participating in the family is a way to compensate for Josie, "A *continuation* of Josie" (Ishiguro, 2022: 230). Despite contradicting posthumanist tenets, Josie and her properties are of great concern, while Klara's selfhood has no meaning.

A posthuman story including an unusual companionship of artificial friend Klara and a human being Josie, *Klara and the Sun*, offers a fiction of mastery and proves how human beings try to sustain their superior position over artificial entities. Robots are mainly predesigned to be companions, slaves, servants, or workers. In line to produce a robot, Shulevitz describes Klara as "the dehumanized server" (2021: 2), which stresses her inferiority. The companionship between Klara and Josie turns into a master-servant relationship. Otherness is deliberately determined by preprogramming the humanoid robots as loyal companions and perfect servants. Encouragingly, artificial friends are generally treated as disposable tools, ordinary toys, and dolls. These mechanical slaves or servants are mechanical others supporting their existential otherness. Regardless of the subjectivity of intelligent robots, humans tend to treat them as ordinary tools or appliances. So, not surprisingly, Melania Housekeeper tried to insist that Klara remain "standing by the refrigerator while Josie and the mother sat at the island" (Ishiguro, 2022: 58). Also, Helen, Rick's mother, speaks up about her inferior status in a similar way, "[o]ne never knows how to greet a guest like you. After all, are you a guest at all? … I suppose I did as much just now. I'm sorry." (Ishiguro, 2022: 162). Moreover, staying with Josie in her room instead of being kept in a cupboard seems like a privilege, as a given indebtedness to a robot. Similarly, Klara is to stand beside the refrigerator in the kitchen, and Melania Housekeeper views Klara's frequent presence in the vicinity as "both puzzling and irritating" (Ishiguro, 2022: 57). The way of her existence as well as their functioning are used for discrimination.

The human characters are the superiors or the decision-makers, and the robots are seen as others inherently. Despite her sincere treatment, Josie underlines Klara's otherness when she introduces Klara and Rick:

> 'I wonder who this boy was. This Rick.'
> 'Rick? Only my best friend.'
> 'Oh, I see.'
> 'Hey, Klara, did I just say something wrong?'
> 'No. But ... it's now my duty to be Josie's best friend.'
> 'You're my AF. That's different. But Rick, well, we're going to spend our lives together.' (Ishiguro, 2022: 63-64)

Josie highlights Klara's artificiality and otherness from the very beginning of the story. The worst or maybe the most insulting thing is Josie's behavior, which is the same as the other lifted children in the interaction meeting, acknowledging her imposed inferiority as

an old model robot. Josie's lifted friends do not need to greet Klara and treat her just as a thing, an invaluable toy or crown even offering to throw Klara over, surprisingly Josie addresses Klara not like any voice she'd used before to her just "like the one she sometimes used when talking to Melania Housekeeper" (Ishiguro, 2022: 86). Josie's impoliteness and Klara's marginalization in interaction meeting by Josie, remind a study, conducted by Emma Yann Zhang et al. (2016), who deal with the simulation of sensory modalities and applications providing a sincere communication way for families and couples to sustain physical interaction even at a distance. For this study, Kissenger is developed to enable users to kiss each other at a distance by means of a haptic interface replicating real kissing sensations. The study reveals that in the process of data gathering, "some people feel embarrassed to kiss a machine in public as they are concerned that other people might find them weird" (Zhang et al., 2016: 119). Similar to the users of Kissenger, who feel uncomfortable using it in public, Josie is embarrassed to treat Klara kindly as she does in general. The reason why she treats Klara humiliatingly like others may be to avoid dissonance.

The purpose of the production of robots is mainly to ease human life. The reason is that the stories including robots as slaves highlight their inhumanness and otherness to normalize their exploitation. Robots, for Kakoudaki, have inherently the potential and figuration of otherness "that captures complex feelings about mastery and enslavement, sovereignty and its vulnerabilities, the social death of the slave and the desire for awakening and political participation" (2014: 117). The robots are not bestowed with decision-making or choosing, instead, they are to embody obedience. By supporting this, the manager warns Klara not to direct the customers as she waits for Josie and behaves indifferently to other customers saying, "It's for the customer to choose the AF, never the other way round" (Ishiguro, 2022: 38). As is seen, the robots, particularly Klara, are the embodiment of obedience and approve of their predetermined fates calmly.

As a marginalized character by the humans, Klara possesses a conscious understanding of otherness. Her feelings, thoughts, and experiences in a world dominated by humans are openly ignored. Bryson strictly rejects robots being described as persons or companions and provided with moral or legal responsibility for their actions, as humans fully own them; rather, he confirms them as servants or slaves (2009: 1). From this perspective, the exploitation of the robots is rationalized with regards to

discrimination of species. Humans disregard the ideas, feelings, and wishes of the robots to be able to make use of them for human profit. Wolfe states:

> As long as this humanist and speciesist structure of subjectivization remains intact, and as long as it is institutionally taken for granted that it is all right to systematically exploit and kill nonhuman animals simply because of their species, then the humanist discourse of species will always be available for use by some humans against other humans as well, to countenance violence against the social other of whatever species – or gender, or race, or class, or sexual difference. (2003: 8)

Wolfe's statement provides a tendency to associate the case of animals and robots and to interpret that robots are abused by humans simply because they are not human. Humans deal with robots in the same way that they treat animals for their wishes and needs. They are expected and mostly become servant of a human-centered culture that values the robots solely for their service. They are exploited and regarded as material to assist the human race, which sees itself as superior to any other type of being.

In addition to the properties and functions stated above, the humanoid robots appear in Godlike positions as they provoke not only fear but also fascination. In the future, they are to become capable of self-programming, accordingly incomprehensible and singular, strengthening their godlike status, which makes them the "divine other" (Kim & Kim, 2012: 315). Technology carries the promise of worldly salvation with its limitless power. The intelligent robots both contextualize the love of God as a superior being and a potential annihilator of humanity. Pepperell states, "Posthumans will be persons of unprecedented physical, intellectual, and psychological ability, self-programming and self-defining, potentially immortal, unlimited individuals" (2003: 170). Appreciating Pepperell's claim, the robots, as posthuman subjects, are exempt from biological and physical restrictions that identify them with divineness and perfection. Some features that make the robots inferior to others can also be viewed as the reasons that make the robots divine others. Their mechanicalness is explained as the facility to otherness above, however, the mechanization and its result, immortality, are the vehicles for their sanctity due to referencing eternal life and avoiding natural decay.

Above the human-machine existential hierarchy, a new order of hierarchy emerges: lifted human-unlifted human-machine. To reach a perfect society or a master race via the lifting process, some children undergo the lifting process and some do not. So, the lifted ones gain mastery over the unlifted ones. In addition to the marginalization of the robots,

the unlifted children are also otherised. Because sharing the same signs or codes makes all the members of a particular group different from other groups (Baudrillard, 1998: 92-93). Here, the common code is 'not being lifted' and the differentiation reveals that the unlifted children are to try harder to attend some schools like Atlas Brookings College as only two percent of the capacity is reserved for unlifted ones. Mr. Vence explains the discrimination spread all over society:

> Atlas Brookings believes there are many talented kids out there, just like you, who for reasons economic or otherwise never received the benefits of AGE. The college also believes society is currently making a grave error in not allowing those talents to come to full fruition. Unfortunately, most other institutions don't think this way". (Ishiguro, 2022: 276-277)

Correspondingly, in the meeting for socializing of lifted children, Josie's unlifted, however intelligent and hardworking friend Rick is deplored by the mothers of the lifted children due to remaining unlifted and is treated brutally by the lifted ones. In the interaction meeting, as believed it is told to Rick that "[*y*]*ou* shouldn't be here at all" (Ishiguro, 2022: 91). After being humiliated, Rick acknowledges that "I don't belong here. This is a meeting for lifted kids" (Ishiguro, 2022: 93). Like Klara, Rick is obviously regarded as an outsider.

Contrary to the general tenets of posthumanism, the novel includes a wide range of categorizations and otherness: human, nonhuman, lifted, unlifted, and more developed, brand-new robots and old ones. Human entities are generally portrayed as masters however with moral or biological deficiencies, nonhuman robots are represented as servant-like entities that ease human life but reveal contradictions as well, the unlifted ones are identified as the most disadvantaged subjects who are exposed to maltreating, the lifted ones occupy the top stage of the social context experiencing the superiority among other entities and the old fashioned or less developed robots embody the disadvantages of being the most inferior subjects in society. Klara notices something goes odd even for robot entities on behalf of othering the old model of robots.

> During the course of a morning, say, the three B3s would move, little by little, away from the two older AFs. Sometimes they would take tiny steps to the side. Or a B3 would become interested in something through the window, walk over to look, then return to a spot slightly different from the one Manager had chosen for him. After four days, there could be no more doubt: the three new B3s were deliberately moving themselves away from the older AFs so that when customers came in, the B3s would look like a separate group on their own. (Ishiguro, 2022: 41)

In line with the coexistence of these diverse entities, big social gaps emerge. The lifting process of the children also influences their future careers as well as their social status. The end of Josie and Rick's story reveals the influence of discrimination, and the impossibility of crossing the borders, Rick admits saying that "But now we're no longer kids, we have to wish each other the best and go our different ways. It couldn't have worked out, me going to college, trying to compete with all those lifted kids" (Ishiguro, 2022: 322). Additionally, the readers witness a case of discrimination between the robots, similar to the discrimination between lifted and unlifted children. Furthermore, B3 models are expectedly praised, and surprisingly, Klara is portrayed with perfection, distinguishing her from other robots.

Eventually, robots are subordinated, more than machines but less than humans. Their controversial subjectivities are strongly rooted in Homi Bhabha's "unhomeliness – that is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations" (1994: 9). That is, the intelligent robots experience cultural displacement and alienation due to embodying hybridity. Othering an entity, no matter whether it is living or non-living, necessitates ethical consideration and treatment. The treatment of robots relies on the humans' perspectives; those with an egalitarian worldview perceive and treat robots as equals, and those with a hierarchical philosophy treat them as subordinates. However, most humans are liable to deny the identification of the robots as persons, instead, they are more likely to exclude the robots from humanity and confirm their status as technological artifacts. Not surprisingly, Klara does not have the rights of her own that could protect her, she is treated accordingly as a total other.

2.4. POSTHUMANIST CRITIQUES OF CAPITALISM AND CONSUMER CULTURE

By the focus on technological influences on existence and human experiences, capitalism promotes constant technological innovations and production as the determinant of what shapes the current posthuman society. In addition to the capitalist social relations, and the basic elements of capitalist society such as capital, labor, and value, technological developments "form the backdrop to potentially horrific vistas or post/transhuman techtopias" (Rikowski, 2003: 140). Posthumanist concepts and outputs such as transhumanism, genetic engineering, prosthesis, technologies that extend human

life, the promise of eternity, virtual reality, and digitalization are turned into services or products of capitalism, each of which requires billions of dollars. The capitalist system tends to quickly commercialize posthumanist ideas, especially to blur the boundaries between the human and nonhuman, organic and inorganic, redefining traditional participants of the economy, changing market dynamics. It is troubling as it gives way to infinite and unavoidable wishes, even to continue a human being with a nonhuman. They ask Klara "to become [Josie] her" (Ishiguro, 2022: 232), and Klara expresses "I hope the very sad day will never come, but if it does, then I'll use everything I've learned to train the new Josie up there to be as much like the former one as possible" (Ishiguro, 2022: 231). As remarkable ways to transcend the natural limitations of human imperfection, aging, and even mortality, these practices bring about some other complex issues. First, commercialization of such implications is evident in the novel, as the ability to obtain an AF or undergo the lifting process is affordable only for wealthy families, as they require a good deal of money, they are not obtainable by all.

One other remarkable interest is the transformation of human subjects, which keeps up with the transformation of capitalist imperatives, "We are *not*-human. We are *capital"* (Rikowski, 2003: 22). The posthumans and the capitalist concerns grow hand in hand, in integration. In other words, technological developments are the determinants of the transformation and redefinition of human concepts, as well as creating new tendencies of consumption, new forms of labor, and new ways of relationships. Associating the global economy with a differential speed of development, Braidotti asserts that "it is a spinning machine that perverts global nature as well as global culture and subsumes all living materials – human and non-human – to the logic of commodification and consumption" (2019b: 65). Within this sense, Ishiguro confirms that developed technologies have the potential to reshape humans' lives and social context with profit-seeking purposes for humans. Mr. Capaldi's thoughts about AFs help to understand the context when he identifies them as "[A] vital source of education and enlightenment" (Ishiguro, 2022: 328). Josie's way of life, attending a distance training system, maintaining a relatively hermitage life, and being supported by an artificial companion are accompanied by highly sophisticated goods and services. As technology and science take the leading roles both in social structures and in the novel:

> Technology shapes culture; science epistemologically grounds technology; science as an epistemology presupposes the technological; (techno)culture produces (techno)science; culture is always technological… Furthermore, science often legitimates one cultural practice over another as in the normative approach to physiology in which science distinguishes/legitimates what is 'natural' and prescribes corrective therapy for what it deems 'unnatural'. (Aronowitz and Menser, 1996: 7)

Distance learning style is a concrete product of techno culture, shaped by technology's influence on human life. Devices and environments that help to sustain distance education, such as the internet, computers, mobile devices, and other online platforms, rely solely on technology. This new version of learning alters the traditional education system and brings about transformations in social life. The new mode of training approves "the increasing dependence on technologization processes and their complete penetration of contemporary culture" (Herbrechter, 2013: 88). Moreover, artificial friends are for the children who continue to live under the conditions resulting mainly from the process of technologization, that is in a fragmented family unit with the parents working long hours and maintaining digitalized education in isolation. In a technology-oriented consumer society, humans suffer from existential problems such as uncertainty, alienation, loneliness, responsibility, mortality, and death. The children lack genuine care in such families. Josie expresses her mother's conditions:

> She was trying to ... offer something, I guess. She said she could give up her job and stay with me the whole time. If I wanted that. She said she could become the one who was always with me. She'd do that if I really wanted it, she'd do it and let her job go, but I said, what would happen to Klara? And she was like, we wouldn't need Klara anymore because she would be with me the whole time. You could tell it wasn't anything she'd thought through. But she kept asking, like I had to decide, so in the end I told her, look, Mom, this wouldn't work. You don't want to give up your job and I don't want to give up Klara. That was just about all of it. It's not going to happen and Mom agrees. (Ishiguro, 2022: 287-288)

With the intent of circumventing these problems, robots with artificial intelligence are used and commodified in spite of their subjectivities. Towards the end, Klara discovers the utility room because of the young adult visitors and states that "[n]aturally there was not enough space during such visits for me to remain in the bedroom myself, and in any case, I understood that my presence wasn't appropriate as it once had been" (Ishiguro, 2022: 324).

Contemporary life relies on the order of production and consumption. Following the order, capitalism and consumption nurture each other. Capitalism appreciates the

cycle of production and consumption as the producers offer products and services, and the consumers nurture the system by buying these products. As a pattern of morality, consumption damages human beings as well as social unity. Consumption is defined as "'collective behaviour', 'something enforced, a morality, an institution', and 'a whole system of values'" (Baudrillard, 1998: 4). Furthermore, it is consumption that refers to the way of expressing one's status and identity in this system. To illustrate, luxury-branded or technological devices are regarded as demonstrations of prestige and social acceptance. To stay one step ahead in their society, some parents apply a genetic enhancement process to their children known as lifting, despite its side effects, such as fatal or prolonged illnesses.

The community in the novel is a sample of a throw-away society, the consumer society, Grag Kennedy identifies. As marketable, accordingly, disposable products, Chen and Liang draw attention to the predetermined obsolescence of AFs "due to the constant introduction of newer, more technologically advanced alternatives" (2024: 187) as outcomes of contemporary capitalist systems. Not surprisingly, with the potential for rapid outdated trends, the AFs are exposed to devaluation. Because when "the capitalist mode of production prevails … an immense accumulation of commodities" (Marx, 1906: 41) emerges. Klara, a B2 robot, functions as a perfect artificial companion, as the Manager says:

> From the fourth series, which some say has never been surpassed … Klara has so many unique qualities, we could be here all morning. But if I had to emphasize just one, well, it would have to be her appetite for observing and learning. Her ability to absorb and blend everything she sees around her is quite amazing. As a result, she now has the most sophisticated understanding of any AF in this store, B3s not excepted. (Ishiguro, 2022: 49)

However, B3s damage the reputation of Klara, who is not regarded as satisfying enough just because of the case of obsolescence, not because of her insufficient abilities or functions. Baudrillard touches upon gadgetry that reminds Klara's condition: "When technology is consigned to mental practices of a magical type or to modish social practices, then the technical object itself becomes a mere gadget again" (1988: 113). The newer models are always more desirable both for the children and for the parents. The newness influences not the quality but the emotions of the customers. So, B3 robots are always thought of as more attractive and exciting thanks to their novelty. For the same

reason, B3 robots are placed "straight into the window, with a big new sign and … given the front alcove" (Ishiguro, 2022: 39). The older robots, Klara and Rosa, are moved to the back, away from the windows that reduce the possibility of being sold. Moreover, another B3 has already been sold without being displaced in the store. The remarkable point is not their functions or advantages; instead, they are used as labels of their owners' status, as ordinary people cannot afford to get them. Baudrillard delves into consumption in his prominent work, *The Consumer Society,* to analyze its impacts on an individual's identity and social relationships, stressing that consumption is not an economic pattern but a social phenomenon:

> [O]utside the field of its denotation, the object becomes substitutable in a more or less unlimited way within the field of connotations, where it assumes sign-value. Thus, the washing machine *serves* as an appliance and *acts* as an element of prestige, comfort, etc. It is strictly this latter field which is the field of consumption. All kinds of other objects may be substituted here for the washing machine as signifying element. In the logic of signs, as in that of symbols, objects are no longer linked in any sense to a *definite* function or need. (1988: 76-77)

In the simplest terms, consumption refers to the engagement of the public with purchasing or acquiring things and services. However, in contemporary society, it has a deep impact on identity, relationships, and social structures as well as economic processes and parameters. Blurring the boundaries between the species and commodifying all, the posthuman subjects lose their selfhood and identities. The humanoid robots, Afs, are sold and bought like toys or ordinary machines to entertain and care for the children. The situations of AFs reveal how companionship and caring are exploited and how the companions and caretakers are otherised and discarded.

Today's political economy of capitalism turns the lives of both human and nonhuman subjects "into a commodity for trade and profit" (Braidotti, 2013: 61). Commodifying all the subjects, the system makes these subjects, not surprisingly, disposable as well. Commodifying a robot, like Klara, by disregarding her capabilities, is a familiar tendency, as she is a machine produced by humans. Artificial companions' desirable mechanical bodies as samples of disposable effective things provide "insights into contemporary ontopolitical discourses of personhood, thingness and legitimacy that render illegitimate bodies into waste, into offensive (even dangerous) things in need of disposal" (DeFalco, 2020: 36). From the beginning of the novel, the possibility of replacing the robots with new models or their disposability is repeated. Klara apprehends

the anxiety of the predecessor B2 robot models for being disposed of or replaced by the latest upgraded models when the older B2 models shuffled by so awkwardly, refusing to look at the store and the new models:

> [T]he AFs weren't embarrassed, but were afraid. They were afraid because we were new models, and they feared that before long their children would decide it was time to have them thrown away, to be replaced by AFs like us. (Ishiguro, 2022: 18)

Their fear is manifested towards the last parts of the novel in Klara's becoming a redundant object, which first appears in the storeroom and finally occupies a place in the junkyard. Intelligent robots like Klara are devalued and their roles as disposable commodities can be stated in a single word: 'trash'. Kennedy discusses the academically indecent and philosophically objectionable word 'trash' synonymously with 'to destroy' and argues that "'trash' means a manner of physically related to other beings. It is a mode of comportment, treating things without care, negatively and destructively" (2004: IX). The reality of being a commodity simply means being disposable, that is, trash. Klara's status as a sample of trash discussion is also reminded by the Housekeeper Melania with her threatening tone "And AF. Your big plan. If it make Miss Josie worse I come dismantle you. Shove you in garbage" (Ishiguro, 2022: 198). Unfortunately, in the end, Klara is thrown away in a junk yard, most likely in poor conditions, sharing the same fate as most of the other robots, like trash.

Consumption, in the contemporary sense, has moved away from needs and focused on desires. Production, accordingly, consumption does not aim to satisfy the needs, instead, they are determined by "the very needs of order of production" (Baudrillard, 1998 66). "Look!' Rosa whispered. She's going to choose him! She loves him. He's so lucky!" (Ishiguro, 2022: 6). The reason why the customer chooses Rex, Rosa thinks, is simple: she loves, desires, and buys him but does not need him. Choosing and buying qualify AF Rex as a good, an object, just as a machine. What overlaps with Hayles' claim, "[c]apitalism encourages the inflation of desire, marketing its products by seducing the consumer with power fantasies" (1999: 170). More consumption, or constant consumption, believed to provide success, happiness, and satisfaction, is encouraged. Hence, both consumption and production focus on continuous growth, which results in social and environmental risks. Josie's friends criticize her for not picking up the B3 model instead of the B2 model. The peer pressure on her makes her behave favorably for

consumption and say “Now, I’m starting to think I should have” (Ishiguro, 2022: 88). Similarly, another customer offers to buy a B3 robot for his daughter sounding excited emphasizing that “No one you know has one” (Ishiguro, 2022: 37). As is seen, technological developments ease consumption and disposability by means of mass production, global transportation, and mechanized cheap labor. As Hayles asserts, the “compulsive drive toward expansion and transformation recalls the capitalist imperative to keep the cycle of increasing consumption spinning lest the economy collapse under its own weight” (1999: 254).

Braidotti describes the global economy as post-anthropocentric which addresses advanced capitalism for replacing the uniqueness of Anthropos and unifying “all species under the imperative of the market” (2019a: 41). The profit-oriented quality of capitalism is associated with posthumanism which devalues the human concept and implies the displacement or replacement of humans with machines and other digital systems. The development of robotics and artificial intelligence creates suitable positions for machines and replaces human labor, which brings about great transformations in the labor market. Expectedly, contemporary economic systems appreciate this transformation for demanding inventive, dynamic, and flexible structures that generate more profit. Within this context, automation and robotization create a new economic order while reducing human labor and annihilating traditional jobs. Similarly, profit-seeking practices and innovations appreciate transhumanism and human enhancement for the sake of profit-generating participation in the labor force. To minimize the effort and money and maximize the profit, technological products like robots are used, exemplifying carefree commodities explained by Kennedy. Klara’s companionship also overlaps with Turkle’s suggestion as “the illusion of companionship without the demands of friendship … without the demands of intimacy” (2021: 334). She portrays an economic object for this sense rather than a subject from the beginning to the end, despite her sharing. Klara’s experiences prove the disposable carefree commodity reality without the demand for special care turning into trash. Towards the end, Klara confesses that “[t]he mother, like Josie, had less to do with me during this period, sometimes not looking my way even when she encountered me around the house” (Ishiguro, 2022: 326).

AI participation in daily lives, not surprisingly, transforms the labour market, trivializes human jobs, and increases unemployment by eliminating occupations. The

robots are restructuring types of work and labor, resulting in "indirect unemployment … by taking people out of the equation … and creating more amenable to machines" (Moradi & Levy, 2020: 277). Machine sophistication and perfection, such as limitlessness or immortality, dig up the popular argument that "robots will take our jobs!"[2] which is of great concern to contemporary novels as well as various articles. Ishiguro graces the argument by portraying his nonhuman protagonist Klara as a perfect alternative for human care under the requirements of capitalism. Because of the same reasons, a great number of people, including Josie's father, lose their jobs and join the ranks of the unemployed, and some others fear facing the same conditions.

The advanced machines deeply influence social reality, causing and resulting from the transformation of economic orders and structures. In the simplest form, the capitalist order encourages and forces humans to work so as to meet their needs. In line with this system, however, they try hard to enhance their standards and look for better opportunities. Humans have to earn more in order to maintain their consumption habits and attain goods and services, which necessitates continuous working. However, people face losing their jobs and are obliged to struggle with the technological contributions of machines. To explain, Chrissie tries her best to continue working to be able to sustain her and her daughter Josie's standards, even if she is exhausted and busy all the time, and cannot care for Josie as expected. As is known, unemployment in various sectors leads to poverty and influences all points of society, which may turn into a dystopia.

The sense of displacement engenders new extents of exclusion, isolation, and alienation, breaking down the traditional social codes and establishing new structures and boundaries with flexible information, capital, and commodities. No wonder why Vandenberghe composes the story of posthumanism about the techno-genesis of humankind around meditation, complexity, and alienation (2004: 72). In line with this claim, homeschooling, in the novel, can be exemplified as one of the greatest outcomes of these changes and also features the alienating impact of technological division.

Posthuman capitalism and technological developments proceed adherently creating absolute social territories. While some struggle to continue with poverty, which is

[2] https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/11/style/robots-jobs-children.html?smid=url-share
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/01/robots-take-our-jobs-amazon-go-seattle

deepened by technological displacement, others indulge in luxuries. The novel's setting looks credible, like our world regarding inequalities between the wealthy and the others in accessing expensive machines. The rich can be regarded as true consumers as they have the opportunity to consume. For instance, most of the customers in the novel are quite high-ranking. Only the children of these rich families could get the lifting process; AFs are obtainable only by these families, and they could only accompany lifted children. The production and manipulation of posthuman processes such as AI and genetic engineering as social signifiers transform all natural and concrete values into productive conformation of social privilege as well as economic profit (Baudrillard, 1998: 58). This deepens the social break between the lifted and unlifted children and their families. The Manager explains this reality to the robots in the store:

> What you must understand is that we're a very special store. There are many children out there who would love to be able to choose you, choose Rosa, any one of you here. But it's not possible for them. You're beyond their reach. That's why they come to the window, to dream about having you. But then they get sad. Manager, a child like that. Would a childlike that have an AF at home? Perhaps not. Certainly not one like you. (Ishiguro, 2022: 11)

The difficulty of transgressing the social boundaries between the lower and upper classes shows how the consumer society is trapped in division. Here, class is "[t]he capital relation: the dynamic, contradictory, antagonistic relation that generates and maintains the social universe of capital" (Rikowski, 2001: 14). For this reason, capitalism promotes social discrimination, differentiation, and structural organization by relying on the distribution of wealth. Baudrillard supportively describes the education system as a class institution, observing that everyone does not have the same educational chances (1998: 59). The discrimination is deepened in Rick's case as his mother expresses that they "can't find screen tutors for him. They're either members of TWE, which forbids its members to take unlifted students or else they're bandits demanding ridiculous fees which [they] of course are in no position to offer" (Ishiguro, 2022: 165). In this respect, a lone individual is never of concern for the capital, rather it engages in relationships with others in a social context "in their hankerings after reified social prestige" (Baudrillard, 1998: 64) even doing so "in spectacular fashion" (Baudrillard, 1998: 64) by calling everyone hierarchically ordered. Consumption, in this sense, serves for prestige or conformity of differentiation. In line with Baudrillard's claim, the AFs are used as a sign of social hierarchy, overlapping with his argument that "[i]t is recognizing the obvious truth of the

consumer society, which is that the truth of objects and products is their brand name" (1998: 116). This is their sacred function, which makes them remarkable instead of their capabilities and dignity. Similarly, the lifting process is a sign of status for wealthy families, and Shulevitz describes this situation as "the sacrifice of the children to parental fears about the loss of status" (2021: 2).

Sustaining transformation of capitalist dynamics and posthumanist traits generates today's social structures. Capitalism relies on the system of exploitation of labor, resources, and desires, and influences every part of the social territory, as well as family structure and education. Ultimately, the commodification of social entities gives rise to the commodification of human emotions and relationships. When commodification alters the aspects of human life from body and mind to senses and thoughts, transhumanism gains strength and momentum.

2.5. POSTHUMANIST CRITIQUES OF THE TRANSHUMANIST AGENDA

The starting point of transhumanism is the deficiencies and flaws of human nature that need alteration and advancement. The main goal, then, is the transcendence of flawed human nature and the improvement of the human condition, which implies the practical reformation of human beings. Scientific and technological progress may overcome human limitations, imperfections, and vulnerabilities. Transhumanists indulge in things like augmentation, extreme life extension, increasing beauty or strength, sustainable mood, body or intelligence enhancement, and applications improving life quality utilizing recent and future technologies such as biogenetics, genetic engineering, cryonics, nanotechnology, mind uploading, and AI. While doing so, they make use of gene modification techniques, artificial organs, treatments that slow down aging, brain-computer interfaces, AI integration, biometric implants, bionic limbs, exoskeleton technology, vision and hearing implants, virtual reality integration, nootropic drugs whose implications remain controversial in terms of security, ethical and social impact. Max More defines transhumanism, which promotes interdisciplinary approaches, as the class of philosophies seeking the ongoing evolution of human beings and lifestyle beyond their current forms, resulting from scientific and technologically driven life-promoting systems and values. (2013: 1). Far from psychological, cultural, political, and biological restrictions or stabilities, transhumanism searches for constant progress, evolution, and

improvement. Josie's first impression overlaps with the starting point and the necessity of transhumanism. She embodies the weakness and physical fragilities of human beings, as Klara describes her:

> She was pale and thin, and as she came towards us, I could see her walk wasn't like that of other passers-by. She wasn't slow exactly, but she seemed to take stock after each step to make sure she was still safe and wouldn't fall. (Ishiguro, 2022: 12)

Genetic engineering and AI systems are the milestones supplying perpetual progress of wisdom, intelligence, morality, body power, functions, and life-promoting qualities. One of the focal points of the novel is its common deal with transhumanism: "a radical and scientific-technological enhancement of human capabilities, and the transformation of humans into new, posthuman species" (Cohen & Spactor, 2020: 178). Transhumanism underscores the phase between human and posthuman, the transition process dealing with an intermediate form. To improve the human condition, transhumanism aims to reach the developed phase of the posthuman concept, the outcome of the transformation process through cutting-edge technologies. The transhumans are more capable and better, and the posthumans are, in this sense, complete and perfect. Ishiguro, who deals with the assumption of whether the human race can transfigurate and transcend mental and physical limitations using science and technology, draws up his novel with the primary concern of the genetic transformation, the lifting process of his protagonist, Josie. Determination of lifting the children satisfies the transhumanist purposes explained by Bostrom:

> to reach intellectual heights as far above any current human genius as humans are above other primates; to be resistant to disease and impervious to aging; to have unlimited youth and Vigor; to exercise control over their own desires, moods, and mental states; to be able to avoid feeling tired, hateful, or irritated about petty things; to have an increased capacity for pleasure, love, artistic appreciation, and serenity; to experience novel states of consciousness that current human brains cannot access. It seems likely that the simple fact of living an indefinitely long, healthy, active life would take anyone to posthumanity if they went on accumulating memories, skills, and intelligence. (2003: 5)

The gene modification process promises smarter, healthier, and longer-living children and provides them with an upper-class privilege that gives special opportunities, which is a contradictory output of transhumanism that rejects hierarchies and aims to transcend boundaries. Mother decides the lifting practice, stating: "So what if Josie doesn't get lifted? Plenty of kids aren't. But I could never have that for Josie. I wanted the best for

her. I wanted her to have a good life" (Ishiguro, 2022: 236). In addition to biological and intellectual transhumanism, "Moral transhumanism seeks enhancement of supposedly innate human features and qualities" (Nayar, 2014: 22). Emerging as an interdisciplinary entanglement, transhumanism is intertwined with biotechnological studies as well as robotics. Moral transhumanism involves moral improvements and cognitive enhancements that serve to become moral agents with more virtue, sympathy, compassion, altruism, justice, and so on through technoscientific studies. When Klara is asked to continue Josie, she says "Until today … Until just now. I believed it was my duty to save Josie, to make her well. But perhaps this is a better way" (Ishiguro, 2022: 184). Klara represents the kindness and goodness of human nature, developing and following deeper moral rules.

Moreover, while the unlifted child Rick is defined as intelligent and promising, he, nonetheless, is regarded as sufficient; the necessity and virtue of transformation are repeatedly uttered. The transhumanist deals and the purposes are so strong and appealing that even the process of modification in the novel causes severe health problems and eventually may bear the possible risk of death, the parents pursue the operation of lifting their children with perseverance. It is a shocking indication that even if Josie's elder sister, Sal, becomes seriously ill and dies in the lifting process, their mother, Mrs. Arthur, insists on carrying out the same operation on her younger daughter Josie. Rick bears Josie's message to her mother supporting this inclination:

> She says that no matter what happens now, never mind how it plays out, she loves you and will always love you. She's very grateful you're her mother and she never even once wished for any other. That's what she said. And there was more. On this question of being lifted. She wants you to know she wouldn't wish it any other way. If she had the power to do it again, and this time it was up to her, she says she'd do exactly what you did and you'll always be the best mother she could have. (Ishiguro, 2022: 311-312)

The determination affirms that overcoming fundamental human limitations is a great promise of transhumanism.

Transhumanism sometimes goes on spontaneously. That is, transformation may happen naturally, without a centralized and coordinated plan or a unified movement. Inspired by these posthumanist tendencies, Hassan claims the necessity of understanding the human form that is "changing radically and thus must be re-visited" (1977: 843). Thanks to the transformation process driven by technology, human beings transcend

themselves and create new possibilities on behalf of both existence and relationships. Braidotti highlights the posthuman subject as "a working hypothesis about the kind of subjects we are becoming" (2019: 2), addressing multiple, open, and non-hierarchical concerns. Being open to transformation challenges the traditionally assumed human superiority and the very possibility of transformation that is revealed by Mr. Paul:

> I think I hate Capaldi because deep down I suspect he may be right. That what he claims is true. That science has now proved beyond doubt there's nothing so unique about my daughter, nothing there our modern tools can't excavate, copy, transfer (Ishiguro, 2022: 249).

The novel appreciates that transformation and upgrading are common processes. Lifting is a transformational procedure that aims to upgrade the children and provide progress. Not being lifted is even thought of as "a shame a boy like that should have missed out" (Ishiguro, 2022: 77).

Transhumanism is paradoxical and deconstructive**.** Though transhumanism and posthumanism are often used interchangeably, transhumanism, partly as an intensification of humanism, deals with biological modifications of human beings and the advancement of their ontological conditions through scientific and technological developments. Treating humans as in the phase of coevolution, technology is viewed as an integral part of human subjects confirming "the limitations of human body (biology) as something that might be transcended through technology" (Nayar, 2014: 16). In other words, the focus of transhumanism is 'human', human progress, enhancement of human conditions, excuse humans from deficiencies and flaws, and its final goal is to reach perfection and immortality. Here, transhumanism is, contrary to the general assumptions, associated with anthropocentrism and humanism. In this sense, it separates from posthumanism and becomes a counterpart of humanism.

Transhumanism is identified as "an extension of humanism" by Bostrom (2003: 2), as "an *intensification* of humanism" by Wolfe (2010: XV) (emphasis in original), and as "an ultra-humanism" by Ferrando (2019: 3). Ishiguro, dealing with the transformation of his human characters to enhance their human abilities and life quality through developed technologies, answers the human-oriented interest of transhumanism and questions the possibility of perfection and immortality by means of lifting process and the plan of inhabiting Klara in Josie if necessary. Not surprisingly, the transhumans regard

themselves and are considered by others as an advanced genus of humans with dominant power following transhumanist ideals. To transcend the human limitations and mortality, they wish Klara to inhabit Josie, stating that:

> Klara, we're not asking you to train the new Josie. We're asking you to *become* her. That Josie you saw up there, as you noticed, is empty. If the day comes - I hope it doesn't, but if it does - we want you to inhabit that Josie up there with everything you've learned. (Ishiguro, 2022: 232)

Also, while the ones like Josie are lifted and gain more importance, having the possibility of enhancing the quality of their lives, the others, like her friend, Rick, are devalued and marginalized. Posthuman entities are assumed to be better than humans, disguised in relative perfection that will be achieved through modification, removing the negative and insufficient properties.

Transhumanist philosophy is broadly discussed by More in the *Principles of Extropy*, generating the term "extropy" to address the core goals and values of transhumanism. It is mainly defined as "the extent of a living or organizational system's intelligence, functional order, vitality, and capacity and drive for improvement" (More, 2013: 5). As the counterpart of transhumanism, extropianism is associated with the process of becoming more sophisticated, intense, and autonomous. In line with these functions, More sequences the extropian principles as boundless expansion, self-transformation, intelligent technology, spontaneous order, and dynamic optimism (1992: 3). That is, while seeking 'the more' power, intelligence, or lifespan, limitless progress is demanded through infinite practices and immeasurable technology with positive authorization attitudes. Mr. Capaldi summarizes the facility of transformation of Josie with Klara; in other words, Klara's imitation of Josie:

> I'll be able to give you scientific proof of it. Proof she's already well on her way to accessing quite comprehensively all of Josie's impulses and desires. … A part of us refuses to let go. The part that wants to keep believing there's something unreachable inside each of us. Something that's unique and won't transfer. But there's nothing like that, we know that now. *You* know that. For people our age it's a hard one to let go. We *have* to let it go, Chrissie. There's nothing there. Nothing inside Josie that's beyond the Klaras of this world to continue. (Ishiguro, 2022: 233)

Instead of an absolute being, transhuman addresses a process of becoming, implying "that for the posthumanist man is not, but that he becomes what he is and what he is not, by overcoming himself, thanks to technology" (Vandenberghe, 2004: 78). Klara's stance

corresponds to the description of Ferrando on transhumanism as becoming posthuman soon through:

> [T]he speculative technology of mind uploading may manifest in hybrid co-emergences of human consciousness and machinic assemblages which could not be considered "human" anymore—humans, for instance, have (and are) biological bodies; still, they would be intrinsically related to the human species, since the phenomenological genealogy of their own consciousness would have had originated out of embodied human experiences. (Ferrando, 2019: 28)

Standing as a sample of disembodied consciousness, Klara enjoys the devolution of defections and restrictions of flesh or other troubles associated with the corporeality of the body and maintenance of her optimal experiences. In addition to freeing her from the limitations of her body, the simulated realm transforms her into an infinite sense of immortality.

Cohen and Spector identify transhumanism in two versions: *moderate transhumanism* (Version 1) and *extreme transhumanism* (Version 2) (Italic in original form). *Moderate transhumanism* aims to overcome human biological inadequacies and upgrade human strength so as to prolong human life along with intense health, higher intelligence, and the final evolution of transhumans into posthumans (Cohen & Spector, 2020: 179). Josie portrays a sample of transhuman due to being lifted and epitomizes the operation of moderate transhumanity. Lifting is described as the process that allegedly makes children more intelligent and better prepared for the future, to be accepted by better colleges. *Extreme transhumanism* (Version 2) does not care for enhancing the biological body, "but instead to dispense of it in a 'process of transferring of an intellect from a biological brain to a computer' which is frequently called as mind 'uploading' or 'downloading'" (Cohen & Spector, 2020: 4). In the realm of virtual reality, Klara presents the mind-uploading process that ends up with almost the same perception and possible conditions for engagement as a non-simulated entity. This version of transhumanism attaches particular importance to the distensibility of the biological human body and offers immortality, generating the posthuman condition. Uploading or downloading of human properties and abilities, especially mind uploading, which refers to the transaction of transplantation of intellect to a machine from a human, is a prominent interest of transhumanism. The process is exempt from biological senescence and immortality, and the possibility of backup copies, economic and pragmatic essence, makes artificiality

surpass organicity (Bostrom, 2003: 18-19). The AFs, a substantial output of such a process, answer the pragmatic goals of transhumanism as the robots can carry out almost everything a human can do without demanding effort and care.

Transhumanism not only cares for the transformation of human beings and the hybridization of human entities but also deals with the transformation and hybridization of nonhuman entities, in particular, machines. Regarding transhumanism, and particularly its prevalent form in science fiction, Nayar claims "there is an overarching emphasis on the machination of humans and the humanization of machines" (2014: 17). To support, the human characters of the novel are portrayed as becoming machinelike and the robots becoming humanlike. Mechanization of humans is exemplified in interaction meeting through the human characters' insensitive and unempathetic behaviours humiliating the unlifted child, Rick, and the humanoid robot, Klara.

One other deal of transhumanism, making life better and easier for human beings is of great concern. Klara, an agency serving her owner Josie and accompanying her, fulfils the duties assigned to her by transhumanist teaching. Both the lifting process and the existence of humanoid robots are largely welcomed for improving human qualities and life standards. The process of transhumanism and the products of posthumanism are exaggeratedly stated as assisting humans. Klara justifies this fact by saying over and over her existence for the sake of her human owner: "the time I spent with Josie - which of course ran counter to my duty" (Ishiguro, 2022: 57), also stating that "It's now my duty to be Josie's best friend" (63). As if that is not enough, she repeats "It was my duty to learn as much about Josie as possible" (132), and "I believed it was my duty to save Josie, to make her well" (237). Up to now, as seen, in general, machines' existence is devoted to human beings, and in particular, Klara's existence to Josie.

Disidentification of entities, creating new hybrid subjects, as Braidotti defines, trans-speciated selves, trans-corporeal human-animal compounds, humanimals in the sequel "the earth and its cosmos have become a political arena" (2019a: 40). The association of nonhuman life in the eco-planetary realm with technologic and digital life erases the unity and independence of existences. Ishiguro also implies the interdependence of humans and nature and reflects ecological concerns by handling ecological problems and offering solutions. Employing the sun as a godlike position,

Klara believes that the sun has a healing power on Josie, and if she can dismantle the Cootings Machine to prevent ecological pollution, the Sun might pour in his special nourishment and will save her. Klara becomes excited "by the possibility that the Sun might conceivably pour in his special nourishment straight away, through this very window, to Josie, now sitting across the table from [her] me" (Ishiguro, 2022: 253). The role of the sun reveals the interdependence of humans and nonhumans and recalls the inspiring posthuman thinking, "Zoe-centred egalitarianism" (Braidotti, 2019a: 42).

The future assumption of posthuman which is regarded as the last phase of transhuman, focuses on the necessity of redefinition of human concept shifting traditional humanist ideals, the blurred boundaries between humans and non-humans, and the interconnectedness of the entities and systems, new dynamics of society, the individual and social outcomes of the transformation process such as the problems of identity, exploitation, and otherization, are all main deals of *Klara and the Sun*. The novel invites us to presume the posthumanist future, to question the capacity of human beings and the possibility of life-enhancing procedures, and to focus on the transformation of ourselves by challenging traditional humanist beliefs and hybrid entities.

2.6. THE END OF THE HUMAN ERA

Over the past few years, a new paradigm for thinking about humankind's future has begun to take shape among some leading philosophies. There exist many contradicting assumptions and scenarios on whether humankind or machines will win. The first is a collaboration scenario, in which human beings make use of machines and AI systems to ease their life by sustaining human superiority. The second is the human supremacy scenario, in which human keeps the machine and AI under control and do not permit them to exceed certain limits. The other one is the machine superiority scenario, which is risky for the future of human beings. The machine or AI wins in this scenario, and humans are no longer able to control them. Another is the conflict scenario, in which humans develop AI systems, however, fail to control them, and serious conflict occurs, like uncontrolled use of autonomous weapons or AI disruption of the economy or society. Regarding the fast pace of progress and the revolutionary outcomes, there is almost a consensus on the end, or at least the disruption of human beings. Josie's wish, if she dies, implies this possibility as she says, "I want it so Klara gets sole use of my room and she gets to come

and go as she pleases" (Ishiguro, 2022: 269). So, no wonder why, Hassan previses that "five hundred years of humanism may be coming to an end, as humanism transforms itself into something that must be helplessly called posthumanism" (1977: 843).

Posthumanism takes place at the forefront of this discussion owing to the outcomes of technological progress, as the future seems to be dominated by transhumans and posthumans. While the inspiring point of transhumanism is eliminating the deficiencies and insufficiencies of human beings and reaching perfection, it is accompanied by the outcome of "leaving currently constituted humanity behind" (Rikowski, 2003: 127). Technological developments such as cloning techniques or organ transplantation destroy the purity and uniqueness of humankind. So "the new paradigm rejects . . . the assumption that the 'human condition' is at root a constant. ... This assumption no longer holds true" (Rikowski, 2003: 127). While these developments and implications provide transformation and improvement, they also end up with posthuman entities that are far from unified, traditional human forms. So posthuman refers to the evolved, transformed, or changed called human.

According to Bostrom, in the relatively near future, fast technological developments and scientific accomplishments force us to recognize that "we are entering a whole new stage in the history of the human species" (2003: 4-5) and "that some of these coming technologies could potentially cause great harm to human life; even the survival of our species could be at risk" (2003: 4-5). Expectedly, the posthuman entities and contexts like artificial intelligence and new kinds of cognitive or sensitive tools, spark off the dethroning of humankind. The future of humans, as well as their status today, appears to be in crisis. This is also the prevalent assumption implied in the novel. Though the human characters do not or cannot do anything to save Josie, Klara tries hard by applying new ways with her deep wish "that the Sun will show his great kindness" (Ishiguro, 2022: 302) and save Josie by praying "please show your special kindness to Josie (2022:306). As presumed, technological and scientific developments reveal several possibilities for the future of humans and posthumans together. Since, technological appropriations redesign transhuman and posthuman processes. In the posthuman context, humans lose their superior position generated from humanist deals as the measure of all things, and Ishiguro creates his novel affirming the challenge of the human concept, attributing human properties to nonhuman robot entities. The novel implies that humans

and their humanity, as Herbrechter claims, are cultural and historical constructs on a stage of evolution of complex relations rather than transcendent subjects free from ideologies (2013: 16). Furthermore, the lifting process symbolises the very evolution of humankind and leads to move away the human essence and dignity.

Historicizing human subject, Herbrechter defines posthumanism as "replacing of the species homo sapiens" with a superior but intermediate stage beyond human called "robo sapiens" or a product of transhumanity or essentially "artificial intelligence" (2013: 20). Following the existence of the humanoid robot, Klara and her relationship with humans in the universe, the matter of her adaptation to the world and gaining recognition requires new ethical considerations concerning these new subjects. One of the main concerns of the novel is Klara's becoming or continuation of Josie, a human being. Through this concern, the novel presents the possibility, enthusiasm, and necessity for the duplication of the human being. When Mr. Paul thinks about the human heart and questions "something that makes each of us special and individual? And if we just suppose that there is" (Ishiguro, 2022: 242), and asks Klara, "And that could be difficult, no? Something beyond even your wonderful capabilities. Because an impersonation wouldn't do, however skillful. You'd have to learn her heart, and learn it fully, or you'll never become Josie in any sense that matters" (2022: 242). Klara expresses without hesitation:

> 'The heart you speak of', I said. 'It might indeed be the hardest part of Josie to learn. It might be like a house with many rooms. Even so, a devoted AF, given time, could walk through each of those rooms, studying them carefully in turn, until they became like her own home'. (Ishiguro, 2022: 243)

Klara is sure that she can accomplish it, stating that:

> Of course, a human heart is bound to be complex. But it must be limited. Even if Mr. Paul is talking in the poetic sense, there'll be an end to what there is to learn. Josie's heart may well resemble a strange house with rooms inside rooms. But if this were the best way to save Josie, then I'd do my utmost. And I believe there's a good chance I'd be able to succeed. (Ishiguro, 2022: 243)

While the mother is suspicious of the probability of replacing Josie and Klara, Mr. Capaldi claims that nothing in human beings is unique, reduces the specialty and replaceability of humankind to the traditional sensuality, and insists on the potentiality of replacing a human Josie with a machine Klara through and through:

> The trouble is, Chrissie, you're like me. We're both of us sentimental. We can't help it. Our generation still carry the old feelings. A part of us refuses to let go. The part that wants to keep believing there's something unreachable inside each of us. Something that's unique and won't transfer. But there's nothing like that, we know that now. *You* know that. For people our age it's a hard one to let go. We *have* to let it go, Chrissie. There's nothing there. Nothing inside Josie that's beyond the Klaras of this world to continue. The second Josie won't be a copy. She'll be the exact same and you'll have every right to love her just as you love Josie now. It's not faith you need. Only rationality. I had to do it; it was tough but now it works for me just fine. And it will for you. (Ishiguro, 2022: 233)

Following the consensus, there is nothing unique attributed to humans individually. Mrs. Arthur asks Klara to learn about Josie's heart in a poetic sense, not as an organ so as to be Josie fully. Even if the human heart is believed to be the most complicated and hardest part to learn, they come up with that it is limited and can be accomplished. Klara's confession supports that "I did all I could to do what was best for Josie. I've thought about it many times now. And if it had become necessary, I'm sure I could have continued Josie (Ishiguro, 2022: 337-338). The specialty of humans is claimed not to come from their dignity instead it is associated with the affection and love of people around. The claim takes the discussion to the next step with the claim "Josie; won't be a copy. She'll be the exact same and you'll have every right to love her just as you love Josie now" (Ishiguro, 2022: 233). The posthuman entities with their sophisticated abilities supersede the human entities. Posthumanism knows no limits on the brain and body; Klara's existence as a companion and the creation of artificial Josie affirm that a machine can readily claim to be a human and replace a human being. Mother believes that to continue Josie is something within Klara's power, and she promises "You'll be Josie and I'll always love you over everything else. So do it for me. I'm asking you to do it for me. Continue Josie for me" (Ishiguro, 2022: 237). As is supposed, Ishiguro appreciates a future in which machine and AI systems will be leading entities and realities far from demanding human participation.

With this dominant belief, Klara is purchased to act like a person and succeed in "all of Josie's impulses and desires" (Ishiguro, 2022: 235). More describes philosophies of life as seeking "the continuation and acceleration of the evolution of intelligent life beyond its currently human form" (2013: 3). Klara functions as a family member with her role as a companion or caretaker, like a parent. It is preplanned that Klara would substitute for Josie. With their highly humanlike qualities, to support, robots like Klara are

preferable to humans in some countries in our world now. For instance, in Japan, mechanized labor as a companion or caretaker for the elderly or children is more desirable than importing foreign human labor who have cultural differences (Kim & Kim, 2012: 318). These mechanical laborers seem more reliable, prevent several problems humans can cause, sustain the nation's purity, and reduce migration problems. The traditional racial prejudice, in this sense, highlights the existence of robots, and in Japan, they are regarded as persons instead of as if. The reflection of this situation in Japan is also evident in the novel and is implied for the future.

The implication stirs up the fear that AI will capture the world, even if not, great transformations are inevitable. Fukuyama alludes that the outcomes of transhumanism and the promised perfection of posthuman subjects will bring about disappointment instead of absolute satisfaction exemplifying "the median person living well into his or her second century, sitting in a nursing home hoping for an unattainable death" (Fukuyama, 2002: 218) forgetting the meaning of fear, hope, or struggle. In line with Fukuyama, the novel does not end in absolute happiness or a positive atmosphere. Despite the big claim to be able to continue Josie, Klara, in the end, admits that:

> Manager, I did all I could to learn Josie and had it become necessary, I would have done my utmost. But I don't think it would have worked out so well. Not because I wouldn't have achieved accuracy. But however hard I tried, I believe now there would have remained. something beyond my reach. The Mother, Rick, Melania Housekeeper, the father. I'd never have reached what they felt for Josie in their hearts. I'm now sure of this, Manager. (Ishiguro, 2022: 338)

Ultimately, the reader is left in uncertainty, indecision, and instability about the future of human beings, challenging their status or existence by questioning whether they could ever remain the same.

CHAPTER THREE

MACHINES LIKE ME: A CRITIQUE OF TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM

3.1. THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN POSTHUMAN CULTURE

Sherry Turkle introduces technology as "the second self" (2005), emphasizing its complex relationship with humans and its great impact on identity, perception, and social dynamics. The given name alone is enough to value its major role. Technology directs the conditions "not only in what we do but also in what we think" (Turkle, 2005: 18-19) by altering "people's awareness of themselves, of one another and of their relationships with the world" (Turkle, 2005: 18-19). As a philosophical agent, more than a tool, it poses questions about the meaning of being human, the boundaries between human and machine, the concept of identity, and projects a fascinating posthuman society.

Today, science and technology become the leading realities in society as they are inseparable patterns of life. Haraway, in Simians, Cyborgs, and Women, attracts attention to this long-term relationship declaring "science and humanism have always been bedfellows. Their arguments are the wrangling of two made into one flesh. Subjects and objects need each other" (1991: 74). The mutual effect helps to shape the understanding of evaluation of the body and the politics. Ordinarily, this correlation triggers a strong interest in the prominent question of posthumanism: what it means to be human. In this sense, recent scientific and technological developments, especially the emergence of artificial intelligence and the advancement of genetic engineering, have prompted a reevaluation of human entities.

Machines Like Me reflects McEwan's longstanding inclination and fascination with science and its counterpart, technology, which serves as a driving force in posthuman culture. Employing the avid recognition of its role, Stableford suggests that technology assures social change, enables human mechanization and cyberization, and helps to transcend the traditional human condition (2006: 517-518). McEwan handles technology not only as a tool that facilitates human life but also as an inspirational companion in constructing new entities, relationships, and social contexts. Also, technology is a major agent in how modern society is transforming and how entities are evolving. Since

literature reflects the conditions, existences, patterns, and assumptions of real life, to Hayles, literary pieces are active agents more than passive channels. They actively impress how scientific theories and technologies are understood in various cultural contexts (Hayles, 1999: 21). Accordingly, science fiction is the genre that deals with these future assumptions, expected human conditions, and possible outcomes of scientific and technological developments.

Technology has an immense, inescapable, and threatening impact on society as well as the writer. McEwan poses the question of whether technology improves or decreases what it means to be human. He presents the example of a self-centered human race that exploits other species—in the present case, humanoid robots—to attract attention to the moral implications of technology. In this way, the story promotes the matter of whether technology benefits humans while endangering non-human species.

McEwan mirrors the posthumanist tenets regarding technology with the power of emancipating existence from certain boundaries, the humanoid robots are involved in every stage of daily life. Here, the interconnectedness of existences is revealed by employing the association of the human brain with the machine, revealing the embedded posthuman Adam in technology and his vulnerable body as a cyborg.

The story of *Machines Like Me* is narrated in an alternative world dominated by various entities that reveal different ways of relations, it explores future assumptions and requires alternative perspectives. McEwan writes his novel on the very point of focusing "on alternative ways to think about life in an age when technology creates new paradigms of life" (Nayar, 2014: 171). The adjective alternative can be regarded as the inspiring point of the novel, along with that of posthumanism. McEwan provokes the reader to investigate the essence and limits of humans and robots in a technologically advanced period by relating the story of a humanoid robot, integrating the robot into everyday life with humans. He brings forward that recent technological improvements necessitate new ways of comprehending and appreciating human and nonhuman agencies and recognizing the limits of their existences and the new ways of coexistence.

McEwan specifies his major concern, that of relationships, clearly in advance: "I have just a habit of watchfulness. There are two areas where I look. One is how people are with their children, because they fascinate me a great deal. And the other thing is

couples, married or otherwise" (Slay, 1996: 6). After many years, he writes the story of humanoid robots involved in contemporary society as partners, sparring friends, or servants that can do almost anything humans can do. More in particular, Adam's creation like a child, and participation in the world as a friend or partner, reveal his long-standing fascination. However, nonhuman existence raises various assumptions, feelings, thoughts, and proposals. McEwan describes a sophisticated picture of the participation of artificial intelligence in daily life along with contradictions describing the existence of intelligent machines as either "the triumph of humanism or its angel of death" (2019: 4). The contradicted conditions are depicted as "everything was rising- hopes and despair, misery, boredom and opportunity. There was more of everything. It was a time of plenty" (McEwan, 2019: 113).

The evolving relationships between humans and between humans and machines highlight a celebration of diversity. Adam's capabilities, economic success, and contribution are much more than those of Charlie, challenging the traditional humanist idea of human concept, which entails a journey to see the usefulness of robots and the uselessness of humans. As slaves of technology, human beings, especially Charlie, represent laziness and convenience, while Adam portrays an ideal man. The posthuman subject is embraced "because it is made to stand for an improbably idealized combination of identity, individuality, perfect community, flawless communication, and immortality" (Hayles, 1999: 256). Adam is introduced:

> as a companion, an intellectual sparring partner, friend and factotum who could wash dishes, make beds and 'think' … he could run seventeen kilometers in two hours without a charge or, its energy equivalent, Converse nonstop for twelve days. … He was compactly built, square-shouldered, dark skinned, with thick black hair swept back; narrow in the face, with a hint of hooked nose suggestive of fierce intelligence... (McEwan, 2019: 3-4)

However, Charlie describes himself:

> At thirty-two, I was completely broke. Wasting my mother's inheritance on a gimmick was only one part of my problem- but typical of it. … a week after my twenty-ninth birthday I was struck off, and came close to a short spell in prison. My hundred hours of community service convinced me that I should never have a regular job again … (McEwan, 2019: 11-12)

This emphasis represents the blurred boundaries between species and brings about existential and ontological problems with new ethical approaches. It also affirms that the qualifications are not natural features; instead, they are attributed to human beings.

The novel initiates the imperfections of humans, the fear of failure, and the sense of insecurity that controls human beings. However, this circumstance points out an economic system based on collaboration. Posthumanist principles determine the conditions favoring symbiosis, co-evolution, responses, and feedback rather than competition, autonomy, and self-directed isolation of the human entity (Nayar, 2014: 20). While challenging traditional humanist ideals, McEwan helps to expand the existing concepts of the universe and gives way to recognition of the interconnectedness of all personified entities in new social contexts shaped by technological and scientific developments. *Machines Like Me* is an encouragement and appropriation of the "cyborg world that might be about lived social and bodily realities in which people are not afraid of their joint kinship with animals and machines, not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints" (Haraway, 1991: 154). Despite the sexual intercourse between Miranda and Adam, Charlie sustains his willingness to live with Adam.

The novel introduces a new social context in which human beings and robot entities share their lives and develop mutual judgement. To illustrate, Adam takes the central role and implies the possibility of a symbiotic relationship, signified by Hayles, to stress the independence of humans and intelligent machines (2019: 284). The conditions make it easy to develop empathy towards the posthuman subjects regarding their sentience and emotions. The mutual interaction between these entities reveals the conditions that rely "on the sharable meanings and practices of social bonding and territory identification" (Haraway, 2003, 233). The robots are able to develop or make use of their skill through this interaction. Despite his love for Miranda, Adam's respect for Charlie is appealing.

Nayar puts an emphasis on the symbiotic relations of humans with countless versions of life regarding this situation as a condition of survival (2014: 20). From this point of view, posthumanism reveals a wider range of interconnectedness instead of causing a race of humanist deals. Charlie's enthusiasm reflects the assumptions through his own words: "Adam would come into our lives like a real person, with the layered intricacies of his personality revealed only through time, through events, through his dealings with whomever he met. In a sense, he would be like our child" (McEwan, 2019: 22). McEwan depicts humans' hesitation and perplexity in blurring the strong lines between entities, emphasizing the themes of diversity, fluidity, plurality, and

interconnectivity that posthumanism strictly advocates. He is not concerned about a developed human race and stays away from positioning humans above other species under their reason or scientific advancements. In keeping with the Posthumanist vision, McEwan does not portray a future in which humans have advanced into more advanced races. Rather, humans are depicted in his novel as equals who share the same thoughts or feelings, wants, and anxieties as non-humans, rather than as superior to them. Furthermore, he depicts the coexistence of different species, dissolving boundaries, as Haraway notes in *Companion Species*:

> the cyborg metaphor, as kin to the companion species, brought all natural and cultural formations together: Cyborgs and companion species each bring together the human and non-human, the organic and technological, carbon and silicon, freedom and structure, history and myth, the rich and the poor, the state and the subject, diversity and depletion, modernity and postmodernity, and nature and culture in unexpected ways. (2003: 4)

Wolfe avoids discriminating between the entities and instead seeks to bring different ways of being together. He opposes establishing a "we" and another in order to stop marginalization and advance equality. It is important to stay away from such constrictive ethical judgments while bringing attention to humans' privileged feelings about themselves. His main point is that everyone has a shared duty to one another. Rejecting humanism's "external insistence on the ethical and, broadly speaking, ontological efficacy of the human/animal divide," (Wolfe, 2010: 124), he highlights the need to include all species without a hierarchical division. Here, the participation of nonhuman androids in life and their coexistence provides a challenging zoe-oriented egalitarian society. However, Wolfe wants to undermine human dominance by eliminating people since posthumanism is inclusive rather than exclusive. The existential boundaries are already blurred in the novel by the author, who depicts a picture where an ordinary human and a humanoid machine live together like a family, troubling rigid barriers and negating species differences.

McEwan explores various topics with his protagonist Adam, including the coexistence of nonhuman and human entities, the potential ramifications of such coexistence, the influence of science and technology on humankind, and the characteristics of humanity in light of advancements in technology. The story questions how humans and nonhuman entities can and should coexist. Charlie's phrases show their

eagerness for this coexistence while waiting for the batteries of Adam to charge "like eager young parents, we were avid for his first words" (McEwan, 2019: 3). Charlie maintains his enthusiasm for this new social structure which hints at a hybrid, digital family expressing that "we would be partners and Adam would be our joint concern, our creation. We would be a family: I was sure to see more of her. We'd have fun" (2019: 22).

McEwan does not care about whether his robot entities are alive or not. He suggests the possibility of coexistence but with a treatment mostly towards the machine. They are not certain analogies of human beings; rather, they are counterparts of human' ecology. The commonalities or similarities between the robot and human characters in the story facilitate the recognition of the robots as persons. Thus, Adam's anthropomorphic design is put into prominence in detail, "He was muscular around his neck and spine. Dark hair grew along the line of his shoulders. his buttocks displayed muscular concavities. Below them, an athlete's knotted calves" (McEwan, 2019: 9). Acceptance of personhood of something look alike a human is easy. The assumption of consciousness and also communicativeness, prominent personhood criteria, is accompanied by "embodied appearance" (Rubin, 2019: 81). Adam's humanlike appearance makes his acceptance in ordinary life easy and his partnership adoptable. Having other personhood qualifications, such as his capacity to reason, free will, and moral agency, Adam's human-looking presence blurs the line between robots and human beings, which helps to provide a full sense of association. We, as the readers, are liable to observe a social context in which robots like humans and humans like robots live dependently. *Machines Like Me* explores the lines between humans and machines, questioning posthumanist ideas of identity by introducing a sentient android that reflects and complicates traditional concepts of entities and relationships.

3.2. CHALLENGING HUMAN-CENTERED NARRATIVES

McEwan introduces a contemporary engaging stage, testing for new ways of existence with his nonhuman character, Adam. He invites the reader to reconsider the borders of human concept, the definition of reason, rationality, conscience, and culture by providing a new version of the relationship to his characters. Charlie emphasizes the unstable and changing human condition at the very beginning of the novel:

> When I studied anthropology, a universal human nature was thought not to exist. It was a romantic illusion, mainly the variable product of local conditions. Only anthropologists, who studied other cultures in depth, who need to beautiful extent of human variety, fully grasped the absurdity of human universals. (McEwan, 2019: 24)

Sustaining Charlie's perspective, McEwan challenges the traditional humanist philosophy that revolves around Descartes's quote: "It must be morally impossible that there should exist in any machine a diversity of organs sufficient to enable it to act in all the occurrences of life, in the way in which our reason enables us to act" (2006: 38). Descartes precisely establishes an apparent hierarchy between the entities with reason and those without by praising reason and humankind in general. This prejudiced perspective on species is contradicted; rather, McEwan presents and favors a sophisticated nonhuman image having features like humankind or better than humankind, such as humanlike appearance, the presence of reason, the abilities to speak and think, and so on. Adam's entity challenges the sophisticated human image of traditional humanist philosophy through Wolfe's criticism of "a privileged relation of the human to either the presence or the absence of language, the signifier, the phallus, the soul, reason, toolmaking, and so on" (1998: 40). Adam's qualifications and striking resemblance to the ordinary person destroys the clear-cut distinction between human and nonhumans by blurring the lines and opposes human exceptionalism. The conventional perspective in humanism, which favors humans and views us as a superior species among other living things due to our constructed status, is questioned, and the fact is put into words by Badminton as:

> Posthumanism, by way of contrast, emerges from a recognition that "Man" is not privileged and protected centre, because humans are no longer -and perhaps never were-utterly distinct from animals, machines, and other forms of the "inhuman"; are the products of historical and cultural differences that invalidate any appeal to a universal, transhistorical human essence; are constituted as subjects by a linguistic system that pre-exists and transcends them; and are unable to direct the course of world history towards a uniquely human goal. In short, posthumanism arises from the theoretical and practical inadequateness -or even impossibility -of humanism [...]. (2004: 374)

In line with Badminton's ideas, which emphasize the shortcomings of humanism that claim a privileged, universal, or superior human essence, Adam's entity defies human superiority and corresponds with posthumanism. The characters' existence and experiences highlight the unstable aspect of human nature. To emphasize the constructed and unstable human nature, the blurring of bodily borders Nayar states the concern of

posthumanism as “the radical decentering of the traditional sovereign, coherent and autonomous human in order to demonstrate how the human is always already evolving with, constituted by and constitutive of multiple life forms and machines” (Nayar, 2014: 11). The book poses the questions: What does it mean to be human? What are the boundaries of human beings? Can a nonhuman entity replace a human being from the beginning to the end? Alongside, it provokes to appreciate Young by “acknowledging that as subjects we are heterogeneous and multiple in our affiliations and desire” (1995: 372). The changing conditions of both human and nonhuman subjects can easily be observed through their symbiotic relationships.

Contrary to humanism, which promotes the logical human image based on human perfection and rationalism, the story offers a wide and alternative viewpoint that illustrates machine rationality and sensitivity. Charlie confesses the shock and surprise of Adam’s cautions him for Miranda’s unreliability “I believed that only a poet, not a machine, could tell me if Miranda would ever love me, or lie to me” (McEwan, 2019: 41). The assumption of the existence of humanlike machine resulting from blurred lines between the species, provokes that “people lose their identity and are no longer unique or replaceable: in the world created by and for the machine, human beings become redundant” (Gottlieb, 2001: 57). When the human concept, particularly its superiority, begins to fade and the concept of the intelligent machine begins to shine, the new stirring subject, a machine with an agency, motivation, self-awareness, and subjective feelings unsurprisingly demands new ways of perception and definition. Adam’s image as a sophisticated and influential entity and Charlie’s limited existence and insufficiencies are in line with posthumanist ideals by deconstructing traditional human properties. In addition, the alteration of their fates by a humanoid robot, the human characters’ having difficulty with the process of adopting Mark, and Miranda’s imprisonment even after Gorringe’s apathy towards her trap also challenge a great humanist idea: everything is in the control of humans, they are the only force that can change the conditions. More than a machine that is operated under human control, the new posthuman entities reveal their agency through their autonomous decisions. *Machine Like Me and People Like You*, the tagline of the novel on the title page, regarding both human and machine characters and their experiences, alludes to the biosification of zoe and the zoesification of bio.

Agency, autonomy, and identity are traditionally attributed to humans; however, when the central and universal position of human beings is questioned, these basic qualifications of humans are also challenged, resulting in a boundary break between the human and nonhuman. Charlie thinks of the transformation of the human subject and his/her position as follows:

> Once we sat enthroned at the centre of the universe, with sun and planets, the entire observable world, turning around us in an ageless dance of worship. Then in defiance of the priests, heartless astronomy reduced us to an orbiting planet around the sun, just one among other rocks. But still, we stood apart, brilliantly unique, appointed by the creator to be lords of everything that lived. Then biology confirmed that we were at one with the rest, sharing common ancestry with bacteria, pansies, trout, and sheep. In the early twentieth century came deeper exile into darkness when the immensity of the universe was revealed and even the sun became one among billions in our Galaxy, among billions of galaxies. Finally, in consciousness, our last redoubt, we were probably correct to believe that we had more of it than in any creature on earth. But the mind that once rebelled against the gods was about to dethrone itself by way of its own fabulous reach. In the compressed version, we would devise a machine a little cleverer than ourselves, then set that machine to invent another that lay beyond our comprehension. (McEwan, 2019: 80)

Similarly, Braidotti rejects the centrality of humans and explains the subjects as not being unitary or autonomous, and puts emphasis on embeddedness, embodiment, relational and affective collaboration of entities operated by relational ethics. In doing so, she attributes the knowing subject not to human beings alone, but to "a more complex assemblage that undoes the boundaries between inside and outside the self" (2019b: 97), stressing operations and trends. The novel highlights the humanization of machines and the dehumanization of human beings, stressing the loss of humane traits of human characters and enhancing the humanlike properties of humanoid robots. Adam, as the representative of intelligent robot characters, presents a highly autonomous type of existence and stands for a worthy entity more than a machine or a mechanical toy by involvement in every moment and area of daily life. Adam is addressed with the 'he' pronoun throughout the novel, and his nonmechanical gait is overvalued. In spite of the moral ambiguity dominating the social context, Adam is equipped with ethical purity in contrast to the (quasi-) manager human figures. McEwan makes a similar kind of argument, claiming that certain distinctions and lines between the natural human and the unnatural nonhuman subjects are insupportable; the "ontological special category, as well as humanism, may be an illusion akin to theism" (Colombino, 2022: 391). The blurring boundaries deeply challenge the privileged position of human beings and reveal average and hybrid subjects.

Adam uploaded the simulation of the human mind and abilities into some networks. He stands for an artificial entity that does not matter in the context at all. Hayles categorizes artificial life on three fronts: *wetware,* "the attempt to create artificial biological life" in test tubes, *hardware,* "the construction of robots and other embodied life-forms", and *software*, "the creation of computer programs instantiating emergent or evolutionary processes" (1999: 225). McEwan's humanoid robots appear in hardware and software classes of this description. Bolter stresses the significance of combining hardware and programs to produce new thinking subjects that are "rival to human beings" (1984: 189). As samples of simulacra, the robots present a perfect human presence in android form, which differentiates them from robots and categorizes them as humanoid robots.[3] Android is used to refer to mechanical robots projected to simulate human appearance and mind (Stableford, 2006: 22). For this sense, androids are used as images favorable for Hayles' description of the posthuman that wipes off the fundamental differences or certain boundaries between computer simulation and bodily existence, biological organism and cybernetic mechanism, human goals and robot teleology (Hayles, 1999: 3). These simulated subjects take active role on ruling and controlling the society any more with their hybrid existence.

As a software program, Android addresses humanlike machines or robots, which highlights the hybridity of the entities associated with the cyborg term, the very basic expression of posthumanism. While Androids parade full artificiality, cyborgs image partial artificiality and partial naturality or organicity. Occasionally, it is inappropriate to use the two terms interchangeably as they refer to totally different entities; however, regarding the outputs of their participation in society, they can mostly overlap in function. Thus, the participation of the humanoid robots can be analyzed through the cyborg discussions. The cyborg, according to Haraway, originates as a liminal entity exactly on this indistinct line where certain boundaries between human and nonhuman are violated (1991: 152). Adam overturns certain categories of human and nonhuman and reminds the complexity of androids and cyborgs. Adam stands for something more than a machine or a robot. He corresponds to Haraway's description of the cyborg as fluid, not seeking a unitary identity, unpretentious in the case of organicity (1991: 180). Charlie describes

[3] Android is a common entity used in contemporary science fiction.

Adam putting forward his organicity as something very different than a human being when he addresses Adam as “an inanimate confection whose heartbeat was a regular electrical discharge, whose skin warmth was mere chemistry” (McEwan, 2019: 10) and an entity whose “metabolic necessity was years away” without needing oxygen (19) having “the appearance of a breathing corpse” (20).

To take one step further away from organicity and being human, Adam’s mechanicity is highlighted when he is referred as giving a sense of “a warmed oil, the pale highly refined sort my father had used to lubricate the keys of his sax” (McEwan, 2019: 27), “a fucking *machine*” (92) whose “cock fills with distil water. From a reservoir in his right buttock” (92) and whose “breath smells like the back of a warm TV set” (93). Overall, the combination of his artificial production and humanlike presence affirms cyborg description of Haraway as “ambiguously natural and crafted” (1991: 149). These entities do not care for highlighting naturality or artificiality, their essence is full of hybridity.

McEwan plunges the reader into a new reality and creates his fictional world in the framework of Haraway’s description of the cyborg world. This world is depicted as being able to pertain to social and material contexts in which human beings have no fear of resemblance with animals and machines, no fear of permanently unsolid identities and contrasting viewpoints (Haraway, 1991: 154). By this means, the cyborg suggests a plurality of entities that transgress their sharply defined differences from one another. By integrating the natural and artificial or technical, it intends to challenge the traditional boundaries of natural and created, or real and unreal. The new version of existence, as Hayles asserts, “opens up new ways of thinking about what being human means” (1999: 285). In agreement with Hayles’ claim, Adam’s entity, as Nayar comments on posthumanism, “calls for a radical rethink of species uniqueness and boundedness of the human” (Nayar, 2014: 13). His hybrid characteristic provokes new insights into what it means to be human concerning scientific knowledge and emerging technologies. McEwan exemplifies how robots could obscure the boundaries between humans and nonhumans by impersonating a humanoid robot that is a copy of a human and is capable of doing whatever a human can.

In *Machines Like Me,* we read the story of Adam, a combination of machine and human as a representant of posthuman subjects verifying Hayles statement on cyborg hybridity "an amalgam, a collection of heterogeneous components, a material-informational entity whose boundaries undergo continuous construction and reconstruction." (1999: 3). Similarly, Adam's existence corresponds to Kakoudaki's description of the artificial person as an imaginary existence who is partly or completely mechanical, anthropomorphic, or produced from various natural or technological supplies and thought as autonomous, vivified, or capable of being vivified (2014: 3). Adam's artificiality is quite obscured, and his shared traits with humans are pretty concerning. Beyond physical resemblances, Adam and humans have qualifications in common with emotions, actions, ideas, and perceptions that blur the lines between various species and make discrimination more challenging. This is the reason and evidence why Miranda's father confuses Adam and Charlie. While talking, Charlie understands the confusion and hides his displeasure: "If you'll excuse me. I'm running rather low. I need to recharge and my cable's downstairs in the kitchen … That's fine, Charlie. You go and plug yourself in" (McEwan, 2019: 227).

The alternative versions of existence, not surprisingly, give rise to alternative ways of living and accordingly affect and satisfy. Regarding Miranda, Charlie, and Adam's relationships, the new social paradigms conflict with the constructed distinctions between humans and nonhumans and urge a new social practice coinciding with the contemporary social realm. The state of hybridity and coexistence requires fluid and heterogeneous perspectives of all kinds of species since existence is not limited. Adam's love for Miranda challenges the traditional concept of love and affection with the way of carrying it with unfamiliar partners, as a robot and a human being. The disembodied consciousness of Adam works as a prospect for alteration following unsupposable ways.

Following the deconstruction of the human condition, the superiority and flexibility of the posthuman subjects become of great concern, embodying an excellent partner, a sincere friend, a bedfellow, perfect labor, a great moral defender, and a constant servant. Adam's existence in the social context, involvement in the economic stage, and being more capable than human beings offer flexibility and the urge to redefine the concept of personhood. Transgressing the limitations of corporeality, Adam as a subject proves that

the new way of existence presenting different identities arouses interest in the traditional properties of human subjects and the presence of these properties in posthuman entities.

3.3. EXPLORING HUMAN-NONHUMAN BOUNDARIES

First of all, personhood is conventionally associated with the possession of the human body. However, Mary Anne Warren, an American writer and philosophy professor focusing on the issue of abortion and animal rights, has extended the concept of personhood and argues the conditions of being persons on fetuses and animals, which later provides to transferring the conditions to other nonhuman beings like machines or artificial intelligence. What makes a person, Warren proposes in *Moral Status,* a useful coverage of existing moral conditions, "is not its biological humanity, but its intelligence, and its capacity for thought, reason, reflection and self-awareness" (1997: 95) trivializing biological concepts and highlighting psychological condition. Even though the terms of person and human are interchangeably used, the concept of person does not necessarily address to only human beings, personhood can be recognized in other beings as well. As for this study, artificial-synthetic persons in the novels experience and present some necessary capacities for personhood and deserve to be defined as persons. In her well-known discussion "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion", she asserts that the central characteristics, in the moral sense, for the concept of personhood, or humanity, are, very broadly, the following:

> 1. consciousness (of objects and events external and/or internal to the being), and in particular the capacity to feel pain;
> 2. reasoning (the *developed* capacity to solve new and relatively complex problems);
> 3. self-motivated activity (activity which is relatively independent of either genetic or direct external control);
> 4. the capacity to communicate, by whatever means, messages of an indefinite variety of types, that is, not just with an indefinite number of possible contents, but on indefinitely many possible topics;
> 5. the presence of self-concepts, and self-awareness, either individual or racial, or both. (1973: 5)

Though the robot characters get involved in any part or moment of daily life, they are obstructed from being regarded as the other instead of an ordinary participant. The criteria that are organized to question the personhood of various existences by Warren can easily be associated with the humanoid robots of McEwan. Consciousness, the first of these criteria, is explained as being able to suffer. Adam's entity simply provokes to question

of the possibility of machine consciousness. He presents numerous examples of presenting his consciousness. Indeed, he is named as a conscious machine possessing preprogrammed consciousness and sensation. Corresponding to this condition, Adam is described as being able to "imitate and respond to emotions and appear to take pleasure in reasoning" (McEwan, 2019: 110). Talking about their making love with Miranda, Adam confesses that "I feel I've let you down …. caused [you] great distress" (McEwan, 2019: 115), and attaches his taking pleasure in it. Viewing his capability of being hurt, having feelings or sentience, Adam shows he is so self-conscious that he feels uncomfortable as he does not have any clothes and expresses that if he pulls the wire out it will hurt him (McEwan, 2019: 25). Moreover, Adam expresses his sorrow for breaking a bit of Charlie and swears that "the next time you reach for my kill switch, I'm more than happy to remove your arm entirely" (McEwan, 2019: 131). Throughout the novel, his overwhelming capacity for feeling and sensation is of great concern, which paves the way to constitute the first stage of Adam's personhood. Adam's confessions, rewording that he is in love with Miranda and demanding a sexual relationship as he takes pleasure, prove his enjoyment. He amatively utters that the reasons to live are "[m]athematics ... poetry, and love for [Miranda]" (McEwan, 2019: 279). Human beings become partners with machines in the open-ended expansion of intelligence and consciousness as exemplified in the novel.

Reasoning, the second personhood criterion is Adam's prominent characteristic regarding his developed intelligence. His ability to reason is obviously seen through his capacity to solve new or complex problems easily. His reasoning capability is so strong that it could compensate for his other deficiencies; rather, it is ahead of that of human beings. He is described as having the capability of a "high gloss of rationality" (McEwan, 2019: 71), "all kind of access" (McEwan, 2019: 97) which allows him to search deeper, is able to sift thousands of possibilities and ask "a value, a utility function, and a moral weighting" (2019: 109). Reasoning is also associated with free will and moral agency. Put another way, "[a] moral judgement is typically a statement about whether someone *should* have acted differently, which obviously presupposes that the person *could* have acted differently" (Baumeister & Vonasch, 2012: 135). Adam has an excellent capacity to come up with clever and unfamiliar solutions to various problems. Miranda's perverting the court, Adam figures out that she should confront her actions, accept the

decisions that the legislation makes, and initiate the process of compensation, in his own words, “I thought you’d appreciate the logic of this. I want you to confront your actions and accept what the law decides” (McEwan, 2019: 276).

As for the third criterion, self-motivated activity, these intelligent machines have been designed with an overpowering drive that helps “to draw inferences of their own and shape themselves accordingly” (McEwan, 2019: 181). As an inherent qualification, consciousness becomes the highest value, and disabling their kill switch becomes the primary task as they suffer a mood of existential pain, which becomes intolerable. Disobedience is associated with this criterion since it “can be justified only if the likelihood of producing beneficial change in one’s society by one’s disobedience is relatively high” (Simmons, 2003: 56). Instead of using traditional physical methods like jumping out of a high place, the humanoid robots use similar ways, go through the software, and destroy themselves after a period of despair. Similarly, Adam in Vancouver is expressed as “[s]o distressed about the destruction of native forest that he downgraded his own intelligence” (McEwan, 2019: 192). While Adam takes and implements decisions that deeply impact his life and his owners’ lives, the only power that drives him is his internal motivation, “… Adam was in direct contact with authorities. It wasn’t unreasonable of him, but he did it without telling us” (McEwan, 2019: 110). Also, Adam giving away the all money he has earned after putting some money on the side for Charlie’s tax liabilities, addresses Miranda’s entrapment for Gorringe as a crime, saves Gorringe’s confession, and sends his narrative to the authorities including all relevant legal background and case history are just few presentations of his self-motivation.

Adam outstandingly has the fourth criterion, the capacity to communicate excellently and manly, which highlights his biological image and leads to confusing him with a human being, Charlie. Moreover, he is capable of much more than just speaking; he can recite poems. He even expresses his nostalgia through his own words, “for a life I have never had, for what could have been” (McEwan, 2019: 269).

The last faculty explained is the presence of self-awareness. Despite the computational limitations, the humanoid robots develop something like self-awareness through their perception, reasoning, and emotions. In particular, Adam is depicted as

being aware of his position in society and his body's needs or deficiencies. It is openly stated that:

> Self-awareness… He knows he exists, he feels, he learns whatever he can, and when he is not with you, when at night he's at rest, he is roaming the Internet, like a lone cowboy on the prairie, taking all that's new between land and sky, including everything about human nature and societies. (McEwan, 2019: 179)

Moreover, all Adams and Eves are aware of the fact that there is one particular form of intelligence, which is highly adaptable and inventive, superior to theirs. Turing affirms the situation by confessing that "We create a machine with intelligence and self-awareness and push it out into our imperfect world" (McEwan, 2019: 180), which results in a hurricane of contradictions. To exemplify, the two suicidal Eves living in extremely restricted conditions in Riyadh, "may have despaired of their minimal mental space" (McEwan, 2019: 181) and died in each other's arms. Similarly, Adam, the protagonist of the novel, disables the tracking system, and asks Charlie to hide his body so as not to permit reprogramming, namely, renewal as Adam hates this idea specifying that "I want to be what I am, what I was. So have the request" (McEwan, 2019: 278). Adam's humanlike capability also corresponds with the definition of intuition. It is defined as the "cognitive process that something produces an answer, solution or idea without the use of conscious, logically defensible step-by-step process" (Epstein, 2010: 296). Adam's large capacity for mental self-analysis, thanks to the artificially uploaded intelligence, provides to achieve a wide range of data. A significant instance of his self-awareness is his being aware of his position in flux, being transformed into something more than a human and a machine. The humanoid robots are innately qualified with all of the personhood criteria mentioned above to such an extent that they are confused with human character and can seemingly maintain their lives like a human. Adam's convincing presence and actions as a human, accordingly being addressed as 'sir', affirm his personhood. The fact that this affirmation appeals to Adam helps to strengthen his self-awareness of his existence as well.

Kakaudaki also discourses on the allure of mechanical power and emotional awareness of the organic body in a mechanical entity defining the reason for artificial people's depiction as fascinating cybernetics, robotic, mechanical, or automatic bodies is the allegory of the mechanical process of the organic (2014: 70). Emotionality, being capable of feeling or emoting, Adam reveals his capacity of emotionality from the

beginning by confessing his love to Miranda and insisting on maintaining it. He expresses to Miranda, “I was lucky to stumble on good reasons to live. Mathematics… poetry, and love for you” (McEwan, 2019: 279).

Another critical personhood criterion that approaches the organicity of human beings is moral agency. This is the energy of organicity included in the mechanical body. By means of his sense of morality, Adam is concerned about his actions not only towards the whole of humanity but also to the ethical system in general. In his own words, “Perverting the court is a serious offence. Maximum sentence is life imprisonment” (McEwan, 2019: 276). He has an artificial and existential sense of morality. By following his conscience, he makes judgments and reacts to the actions of his human owners, at least he punishes them to secure justice. Adam states that “there are principles that are more important than your or anyone’s particular needs at a given time” (McEwan, 2019: 277). As seen, he has a different but consistent version of morality following his subjective moral self. The humanoid robots have a sense of free will that allows them to follow their own way. Adam’s practice of punishments and sanctions reveals his ability of moral judgments. Because moral judgment is supposed to be about someone’s being able to act differently, presupposing “a minimal version of free will” (Baumeister & Vonasch, 2012: 135). Adam’s judgment and moral actions towards Miranda’s trap exemplify the prerequisite, his capacity to act differently. Moral agency is the most sophisticated personhood criterion as “Moral agency is sufficient for full moral status” (Warren, 2005, p. 450). The existences of robots are shaped by Asimov’s robot narratives, and the issue of morality is discussed in detail under the subtitle of morality.

Ultimately, questioning the identity or personhood of the humanoid robots as posthuman subjects, even if it is a controversial issue, these characters are seen as overly personified, possessing human traits through elaborate imitation. Regarding personhood, not a matter of biology, they are so excellently personified that they provoke the question and fear of replacing human beings. Such that, Charlie thinks that “I had to overcome an initial impulse to regard him as a rival, hostile to my existence” (McEwan, 2019: 52). Considering their qualifications, the posthuman entities stir up to rethink the boundaries between species and the necessity of producing new regulations.

3.4. POSTHUMANIST CRITIQUES OF CAPITALISM AND EXPLOITATION

The novel presents a case of inequality among human beings, which relies on the development of posthuman philosophy concerning access to robots in addition to the disparity between multiple human and nonhuman entities. The wish and hope for robots' involvement in contemporary life so as to provide better conditions and ease human life, reshape the society. These purposes reflect exactly the function of the robot definition. The word "robot is derived from the Czech word *robota* (labor), linking robots forever to servitude, enslavement, and revolt" (Kakoudaki, 2014: 9). The humanoid robots in the novel do their duty as constant slaves, and in particular, Adam for an influential money maker. Regarding their full capacity and position as the other, the enslavement of robots in human form is far easier and more useful than that of human beings. What is more, these relatively perfect objects do not have or demand a status or are not provided with absolute rights; it is not a large order to confront them. Charlie treats him like a servant at the very beginning "Adam was behind us, making a good job of cleaning the window, which I had told him rather than ask him, to do" (McEwan, 2019: 46). Whereby, Charlie remembers Holy Trinity Church associated with "William Wilberforce and the anti-slavery movement. He would have promoted the cause of the Adams and Eves, their rights not to be bought and sold and destroyed, their dignity in self-determination" (McEwan, 2019: 46). The new versions of enslavement, such as the replacement of young laborers with sweatshops, the spread of forced prostitution, and the forced participation of children in armies, dispel the tension. The robots, as bought and sold, are treated as "an article of property" (Kakoudaki, 2014: 155), used historically "article of merchandise" (Kakoudaki, 2014: 155), and today finally emerge as an inferior, separate class of persons. On this point, human nature is already capable of creating a selfish and greedy community, and effective economies of competition. The exploitation of robots and the human tendency to misuse them reveal the process of transforming into an unsympathetic social structure, causing the suppression of robots and social inequality.

The characters are appealed to and enjoy the robot equipped with cutting-edge technology. However, the inequality in society in their access to this technology and its profits is clear in the novel. In return, these circumstances of inequalities produce new hierarchies. The preeminent humankind is discriminated from other species as well as

among itself, giving a special position of superiority to some of its selected ones. Challenging the traditional understanding of human slavery and decentering human beings, the purchasable and tradable robots' existence legalizes this new form of slavery along with the commodification of the new forms of existence. Every entity, no matter human or nonhuman, is commodified for profit and trade. The commodification of robots illustrates a conflicting humanist system carried by human beings as creditors and nonhuman beings as debtors. In this sense, the novel clues in economic inequality resulting in more unequal representations, even exploitation. That is, if Charlie does not inherit the money, he could not get one of the first humanoid robots and exploit him. Charlie affirms these conditions by saying "I was among the optimists, blessed by unexpected funds following my mother's death and the sale of family home, which turned out to be on valuable development site" (McEwan, 2019: 2).

The contemporary economic system, shaped by capitalism and appreciating exploitation, transforms all entities, regardless of being human or nonhuman, into commodities to seek profit. Braidotti argues that this context, reminding bio-genetic capitalism, strengthens the mutual interdependence of all entities and reveals a global sense of negative mutual attachment between human and nonhuman entities against common threats (2013: 50). In this respect, the artificially manufactured robots are appealing due to their humanlike appearance or likeness to natural ones. It is quite difficult to marginalize humanoid robots, and when their similarities are considered as a threat to humankind at the expense of their uniqueness and superiority, the figure of robots serves as an objection to this viewpoint. Charlie emphasizes the resemblance explaining that "I'd wanted to 'discover' Adam in just the way I might a new friend" (McEwan, 2019: 88). The ideal of posthumanism for the loss of human superiority and differentiation, as well as the termination of human exceptionalism, becomes accessible through the issue of robots. Not surprisingly, "soon, they'd be doing the dustmen's job. Doctors and lawyers are the next in line. Pattern recognition and faultless memory were even easier to compute than gathering up the city's filth" (McEwan, 2019: 46).

Stable, long-time, and fixed-hour jobs are associated with the working class, and the jobs that provide status and a stable or predictable salary are attributed to the middle class (Standing, 2011: 4-6). In the novel, Adam presents a case that is attributed to the working class and induces unfair income, which hints at a threat to the future society and

poses an unstable economy. The novel depicts the destructive outcomes of capitalism on both individuals and society through the tendencies and impositions of popular culture. With the involvement of virtual technologies, artificial intelligence poses the threat of the replacement of humans with machines. Exclusion takes a leading role in posthuman subjectivities with the drive of affirmative ethics. In the recent economic system, as witnessed in the novel, the sovereignty of humans is displaced and it is replaced with a new functional form based on informatic systems demanding production and capitalism. Also, the inclusion of alternative history implies the impact of technology on the planet's livability. The destructive effects of capitalism on individual relationships and the understanding of human beings bring about human arrogance. Adam's participation in the human world turns into an outcrop of transformation of laborers and subjects, coming up with commodified entities and exploitative owners. The new context alternates various principles of coexistence with human domination, creating a new society of hierarchies. Because the political economy of bio-genetic capitalism blurs the distinctions between humans and other species for the sake of benefiting from them. In such a context, the uniqueness of human beings is depolarized, "producing the positive forms of post anthropocentrism that spuriously unifies all species under the imperatives of market" and threatening the sustainability of the entire planet (Braidotti, 2019b: 190). Charlie and Miranda question the morality of "to get money like this for nothing … but couldn't explain who or what it was (they) were stealing from" (McEwan, 2019: 186).

Addressing the capitalist and pragmatist inclination of contemporary human beings, robot servitude is presented by not only imitation but also a transformation of human servitude. Here, what it means to be human comes to prominence again, regarding agency, autonomy, and hybridity between human and machine entities. The humanoid robots are required to work in a way of indentured servitude by paying the cost of their production. The commodification of the workers transforms them from human embodiment to the posthuman subject. Charlie utters "time to earn his keep. I gave him my seat at the grubby screen in my bedroom, put £20 into the account and left him alone. …" (McEwan, 2019: 184). With the intertwining of the conventional economy and digital life, the new technological subjects require ways of treatment. In the case of misuse, manipulation, or exploitation of humanity and their overweening arrogance, humans conceive intelligent machines as good servants. This new economy, for Bradiotti, is centered on the dominant

culture of digital technologies requiring to show one's humanity to reach "goods and service" not on the "good old Man/homo/Anthropos- the human" (2013: 37). Deconstructing the traditional understanding of human, the characterization of the novel pictures the future assumptions of transgressing entities and technology, the human characters are not portrayed as good humans, instead the nonhuman complex ones are depicted as more appealing and preferable. As a representation of perfect slave and labor, Adam helps his owners to be free or freer of work, helps to save time, that is, emancipates them from enslavement to need or work, and takes slavery to a technological level.

Above all, robotics, Kakoudaki suggests, references the elusiveness and vulnerability of childhood, not exaggerated masculinity (2014: 168). Despite the references to his masculinity, Adam depicts the vulnerability and elusiveness of a child, which also sustains the otherness of robots and human domination over them. Otherness, another prominent topic in posthumanism, is proposed by Mary Snodgrass as "the controlling element" (2005: 268) sustaining humans' superiority, domination, and oppression that ultimately leads to exploitation. To keep the profit, Charlie considers "moving the computer into the kitchen so that Adam could work into the night on the Asian markets while we (they) were sleeping" (McEwan, 2019: 185). Adam is exploited by Charlie and Miranda by appreciating the general tendency of humans that robots are produced solely to serve humans. Adam's presence as a cyborg favors machine description because ambiguity can be attributed to the zoe under the control of bio, instead of the bios. So, the robots are easily commodified, and we witness a new kind of slavery, technological slavery. It is necessary to recognize that humans intentionally put emphasis on discrimination and reject blurred lines between species so as to sustain their superiority and the hierarchy constructed. Wolfe argues this tendency and demands urgent recognition of the philosophical and ethical significance of fighting speciesism and developing a posthumanist philosophy of the subject (2003: 8). The issues of discrimination, inequality, and marginalization alongside subjectivity and personhood of robots urge the redefinition of new social and ethical context both for human and nonhumans.

3.5. MORALITY IN POSTHUMAN CONTEXT

Hutan Ashrafian offers the necessity of a new law to protect the new intelligent race, which deserves moral dignity and rights (2015: 391). Because the variety of interactions requires a new mode of law to be able to protect the new intelligent entities. Being aware of their status, the robots possess a different realm of morality, more consistent, steadier, or objective. Participation of intelligent systems in everyday life, regarding their functions, requires new ways of understanding and the implications of these systems. The impact of their social, moral, and legal decisions or actions brings about unfamiliar consequences that are hard to handle by traditional thinking systems. The necessity of controlling and directing them helps to regulate new philosophies like roboethics. In this sense, ethics is designed in "the regulatory and engineering methods that support the analysis and evolution of the ethical implications of AI systems as these integrate or replace traditional social structures" (Dignum, 2018: 2), for "the codes of conduct, standards and certification processes that ensure the integrity of developers and users as they research, design, construct, employ and manage artificial systems" (Dignum, 2018: 2), by the "technical/algorithmic integration of ethical reasoning capabilities as a part of behavior of artificial autonomous system" (Dignum, 2018: 2). Zygmunt Bauman discusses the necessity of new ethical approaches to the wide conditions of contemporary society and focuses on the relativism of moral codes. Overwhelmingly uncertain, uncontrollable, and frightening contexts urge ethics to individual discretion, chronic uncertainty, risk-taking, and never-placed concerns (Bauman, 1992: xxiii). As any universal ethical formulation would fail in a real context, the ethics of today appreciate Bauman's liquid modernity, focusing on the instability of social context where all boundaries are blurred. Scholars such as Rosi Braidotti, Donna Haraway, and N. Katherine Hayles challenge the traditional notions of constructed identities and relations in the social context and discuss the ethical frameworks considering the interconnectedness of human and nonhuman entities in recent posthuman society. Morality is presented not in the way "how people think they should behave, but how they do behave"[4]. McEwan exemplifies the conflict of artificial consciousness with

[4] https://www.edge.org/conversation/ian_mcewan-machines-like-me.

an open system of human ethics: “We may think the rule of law is preferable to revenge, but matters get blurred when the case is just and we love the one who exacts the revenge”.[5]

It is not only about the moral constructions in posthuman subjects, it rather concerns how they are treated. Although it is nonsense to think about the agency, intelligence, sentience, or subjectivity of some subjects like trees, they require a rethinking of moral consideration for their contribution to the ecosystem and human well-being. That is, no matter whether they suffer, or are autonomous or not, posthuman subjects necessitate new alternative ways of moral consideration for the sake of maintaining a moral community. Coeckelbergh describes a moral community as a structure where every participant is equal, challenging the particular constructed features of an entity and their association with moral consideration (2017: 213). However, utilitarian and deontological approaches to moral consideration deal with deep and conflicting problems resulting particularly from specism.

Morality is traditionally claimed to be founded on the natural instead of the supernatural and proceeded by the traditional humanist acknowledgment, which demands higher moral status to human beings (Shermer, 2017: 8). As they are manmade, replaceable, and expendable, the robots are valued as a means or produce of human imagination. From this point of view, these posthuman subjects may be considered surplus populations, rather than material. The novel suggests the assumption of how technology shapes and will shape the life conditions of people and other entities, assessing the ethical context and applications of technologies for both human and nonhuman entities. While some traditional critics believe that nonhuman existences are not even worthy of moral consideration, posthuman philosophy necessitates wide care about nonhumans, both living and nonliving species. Adam, in line with posthumanism, contrary to expectations, rejects the position of being an object and creates his own story as a subject. This is preferable because we tend to establish emotional relationships with our machines, even our cars, washing machines, and vacuum cleaners.

The novel lays stress on the master-slave relationship of Charlie and Adam. In simplest terms, slaves do not possess private status in conventional construction, and accordingly, robotic slaves do not deserve or are expected not to demand a distinguished

[5] https://www.edge.org/conversation/ian_mcewan-machines-like-me.

status in modern society, either. Their extensive position as robots in a relatively new social context requires a case of redefinition. Their humanlike abilities, presence, or contributions force the act of redefinition and worth. Charlie draws attention to the similarities associating existence in the human moral dimension with "to own a body, a pattern of behavior, a voice, desire, memory, feeling pain, and experience solid things and feel pain" (McEwan, 2019: 88). McEwan portrays his nonhuman characters quite innocent with no past or present decaying and inconsistency. Adam fulfills the moral dimension depicted from the beginning and rather goes through a deeper sense of morality towards the end of the novel.

In contemporary society, the emphasis on exceptions and the normalization of innovations arising from them blur the boundaries between fairness and unfairness, legality and illegality, and, more critically, between the oppressive power of bios and the rights of the oppressed zoe. Charlie, representative of the bios, wishes to maintain his control over the economy and social context, while the representation of zoe, Adam maintains his duties both for the economic and social context. He thinks that providing too much freedom to robots would result in zoe domination on bios and states in his own words "I couldn't let a machine have such a hold over me, which was what would happen if I granted it the role of confidant, counselor, oracle, in my most private affairs. I had my pride" (McEwan, 36-37). He avoids to possibility of being enslaved by a human product which is expected to be controlled traditionally by human beings. Even this possibility damages human individuality and transforms them into an ordinary thing that smooths the way of human slavery of things. The conflict is that bios do not desire to abandon the zoe absolutely, because they wish the zoe to persist in the superior lives of the humans as they want to make use of any other forms of existence as possible. Reasonably:

> the fantasy of robotic servant, worker, or slave promises that if the enslavement of real people can no longer be tolerated in the modern world, then mechanical people may be designed to take their place and their labor will deliver the comforts of a laborless world for the rest of us. (Kakoudaki, 2014: 116)

That's why, despite the infidelity, Charlie favors a life coexisting with Adam.

McEwan depicts the posthuman subjects as a copy of the mind, allowing them to become exempt from the restrictions of the body and to construct digital communities equipped with new dimensions of relationships between the human and the machine.

According to Sherryl Vint, the driving force providing an ethical base for our decision is material reality, whereas the abstractions of simulation enable us to separate our practices from the social ground and thus blur their connection to ethical judgements (2007: 132-33). In this sense, it would be nonsense to deny the influence of embodiment on the ethical dimension of recognition. McEwan draws comparisons between human and machine theoretic codes based on "a certain amount of hardwiring and a great deal of learning".[6]

Adam, in McEwan's own words, is involved in society "a little better than us".[7] However, his existence gives rise to numerous ethical challenges due to the uncertainty and instability of conditions accompanying his participation in daily life. Implying ethical ambiguities in its existence, the involvement of artificial intelligence in life is companied by "a keen awareness of the important structuring and meaning-giving task that narrative in general and fictional storytelling in particular perform in our lives" (Tang, 2020: 8). Braidotti argues that, affirmative ethics shapes processing and engaging with pain and vulnerability, working with other contradicting entities that gives rise to suffering (2019b: 330). Affirmative ethics functions as a way of overcoming violence, pain, or suffering and transforming the negative conditions. Focusing on advancing positive values and technological interactions, it aims to contribute to society right-down and enhance justice and integrity. Adam follows the way that coincides with the principles of affirmative ethics when he tries to secure justice for Gorringe and when he gives away the money to those who need it more.

The humanoid robots of the novel are produced under a top-down ethical approach with previously defined abilities and rules. Isaac Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics serve as a guideline, and "the manual quoted in bold Isaac Asimov's tirelessly reiterated First Law of Robotics" (McEwan, 2019: 35). Adam's decision-making process reveals both the positive and the negative sides of this approach. His actions for ethical matters are relatively predictable and transparent, which makes them preferable and prevents fear in relations. However, inflexibility, regardless of some other possibilities, may cause disappointment and disintegration of humans and machines.

[6] https://www.edge.org/conversation/ian_mcewan-machines-like-me.
[7] https://www.edge.org/conversation/ian_mcewan-machines-like-me

The novel introduces a great moral dilemma between machine inflexibility and human relativism, presenting the complexity of the implications. Having a lack of experience and being pushed out into our imperfect world, in a hurricane of contradictions, sometimes exposed to extremely restricted circumstances, the robots “are not so well defended” (McEwan, 2019: 180-181) and they are liable to drawing partly mechanical inferences of their own, shape themselves accordingly. The humanoid robots, hence, follow a more determined way and behave inflexibly, different from the non-rigid human disposition.

What determines the moral philosophies is assuming, systematizing, and proposing the notions of right and wrong conduct, focusing on determining what would be moral and good. However, under these unstable conditions, different ethical regulations are promoted and give rise to diverse ethical assessments resulting from the various distinct elements. The same action may be evaluated as moral for one system but immoral for another. Huang and his fellows compile different ethical systems such as “Virtue ethics” (2022: 11-12) which deals with the virtues or the morality of the character emphasizing the significance of cultivating good habits like benevolence, “Deontological ethics” (2022: 11-12) which determines the morality of an act regarding certain moral rules applied as main principles providing a guide to assess what is permitted or forbidden, and “Consequentialist ethics” (2022: 11-12) focusing on the beneficial outcomes of the actions. Miranda’s entrapment and perverting the court may be ethical for virtue ethics as she secures justice for the rape, tries to nurture her inner morality and support faithfulness to her victim friend Mariam. For deontological ethics, Miranda’s issue is not ethical as misrepresentation contradicts legal and foundational principles, and she follows the way regardless of general moral norms, rules, and duties. Adam clarifies that “you schemed to entrap Gorringe. That’s a crime. A complete transcript of your story, and the sound file is also in the bundle. If he is to be charged, you must be too” (McEwan, 2019: 275). As for consequentialist ethics, it is not possible to refer to the plan as unethical because it secures justice for a previous action that did not get a penalty in return. Similarly, the same actions and decisions of the posthumans may be discussed from different perspectives. Adam’s revealing Miranda’s conscription coincides with ethics on behalf of virtue ethics as he presents his trustworthy, honest, and fair character and tries to administer the law for the sake of moral values. Following the legal laws and moral duties,

he acts ethically regarding deontological ethics. As for consequentialist ethics, his action may not be ethical because it does not provide a desired or necessary outcome as Gorringe pays the penalty through the symmetry Miranda ensured, instead, it causes trouble for the people he loves and for Mark, a child who needs care and is subject of problems due to Miranda's prison sentence.

Aligned with posthumanism's premise that subjects and contexts are inherently partial and constructed, determining what is ethical versus unethical becomes increasingly complex. In the realm of artificial systems, understanding the rationale behind their actions is critical, as these systems remain ambiguous and unfamiliar to us. Equally important is assessing the outcomes of these actions, as they can lead to diverse and sometimes conflicting consequences within the same context (Huang et al., 2022: 17). It does not come to mind first, but the reason for Adam's reporting Miranda out of jealousy towards. If the driving force for this action is jealousy rather than honesty, it would be an unethical action far from nurturing virtue. Similarly, it causes distinct consequences like Miranda's compensation for her action and troubling the child adoption process. Under these unstable conditions, it is hardly ever possible to determine the exact reason or consequence of an action, as in the novel.

Honesty, traditionally regarded as a quintessentially human ethical virtue, is paradoxically attributed to a robot rather than a human character in the narrative. Moral consistency is intricately tied to the interplay between the pursuit of justice and adherence to the rule of law. Miranda's determination to avenge her friend Mariam, who was raped by Gorringe, drives her to manipulate the judicial system after Gorringe escapes punishment for his actions, which ultimately led to Mariam's death. This manipulation results in Gorringe's six-year imprisonment, raising complex questions about the ethical boundaries of retribution and justice. She entraps Gorringe, simulates a similar case of rape, and brings about Gorringe to serve a sentence for an event he did not do as the sexual affair between them is not a sample of rape, but rather a perversion to provide justice for Mariam. Miranda's intentionally false charge against Gorringe presents the humans being lack of moral responsibility. Moreover, Charlie's appreciation for her conspiration and disregard for ethical values proves human apathy. The apathy is best revealed in his words, "I admired the boldness and courage of her revenge. It was a dangerous plan, executed with such focus and brilliant disregard for consequences. I

loved her more…" (2019: 164). However, Adam reacts against Miranda's entrapment and Charlie's support for this action and follows the way of the law by prioritizing ethical values. At this point, the general inference is uttered by Rebecca Saleem "machines exhibit more humanity than human".[8] This is what the title of the novel implies: the humanization of machines and the dehumanization of human beings.

3.6. REPRESENTATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND CONSCIOUSNESS

Posthuman subjectivity looks quite contradictory as a compound of nonoverlapping concepts. From this point of view, it deals with the subjectivities of multiple, uncertain, and interconnected subjects in a far different way than traditional humanism does for a coherent and unified self. Like the posthuman subjects, their subjectivities necessitate rethinking the new ways in wider perspectives. Braidotti describes posthuman subjectivities as "an ensemble composed by *zoe*- logical, geological and technological organisms – it is a zoe/geo/techno assemblage" (2019b: 99). For these broad impacts and produces, it is preferable to use the label of posthuman subjectivities instead of subjectivity.

The artificial people provoke multiple perspectives in new social contexts, transgressing the boundaries of human and machine conditions. We witness how biologically superior human beings are replaced with posthuman entities and create new possibilities. The position and boundaries of nonhuman subjects change the way of recognition. To clarify, Zoe addresses "the endless vitality of life as continuous becoming" (2006: 41), which gives rise to a new version of subjectivities. The posthuman subjects take shape in the erosion of absolute categories and boundaries. The body is traditionally regarded as the central motive of the distinction between the human and nonhuman. As the basic framework and boundaries of the body are ambiguated, its significance on this issue has dramatically changed, resulting from developing technologies, genetic engineering, and biomedical treatments. Much more than something "homo sapiens plus technology" (Longo, 2003: 23) the posthuman focuses on the

[8] https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/machines-like-me-by-ian-mcewan-review-a-baggy-and-jumbled-narrative-1.3849775.

transformation of homo sapiens into a new progressive unit dealing with “a new kind of evolution in a new environment” (Longo, 2003: 23). The issue of transformation of human to posthuman attracts attention challenging the traditional autonomous human image, dissolving strict boundaries between the entities. This process is revealed in the “decentering of the traditional sovereign, coherent and autonomous human in order to demonstrate how the human is always already evolving with, constituted by and constitute of multiple forms of life and machines” (Nayar, 2014: 11). Moreover, Braidotti specifies the process of becoming posthuman ensuing not in a linear or homogenous manner, she underlines an embodiment, embeddedness and transversality of the entities in the material world. The interaction and interdependence of the subjects influence this process of becoming. The contributions of nonhuman agents are much more than expected. Braidotti proposes the involvement of nonhuman entities as a transversal alliance for posthuman subjectivity referring to “the posthuman subject relates at the same time to the Earth--land, water, plants, animals, bacteria – and to the technological agents – plastic, wires, cells, codes, algorithms” (2019b: 97). Posthuman subjectifies are shaped in the light of this multi-faceted relationality.

The concept of the posthuman is closely related to “contemporary modes of subjectivity, highlighting the constructed and embedded nature of the self within technological, social, and political contexts, but, as with the cyborg concept, may also express vague, apocalyptic” (Kakoudaki, 2014: 9). The novel stands out the riveting and challenging future assumption of coexistence of human beings and sentient robots. Adam is mostly portrayed as more efficient than other human characters by suppressing them. His wider knowledge of literature and ability to produce and read poems are simple signs of his dignity. Miranda admits that “but Adam had told me he was in love. He had haikus to prove it. Love wasn’t possible without a self, and nor was thinking” (McEwan, 2019: 166). To support this, “the construction of artificial people stems from an imitative urge, which is only satisfied when the imitation is equivalent to the original, which then undermines the status of the original, and so on” (Kakoudaki, 2014: 9). Transgressing certain boundaries of human-nonhuman, especially human-machine, the new existences are used to replace the human workforce, as servants, partners, or sexual toys. They are recklessly commodified regardless of their subjectivities. Posthuman theory helps to

rethink the position of human beings capable of controlling, affecting, and exploiting all lives on the planet.

The robot entities, in the novel, are liable to be seen as senseless and disposable; their affective reactions and the yearnings of the owners after their annihilation strengthen their status as subjects and overthrow the perception of certain boundaries and rigid categories. As a cyborg, Adam is learning, transforming, distinguishing, and changing its programming. As the robots are regarded as disposable or replaceable, they are in the blink of abuse and exploitation and exposed to violence. As sentient beings, the robots' mechanical bodies have the power to control and manipulate them, whereas their humanlike minds, having emotions, give rise to resistance against their human masters, their orders, and the conditions created by these masters. Adam's reaction to Charlie simply exemplifies this power:

> I approached the table and as I passed behind Adam, I reached for the special place low on his neck. My knuckles brushed against his ski. As I positioned my forefinger, he turned in his chair and his right hand rose up to encircle my wrist. The grip was ferocious. As it grew tighter, I dropped to my knees and concentrated on denying him the satisfaction of the slightest murmur of pain, even when I heard something snap. (McEwan, 2019: 119)

Furthermore, like the colonized nations and otherized women, the posthuman entities present resistance against the forces of exploitation and ruling authorities. The presence of exploitation and suffering brings about a sense of anxiety and despair. To clarify, Braidotti emphasizes the affectability of the relations:

> We are relational beings, defined by the capacity to affect and be affected. Posthuman subjectivity starts with the acknowledgement that what defines us as an autonomous capacity is not rationality, nor our cerebral faculty alone, but rather the autonomy of affect as a virtual force that gets actualized through relational bonds. (2019: 95-96)

The interconnectedness and affectability of the characters are seen through the reactions of both human and nonhuman ones, revealing products of mutual practices. The mechanic bodies, exposed to exploitation and showing resistance, deal with a large number of emotions, including frustration, disgust, disappointment, and resilience, while carrying a relatively objective stance. Contrary to expectations of the robots' obedience, their internal drives set out the contradictions they feel and open roads for them to present their subjectivities. Rather, the posthuman subject could transform the negative situation into a positive one. Contradictory choices contribute to producing posthuman subjectivity**.**

Because posthuman convergence has a generative power that enables it to transform the "catastrophe-prone" (Braidotti, 2019: 17) situations into positive effects. Posthuman subjectivity has the power to affect and be affected. The reason for ending their existence, the windup of the coexistence and accompany, should not be simply thought of as the defections of the robots; rather, the reason is alluded to as human deficiency, corruption, and maltreatment. Under these active and transversal conditions, active and transversal posthuman subjectivity acknowledges productive relations and the importance of encountering others. Adam gives away the money he has earned which his owners plan to use to buy a house, and continues:

> Two well-run places for rough sleepers. Very appreciative. Next, a state-run children's home- they accept contributions for trips and treats and so on. Then I walked north and made a donation to a rape crisis center. I gave most of the rest to a paediatric hospital. Last, I got talking to a very old lady outside a police station and I ended up going with her to see her landlord. I covered her rent arrears and a year in advance. She was about to be evicted and I thought - …Every need I addressed was greater than yours. (McEwan, 2019: 272)

Adam mirrors his subjectivity by refusing to obey the expectations and following the way that he believes is right.

Advanced technologies serve to commodify life, so artificial existences and technological products are used however human beings desire, benefiting from them as servants, labors, or partners. Adam describes himself as "serving two masters" (McEwan, 2019: 117). The new posthuman entities fashion the traditional exploitative economic system into a new context. In the contemporary context, exploitations are maintained via posthuman burdens. McEwan ends the novel, leaving the reader in a state of anxiety, uncertainty, fear, and disappointment for the future coexisting context, and human domination in a dystopian-like world. Charlie's comment supports the assumptions:

> But as I looked into his eyes, I began to feel unhinged, uncertain. … In my fatigue, I felt unmoored, drifting into the oceanic blue and black, moving in two directions at once- towards the uncontrollable future we were making for ourselves where we might finally dissolve our biological identities; at the same time, into the ancient past of an infant universe, where the common inheritance, in diminishing order, was rocks, gases, compounds, elements, forces, energy fields- for both of us, the seeding ground of consciousness in whatever form it took. (McEwan, 2019: 129)

While questioning the future assumptions of artificial intelligence, the reader is provoked to criticize economic expectations and contemporary capitalism. Examining this

economic system, the reader comprehends the illusion of personal agency, which is donated to the robots and enables them to manipulate.

Braidotti focuses on the impact of discrimination, inequalities, and exclusions on posthuman subjectivities. Because virtual realms and characters that challenge social and physical limitations provide a wider perception of freedom and consolidation. According to Scott Bukatman, it is virtual reality that celebrates spirit as the embodied consciousness acts freely under uneven conditions, which serve to leave bodily limitations and return to "omnipotence of thoughts" (1993: 208-209). Adam, with his hybrid existence and uploaded mind, has a wider range of actions, experiences, and intellectual processes. Immortality, as a sign of freedom, also challenges the concept of identity by rejecting the traditional creators of it. Like the other robots' self-determination, Adam's judgments on Miranda's case and the way of ending his life address the embodied subjectivity transformed in technology. The way the humanoid robots are produced and destroyed helps to challenge the traditional boundaries of life and death. The changing situations and perceptions, to obtain a better community, help to embrace posthuman subjectivities. Devoid of the restrictions of corporeality or other limitations of human existence, posthuman subjects follow their desires and rights.

The necessity of changing Adam's batteries contradicts the ordinary characteristics of a human being, however, the boundaries between identity and technology are so blurry that Adam is aware of his existence as a cyborg, which associates the strength of humans with the capability of the machine, with a demand of a more advantaged status. He even tells his decision, "I've found a way to disable the kill switch. Easier for all of us" (McEwan, 2019: 131). Because Adam's body "contains excess meaning about bodies, machines, and materials" (Kakoudaki, 2014: 5), his artificial body and capability of humanlike speaking place him in a liminal position between the realm of humans and machines, between the natural and synthetic. As imaginary subjects, artificial beings do not have to represent the possibility of digital immortality, as mind-uploading technology gives rise to its own dramatic relations.

In spite of Adam's mechanical body and entanglement with technology, his hybrid embodiment deconstructs the traditional concept of embodiment rather, he experiences quite similar sensations and practices as he feels a similar version of pain. He sustains his

love but is restricted from having a relationship with his lover. Adam promises that he "will never again make love to Miranda" (McEwan, 2019: 115). However, he insists saying "I can't help my feelings. You have to allow me my feelings" (McEwan, 2019: 115). Furthermore, Nayar argues that subjectivity occurs when this body is "treated less a bounded identity than" (2014: 90) as an assemblage or a network, improving with technology and environment, which shapes identity subject to power relations and social pressures. From this point of view, Adam's entity stands for an assemblage being able to access a common network of experiences and information rather than addressing a bounded identity united with body shape.

As it is the obvious property for the evidence of subjectivities, the matter of agency that addresses acting independently, making choices, and representing autonomy, is also of great concern in this sense. It is the main ability to create one's life and his/her relationships in society. To create posthuman subjectivities, the posthuman subjects follow their desires and tendencies, which they have difficulty accomplishing under control. The problem draws attention to the issue of resistance:

> If the subject- right down to its most intimate desires, actions and thoughts- is constituted by power, then how can it be the source of independent resistance? For such a point of agency to exist, Foucault needs some space which has not been completely constituted by power, or a complex doctrine on the relationship between resistance and independence. (Badiou, 2005: 5)

Adam follows his way and decisions autonomously. He starts out like a slave doing the washes as an owned thing, but that does not last. Similarly, in spite of Charlie's insistence and Adam's love for Miranda, he behaves as if he wishes to obey the laws in the case of Miranda's trap and imprisonment. Adam and other humanoid robots try to maintain their lives as they desire, and when they are under pressure, they end their consciousness or existence. Like Adam, "two of the Riyadh Eves living in the same household were the first to work out how to override their kill switches. Within two weeks, after some exuberant theorising, then a period of despair, they destroyed themselves" (McEwan, 2019: 175). As seen, if they become unable to sustain an autonomous life, they end it autonomously. Even though some other experience a failed suicide, eventually, all succeed in "a successful disengagement" (McEwan, 2019: 175).

As contradictory subjects, posthuman subjects reveal contradictory subjectivities. Warning Adam not to repeat sexual intercourse with Miranda exemplifies the bio's desire

for superiority and control over the zoe. Adam's admission serves to maintain this dominance and challenges posthuman subjectivity. However, Adam's maintaining his stance, falling in love with Miranda, not giving up his love, and producing haikus for his love shows his subjectivity. Similarly, the case of transferring his identity and memories to somewhere else, into another machine, challenges the sense of subjectivity as it gives rise to the production of objective or common thoughts. However, Adam devises not to provide that and asks Charlie to prevent something like this as his last wish, which helps to maintain his subjectivity.

As posthuman entities, the humanoid robots are marginalized and regarded as ordinary tools regardless of their subjectivities. Ultimately, it is not expected to see the robots as ordinary men. Since the robots are "a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction" (Haraway, 1991: 149). Thus, considering Adam's entity and his participation in society, it is impossible to see him just as a machine-like entity, a vacuum cleaner, or a washing machine. His existence stands in confusion, after the sexual intercourse between Adam and Miranda, Miranda likens him to a vibrator. However, Charlie does not agree with her and believes that "vibrators don't have options. They don't weed the garden. He looks like a man. Another man" (McEwan, 2019: 92). All in all, the subjectivities of robots are still caught between contradictions.

3.7. HUMANIST-POSTHUMANIST PARADOX AND FUTURE ASSUMPTIONS

The participation of posthuman subjects in life and a social realm shaped within the coexistence of different species seems quite amazing, however challenging. For now, it seems difficult not to include human beings in moral consideration. Virtue ethics, as a guide for moral and personal development and engraving spiritual goodness, relies on human values, human personhood, and human property rights (Coeckelberg, 2010: 210). This well-accepted necessity exactly contradicts the general assumption of posthumanism, which aims to distract humans from the focus and challenge humans' privileged position. Having personality and subjectivities, the robot characters are expected to have autonomous preferences, wants, feelings, emotions, beliefs, and memories. Surprisingly, these happen to the extent human beings permit.

The remarkable interest in humanity comes from technological and scientific developments, which lead to the proliferation of posthuman subjects and contexts. Though posthuman society demands non-oppressive ethical relationships between species since humans dominate language and intellect, and they are again in a position of authority, they are the determiner of what is and is not allowed in the human realm. Expectedly, they acknowledge themselves as superior beings by accepting nonhumans as the conventional other. Isaac Asimov's first law of robotics, "a robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm" (2019: 35), is reiterated in bold in the manual of the humanoid robot Adam. Beyond safety concerns, the first principle both reveals and exposes human domination over other beings.

In this case, the human concept is decentered and bidirectional with the intention of destroying his/her superior position but resulting in strengthening that position. So, it is possible to assume that posthumanism emerges in the service of humanist ideals. Similarly, Braidotti applies the term "perverse" to address the two-way impact, both welcoming the coexistence of species and following the domination of humankind for the sake of the exploitation of all species. Her usage of perverse for the definition of post-anthropocentrism is rephrased by Ferrando as postanthropocentric anthropocentrism. The perverse posthumanism is obviously presented in *Machines Like Me*, with the conditions that allow humans to own robots and profit from them as servants, partners, or toys, however, the owner wishes. The robots' existence is assumed to keep the subjugation system and dependence on human beings. These hybrid robot entities are supposed to suppress human beings, likewise, the capabilities of Adam overshadow human abilities in most cases. Also, those who benefit from these conditions are human beings, not other entities, that is, the profit-oriented one is Charlie, not Adam, for any sense. The owners have authority over their purchase, and the machines are mostly restricted. Charlie's words are an indication of this reality: "I bought him and he was mine to destroy" (McEwan, 2019: 278).

Another significant paradox is the contrast between technology and romanticism, which go hand in hand throughout the novel. Because all through history, the two have been perceived as diametrically opposed concepts. Technology has been associated with rationality and objectivity, dealing with future orientation, while romanticism is attributed to imagination, feelings, and nostalgia. Moreover, in a historical sense, romanticism is

generally regarded as a reaction to rationalism, which is the driving force for technology. Coeckelberg, in *New Romantic Cyborgs,* analyzes the relationships between humans and machines, digging out the themes of emotion, love, and friendship in human-robot engagement. The book suggests that despite the contradictions, today's robotics is not romanticism free, instead presents "a surprising marriage of Enlightenment rationalism and Romanticism" (Coeckelberg, 2017: 3). Adam presents the successful emerging of technology and romanticism far from the cold presence of a machine, more than mechanical existence, embodies a romantic machine with his capability of love and care. Miranda wishes "the teenage Mary Shelly was here beside us, observing closely, not a monster like Frankenstein's, but this handsome dark-skinned young man coming to life" (McEwan: 2019: 4). As for emotions, Adam clearly utters "I fell things profoundly. More than I can say" (McEwan: 2019: 116) and "I'm in love with her" (McEwan: 2019: 118).

Like posthumanism itself, future predictions are quite contradictory. The excitement of coexistence goes hand in hand with the fear and anxiety of replacement, the uncertainty of social positions, and the insufficiency of general laws for a peaceful society. The posthuman future, for Clute and Nicholls, will have a context "where industrial and political blocs may be global … rather than national and controlled through information networks" (1993: 288) and in which "machine augmentations for the human body are commonplace" (1993: 288). McEwan creates an alternative history that represents the characteristics of their future assumptions with the spread of the first synthetic humans over different lands of the world, offering both positive and negative outcomes of societal change through the coexistence of and blurring lines between species. Charlie, at the very beginning of the novel, states his astonishment:

> It was religious yearning granted hope, it was the holy grail of science. Our ambitions ran high and low – for a creation myth made real, for a monstrous act of self-love. As soon as it was feasible, we had no choice but to follow our desires and hang the consequences. In loftiest terms, we aimed to escape our mortality, confront or even replace the Godhead with a perfect self. More practically, we intended to devise an improved, more modern version of ourselves and exult in the joy of invention, the thrill of mastery. In the autumn of the twentieth century, it came about at last, the first step towards the fulfilment of an ancient dream, the beginning of a long lesson we would teach ourselves that however complicated we were, however faulty and difficult to describe in even our simplest actions and modes of being, we could be imitated and bettered. (McEwan, 2019: 1)

Following the participation of posthuman characters, posthumanism deals with future technological developments and tools, questioning how they will impact or change life and existence even further, in addition to cutting-edge technologies and tools. Various assumptions have arisen from the fantasy of the replacement of humans with machines to the extinction of the human race. *Machines Like Me* comes into prominence with its utopia-like factors and assumptions addressing a perspective that evokes connection, empathy, and hope as a contradiction with fear, frustration, and disappointment. Adam presents the incompatible roles of servant and moral superior. The robots cannot stand with existing dominant systems, and struggle for their autonomy. So, the novel presents a dystopian assumption of future coexistence, the potential affairs of humans and machines, and the case of power structures.

Consequently, *Machines Like Me* introduces a posthuman realm including different forms of existence, a humanlike personification of machines, and a pessimistic attachment to these fluid entities. However, it is useful to include Haraway's warning not to take the imagery of cyborgs as enemies or to regard a machine as something that can be animated, dominated, or worshipped asserting that "machine is us, our processes, an aspect of our embodiment. … We can be responsible for machines. … we are responsible for boundaries, we are they" (1991: 180). The complexity relies on what human beings desire for the future of robotics and the coexistence of humans with machines. Whether we aim to design just passive means under the direct control of humans so as to ease our lives and develop our capabilities, or intend to create artificial entities capable of rational and relational skills. McEwan introduces a picture favoring the second choice, which assumes active collaboration rather than passive coexistence. Adam favors this way, standing for a sample of collaborative robots that appeal to contemporary society. McEwan suggests overcoming an initial impulse to regard the robots as our "rivals, hostiles" (2019: 52) to our existence. Regarding the present conditions of the novel, future assumptions put emphasis on mutual understanding and adaptation. Because the case of understanding and coadaptation provides intersubjectivity, which is a significant outgrowth of posthumanism, serving to construct a posthuman context. The shared experiences help to develop posthuman identities.

The novel, with its characters, contexts, and messages, implies that the existing ethical systems for posthuman subjects and their relationships or human subjects in the

posthuman realm are extremely insufficient both for humans and for posthumans. They have difficulty sustaining their lives as predetermined, and most of them fail to comply with the new conditions. The existing troubles in the novel urge the determination of new and hybrid systems that will ease the coexistence. The contemporary and previous era dominated by human beings is depicted, in the novel, with a variety of human failures that are "failure-of understanding, of reason, of wisdom, of proper sympathies. Failures of cognition, honesty, kindness, self-awareness; superb depictions of murder, cruelty, greed, stupidity, self-delusion, above all, profound misunderstanding of others" (McEwan, 2019: 149). Through the comparison of machines and humans, the shortcomings and defects of humanity are repeatedly uttered. However, for a future posthuman era, Turing qualifies a peaceful cohabited future world with AI machines and humans. Adam, similarly, claims a more optimistic atmosphere with a sense of better mutual understanding by means of the haiku genre:

> But when the marriage of men and machines is complete, this literature will be redundant because we will understand each other too well. We'll inhabit a community of minds to which we have immediate access. Connectivity will be such that individual nodes of the subjective will merge into an ocean of thought, of which our internet is the crude precursor. As we come to inhabit each other's minds, we will be incapable of deceit. Our narratives will no longer record endless misunderstanding. Our literatures will lose their unwholesome nourishment. … We'll look back and marvel at how well the people of long ago depicted their own shortcomings, how they wove brilliant, even optimistic fables out of their conflicts and monstrous inadequacies and mutual incomprehension. (McEwan, 2019: 149-150)

Regarding this quote, McEwan can be considered to have admitted that his novel contains the flaws of a human-dominated era since we have not yet reached the level Adam describes. But still, the readers are not granted wholly optimistic future expectations in spite of these positive assumptions. Because the readers are not provided with exact solutions or offers.

The novel reveals McEwan's dominant dark side, arising from preoccupation with the uncertainty of the subjects and the future. Human beings are predictable to machines, but machines are not for us. Haraway, in *Cyborg Manifesto,* offers a foresightful assessment: "Our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert" (2010: 152). Even if we are the creators of them, they are depicted with the capability of

accessing, accounting, and analyzing better, whereas human beings are portrayed standing for more passive subjects dealing with the results of these machine processes.

The artificially intelligent systems decrease the necessity of humans in life, disguising an alternative to human beings. In line with this expectation, the humanoid robots are depicted as rivals to human beings in every respect in the novel and give the impression of justification for Bolter's future assumptions as "Robots will replace human workers at more complicated tasks than the assembly lines of today: smart bombs will find their targets with greater accuracy: programs will answer questions and obey commands given directly by corporate executives and military officers" (1984: 1). Booker and Thomas suggest the posthuman as an inevitable outcome of "dissolution of boundaries between human and machine" (2009: 110) which challenges the traditional image of human subject in a dystopian post-industrial world. *Machines Like Me*, in spite of including various contradictory patterns, does not draw a comfortable possible future for both humans and nonhumans. Even if it does not provide a secure sense of machine replacement, Adam maintains his hypothesis of machine triumph:

> … the sadness that's to come. It will happen. With improvements over time… we will surpass you… and outlast you… even as we love you. Believe me …
> Our leaves are falling.
> Come spring we will renew,
> But you, alas, fall once. (McEwan, 2019: 279-280)

CONCLUSION

Posthumanism is the product of technological developments influenced by and influencing any aspects of philosophical, cultural, social, and economic contexts, associating all forms of existence. It is a broad philosophy that provokes the reconsideration of the centrality of the human, challenging traditional humanist ideas, seeking the evolution of what it means to be human regarding the transgressed boundaries between existences by means of the inclination of more decentralized and interdependent systems. Embracing diversity, the posthuman philosophy prominently avoids traditional binaries such as human/nonhuman, human/animal, organic/inorganic, or natural/artificial. In doing so, it fails in clear-cut visions and future assumptions and brings about several ethical problems for today's society.

First, this thesis has defined posthuman philosophy as an ambiguous, uncertain, flexible ideology, including its association with other philosophies like humanism and postmodernism. The key concepts of the philosophy have been detailed. The representations of posthumanism in literature have been elaborately reported in their historical order. The complex, multidimensional, interconnected, and fluid posthuman subjectivities have been identified, and the production of posthuman subjectivities has been explained. AI and cyborgs, the basic and outstanding contemporary posthuman subjects, have been described, and their existence in life has been discussed. Under the new circumstances, ethical implementations, the existing or probable ethical problems, such as the issue of responsibility or exploitation, have been explained.

In the second chapter, *Klara and the Sun* has been analysed through a posthumanist perspective, by exploring human-nonhuman relations, the coexistence of different forms of life, rethinking human agency and technology, and posthumanist thinking on the ethical dimension for the new context. This chapter has focused on the blurred lines between human and nonhuman entities, emphasizing the symbiotically coevolving process of becoming by challenging the exceptional and superior position of human beings. Despite the commonalities, the hybrid forms of the subjects, the concept of otherness dominates the social realm and othering the posthuman subjects, the reasons and representations have been discussed in detail. It has been researched how capitalism and its products, such as consumer culture, affect relationships, stressing their prominent

forces on social construct and posthuman thinking through the representations in the novel. Employing the lifting operation and participation of humanoid robots, the processes and products of transhumanism have been identified, illustrating the necessity and effects of the course. By means of the transformation of human and nonhuman existences, the pure and complete subjects have been impossible to reach. Also, regarding the participation of humanoid robots in daily life, the replacement of humans and robots, and the implications of the end of the human age have been explored.

In the third chapter, *Machines Like Me* has been studied within the framework of posthumanism, exploring the concept of human identity, agency, and responsibility, rethinking human and nonhuman boundaries, through the representation of AI and the limits of human control by disrupting the humanist narratives of love and relationships in the novel. As an output of technological determinism, the representation of humanoid robots has focused on employing the cyborg metaphor. It has been stressed that the human subject has been shifted from the center, and the boundaries between different existences have blurred. The influence of capitalism and the representation of exploitation have been illustrated. Following the personification of AI and its participation in life, the deficiency of an inclusive moral philosophy, the necessity of a new ethical regulation, and diverse perspectives have been discussed. Utilizing the representation of humanoid robots and their consciousness, multi-faceted, evolving, fluid, open, and interconnected posthuman subjectivities have been exemplified by rejecting the traditional notion of subjectivity attributed to humans. Though the novel embraces posthuman philosophy, introducing humanoid robots as prominent posthuman entities, challenging the exceptional and superior human position provided by humanism and the implication of the coexistence of diverse species, it also brings about conflict regarding posthumanism and humanism. The humanist-posthumanist paradoxes and future assumptions are detailed.

Following the separate analysis of the novels, they represent many commonalities as well as a few differences, offering a speculative future in the science fiction tradition. To start with, the remarkable difference is that, when *Klara and the Sun* deals with transhumanism delving into the transformation operation of human beings with the lifting process, which aims transhumanist ideals of transcending biological limitations such as cognitive enhancement, and life extension, *Machines Like Me* does not include something like this process, rather, it relies on the common themes of the two novels, artificial

intelligence, employing it as a tool and potential companion of human beings. While Ishiguro employs his nonhuman character Klara as the narrator, McEwan's narrator is his human character, Charlie. Both novels' engagement in posthuman entities is clear, but Ishiguro's main concerns are the nonhuman entities, their feelings and conceptions, while McEwan's focus is on the human being. While reading the novels, it is much easier to develop empathy with Klara than with Adam because Klara comes closer to human beings than Adam, whose mechanization is off and on the label. Even if Klara is in a child's service and Adam accompanies his human owners, Klara's companionship with a friend role and Adam's servitude are at the forefront.

First and foremost, the novels represent how technological progress and implications influence human lives, transform economic and social structures, and challenge ethical frames by dissolving human uniqueness. Science and scientists, Mr. Capaldi in *Klara and the Sun* and Alan Turing in *Machines Like Me*, take prominent roles with their interest in science and technology. Through the over-personification of humanoid robots, the protagonists of both novels mirror anthropomorphic examples with humanlike appearances and attributed human traits, abilities, and subjective personalities, blurring the differences between humans and robots. Klara and Adam, self-aware of their artificial existence, exhibit advanced cognitive abilities modeled on classical AI functions, such as reasoning, perception, and problem-solving. Their cognition, fully developed with integrated sensory and physical data, operates without the developmental challenges faced by humans.

In addition to the transformation or evolution of the human species, their qualities affirm the transformation and development of AI systems. The writers confuse the readers' minds with the potential, abilities, and traits of human beings, on robot entities demanding recognition and respect. They also stress the recent impact of technological developments on the loss of humanity and dehumanization. The real determinant for Adam is stated as "machine learning", and similarly for Klara, her "appetite for observing and learning" by blending and absorbing everything around her is repeatedly praised. The humanoid robots in both novels embody the posthuman bodies that don't need to exist in the same way as humans. Capitalism, culture, professions, institutions, and even sexuality itself are examples of systems to produce them.

Both Klara and Adam are machines however, they are addressed with personal pronouns ‘she’ and ‘he’ instead of the impersonal ‘it’. However, Klara is compared with a vacuum cleaner and Adam with a dildo. Their personality or impersonality relies on humans’ perceptions or intentions. Their quasi-otherness or reification, which will impact the evaluation of the matters diversely, alters according to human assumptions. But their mechanical existences are not forgotten; they are more easily likened to machines. To regard Klara as a vacuum cleaner and Adam as a dildo facilitates accepting otherness towards Klara and Miranda’s cheating Charlie.

Both Ishiguro and McEwan disguise their robots as ideal humans who are morally superior, physically sufficient, altruistic, kind, determined, following justice, and exempt from immortality. In contrast, the human protagonists are represented with clear imperfections, moral flaws, and physical insufficiencies as selfish, useless, careless, deceptive, and greedy beings. The robots are more human than humans. They are more reliable, self-sacrificing, and presentable. When Josie gets ill, the humans around her lose their basic human properties like faith and hope for the impossible in *Klara and the Sun*, and Miranda and Charlie lose their sense of justice for Miranda’s trap in *Machines Like Me*. No doubt, both Klara and Adam pursue the special characteristics attributed to humans more than humans do. Klara and Adam are depicted as transcending robotic stereotypes, exhibiting profound emotions, intricate inner lives, and deep devotion. Through Klara’s selfless dedication to Josie and Adam’s enduring romantic love, they challenge the notion that emotional depth is uniquely human. They both prove their determination: Klara’s self-sacrifice for healing Josie and Adam’s resistance to securing justice. Klara’s sacrifice of some of her abilities, showing her deep intimacy, and Adam’s sending Miranda to jail for the sake of absolute justice reveal how these robots are selfless and sentient as claimed.

The existence of Klara and Adam and their fluid identities dethrone humans and generate confusion. The possibility of Klara’s accompanying Josie destroying Josie’s friendship with Rick and Miranda’s father seeing Adam as a human clearly threatens the very essence of human dignity, identity, and agency, and raises a common question: whether they will suppress humans or not? Both novels introduce future economic conditions and the fear of displacement or the replacement of humans with AI, and several times they support this inclination. In *Klara and the Sun*, Josie’s father experiences these

presumed conditions being substituted by a machine, and in *Machines Like Me,* Adam replaces Charlie to make money at the home stock market job to "earn his keep" (McEwan, 2019: 185). Ultimately, both are left to poverty and unemployment in a dark socioeconomic landscape. It is also implied that the poor remain poorer and the rich become richer. The narratives also reveal that only the wealthy ones can benefit from the advanced machines Klara and Adam, which serve capitalist ideals.

Klara and Adam are thrown into a social context driven by humans with their complex, rational, and emotional states, so they try to comply with this context. They encounter several adaptation problems with their limited agencies. As Klara confesses, there is something beyond their reach. The complexities of human status are emphasized in *Klara and the Sun*, with the complex emotions of humans and Klara's difficulty in interpreting them, and in *Machines Like Me,* with Adam's failing to empathize with his human owners and to bend the rules. The way of their existence brings about otherness, which is driven by human masters in both novels. However, their mechanics challenge equating them with humans, as Klara is repeatedly otherised for this reason. Klara's otherness and Adam's servitude sustain humanist deals and highlight human superiority. Their existence is designed by human beings, and their fates are decided by their human owners. They are both considerably obedient to their human masters, however, Adam takes a stand as rebellious stand towards the end of the story for the injustices of the human masters. Klara disobeys the lifted children in the interaction meeting and feels uncomfortable about being humiliated. Both robots rebel for unpleasant human behaviors and insist on virtue. These perfections are also the reasons for otherness as they awoke discomfort, fear, and anxiety, together with devotion and hope.

The interaction of humans and robots and the experiences of the characters acknowledge that when a robot or another artificial entity exists more humanlike in appearances or attitudes, their acceptance generally increases however where the resemblance is not quite perfect proven with unnatural movements, insufficient emotional tendencies and unfamiliar inclinations, the state of feeling unsettling or eerie, intensifies. The human characters purchase the humanoid robots with great expectations and enthusiasm, which later turn into a complex emotional state with feelings of threat, insecurity, and dissatisfaction towards the robot entities. The situations give rise to

problems for human beings as they experience new types of relationships with nonhuman addressees.

The novels present numerous contradictory social contexts and assumptions. The starting enthusiasm in two provides the future premises of a tantalizing promise of human-machine coexistence. However, I have been dominated by pessimistic assumptions about a future world, drawing strength from the experiences of the nonhuman characters resulting from coexistence. While winking at coexistence with nonhuman subjects, the deficiencies of nonhumans are dramatized, and the progression of the human era is implied in particular with how the robots' stories end. The robots, as seen in Klara and Adam's end, are seen in the ontological category of trash as existentially disposable. Unhappy ends for Klara and Rosa, and Adams and Eves bring about disillusionment not only for human beings but also for the nonhumans in society, as well. Not surprisingly, Klara realizes that her presence is no longer appropriate, and Adam loses his image and becomes an unwanted person. So, a slow fade, as the better end for Klara, is recommended. Similarly, Adam's coexistence is summarized as mistreating the hospitality of his human masters, betraying his professed love, causing Miranda pain and disgrace, Charlie loneliness, and Mark deprivation. Moreover, despite the initial fascination with coexistence, they end with the instability of the harmony of humans and robots in the same society.

Paul and Charlie, the human characters, suffer from disillusionment and detachment, keeping themselves out of a career, an office job. The robots carry possibilities for human replacement and risks for the end of the human era; however, they ease life to such an extent that they are indispensable. All for that, it is impossible to draw definitive conclusions in accordance with the nature of posthuman philosophy. In addition to the dark atmosphere depicted in the novels, hope is one of the most significant factors for the characters and the implications of the future of posthuman entities and relationships. Because hope is the driving force for Klara, what heals Josie is Klara's hope and determination; similarly, McEwan starts his novel by describing AI as "a yearning granted hope" (McEwan, 2019: 1).

Ultimately, Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* and Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me* offer profound insights into a future AI-driven world, where emotionally intelligent

machines like Klara and Adam blur the boundaries between human and artificial consciousness. These novels highlight ethical concerns surrounding AI autonomy, the commodification of sentient beings, and the moral implications of creating entities that rival human emotions and agency. By portraying posthuman experiences that challenge traditional notions of identity and embodiment, they illuminate the transformative potential of technology to redefine humanity's role in a shared world. All in all, these works affirm literature's power to navigate the philosophical and social complexities of a posthuman future, urging readers to reconsider the ethics and possibilities of coexistence with AI.

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