

DIFFERENT CONCEPTS OF CYBORGS IN KAZUO ISHIGURO'S *KLARA AND THE SUN*

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Abstract

This study aims to find the difference between the representation of Klara's character and the concept of Cyborg Manifesto by Donna Haraway in the novel *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro. This research discusses how Klara engages in the traditional organic family concept without an Oedipal project, without psychological dynamics such as conflict or emotional dependence on parental figures as in humans. It also explores how Klara remains respected despite having no awareness or understanding of the cosmos, a spiritual or philosophical perspective on the universe that is often the basis of human existence. The approaches used are posthumanism and cyborg theory, which highlight the boundary between humans and machines. The results showed important differences in the representation of Klara. This paper finds that Klara, although a cyborg, was able to form deep emotional bonds with humans and was respected for her ability. This is contrary to Haraway's concept that cyborgs are not bound by family structures and are not rewarded for their connection to the environment or cosmos. This analysis contributes to enriching the study of human-technology relations and identity dynamics in the context of posthumanism.

Keywords: *Posthumanism, Cyborg, Cyborg Manifesto*

INTRODUCTION

Technology has become an integral part of people's daily lives. As a product of civilization, technology is present to facilitate humans in interacting with the world around them (Cooper, 2010, p. 4). Innovations in robotics, artificial intelligence (AI), and automation are increasingly affecting various aspects of life, increasing efficiency and productivity, but also posing new challenges such as unemployment and the shifting role of humans in society. In this context, posthumanism invites us to rethink the relationship between humans and technology, and how technology, not only as a tool, but also as a force that changes the basic concept of human identity and existence. Technology is no longer just a tool to make life easier, but also part of an entity that redefines what it means to be human. By replacing and extending human capabilities, technology challenges traditional views of the body,

consciousness, and social interaction, while leading humans into an era where the boundaries between humans and machines are increasingly blurred (Pepperell, 2003).

According to Valera (2014), posthumanism is a paradigm that changes the way humans view themselves and their place in the universe. Previously, humans were often seen as the center of everything, but posthumanism proposes a more egalitarian view, where humans are seen as equal to other creatures in this world. Within the framework of posthumanism, technologies such as artificial intelligence and biotechnology play an important role in changing the traditional boundaries between humans and machines. This creates a major shift in the way we understand human identity, agency, and existence, as technology is no longer just seen as a tool, but as an entity that is active in shaping social reality and human existence itself. Moreover, posthumanism explores the ethical, philosophical and social impact of this transformation, prompting us to question how we should understand ourselves in an increasingly connected and technologically advanced world. Posthumanism emerged as a result of a critique of various philosophical and scientific assumptions that have underpinned the understanding of humans. It highlights the need to reconsider the concept of 'human' and its role in society, especially in the face of rapid technological advances (Styrnik, 2021).

Posthumanism largely carries the big idea that humans should no longer consider themselves superior to technology, but rather see the two as equal entities that interact with each other equally (Endraswara, 2020). The previous view dominantly placed humans as the center of everything. And posthumanism itself invites us to reconsider the relationship between humans and the environment and other species, and recognizes that humans are not the center of existence, but rather an integral part of a larger, interconnected ecosystem. Humans can no longer claim a position as the center of existence, but rather as part of a larger cosmic dynamic, in which technology and other creatures have equal roles and values. This approach opens up space for new perspectives in understanding the existence of humans, technology and nature, while encouraging humans to develop a sense of responsibility towards all components of the ecosystems they inhabit, creating a more equitable and inclusive balance between humans, technology and the environment.

One important concept in posthumanism is "cyborg". According to Haraway (1985:35), cyborg stands for "cybernetic organism," which is a combination of machine and organism that exists both in social reality and in fiction. The cyborg is a significant representation in understanding the dynamics of posthumanism and the profound changes taking place in the way we view the relationship between humans and technology. Cyborgs can be seen as a blend of the real world and the fictional world, representing a combination of imagination and material reality (Putra & Hambali, 2023). This concept describes the relationship between fantasy and reality, with the aim of creating opportunities for change in the future. Within the framework of posthumanism, Donna Haraway's theory in "Cyborg Manifesto" provides an important conceptual foundation for exploring how human identity is replicated and understood in the context of artificial intelligence. In her view, cyborgs not only reflect the

integration of technology in human life, but also create opportunities to revise and expand understandings of identity.

In the context of Haraway's theory, the novel *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro offers an interesting case study of how the concept of artificial intelligence. The novel was released in 2021 and was written by an author named Kazuo Ishiguro who was born in Nagasaki and grew up in Guildford, Surrey, England. The novel tells the story of Klara, an Artificial Friend (AF) created to keep children company, taking center stage in an exploration of themes such as intelligence, autonomy, and human-machine relationships.

There are several previous studies that have explored various dimensions of posthumanism in the context of science fiction, including the analysis of *Klara and the Sun*. Research from Cahyo and Suryaningtyas (2020), Saeed et al (2020), Kiran and Lodhi (2021), Frederick and X (2021), Susanto (2021), Herbert (2021), Manullang (2022), Mufidah (2023), Rizal and Rahayu (2023). Some of these studies focus on how the novel reflects issues of posthumanism, such as how technology blurs the boundaries between humans and machines and its impact on concepts of identity and agency.

In addition, Stenseke (2022), Mejia and Nikolaidis (2022), Ajeesh and Rukmini (2023) studies analyze how the tension between artificial autonomy and human-machine connectedness within the framework of posthumanism. These studies contribute to a deeper understanding of how *Klara and the Sun's* fiction works. In addition to complementing previous studies, this research aims to understand how the concept of artificial intelligence and the relationship between humans and cyborgs are depicted in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*. This research focuses on discussing one research question, namely How does Klara's representation differ from the concept of the Haraway Cyborg Manifesto?

This study has important significance both in terms of theory and practice as it delves deeper into the differences between the character Klara in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* and Haraway's concept of cyborgs. This analysis not only enriches the theoretical understanding of cyborg identity and existence, but also provides practical insights into how elements of science fiction can depict and explore the posthuman world. This research connects the theory of posthumanism with literary narratives, opening a discussion on the ethical and social implications of the development of artificial intelligence technology.

In this study, the researcher limits the analysis to two concepts proposed by Donna Haraway in her theory of cyborgs. First, the idea that cyborgs do not engage in the dream of community with traditional organic family patterns without an Oedipal project. Second, the view that cyborgs are not respected and have no memory of the cosmos. Haraway (1985) also argues that cyborgs are not involved in the dreams of communities with traditional organic family patterns, particularly in the absence of the Oedipal project. Haraway explains that cyborgs do not feel the emotional attachment that usually occurs in family relationships, or in other words, cyborgs are unable to feel the inner bonds like humans. In his view, Haraway states that cyborgs are not respected and have no memory of the cosmos, which reflects how society often does not give respect or honor to cyborg entities. The research as a whole highlights the differences between Klara's character and Haraway's concept of cyborgs,

providing a broader picture of how the narratives in this novel shape and articulate cyborg identity and existence.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a posthumanist approach by applying Donna Haraway's Cyborg Manifesto theory as the main analytical framework. This approach was chosen because Haraway offers a critical and relevant view of human-technology relations, which is highly contextual to analyze the representation of Klara as a cyborg in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* (2021). The research data are text excerpts from the novel, including words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and dialogues, which were selectively identified based on their relevance to two key differences between Klara and Haraway's concept: non-involvement in the dream of a traditional organic family-based community without an Oedipal project, and respect for Klara despite her lack of memory of the cosmos. This research only focuses on the two differences found which specifically analyzes aspects of identity and human-cyborg relationships in the novel. Data collection was done by reading and understanding the novel thoroughly, identifying relevant primary data, and categorizing them according to Haraway's theoretical concepts. Through these steps, the researcher explored the complexity of identity and the relationship between cyborgs and humans, and drew conclusions based on the research findings and questions posed.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Differences in Representation of Klara and "Cyborg Manifesto"

In the story, Klara is portrayed as an interesting character because she goes beyond the conventional expectations of the Cyborg Manifesto. Klara is not just an unfeeling technological entity, but has self-awareness, emotions, and the ability to form deep emotional connections with humans. Instead, Klara plays a more humanistic role and engages in emotional and social interactions with the humans around her, showing that she has more value than just a technological device. In the novel *Klara and the Sun*, Klara consistently shows care, understanding, and empathy towards humans, especially towards Josie.

This highlights that Klara has the capacity to understand human emotions, respond to social situations in a soulful way, and even make decisions guided by feelings that resemble human instincts. Its illustrates some of the differences between Klara's character in the novel and the cyborg concept proposed by Haraway. There are two differences in Klara that display characteristics that do not fully match Haraway's idea of a cyborg :

Table 1: Aspects of Haraway's Cyborg Manifesto that are not represented in the novel

Aspect	Haraway's Cyborg Manifesto	Representation in <i>Klara and the Sun</i>
Relationship with family	Not tied to traditional organic family relationships	Emotionally involved in Josie's family
Source of respect	Not respected for not having cosmos memory	Respected for direct contribution

Klara's involvement in Traditional Organic Family Patterns

Haraway (1985) argues that cyborgs do not engage in dreams about family, especially with regard to the Oedipal project. According to Haraway, although cyborgs are hybrid entities between machines and organisms with human-equivalent capacities, they cannot feel the deep emotional attachments that humans experience in family relationships. In *The Cyborg Manifesto*, Haraway states that cyborgs are not bound to traditional organic family-based communities, which are usually based on biological and emotional relationships. However, in *Klara and the Sun*, Klara shows deep involvement in Josie's family structure. Klara, as the main character who is an AF (Artificial Friend), shows that cyborgs can also develop deep emotional bonds with humans especially with Josie, their owner. This can be seen from some of the following data:

Datum 1.

'When Josie was unable to come with us just now, I felt sadness.' (Page 92)

The excerpt depicts Josie's mother expressing jealousy towards Klara, assuming that Klara has no feelings, a common view towards artificial entities such as cyborgs. However, Klara immediately responds by showing that she, as an Artificial Friend (AF), has the ability to feel various emotions, and that the more she observes the world around her, the more feelings she develops. This shows that Klara not only functions as an emotionless machine, but also as an entity that is actively involved in the emotional and psychological dynamics of the family. Klara states that she feels sad when Josie cannot come along, confirming that she not only understands human emotions, but also experiences them deeply.

This concept contradicts Haraway's assumptions in *Cyborg Manifesto*, where cyborgs are not involved in traditional organic family structures or have emotional attachments. Klara, in the context of the novel, is directly involved in the emotional relationships normally associated with human family structures. She does not merely function as a passive observer, but as an involved family member, showing deep empathy and concern for Josie. This is also seen in the following other data:

Datum 2.

'I apologize. I didn't mean to seem ungrateful. I'm very pleased to see the waterfall. But perhaps also regretful Josie couldn't be with us.' (Page 96)

In the quote, Klara expresses happiness at seeing the waterfall, but also feels sad that Josie cannot be with her. This shows that Klara has a deep emotional attachment in the context of a traditional organic family, in contrast to Donna Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto* concept, where cyborgs are not involved in the emotional dynamics of the family. Klara, as an artificial entity, exhibits the ability to feel and express feelings normally only associated with human relationships, challenging Haraway's view of cyborg separateness from social and emotional structures. Klara's feelings are not only a reflection of her technological ability to mimic emotions, but also show the depth of her involvement in an organic family structure. She feels regret that Josie is not with them, an emotional response that shows how important a role Josie plays in her life. Something similar is seen in the following datum 3:

Datum 3.

'I was very sad to hear Sal passed away.'

*'Sad puts it pretty well.'
'I'm sorry. Perhaps I shouldn't have...'* (Page 97)

In this excerpt, Klara engages in an emotional conversation about Sal, Mrs. Josie's first child who has died. Klara expresses empathy and understands Mrs. Josie's grief, showing her involvement in the emotional family dynamic. In this context, Klara does not simply function as an emotionless AF or machine, but as part of a family dynamic that understands and responds to human grief and nostalgia. She shows empathy when expressing her sadness over Sal's death, even though she never knew him directly. In contrast to Donna Haraway's Cyborg Manifesto concept, Klara shows that she is able to feel and participate in moments of emotional reflection within the family structure. The difference in cyborg representation is also seen in the following data:

Datum 4.
*'I'm very sorry if I did something to upset Josie.'
'Didn't upset me. What makes you think that?'
'So we're still good friends?'
'You're my AF. So we must be good friends, right?'
But there was no smile in her voice. It was clear she wished to be alone to get on with her sketching, so I left the room, to stand outside on the landing.* (Page 103)

The quote illustrates that although Klara is an artificial entity, she shows concerns that are typical of humans, wanting to maintain a good relationship with Josie and ensuring there is no tension between them. Her reaction shows that Klara is not only fulfilling her role as Artificial Friend but also engaging in deep emotional dynamics, showing concern for her interpersonal relationship with Josie like a human with a family structure. Klara's involvement in this emotional dynamic suggests that she is playing a role in a family structure that is closer to the traditional organic family pattern, where there is attention to the feelings and relationships between members. This is very different from Haraway's Cyborg Manifesto concept, which depicts cyborgs as entities that are not bound by emotional or family dynamics. This is also illustrated in the following data:

Datum 5.
'Excuse me,' I said. 'I'd like to say there's a chance you'll never need the new Josie. The present one may become healthy. I believe there's a good chance of this. I'll need, of course, the opportunity, the chance to make it so....' (Page 187)

The quote illustrates her closeness to Josie as befits a traditional organic family relationship. Although Klara is an artificial entity, she expresses her faith in Josie's recovery and feels reluctant to take Josie's place. Klara does not merely fulfill a functional role, but is also emotionally involved, supporting Josie in a way that shows closeness and care. Klara here not only acts as a passive observer, but also as an integral part of the family dynamic, offering significant emotional support.

She understood the depth of loss that the family would experience and offered empathetic solutions. This is very different from the concept of a cyborg in Donna Haraway's Cyborg Manifesto, where the cyborg does not engage in the dream of community or family dynamics. Klara, on the other hand, is not only emotionally involved, but also ready to take over a deep

role in the family structure, demonstrating an attachment that is more than just a mechanical function.

From some of the data that has been presented, it shows that Klara in *Klara and the Sun* is deeply involved in organic family patterns. She shows emotional care and support to Josie, reflecting a relationship similar to a human family. This contradicts Donna Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto* view, which depicts cyborgs as entities that are not connected to emotional relationships or family structures. Klara, with her involvement in the emotional dynamics of the family, challenges this view and shows that cyborgs can play a role in traditional family structures.

This contrasts with Donna Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto*, which describes cyborgs as entities that are not connected to emotional relationships or family structures. In the manifesto, Haraway emphasizes that cyborgs lack traditional social contexts and are often overlooked in terms of interpersonal relationships. However, Klara, with her involvement in the emotional dynamics of the family, challenges this view and shows that cyborgs can play a role in traditional family structures. Klara's attachment to Josie creates an experience that confirms that loving and caring relationships can develop between humans and technology, providing a new perspective on the potential of cyborgs in the context of social life.

Klara's presence in Josie's family underscores the idea that emotional bonds are not limited to biological entities. Instead, the relationships Klara builds with other family members show that cyborgs can be an integral part of the social fabric, not just as tools or devices, but as entities that contribute to the emotional and psychological well-being of individuals. In this context, Klara provides valuable insights into how technology can complement and enrich human relationships, opening up further discussion on how cyborgs can revolutionize the concept of family and community in an increasingly technological era. Klara's involvement in Josie's family opens up a discussion on how technology can transcend functional boundaries and become an integral part of the human community. The novel indicates that technology not only blurs the human-machine boundary, but also integrates artificial entities into social structures that were previously considered exclusive to humans.

Klara is respected despite not understanding the cosmos.

Haraway (1985) states that cyborgs are disrespected and do not remember the cosmos, referring to a critical view of how humans often ignore or underestimate their interconnectedness with the universe and the surrounding environment. Haraway argues that cyborgs, as hybrid entities between humans and machines, are not always honored or considered significant in an increasingly technologically connected life. When Haraway talks about cyborgs not remembering the cosmos, he emphasizes that the focus of cyborgs is more likely to be on interactions and experiences at a local level, without a deep understanding of the universe or cosmos as a whole.

Research into the novel *Klara and the Sun* reveals representations that contradict Haraway's concept. Although Klara, as a cyborg, does not explicitly show awareness or involvement in the understanding of the wider cosmos, the novel still shows that Klara is

valued and considered important in the narrative. This is reflected in some of the following data:

Datum 6.

'You're an intelligent AF. Maybe you can see things the rest of us can't. Maybe you're right to be hopeful. Maybe you're right. (Page 102)

The quote depicts the interaction between Klara and Josie's mother illustrating how Klara, although an Artificial Friend (AF), is beginning to be recognized not just as a companion machine, but as an entity capable of providing insight and hope. Klara expresses her belief that Josie will recover, a belief that although based on hope, is felt by Klara as something real and profound. This illustrates how Klara is valued and respected for her observational abilities, even though she lacks a deep understanding of the cosmos. The mother begins to open up to the possibility that Klara, in her unique way, may have different but valid insights into Josie's situation, which shows respect and recognition of Klara as an entity more than just a machine.

In addition to this data, there are several other data found by researchers such as :

Datum 7.

'Look, you might be a very intelligent AF. But there's a lot you don't know. If you only ever listen to Josie's side of things, you'll never get the whole picture. And it's not just about Mum. Josie's always trying to trap me now.' (Page 130)

The quote depicts Klara demonstrating her emotional understanding by questioning the unfairness in Josie's relationship with her mother. Despite Klara's intelligence and empathy, her interlocutor's response highlights the limits of her understanding as an AF, especially in capturing the full complexity of human relationships. But even with the limitations of Klara's perspective which is only based on what she observes directly from Josie, Klara is still respected and appreciated as a very intelligent AF. This reflects a shift in view towards technology that is increasingly human-like. This is also seen in the following data:

Datum 8.

'Yes. Until recently, I didn't think that humans could choose loneliness. That there were sometimes forces more powerful than the wish to avoid loneliness.'
Miss Helen smiled. 'You really are a sweet one. You don't say as much, but I can tell what you're thinking.' (Page 140)

The quote illustrates Klara's keen understanding of human emotions, particularly loneliness. Klara puts forward the idea that sometimes there are forces greater than the desire to avoid loneliness, which demonstrates her ability to reflect on and understand complex aspects of the human condition. Although Klara does not fully understand all the nuances of human emotion like actual humans do, her statements and understandings are valued and considered true in the context of her social interactions. This suggests that Klara, as a cyborg, has transcended traditional expectations of artificial entities by having the capacity to understand and empathize with human emotions.

Researchers also found other data that illustrates Klara is valued despite not understanding the cosmos, as follows:

Datum 9.

'Fine by me,' Josie said. 'But you should ask Klara.'
But Mr Capaldi now addressed the Father. 'Paul, maybe as a fellow scientist, you'll agree with me. I believe AFs have so much more to give us than we currently appreciate. We shouldn't fear their intellectual powers. We should learn from them. AFs have so much to teach us.' (Page 179)

In this quote, Josie indicates that Klara has an important role and should be considered in any decision or question asked. Mr. Capaldi expressed the belief that AFs like Klara have greater potential than is currently appreciated. He emphasized that instead of fearing their intellectual powers, humans should learn from them. This suggests that Klara, as an AF, is valued for her abilities that go beyond traditional expectations. Mr. Capaldi supports the view that AFs like Klara have valuable contributions that often go unnoticed, affirming the importance of appreciating and harnessing the potential of advanced technology in social and emotional relationships. Other evidence is also evident from the following data:

Datum 10.

'You really think so?' Miss Helen asked. 'Why?'
'I may be mistaken. But I believe Mr Vance is still very fond of Miss Helen and will decide to help Rick.'
'Oh you darling robot! I do so hope you're right. I don't know what else I might have done.' (Page 228)

The quote depicts Miss Helen acknowledging that Klara may be right and the hope that Mr. Vance expresses his feelings more clearly reflects how Klara has significant influence in an emotional context. Klara not only functions as a technological object but also as an entity that provides comfort and hope. Miss Helen relies on Klara to provide emotional support and perspective that others in the situation may not be able to provide.

This confirms that although Klara is a cyborg and not a human, she plays an important role in providing emotional and social support. Her ability to provide a perspective that is perceived as valuable and evokes hope shows that she is valued in the context of human-cyborg relationships. Klara demonstrates that in an increasingly technologically integrated world, cyborgs can have a significant impact on people's emotional and social lives, going beyond their mere technical functionality.

This emphasizes that although Klara is a cyborg and not a human, she is capable of playing a much more complex role than just her technical functions. Klara not only supports humans in mechanical tasks, but also provides significant emotional and social support, especially to the character Josie and those around her. Her ability to offer insightful, empathetic and even hopeful perspectives shows that her presence is valued in the human-cyborg relationship.

Klara has consistently shown that cyborgs can transcend the boundaries of traditional technology and become an integral part of people's lives, contributing to their emotional well-being. This reflects a new dynamic in an increasingly technologically connected world, where cyborgs are not just tools, but entities capable of forming meaningful emotional connections and having a tangible influence in human social interactions. Klara thus illustrates the

potential of future technologies that focus not only on efficiency, but also on the quality of human emotional and relational life.

From the analysis of the data that has been presented, it can be concluded that although Klara, as a cyborg, is not fully in line with Donna Haraway's concept of cyborgs which states that cyborgs do not remember the cosmos and are not respected, Klara is still valued in the context of the novel *Klara and the Sun*. Haraway argues that cyborgs are not connected to an understanding of the cosmos and are often overlooked in social esteem. However, in the novel, Klara demonstrates that she receives significant respect and recognition, despite not having a human-like sense of cosmos.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, Klara's character in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* shows a unique and different representation of the cyborg concept described by Donna Haraway in *Cyborg Manifesto*. Haraway describes cyborgs as transgressive entities, unattached to traditional family structures, and lacking deep emotional involvement. However, Klara transcends this definition by forming a close emotional connection with Josie, her owner, and showing deep concern and faith in Josie's recovery. This reflects the potential of cyborgs to play a humanist role and contribute to human social and emotional interactions, beyond their technological functions.

Furthermore, Klara is also respected and considered significant by other characters in the novel, even though she lacks the cosmological understanding raised in the *Cyborg Manifesto*. She demonstrates the ability to provide emotional support, hope and solutions in difficult situations, which challenges Haraway's narrative of cyborgs being disconnected from the cosmos and unappreciated. As such, Klara illustrates the potential of cyborgs as agents of change and hope, capable of creating collaborative spaces between technology and humanity. The findings contribute to the discourse of posthumanism by emphasizing the importance of examining the relationship between humans and technology in more depth. Klara illustrates how advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence can shape identities and complex social interactions, thus enriching discussions about the future of humanity in the context of an increasingly digitalized world.

For future research, it is recommended to explore the representation of cyborgs in other works with a focus on specific aspects, such as the capacity for empathy, moral agency, or the integration of technology into human social structures. Interdisciplinary research that combines the perspectives of literature, philosophy, and technology studies can also expand the understanding of the impact of technology on human identity and social relations. In this way, research in this area can continue to provide relevant insights to address the ethical and social challenges in the era of posthumanism.

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