

Humane Artificial Intelligence In Kazuo Ishiguro's "Klara And The Sun"

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Abstract

Science fiction is the genre of modern speculative fiction that deals with techno-scientific changes and developments in the society where the sources are taken from the real world scientific innovations. It was introduced by the English novelist Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley in 1818 that specializes the interconnectedness of literature between science and technology by exploring the themes of quest for knowledge and fanatical ambition. The philosophical literary theory of Posthumanism emphasizes the presence of non-human entities like cyborgs or superhumans or artificial intelligence by describing the condition of our present and future world with the convergence of humans and technology. Kazuo Ishiguro focuses the futuristic world by emphasizing how artificially intelligent and solar powered humanoid provides an exemplary companionship to the genetically modified children in his captivating novel, "Klara And The Sun". This thesis critically examines the humanistic emotions and qualities of AI that is beneficial to the healthcare industry and how AI appreciate nature more than the humans even though they are the product of industrialized human society.

Keywords

Genetic Engineering, Mechanical future, Posthuman humanity, Metamodernism

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Literature is the artistic representation of life through the medium of language related to the ideas and feelings of the people whether it is a truth or a product of imagination. It is the embodiment of different forms of human experiences about a nation's traditions, customs and cultural patterns. Such experiences are fashioned into the various forms of expressive literary art with insightful aesthetic excellence.

Science Fiction deals with the futuristic concepts of advanced science and technology, parallel universe, time travel, space exploration and extraterrestrial life. The American author Hugo Gernsback popularized the term science fiction in 1920. The potential consequences of scientific, social and technological innovations are explored in science fiction. Ihab Hassan was first coined the term posthumanism in 1977 which is rapidly developing in the 21st century contemporary literature.

The ideologies of post humanism empower the contemporary scientific technologies that enhances the human intellectual, physical, psychological capabilities in order to achieve the 'posthuman future'. As quoted by Ihab Hassan, "The postmodern man may not be the same homosapien. Will AI supersede the brain, rectify or extend it?. Post humans are the chilling obsolescence of the human brain", he argues that the potential enhancement of man or humanism is seen with the rise of machine or Posthumanism by the technological developments in this contemporary modern world.

Kazuo Ishiguro is the Japanese – British author who was critically acclaimed in the contemporary literary world. He was born in Nagasaki in Japan on 8th November, 1954 and

migrated to England with his family when he was at the age of five. His nine novels have earned him many prominence throughout the world and his works have been translated into fifty languages. He had won Noble Prize in literature in 2017 for uncovering the illusory sense of connection with the world.

"Klara and the Sun" is a dystopian science fiction novel which was published on 2nd March, 2021 by Faber And Faber in England and Alfred A. Knopf in U.S. This novel is the first post novel written by Kazuo Ishiguro which is set in U.S with unspecified future. This novel explores the relationship between human and Artificial Intelligence with the universal theme of love and connection by the ethical implications of advanced technologies. This novel is considered as New York Times Best Seller in March, 2021 and it is praised 'Daily Mirror' by quoting, "Genuinely moving, even beautiful, in Ishiguro's unostentatious but perfectly judged novel".

Kazuo Ishiguro puts forth the vision of the technological future robotics by portraying the artificial intelligence as a blend of biological and mechanical mankind to explore the relationships in the techno scientific society. He employed an over-articulated style in the narrative description of this novel that inherently centered with various natural ellipses about the memory and consciousness of the AI.

The tone of the retrospective narration of the non-human AI gained credibility with sociological interests and realism of the story. The society presented in Klara and the Sun has made a vast development in the field of artificial intelligence, robotics and genetic engineering. The expository dialogues are made prominent in this novel that underscores the contem-

porary theme and concept of the Human-Robot relationships in the world. The vision of AI as a posthuman withstands contemporary aestheticism by critical maneuvers. This research paper aims to explore the concepts of help of the robotics in the healthcare industry and love of the robotics towards nature than that of human beings.

Human genetic engineering is the manipulation of genes or DNA of an organism using technology. Ishiguro emphasized the cusp of enhancement revolution with the convergence of the recent scientific developments in the areas of nanotechnology, Biotechnology, information technology and cognitive science that improves the health and quality of human life. As Nicholas Agar of Victoria University quoted " We are no longer living in a time when we can say we either want to enhance or we don't. We are already living in an age of enhancement" , Ishiguro significantly examined the knowledge between people and environment with the techniques of genetic augmentation of the living beings that deliberately comprehend the abilities of the individual in personal and societal levels.

Josie Arthur , a 14 and a half years old young and ailing girl lives with Chrissie Arthur, her mother and Melania, her housemaid in the rural area of the United States who is genetically engineered or uplifted to boost her intelligence and academic performance. She is a kind and intelligent girl who walks with a noticeable limp and suffers from a mysterious chronic illness that sometimes became evident for the fear of her death. It is later revealed later that Josie's illness is a result of her mom's decision to have her lifted which is a mysterious procedure and a prerequisite for most of the colleges that are intended to make children smarter.

The uncertain life of the uplifted beings are evident in the fact that the illness of Josie and her circumstances of loneliness depict the future which will consider the importance of prosperity than that of mental and physical health of the children. Artificial Intelligence become an important area of research in almost every field such as engineering, science, education, medicine, business, accounting, finance, marketing, economics and law by the 21st century.

This exchange of understanding of Klara shows her humanity as she is rightly deserved to be an AF for lonely children. Various models of AI like B2, B3 and MY3 seems that the appearance, ability and consciousness of the robots differs from each other for the development of various fields of industry. Many uplifted children who was sincerely finding for an apt AF in the busy street shows that uplifted children cannot survive without assistance and so the sale of robots would become a leading trade in the near future with various models and tremendous facilities for the welfare of the society.

Cootings Machine is a construction vehicle or street repairing machine used to rip up the road that spews large clouds of smoke by ultimately blocking out the patterns of the sun. Klara wanted to dismantle the road resurfacing equipment by introducing the PEG 9 solution to it that could damage the internal workings of the machine. Klara said, "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"(Ishiguro 273). The PEG-9 solution was found in the brain of Klara just behind her ears and she decided to part with half of her PEG-9 solution eventhough it will affect her cognitive functionality.

Just a small incision. Below the ear, Either ear would do. We'd require a tool, something with a sharp point or edge. We need only to pierce the outer layer. Beyond that, well, there should be a small valve I can loosen, then tighten back again with my fingers. (Ishiguro 227).

The presence of Cootings Machine at most of the places in the big city indicates the polluted and polluting environment of the world. The self-sacrificing attribute of Klara is proven when she came forward to destroy the machine for the welfare of the society by sacrificing the fluid necessary for her survival. The non-human Klara, an Artificial Intelligence considered the Artificial Cootings Machine as an enemy to the sun which is her deity. The irony in this science fiction novel is highlighted with the concept of environmentalism when the man-made and humanistic Klara worships and saves nature with the intention of creating a pure world without pollution than that of the industrialized human beings.

Klara is very good at observing and went on learning about the outside most of her days through the window display of the store where she is exposed to extraordinary nourishments of the sun. Ishiguro highlights the importance of human connection through the minor subplot of the reunion of the aged couple by emphasizing the fundamental idea that love is the remedy for damaging effects of isolation and loneliness. The reuniting moment of the aged couple made the non-human protagonist to grasp the human emotions of loss and wonders that indicates AI is about to become emotionally aware in the society. Affective computing is one of the technological developments of AI that enabled robots to display emotions through the sensor systems capable of recognizing, interpreting and simulating the spectrum of human emotions as they are the cornerstone of human existence. Ishiguro emphasizes the fact that the future will involve more collaboration between AI and human creativity with respect to the universal language of human emotions.

The extraordinary and sophisticated observational ability of Klara with her unique qualities had the appetite for observing and learning. Klara can be considered as a prototype human who speculate, extrapolate and worship natural elements based on direct observation. Klara can grasp and interpret the emotions of the human beings as she can analyze the wrinkled instant around a women's eyes denote a smile or distrust.

The goal of Klara to keep Josie happy and safe in all the situations shows that robots can possibly take the place of humans when it comes to the matters of love and care that are bound with human emotions. Klara was parted from Rosa

and lives with Josie at beautiful home in the outskirts of the town. At some instances, Klara might act like Josie and fulfill the needs if her mother. Melania often tried to shorten the interactions between Klara and Josie but it never happened. Ishiguro's representation of mother's face that overflow with kindness towards Josie eventhough tensed and hurried every morning shows the unchanging universal love of the parents towards their offsprings.

Ishiguro appreciated the function of aesthetic nature by representing sun as a metaphor for the openness of soul with love throughout the globe with strict limits. The beautiful narration about the sunset expresses that the eternal beauty of nature is the source of joy as it never fades away. Sunrise and sunset are one of the fundamental factors for the existence of human beings in the world. The nourishment of the sun is the reason behind Klara's sense of hope and agency.

Ishiguro portrayed the process of genetic engineering which is presumably costly and is essential for getting into most of the colleges for higher education. Parents who can afford it have their children "lifted," or genetically modified to enable them to qualify for university. The serious competition to grasp the chances of higher education highlights the importance of education through direct or virtual classes. Josie attends virtual class and Rick attends direct class as both are teenagers, Ishiguro insists the priceless value of quality education with prosperous health as it is essential for each and every individual in this world.

The destructive nature of the angry bulls and Klara's fear of it are highlighted on contrast to the kindness of Sheep mentioned in this novel. The anger out of discrimination, betrayal, and the fear of being replaced by a better AF became the foundation of the bull's ferocious figure. Klara's nature of kindness and maturity is highlighted by the symbolic representation of tranquility of sheep. Ishiguro represented bull for the symbol of anger, frustration and the desire for human love where sheep represented for the symbol of patience and kindness that were common in the life of all the individual including AF as it has the knowledge and ability endowed with technology and the capability of understanding emotional complexity of the people.

The Sun was pouring his nourishment into the buildings,
and when I looked over to the spot
where Beggar Man and the dog had died,
I saw they weren't dead at all—
that a special kind of nourishment from the Sun had saved
them.
(Ishiguro 38)

As the Sun gets near, she forms words in her thoughts and asks the Sun to make Josie better, just like the Sun did for the Beggar Man and the dog. She apologizes to the Sun if her request seems selfish in this fast-moving artificial world. Klara wanted to have a pact with the sun to improve Josie's health by her patterns of nourishment. Klara is convinced

that the exposure to the sun would help to cure Josie of the mysterious illness. She endows the sun with divine energy and visits a barn which is almost like a pilgrimage place to make emotional pleas to the setting sun for Josie's recovery. Even though Klara is an artificial robot, she has the unwavering belief in the power and kindness of the sun with the same human propensities to pray and bargain with the gods. The sun's symbolic role in the narrative becomes the crucial aspect of Ishiguro's exploration as it depicts the social disconnect of the world with the techno scientific developments and the natural life-giving source for the artificial robot. The sun represents the metaphorical bridge between the natural and the artificial phenomena emphasizing the profound impact of technological evolution with the perceptions of meta modern world. Klara aligns the human inclination to trust in science as the sun becomes the driving force of the human beings as she influences the thoughts, feelings and daily activities. The significance in the metaphorical representation of the sun sheds light to the major irony in this novel about the appreciation of nature from the artificial intelligence or the non-human protagonist than that of the modernized human beings in this world.

The captivating and thought-provoking exploration at the intersection of artificial intelligence and nature by reinforcing Klara's efficacy of her actions with the nourishment's of the sun. Ishiguro introduces the unique perspective about the artificial Klara's existence that intricately linked to the natural Sun, serving not only as the source of energy but also as a metaphorical symbol of divinity that extends beyond her artificial nature by exploring the evolving relationship between humanity and technology. This novel suggests that the Sun's influence extends beyond Klara's beliefs as witnessed in Josie's miraculous recovery on a bright morning following Klara's plea to spare her. This incident underscores the Sun's role as a catalyst for positive change in the story, emphasizing the novel's broader theme of humanity's growing disconnection from the natural world. Chrissie asked Klara about her opinion of human heart and hanged on the hope that his daughter cannot be replaced by a machine obscurely. Chrissie discussed the unique individuality of the human beings,

Do you believe in the human heart?
I don't mean simply the organ, obviously. I am speaking in
the poetic
sense. The human heart. Do you think there is such a thing?
Something that makes each of us special and individual?
In order to truly learn Josie, you'd have to learn not only her
mannerisms But what's deeply inside her? Wouldn't you have
to learn her
heart? (Ishiguro 218)

Klara believed in her capacity to master Josie's heart and provide the best way to help Josie survive in this world. The expectations for the replacement of robot in the place of daugh-

ter after the death of Josie is the main turning point in this novel. The technoscientific developments make everything possible through the mechanical system in this metamodern era that elevates the multidimensional life of the human beings.

On the same dark cloudy afternoon, Klara noticed the sudden clearance of the dark clouds and the sunshine pouring through Josie's window where the sun poured its special nourishment to protect Josie. The human quality of belief of the humans is displayed by Klara more or equivalent of the human beings. The consequences of technologized rationality are portrayed in this novel with the characters of Josie and Rick. Rick was left uncertain about his future as he was not engaged in the society's technological development that means he fundamentally "doesn't have the society"(128). Rick and Josie grew apart and separated from each other as Rick was not lifted and unable to enter Atlas Brookings.

Josie started to attend college and thanked Klara at the time of departure for her remarkable service. It was their last meeting and Josie said, "I guess you may not be here when I get back. You've been just great, Klara" (Ishiguro 301). Mr. Capaldi proceeded his project about introspecting the robots where Chrissie is unconcerned about the robot clone of Josie as she had a miraculous recovery in her life. Klara had a dignified end of her living by "slow fade" in the yard where she recalls her memories in her head.

The literary theory of Posthumanism is applicable to this novel when Klara is flourished at her objective when she expresses, "I believe I gave a good service and prevented Josie from being lonely". After witnessing and observing the humans with all their virtues and vices, she proceeded herself as a major source of hope for Josie's recovery and survival the made possible by her intuition. The character of Rick adds depth to the novel regarding social issues where he and Klara form a close bond as they both navigate the challenges of being "unlifted" in a world that values genetic enhancement. Ishiguro is a master in subverting the traditional genre conventions.

Klara is programmed for her servility to the lonely children. She is humanized for her loyalty, caring nature and empathy including her journey of self-discovery her unwavering devotion to Josie, her observations and interpretations of the world provide a unique perspective on human behavior and emotions. The philosophical theory of Posthumanism describes the condition of our present and future world by the convergence of humans and technologies. The most interesting aspect of "Klara and the Sun" is when Ishiguro emphasizes the human beings to think about the mortal life and the ethical decisions that one has to decide in the advance of science and technology.

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