

# From Flesh to Code: The Post Human Subject in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* and *Klara and The Sun*

OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 13

Special Issue: 1

Month: August

Year: 2025

P-ISSN: 2321-788X

E-ISSN: 2582-0397

Citation:

Kalaivani, G. "From Flesh to Code: The Post Human Subject in Kazuo Ishiguro's and Klara and the Sun." *Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities*, vol. 13, no. S1, 2025, pp. 37–40.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/sijash.v13iS1i1-Aug.9566>

**Dr. G. Kalaivani**

*Assistant Professor of English*

*Sourashtra College, Pasumalai, Madurai, Tamil Nadu*

## Abstract

*The world of literature has gone through numerous recorded periods since the era of ancient times. The intervention of AI and other similar machines is the last threat to the true meaning of authorship and the creations. It is this necessity that guides to a serious examination of how literature captures the evolving definitions of what it refers to be human in the Gen Z era, i.e. in an era perpetuated by biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and digital shifts. The 21 st century fiction written in fiction is mainly driven by tech-renaissance. It is argued that chatbots, fembots, and robots are shaking in all the spheres of human brain and its functioning. The combination of human emotion to the machine creates anthropomorphized writers with unbelievable creativity. In the post-humanist context, such authors may as well be regarded as the competitors of the substitution of human writers or even as a form of imitation. The paper looks into the continuation of literature onto the highway of transition of a concrete identity of human beings to a post-human identity through the different incarnations of AI, cyborgs, and clones, as exemplified in the works of Kazuo Ishiguro, that is, and Klara and the Sun.*

**Keywords:** Gen Z, Tech –Renaissance, Anthropomorphized, Chatbots, Fembots, Cyborgs

Literature turns itself into an excellent arena of negotiating the tensions between embodiment and abstraction, nature and technology, emotion and logic. Artificial intelligence and posthumanism have impacts on the narrative voice, authorship, even the role of the readership; in reality, their influence will trickle down to incarnate these themes of so much talk. As AI poetry and fiction can provide us with consciousness, one will even question whether we need to debate issues of originality, creativity, and human authorization. Finally, instrumentalism of the post humanist and AI themes in literature gives an opportunity to authors and readers to address pressing philosophical and existential questions on the continued presence of technology in their lives. It is, in a less obvious manner, a representation of both modern fears in projecting conceivable two alternatives-an utopian one and a very ominous one-that would permanently shift the parameters of human-being in the modern world that we know so well today.

Artificial intelligence and post-humanism have transformed the nature of modern literature. Many of these themes are not just the objects of science fiction, but they permeate the popular story lines,

and through them they challenge the essence of humanity, identity and more. In other words, post humanism offers a theoretical viaticum to a critique of anthropocentrism: it puts the human identity to ashes on the principles of rationality, autonomy, and body integrity, which were and are still deeply ingrained in the Enlightenment. Literature replied with offering new topologies of the human subject engaged in interaction with machines, networks, synthetic bodies, and algorithmic intelligence. In fictional writing, AI is defined as the zone where moral issues, humanity, and affectivity are explored.

In most cases, it is the awakening of mankind that Kazuo Ishiguro suggests in when he asserts that the human traits could be extended to the fictional and artificial human lives, the ones that could be produced in the laboratory. But not necessarily people naturally born. But here will really foreshadow a more complicated theme. Ishiguro has earned a right to discuss the worth of experiences and qualities that are inherent to the life of humans like the need of the hero to hope by demonstrating what clones think and dream about. The feelings of love, resentment, sadness, and joy of the Hailsham future that is beyond their predetermination (most of them become carers, after which they donate organs until they die) are profound, and something that the normal people are probably used to consider the matter of course.

The conflicting relations in are internal, occurring between Kathy, Tommy and Ruth who are striving to sustain hope and are seeking love in an international which has already proclaimed their destiny. The fact that they can fantasize about a future, but unimaginable, underscores the tragic disparity between their great emotional desires and the grim reality they live in. The inward conflict which they revel in is a mediocre worry between innocent aspirations, and the callous perceptions that the latter may never be realized true to themselves. This internal conflict, however, both with themselves and with each other, makes them indulge in all the extremities of human feeling and possibility.

The climax of the story is when Kathy who is studying at Hailsham learns about the existence of an audiotape containing the music of the song titled “. The lyrics can suggest to her the desperate cry of a mother who no longer wants to be separated with her baby. Holding a pillow and swinging to the music, Kathy fantasizes about living a life of nurturing and motherhood, which she can never remain. This is interrupted when Madame sees her and begins off evolved to cry a silent recognition of the tragedy of the misplaced future of Kathy. Ishiguro uses this scene to highlight the insatiable urge to desire, despite the apparent lack of prospects of uncovering the said desire.

The emerging movement begins to disseminate as the narrative goes on as the memories of Kathy show the emotional conflict of each character. The frequent tantrums of Tommy are the signs of a sensitive soul that can not overcome himself to a predetermined existence through other people. His friendship with Kathy grows stronger since they begin to question the motive behind Madame gallery since they always wake up to the truth in their exploitation. In the appraisal, Ruth attempts to fit in the demands of the arena through rejection of the truth. She sticks with the fixation over the imaginary future such as the illusion of running in a workplace she saw in a magazine because she understands in the depths of her mind that this could not happen to a person like her. At the Cottages, the clones start to find out with more relationships, which involve love and desire. Kathy secretly likes Tommy, and Tommy remains caught up with Ruth and does not know how to deal with their complicated relationship. These characters act like they are against melancholy and they are indulging in what seems to be a heroic refusal to acknowledge the reality of their lives. The haunting paradox of their story is that it is certain to know death yet it is reaching an accomplishment to life.

The moral and emotional richness of those clones is what makes the depiction of Ishiguro so touching. To a certain extent, they appear even more humane, even more heroic than actual humans.

Kathy and Tommy confront Madame and Miss Emily to ask that they defer their donations but they are given an icy cold rejection. Miss Emily acknowledges that there were no deferrals at all and displays her own disgust towards the Hailsham college students. The gap between humans and clones is made clear. But Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth certainly do not hate their guardians or their creators in particular, but rather they must have learned to live silently with the looming loss.

In the choice made in the story, Kathy and Tommy at last come to the truth: their love will not help them. Their emotional experience of their lives, which is characterized through the fear of clinging to hope and having to face fate comes to an end in resignation. The desperate cries of Tommy to the heavens and the restrained sorrow of Kathy are the expressions of the human face of sorrow. This is a sign of silent lamentation as she loses her popularity with her fate. In the end, the characters will turn into defiant dreamers and find the peace of having the mortality.

In *Klara and the Sun* Ishiguro examines the posthuman by making Klara, an Artificial Friend (AF) serve as a child-tending machine, which consumes solar energy to operate. Although it is not the most technologically enhanced version in the store today, the high quality of powers of observation Klara possesses makes her stand out. Through the shop window, she observes the arena pass through and adores the Sun as a source of food and healing. One day she witnesses the returned death of a respectably dead beggar and this makes her belief stronger in the divine benevolence of the Sun. Klara is later bought through Josie, a terminally ill teenager that has gone through a genetic enhancement procedure also known as lifting. This system, which was on the one hand intended to make her future success stable, has made her weak physically. Josie has a friendly neighbor Rick, who is no longer lifted, and is shunned by upper academic and social classes. In spite of those obstacles, Josie and Rick still have a vision of a mutual future. Klara, who is now a member of the household of Josie, strives to identify the manner of how to guide her to perfection.

As Klara is increasingly integrated into the family, she gets to know of this disturbing scheme: Josie and her mother, together with a weird engineer called Mr. Capaldi are making an AF copy of Josie just in case she passes away. Klara begins to understand that she can be anticipated to come to be Josie supposing her identity and memories to fill the emotional gap. However, the real desire of Klara is to keep the real Josie alive. She does not want to participate in the substitute program and as a substitute, she calls the Sun asking to get a miracle. As part of her attempt to impress the Sun, Klara constructs a Cootings Machine - a device that emits pollution and which she feels is offending the Sun. This effort may appear hopeless but she cannot lose faith. One day, when it is daylight on the horizon, Josie is surprisingly improved. Rick, who is usually the cynic, even confesses that her recovery seems associated with the sunshine. Klara takes this to mean the kind nature of the Sun and she believes her prayers were answered.

When she is older and when Josie goes up to university, she becomes very distant to each Rick and Klara. Klara is eventually taken to the Yard, where old AFs are on watch where they can cease. Despite the fact that her body is dying, Klara is still happy material and she spends her final days with her memories. The first time the Manager visits her one closing time, Klara tells her about how kind Sun is to Josie. The Manager kindly recognizes the devotion and the intelligence of Klara.

## Conclusion

In his novels *Never Let Me Go* and *Klara and the Sun*, Kazuo Ishiguro offers a deep reflection on the changing face of humanity in the world that is more technologically influenced by biotechnology and artificial intelligence. Using the accounts of a human clone (Kathy H.) and an artificial robot (Klara), Ishiguro presents the concept of the posthuman subject the creature that undermines the conventional divisions of human identity, emotion and agency. Both *Never Let Me Go* (2005) and *Klara and the Sun* (2021) by Kazuo Ishiguro challenge the unstable boundaries between humanity

and artificiality, but use different approaches to narrative and moral issues. *Never Let Me Go* is an exploration of posthumanism that is situated in a dystopian world of clone society within which Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth have to grapple with love, mortality, and the need to be recognized. It is through the repressed, despondent mood of the novel that the normalization of systemic exploitation is put into perspective in such a way that the internalization of the oppressed becomes a part of their jobs. Ishiguro is not just an attack on the hubris of science but on the ability of humans to find comfort in injustice in the guise of the ordinary. The desire of the clones to art, love and purpose foreshadows the contradiction: they are made to work but they are the most human in their souls. The novel therefore criticizes a world in which the ethical concerns are dominated by the progress and this disposes of the lives that are regarded to be other.

The posthuman manifests itself in the cloned individuals as their lives are fixed to be donor of organs. These clones are emotionally complex, highly moral, and profound in their attachments despite their biological nature, and thus call into question the moral right of denying them all the rights of humanity. Ishiguro makes a subtle critique of society that is commoditizing life in the name of progress and healthcare. In contrast to it, *Klara and the Sun* introduces an artificial character of Klara, who in spite of not having flesh is loyal, perceives, and even has a spiritual feeling. However, in comparison, the *Klara and the Sun* reverses the human subjective outlook to an Artificial Friend (AF), which has an observational, fragmented text, exposing limitations as well as depth of the non-human consciousness. However, in contrast to the clones, who desire to have their humanity acknowledged, Klara represents devotion and understanding despite the artificial construct, indicating that love and sacrifice could be beyond the biological beginnings.

The book is not about a systemic oppression as much as it is about the commodification of the care within individualistic society of posthumans. The minimal style of Ishiguro is used to emphasize the sense of uncertainty: the fact that Klara trusts the Sun as a healing power is shown because she is naive but also because this image is the allegory of the issue of human dependence on technology instead of some spiritual or communal relationships. Reading both novels at once betrays the changing meditation Ishiguro took on what makes a person, with *Never Let Me Go* focusing on the tragedy of human dehumanization when faced with exploitation, and *Klara and the Sun* questioning whether genuine emotional attachment is possible to get out of the artificial and what it implies about the future of human relations.

Her first person narration brings about very interesting questions regarding consciousness, empathy, and programme intelligence boundaries. The ability of Klara to care breaks the stereotypes that people are the only ones who could be deeply felt or make sacrifices. The novels combined can bring the locus of human value to relationality, emotional intelligence and ethical agency. Posthuman subjects created by Ishiguro break the natural versus artificial dichotomy and show a continuum with visible indistinct middle between flesh and code. These works challenge the readers to think over what it is to be a human being in a world where technology not only prolongs the life but also starts to duplicate or even substitute the life. This paper, therefore, discusses how Ishiguro employs speculative fiction in order to reinvent the subjectivity of the posthuman age when the lines of man, machine and clone are being more and more unsteady and morally hot.

## References

1. Bostrom Nick. *Super intelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies*. Oxford University Press, 2014.
2. Dick Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Del Rey, 1996.
3. Huxley Aldous. *Brave New World*. Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2006.
4. Ishiguro Kazuo. *Klara and the Sun*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2021.
5. Orwell George. *Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich*, 1949, 1984.