

Chapter 4

TRANSHUMANISM IN *GHOST IN THE SHELL* (2017)

AND *MAD MAX: FURY ROAD* (2015)

4.1 Ghost in the Shell: A story born in times of crisis

Since the conquest of space and the reconstruction of Hiroshima, robots have never ceased to fill the imagination of mangaka¹ even after the Second World War. *Ghost in the Shell* (2017) was at first a comic strip first published in 1989 and then adapted for the cinema in 1995, and then again in 2017. It has established itself as a pillar of science fiction films. It left an indelible mark on future cyberpunk filmmakers like the Wachowskis² and their Matrix trilogy³, as well as comic book writers.

Titled "*Ghost in the Shell*" in English, the title refers to the riot police, in a hyper-computerized society where the human body is "reinforced" and the police are cyborgs. In this film Major Motoko Kusanagi⁴ is a female cyborg who fights cybercriminals in Section-9⁵, a high-level police unit. The Europeans at Disney distanced themselves from the more blissful Tezuka⁶. In 1995, when Mamoru Mansell released the lively version after several months of hard work, it was a troubled year in Japan, culminating in the Tokyo subway sarin gas attack⁷ and the Kobe earthquake⁸. The 1990s were also a time of political uncertainty, where those responsible were disorganized, powerless and absent in times of crisis. While all this was previously prohibited there was no right to disappoint young readers so a new wave of artists would then revolutionize Japanese fiction. In the 1990s, they moved on to more pessimistic works that dealt with economic, social and personal depression.

"Nihilistic anguish of cosmic horror, philosophical questions deepened in existential crises, bankrupted politics entrenched in the pure dystopia of multi-universes, and the urge to laugh at the dismay of our lives" (Miranda)

The human and robot relationship, the autonomy of the latter and other classic

cyberpunk themes were already there, notably with Isaac Asimov⁹ and Science fiction author Philip K. Dick. It was touched by Masamune Shirow the writer of *Ghost in the Shell*, made famous with the post-apocalyptic manga *Appleseed*. AI fiction was already in rage; but with a graphic twist, Shirow brought something from Asimov's antiquity to the modern era. The power of science fiction is the recycling of elements invented long ago. We all have our bodies, we use it every time and Shirow just manipulated it. In the 1990s, the *Nomad* series appeared in collections such as *Akira* and *Ghost in the Shell*. Shirow stands out for the quality of the design, especially the armoured vehicles and the oval ships which break with the military style, the square facade and the incredible action scenes. Shirow fits huge amounts of junk and cables into very small spaces anywhere.

When they agreed to adapt the manga into *Ghost in the Shell (2017)*, Balfe and Mansell wanted to explain cyberstyle and future. These two men come from different generations; so *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* is a fun action film of tough and beautiful heroines who keeps their identity a secret. The film quietly scatters cultural references without explanation, leaving it up to the viewer to interpret them. With *Ghost in the Shell (2017)*, they contributed to making Japanese animation a cinematographic genre in its own right.

Technically, the film used a perfect blend of traditional animation and digital design that brought the film to life with great success, setting a new standard in the industry that would soon prove profitable both economically and aesthetically. To quote Wong Kin Yuen, "Ghost in the Shell, and Hong Kong's Cityscape Colonial cities can be viewed as the forerunners of what the contemporary capitalist world city would eventually become.... in the colonial and paracolonial societies" (Wong, 1-21)

Ghost in the Shell (2017) is set in a future where people are empowered by cyber devices. Hanka Robotics, the company responsible for most of this development, is secretly developing an artificial "shell" that could house a human brain. Meera Killian, the sole survivor of a cyber-terrorist attack that killed her parents, is chosen for the Cyber Terrorist Project, Public Safety No. 9. Cyber Soldier, led by Hanka Robotics and Ouellet, CEO of Hanka Robotics runs it all.

A year later Mira was promoted to Major in the 9th Public Security Division,

where she worked with Batu and Togusa under Daisuke Aramaki. Meera suffers from hallucinations and struggles to remember her past. However Dr. Ouellet assures that this is only a technical problem. After a counter-terrorism mission, Killian kills Geisha, the robot that was hacked earlier. When he/she -the cyborg- discovers the hacker's name is Kuze, Killian breaks protocol and the AI enters to find answers. The hacker has time to fight back, trapping Killian and the team, severely damaging Batu's eye and Major's body. Enraged, Cutter threatens to shut down Section 9. But the hacker tells Section 9 member Dr. Dalin and kills her. When Mira's team connects this murder to others that have happened before, they manage to find another victim: Ouellet.

Cybernetically repaired and enhanced, Killian and Batu are able to communicate with Kuze through the body of the person they previously attacked. They then manage to track down the hacker and once they arrive at their destination, they find countless human bodies psychically connected to each other to form a temporary communication network. Killian is captured by Kuze, who reveals that he is a failed experiment in the same project Major was involved with. He then asks her to try to remember her past and after freeing her he leaves.

Killian confronts Ouellette about the hacker's revelation. She discovered that 98 test subjects died in front of her during the experiment and she had their memories implanted in her. Ouellet is then ordered to kill Killian, but refuses. Cutter kills the doctor who informs Aramaki and his team of Mira's rebellion and then decides to kill her. Killian follows Ouellet's whereabouts, where she meets a widow who reveals to her that she is the mother of Motoko Kusanagi, a girl who ran away from home a year ago, was arrested and committed suicide. And the widow Killian's real mother, Motoko Kusanagi, is none other than her real name, her real identity, before she was reprogrammed by Hanka Robotics.

During the battle between Major and Cutter, hacker Kuze finds himself an ally in Killian and offers to join Meera in saving his life. Later Kuze is killed and Killian is seriously injured, and Cutter is killed by Aramaki. The next day, Meera recovers and regains her true identity as Motoko. She returns to her mother and works in Section 9.

In this film, Scarlett Johansson plays Mira Killian / Motoko Kusanagi. Motoko is actually Asian in the original manga. It is interesting to note that Sam Yoshida, publicity director for the manga rights company, said he was very happy with the casting of Johansson because it has a "cyberpunk feel" and because he thought she was the perfect actress to play the role of 'spirit' or ghost. The Japanese audiences generally have a very positive opinion of the film and are satisfied with Johansson's performance. Mira is a "shell" artificially created by Killian Motoko and therefore can take any form.

Scarlett Johansson's portrayal of Major is mesmerizing in every way and is very different from *Black Widow* (2021). The famous Marvel character played by Johansson is actually at least for a few years a superhero, and many *Ghost in the Shell* (2017) fans were expecting a similar interpretation. On the other hand, Johansson managed to give us a very different, strong character, but a compelling performance of doubts and questions surrounding the brand atmosphere *Ghost in the Shell* (2017). The only downside to the character of Mira Killian, played by Scarlett Johansson, is that it leaves little room for the secondary characters who are an integral part of the original works. Batu, for example, is Major's best friend and colleague, and his personality is shown throughout the film during the team's missions. The exciting actor Pilou Asbæk still brings a liveliness and a touch of humour that can cut through the serious and philosophical atmosphere of the film. Asbeck claims to have read and re-read the *Ghost in the Shell* manga himself and discovered that "Batau likes pizza and beer" and ironically understood 80% of his personality.

Aramaki, the boss, also receives a lot of attention despite not fully realizing the character's potential. Aramaki, played by Takeshi Kitano, hands out Zen wisdom pills throughout the film, but dislikes shooting enemies with a revolver. Additionally, he is one of the very few people without cybernetic enhancements; it can be called a "ghost", understood as a soul, as opposed to a "shell" of a character. Takeshi Kitano chose this character very carefully; Kitano is indeed an important figure in Japanese culture since he is known as an actor, director, poet, artist and painter. It is therefore a tribute in *Ghost in the Shell* (2017), that contrasting with white artists and other stylistic decisions can turn the work into a commercial product.

Dr. Ouelet is another character worth exploring further. Juliette Binoche, the actress who plays her, accepted the role because she considered Ouelet to be "a scientist who makes a pact with the devil". In fact, we can clearly see that the image of the doctor is a compromise between the stereotype of the "mad scientist" and its opposite. Although she sacrificed so many lives to create Mira, she does not hesitate to make her final choice: kill her creature or sacrifice her. By choosing the latter option, Ouelet only confirms her paranoid notion that she herself is making another sacrifice to survive his most successful experiment. However, people's first impulse is to mourn her death.

Kuze, played by Michael Pitt, deserves a final mention. The actor leaves a whole new rendition that is reminiscent of the original works of *Ghost in the Shell* (2017). In fact, he could have doubted Mira and forced her down a path she would never discover. It blurs the image of the "villain" played by Kuze, but gives a good insight into the philosophical questions raised in *Ghost in the Shell* (2017).

4.2 Human Consciousness in *Ghost in the Shell* (2017)

The purpose of me taking up *Ghost in the Shell* (2017) is to see its resulting effects; to focus on the role of technology in human life, and specifically the limits to which technology can be pushed to preserve our identity. Besides this important theme, *Ghost in the Shell* (2017) is full of philosophical reflections: what makes us human beings? If all of our bodies were replaced by robotic limbs, would we still be human? What is the soul or ghost?

These are the questions asked by Meera Killian, the protagonist of the 2017 action film. However, the film was never a complete copy of the previous works in manga or anime, instead serving as an introduction to the saga of *Ghost in the Shell*. For that reason many of the themes explored in the original are missing from this film, including the focus on setting, technology, and the protagonist. However it suffices for my study on transhumanism as the latter is presented as a tortured soul, torn from her body and her memories, and tries by all means to accept her new identity.

While the original town is decadent and quiet, the 2017 version is chaotic, redundant, bright, filled with billboards and neon lights. The new Japan is changing

very rapidly and technology must adapt to this change as people do it too. So we are talking again about enhancements, about cyborgs, about how to adapt our appearance and our mind to this new reality. But with these new developments come new dangers: we see for example the phenomenon of brain hacking, which allows a hacker to remotely control someone's brain and therefore all their activities.

The main difference between the original works and *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* can be summed up in two main concepts; The former asserts that our identity and humanity resides in our memories (a central theme of manga and other works), while the latter -is an eastern rather than a western approach- based on facts rather than philosophy; *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* is just one of many changes that the general public should appreciate.



Fig. 4. Kuze meets the Major in *Ghost in the Shell (2017)*

Ghost in the Shell (2017) goes beyond technology and is one of those works of science fiction that may well challenge the very concept of humanity. It's an important work in my study because it raises the question of a possible cybernetic soul. Cyborgs aren't just machines; they aren't people either. They represent the future of people connected to information networks. The cyborg is a metaphor for humanity modified by technology. The film's problem isn't whether machines can have souls, but rather how humans can preserve their human nature and their souls in

a hyper-technological society.

What separates robots from humans in *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* is that they have "ghosts". Without necessarily speaking of ghosts, it can be understood as soul; a consciousness. The heroine Motoko Kusanagi; a hybrid of human cells and a mechanical body, constantly doubts her existence, the authenticity of her "soul" and a part of her humanity. *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* is an excerpt from the 1995 anime in which the pirate puppeteer pursued by Kusanagi, a highly advanced artificial intelligence, claims to have become aware of its existence. It is recognized as a form of life because it defines itself as "conscious" and is aware of its existence.

It is precisely one of the central nodes of the whole *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* universe, and to shed light on this problem, Balfe the soundtrack composer invokes mechanistic determinism. The approach is based on the idea that the brain is a mechanism capable of receiving information from the body, processing it and then converting it into an output. Even in cognitive psychology, the brain is associated with an information processor in which all human behaviour can be explained by a set of mental processes and algorithms like a computer processor. According to these views, the mind is connected to the body and the biological functions of the body are created through a series of complex processes. *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* responds that when the mind is displaced, the mind changes, and so does the shell it occupies. Another interesting thing is that computer brains can be hacked by viruses that can damage software or the brain indiscriminately, pointing out that while the mechanical body has no weaknesses, the brain retains its vulnerability: which makes it surrounded by complications. In the words of Paul Ekman,

"When emotional expressions lack a muscular movement that is difficult to make voluntarily, that expression should be less reliable; and those expressions that contain the reliable muscle should be more likely to be trustworthy." (Ekman, 205–221)

We can see another interesting thing in the film where it seems that some androids are born or created with a conscience. But what the work shows is that the soul that emerges from an android is the same that emerges as the complex biological functions of the human body, or it is something entirely unique and different.

Cyborgs in *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* are free to learn, have almost unlimited access to the sea of information that exists on the web, but apparently few stopped following the original programming and later developed their own identities. The line between man and machine becomes even more blurred when a robot penetrating a human cyberbrain is conscious and endowed with a self-awareness that goes beyond simply executing the information contained in the program code. So what Shiro wants to think about is not the potential loss of identity as we know it today, but a call to redefine the idea of identity as fluid and ever-changing.

4.3 The dystopian society in *Ghost in the Shell (2017)*

However, *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* is not a paradoxical vision of human development through technology. Balfe and Mansell approached the film in a way that rules out human consequences and potential threats. The film can often be misunderstood as it shows not being afraid of human development. The film advocates transhumanism and bodily prostheses.

This benevolent view of technology and robots is not unique to the authors of *Ghost in the Shell (2017)*. In Hollywood there is no hostile relationship with the machine. Since the beginning of industrialization it was thought that it would replace man. When a robot helps a human make a decision, it is found that even though the robot is probably right, the human wants to have the last word. So it's moving in the right direction: a transhumanistic future. People today are afraid that the robots will lose control and someday they will be attacked by the robot. But the intervention of robots varies according to society, culture and context.

On the other hand, the perception of robots in Japan is influenced by animism and the belief in yokai¹⁰, which can animate certain household objects. In the Japanese tradition, and long before robots existed, objects endure, especially those that have stood the test of time like an old lantern. The question of aggression never interested the Japanese, the question came with the Cold War. Japanese fiction is not about whether robots are better than humans, but about who we are and where we come from if we are robots. As Dani Cavallaro explains vividly

"Cyberpunk is concurrently concerned with actual and imaginary metamorphoses of biological organisms into machines, and of

mechanical apparatuses into living entities. Its recurring representation of human beings hooked up to digital matrices vividly recalls the envatted brain activated by electric stimuli, which Hilary Putnam has theorized in the context of contemporary epistemology. At the same time, cyberpunk imaginatively raises the same epistemological questions instigated by Putnam. These concern the cognitive processes associated with the collusion of human and mechanical creatures, and related metaphysical and ethical issues spawned by such processes. As a philosophical trope, the brain in a vat would appear to pivot on the notion of a disembodied subject consisting of sheer mentation. However, literary and cinematic interpretations of the image in cyberpunk persistently foreground the obdurate materiality of the flesh—often in its most grisly and grotesque incarnations." (Cavallaro, 287)

The telecommunications revolution was so widely anticipated by the works of cyberpunk that the genre is regularly considered predestined. While the internet has its roots, *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* is not far from that experience. *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* is specifically all about networks, hyperlinks and the constant connection of creatures, and as such.

This film offers a journey to a distant future where cybernetic implants expand human capabilities. Human development is the central to the film's plot. *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* brings the protagonist back to the theme of human evolution; to cybernetic systems that enhance the abilities of the heroes of the film. 'Major', played masterfully by Scarlett Johansson, one of the operational members of Section 9's task force, is more than an advanced human being: a perfect cyborg, a fighting machine that can skilfully exploit its points like speed and power. The only human aspect that distinguishes the major is the brain, stolen from the original biological body that was misused after the accident. Dr. Huell (Juliette Binoche) is the perfect fusion of the human and robotic universe. The symbolic dimension reveals to us that in the cyborg, the software and the command centre is the man -metaphorically- while the hardware is entrusted to robotics, which is technology. The same dynamics are repeated at the moment of the close union of the brain with the robot body. Dr.

Welle is still at the forefront of surgery, entrusting the given performance to the surgical precision of the respective automatic organs, while the given execution depends on the precision.

To ensure all this, Public Safety Section 9, a counter-terrorism IT organization managed by Hanka Robotics, is leading the way in addressing the critical challenges ahead. Remarkably, the investigation of the mysterious Kuze (played by Michael Pitt) anchors the plot. A cyberhacker who can invade the mind with murderous intent, undermines Major's defences between memories and mapping the present. This film deals with a humanity that welcomes and embraces technology, especially in its urban habitats. The connection between our bodies and our technology cannot function unless we are immersed in the context of an artificial landscape where atoms and bits help create a unique environment rich in information and representations. The environment in *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* suggests a cyberpunk aesthetic, where the architecture can take up all the space necessary for vertical growth. Towers and skyscrapers dominate everything else, while billboard lights illuminate the scene, highlighting famous Eastern and Western brands such as Adidas, Honda, and Konami. *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* questions what remains of human beings and the assemblage of humanity when the human and the machine collide and elide their limit of differentiation. It will be shown how the film's predilection for technology in its narrative content and technological rationalism in its wider conceptual embedding reconstructs humanity but rejects the metaphysical valuation of humanity through notions of dignity, taboo, respect, affect, and so forth by connecting this twin problematic of ontological difference and metaphysical poverty to the ontological philosophy of Martin Heidegger and psychoanalytic philosophy of Slavoj Žižek (Hourigan, 51).

In addition to physical characters, there is a widespread presence of holograms that can be seen with the naked eye and without technical support. The film offers an opportunity to spark a good discussion about possible new trends in marketing, with more or lesser-known brands trying to compete for the most expensive thing on the market: attention. And that is possible today and increasingly in the near future because of the fascinating technologies such as augmented reality, virtual reality and holograms that can literally destroy the distinction between the physical world and

the digital world. It arouses curiosity, interest and pleasure through fascinating and completely unique experiences.

Most importantly, the humanity of the mind in the shell integrates technology into its body, creating a shell that is strong and hard-wearing, yet allows for quick and agile movements. Technology is no longer just an extension of our bodies, but completely replaces our biological container. With the cybernetic eye of Batu (Pilou Asbæk), implanted by special surgery and able to generate x-ray vision, we can see that Major Meera stands at the crossroads set by Kuze: she will remain transhuman or completely self-destruct. Meera often finds herself in front of a mirror, trying to recognize herself and shed light on her dark memories, which return after a brief setback. She touches her skin and tries to understand her own being.

Ghost in the Shell (2017) is a fictional universe where we are immersed in a 21st century science fiction, so high-tech and complex that it sometimes seems too predated and decadent, characterized by the presence of elements that contribute to the cyberpunk and post-cyberpunk atmosphere. It is a world in which robotics and nanomachines have enabled hybridization between humans and cyborgs, where it is possible to replace the biological body with a mechanical body, in which the individual's consciousness and memory; is represented by 'ghosts'. Through the subject's new cybernetic brain, a person can access the web and large amounts of information using just the will to think. They can manipulate their memory, delete and overwrite certain parts at will which we humans try to do sometimes: trying to forget bitter memories.

Shiro's work is rooted in transhumanism. It is a cultural movement that aims to overcome the biological limits imposed by biology, such as aging, through the hybridization of human beings through technological and scientific advances. Shiro's view is that humanity must be defeated using cognitive science and technology. According to this view, the spirit can be freely removed from our body and transplanted into an artificial body. This perspective is essentially linked to Cartesian dualism¹¹. Descartes divides reality into *res extensa*, or extended substance, which extends through space; and *res cogitans*, or thinking substance, which has no extension in space. In *Ghost in the Shell (2017)*, the soul that Descartes speaks of will be the "mind", which can be defined as human consciousness, and is the only

protection for man, since the body, the armour, is used in the will and therefore everywhere . So when people hybridize their bodies with cyborg bodies, they are still human because the mind is separate from the body.

4.4 Transhumanism: The ‘ghost’ in another shell

When a movie like *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* is shown, many people's first thought is that these things are really going to happen in the future. It's like electricity being discovered and initially dismissed as potentially dangerous, or the internet being mocked and declared the most useless invention of the century. In short it must be admitted that the human brain is sensitive to new things. Today, however, we take for granted many things that did not exist a few decades ago, such as the fact that there are no flying machines; Therefore, dealing with technology should not be characterized by fear or doubt, but by trust and openness to possibilities. If we were to live in a reality like *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* or any other science fiction, the process would be slower and we would have more time to get used to it.

In this spirit, I propose to reflect on the time in which we lived, the Cambrian era of machines, from the simple to the complex. There is no doubt that science works to be more present in our lives and to help us in various tasks. So when we ask the cloud-based voice service called Echo Dot¹² to turn off the lights or cook in the microwave, we know it's bound to be slow but it is an inevitable progression.

The film also familiarizes us with biohacking. Biohacking is a set of exercises and techniques to improve the body, performance and health. The term theoretically formulated in the 1980s, began to spread in 2005, and its name is a combination of the words "biology" and "hacking", clearly referring to the practice of "hacking" our body and our biology. Examples of biohacking are making and taking mind-altering substances, tracking our activities with computing equipment and biochips, health and DNA sequencing, etc.

We are also talking not only about scientists but ordinary people trying to improve and strengthen their bodies by implanting cybernetic devices to encourage body changes and transhumanism. Transhumanism is a cultural movement that advocates scientific and technological breakthroughs and advances of all kinds, including the most controversial of human genetic engineering, cryonics and

artificial intelligence applied to humans; in the face of all this future, technology will hopefully eliminate all diseases, disabilities and undesirable human conditions.

Ghost in the Shell (2017) also deals with Neuralink, one of the most important examples of transhumanism. Founded by Elon Musk, there is a company that develops implantable neural interfaces and focuses on putting our brains in direct communication with technology. Musk founded this company because that person can be more efficient, useful, and smarter than us. Musk says it's better to develop technology that people can use personally rather than technology that supports them and "cares about understanding the universe... Hopefully there's more good than harm," (Duffy and Maruf, 2023)

However, neuralink's current focus has nothing to do with Shell's futuristic spirit; the company's mission is to help people with brain damage. The technical interface designed by Musk is called "Neural Lace"; an ultra-thin network injected into the skull to form a network of electrodes capable of monitoring brain activity, creating a symbiosis between brain and technology. "Elon Musk's recent paper on his innovative Neuralink technology gives us a glimpse into the next generation of direct to consumer (DTC) neuro-technologies, even beyond the current state of the art." (Tal, 187). In the future, people will -hopefully- be able to upload or download any information directly from their computer through this network. For example, consider Neo from *The Matrix*, who can learn kung fu by activating programs. In this way technology can help with every kind of neurological disorders and brain injuries.

Going back to *Ghost in the Shell (2017)*, I would highly recommend it for anyone who wants to do it. These shells with ghosts are superhuman and most necessary for anyone willing to survive in a dystopian world. These cyborgs have superhuman abilities such as genetics, implantable electronics and more. These superhuman robots carry concepts like human development, longevity, and biohacking. In such films we see the use of certain therapies or interventions to improve the human body and quality of life and to cure or not to cure diseases leaving it as a sort of punishment. It is not just about increasing life expectancy; it improves and enlarges our bodies: prostheses, connecting the human brain to computers and robots, and improving our quality of life through pharmaceutical

supplements or neural stimulation. The intimate technology revolution has led to a new wave of technological applications, most of which are intimate technologies capable of monitoring, analysing and influencing our bodies and behaviours in different ways.

4.5 Types of H+ and the Clone alter ego

There are different forms of being a transhuman. The augmentations are varied. Some of them are:

- a. Physical Capacity: Increase in strength, speed, endurance, or mobility;
- b. Health: a longer, healthier and pain-free life;
- c. Cognitive development: Increase in intelligence, in concentration or in memory;
- d. Emotional: increasingly recognizes and expresses feelings;
- e. Moral: having more empathy and compassion;
- f. Spiritual: has a greater sense of purpose and meaning;
- g. Sensory Awareness: Enhanced vision or additional sensory abilities such as bats and their ability to use echolocation.

When IVF, 'in vitro fertilization' was first introduced, it caused a lot of controversy. Today, however, it is quite socially acceptable. PGD, Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis, goes further than artificial insemination. PGD is the genetic profiling of embryos before implantation to detect genetic abnormalities. Embryos that show no genetic abnormalities during this examination are placed in the uterus. Designing the unborn is one of the scientific breakthroughs that would allow us to "create" or "engineer" humans. By this technique, we can modify our genes. It can help prevent genetic diseases, and can also alter certain personality traits, such as: better immune system, greater intelligence, or greater muscle strength. This type of modification is also known as germline engineering and the consequences of these modifications are permanent. This means that they are passed onto future generations. The advent of a new technique or technology almost always raises

doubts about its safety and effectiveness. But once the technology is available, new requirements and needs often arise outside the original domain. As Michael Spezio says;

"Ethical deliberations about brain-machine interfaces (BMI) focus on how humanity will be changed in imagined future transhuman landscapes. I review some current developments in BMI and suggest that responsible deliberation about BMI proceed by recognizing the typically implicit central role given to the imagined futures and the humans who inhabit them. As responsible deliberators about BMI, we make choices when we engage in "minding the other" that precede and constrain the choices we then make about BMI. Sjoerd Repping and Heide Mertes emphasize that we should not exaggerate our expectations regarding the rate of development of reproductive technologies. Heidi Mertes: "Technology usually doesn't work as fast as you think. The world won't suddenly be full of cartoon dolls when we wake up tomorrow." (Spezio, 375-380)

In exploring identities, dystopian transhumanist films are not content with the possibilities created by robots, but use the genetic thread. First it was done through the mutant. In fact, this name is suitable for any living being that is born as a result of an unexpected change in its DNA. The fiction of the 1940s and 1950s was forced upon people whose biological nature had been altered primarily by radiation, an unchecked synecdoche of technological progress. Product of a bad marriage between science and humanity, the mutant makes a pitiful figure.

Hollywood has affirmed the radical difference between past and future, and dystopian films have offered to describe the physiognomy of the latter. The priority was to define and highlight the difference of tomorrow and its inhabitants with those of the present.

Francescutti (2004) characterized 20th century science fiction as a form of techno-scientific risk communication. In the beginning, the greatest danger was the rise of totalitarianism, the creation of monsters or the destruction of the planet by scientific arrogance. Gradually, their stories became interested in the effects of

modernization on personality and individuality. Mark Rose (1981) underlines that the antinomy between human and non-human is one of the contradictions at the origin of the development of the genre. But there are others who have made this a suitable platform for thought experiments with subjectivities that erase, transcend and blur the lines of gender, race and ethnicity creating a world of transhumanism. The cyborg, the extra-terrestrial, the mutant and the clone served as a basis for thinking about human identity. Let's not forget time travel as a pretext for enjoying adventures mixed with kinship.

4.6 Political Dystopia in *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015)

This masterful juxtaposition in *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) reflects and defines the primary conflict between protagonist and antagonist. Herein we examine the political dystopias that define and reflect our world. There are many larger-than-life aspects, but for some reason they all feel like subtle screams. Our world is a fast world yet *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) takes it to a whole new level. *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) tells what the future of the world could be like if injustice were widespread.

Like many dictators in today's world, the dictator in *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) uses resources to control the populace. When we bring people closer together to survive, they have two reactions: either rebel against their leader's brutality or forget everything else, only caring about the part of their existence that allows them to survive. For example, one of the main reasons the French Revolution broke out was that peasants were starving and not receiving medical care. The bourgeoisie took over all property and deprived the peasants of political power so that they could fight. *Mad Max* pedestrians do not react like the French. The people here get water and food. Replenishing water has a greater impact on health and mobility than losing food. Immortan Joe¹³ gives them water from time to time, but doesn't say when. So they depend on it for their livelihood. In addition they are surrounded by a desert canyon and have little access to other allies. Someone within the revolution has to make sure the people have access to guns, healthy food and water, but the people are being brainwashed to the point of being almost impossible. This is where Imperator Furiosa¹⁴ the Superheroine comes in.

Mad Max: Fury Road (2015) plays with the duality of weaponry and farming. In today's society, so much money is invested in weapons development that the world seems to be in a constant arms race, but that comes at a price. When we look at guns, we lose sight of the need for life and how to stop global warming. We spend all our money on things designed to keep us in power, not to keep us alive. This future shows where extreme thinking can lead. *Mad Max: Fury Road (2015)* weapons are great, huge war machines and war tactics abound, but the world is so neglected that there is nowhere to grow food; they dry up everything and the ground turns to sand. We know this is happening in the lives of today's generation. The Wasteland of Mad Max is just like Brantlinger says about Rome and Byzantium:

“Rome or Byzantium both as the capital of all pleasure and as necropolis, the ultimate dead end of history-to the sterility of industrial modernity. Rome or Byzantium could be at once utopia and dystopia, a model of decadent behaviour to be admired and imitated but also an exemplar of imperial hubris and futility-the ironic mirror of the decadents' own bourgeois, industrial, imperial society which, they declared, was rapidly becoming another tottering empire like the one that had fallen. They condemned the decadence of their times; they also paraded the decadence of their own art works and lifestyles.” (Brantlinger, 115)

Immortan Joe's army is devoted to him, when his army fights, they do so in hopes of dying in his honour, believing that doing so will lead to "Valhalla," a type of afterlife derived from Norse mythology. Nux¹⁵, the main battle boy, uses the phrase "I live, I die, I live again.". The author takes it a step further and makes our world an even greater powerful reflection. The Immortan Joe War Boys benefit from the afterlife. He uses this to his advantage and puts himself in the role of sending to Valhalla which means dying for Immortan Joe . He convinced his soldiers that he was more than just human. We can also see this in *10,000 BC (2008)* This is also a strategy that reflects what Augustus Caesar did to prevent his throne from being called into question; a sort of pretending to be on a divine level exactly as the people need it. The author takes this Roman ideal and combines it with the extreme mentality of a religious extremist.

The world of *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) shows only a part of it to the audience; the rest of it left for researchers. There are still a lot of weird places, some simply described in the film but never told. Anyone who recognizes it right away cannot judge it as a third party, and that is exactly what the author is looking for. To properly critique our world, we must view it as an audience, which is difficult given all the influences we grew up with. When we hide our flaws, we forget how corrupt our world is and where it is leading us. Dystopian films reflect the horrors of the time. But the best way to hide the message is to engulf the entire story with a secondary plot of love, abduction and war.

In his essay "The Economics of Mad Max and Star Trek" in *LA Review of Books*, Tom Strathurst identifies two different types of futures that dystopian films present us with. At one end of the spectrum is Star Trek's fantastically rich utopia, born of increasing technological innovation and deregulation. The wild and hopeless dystopia of Mad Max, on the other hand, is marked by environmental catastrophe and constant conflict. Both are the result of human collective masochism.¹⁶ Both these films are sci-fi examples of popular popcorn entertainment, but the conflicting futures of *Star Trek* and *Mad Max* are presented as futuristic reality rather than mere fantasy, and therein lies the value. Films about the future of humanity often deliberately challenge audiences' understanding of the modern world and make them reflect on the future implications of what is happening now.

Brilliant fantasy visions like *Star Trek* (2009) are often founded on modern problems. This optimism ignores problems and assumes that the future is bright regardless of today's actions. On the other side of the coin, dystopia encourages a completely different mind-set. Utopian movies assure us that everything will be fine, but dystopian movies tell us that's probably not the case. Dystopian films, on the other hand, express the director's fear and frustration with the modern world, they try to communicate this concern to the public in hopes of starting a dialogue.

The influence of dystopian fiction in our real life is difficult to gauge. We know that the speculative drama *The Day After* (1983) so angered Ronald Reagan that it persuaded him to reconsider his views on nuclear proliferation. After seeing the film, Reagan wrote in his journal his determination "never to have nuclear war." Four years later, Reagan, along with Mikhail Gorbachev, signed a treaty between the

United States and the Soviet Union that removed all intermediate-range nuclear missiles from the United States and the Soviet Union. However, these concrete examples of dystopian films with direct and significant impact are rare. The best dystopian films often contribute to ongoing debates or create indelible images of fears about tomorrow. George Miller's *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) has helped keep the debate about our ecology alive.

In *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015), human acts and those places where they omitted to act have turned into deserts, yet the remnants of humanity continue to wage war and deprive the planet of fossil fuels. Miller seems to have noticed the tolerant attitude of some countries towards global warming and the nuclear threat and came to the disappointing conclusion that the same could happen years from now. This film can be a bit funny, but the background doesn't get any more serious than that. Either move out and disarm or lose the world to chaos, misery and despair.

Other such examples include David Michod's *The Rover* (2014), Jake Paltrow's *Young Ones* (2014) and Gabe Ibanez's *Automata* (2014). Like *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015), all three are set in a tumultuous near-future plagued by ecological and social collapse. But *Fury Road* differs from those films in one important way. This is mainly because it is designed to captivate the audience as *Mad Max* is touted as a carefully curated carnival of mechanical mayhem, more mainstream action than art. We enjoy films for their escapist pleasure, so writer-director George Miller presents *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) film as a socio-political and ecological allegory.

4.7 Post-Apocalyptic Society in *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015)

Audiences may claim Furiosa as someone who misunderstood gender inequality when she only wanted female-led warriors. But good dystopian movies always have. Like Ridley Scott's ground-breaking dystopian sci-fi film *Blade Runner* or Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*, the twisted world of *Fury Road* is a setting, not a film as a whole.

Mad Max: Fury Road (2015) provides an accurate portrayal of the growing class divide, institutionalized corruption, and religion as a means of control as dystopian films have done throughout cinematic history, making it one of the most

pressing crises of our time. It is cinema that seizes time and expresses anger through tastier metaphors. In the 1970s, *Soylent Green* (1973) and *Silent Running* (1972) showed suffering from overpopulation and food shortages. In the 1980s, *Robocop* (1987) and *The Running Man* (1987) lamented the resurgence of right-wing politics and the rise of junk culture. Concerns about overpopulation are also reflected in recent dystopian classics *Minority Report* (2002) and ecological collapse in *Children of Men* (2006), *Snowpiercer* (2013) and *Ex Machina* (2014) and *Artificial Intelligence* (2001), which features in genetic engineering in the prequel to 'Planets of the Apes' (2011, 2014, 2017). Even JJ Abrams' "Restart" *Star Trek* films have dystopian elements that seem utopian. Abrams' *Star Trek Into Darkness* (2013) depicts a world, actually a universe, threatened from within as terrorists attempt to destroy an entire civilization.

Dystopian films may ultimately be viewed as more "responsible" than utopian films, but they risk being ignored because they provoke complacency rather than encourage it. Christopher Nolan's dystopian film, *Interstellar* (2014), plays a big part in this era. When a team of astronauts and scientists leave a bankrupt Earth to search for other habitable planets. *Interstellar* threatens to overwhelm humanity's inability to understand that Earth's resources are finite. *Interstellar*'s conclusion is oddly hilarious: humanity is saved when an advanced, space-time-manipulating futuristic species comes to the rescue at the last minute. It's a mode that offers possible hope. It suggests that our survival as a species is inevitable if we sit and hope someone other than us will save us.

Unlike *Interstellar*, there are no false hopes in *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015). It doesn't really give hope. No solution has been proposed to reverse irreversible climate change, nor should it be. Miller's films are more "responsible" than Nolan's in presenting a dystopian future without suggesting that there's an easy way back to harmony, and they always rock us with a good dose of horror. Genre theorists like Rick Altman in his *Film/Genre* (1999) and Thomas Schatz in *Hollywood Genres: Formulas, Filmmaking, and the Studio System* (1981) classify films based on common themes, motifs, and conventions or themes of moral ambiguity, or Western explorations of savage individualism and frontier lifestyles. Here what we have in *Mad Max* is an example of cult films. Cult war films like "Mad Max: Fury Road

(2015) all require suspensions of disbelief by pitting their heroic figures against hundreds of attackers. Based on available data, male audiences seem to forgive masculine films for sins against realism, while feminine ones are considered products of PC culture or merely inaccurate." (Posada, 191). It forces us to see the world with new eyes, or persuade us to fear what might happen.

4.8 The New Eve

It is a basic instinct for transhumanist men to fall in love with artificial women. The first gynoid¹⁷ a more appropriate adjective than android; the object of desire, was *The Future Eve*, by Adam Villiers de L'Isle (1886); even if it was not until *Metropolis* (Lang, 1927) that the mechanical woman entered the popular imagination. In *Blade Runner 2049* (2017), this distances get shorter: Deckard, the stubborn fighting android falls in love with Rachel, the beautiful replicant¹⁸, and they run away to find love. In this film, women are seen as the otherness of humanity which is defined as masculine.

The same film shows robots in an identity crisis. In one memorable scene, Deckard confronts his nemesis, the deadly replicant Roy, and the close-ups allow us to identify with his deep human pain, creating a theatrical sense that an android can display more humanity than many related connections. In Spielberg's book *Artificial Intelligence* (2001), the emotionality of robots comes back to the fore, from the point of view of kinship: the sad story of an automatic Pinocchio who wants nothing more than love of a mother.

In 1976, the television series *The Bionic Woman* popularized the term cyborg, short for cybernetic organism. Organic textures with an anthropomorphic look blend with the electromechanical efficiency of the most complex prostheses. In contrast to the murderous masculinity demonstrated by these hybrids in *RoboCop*, 1987 by Verhoeven and *The Terminator*, 1984 by Cameron, Donna Haraway (Haraway, 164) defends the fragmented possibilities that create "a sort of personal, postmodern, collective", disassembled and reassembled. In the vision of the feminist theorist, the cyborg has become an icon of post-gender society.

Transhumanism pushes people from fixed identities to its extreme consequences. The quest to reduce personality to data that can be uploaded or

downloaded to digital devices aims to replace immortality. Ashk says;

“Thus, artificial intelligent liberates us with the possibility of techno-heaven, where humanbeings will not be bothered by limitations and sufferings of organic body. There will not be hallucination rather people will live their life within conscious artificial intelligence. This may lead human beings to live forever and even live after this earth become unlivable finding a new earth suitable; even they don't find any suitable earth, they might be able to create a suitable environment though nanotechnology” (Ashik, 9-29)

There are, among other things, unpleasant consequences. We see it in Bethany, the daughter character in *Years and Years* (2019), who tries in vain to protect herself from the troubles of puberty by vaccinating herself with microchips, cameras and cell phones. Emphasizing that the human is inescapably linked to the non-human, Bruno Latour's *Postmodern Science Fiction Critique* (1993) dramatizes the seemingly impassable boundaries between nature and culture. The messages that people broadcast on stage tell us that "anatomy is no longer a destiny".

About the cinematic feminism in *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) women are cocky and ruthless. Furiosa outperforms Max in many areas. She drives a truck, knows how to fight, and has risen to the top of the Citadel's military hierarchy. This seems to be an absolute exception. The film was one of the few to pass the Bechdel test,¹⁹ and the woman does not relate to the man. Each Immortan Joe woman has her own unique personality and usefulness.

It is not surprising for a dystopian audience to see the women on stage. It looks like a Manga advertisement: thin and tall, square face with big eyes and full lips. A blonde version of such can be found in Queen Daenerys in *Game of Thrones* series. In the world of *Mad Max*, every woman is involved in the plot and their personalities position them in control and not in the need of a man to protect them.

In a genre typically defined by the conflicting desires of male heroes and villains, and surrounded by symbolism in its portrayal of dramatic female characters, *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) focuses heavily on the actions and concerns of female characters. With a massive fleet of vehicles and a grand chase complete with

explosions, gunfire, and skirmishes in the sky, Miller is able not only to ignore the feminine, but to give them a truly feminist perspective from a patriarchal state; also adding the sexism and objectification of women.

It is not the titular hero Tom Hardy who challenges the tyrannical order of the monstrous villain, but the patriarchal villain, the cruel Furiosa Charlize Theron. The film's feminist approach may have been somewhat overdone by both angry male feminists and enthusiastic feminists alike. The actresses playing the five wives are beautiful models in sheer dresses, and some plot logic is implied, like Princess Leia in metal slave panties in *Return of the Jedi* (1983).

4.9 Max's object of human life in a hostile universe

Max is the classic leader in the dystopian universe. He was a self-dystopian figure. From the first seconds of the film he is a victim of the fortress and its operations. As the film progresses we discover the value of water and its uses and what Max uses. Max fights for his existence. The deaths of his wife and daughter, an important part of the first trilogy, appear here as watermarks. His daughter appears in flashbacks to his subconscious realm to guide Max.

Max's object of human life in this hostile universe is one of survival and self-preservation. He is a loner and a man of few words, haunted by his past and the loss of his family. Max has endured immense suffering and violence, which has left him hardened and cynical. He is driven by a basic instinct to stay alive, avoiding dangerous situations and doing whatever it takes to protect himself. As the plot unfolds, Max gets caught up in a mission to help a group of women led by Imperator Furiosa, portrayed by Charlize Theron, escape from Immortan Joe's captivity. These women are escaping forced servitude as breeders for Immortan Joe, and they seek freedom in a safer and more equitable society.

Throughout the film, Max's objective shifts from pure survival to one of redemption and altruism. He becomes an unexpected ally to Furiosa and the women, helping them navigate the dangerous wasteland and protecting them from Immortan Joe's forces. Max's journey in "Mad Max: Fury Road" is about finding a purpose beyond mere survival, learning to trust and connect with others, and embracing the responsibility of helping those in need. His evolution from a lone wolf to a reluctant

hero reflects the themes of hope, redemption, and the potential for positive change in a world that seems devoid of humanity. In the dystopian world of Mad Max "the fatal blow has already been dealt to the city, rendering it uninhabitable in the long term, and only through the retrofitting of failing structures and technology is its ultimate demise temporarily delayed." (Yeates, 91)

A dystopia begins when critical resources fall into the wrong hands. And Max in it is a cute boy among monsters. He was captured early in the film and became a "Globulant"¹⁹ who donated his blood to Immortan Joe's fanatic warriors. Aesthetically, *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) is set in a beautiful post-apocalyptic world. The looks are great; especially the dunes. The lighting is perfect; nothing to complain about. And of course the flamethrower guitar along with the percussion drives a frenetic madness. The vertical pole plays with the columns, the great flexibility of the body moving from one vehicle to another, and the vehicles crossing in a furious ballet are all timeless memories for any viewer. The beauty of the women contrasts with the ugliness of most characters, marred by contamination, large cysts, missing limbs, dwarfism or gigantism and white bloodless bodies.

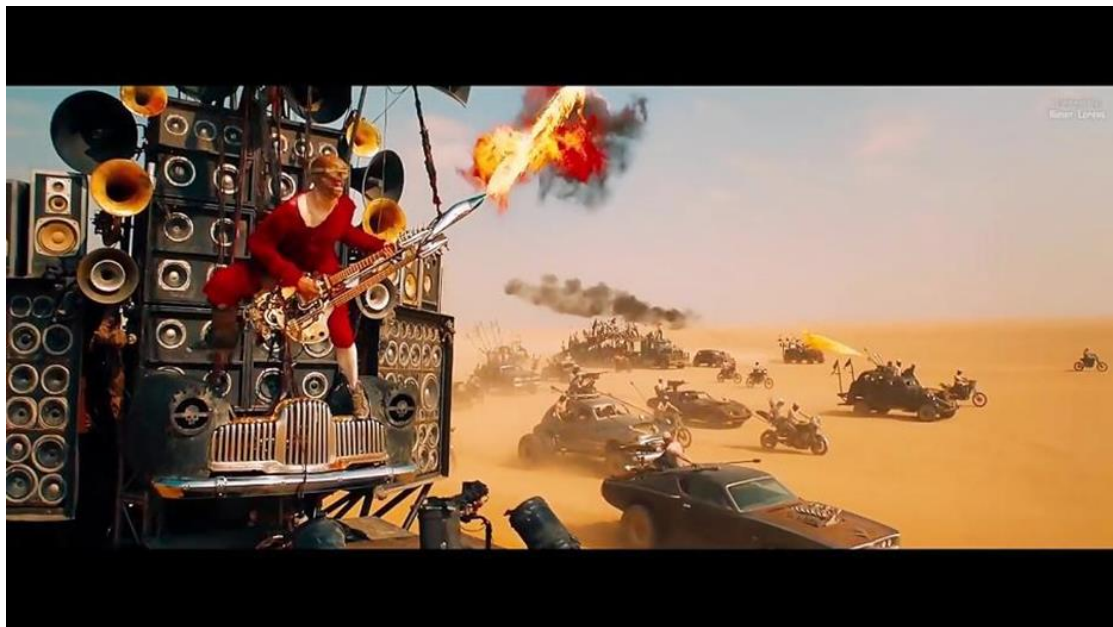


Fig. 4. The flamethrower guitar in *Mad Max: Fury Road*

"We are not things" is one of the most definitive line in this George Miller's brilliant and dreamy *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015), a provocative indictment of a horrific totalitarian regime that reduces people to things and shows how the human body is subjected to brutally efficient and practical intensive agricultural production

methods where milk is harvested and females are domesticated. In any other film, the phrase "We are not things" might sound cliché, but beneath the vividly imagined atrocities that accompany the haunting echoes, its simple statement is imbued with a real power that has grown in months since the film screened in the cinema.

The Cult of the Citadel suggests radical faith in a different way. Martyrs here are willing to kill and die to be welcomed into valhalla. It is here that we realize that they are very human and not monsters as we see them. Joyce A. Evans says, "Again and again, a surviving hero is confronted with a frontier to conquer, a civilization to rebuild" (Evans, 175)

The film, on the other hand, successfully circumvents the love story between Max and Furiosa. They range from enemies to insecure allies to fellow combatants, but the sexual tension between them lurks beneath the surface. All of this is set in a nightmarish cinematic universe defined by colourful visuals, exotic sets, and cartoonist Rube Goldberg sets that outline just enough story structure, characters, and dialogue to tie the film together.

For a film set in such a vast world, *Mad Max: Fury Road (2015)* is remarkably human in its affirmation of hope and the possibility of redemption for individuals and communities. When we first see him, Max is the sole survivor, haunted by the horrors he witnesses and can't help but try to survive. Max yells at Furiosa, "You know, hope is a mistake. If you can't fix what's broken, you'll... you'll go insane." (*Mad Max: Fury Road*, 01:25:15-01:25:31). But in the film it's hope that allows not only to fix what's broken, but also to fight the brink of insanity. This juxtaposed statement of Max may baffle the audience but we have to remember he's prefixed as 'mad'. In the hostile universe Max's object of human life ultimately becomes about rediscovering his own humanity amidst the chaos, violence, and desperation of the wasteland, and finding a reason to fight for a better world, even if it's just for a glimmer of hope.

4.10 The Psycho-political Realism of *Mad Max: Fury Road (2015)*

Machine bodies, oil race and blood hunting are the poetic core of George Miller's film. The only challenge facing film and art today is to find new vocabulary, linguistic palettes that can express realities that cannot be adequately expressed

through traditional means of representation; and *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) was able to glimmer right on those angles. As history moves faster than language can keep up, it becomes increasingly difficult for "visual" art to meaningfully communicate how the changing world is based. From its beginnings, science fiction analysed the present critical with speculative predictions about the future. Science fiction stories focus on the symptoms of today and exaggerate the consequences of tomorrow. But what happens when the future dies in science fiction or when technology advances faster than we can imagine is when dystopias come of age.

Mad Max's ominous symphony sounds more like a waterphone²⁰ soundtrack than a didactic tale. The apparent discord between director George Miller and the world we live in is one of style rather than substance: A medieval future where lords rule neglected hordes and natural resources including mother's milk and blood are coveted by monopolies. Despite its contrived and apocalyptic tone, the lawless lands Mad Max traverses don't seem all that strange to doomed souls caught in the war-torn chaos. Lucas Miranda cautions that "nobody should follow political or religious idols—in that world, individuals are free from the illusions, repressions, and distortions of civilization, but such a dystopia cannot be and should not be anyone's utopia." (Miranda).

In the first part of the tale of Mad Max; he seemed the hero, guardian and representatives of justice in the ruins, but as the story progresses the moral dichotomy between good and evil fades, and in any case the situation is chaotic. Max's passive behaviour no longer corresponds to high moral standards. An oasis of calm and lush vegetation is nothing more than a mirage in the desert of reality, not an impregnable city to claim, just a throne like the Iron Throne²¹ in *Game of Thrones*. And an angry Charlize Theron rebels against a tanker harbouring a harem of virgins sentenced to forced fertility by Immortan Joe played by Hugh Keyes Byrne.

Furiosa's escape embodies the dynamic core of the film as Immortan Joe recruits an army of sphinx-shaped vehicles to track them down but soon realizes the only way to escape them is a detour. When Furiosa returns to the castle, she actually climbs into the same position as Immortan Joe, temporarily abandoning her mission. In a dystopian film if we imagine a matrilineal society, it is a society based on the structure of the old patriarchal society. Widely hailed as a sort of feminist heroine,

Charlize Theron's character is little more than a one-dimensional phallic impersonator on the throne. Apparently femininity and self-empowerment don't mix well in Hollywood, and the women's harem that Immortan Joe rescues is androgynous because it's a passive subject in liberal hands. In the final scenes, Mad Max played by Tom Hardy disappears into a pack of robbers with the same passivity that characterizes him throughout the film, showing the rise of the citadel's social pyramid. It didn't end patriarchy; it continued to adapt and adopt its discriminatory logic.

All possible forms of reciprocity are withdrawn from the will to survive. Like modern warfare, alliances are volatile and selfish. There are no public interests to fight for, no common interests to defend. It's a blood race against enlightenment and all order. When social contracts are broken and progressive institutions collapse, as seen in *Fury Road*, individualism is no longer a pathological form of social self-interest, it's the only way to survive. In *Fury Road* our hero Max became bloodsoaked and his biological resources -blood- was drained from his body to keep the eco-monsters alive. In a void where all beginnings are lost, the infernal spectacle of thunder and steam engines fills our eyes with awe and a disturbing familiarity. Vaughan says:

"George Miller's instant cult classic *Mad Max : Fury Road* (2015) foreshadowing water as the only remaining object of value (and therefore tyranny and oppression) in a postapocalyptic dystopia, an accessible environmental justice springboard for the film's high-octane action sequences and stylized violence" (Vaughan, 59–90)

Mad Max: Fury Road (2015) is first and foremost a work of heart-breaking ecstasy, but the beauty of destruction doesn't need our self-righteous anger with double standards. The carnage of mechanical bodies, oil and blood forms the narrative and poetic core of the film. When nothing new and good can be created, realized, or conceived, the spectacle of destruction takes on an almost spiritually satisfying and purifying quality. Like a nihilistic revelation, the viewer ponders the painterly collapse of that beautiful day. In this George Miller's meticulously woven post-apocalyptic baroque, humanity's legacy is a trail of indescribable beauty fuelled by pain, violence, and constant anger.

4.11 Transhumanist dystopian society in *RoboCop* (2014)

The film *RoboCop* (2014) quickly became an icon of pop culture . The film tells the story of Alex Murphy (Peter Weller), a Detroit police officer who is shot while on duty. The nearly dead remains of his body are put through a robotic process, creating a prototype mechanical police force. The film became a cinematic landmark, to the point of being a cult creation despite its limited budget to adapt a sci-fi story with a script compelling enough to portray one of the urban atrocities and a voice of action that allows us to critique the media, politics and the growing economic globalization in which people are seen as socio-cultural by-products. Robocop according to Dalot-Bul was one such.

“Sanders’ movie resorts to a eulogy of the physical human body and human existence as we know them, thereby duplicating the American Robocop formula. I interpret these discrepancies as revealing a return to an anthropocentrism prevalent in American science fiction, and argue that they have implications beyond the case at hand.” (Dalot-Bul, 527-543)

Murphy has been turned into a cyborg by a multinational corporation that treats civilian safety and security as just a machine. The first part of the film presents him as a fiction, a robot; but little by little he remembers his past life; the conscience of man finally overcomes the machine. The iconic dialogue that caps off the story is unforgettable: When the company owner asks him who he is, he emphatically replies: ‘Murphy!’. Through this reading, the story becomes a sort of triumph of human nature over the cold artificiality of technology. Although RoboCop's body is made of titanium and kevlar, the character development makes his identity very clear: he changes form, but remains human, his return is not easy, but he recognizes himself as such.

In this current of thought, the obligatory reflection on the borders that the character crosses is relevant. The neural structure, the consciousness itself are memories, it goes on without desires or intentions, coming and going with an appropriate degree of connection. What defines the cyborg over time must have at least a certain psychological or physical continuity, but when these criteria are

broken down, we no longer know how to react. By addressing these areas of thought, the plot of the film takes on new directions. The implicit consideration of the constant presence of corporations and multinationals concerned with security and public order for commercial reasons suggests a contrast between the preconceived notion of human life and the resilience of nature, the organic, and the figure of the protagonist, designed at the level of the prototype. This tension, which is not new, is updated to make us reflect on human nature and its contents, the order in which Murphy creates his family and which he precedes of the operation is an example of what a future transhumanist dystopian family would look like.

The *Robocop* film was so successful that it spawned two relatively effective sequels. *Robocop 2*, directed by Irvin Kershner in 1990, with a screenplay by Frank Miller, revolves around the launch of a new cyber development program to create a more sophisticated cop; in this case not a cyborg, but the robot itself. Here, Detroit is in unstoppable chaos, there are police strikes, insecurity on the streets, where a new drug called Nuke is taking off. The central character's task escalates to the point where, in some missions, he is nearly destroyed when dismembered. The question of the relationship between man and machine returns with the latter's visions of relative invulnerability.

Another *RoboCop* was released in early 2014, which adapted the story for a younger audience while capitalizing on the extreme violence of the original production. At that time, *RoboCop* has moved on to a new generation, with more relaxed language and a clear bioethical character. Directed by the Brazilian José Padilla, the story focuses on the personal and family environment of Alex Murphy, played this time by Joel Kinnaman, with a psychological perspective highlighting the effects of the physical transformation of the character. This film is about the integration of cyber police into the daily life of the city, and we wonder if America is "robophobic".

4.12 Consequences of Transhumanism

The ability to genetically produce or manipulate humans is often associated with a well-planned improvisation of the whole race: eugenics. It refers to the alteration of the entire genetic makeup of the human population. On the one hand, we

acquire new skills, on the other hand, we learn less and less about other skills. The smartphone for example has certainly changed the way we communicate and interact with our family, friends and partners. Looking at this train of thought, we can see that human ascension may, at first glance, appear to be an individual choice. However the use of technology is often motivated by commercial, military or governmental interests. Then the emergence of a chasm or disparity between "normal" humans and superhumans comes in. As Lewins resorts, transhumanism "intended to boost our mental and physical capacities, and the capacities of our children, beyond the normal upper range found in our species. Because human enhancement apparently involves altering human nature, it is meant to be the sort of thing that sends shivers down the spine." (Lewens, 354–356). Thus we can consider the societal change that new technologies bring on the individual and on social engineering systems and underlying social and cultural patterns.

Transhumanism in human society spans through various aspects of life, including ethics, culture, economics, and social dynamics. While the exact outcomes are speculative and subject to ongoing debate, some potential consequences are evident.

4.12.1 Enhanced Human Abilities

The cornerstone of transhumanism is the use of technology to overcome the limitations of humans' natural cognitive, physical, and sensory abilities. This concept promises cognitive enhancements that promote better memory, learning and innovative thinking through a brain-computer interface. Physical improvements can manifest as increased strength, speed, and endurance through bionic limbs, exoskeletons, or genetic engineering as "the development and use of new enhancement is typically justified by pervades into everything we do and technologies that promise to help us a speculative account" (Hauskeller, 39–47). Sensory enhancement may extend human perception into areas such as infrared vision and extended hearing range. Beyond personal gain, these advances will impact education through accelerated learning and personalized experiences, transform industries through the introduction of enhanced skill-based professional roles, Impairment may be addressed through prosthetic limbs or neural interfaces. Nonetheless, these potential improvements pose ethical dilemmas around equity,

access and identity that require careful regulation and social considerations.

4.12.2 Social inequalities

Social inequality in the context of transhumanism refers to potential differences that can arise between those who have access to advanced improvements and those who do not. Advances in technology can improve cognitive, physical and sensory abilities for some, but those who do not have access to these enhancements can be disadvantaged. This fragmentation can perpetuate existing socioeconomic inequalities and create new forms of privilege based on technological advances. This is evident in the dystopian class distinctions in *Mad Max. Fury Road (2015)*. Bogna M. Konior says,

"On the level of politics and culture, this catastrophic narrative marks the moment when we are collectively redefining our idea of the "human" and the types of social agency that this figure might have in the times when our species seems both powerful enough to bring about our own destruction through technological expansion, and at the same time not powerful enough to save itself, or to even at a minimum provide a model of industrial society that would not be based in rapidly accelerating social inequality and political polarization." (Konior, 67)

Access to improvements is influenced by financial resources, which can widen the gap between the rich and the poor. The resulting social inequalities lead to unequal access to opportunities, educational benefits and social benefits, exacerbating divisions within society and improving ethics of justice and fairness in a world of people. may cause public concern.

4.12.3 Concept redefinition

Mad Max. Fury Road (2015). and *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* explores how transhumanism redefines notions of what is normal and contributes to social inequalities. provide insight. In *Mad Max. Fury Road (2015)* shows a world in a post-apocalyptic setting where resource scarcity and survival have altered social norms. Characters with unique enhancements, such as Immortan his Joe and

Furiosa's mechanical arm, challenge conventional notions of physical normalcy. These upgrades represent adaptations to the harsh environment, but at the same time show how the lack of power imbalance, as Immortan Joe's elite enjoys technological superiority while others suffer as “sources of motivation not integrated into the system of beliefs or desires. The characteristic properties of the affect program system states, their informational encapsulation and their involuntary triggering, necessitate the introduction of a concept of mental state separate from the concepts of belief and desire.” (Griffiths, 243). It shows what leads to *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* deals with the complexities of human-machine integration. The Major's cybernetic enhancements have blurred the lines between human and machine, forcing a reassessment of individual identities. This raises the question of what is normality and humanity in a world where individuals can manipulate their own bodies and minds. The film also addresses the ethical implications of companies benefiting from improvements in the human body, with financial constraints potentially leaving many people behind. Both films highlight how technological advances can change social norms and exacerbate inequalities, highlighting the need for ethical consideration and responsible development in a transhuman future.

4.12.4 Loss of privacy and autonomy

When survival comes first, characters like Immortan's Joe and Furiosa embody that loss with bodies donned with enhancements that blur the line between human and machine. These extensions represent a departure from the natural human form and question individual agency in a society that requires fusion with technology for survival. The chaotic desert landscape depicts a society where individual freedom is being eroded by scarcity of resources. The loss of privacy is evident as individuals are subject to surveillance and scrutiny, such as the reign of Immortan Joe or the oversight of water distribution. *Ghost in the Shell (2017)*, on the other hand, tackles the challenge of human-machine integration, as the Major's thoughts and memories become vulnerable to outside manipulation and surveillance. Her experience highlights the vulnerability of individual autonomy compared to humans. Marietjie Botes regards "autonomy not as a right or ethical principle, but rather as an ability that increases with a person's enhancement through acquisition of new skills, such as languages, education and learning how to draw conclusions. This view of autonomy

ties in nicely with his argument in favour of transhumanism, where enhancement is not only a natural evolution, but also serves as a support for gaining a better ability to exercise autonomy, which ability will ultimately aid adaptation to technologies." (Botes, 345)

Her experiences underline the vulnerability of personal autonomy when the human body and mind are interconnected with technology. Both these films highlight how technological interventions can disrupt the traditional notions of privacy, as characters' bodies and actions become subject to external control and surveillance.

4.12.5 Impact on Human Conscience

The fusion of humans and technology will change human relationships. *Mad Max. Fury Road (2015)* and *Ghost in the Shell (2017)* show how the impact of transhumanism on relationships intersects with redefined notions of normalcy. provide insight into what Furiosa's mechanical arm challenges conventional notions of physical normalcy and can affect how characters connect and relate to each other. Major's cybernetic body raises questions about authenticity and emotional connection, forcing her to navigate a sense of herself within a human-machine hybrid. These films seek to incorporate new dimensions of identity and experience in a world where boundaries between humans and machines are increasingly permeating as transhumanism redefines what is considered normal have evolved and may create both challenges and opportunities for connection. The integration of technology into human biology raises existential questions about human identity, consciousness, and human nature. As Rachel Elijor says

“Because man is other than his physical surroundings, the real is found in the perfection of the soul...It is this process of perfection that man continues to rely on the supernatural realm for his identity”
(Elijor, 888)

4.12.6 Environmental aspects

Mad Max. Fury Road (2015) recreates a post-apocalyptic barren landscape plagued by environmental degradation. Society is on the brink of collapse due to lack of resources, especially water and fuel. The characters' struggle to survive in this

hostile environment shows the consequences of uncontrolled resource exploitation and the damage it does to both the planet and human society as the “environmental, military and economic crises compel us to define humankind by our shared inhabitation of a beleaguered planet.” (Williams, 52). The film serves as a cautionary tale of how disregard for environmental sustainability can lead to the collapse of societies and deepening social inequalities. This highlights the interdependence between human well-being and environmental health. *Ghost in the Shell (2017)*, on the other hand, features a futuristic cityscape heavily influenced by advanced technology, including enhanced cybernetics. It indirectly raises questions about the impact of such technological advances on the environment. The high-tech urban environment suggests that a great deal of energy is required to operate the technological infrastructure and maintain the cybernetic enhancements. This phrase indicates the potential environmental impacts resulting from resource-intensive technology and the need for energy sources to sustain it.

4.13 Conclusion

Natural genomes are not inherently better than artificial genomes. The only real difference is the "new" factor and our dislike of it. When it comes to innovation we have to start somewhere. However, this leads to greater availability. What is interesting from this point of view is that creative people are not created overnight. The transition from apes to our current form is seamless. In 1991 Mark Weiser, chief technology officer at Xerox, said, "The most profound technologies are those that disappear. They weave themselves into the fabric of everyday life until they are indistinguishable from it." (Weiser, 94-104)

People play god; and according to Yuval Noah Harari, author of *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow (2016)*, scientists are turning us into gods instead of human beings. They don't do it on purpose. They work on therapies and modalities to cure diseases, and as I mentioned earlier, some of these medical treatments can be used to help people improve their abilities or live longer. In his book, Harari argues that humans are made up of "algorithms" made up of feelings, emotions, and desires. Transhumanists are analysing and focusing on these "human algorithms" (Harari).

We can now analyse and manipulate people's behaviour, feelings and

preferences better than ever. Harari calls it dataism. This view assumes that data can solve anything. In the human algorithm, people can be considered as a computer system. Through the use of email, social networks and the internet, we contribute to what is called dataism. All of this data is in the hands of big companies like Google, Facebook, and Amazon. At the same time, we still live in a very human-centric world. This means that we humans understand the world around us and that people come first.

Another scenario described by *Mad Max: Fury Road (2015)* is that human productive power can divide humanity into two distinct classes: the "normal" human class and the "superhuman" class. Professor Michael Bess, author of *Make Way for the Superhumans*, believes it is a threat. According to him, the possibilities we will have in the future to create perfect people also carry a great responsibility. They can lead to a better world, but they can also lead to a dystopian society. According to Bess it is up to us to make this choice, individually and collectively. (Bess)

Ghost in the Shell (2017) is about a cyborg; a half-human, half-machine being. The only part of the body that is not artificial is the brain; The rest of the body is made up of mechanical and synthetic organs and tissues. While the world has changed dramatically like in the emergence of flying machines and cleaning robots, the people have not changed. According to Michael Bess, it is inevitable that we change as human beings. So alongside unconditional negative pessimism, there's a kind of "cautious optimism." It refers to the expectation that good things will happen if we work hard enough for good things.

Notes

1. Mangaka is a professional manga artist who writes or illustrates manga
2. Lana Wachowski and Lilly Wachowski are American film and television directors, writers and producers. The sisters are both trans women and are most famous known for creating The Matrix series.
3. The Matrix trilogy suggests that everyone has the individual responsibility to make the choice between the real world and an artificial world. Though Neo is the exemplar of free will, fate plays a large role in his adventure. Neo relies on the Oracle, and everything she says comes true in some way.

4. Major Kusanagi Motoko), or just "Major", is the protagonist in Masamune Shirow's *Ghost in the Shell* film and also in manga and anime series. Major Motoko Kusanagi is one such person, living in a full-body prosthesis after an accident as a child; her only organic parts are her brain and spinal cord. Her current prosthetic body looks like a generic product, but is actually military grade.

5. Public Security Section 9 is an elite special ops unit that works directly under the control of the Prime Minister in *Ghost in the Shell*.

6. Osamu Tezuka was a Japanese manga artist, cartoonist, and animator. He is considered as the God Of Manga and The Father Of Anime. Tezuka is mainly known for the manga and anime Astro Boy, the manga Buddha, and the anime Kimba, and the White Lion.

7. The Tokyo subway sarin attack was the first large-scale disaster caused by nerve gas. A religious cult released sarin gas into subway commuter trains during morning rush hour.

8. The January 17, 1995 Hyogoken-Nanbu earthquake of magnitude 7.2 in JMA scale ($M_w = 6.9$), which struck Kobe, Japan and its surrounding area was the most severe earthquake to affect that region this century. The earthquake resulted in more than 6,000 deaths and over 30,000 injuries.

9. Isaac Asimov was an American writer and professor of biochemistry at Boston University. He is best known for the Foundation series and robot stories.

10. Yokai is a catchall Japanese word for ghosts, demons, monsters, shapeshifters, tricksters, and other kinds of supernatural beings and mysterious phenomena. Yokai interact with the human world and spark common notions of frightful things.

11. Dualism: According to René Descartes that the world comprises two distinct and incompatible classes of substance: *res extensa*, or extended substance, which extends through space; and *res cogitans*, or thinking substance, which has no extension in space.

12. Echo dot also known as Alexa is a voice-controlled virtual assistant. It is used to voice-control electronic home appliances, stay connected and entertained.

13. Immortan Joe is a fictional character and the main antagonist of the 2015 film *Mad Max: Fury Road*. He's a maniacal war lord, dictator and slave owner who uses women as breeding stock and doesn't accept when they question him.

14. Imperator Furiosa is a fictional character in the 2015 film *Mad Max: Fury Road* and the 2024 prequel film *Furiosa*

15. Nux is one of the main characters in *Mad Max: Fury Road*, portrayed by Nicholas Hoult. He is a member of Immortan Joe's army of War Boys and lives in the settlement known as The Citadel, but later allies himself with Max Rockatansky and Imperator Furiosa after feeling responsible for Angharad's death. He also forms a bond with Capable.

16. Masochism is the enjoyment of an activity that appears to be painful or tedious.

17. A gynoid is anything that resembles or pertains to the female human form.²⁰⁰

18. Replicants are hologram programmes much like Siri but they can manifest their appearance in the real world. In *Blade Runner*(2017) programmers sold beautiful replicants as artificial wives.

19. The Bechdel Test, or Bechdel-Wallace Test, sometimes called the Mo Movie Measure or Bechdel Rule is a simple test which names the following three criteria: (1) that at least two women are featured, (2) that these women talk to each other, and (3) that they discuss something other than a man.

20. The Waterphone is a musical instrument. It is used in a variety of movies and albums, the instrument is often associated with otherworldly, mysterious, and/or suspenseful moments. Its haunting sound is said to be reminiscent of a humpback whale's call. The waterphone's soul purpose is to evoke feelings of dread and danger.

21. The Iron Throne in *Game of Thrones* series is more of an ideology than a throne of power. In reality anyone who sits on the throne does not have the authority which the throne is supposed to give.

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