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Representations of the body in British science-fiction novels from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century: a study of Edward Bulwer-Lytton's the coming race, H.G. Wells' the time machine and Aldous Huxley's brave new world

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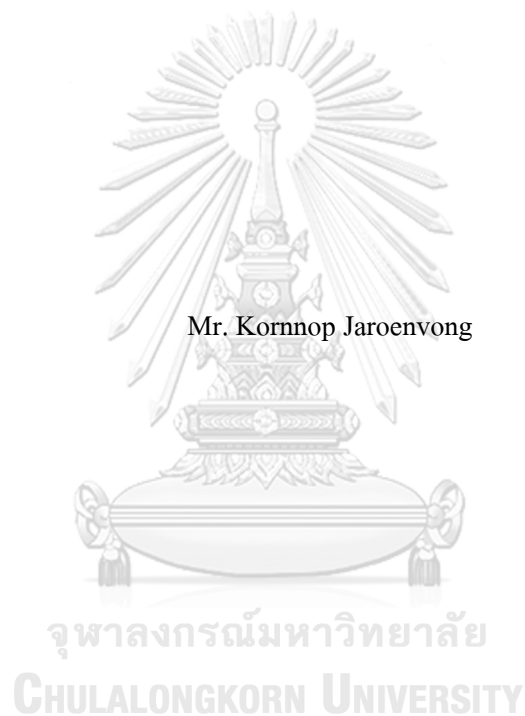
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REPRESENTATIONS OF THE BODY IN BRITISH SCIENCE-FICTION NOVELS FROM
THE LATE NINETEENTH TO THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY: A STUDY OF
EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON'S *THE COMING RACE*, H.G. WELLS' *THE TIME
MACHINE* AND ALDOUS HUXLEY'S *BRAVE NEW WORLD*



A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in English
Department of English
FACULTY OF ARTS
Chulalongkorn University
Academic Year 2020
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ภาพแทนร่างกายในนวนิยายแนววิทยาศาสตร์ของอังกฤษจากยุคปลายศตวรรษที่ 19 ถึงต้นศตวรรษ
ที่ 20: การศึกษาเรื่อง *เดอะ คัมมิง เรซ* ของ เอ็ดเวิร์ด บัลเวอร์-ลีตตัน *เดอะ ไซม์ แมชชีน* ของ เอช จี
เวลส์ และ *เบรฟ นิว เวิลด์* ของ อัลคิส ฮักซลีย์



วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาอักษรศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต
สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ ภาควิชาภาษาอังกฤษ
คณะอักษรศาสตร์ จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย
ปีการศึกษา 2563
ลิขสิทธิ์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

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ศตวรรษที่ 19 ถึงต้นศตวรรษที่ 20: การศึกษาเรื่อง *เดอะ คัมมิง เรซ* ของ เอ็ดเวิร์ด บัลเวอร์-
ลิตตัน *เดอะ ไทม์ แมชชีน* ของ เอช จี เวลส์ และ *เบรฟ นิว เวิลด์* ของ อัลดัส ฮักซลีย์. (

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE BODY IN BRITISH SCIENCE-FICTION NOVELS

FROM THE LATE NINETEENTH TO THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY: A

STUDY OF EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON'S *THE COMING RACE*, H.G. WELLS' *THE*

TIME MACHINE AND ALDOUS HUXLEY'S *BRAVE NEW WORLD*) อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก :

ผศ. ดร.ณิศา ตีรณสวัสดิ์

นักวิจารณ์เสนอแนะว่าตัวละครที่ไม่ใช่มนุษย์ส่วนใหญ่ในนวนิยายแนววิทยาศาสตร์ของ
อังกฤษในยุคปลายคริสต์ศตวรรษที่ 19 สะท้อนความแปลกแยกทางสังคมและความกลัวเชิงวัฒนธรรม
ที่มาจากความเสื่อมสลายด้านร่างกาย จิตใจ และศีลธรรม อย่างไรก็ตาม วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ศึกษาการ
นำเสนอภาพแทนร่างกายในนวนิยายแนววิทยาศาสตร์ของอังกฤษสามเรื่องที่ทำให้มุมมองเชิงสมมติฐาน
เกี่ยวกับมนุษย์ในอนาคต ได้แก่ *เดอะ คัมมิง เรซ* (1871) ของ เอ็ดเวิร์ด บัลเวอร์-ลิตตัน *เดอะ ไทม์ แมชชีน*
(1895) ของ เอช จี เวลส์ และ *เบรฟ นิว เวิลด์* (1932) ของ อัลดัส ฮักซลีย์ โดยใช้แนวคิดหลังมนุษย์
นิยมเชิงวิพากษ์ในช่วงคริสต์ศตวรรษที่ 20 และ 21 ซึ่งพยายามหักล้างแนวคิดที่ยึดมนุษย์เป็นศูนย์กลาง
และเน้นย้ำความสำคัญของความเป็นอื่นที่ไม่ใช่มนุษย์ วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้แสดงให้เห็นว่าการหลอม
รวมกันระหว่างร่างกายมนุษย์และสิ่งอื่นที่ไม่ใช่มนุษย์ เช่น เครื่องจักร และสัตว์ ได้สร้างอัตลักษณ์ใหม่
ที่กำลังเกิดขึ้น ซึ่งทำให้ภาพลักษณ์ในอุดมคติของมนุษย์ผิดเพี้ยนและความเชื่อเกี่ยวกับมนุษย์ว่าเป็น
ศูนย์กลางอำนาจอันยิ่งใหญ่และแนวคิดแบบชั่วคราวข้ามระหว่างสิ่งที่เป็ธรรมชาติและไม่เป็น
ธรรมชาติถูกสั่นคลอน ขณะที่เรื่อง *เดอะ คัมมิง เรซ* นำเสนอภาพร่างกายกระแสไฟฟ้าของสิ่งมีชีวิต
คล้ายมนุษย์ที่มีปีกจักรกลและพลังงานไฟฟ้าในร่างกายได้ใกล้เคียงสิ่งมีชีวิตครึ่งหุ่นยนต์หรือไซบอร์ก
ร่างกาย “สัตว์มนุษย์” ในเรื่อง *เดอะ ไทม์ แมชชีน* แสดงให้เห็นว่าการผสมผสานระหว่างมนุษย์และสัตว์
นำไปสู่จุดจบของความเชื่อแบบเก่าเรื่องรูปและลักษณะความเป็นมนุษย์ ในเรื่อง *เบรฟ นิว เวิลด์* การใช้
เทคโนโลยีชีวภาพสุดโต่งช่วงต้นคริสต์ศตวรรษที่ 20 นำไปสู่การนำเสนอร่างกายที่มนุษย์สร้างขึ้นใน
รูปของมนุษย์โคลนที่ตัวตนและความปรารถนาถูกประกอบสร้างและบงการโดยรัฐ วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้
เสนอแนวคิดว่าการเปลี่ยนแปลงแก่นเรื่องจากเรื่องความเสื่อมสลายไปเป็นการต่อต้านแนวคิดมนุษย์
เป็นศูนย์กลางนั้น ไม่ได้เกิดขึ้นอย่างฉับพลัน เนื่องจากภาพร่างกายหลังมนุษย์นิยมยังพบได้ในนวนิยาย
แนววิทยาศาสตร์ของอังกฤษตั้งแต่ยุคปลายคริสต์ศตวรรษที่ 19 และพัฒนาต่อเนื่องเรื่อยมาจนมีภาพที่
ชัดเจนขึ้นในต้นคริสต์ศตวรรษที่ 20 ช่วงที่วิทยาศาสตร์และเทคโนโลยีเจริญก้าวหน้า

สาขาวิชา ภาษาอังกฤษ

ลายมือชื่อนิสิต

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ลายมือชื่อ อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก

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Kornnop Jaroenvong : REPRESENTATIONS OF THE BODY IN BRITISH SCIENCE-FICTION NOVELS FROM THE LATE NINETEENTH TO THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY: A STUDY OF EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON'S *THE COMING RACE*, H.G. WELLS' *THE TIME MACHINE* AND ALDOUS HUXLEY'S *BRAVE NEW WORLD*.
Advisor: Asst. Prof. NIDA TIRANASAWSDI, Ph.D.

Many critics have suggested that most of the non-human characters in late-Victorian British science-fiction novels reflect social alienation and the cultural fear of physical, mental and moral degeneration. However, by relying on the concept of critical posthumanism in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that attempts to debunk anthropocentrism and emphasise the significance of non-human otherness, this thesis studies representations of the body in three British science-fiction novels: Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* (1871), H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1895) and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), which provide speculative visions of what humans will be in the future. It demonstrates that an assemblage of the human body and non-human others such as machines and animals creates a new, ambiguous identity that disfigures an ideal image of man and destabilises the anthropocentric belief of human hegemony and natural-unnatural dualism. While *The Coming Race* presents the electric body of the humanoids with mechanised wings and electric energy under their skin as a cyborg-like creature, the "humanimal" body in *The Time Machine* illustrates how the human-animal amalgam leads to the end of the human form and aspect. In *Brave New World*, extreme bio-technology in the early twentieth century leads to the man-made body of the cloned humans whose self and desire are constructed and manipulated by the state. Instead of a clear-cut thematic transition from degeneration to anti-anthropocentrism, this thesis thus argues that the posthuman body can be found in late nineteenth-century British science fiction and continues to gain its clearer depiction in the early twentieth century during the techno-scientific progress.

Field of Study: English

Student's Signature

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Advisor's Signature

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Kornnop Jaroenvong

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The end of the nineteenth century has been chiefly known for culminating changes in science and technology which drastically affected the way people thought how the future of humankind would be like. As Britain thrived on industrial and imperial expansion during the Victorian era, its struggle in this capitalistic competition with other European nations to accumulate economic wealth can reflect the idea of progressive evolution. Along with evolutionary hypotheses, there was also the formation of racial differences in which human beings were classified into multiple racial origins and the white European people regarded themselves as the superior and civilised ruler of the non-white. Following the continuous progress in techno-science and the racial conflicts between the colonisers and the colonised, with the introduction of degeneration theory, fears of socio-cultural and racial decline could be felt in late nineteenth-century Britain. The term degeneration derives from the Latin word “degeneratus” meaning being away from its kind or race and also used in the late nineteenth century as a reversal of the evolution theory. It refers to the state of returning backward in terms of biology, morality, culture and art. Modernisation and influx of foreigners might biologically and culturally imperil British people. A number of British writers observed this collective anxiety by creating fictional characters of non-human, deviant and sometimes monstrous entities in rivalry against human beings. With their anomalous body including chimeric, animal-like, primitive and criminalistic traits, these non-human or quasi-human creatures were interpreted as metaphors of degeneration that would potentially lead to human extinction.

In the past few decades, many critics have suggested that the body, both in fiction and reality, can be a socio-political construct rather than a fixed subject. Late twentieth-century thinker on the human body and social discipline Michel Foucault mentions in his article “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” (1971) that the body is “the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a dissociated self (adopting the illusion of a substantial unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration” (83). The natural physique traditionally recognised as a house for the soul by Christians and humanists, and scientifically and philosophically seen as the product of personality has recently been considered as a mutative surface or a material object that can be “inscribed,” situated and broken into pieces by socio-historical contexts and political discourses. Foucault also proposes how individual bodies are tacitly forged in a certain milieu which can be politically manipulated rather than being innately situated. In other words, socio-cultural and political environments play a part in shaping bodily experiences and behaviours of social members. His concept about the body has become a theoretical tool that offers a new dimension of truth about human identity and inspires many scholars to rethink about possible implications of power relations in the body, society, culture and politics.

Although the deconstructive analysis of the body, notably gender, race and health, mostly flourished from and were applied in the late twentieth-century contexts, some scholars have looked into the construction of the body in earlier time. The nineteenth century was a period in which the body was under progressive change and management. In *The Citizen's Body: Desire, Health and the Social in Victorian England* (2007), Pamela K. Gilbert has reviewed English historical contexts and taken the Victorians' reform bills during the 1830s as a milestone of new bodily practices to

present how the body was governmentally medicalised, nationalised and rendered as the “social” body situating the English citizens against the foreign bodies notably the Irish and Indian people. As a result of the reforms, “Britishness equals Englishness equals...the healthy (clean, isolated), white, masculine, middle-class body” which was “the index and metaphor of the nation” (Gilbert 9). What it means to be an English body—the healthy, sanitised, cultured, well-behaved and domesticated body—was thus regarded as the quality of being a normal human citizen as well. It can be suggested from the making of the social body that the non-English people or those who fail to possess characteristics of English citizens were deemed deviant, diseased, dirty, uncultured, misbehaving and homeless, and excluded from the typical human realm. This dualistic implication of English-non-English, human-non-human dichotomy indicates that the Victorian view of the normal body and the deviant one is discursive, not only echoing Foucault’s idea of the body and hidden political agenda but also revealing complications and controversies of the body in the late nineteenth century. However, many Victorians seemed, more or less, unaware of the fact that human bodies, behaviours and desires of the masses were not entirely individually made but governmentally and socially intruded and controlled both in public and private spheres, and most of the people were ridden by fears and anxieties about physical, mental and moral degeneration.

Degeneration Discourses and Representations of the Anomalous Body in Late Nineteenth-Century Britain

Victorian fears of decaying human wholeness caused by moral, physical and mental corruptions were culminated in the late nineteenth century in which social

movements, the urban sprawl and the rise of scientific practices resulting from the industrial progress were witnessed. Despite massive industrialisation in England, the transition to modernity and urbanity entailed new, unfamiliar and threatening surroundings mostly perceived as a negative change. In addition, health issues like ailments and epidemics “[lay] at the heart of fears of national degeneration” as “physical symptoms” became “broader evidence of decay and decline in morality, art, and the economic well-being of the nation” (Marshall 114). Due to a dramatic increase in population in urbanised areas of England, especially in London, the influx of people entailed crowded, unhygienic, unhealthy and even fatal conditions for human bodies.

The culmination of fears about possible moral and biological regression by humankind could be the result of late nineteenth-century degeneration hypotheses proposed by thinkers whose works were influenced by evolutionary concepts. Many critics have suggested that one of the radical paradigm shifts based on science in the nineteenth century is Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution which led to a new understanding of nature together with new racial, biological and human-hierarchical concepts. Although Darwin’s evolution hypothesis in *On the Origin of Species* (1859) indicated the human advancement from barbaric apes to sophisticated homo sapiens, its rational truth challenged the human’s divine origin and reinforced the possibility of a biological collapse to animals (Margree and Randall 218). In addition, his theory depicted an intense competition of living species as a “war of nature” chiefly waged by human beings against other non-human species in order to achieve all necessary supplies (Marshall 54). The nature of everything in the world, including the history of mankind, works in a transformative, cyclical manner as “this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless has

forms most beautiful and most beautiful and wonderful have been, and are being, evolved” (Darwin qtd. in Marshall 55). This implication of the cyclical transformation of things indicates that human species can either evolve forward or backward for “there was...no guarantee that man was...the best-developed life-species” (Marshall 55). Although some Victorian critics saw this theory as full of absurdly “new ideas” that “[w]e were all monkeys before we were men, and molecules before we were monkeys!” (qtd. in Marshall 56), with this circle of life, it rather created fears of biological decline that humans might descend from their privileged position over non-human animals and possibly revert to primates one day. While human collaboration, including the monogenic view of universal decency of all humans, is the key survival tactic that Charles Darwin advocated, in *The Principles of Biology* (1864), Herbert Spencer arguably believed in the fittest, the best adapted competitors who successfully reproduce and outlive the other species in this course of evolution. Spencer’s framework, the ruling of the fittest and the elimination of the unfit, later influenced the formation of racial differences in which human beings were classified into multiple races and ethnics with an underlying superior-inferior relationship. The idea of being “fit” here does not necessarily mean physical strength but rather a genetic modification of a life form to procreate an offspring with a body suitable for a certain environment. Those with immense physical power but prone to or lacking genetic adjustment for living in unfriendly surroundings might soon be extinct. The former race or species can face racial and biological decline by being outnumbered or genetically mixed with other more adaptive species.

Scientific and technological breakthroughs were a positive movement that allowed England to justify their stance of being one of the most advanced, civilised

nations. Nonetheless, due to a precaution about racial regression and competition of survival implied in evolution theories, degeneration discourses were formed by late-Victorian thinkers. Although it was just a hypothesis, human extinction seemed probable as many writings, in scientific, philosophical and literary forms, pointed to social incidents such as crimes, prostitution, stigmatisation of foreign immigrants believed to carry unwanted biological traits, and hysteria which reflected the impurity of the body and soul. With possible fears and anxieties of extinction, degenerationists revealed signs of decay, stigmatised and segregated the convicted degenerates from society. The body obviously played an important role in theorising degeneration as it was easy to be noticed and judged as evidence of physical abnormalities mirroring inner depravity. For example, in *The Criminal Man* (1876), Cesare Lombroso, an Italian physician and psychiatrist, took some distinguished physical characteristics as a criterion to determine a criminal and claimed that criminality was based on biological, psychological and sociological factors instead of individual free will. It can be said that Lombroso generalised the “born criminals” as being mentally and intellectually crippled through the analysis of their “anomalies” or physical and psychological deviations (Lombroso et al. 68).

According to Lombroso’s “biocriminological” analysis and his empirical evidence of the body, physical characteristics of “born criminals” are in common with those of atavistic or primitive people who have enormous nose, projecting lower jaws, big cheekbones, large eye sockets, dark skin with curly hair, bulging ears, and long arms with left-handedness and low sensitivity to pain (Lombroso et al. 73). In addition, Lombroso found from the study of several ferocious lawbreakers that they were morally and affectively senseless, lazy, inattentive, conceited, aggressive and

unable to feel guilty and think logically in advance (Lombroso et al. 73). Such an assumption of innate turpitude, as some critics have argued, revealed his humanitarian point of view that criminality is comparable to intrinsic diseases which need to be clinically examined and individually treated during incarceration. In other words, instead of a product of individual free will, moral degeneracy as presented through the criminal body is indeed a product of biological, psychological and sociological milieus. Thus, criminals, in Lombroso's view, are inhumane by nature and they should not be severely punished but rather imprisoned as congenital deviants to protect the outside, normal world from criminal infection and impure heredity. It can be interpreted that criminality is permanently "inscribed" in and on the body of criminals and programmed through biological and environmental factors which cannot be altered by civilised education and rationality: "exterior corporeal features mirror interior moral states" (Lombroso et al. 69). Having portrayed the body as an indicator of crime, insanity and moral corruption, Lombroso's theory of born criminality was used, for example, to hypothesise the criminal's possible identity in the scandalous crime of Whitechapel, London in 1888, committed by a serial killer who perversely and brutally cut up the female victims' organs. These predicted traits were controversially identified as "a Russian, Jewish anarchist, a policeman, a local denizen of Whitechapel, an erotic maniac of the 'upper classes' of society, a religious fanatic, a mad doctor, a scientific sociologist . . . and a woman" (Walkowitz 551). The suspect could be anyone especially one with a social stigma of being violent, mentally deranged or absent from sanity, which satirically includes a sociologist and a woman. The criminal's physical description was drawn from racial, occupational, mental, and religious attributes which were extraordinary for a normal human to possess and

undeniably share with mad, perverse and inhumane characteristics of the criminal body as observed in Lombroso's *The Criminal Man*. In addition to the poor living condition, London in the late nineteenth century became known for crimes and disruptions of which people were extremely scared. From this physical assessment of criminals, the deviant, criminalised body acted as a horrifying spectre that haunted the Victorians and threatened their lives.

The degeneration hypothesis was then expanded from bodily regression to cultural decline by a German writer and social critic Max Nordau who discussed how socio-cultural and political phenomena endanger decent art and culture in *Degeneration* (1895). Unlike Lombroso's hypothesis of physical degeneration, Nordau's thesis was mainly about the condemnation of improper arts and writings, notorious as decadent works of degenerate creators, which conveyed cultural decline. This cultural degeneration, however, had something to do with the mentally ill and the degenerates, whose abnormally deformed body reflected mental fallacy. The abnormal body, in other words, can be a carrier of impure ailments such as depravity, hysteria, and perversion which can imperil the normal body. Under the scrutiny of physical and cognitive disintegration, the body is, again, used as a medium for the manifestation of biological and psychological deviations signifying madness and decadence. As Nordau put it, it is too conceited to "preach to fanatics of the insane tendencies of fashions in art and literature, on their enthusiasm for error and foolishness..." because the degenerates' "mental derangement is too deep-seated, must be abandoned in their inexorable fate" and it is too late and impossible to "cure" them (550-551). These degenerates were implicitly stigmatised as unwanted human others, the mentally and physically sick people unable to fit in the modern world. As

implied by Nordau, they were too ignorant to be polished, disciplined and worthy of social acceptance. In order to morally and physically sanitise the society, they should be “abandoned” as outcasts whose behaviour was deemed a lethal disease corrupting the society as a whole. Unlike Lombroso whose physical degeneration was crudely drawn from an empirical assessment in the physiognomy of criminals, Nordau introduced degeneration of the late nineteenth century in terms of bodily symptoms and associated the decadent characteristics with declining morality, art and culture. Thus, the body and external features of the degenerates, especially in Lombroso’s hypothesis of bio-criminology, seemed to easily infuse people with fears of bodily decline, the undesirable consequence most Victorians avoided and excluded from dominant culture.

Representations and beliefs of the body from the Western worldview have been historically, philosophically and culturally changing over time, due to biological and socio-cultural differences. In examining the body through an anthropological and historical lens, John Robb and Oliver J.T. Harris discuss in their article “The Body in History: Constructing a Deep-Time Cultural History” (2015) the complex images and ontologies of the body of Europeans. They investigate “body worlds,” or representations of the body in different cultures, locales and historical periods, from multiple aspects in order to illustrate the dynamic changes of bodily representation by giving a broad overview of body images from the human-animal body or fluid body in the stone age to posthuman cyborgs in the twenty-first century. They found that these views about the body in European history are simultaneously shaped by social, cultural and geological factors and induce the concept of multimodality which suggests that there are different, perhaps contradictory, concepts of the body (Robb

and Harris 13-14). The way they reinvestigate the socio-historical fact of the human body as an unfixed entity which changes in relation to its context may contribute to the posthuman idea of reimagining the possible notion of life forms and the body which is not solely fixed in the humanistic framework. The changing perception of the body, as Robb and Harris suggest, is not a crisis per se, but this conceptual change is problematised by conservative thinkers because they fail to acknowledge that the human body is no longer “stable” and “unquestioned” (15). The nineteenth century was the significant period of a paradigm shift about the human body. According to Robb and Harris in *The Body in History* (2013), the medieval concept of the microcosmic body created by God was changed into the nineteenth-century concept of the modern body as a site of scientific knowledge. Since the study of human physiques was conducted in medical and scientific fields, the mid-nineteenth century “meta-theory” perceived the body as a materialistic entity with mechanisms (194). Scientific practices on the human body in the nineteenth century notably started when Charles Darwin studied the human species, Sigmund Freud pioneered psychoanalysis and Friedrich Nietzsche declared the death of God and the collapse of Christian morality. Therefore, the divine human body was brought down to the earth and rigorously examined to reveal more about life.

Robb and Harris observed that in twentieth-century Europe, bio-technology partly engendered the binary opposition between the natural and unnatural, cultural and non-cultural body which is worrisome because it leads to a conflict between normality and abnormality of the body (208). As they assert, “[n]ew technologies and practices constitute new kinds of bodies, but we should emphasise the *familiarity* of change in contrast to the assumptions of stability” (210). To resolve the bodily crisis,

people should acknowledge the “change” of the body instead of clinging onto its “stability.” Again, multimodality or mixed perspectives about the human body can dissolve the clear-cut binary opposition of nature and culture. From the humanistic view, the human body is seen as an autonomous, rational and superior entity while the opposite body such as that of the disabled people, soulless machines and animals is seen as a deviant body. The deviant body with its lack of humanness belongs to worthless outcasts and thus becomes exploited and controlled. To look beyond the anthropocentric assumption of the human body as opposed to the non-human, a posthuman way of reviewing and revealing the posthuman history of the human body as co-evolving with the non-human deserves special attention.

Towards Posthumanism and the Posthuman Body

As seen in the degeneration discourses and negative representations of the deviant body in the late nineteenth century, it can be inferred that the fears of threatening otherness are based on anthropocentric or man-centred worldview which prioritises human well-being within the Great Chain of Being. In addition to the way humans have created hierarchy among beings to put human species on top, by observing carefully within the human world itself, some groups of people are more noteworthy than the others. Many theorists of degeneration unanimously condemned the degenerates’ ill, immoral and perverse genetics as a tainted spot of humanity or even equivalent to a lethal, disgraceful epidemic which could lead to the fall of human civilisation, and resorted to a eugenic practice which only regarded the healthy, plague-free citizens and discarded the sick, diseased pariahs. Such panicking, slanted discourses could be said to result from the anthropocentric reading of the non-human

or not-quite-human characters as fearful non-human entities existing to downgrade and terrorise humans. As many critics believe, anthropocentrism, the Western philosophy that regards humans as the centre of the universe, is influenced by the Biblical Creation story in which the divine image and sovereignty over the non-human is bestowed on humans by God (Boslaugh). Non-human entities which include animals and natural resources, in the view of traditional Christianity, are created by God to be exploited by humans and are inferior since they have no souls and reasons. In Pierre Auger's article "Contemporary Anthropocentrism: On Science and Traditional Cultures" (1980), anthropocentrism, as opposed to Darwin's evolution, is not just the centrality of humans in general but of "certain early tribes or ethnic groups considered themselves as the centre of the world" (223). Auger also observes that humans rationalise their superiority over and distinguish themselves from other non-human beings through cultural evolution, the "building of society and culture," instead of biological evolution which includes other non-human beings (223-224). This anthropocentric concept becomes problematic as it permits the exploitations of the non-human and is similar to "speciesism and human chauvinism"¹ (Kopnina et al. 111). Paul Crutzen, a chemist and essayist on climate change, coined the term "Anthropocene" as the era in which steam engines were invented in 1784 as a result of the Industrial Revolution in Britain and made nineteenth-century industrialisation in Britain the beginning point of climate change (Morgan 609). Although one might use the term to condemn humans' carelessness towards ecological well-being, it

¹ According to Helen Kopnina, Haydn Washington, Bron Taylor and John J. Piccolo in "Anthropocentrism: More than Just a Misunderstood Problem" (2018), the concept of chauvinism originates from the humanist anthropocentric paradigm of the dominant, patriarchal Westerners who legitimise human species' exploitation of other non-humans (111).

reinforces anthropocentrism, the paradigm of human supremacy which is powerful enough to affect the whole environment.

Still, some human beings are worth little in the anthropocentric era. As some indisposed citizens are deemed less than human, the fear of a tainted human species leads to the belief in eugenics which maintains superior heredity as the solution for saving human race from “racial degeneration” (Thorsheim 68-79). Eugenicists clearly demonstrated how the Victorians utilised medical control of unwanted heredity to justify an anthropocentric stance and translated their fears into reproductive practices in which the fittest people, living in well-nurtured conditions and carrying good genetic traits, were allowed to reproduce their healthy, disease-free offspring for the nation in order to prevent such racial degeneration. Although the selection of the fittest genes is acceptable for the survival of human species, it fortifies human-non-human dualism which antagonises and marginalises the unfit citizens or degenerates, namely the diseased, the impoverished, the mentally abnormal and the perverted, in a lower rank of political outsiders and disables.

Anthropocentric philosophy constructed and standardised the body of mankind by relying on the classical humanistic notion of “man as the measure of all things” originally made distinguished by the Greek philosopher Protagoras and later illustrated by the well-known Renaissance artist and sage Leonardo da Vinci in “Vitruvian Man” as shown in Figure 1. This illustration of “Man,” especially the Western male who is aligned at the centre of the circle with perfect bodily proportion, despite being considered as artistic reference, has been used as a prototypically ideal body of human beings to corroborate the famous concept of *mens sana in corpore sano* (or a healthy mind in a healthy body) which also implies the discourse of

emotional sanity reflected through the body. A feminist critic Rosi Braidotti regards the Vitruvian Man as a symbol of the humanistic dogma which “combines the biological, discursive and moral expansion of human capabilities into an idea of teleological, ordained rational progress” as she calls it a “high-humanistic creed” prevalent in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries (13). From this universal image of mankind, Braidotti echoes Orwell’s satire of human hierarchy that “[w]e are all humans, but some of us are just more mortal than others” (15). This statement implies that White Europeans, especially male westerners, regard themselves as “the measure of all things” and situate their socio-cultural and historical narratives at the centre of the world and even the universe while those, including females, non-westerners, non-whites, animals, who fail to possess universal human traits are deemed inferior assets of man.

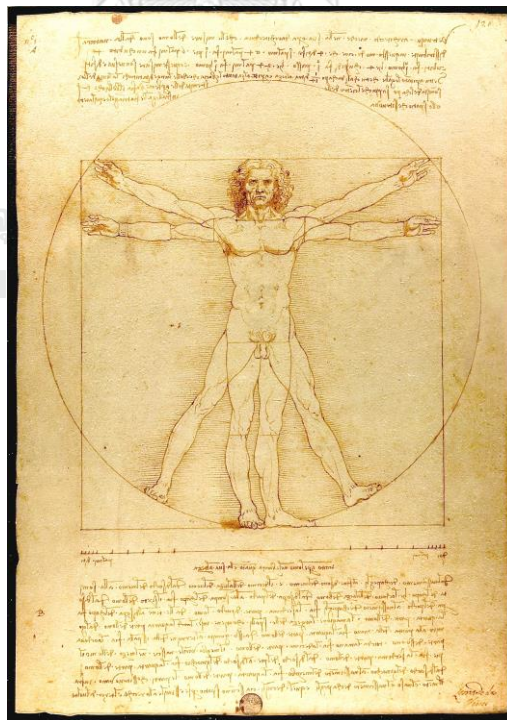


Figure 1. *Vitruvian Man*, 1492, *Leonardo da Vinci*

Source: www.lucnix.be. 9 Aug. 2007 (photograph)

In socio-political reality, racism is an obvious example of bodily differences caused by the anthropocentric scheme of colonialism and biological determinism influenced by evolution hypotheses and empirical science. The concept of racial distinction was recognised from 1500 to 1800 when great European empires, including Great Britain, enjoyed their colonising power using bodily control, as in clothing, to segregate sexes and classes. Racial recognition during the modern period was not necessarily “biological” until the late nineteenth century in which the defamatory term of “Negro” emerged (Robb and Harris 186). Despite some scholarly attempts to reveal how humans were non-human animal descendants by using Darwin’s evolution theory, there was an assertion, in the nineteenth-century racial competition, that particular groups of humans are more “unique, or more perfect, while others were closer to animals” (Harris and Robb 187). Many anthropologists rely on empirical evidences to assume that the Negro races stand between the white races and the simians, the “advanced” and the “backwards” (Harris and Robb 187). Nineteenth-century biological determinism and empirical science thus became an anthropocentric instrument for classifying humans and legitimising white European biological dominion as some thinkers have carefully provided empirical evidence to show that not all humans are close to primitive apes by focusing on physiognomy of races and claimed that the white European race is distantly related to chimpanzees. From the skull comparison in Figure 2, the young chimpanzee’s head is more similar to the Negro’s than the top-ranked Greek skull which suggests anatomical superiority (Robb and Harris 189). The Negro skull being placed in the middle not only emphasises the European’s biological distance from the non-human species and legitimacy of their loftier power but also the Negro’s degenerate physique. This

empirical data, despite its racist implication, was persuasive enough to lead to the assumption that those non-whites or non-Europeans, especially black people, were less physically and mentally advanced and more intimate to savage animals.

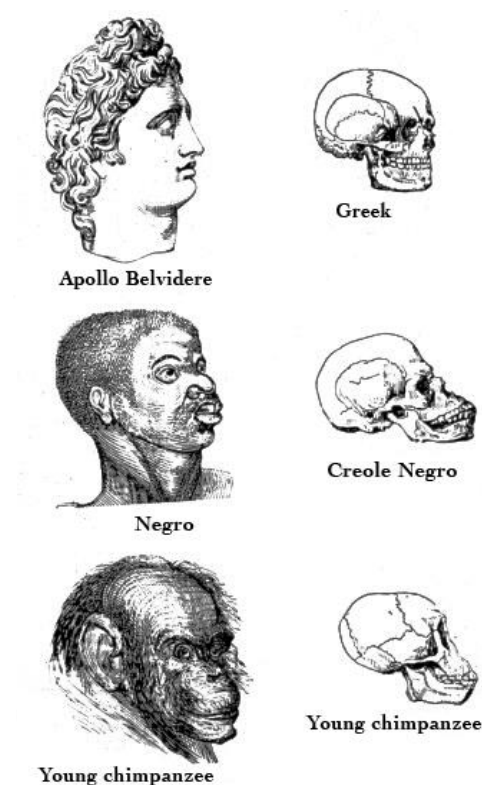


Figure 2. Illustration from *Indigenous Races of the Earth* (1857)

written by Josiah Clark Nott and George Robins Gliddon,
upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8b/Races_and_skulls.png.

A number of late-twentieth and twenty-first-century thinkers, having witnessed social, political and environmental problems which were likely to come from human conducts, have started to question the humanistic or anthropocentric worldview about the supremacy of human species, especially male, white Westerners. Their criticisms of the very concept of human power and definition, and emphases on the non-human, namely animals and machines, became a group of ideas loosely

labelled as posthumanism² which was a critical theory drawn from anti-humanist and postmodern grounds. Humanism started to be seriously questioned by anti-humanists like Jacques Lacan and Michel Foucault. In “The Ends of Man” (1968), Jacques Derrida argues that an objection to anthropocentrism or humanism by not mentioning it is a wrong reaction against it. Instead of avoidance, he suggests that anthropocentric issues should be talked about in order to deconstruct them in terms of their “language” and core concepts (135 qtd. in Badmington 14). Influenced by the challenge against humanism, Ihab Hassan loosely uses the term “post-humanism” in “Prometheus as Performer: Toward a Posthumanist Culture” (1977) in which he proposes that the “human form,” together with its “desire” and “representations,” needs to be “revisioned” (843). That is, humanism will be outdated and “we must helplessly call post-humanism” (843).

In addition to the attack on humanism, the disbelief of meta- or grand-narratives³ among French postmodern philosophers in the 1970s, especially Jean François Lyotard who contributed to the idea of “postmodernism” in *La Condition Postmoderne* or *The Postmodern Condition* (1979), is also the founding concept. Truths about the human body and species can be deconstructed and later pave the way for critical posthumanism which has been fruitfully discussed in many areas such as

² As Scott Jeffrey suggests in *The Posthuman Body in Superhero* (2016), the term was loosely coined for different aspects. On one hand, it is usually associated with transhumanism which is believed by many critics to be derived from the age of Enlightenment and connote human perfection through physical enhancement. Transhumanism, a theoretical branch under the posthuman umbrella, seems to promote the humanistic idea of human centrality through technology while posthumanism, specifically critical posthumanism as proposed by Rosi Braidotti in *The Posthuman* (2013), attempts to challenge humanism which addresses human importance and regards non-humans as tools for human success by relying on anti-humanistic grounds.

³ In Lyotard’s view, postmodernism means the “incredulity toward metanarratives” (xxiv) which include any theory or paradigm constituted and widely accepted as truth. Postmodern thinkers saw dominant knowledge, belief or fact in a sceptical manner since the narratives, which can be found in scientific knowledge, religious teachings, history, and cultures, do not entirely seem universally truthful and unchangeable. In fact, they were partly biased and discursively constructed to represent the universal truth.

philosophy, science and literature especially science-fiction which raises questions like “what will the human *be* like tomorrow?” (Nayar 3) and reimagines new forms of human-non-human hybrids known as the posthuman. N. Katherine Hayles, another posthumanism thinker, notes in *How We Become Posthuman* (1999) that “becoming a posthuman means much more than having prosthetic devices grafted onto one’s body”: it “means envisioning humans as information-processing machines with fundamental similarities to other kinds of information-processing machines, especially intelligent computers” (246). Unlike Hayles’ specific description of the posthuman as a computer-like life form, Robert Pepperell broadly defines the posthuman beings in *The Posthuman Manifesto* (2005) as those who “regard their own being as embodied in an extended technological world” while “[h]umanists saw themselves as distinct beings, in an antagonistic relationship with their surroundings” (8). Pepperell previously elaborates in *The Posthuman Condition* (2003) that the prefix “post-” suggests the end of the humanistic period and thus means ‘after humanism’ or the reform of conventional views of humans which dissolves the line between “biology” and “technology” (iv). In contrast to Pepperell, Neil Badmington claims in “Theorising Posthumanism” (2003) that “post-” in posthumanism has nothing to do with time⁴ and is similar to how postmodernity is the “re-writing” of modernity (20-21). That is, it is the re-writing or “critical practice” of humanism (Badmington 22). It can be concluded that criticism of humanism has formed what is called “critical posthumanism” to deconstruct the traditional humanistic worldview

⁴ Posthumanism can be the condition that happened both “before” and “after” the era of humanism. Badmington concludes that posthumanism is based on postmodern ideas, especially those of Derrida and Lyotard, which are the reinvestigation and direct criticism of modernity and meta-narratives. Thereby, postmodernity can be seen in older periods before it was theorised or known. Likewise, posthumanism, the criticism and re-examination of anthropocentrism, can be seen before humanism was on the decline.

about human hegemony and exclusiveness, and proposes that humans are indeed entangled with non-humans and their surroundings (Nayar 4).

With the attempt to defy what it means to be human and define what it means to be posthuman by many critics, the body is thus re-examined beyond anthropocentric measurement. Donna Haraway, an American philosopher of feminism and biology, proposes the concept of being a cyborg, a hybrid being that fits the posthuman identity and defies anthropocentric dualism, human-non-human, nature-culture boundaries, in “A Manifesto for Cyborgs” (1985) which has become an often-cited source for scholars to reread the human body in the technological era where the organic physique is revealed to be co-evolved with non-human machines and to lose its authenticity. Another thinker of posthumanism following Haraway’s notion of the cyborg is Rosi Braidotti whose work, *The Posthuman* (2013), is developed from both anti-humanist and feminist stance in seeing the human in Anthropocene as a problematic assumption. Humans are, indeed, proven to be just a small entity in the universe. Braidotti also draws on Haraway’s concept of human-non-human coevolution to show that human existence is dependent on non-human entities. In explaining the posthuman body, these two thinkers, though Haraway refuses to be considered as a posthumanist, are well-regarded as important contributors to posthumanism. Pramod K. Nayar summed up how the body is re-viewed in *Posthumanism* (2014) that the human body, a “constructed category” made by “exclusions” from non-human beings, is in fact “constructed through a close *assemblage* and *interface* with animals, machines and environments” (56).

As the works of Haraway and Braidotti give significant insights to how the posthuman body is formulated and exists against anthropocentric dualisms, the

argument of this thesis will be based on Haraway's notion of the posthuman cyborg and companion species, and Braidotti's notions of posthuman subjectivity, becoming and post-anthropocentrism. To begin with, in Haraway's "A Manifesto for Cyborgs" (1985), the image of a cyborg, a chimera or a "theorised and fabricated hybrid[] of machine and organism" (66) with a vague identity, is used to undermine human-animal, machine-organic and virtual-material oppositions considered as dualisms framed by the anthropocentric or humanistic view. Haraway's idea about the cyborg destabilises the anthropocentric segregation of gender, race and hierarchy because the obscure identity of the cyborg—whether it is male or female, black or white, human or non-human—exists beyond human-non-human, nature-culture separations. The human-animal dichotomy, as Haraway proposes, should be firstly eliminated by the evolutionary theory and animal rights movement. Secondly, the flesh and machine distinction should become blurred by the fact that some artificial beings look more alive than humans who can become lifelessly robotic. Lastly, there should not be a sharp contrast between physical and non-physical entities as technology is sometimes invisible, but that does not mean it is not there. The dualisms of man and woman, nature and culture, reality and myth, master and slave, and body and mind are problematic when it comes to the hybrid of human, animal and machine. Thereby, Haraway suggests that the human species embrace otherness, be pluralised and live in between: "Yet to become other is to be multiple, without clear boundary, frayed, insubstantial. One is too few, but two are too many" (96). She adds that the cyborg body needs no singular identity and is beyond anthropocentric limitation, and that machine is not the other but is "us, our process, an aspect of our embodiment" (96).

Another concept in addition to the cyborg is the “companion species” in Haraway’s “The Companion Species Manifesto” (2003) which maps the complex relationship between humans and companion species or “significant otherness,” signifying the family ties between human and non-human species. This manifesto denies the humanist Anthropocene and proposes a multi-species era which Haraway calls the age of “naturecultures,” the nature-culture integration or the mutual development of technology, cyborgs, humans and other species. Such a “naturecultures” paradigm includes the integration of dichotomised fields of study: “Art and engineering are natural sibling practices for engaging companion species” (22). Instead of seeing human beings as superior to non-human others, the human and the non-human namely animals, in Haraway’s point of view, have coexisted in a non-hierarchical relationship as companion species. The domestication of wild canines can be an example of how animals actively adjusted their wild behaviours to become humans’ pets. While people regard house dogs as obedient friends, Haraway contended that these canines take “opportunistic moves” by becoming tameable for their survival (29). At the same time, human activities concerning dogs, such as breeding, change the way people live (Haraway 29). The way both humans and animals take advantage of each other ultimately establishes a companion-species relationship in which human beings obtain a dog’s loyalty and dogs can live on in an environment other than wilderness. This relationship of the two companions having adjusted their physiques and environments for their co-existence and survival implies that the anthropocentric and Biblical view of the divine origin of humans is no longer relevant in the age of technology. Haraway relates the “humanist technophilic narcissism” (33) to self-centred, hegemonic humans who treat animals and cyborgs as

their servants and tools, arguing that the obedience of the non-humans is indeed the power to negotiate their “rights” when both humans and non-humans respect, respond and pay attention to each other (53).

Moreover, Haraway extends the idea of “kinship-making”⁵ in her later essay “Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin” (2015). She reinforces the concept of kin-making and discards the idea of human dominion to solve the problem of global overpopulation: “Anthropocene is about the destruction of places and time of refuge for people and other critters” (160). Having asserted that all species in this planet co-evolve and are composed of multi-species, she proposes the age of “Chthulucene—past, present, and to come” (160), suggesting inseparable time, places and things. That is, if humans could not reproduce and came to an end, they should reconsider non-human others as their kin even though it would be “unfamiliar (outside what we thought was family or gens), uncanny, haunting and active” (Haraway 161-62) since the human and the non-human constantly response to each other. Hence, the posthuman thinking can be a solution to the fear of a degenerated human race.

In *The Posthuman* (2013), Braidotti proposes the concept of “post-anthropocentrism” which argues that anthropocentrism is problematic since it “produces a negative category of the human as an endangered species bound by fear of extinction” (96). Braidotti agrees with Haraway to guide humans into the age of multi-species where humans are just an entity in the vast space called “zoe” or a “dynamic, self-organising structure of life itself” (60). Braidotti asserts that the familiar notion of human, a rational being who is superior to all creatures and has

⁵ As Haraway observes in “The Companion Species Manifesto,” the way humans share space with dogs or take dogs as members of their family is the means to “kin-making” or making a family of multi-species (95).

supreme rights from his intelligence, should be dismissed in the post-anthropocentric condition. To envisage the posthuman subject and make the post-anthropocentric period possible, three processes of becoming posthuman should be underscored: “becoming-animal, becoming-earth and becoming-machine” (66-67). First, the becoming-animal process explains that the non-human animals should be independent from being a measure of human virtue under the anthropocentric angle and should have a life of their own in the non-hierarchical earth. Second, the course of becoming-earth redefines the earth and other non-humans based on the belief that everything is “self-organising” (86). Finally, the becoming-machine process, which is similar to the previous ones, explains that machines can be independent subjects. The idea of self-operating is influenced by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s notion of “bodies without organs” implying the human-machine relationship regardless of functionality (Braidotti 91). In short, the non-humans are no longer meaningful because of their functional quality described by humans, but they are meaningful per se.

The intersection of biology and technology not only produces human-machine or artificial beings such as cyborgs, robots and Artificial Intelligence (AI), but also introduces multi-identities to human beings. Judith Halberstam and Ira Livingston discuss posthuman bodies in their introduction to *Posthuman Bodies* (1995) claiming that perception of the body has changed in the age of technology, and that the body is no longer limited to the humanistic view as they argue that “[p]osthuman bodies are not slaves to master-discourse” (2). The human-non-human merging makes the humanistic “family of man” obsolete (Halberstam and Livingston 3). The posthuman body is the deconstruction of gender and perhaps leads to a “postgender” future as seen in the concept of “someness” which signifies a body that is not one but some: gender,

race and sexuality are not singular but plural and flexible (Halberstam and Livingston 8-9). Accordingly, the bodies outside humanistic understanding are not something to be feared but are the embodiment of the posthuman beings.

Ruination of the Anthropocentric Human Body in Science Fiction

In the mid nineteenth century, despite the remarkable prosperity of Britain and its economic and political influences during the reign of Queen Victoria, industrialisation and the laissez-faire policy had brought about poor living conditions, unfair treatment towards the working class and a more rigid demarcation between the rich and the poor which partly became factors of prostitution and crimes. The impoverishment of the working class and class distinction were realistically dramatised in a body of writings notably called the social problem or Condition-of-England novel popularised by Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, Charlotte Brontë and Benjamin Disraeli. These novelists not merely reflected social issues but also openly sympathised with the lower-class people, objected to injustice and planted a reformist spirit among Victorian readers in search for social reform and a better society. Dehumanisation and deprivation of good life quality of the working class mirrored in the mid-century Condition-of-England novels reveal how people could be treated unfairly and inhumanely during the course of the nineteenth century. With the impending degradation of human lives, many British writers of the late nineteenth century relied on the Gothic and science-fiction tropes to portray the speculative future of human decline, especially the degeneracy of the White European species. The British fin-de-siècle Gothic, as described by Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst, was used to explore the “ambivalence” of social transformations that engendered

insecurity for the people (qtd. in Margree and Randall 218). In late nineteenth-century literature, the fears of degenerative future of human species can be seen in what Kelly Hurley has called the image of “gross corporeality” revealing that the human subject can become the “not-quite-human subject” or the “abhuman”⁶ whose humanness has become unstable (3-4). For example, the fictional vampires in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897) can embody the abhuman linked to a “heredity taint”⁷ that leads to deviant offspring and the ultimate extinction of humanity. Therefore, the degenerated body, an integrated identity of the human and the non-human including both living and non-living things, echoes the Darwinian idea of animality in the human body which can be seen as the abhuman or the not-quite-human in many Gothic novels and represented in forms of human-like machines or creatures in science fiction.

Indebted to the influence of Gothic romance, science-fiction fantasy, as Patrick Brantlinger argues in “The Gothic Origins of Science Fiction” (1980), is considered “antithetical” to and outweighs the idea of realism and rationalism and in science fiction (30-31). Due to the fact that British industrialisation and technology were not beneficial for everyone, many Victorians became sceptical about and disillusioned by scientific advancements as the urban sprawl destroyed the environment and encroached on people’s health. The fear of human beings

⁶ Hurley has suggested in *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle* (1996) that the “abhuman” is the barely human subject whose identity is “not-quite-human” since it lacks consistency, loses its normal self and turns into other. The prefix “ab-” connotes the absence or departure from something to something else (3-4).

⁷ Hurley suggests in “Heredity Taint and Cultural Contagion: The Social Etiology of Fin-de-Siècle Degeneration Theory” that heredity taint is biological degeneration conceptualised by many theorists of degeneration, believing that the deviant traits, physical and mental abnormalities, can be transmitted from generation to generation and eventually engender the doom of mankind (193).

endangered by industrialisation was reflected in science-fiction novels⁸ through the portrayal of not-quite-human creatures or the non-human which embody a bodily decline and degenerating humanness. Such fictional figures without clear-cut categorisation are set against the human image and result in the distinction between human and non-human beings. It can be concluded that British literature of the late nineteenth century explores and elaborates the body by reproducing characters in the fashion of human-non-human dualism and representing several anomalous bodies that can significantly be embodiments of the degenerates whose human rationality, knowledge and sympathy are absent as a result of unhealthy physique and mentality. Literary vignettes of degeneracy ultimately intensify the Victorian anxieties about bodily, cultural and moral decline and suggest that most representations of the body in British fin-de-siècle novels will usually fall into the degeneration discourse.

However, in light of posthumanism, a dividing line between the natural and the artificial, the human and the non-human, is revealed to be disturbed in a techno-scientific world. The fin-de-siècle science-fiction novels do not solely portray a society where humans are inflicted by tyrants and become degenerated but also foreshadow a world in which the ideology of humanistic and anthropocentric utopianism is challenged. These novels seem to offer literary contradictions. While they were influenced by the degeneration discourse, their underlying dystopianism

⁸ Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) introduces a prominent non-human or not-quite-human creature made of a collage of body parts and resurrected by lightning. From this introduction of an artificial life, Brian Aldiss, an English editor and writer, arguably regards *Frankenstein* as the first science-fiction novel in his science fiction history book *Billion Year Spree* (qtd. in Brantlinger 31-32). In the late nineteenth century, H.G. Wells presents an uncanny vivisection that gives birth to human-animal islanders in *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896) whose bodies are made of animal organs in a human form. The non-human characters in both novels are the not-quite-human whose identity cannot be clearly identified as human or animal. Their obscure existence, which is a result of an overreaching experiment, breaks the boundary between the human and the non-human, and implies that science has gone awry.

could be a progressive revolt against humanism and anthropocentrism which had prevailed during the age of Enlightenment. The anthropocentric and humanistic worldview can be found in the utopian narrative which illustrates the “much improved” community achieved through techno-scientific progress and, at the same time, keeps away from the worse image portrayed in the dystopian narrative (Claeys 56-58). Nevertheless, it seems ironic that the more humans demand perfectibility, the more they walk toward calamity (Claeys 56-58). Sue Zemka has suggested in “Erewhon and the End of Utopian Humanism” (2002) that some utopian stories imply the end of humanist utopianism using Samuel Butler’s *Erewhon* (1871) as an example of the utopian novel that does not offer the “paradise of humanist social planning . . . but instead a maze of bizarre institutions and fantastic customs” (Zemka 439). She observes in “The Book of the Machines,” a chapter on *Erewhon*, that the rise of machines and the Darwinian concept which rejects humanistic biology and culture sabotage the greatness of humanity and signal the fall of utopian humanism. Human nobility and unity were called into questions and undermined in twentieth-century science fiction as many novelists employed dystopian writing to observe the loss of human identity within the theme of state control⁹. Dystopia is what Lyman Tower Sargent calls the “non-existent society” which seems to be “worse than the society in which that reader lived” (qtd. in Seed 69). In the same manner, the degradation of the impeccable human physique as portrayed both in Hurley’s “abhuman” subject, the Gothic body that will soon transform into monstrosity, and the non-human in British nineteenth-century science fiction somehow influences dystopian reading and writing

⁹ Katherine Burdekin’s *Swastika Night* (1937), for example, imagines the racist state of the Holy German Empire characterised by mysticism and paganism, and Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932) portrays a society led by God-like scientist controlling genetically engineered people with drugs (Seed 81).

which points to the “worse” society and humanness. Therefore, the emergent dystopian narratives during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries do not only raise the contemporaneous fear of the apocalyptic future of humanity but also reflect the downfall of the anthropocentric worldview. As dystopian texts were linked to social reality, the dissolving power of the British Empire from decolonisation during the twentieth century might be a good example of how the great power of humans (the British) was in decline and challenged by a new superpower, the US. In “‘The Twilight of Utopia’: British Dystopian Fiction and the Cold War” (2011), Andrew Hammond observes that the declining power of Britain during the twentieth century significantly paved the way for the literary theme of the British Cold War dystopianism in the late twentieth century. It should be noted that the early twentieth-century British dystopian texts such as H.G. Wells’ *The Sleeper Awakes* (1910), Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932) and C.S. Lewis’s *The Hideous Strength* (1945) can be read as reactions against dictatorship, totalitarianism and radical changes in a harmful political regime at that time as the early twentieth-century dystopianism “satirizes both society as it exists [...] and the utopian aspiration to transform it” (Northedge and Wells qtd. in Andrew Hammond 664). Although British literature in the post-1945 era was pronounced as “the twilight of utopia” with a theme about Cold War (Andrew Hammond 680-681), dystopian texts can be regarded as a sarcasm of the humanistic and anthropocentric world, and a representation of its decline.

Though it is known that science fiction is a genre involving the formation of a posthuman hypothesis during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, a number of critics explore the late nineteenth and the early twentieth-century fiction to uncover pre-existing posthuman ideas and representations of the body. In “Posthuman Bodies”

(2015), Paul Sheehan traces the posthuman figures of mythic bodies, techno bodies and the barely human of the genetically engineered or cloned in *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896), for instance. These bodily types echo the posthuman body as an assemblage of multi-species and an unidentified subject. In “The Victorian Posthuman: Monstrous Bodies in Literature and Science” (2018), Wietske Smeele proposes the emergent “Victorian posthuman” as a new understanding of the body in nineteenth-century culture in order to reveal the pre-existence of posthuman subjectivity as a novel view of the Victorian body. In *Our Posthuman Future* (2002), Francis Fukuyama focuses on political, social and ethical controversies about human rights and human nature in the up-coming future. He refers to the posthuman settings in Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932) and George Orwell’s *1984* (1949) as resulted from biotechnology and media. These scientific technologies, as Fukuyama notes, plasticise human beings whose behaviours are “shaped by their social environment” (13) and will soon govern the body and mind. Posthumanism, especially critical posthumanism that attempts to debunk anthropocentric and humanistic ideologies, is not a theoretical framework only applied in the twentieth and twenty-first century contexts. It is also used to reinvestigate and reveal human conditions in different periods of human history whenever the human existence was, is or will be affected by non-human entities, namely animals and technology. This thesis relies on critical posthumanism to endorse the idea that a trace of the posthuman concept and characterisation can be found in nineteenth-century science-fiction novels where non-human characters were created against a backdrop of techno-science. By studying representations of the body of non-human characters in two selected late nineteenth-century science-fiction novels, *The Coming Race* and *The*

Time Machine, and the early twentieth-century novel, *Brave New World*, the thesis aims to argue that the thematic transformation in British science-fiction novels from degeneration to posthumanism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is not abrupt and clear-cut. The posthuman representation, the prefiguration of creatures whose identities destabilise anthropocentrism and the age-old human and non-human demarcation, was not exclusively seen in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries but had arguably been in progress since the nineteenth century and became conspicuous in the early twentieth century.

Representations of the Body from the Late Nineteenth to Early Twentieth Century

Although fictional non-human characters were commonly found in late nineteenth-century British science fiction as embodiments of cultural fears of human degeneration, this thesis investigates this characterisation in the light of critical posthumanism to indicate thematic nuances and a continuous development of non-human characters in the selected novels from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. By examining the body in Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* (1871), H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1895) and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), the electric body, the "humanimal" body and the man-made body are proposed as a trajectory of three possible representations of the posthuman life forms, apart from being the degenerates. While Bulwer-Lytton's electric body in *The Coming Race* was drawn from the way the author was fascinated with lightning and electricity just like what is seen in Shelley's Victor in *Frankenstein* (1818) to show how the Vril-ya are embodiments of cyborg-like beings with mechanised wings and life-giving electric-like power, Wells' "humanimal" body in *The Time Machine* is based on

devolution and animalistic inhibition of human beings which pose a question of what it means to have human and non-human forms, the posthuman identity. Huxley's prediction of extreme bio-technology in the early twentieth century in *Brave New World* leads to the man-made body of the cloned humans whose body, desire and intellect are technologically constructed. Representations of these posthuman-to-be characters suggest the re-working of human nature, essence, self-consciousness and autonomy which are anthropocentric qualities.

In Chapter II, the thesis will look at the concept of cyborgs and companion species in the subterranean humanoids called the "Vril-ya" with the body merged with electrical energy and their relationship with the protagonist, a human character, in a notably British early science-fiction novel, *The Coming Race*, written by Edward Bulwer-Lytton with a utopian trope and a voyage fantasy. It imagines the hidden race as having survived and secretly resided under the earth since the Great Flood. These beings are found to be mystic and foreign to the narrator as they, despite being descendants of prehistoric humans, live lives far more advanced than those who live on the earth's surface: they are connected to machines and the mysterious power of Vril which facilitate their lives. That is, the winged humanoids endowed with magical and supernatural power can be counted as posthuman beings whose body is linked to the primeval species of homo sapiens, mysterious force, and mechanical prosthesis. *The Coming Race* not only portrays the co-evolution of other species that might replace humans but also imagines the unfamiliar reversal of gender roles in which females are the leader and physically superior to males. The switching of gender roles, apart from serving as a satire of the New Woman predicament in the Victorian period, can be seen as a challenge to the humanistic and anthropocentric patriarchy.

Despite their threatening image, the Vrilya body resonates the assemblage of multi-species and companion species.

Chapter III will move to the posthuman body in H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine*, the fin-de-siècle science-fiction novel with a time travelling theme in which the "humanimal" creatures are portrayed as not only the reverse of the Darwinian theory of evolution depicting an animalistic version of future humans but also a posthuman entity whose bodily transformation reveals the process of becoming otherness. Humans, as seen by the Time Traveller who travels to the future of England, seem to be animal-like creatures: the weak Eloi living on land and the hunter Merlock living underground. This representation of futuristic human bodies enables the reader to think about the possible life forms in contrast with the foreign presence of a human, the Time Traveller. The dissolving humanness in the futuristic world in *The Time Machine* implies the non-human age which can be a resistance to anthropocentrism and thus echoes the idea of biological assemblage and a post-anthropocentric era of multi-species.

Finally, this thesis will present Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* as the British science fiction of the early twentieth century which depicts the man-made body of the genetically engineered close to the contemporary prospect of biotechnology. The Civilised humans who are artificially reproduced outside natural procreation can be considered as fatherless cyborgs. Huxley also speculates on the perfect society controlled by Ford, the supreme authority, in which humans are drugged to become docile using "soma," a medicine that makes the Civilised happy. Humans outside the artificial reproduction are regarded as the Savage, the traditional image of humans, whose bodies are foreign and wild since there were no scientific

manipulation in their birth. The way traditional humanity is treated as foreign to the cyborgs suggests that humanism is marginalised in the technologically advanced world and evidently a criticism of the humanistic or anthropocentric worldview. The death of John, the male Savage who cannot adjust himself to the Civilised, presents an image of the posthuman world consuming the traditionally humanistic one.



CHAPTER II: EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON'S *THE COMING RACE* AND THE ELECTRIC BODY

Written in 1871 and published anonymously in 1872, *The Coming Race* was Edward Bulwer-Lytton's first literary attempt on a fantastic story about a mysterious journey to a utopian land in the same manner as Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travel* unlike his other stories dealing with occultism and spiritualism¹⁰. Despite being Bulwer-Lytton's renowned Gothic text, an adventurous plot about the discovery of an underground cavern inhabited by a mysterious race of mechanically-winged humanoids, the Vril-ya, seemed to impress many Victorian readers. Sir Rider Haggard, for instance, found it so fascinating that he could "read again and again, and with added pleasure" (Higgins 20). Although *The Coming Race* gained popularity during the nineteenth-century, some have argued it is not widely read today since Bulwer-Lytton's notoriously corny writing style hardly arouses excitement in the story that deals with an adventurous journey and fantastic elements. The novel has been thematically explored, and one of the prominent themes is racism. As the title itself is a reminder of the racial issue, the Vril-ya's contempt for other inferior species is just like the way "citizens of New York regard the negroes" (Bulwer-Lytton 100). As Patrick Brantlinger asserts, these human-like creatures "are racists" (165). An act of racism in the novel can also be reflected in the disallowed miscegenation when the Vril-ya believe that their kind being interbred with humans will cause biological

¹⁰ Bulwer-Lytton was an English politician and novelist whose works were characterised as nineteenth-century Gothic fiction by scholars but as "meta-physical novel[s]" by himself. He was interested in "spiritualism, mysticism and the occult" (Small 15). The word "occult" or *occultus* in Latin means "hidden," connoting an existence of the "unseen world," and is connected to magical rituals done to "converse with the dead, win the affections of others, influence the direction of [] lives, ward off illness, even understand the greater order of things" (Dell 7). Most of his works like *Pelham* (1828), *Zanoni* (1842) and *A Strange Story* (1862) include elements of Gothic terror and occultism.

regress. This xenophobic and eugenic practice indicates the underlying “imperial politics” in which the Vril-ya signify the irrational culture outside the Western civilised one and are thus constructed as a villainous race leading to extinction of mankind (Mazlish 739-744). In addition, Bulwer-Lytton’s concept of a subterranean “refuge to those within and a threat to those without,” a secluded safe space surrounded by technology that empowers its residents, proves that the underground creatures will evolve into the strongest coming race and supplant human race (Redford 126-128). Hence, degeneration, racism and xenophobia can be a projection of cultural, imperialistic fears of the author.

Some other critics have viewed *The Coming Race* as a satire of the utopian ideals about liberty, class and gender equality, and perfectly technological-driven society with no hard work, wars and miseries. The theme of unrequited love between a couple of different races or species in the novel forms the “sexual romance” whereas a vibrant hidden city full of machines and formidable humanoids can signify a “modern scientific (perhaps, pseudo-scientific) utopia” (Parrinder 82). After meeting with the Vril-ya, the narrator is marvelled at how advanced and civilised this unknown region is: there are flying boats, human-like creatures with mechanic suits, automations and the multi-purpose, magical power called Vril. The main workforce are young Vril-ya who enjoy their hard work and liberty while the females, with more massive physique, respect each other in equal terms. This foreign, hidden tribe also lives in isolation from other races, so there is no war, except for regular slaughter of invasive subterranean monsters. According to Bulwer-Lytton’s biographer, the Vril-ya are presented as being both “mild and terrible, highly intellectual, and insufferably dull” (Robert Bulwer-Lytton 462) in a mildly sarcastic manner. In addition, the Vril

community is also a “demi-eden” or “earthly paradise” which might be too far-fetched and banal for the author since humans cannot live without “strife, competition, suffering and folly” (Christensen 246). Bulwer-Lytton himself commented that social equality makes the Vril-ya society “extremely dull” due to the lack of “all greatness” from individual achievements (Robert Bulwer-Lytton 468). It is not merely the Vril-ya’s brutal eugenic preconception but also the monotony of this paradise that prompts the narrator’s flight to his own broken and *less* civilised land. Apart from the mild criticism of utopianism, the narrator’s character can be a parody of the white Victorian “upper-class dandy” (Wagner 379-385) or a rich Victorian male elite who enjoys adventurous life and freedom, and makes sense of the world by using his empirical and imperialistic view to judge things. In his view, the Vril-ya are like the Red Indians, Egyptians or Indo-Europeans. Gender equality and Gy-ei or females’ strong sexuality are unfamiliar for him. His Western pride is, however, belittled as the humanoids are more capable and civilised in physical, intellectual and cultural aspects. *The Coming Race* cannot be simply characterised as one particular literary genre. With satiric undertones about the utopian cliché and the human hubris, it can be regarded among the early dystopian tales of the perfect yet grim presence or future.

Scientific knowledge and technological invention in nineteenth-century Britain were found captivating by many Victorians. Electricity, a legacy of the Enlightenment age, trialled by British scientists not only gave an insight about life and matters animated by electrical energy but also became a literary influence. Mary Shelley, for example, fuses science and horror together in *Frankenstein* (1818), one of the forerunners of science fiction, by creating a humanoid, a collage of flesh, reanimated by electricity. Such a profane imagination later invoked the question of

artificiality of life and human-nonhuman demarcation. Bulwer-Lytton, among other precursors of science fiction in the late nineteenth century, also introduces human-like entities, the Vril-ya, with the body charged by electrical power in *The Coming Race*. Unlike *Frankenstein*, electricity in *The Coming Race* not only energises one life but the whole technologically advanced society. To dispute the human-nonhuman demarcation in the technological world, scholars contributing to posthumanism re-examine the body as a complex assemblage of otherness to criticise the prevalent human-centric mindset. While the novel has been read under the theme of racism and racial degeneration, by relying on the posthuman view, this chapter argues that the Vril-ya can represent a progressive form of life instead of monstrous deviants. The portrayal of their electric body, a body integrated and co-evolved with electrical technology, complicates a borderline between the human and the non-human, the natural and the artificial, while the human's imperial judgment and character are satirised.

The Coming Race: Electricity, Body and Fiction

In the nineteenth century, science and technology, especially synthetic electricity, pioneered in the Age of Enlightenment, brought about not only social modernisation but also a new perception of life and body. Among those experimenters of electrical power in 1742, Benjamin Franklin demonstrated that natural electricity could be drawn from lightning. In 1745, electricity was then produced by a battery-like jar with voltaic fluids (Harkup 37). In the early nineteenth century, the study of science, previously known as natural philosophy and paid attention by men of the bourgeois class, was developed into several disciplines, one of which was the chemistry of electrolysis and magnetism seriously trialled by Sir Humphry Davy.

Synthesised electricity, as a result of chemical studies, led to tremendous technological breakthroughs like Michael Faraday's electric motor in 1821, electric telegraph in 1837, Graham Bell's telephones in 1875, and other machineries. Electricity and its effect on the body were central to the public interest, especially that of the rich and the well-educated. Concepts of electrical energy in the body stemmed from Franz Mesmer's animal magnetism or mesmerism and Luigi Galvani's galvanism in the late eighteenth century. While magnetism was a life force or invisible fluids in all living things, galvanism was the practice of corporeal reanimation by electrification. As a pioneering field of neuroscience, galvanism was trialled on a human corpse by Giovanni Aldini in 1803 to prove electrical effect on the reanimation of the body. A lecture on electrolysis was also held by Andrew Crosse, known as the thunder or lightning man, who was believed to unorthodoxly create a living creature through his electrical work. Such scientific trials left the audience in awe and paved the way for electrotherapy, the medical and therapeutic treatments for physical and mental sickness, throughout the nineteenth century. With the use of electrical current as medication for physical illness, the human body was thus perceived as "Atlantic cable, an electrolytic conductor, an induction coil" and "electrical devices" which configure the image of "a component of machinery" (Morus 278). Once a slight electric shock was given, not only nervous and muscular diseases were cured but also behavioural disorders labelled as insanity. Some mentally ill patients, for instance, received daily "electric bath" as a cure for abnormal nerves (Beveridge and Renvoize 160). Electrotherapy was later proved ineffectual and faced its decline. This association between electricity and life in nineteenth-century

Britain, rendered the body, instead of a house for the soul, a container of electric-driven organisms.

The electrical experiments on the body at the beginning of the nineteenth century also created literary spark. Mary Shelley, for example, was among the observers of such radical practices. Her novel *Frankenstein* (1818), with a depiction of a human-like creature reanimated by electricity, was not only inspired by her own hope for the revival of her dead baby or a caricature of Lord Byron's foot malformation, talipes, which caused him physical and mental pain (Bauman 3-10). It also subtly alluded to the experiments of Franklin, Galvani, Aldini and Crosse, especially the trials on living beings that associated "electricity" with "life" (Harkup 37). The novel was generally a mix of the Gothic and science fiction as it engages in horror, criminality, mystery and the *what-if* about man's interference with the creation of life, and was a "summation of the previous century's scientific achievements" (Harkup 38). In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, instead of creating a perfect being in human form, the creature is condemned by the creator as a disgusting monster. The novel was also hailed by Brian Aldiss as the first, monumental science fiction of which the theme of artificial life electrically charged was later reiterated in modern science-fiction novels and films in forms of robots, cyborgs and artificially intelligent aliens or humanoids. Electricity was thus proved as an essential source of scientific fantasy and passionate wonder of life beyond natural laws that some Victorian scientists and writers want to explore. It was arguably "similar to a life force or was, in fact, life itself" (Harkup 37). In this unorthodox question about an actual subjectivity of the living, other than the spiritual part, there might be some organisms that constitute a being.

In *The Coming Race*, Bulwer-Lytton's depiction of a race of humanoids whose body is charged with electric-like power Vril, which this thesis will call the electric body, can be a reference to contemporary electrical developments and the so-called artificial creature from *Frankenstein*. Electrical uses ranged from medication to urban power supplies in nineteenth-century Britain were remarked as the beginning of "the Age of Electricity" (qtd. in Beveridge and Renvoize 157). The marvellous electric lights are introduced in *The Coming Race* when the narrator accidentally falls into the bottom of a mine cave and is surprised that there is "a brilliant light" that seems like "artificial gas-lamps" (8) and is later perceived as "a diffused atmospheric light, not like that from fire, but soft and silvery, as from a northern star" (10). This astonishing use of electrical technology makes the narrator feel awed by the source energy, Vril, which is both creative and destructive. One might see this mysterious zeal as mesmeric energy, but Bulwer-Lytton objected in a letter to John Foster that "[he] did not mean Vril for mesmerism, but for electricity, developed into uses as yet only dimly guessed..." (qtd. in Robert Bulwer-Lytton 466). He also noted in another letter that "the notion of Vril might be more cleared from mysticism and mesmerism by being simply defined to be electricity and conducted by those staves or rods" and "it would be safe to omit all reference to the power of communicating with the dead" (qtd. in Robert Bulwer-Lytton 467). Instead of mysticism or necromancy, Vril is, indeed, associated with the contemporary technology. Like Victor's use of electricity in *Frankenstein*, in addition to the same portrayal of the electric body, Vril energy in *The Coming Race*, is like a double-edged sword. It can be assumed that Bulwer-Lytton and Mary Shelley were inspired by the electrical fantasy and technological dualism but Bulwer-Lytton's depiction of electricity is extended to a higher level of

imagination in which the electric body, flying boats, mechanic prostheses, and lightning staffs are beyond what the contemporary practice of electrolysis ever achieved. As humans and non-humans were drawn closer in a complex relationship by technology, inquiries of life and artificiality or human-nonhuman entity were not merely the scientists' and philosophers' interest but also the writers'. Regardless of racial degeneration and xenophobia, electricity provided radical insights about life and living, allowing the human subjectivity and the human-centric view to be re-examined.

The Coming Race: From the Monstrous Body to the Electric Body

Representations of the monstrous body in fiction usually reflect a vile image of man and his fear of degeneration. With reference to a psychological explanation, Michael Szollosy suggests that fictional monsters, especially “near human cyborgs” (1) are the projection of extreme apprehension within humans. Negative qualities like heartlessness and inflexibility of the monsters are the “unwanted parts” of “our own violence, anxiety, hatred and fear” (Szollosy 4). Some fictional monsters are the product of technology, and so is “the devolution of life” (Edwards 1). The human body being parodied by, or transformed into, monstrosity is a downgraded version of human quality. On the other hand, it can disrupt the anthropocentric concept that has posited humans as the centre of all beings and things. Representing a certain group of humans as being inhumanely monstrous can reflect the ethnocentric thinking, especially of imperialistic Westerners, against unconventional types of people who are deemed alien, irrational, inhumane and uncivilised others.

One can argue that the Vril-ya's portrayal in *The Coming Race* is associated with degeneration hypotheses. Cesare Lombroso's empirical evaluation of criminal

attributes in the late nineteenth century, for example, relied on primitive appearances and misshaped physique to determine the born criminal. Similarly, in the novel, according to the self-referential and imperial-minded narrator, the Vril-ya's body bears atavistic traits as the subterranean world provides the dark, primitive atmosphere with forgone architecture and is inhabited by massive, ancient-looking reptiles. The underground humanoids also share the resemblance of humans who live on the surface of the earth, but they seem to belong to the exotic, primitive race as their facial "outline and expression" remind the narrator of a face of "the sculptured sphinx" (Bulwer-Lytton 18). The Vril-ya's strangely red skin with "large black eyes, deep and brilliant, and brows arched as a semicircle" (Bulwer-Lytton 18) can remind the narrator of the Red Indians and primitive Indo-Europeans with dark complexion and taller figures. Apart from a cold-looking character of the Vril-ya which suggests inhumanity, the "inimical" weapon is also associated with criminality hazardous to humans. Even though their atavistic physique can be, but not entirely, associated with Lombroso's concept of biological criminality, the Vril-ya do not look like psychopaths. Instead, they look like the mystique seers or mind readers as the narrator notices how one of the Vril-ya approaches to help him "with an eye that seem[s] to read to the very depths of [his] heart" (Bulwer-Lytton 19). Although the protagonist feels safe under their care, the way he is scared of being "captured and dissected for scientific purposes" (Bulwer-Lytton 172) implies his preconception about the criminal motive behind this race as he comments on their cold-looking face as that of a hunter rousing "the instinct of danger which the sight of a tiger or serpent arouses" (Bulwer-Lytton 18). The Vril-ya's primitivism, superstition and paganism also recall Max Nordau's explanation of social degeneration caused by the practice of mysticism. In

this sense, the Vrilya are not mentally corrupted, but they seem like degenerates, for they invade and corrupt the human mind by putting the protagonist into a trance and hypnotising him. In other words, they have the potential to corrupt a human's psyche using their mystical sorcery.

It is worth emphasising that criminalised and mystical features of the Vrilya are drawn from the narrator's point of view which can be unreliable. With the first-person narration in this novel, the use of "I" is not only for the reader's identification with the narrator but also a sharp contrast between the narrator and the creatures he is confronting. That is, as a self-defensive mechanism of an imperialistic, civilised man dealing with the fear of the threatening and inexplicable others, the narrator's subjectivity detaches himself from an objective judgment and thus results in constructing the image of the Vrilya as the criminal others endangering humankind. This xenophobia and forbidden miscegenation, by imagining humans as a monstrously inferior species, in reversal, are what the Vrilya are holding against humans as well. Bulwer-Lytton seemed to point out that the angst both species have towards each other can be relevant to their self-centredness: the narrator's worry about his own physical destruction and the Vrilya's concern about biological regress. The way the Vrilya regard humans or other creatures of different races as inferior to them can reflect speciesism, an anthropocentric practice that human beings use to justify themselves as the most civilised and supreme species on earth. The characterisation of these non-human creatures can be a mockery of excessive xenophobia. Anthropocentrism has also strictly drawn a line between the human and the non-human. However, this demarcation is violated not only in "the Gothic text" or "Neo-gothic text," where "technology is often perceived as a challenge to human identity

(Szabo and Crisan 148), but also in science fiction. Instead of reaffirming the Vril-ya's body as the monstrous representation that provokes the reader's fear of degeneration, this chapter focuses on the portrayal of the electric body in *The Coming Race* as a complex assemblage of technology and organic life. This bodily type can pose a challenge for the human subject and the anthropocentric definition of living beings.

Monstrous and anomalous bodies being fantasised in fiction as products of the hybrid between the human body and the machine or technology do not always symbolically suggest social outcasts, including psychopaths and foreign refugees, and the working class. Regardless of human reference, such deviant entities can be called the posthuman. For Kelly Hurley, for example, alien characters in science fiction films or novels should not represent a certain group of people in human society and should be taken "literally" by "focusing on monstrosity as spectacle rather than metaphor, and on body horror as a speculative narrative that sets out new economies of identification and desire, rather than leading us back . . . to ones we already know too well" (205). As the posthuman reading dissociates fictional monsters from the conventional human metaphors derived from the anthropocentric logic or what Hurley calls "either/or logic of anatomical difference," aliens are not lower-class workers in Marxist thoughts, not the suppressed anxieties in Freudian concepts, and not inferior females in feminist views but the posthuman with "the body horror" and unfamiliar "logic of identity" (209-21). From this posthuman image, the "post" state of bodies can refer to either advancement as seen in cyborg bodies or techno-bodies or bodies which are turning backwards like mythical, atavistic chimeras (Sheehan 246). Both ancient and futuristic bodies become a pathway to a novel representation of the barely human—the cybernetic body, the cloned body, the cannibal body and the zombie

body—found in twentieth and twenty-first century fiction. The re-imagination of the monstrous body with an anthropomorphic appearance as a sophisticated life form disrupts the humanistic ideal of great division between unified human body and nonhuman others. Posthuman corporeality is thus a container of multi-species. For instance, the transplanted organ in another body serves as an intruder that distorts the wholeness of the original body (Rossini 157), so the human-animal, human-machine body reinvestigated in light of posthumanism is also characterised by its pluralism and fluidity.

Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* portrays the electric body of the not-quite-human characters as a mix of organic parts and inorganic machines. From the highly technological settings where the Vril-ya dwell, their body merged with electricity recalls an image of a cyborg. After the death of his engineer friend whose body is consumed by a gigantic reptile in a subterranean region, the narrator staggers away and finds himself in a utopian-like wonderland surrounded by peculiar vegetations and Mesopotamian buildings. Although the mysterious town is indicative of the ancient civilisation, it is technologically supported. In addition to tamed deer-like animals, a grand entrance to the buildings, and extraordinarily oversized and synthetic-like plants, there is a flying vehicle described by the narrator as “a small boat, impelled by sails shaped like wings” (Bulwer-Lytton 15). The flying boat with “wings” is obviously not a hot air balloon but quite similar to an aeroplane that the Wright brothers thought of in 1899. For Britain, airplanes were not successfully invented until the early twentieth century. Aviation technology in *The Coming Race* is thus more advanced than that on the surface of the earth where humans live, especially Great Britain. Once he draws closer to the Egyptian buildings, he meets the human-like creatures who call themselves Vril-ya and is hospitalised by them. While

the narrator resides in this subterranean city, he learns about the Vril-ya's way of living, language, mechanic garments and mystically electric-like power called Vril. Vril is a life-giving and life-destroying force that energises their bodies and the entire city. The narrator is at first captivated but horrified by the appearance of a male humanoid who looks extremely tall and dresses up with mechanic devices:

Its chief covering seemed to me to be composed of large wings folded over its breast and reaching to its knees; the rest of its attire was composed of an under tunic and leggings of some thin fibrous material. It wore on its head a kind of tiara that shone with jewels, and carried in its right hand a slender staff of bright metal like polished steel. (18)

The physical description recalls the chivalric and mythical image of an actual knight in shining armour, the winged immortal, or a wizard with a magical staff. The narrator later learns that the winged suit can make these humanoids float in the air as he sees the child, who takes him to a room, fly through the window. Instead of being organic wings of poultry, the narrator realises that these are mechanical and artificial wings because the child “did not flap to and fro as a bird does, but the wings were elevated over his head, and seemed to bear him steadily aloft without effort of his own (24-25).

Staying at the house of the host or Aph-Lin, chief of the Light-preserving Council in this tribe, the narrator suspects that the wings are electrified when he touches the host's wings and “a slight shock as of electricity passe[s] through [him]” (30). The truth behind these magical wings, healing and destructive abilities of the Vril-ya, and all subterranean technologies is explained by Zee, the host's daughter, that Vril is the key energy, which the narrator assumes as electricity and refers to Faraday's “atmospheric magnetism” (42), used for animating every technological device and

supporting all lives in this subterranean region. People have the sunlight whereas the Vril-ya have Vril.

Similar to Donna J. Haraway's image of a cyborg, a hybrid creature and a life condition of the twentieth and twenty-first century in which organic lives are seamlessly merged with inorganic apparatus, the Vril-ya's electric body can become an embodiment of the cyborg. The cyborg representing the humans' "joint kinship with animals and machines," disassembles the age-old binaries of life and artificiality, nature and culture (Haraway 72-82). Electricity, the emergent technology in the Victorian time, was deployed by Bulwer-Lytton to create the electric body with more fantastic quality. In a letter on March 1870 asking for John Foster's thoughts about Vril power, Bulwer-Lytton referred to the scientific reality that "some bodies [were] charged with electricity like the torpedo or electric eel," but they could not "communicate that power to other bodies," so he proposed the novel idea of "a race charged with that electricity and having acquired that art to concentrate and direct it—in a word, to be conductors of its lightnings" (qtd. in Robert Bulwer-Lytton 467). The way Bulwer-Lytton refused "mesmerism or magnetism" shows his attempt not only to distinguish this work from his other occult-related texts but to appropriate it as scientific fiction with the fantasised possibility of electric technology. In the novel, the humanoids are not only charged with electrical power but can also fly and annihilate subterranean hostile monsters, control minds and heal wounds. All of these abilities are similar to and beyond actual medications of electricity in the nineteenth century. The integration between the body and electrical technology is taken seriously as the organism of the Vril-ya and electric wings are merged to produce a cyborg-like creature.

According to Haraway, the cyborg's bodily representation depicts a collapse of the organic-inorganic, natural-artificial boundaries. Its imagery was proposed to show how complicated life and identity are in the late twentieth century and to call for human-non-human, physical-non-physical, and nature-culture binary breakdowns through techno-science. The Vril-ya's body is not only invigorated by electricity or Vril but also an indescribable entity that disrupts the organic-mechanical division since "[o]ur machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert" (Haraway 69). It can be inferred that a state of being a cyborg is either a mere machine which is becoming human-like or alive or a human who acts like machinery. Similarly, in the novel, the narrator is an injured man who is under the care of the Vril-ya. Despite his active lifestyle on earth and his passion for traveling and adventure, he seems inactive and is inert when he temporarily stays with the Vril-ya. In contrast, the humanoids are more alive and energetic as they fly like "an eagle that basks in the sun" (31). Zee, the host's daughter, shows the narrator around at a department of the museum where she performs Vril power using her electrical staff to reinvigorate objects. As the narrator astonishingly observes,

She [Zee] seemed to endow them [substances] with intelligence, and to make them comprehend and obey her command. She set complicated pieces of machinery into movement, arrested the movement or continued it, until, within an incredibly short time, various kinds of raw materials were reproduced as symmetrical works of art, complete and perfect. Whatever effect mesmerism or electro-biology produces over the nerves and muscles of animated objects, this young Gy [a female Vril-ya] produced by the motions for her slender rod over the springs and wheels of lifeless mechanisms. (109-110)

Zee, just like other humanoids, is a conductor of the lightning that energises “lifeless mechanisms” to make them look life-like. As a result, inert machines can be full of life as if a tin man is revitalised by the given soul or spirit. This organic-inorganic binding between the Vril-ya’s electric body and lively machineries depicts the cyborg body whose complex identity lies in between the natural and the synthetic. The narrator has a chance to wear those wings and learns how to fly, but he finds that these mechanical devices are not easily synched with the human body. He remarks while struggling in his flying lesson given by Zee: “I was the servant of the wings; the wings were not my servants—they were beyond my control...” (159). Meanwhile, the Vril-ya’s body is fully adjusted to the wings as if the wings were an organic part. According to Zee, flying with mechanical wings, just like a bird’s innate ability to flutter, “has become an instinct” that a young Vril-ya “wills to fly as intuitively and unconsciously as he wills to walk” (160). This scene drops a hint that, with early and constant practice to use a mechanical device, the body, either of humans or Vril-ya, can be harmoniously synchronised. A regular use of machines familiarises the organic body with the inorganic, and thus formulates an organic-inorganic collage or the cyborg. Zee, as a noble and learned philosopher, elaborates that people of this race are born cyborg-like as they need to practice using machine-driven wings as though they were their own limbs so that the body and technology can fully interlock.

In addition, this mutual development between organic life and inorganic machines recalls what Haraway calls companion species and co-evolution. The notion of companion species indicates that two different species are not complete strangers but, in Haraway’s term, significant-otherness beings or things that co-evolve and co-exist interdependently in history. Moreover, unification of organism and mechanism

can also be associated with Braidotti's becoming-machine process of the posthuman whose organic bodies are mutually developed with technological others. Like Haraway's cyborgs, the posthuman body can be seen in the becoming-machine framework which regards the body of humans and non-humans in the techno-scientific environment as a complex assemblage. In fact, machines, as Braidotti calls "technological others" are not merely adapted for human use but also shape the human body so that organic flesh and technological device can be interdependent (90-91). The becoming-machine subject relocates and redefines "bodies as part of a nature-culture continuum," so it is the posthuman subject that exists outside anthropocentric human-non-human dualism (92). In the novel, as this pair of mechanical wings are expected to be innate organs of these humanoids, living without this technological other is like living without limbs. According to the Vril-ya, body and machine are interdependent and familiarised to each other in the becoming-machine process. With the complicated organic-inorganic corporeality, the Vril-ya's bio-electricity can be considered as a prefiguration of the nearly posthuman cyborg or the becoming-machine subject.

Moreover, the Vril-ya are directly linked to the uncivilised forefathers, the Ana, who are regarded as distantly prehistoric kindred of humans who live on the earth's surface. Despite being seen as quasi-human beings and non-Westerners, the Vril-ya's alternative history reveals that they have a significant relationship with humans. The human protagonist learns, while in trances, that the Vril-ya descend from their ancestral race called Ana, the savage, who primevally inhabited on the surface of the earth. It was the Great Flood that made some Ana migrate to the underground. Having survived, these savage beings began to settle, separated into

many tribes and sometimes waged wars against one another. When the mysterious Vril power was discovered, the Vril masters used this mighty power to end all wars and established their subterranean community as a new, civilised nation as implied in the name Vril-ya. The savage race, Ana, prior to the Vril-ya's reign, developed many machineries and technologies, so the Vril-ya, a recent generation of Ana, have socially, culturally and technologically predated homo sapiens, the recent type of humans. It can be assumed that the Vril-ya, as observed by the narrator, are the hidden beings akin to humans or perhaps a prototypical species preceding the human race. Though the narrator's body resembles the small, barbaric type of humanoids that the Vril-ya call the Tish, having adapted his look to mingle with the Vril-ya, the narrator is assimilated in this society as the guests in the banquet "had grown accustomed to [his] appearance, seeing [him] so often in the street, and [he] had ceased to excite much curiosity" (197). How these subterranean creatures get used to the human character shows that repetitive appearance of the unfamiliar removes the sense of strangeness and otherness. Although the Vril-ya have evolved distinctively from human race, they quickly learn the human's tongue through telepathic learning and trances. This image of mutual development of intellectual otherness by transferring linguistic knowledge reinstates Haraway's notion of coevolution of companion species: the human and the Vril-ya. In *A Companion Species Manifesto* (2003), Haraway extends human-machine relationship to a world of multi-species and reveals how the nature-culture separation is being constantly collapsed by the gradual proximity of homo sapiens and canines that coevolve as companion species (16) through the relationship called "significance otherness" (96). Such coordination and interrelation between the human and the Vril-ya do not only depict the process of

cyborg-imagineering but also make these characters from different worlds turn into companion species through the shared tongue, English. But the Vril-ya's cooperation in learning English is not for the human's sake or imperialistic expansion but for their intellectual satisfaction. The learning is done while the narrator is being unconscious, so it looks like these humanoids are smuggling the human knowledge and the human body and brain are partly a research subject.

The representation of these subterranean humanoids also suggests that the body can be seen as a site of multi-species due to their racial, biological and cultural complexities. At the very first confrontation with the Vril-ya, the narrator recognises that they are not natives of Western Europe but rather belong to the primitives such as ancient Egyptians or Red Indians, or people of colour in exotic countries. Despite being an experienced and adventurous Traveller, he is perplexed and unable to clearly describe the Vril-ya as humans or non-humans, Westerners or non-Westerners. They have human silhouette with distinctively serene and beautiful faces, mechanical garments and taller bodies. As a guest, the narrator undeniably learns the Vril-ya's way of life. At the College of Sages where female Vril-ya or Gy study as professors of "purely speculative philosophy" (57), the narrator notices that there are ancient pictures of these people's ancestors, the uncivilised Ana, which he finds striking because they are depicted with "higher degree of art," instead of being categorised as primitive art by Western methodology, and "resemble[] [the] upper world and European types of countenance" with "Italian heads" (113). Their archaeology reveals that the savage Ana six thousand years ago bore racial ambiguity. Once the subterranean race becomes civilised and technologically developed, their bodies are also transformed "a thousand years after the Vril revolution," the Vril-ya's

countenance is calmer and more graceful unlike that of the Tish (114). The cultural and linguistic complexity implies that the Vril-ya do not only belong to Western primitives but also Indo-European tribes as the narrator observes that their language is “akin to the Aryan or Indo-Germanic” (80). The letter V also reminds the narrator of Egyptian hieroglyphs since it is a symbol of an inverted pyramid and “denotes excellence or power; as Vril” (75). Through Vril power in the electric body of the Vril-ya, telepathy and parapsychology can be achieved and allow these humanoids to learn new languages and become multilingual. After the narrator’s injury is cured by a child who “approach[es] his lips to [the narrator’s] forehead, breathing on it softly” and makes the pain “cease[.]” with “a drowsy, happy calm” (22). The Vril-ya, like mind readers, learn English language taught by the unconscious narrator who is asleep (34). This learning process, again, acts as an invasion of the unconscious mind and proves that these cyborg-like humanoids are intelligent and have a fast linguistic input. In contrast to the imperialistic expansion of the British, the Vril-ya’s terrain is not colonised, but the host and his kids learn English out of inquisitiveness. It is through their mysterious Vril technology that allows them to obtain information, as if it was telepathy, and extend their intelligence by metaphorically colonising the human mind. This ability is made possible by Vril energy as the narrator converses with the host daughter and a professor of the College of Sages, Zee:

[B]ut applied scientifically through vril conductors, they [the Vril-ya] can exercise influence over minds, and bodies animal and vegetable, to an extent not surpassed in the romances of our mystics...all the faculties of the mind could be quickened to a degree unknown in the waking state, by trance or vision, in which the thoughts of one brain could be transmitted to another. (43)

The intrusion into human thoughts is significant to posthuman thinkers since thoughts and reasons which are exclusively owned by human beings are easily stolen and intruded by non-human power. Following the humanistic view in the Age of Enlightenment during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it is conventionally believed that humans possess their own selfhood, body and reason known as “possessive individualism” (Macpherson qtd. in Rossini 161). For John Locke, personhood is man’s own “property,” and this statement is agreed by René Descartes that “body which...I call mine, belonged to me more properly and more closely than any other” (qtd. in Rossini 162). Westerners influenced by the humanistic worldview tend to assume that reason, body and originality are copyrighted and licensed as personal properties. Nevertheless, the posthuman body is, indeed, a subject being able to be invaded and modified, and ultimately loses its intrinsic quality and unity. The way the narrator’s body and consciousness is technologically invaded by the Vril-ya suggests a posthuman moment in which man loses the ownership of his subjectivity. His brain is open and read without permission while his copyright over his intellect and body is terminated.

For the narrator, the most intriguing history of the Vril-ya is the pre-historic myth of a Vril-ya philosopher who is a descendant of frogs. In the narrator’s view, the story of amphibian origin of the Vril-ya is made up as a “symbolic fable” like “an Indian Budh [sic] or a Greek Prometheus” (Bulwer-Lytton 114). Frogs and Prometheus can coincidentally allude to Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. Frogs and electricity are reminders of a prototypical electric body from Galvani’s experiment known as the frog galvanoscope in 1791 in which a dissected frog leg was electrified and began to “twitch” (Piccolino and Bresadola 71) as if this dead part was still alive.

The same method is used by Victor Frankenstein—the subtitle “Modern Prometheus” indicates that the mad scientist will face his doom for his creation of life as profanity to God. However, from the myth, the Vril-ya believe that they have animalistic heritage and therefore a multi-species identity. In an image seen by the narrator, a Vril-ya’s ancestor, the philosopher’s great-grandfather, is depicted as wearing an armour covered with scales of fish or reptile. His feet and hands are “wonderfully long, and webbed” with “prominent eyes, a very wide mouth and high cheekbones, and a muddy complexion”, making him look like a “Giant Frog” biologically classified in the “Batrachian genus” (115). There is also a statement inscribed on the picture that says: “Humble yourselves, my descendants; the father of your race was a *twat* (tadpole): exalt yourselves, my descendants, for it was the same Divine Thought which created your father that develops itself in exalting you” (115). The narrator feels that these ancient images of the Ana and the frog race are nothing but caricatures whereas Aph-Lin, the host and Zee’s father, contends that this myth is highly regarded as the golden age of philosophy and evolution theory proved by a naturalist:

In what we call the Wrangling or Philosophical Period of History ... there was a very distinguished naturalist, who proved to the satisfaction of numerous disciples such analogical and anatomical agreements in structure between an An [man or a male Vril-ya] and a Frog, as to show that out of the one must have developed the other. They had some diseases in common; they were both subject to the same parasitical worms in the intestines; and, strange to say, the An has, in his structure, a swimming-bladder, no longer of any use to him, but which is a rudiment that clearly proves his descent from a Frog ... another sect of philosophers maintained the doctrine that the An was not the

descendant of the Frog, but that the Frog was clearly the improved development of the An. The shape of the Frog, taken generally, was much more symmetrical than that of the An; beside the beautiful conformation of its lower limbs, its flanks and shoulders, the majority of the Ana in that day were almost deformed, and certainly ill-shaped. Again, the Frog had the power to live alike on land and in water—a mighty privilege, partaking of a spiritual essence denied to the An, since the disuse of his swimming-bladder clearly proves his degeneration from a higher development of species. (116-17)

Aph-Lin's explanation of the possible evolution of the An and the Frog suggests that the non-human traits are not an implication of degeneration. In fact, the Frog is regarded by the Vril-ya that its physique is "symmetrical" and has "a mighty privilege" that allows it to live on land or in the water while the An loses that ability to live in both worlds and turns into a savage with a "deformed" and "ill-shaped" body. The Vril-ya and the animal are not separated by anatomical differences as he argues that the Vril-ya's ancestors and frogs share the same "diseases" and "parasitical worms in intestines." The "distinguished naturalist" with his evolution from frog to human-like creatures can be a reference to Charles Darwin's theory of primate origins of human race. Bulwer-Lytton wrote in a letter explaining about his creation of the new species of the Vril-ya that "[t]he only important point is to keep in view the Darwinian proposition that the coming race is destined to supplant our race..." (qtd. in Robert Bulwer-Lytton 465). It is Bulwer-Lytton's interpretation of the emergent idea of evolution in the nineteenth century that other species will evolve into a fitter race and substitute mankind or that the human will be turned into something else through the course of time. Apart from the fear of man being

superseded, evolutionary process plays a crucial role in intersecting the bodies of the frog and the An. The Vril-ya's body, therefore, has a chimeric origin and is composed by racial, cultural and biological multiplicities.

Although the Vril-ya's electric body is visually sexed, their gender paradigm is an overturn of the Western male-female identities. Female Vril-ya are called Gy-ei or Gy, and their bodies are more massive than Ana or An, the male, and free to do activities and choose their own husbands while Ana are more passive. In Victorian Britain, while men were allowed to do outdoor activities, women were supposed to be domesticated and were not advised to wander outside at night or they would be considered prostitutes. This double standard which suppressed women but privileged men enabled the latter to take advantage of the public and the private spheres: they could work and travel freely outside the house and in the family their status as husbands gave them superiority over their wives. As many middle-class women internalised these gender stereotypes, their womanhood was described by the metaphor of the "angel in the house," whose lives were properly positioned as obedient daughters, dedicated housewives and careful mothers ready to serve fathers, husbands and children at home. Sexual expression was forbidden to all women, otherwise they would be seen as prostitutes or radically progressive and self-reliant individuals. Therefore, Victorian women were expected to be passionless and embrace femininity, motherhood and morality so that they would be good daughters, wives and mothers who devotedly supported households and a nation ruled by men. The Vril-ya society in *The Coming Race* seems like a parody of the world above the ground where men are active thinkers and women are passive housewives. The Gy-ei are physically strong and active, yet beautiful. According to the narrator's comments,

the host's daughter, Zee, is "a magnificent specimen of the muscular force which the females of her country attain" with a "grand" and "faultless" face which reflects "abstract thought" and "sternness" (109). She is taller and more well-built than the male, Ana, as she can "lift up a cannon as easily as [the narrator] could lift a pocket-pistol" (109). The narrator is amazed and terrified by this female creature's strength and masculinity. As a Victorian man who seems physically strong and active, his body seems fragile compared to that of a Gy who can carry a "cannon" like a man holding a "pocket-pistol." Zee, apart from being a parody of the progressive woman, is like a heroic warrior or an unconventional "angel" who deviates from Victorian feminine values. The Vrilya's courtship is also puzzling for the narrator when one of the female Vrilya disputes with him that in this subterranean world, females approach men first and doing otherwise is "a strange reversal of the laws of nature" (206). Females' overt sexuality is normal for this race but a deviation for the narrator who values Victorian gender roles.

In addition, the Gy-ei are intelligent thinkers or philosophers while most Victorian men took over intellectual profession in reality. Zee and other unmarried Gy-ei are professors in the College of Sages. According to the narrator's sarcastic commentary on the philosophical community in the College of Sages, "[t]he female Professors of this College that those studies which are deemed of least use in practical life—as purely speculative philosophy, the history of remote periods, and such sciences as entomology, conchology, &c.—are the more diligently cultivated ..." (57). However, these female scholars, including Zee, do not only investigate into the subjects that are "deemed of least use in practical life" but also study the "properties of vril" (58) or the vital energy that is greatly beneficial for the whole Vrilya society.

There is an occupational difference in this subterranean world. Well-educated Gy-ei with their strong body take over intellectual jobs whereas Ana are assigned to jobs associated with labour and machinery. With gigantic wings, Gy-ei are free to stay outside of the house and do outdoor activities like sports. The fact that female cyborg-like creatures spend most of their time in the College and the public space instead of being domesticated is a sharp contrast to the Victorian cult of femininity and womanhood which encouraged women to be obedient, submissive and inferior to men in terms of intellectual ability. While patriarchy has prevailed in the human race, especially the Western civilised society, the Vril-ya's community is quite matriarchal since it is natural for females to be physically and intellectually superior to men. The narrator adds that Gy-ei have the better electric body with "a readier and more concentrated power over that mysterious fluid [vril] or agency which contains element of destruction, with a large portion of that sagacity which comprehends dissimulation" (63). In a way, these Gy-ei perhaps epitomise the "femme fatale" or the dangerous woman figure that Ana fear as "they[Gy-ei] cannot only defend themselves against all aggressions from the males, but could, at any moment when he least suspected his danger, terminate the existence of an offending spouse" (64). Although this incident does not occur in the present day, in the past, a Gy could easily destroy her husband if he ruined her affection first. In spite of the dangerous figure of Gy-ei, the narrator observes that these females will be "the most amiable, conciliatory, and submissive wives" when they love their men so much because "where a Gy loves it is her pleasure to obey" (68). Although the devoting and obedient nature of a Gy recalls the Victorian image of "the angel in the house," a Gy becomes devoting and obedient because of her own free will to do so. The narrator also acts like a mouthpiece for

Bulwer-Lytton in an overt criticism of the Victorian marriage which cripples the wives in the scene where the narrator talks about how Gy-ei stop using wings during marriage (161). Although Gy-ei can be seen as a caricature of the progressive women, Bulwer-Lytton is not blind to the fact that marriage obstructs women's freedom.

The Gy-ei not only choose their own husband without parental permission but they are the ones who initiate the courtship by approaching Ana first. As the narrator witnesses the reversed gender paradigm, "they[Gy-ei] claimed the privilege, here usurped by men, of proclaiming their love and urging their suit; in other words, of being the wooing party rather than the wooed" (66). Being a female wooer with a masculine look makes the Vrilya's courtship become a complete reversal of the courtship of Victorian people. A Gy can be seen as being sexually active which is normal and acceptable. The narrator himself is also wooed by Zee and another Gy. An explanation from an An or male Vrilya about the unconventional practice of flirtation fills the narrator with more frustration. If a male says love first, "he is disgraced in the eyes of the Ana, and secretly despised by the Gy-ei" (199). Instead, Ana are expected to be more subtle in expressing passion and act seductively to impress the Gy-ei by using "coy tactics" (202). As the narrator is under Zee's care, the romantic relationship between Zee and him, as the human guest or "Tish," develops. Zee expresses love to him, but he is infuriated because this female courtship is inappropriate for him as he answers Zee, "the words you utter are improper for a maiden Gy to address even to an An of her own race" (189). He also rejects another maiden who woos him that in his country, "the Gy does not propose: the An speaks first" (206). The human rules and practices of courtship and gender roles are indeed

unnatural for and disabled in this subterranean culture, and so are the human-centric worldview and human subjectivity.

Although the Vril-ya are heterosexual, their complicated and unconventional gender orientation is much similar to the cyborg identity. For Haraway, the cyborg should be sexually fluid or unspecified by sexual attributes at all to establish a post-gender identity. Braidotti's posthuman reading rejects not only sexualised bodies but also racialised and animalised ones, taking a bio-scientifically cloned ewe as an example of a posthuman life in the real world controversially addressed either as a real animal or an artificial life. The posthuman body, thereby, becomes a site of biological, organic and sexual multiplicity. In science-fiction, extra-terrestrial aliens, for example, go beyond gender stereotypes, cultural and biological fixation of the humankind (Hurley 209) as they can transform human males into "mothers" of alien babies by injecting alien embryo into the male body and be reproduced outside humans' "heterosexual coupling" (Hurley 218). In *The Coming Race*, such a perplexing body image is found when the narrator first meets the subterranean manlike aliens whom he confusingly calls them "he/she" and "it." After having learned their sexual difference, the narrator has found that, on one hand, the Gy-ei or females are more physically manly and sexually active than the males who seem passively effeminate. On the other hand, the female Vril-ya's masculine strength is softened by maternity. Zee, "the wisest and the strongest" (162) of all Gy-ei, was "a very centre of innocent delight" (164). The protective, nurturing mother figure of Zee is noted by the narrator, despite his one-sided view, that her "kindly and protective sentiment" is like the "affection for 'pets' which a human female at every age shares with a human child," and her "desire to aid, to succour, to protect, to comfort, to bless,

seem[s] to pervade her whole being” (162). As a Victorian man, the narrator undoubtedly adores this maternal part as representing the “noblest womanhood” (165), hence reflecting the Victorian value of femininity. Zee’s fixed biological sex and womanhood contradictory to her masculine look, passionate nature and intellectual superiority that are expected to be characteristics of Western human males somehow complicate her gender identity. Apart from being a mockery of Victorian gender roles, the Vril-ya’s gender ambiguity can be closely connected to Haraway’s cyborg whose gender identity is not easily determined by using the anthropocentric and dualistic framework of masculinity and femininity.

Vril: Electrical Energy and a Redefinition of the Organic Body

The mighty, electric-like Vril energy is another non-human entity that disrupts the state of being human and non-human, alive and lifeless. In addition to the author’s obvious intention to create Vril as “electricity,” the power is also associated with “virility” (Hassler 356) or the vigour of the Vril-ya, especially the females. Vril, as a bodiless force, can reinvigorate non-human objects, destroy life and penetrate into every inch of the subterranean creatures. Vril makes the cyborg imagery possible as it, too, diminishes the difference between “animal-human (organism) and machine” (Haraway 69). The separation between “physical and non-physical” is collapsed so that, as the cyborg identity was investigated by Haraway, humans seem lifeless while machineries are distinctively full of life (69-70). As the Vril-ya’s history suggests, this mysterious force was discovered underground and used to unify the country consisting of separate tribes violently waging wars against one another. It is dominantly “all-permeating fluid” which can be manipulated to “destroy like the flash

of lightning,” “replenish or reinvigorate life,” and treat physical ailments (Bulwer-Lytton 51). The multipurpose quality of Vril is not only similar to that of magical charm but also resembles the electrotherapeutic cure for nervous and muscular maladies and a new energy used to ameliorate industrial engines during the late Victorian era. Bulwer-Lytton also makes use of this idea of electrical battery for machines in the novel in which objects like robotic devices are charged and animated by using a “vril staff” as though the electric power was being transferred from one body to another object (109-110). The narrator explains how the Vril-ya manipulate “inert and stubborn” objects using a remote-control staff infused with Vril energy:

If a heap of metal be not capable of originating a thought of its own, yet, through its internal susceptibility to movement, it obtains the power to receive the thought of the intellectual agent at work on it; and which, when conveyed with a sufficient force of the vril power, it is as much compelled to obey as if it were displaced by a visible bodily force. It is animated for the time being by the soul thus infused into it, so that one may almost say that it lives and it reasons.

Without this we could not make our automata supply the place of servants. (112)

These non-living machines are imbued not only with life but also with “the thought of the intellectual agent.” On one hand, Vril seems like a spirit invoked to possess and animate non-human matters. On the other, following a scientific explanation based on the Vril-ya’s College of Sages, it is electrical fluid that mobilises all mechanisms in matters and organisms. The Vril-ya’s creation of life-like objects, like cyborgs, can be a blasphemy against humans’ God, and against human subjectivity. Human specialness, especially the White Europeans, is underpinned by classical humanism during the era of Enlightenment where humans are distinguished from all non-human

creatures due to their superior rationality and self-consciousness. The anthropocentric belief in humankind as rational beings or divine offspring is, however, disturbed by how a Vril-ya's mechanical object "lives and reasons" after being energised by Vril power. In this case, machines as becoming rational beings, as ironically perceived by the narrator, destabilise the human subject as the most special, cultivated and reasonable species. As the organic body is becoming machine-like by being attached to mechanic wings, apparatuses become alive by Vril.

This creative and destructive power, leading the subterranean race to the Vril-centric society, is represented as an ambiguous entity whether it is a life force or life itself. Like body fluids, this electrical current runs like blood in veins and freely passes in and of the body. The Vril-ya's electric body is regularly maintained by taking a bath "charged with vril" believed to be "a great sustainer of life" (97) and prolong their life span. As the central energy of all subterranean lives, transportation, power supply, medical treatment and everyday activities are well supported. The Vril-ya's body is also objectified as a battery or mechanical device within the electric-like network. Despite being used and controlled, Vril's ability to automatically travel makes it more like an electrical symbiont and a self-organising mechanism. This entity is, in a way, god-like when one humanoid says a prayer in a cremation ceremony: "Behold how great is the Maker! To this little dust He gave form and life and soul. It needs not this little dust for Him to renew form and life and soul to the beloved one he shall soon see again" (193). The power is said to be "Lent to" the Vril-ya and in the time of death, it will be "Recalled from" them (194). It is not only addressed as "the Maker" but also materialises the electric body as a temporary vessel for Vril. Instead of a sheer product of science, electric-like Vril is perceived as

divinity whose power can be distributed to the Vrilya and also self-regulated by holistically return to its whole. The way this mysteriously powerful technology integrates in and merges itself with the body from birth to death demonstrates how the Vrilya are a part of a Vrilya-centric network. It can be associated with what Braidotti calls “Zoe” or self-organising mechanism. She attempts to characterise the technological age in the twentieth century as a Zoe-centric or post-anthropocentric era in place of the anthropocentric and humanistic domain which polarises all life forms into human and non-human, culture and nature dichotomies. Braidotti contends that the other-than-human, namely non-human and natural agents, are usually exploited and antagonised in the Western anthropocentrism. To disrupt an anthropocentric hierarchy appointed by humans and put humans on top, she proposes Zoe as a non-hierarchical, self-organising life system. This Zoe-centric¹¹ thinking is based on the idea of vitalist materialism¹² or cosmic energy that unifies all matters without relying on human force. This posthuman force is intelligent as Braidotti associates it with information technology that is built by humans but later becomes an “expanded relational self” (60). In the same light, Vrilya can be seen as an ambivalently self-organising entity with multiple qualities: destructive, healing and creative traits. It is constituted as a network, like that of information technology, passing through the body and carrying information or thoughts from one body to another as seen in the Vrilya’s telepathic practices. Although the Vrilya put themselves in a superior status

¹¹ Rosi Braidotti relies on the ecological concept of *monism* or the unity of all matters as a model for her Zoe-centric thinking. The process of becoming-earth indicates that Zoe is a “dynamic and generative force” moving on its own without human influence (86). It is a life force that needs no humanisation and categorisation as animal or non-living things. Instead of anthropocentric era driven by humans, Braidotti suggests that the anthropocentric convention is drawing to the end and the Zoe-centric or post-anthropocentric era, implying the end of humanism or the emergence of the posthuman, begins.

¹² Braidotti refers to Spinoza’s idea of “matter is one” or a holistic or “monistic universe” which leads other French philosophers to think that matters are self-organised without human interference (56-57).

to the Tish or mankind, they are equally and submissively objectified as puppets or apparatuses which are driven by this vital life energy.

To rely on Bulwer-Lytton's satirical connotation in the novel, human exceptionalism is undermined by the existence of the Vrilya as non-human others. The only human character or the narrator, an American gent of "high social position" who is passionate for adventures (5), represents the image of an imperialistic man from the Western world. Being accidentally trapped in the chasm of the mine dwelled by an exotic, quasi-human race, he is rescued and introduced to a whole-new landscape and technology. In his conversation with the host, Aph-Lin, who is sceptical about humans' cultural sophistication, the narrator, feeling offended and disdained, answers to save his face, "I had the honour to belong to one of the most civilised nations of the earth" (37-38). He infers that this humanoid seems "[m]ortified" after hearing his fabulous story, so he "elevate[s] [his] theme" by saying that his world above ground has democracy, good governance that ensures "tranquil happiness" and people under good care (39-40). To a certain degree, it seems like an overstatement since he "elevate[s]" it and, being aware of undesirable sides of human society, selectively talks about "the present grandeur and prospective pre-eminence" of America to impress the humanoid listeners with idealistic happiness and democratic regime. Some readers who identify themselves with the narrator, however, undeniably agree with the belief that they, too, come from "one of the most civilised nations." The belief reflects the self-referential claim about human exceptionalism and anthropocentrism which position humans, especially Westerners, as the most supreme race or species. As a parody of a Victorian man of reason, the narrator cannot allow that the Vrilya are smarter and more advanced at first to regain human

dignity and cognitive superiority. After Zee and her father, Aph-Lin, acquire his native English, he later admits that his language is “much simpler than theirs, comprising far less complexed ideas” while they have a more “ductile” brain to gain wisdom through telecommunication (44). Despite the truth that the Vril-ya have superior mentality, “[the narrator] secretly demur[s]” it and has to “sharpen [his] wits” because he “could not allow that [his] cerebra organisation could possibly be duller than that of people who had lived all their lives by lamplight” (44). The scene indicates how the human character insists on maintaining his cognitive supremacy and his Western, civilised image in denial of the superior others. The narrator also attempts to comprehend this foreign world using human reference as he stereotypically likens the Vril-ya’s language to that of the Indo-Europeans and also compares their physical characteristics to those of the primitives:

I cannot help thinking it a development, in the course of countless ages, of the Brachycephalic type of the Age of Stone in Lyell’s ‘Elements of Geology,’ C.X., p.113, as compared with the Dolichocephalic type of the beginning of the Age of Iron, correspondent with that now so prevalent amongst us, and called the Celtic type. (98)

Obviously, this human character bases his hypothesis on anthropology, which is a human-centric presumption, in order to describe this alien race. The Vril-ya’s history, however, proves him wrong because its deluge myth suggests how these humanoids are decentralised from humans’ history and civilisation. The narrator’s denial of the non-human others’ intellectual and technological advancement signifies his deep-seated anthropocentric judgment in which humans, especially the Westerners, are unrivalled in physical, mental and cultural aspects. The human-referential assessment

and human-righteousness further emphasise the claim of human history as the centre of the world history and are supported by predominant humanism in which human selfhood and rationality are universally and explicitly hailed as the distinctive human qualities. Human specificity—cognition and self-conscience—becomes a philosophical and political concept making humans the ultimate owner of their personhood and body, and allowing those with more rationality to rule.

Nevertheless, the narrator feels inferior and alienated while he lives amongst these subterranean creatures who can surpass him in many ways. From the representation of the body, the Vril-ya are vigorous while the narrator is weakened and belittled as he is treated like a “suffering bird or butterfly” (23). A mass of humanoids makes him feel dehumanised as they are gathering around him and “examining [him] with great interest, as if [he] [was] some rare wild animal” (25-26). From the Vril-ya’s point of view, human beings are outsiders to them as much as they are to him. Taë, a young Vril-ya and the magistrate’s son, is passionate about the subterranean monsters that swallow the narrator’s friend as Taë keeps asking about the giant reptile, later known as Glek-Nas, a creature with “jaws, claws, and belly” and without “brain and heart” (145), rather than about the narrator’s identity (45-46). Glek-Nas, being heartless and irrational, can represent a killing machine. It specifically preys on Ana or the males and has to be annihilated because it threatens the Vril-ya’s lives. The Vril-ya do not only kill Glek-Nas but also destroy every harmful creature. The Glek-Nas hunting is the Vril-ya’s tradition of defending themselves from annual invasions of these cruel gigantic reptiles. In the hunting scene, under Taë’s hypnosis, the narrator is used as a decoy as he comments, “but I was a mere machine at the will of this terrible child [Taë]” (150). The human is

obviously deprived of reason and self-consciousness by the hypnotic power of Vril. Similar to the lifeless objects that Zee controls and animates, the narrator is put in the same position as the non-human or non-living. In other words, with Vril power, his human body becomes less abled and is nothing but an automaton or apparatus. The human subject is thereby easily objectified, belittled and insignificant as the narrator is called a “Tish,” whose name is “indeed a pet name” and “metaphorically signifying a small barbarian, literally a Froglet” that young Vril-ya “apply it endearingly to the tame species of Frog” kept “in their garden” (148). In contrast, the Vril-ya’s body is represented as being more abled as it is merged with a synthetic prosthesis or technological other and is part of the electric Vril network. They can telecommunicate, cure, reinvigorate the non-living and demolish threatening others via their superhuman power. Based on the Vril-ya’s evolution theory, which is somewhat a reversal of the humans’, the frog-like body is at the peak of their evolution due to its perfect symmetry while the more recent body of the barbaric Ana is seen as the degenerated type (115-117). In contrast, most anthropocentric biologists unanimously conclude that the body of homo sapiens or modern humans is the most advanced version of the ape-like ancestors. Other bodies transforming far away from human characteristics will be considered as non-human, uncultured and inferior entities, namely animals or the savage. This anthropocentric determinism of humans as the superior race can no longer be applied in the subterranean region. Indeed, the narrator, a human representing an anthropocentric figure of rational being and supreme species, is ruined and no longer serves as the measure of everything.

In the end, although Zee saves the narrator from death sentence as a result of the Vril-ya’s anti-miscegenation law, the human subject is entirely rejected by this

race. As interracial marriage is criminalised in the Vril-ya society, Zee and the narrator's union is strongly forbidden. The narrator, with foreign and degenerative genes, is decided to be annihilated. This human character is a monstrous image due to his genetic taint that might deteriorate the Vril-ya's physique. As non-human characters had been antagonised in literature so far, it might be surprising for the reader of *The Coming Race* that the human character is, indeed, a symbol of a biological threat since interbreeding between the Vril-ya and Tish will produce carnivorous offspring. By referring to the eugenic tradition, Aph-Lin warns the narrator, who is loved and wooed by Zee, that he must comply with the rule by rejecting her love no matter how invincible she is, or else he will be burned into dust by Vril power. Aph-Lin seriously points out that interracial marriage is hopelessly impossible: "I grieve for you, because such a marriage would be against the A-glauran, or the good of the community, for the children of such a marriage would adulterate the race: they might even come into the world with the teeth of carnivorous animals; this could not be allowed..." (176). On one hand, this xenophobia can be what Bulwer-Lytton aimed to reflect on human fear of biological degeneration which can lead to contempt for or even genocide of people of different races. On the other hand, the Vril-ya as a "new species developing itself out of our own one[human species]" will never "amalgamate with, but destroy us[humans]" (qtd. in Robert Bulwer-Lytton 465-466). However, Bulwer-Lytton noted that the Vril-ya "ought not to be represented terrible" as their destructive characteristic derives "not from [their] vices but [their] virtues" (qtd. in Robert Bulwer-Lytton 466, 468). Humanity will be endangered not because of the Vril-ya's monstrous power but because of their more advanced way of life. Clearly, the arrival of the Vril-ya is not a direct cause of human

extinction. It is arguably man's own failure to biologically evolve that entails his own doom. Humans, the very subject of humanism and anthropocentrism, are thus criticised for their imperfect genes. Apart from the satire of chauvinism and racism, the human presence, as well as human-centrism, is belittled and finally excluded by the non-human race. The Vril-ya are "the coming race" that probably takes humans' place and refuses their subjectivity.

The fear of degeneration is not so much intrinsically embodied by the representation of the Vril-ya than by the uncompromising belief of human supremacy and humans' own unwilling adaptability. In his final remark, the narrator not merely warns the reader about the terrifying quasi-human race but also suggests that humans adjust and improve themselves in preparation for the coming race. Due to the fact that the Vril-ya usually eliminate any "untameable" creature (60) in order to preserve their well-being, humans would be certainly eliminated if they remain less advanced. Species adaptation is what Bulwer-Lytton referred to as "the Darwinian proposition" (qtd. in Robert Bulwer-Lytton 465) that a race should not stay unchanged. Apart from the human angst towards the unexpected arrival of new species, entering a new form of life through biological and technological advancements can be a key to survival. Like the Vril-ya's body coevolved with technological others, their evolution from a frog to An indicates that they continuously develop in physical, intellectual, technological and cultural aspects. Zee and her father, Aph-Lin, argue that the Frog race of Ana is now a funny story for children and the hypothesis that the Vril-ya will devolve into frogs or tadpoles is obsolete. That is to say, they experience states of becoming something all the time and never regress. The Vril-ya's view about the body as an apparatus, positively perceived as a fluid and transformative subject,

diminish their fear of death. Since death is “implanted in the breasts of the race to which [the narrator] belong” (233), it is “only the instinct of the inferior creatures” for the Vril-ya and none of their kids is afraid of it (236). Fearlessness in the face of death may be a posthuman dream that humans, in general, never achieve since this anthropocentric fear of extinction specially and deeply rooted in every human mentality makes humans human. There are two hypotheses that the narrator comes up with if this alien race ascends the earth’s surface: the destruction of “existent varieties of man” and “intermixture of race” (226). The latter possibility seems too “sanguine” since miscegenation is fatal (227). As Bulwer-Lytton himself noted, the genocide of mankind is more likely to occur due to “the impossibility of our tolerating them or they tolerating us” (qtd. in Robert Bulwer-Lytton 466), not the evil nature of the Vril-ya. Likewise, the way Zee and Taë help the narrator escape and defy their traditions proves that some humanoids are not harmful to humans or Tish. The reunion between the human and Vril-ya is, however, no longer possible since the chasm, the connecting door between upper and lower worlds, is permanently closed. Despite the disconnection, in his anthropocentric and imperialistic dread, the narrator remarks that the subterranean race will come up and destroy human beings while he is hoping that “ages may yet elapse before there emerge into sunlight our inevitable destroyers” (243) and that human beings will be more advanced. The question arises if it is this foreign race that is dangerous per se or actually humans’ own denial of otherness and progress that may lead to the annihilation of human race.

Despite being translated as a representation of fear, these subterranean humanoids are a new life form nearly yet incompletely close to what critics can call the posthuman entity. Bulwer-Lytton not only refers to the theme of electricity as a

life-invigorating energy in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* but also integrates the contemporary electrical phenomena in the creation of Vril and the electric body. With fluid, invasive, shapeless and intangible qualities of electricity used in medical and engineering fields, electrical technology made its way into Victorian human bodies and objectified them. Like Haraway's image of a cyborg as a lively species assembled by organisms and machines, the Vril-ya, with the electrical life force of Vril, are also the born cyborg-like beings with the electric body. Electrical devices become parts of the Vril-ya's bodies as if they were organic prostheses or limbs seamlessly merged with the body to complete the becoming-machine process. The assimilation of organic and inorganic elements disrupts the boundary between life and artificiality, and raises a question of liveliness and lifelessness. While the cyborg or the posthuman subject rejects conventional reproduction and fixed sexes, the Vril-ya, despite unconventional gender roles, still live in the heterosexual body and traditions of motherhood. As a result, their electric cyborg-like body can be a prototype of posthuman science-fiction characters in later periods, yet still far from being the complete posthuman. In addition, the non-human life force, Vril, also destabilises the human subject, a rational and self-conscious being, when the human character's mind and body is invaded by such energy. It is an ambivalent entity—destructive yet creative, controllable yet self-organising—which establishes this subterranean region as a non-hierarchical Vril-centric society just like what Braidotti asserts about Zoe or the non-human self-regulating life force. Bulwer-Lytton's parody of the imperialistic and self-referential protagonist can be a criticism of the anthropocentric presumption and exceptionalism that obstruct the narrator from eliminating his fear of otherness. It can also be concluded that the fear regarding degeneration may not be intrinsically from the Vril-

ya's dangerous traits but from the imperialistic illusions and obsessions about negative representations of the non-human others. Bulwer-Lytton's representation of the "coming race" with a posthuman-like body does not end there but seemingly paves its way for what H.G. Wells calls in "Zoological Regression" (1891) the "Coming Beast"—a wordplay which suggests the arrival of a "humble creature" with survival abilities to physically adapt or downgrade themselves and supersede human beings (253). The next chapter will put emphasis on H.G. Wells's bestial mutants in *The Time Machine* whose "humanimal" body breaks the boundary between the human and the animal.



CHAPTER III: THE “HUMANIMAL” BODY IN H.G. WELLS’S

THE TIME MACHINE

The previous chapter has pointed out how the amalgamation of organic bodies and technological entities affirms the possible progression of a species rather than devolution in Bulwer-Lytton’s *The Coming Race*. As the modern innovation had considerable impacts on people’s lives and produced both wonder and fear, Bulwer-Lytton was among those Victorian writers who observed the transformative power of technology and provided subtle social commentaries about it in his fiction. The mysteriously magical Vril energy, perceived as electrical technology and absorbed by the Vril-ya’s physique, enables the formation of the electric body, instead of the monstrous one, that undercuts the borderline between the organic and the inorganic, the natural and the synthetic. As the body is thought of as a material subject having undergone physical and discursive changes by the cyborg theorist Donna Haraway and the posthuman thinker Rosi Bradotti, Bulwer-Lytton’s representation of the Vril-ya and their electric body is a possible vision of a cyborg figure and suggests the actual process of becoming-machine. It eventually formulates the body which does not only reflect the monstrous and monstrosity but a progressive entity that denies the anthropocentric dualism and echoes the author’s argument against degeneration hypothesis. Yet, non-human entities, which are central to critical posthuman discussions, are not merely limited to technological others or synthetic machines but also include animals. This chapter will take animals into account to reinvestigate the relationship between humans and animals which was a pivotal topic in late nineteenth-century Britain. It will also examine how the human-animal body is created and signifies biological

advancement rather than an image of cultural fear of regression in H.G. Wells's scientific romance or science-fiction novel *The Time Machine*.

Degeneration: When Humans and Animals Meet

The mid-nineteenth-century formation of evolutionary principles in Britain led to a radical conclusion that human beings have never been separated from animals. Due to biological similarities, human beings were genealogically linked to their animal ancestors instead of the great divinity. From the observation of numerous animals, plants and natural mechanisms of the earth, Charles Darwin theorised natural selection process in which all species came into being and survived through what he called a “descent with modification” in *The Origin of Species* (1859). Each living being, naturally selected as the strongest once the living mechanisms undergo “a frequent recurring for existence,” is a descendant of primitive ancestors with adapted and modified bodies (Darwin 5). Humans are thereby presumed as being genetically and anatomically related to the primates, namely chimpanzees and monkeys. Although naturalising sexes and gender roles as the fixed human nature was disapproved by some Victorian scholars, this radical Darwinian evolution not only challenges the concept of the great chain of being and the biblical notion of humans as the image of God and as the centre of the universe, but also reveals the interior animality of the human body. From the caricature of Charles Darwin in *The Hornet* in 1871, it depicts the theorist and his theory in the form of an ape-like human of

“the Venerable Orang-outang.”¹³ This symbolic hybrid between a modern man and a primate ancestor provides a grotesque outlook of how the human and the animal are roughly blended and juxtaposed. The white facial hair of Darwin’s extraordinary large head which is illustrated in contrast with the blackish furs covering the primate body is quite a disturbing spectacle. While Darwinian hypotheses about humans’ primate forefathers became recognisable in Victorian culture, politics and literature, the held borderline between human and animal bodies during that time was gradually dissolved.

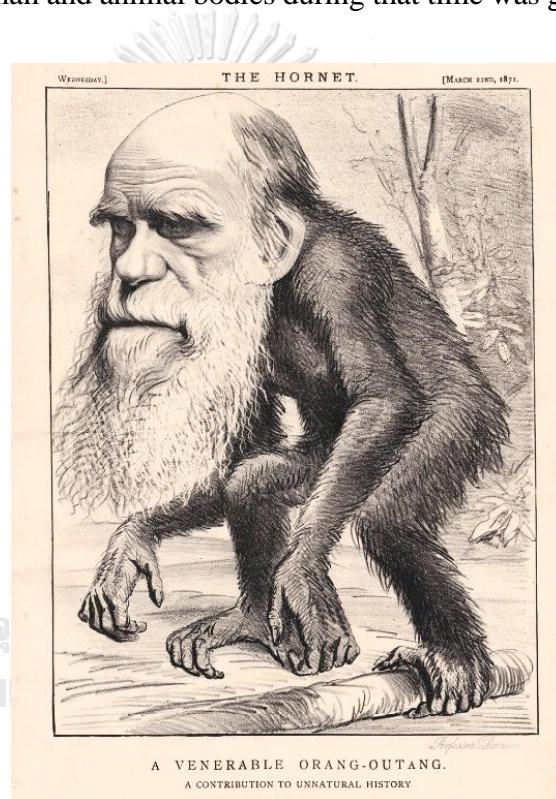


Figure 3. A Venerable Orang-outang. A Contribution to Unnatural History published by Frederick Arnold in *The Hornet* 22 March 1871. National Portrait Gallery, London

¹³ In the dissertation entitled “The Victorian Posthuman: Monstrous Bodies in Literature and Science” (2018), Wietske Smeele uses this caricature of ape-like Darwin to demonstrate how the effect of physical de-evolution, which is implied in Darwin’s evolution theory, is depicted in the Victorian novellas, especially in Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886). Smeele added that this ape-like image both in fiction and sarcastic illustration represents how this groundbreaking theory created cultural concern of instability of humanity as it can be spotted out by physical regression and by a gradual process of degeneration in which the anatomy is more simplistic and atavistic like the way a human turns into an ape in Stevenson’s character Mr. Hyde (155-66).

Apart from technological machinery that transformed Victorian life and culture, animals also played a crucial part in Victorian society. With reference to Genesis, after God created humans in his image, making them special beings, he allowed humans to “have dominion over” every single “creeping thing that creeps upon the earth” (Genesis 1:26). This biblical view guided how most Westerners were supposed to treat non-human beings. During the course of the nineteenth century, animals could be exploited for the sake of human benefit; they were experimented and vivisected in scientific laboratories, talked about in political movements and used as metaphors to suggest some types of people who were believed to be less than humans. Harriet Ritvo, an American scholar who studies nineteenth-century animal issues in Britain, discloses in *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures* (1987) that animals are significant to humans in terms of science, culture and politics and embedded in human history. They can be categorised into three types: the economic animals that support human lives, the sentimental animals that are kept as pets or companions, and the spectacle animals that are traded as valuable products or exhibited in zoos (Ritvo qtd. in Yeandle 258). Some of them are eaten, tended and merchandised. Metaphorically, British urbanisation led the impoverished working class to live an animal-like life as they “herd[ed] together” in the underground space of London in the late nineteenth century (Gissing qtd. in Redford 125). Animals were also set against human rationality and civilisation, so those who were socially unfit, physically deformed and mentally deranged were linked to animality. In the late-Victorian period, aristocrats and working-class people politically attacked each other by raising the topic of animal protection. With the passing of the Cruelty to Animals Act in 1876, members of the upper class took advantage of this law to blame the

lower classes for treating animals badly while the workers blamed the aristocrats for hunting and killing wild animals for fun (Mayer 351-352). In a way, the non-human creatures were passively dragged into humans' political dispute. Whereas the killing of animals or putting them into a fight for fun was deemed unacceptably brutal and inhumane by Victorian sentimentalists, butchering animals for food and vivisectioning them in laboratories were controversially permitted by law if it was for the sake of human knowledge and health. Despite being a socio-cultural and political subject matter in Victorian society, animals were eventually deemed inferior and only utilised as an apparatus for mankind.

Due to the subordination of animals and the degenerative premise of how human beings might devolve into their primate ancestors, animalisation of the human body can be negatively perceived as a sign of dehumanisation and degeneration. From the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, the cultural perception of the body has shifted from the body as a microcosm, an epitome of the universe, to the body as a machine, the concept in which individuals are mechanical parts of the community. According to Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1975), since the nineteenth century, the body has gradually been disciplined in authorised institutes such as schools, asylums and prisons where governmental and medical authorisation invaded individual bodies to normalise, manipulate and civilise them (as cited in Robb and Harris 19). In the Western culture, animality can represent monstrosity in the humanistic culture and politics. The chimeric body or human-animal hybrid are usually portrayed in arts and mythology to stigmatise immoralists and signify that a bestial physique is an undesirable sign of regression and corruption. Violation of the human perfect form, the image of God, and transformation into ugly, deformed beasts

or plants are also seen as punishments and representations of a tragic destiny. Although a spectacular portrayal of a half-human, half-animal being may reflect divinity and holiness, a grotesque human-animal body often bears negative connotations. For example, the depiction of Greek mythic creatures, namely “centaurs, minotaur and sirens,” whose bodies are the distinct amalgam of a human and an animal, signifies unethical and “bestial” behaviours of human beings who indulge in earthy experiences (Robb and Harris 110). The imagery of characters with anomalous and animalistic appearances could be inherited from the seventeenth and eighteenth-century fantasy of “threatening bodies.”¹⁴ Monstrous bodies from utopian and dystopian tales such as Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) and Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) also suggest the dangers of scientific misconduct and monstrosity born from science (Robb and Harris 175). In addition, the transformation from a normal human body into an atavistic, ape-like humanoid is thought of as a sign of regression and extinction. In *Degeneration: A Chapter in Darwinism* (1880), Edwin Ray Lankester explained that animalistic, simplistic traits were a sign of degeneration. As Lankester described, “regressive metamorphosis” and parasitic animals were regarded as instances of degeneration due to “a loss of organisation making the descendant far simpler or lower in structures than its ancestors” (30-31). Another degenerationist Cesare Lombroso proposed traits of criminality in *The Criminal Man* from ill-proportioned anatomy. The abnormal

¹⁴ In *The Body in History* (2013), John Robb and Oliver J.T. Harris studied the deviant bodies represented in nineteenth-century literature. They conclude that such anomalous, monstrous bodies, envisaged as “witches, Jews, Catholics, Protestants, werewolves, vampires and others,” were prevalent in seventeenth and eighteenth-century cultures and were embodiments of the social outcasts or political opponents. However, the nineteenth-century formation of race became another source of the threatening body or otherness as Robb and Harris reveal, “[w]ith colonial expansion, people with exotic appearances and incomprehensible habits formed another ingredient for bodily utopias and dystopias.” Racial conception formulated in the nineteenth century became what Robb and Harris referred to as “colonial fantasy” (175). As race was exploited by imperial naturalists as fixed biology and the inferior race such as the primitives, natives or indigenous tribes were later animalised, providing a justifiable right for the colonisers to take control over them.

physique could be linked to certain groups of people with wicked mind. The inheritance of these criminal genes could lead to degeneration of the human race. Animalisation, dehumanisation or monstrous deformation of the human body imagined in many Victorian science-fiction novels thus evidently suggest the possibility of mental, cultural and physical decay. As Victor Frankenstein's grotesque creature is composed of different organs of animals and Dr. Jekyll's other self Mr. Hyde is ape-like, it can be seen that these humanoids, who have traits and are treated like animals, in nineteenth-century novels reflect the reverse evolution in which the body becomes atavistic and simplified. The human-animal metamorphosis in fiction and biological regress in reality not only reflected moral crisis in the late nineteenth-century society but also prophesied a degenerative route of the human species.

From the observation of human-animal relationship, representations of animals in history, culture and literature of the nineteenth century were usually considered as negative metaphors and imageries of the unwanted and inferior features found in humans. The configuration of animalistic characters thus reflects how the Victorians were so worried that the loss of humanness and transformation into animals mostly led to degeneration. Nevertheless, with the twentieth and twenty-first-century view of critical posthumanism, the monstrous body, including an animalistic human or anthropomorphic animals, in the late-Victorian science fiction not merely conveys dehumanisation and devolution but can also be read as a revolt against anthropocentrism and human-non-human dualism. It is true that Darwin's animalistic genealogy of mankind could affect the Victorian view about human species. Wells's predictive view of evolution in *The Time Machine* is ambivalent since the animalised characters can either embody physical regression in the Time Traveller's speculation

or an advanced hybrid life. The Time Traveller's subjective narration, which is ambiguous and unreliable, allows for the reinvestigation of the monstrous body of the Eloi and the Morlocks which seems to signify the "humanimal" future in which evolution is a puzzling progress. One cannot be so sure about the future even though he is able to travel through time. Unlike Bulwer-Lytton's prophesy of technological utopia and mechanised body in *The Coming Race*, *The Time Machine* presents the world where humanity and animality are hybridised as a result of evolution and biological adaptation. Similar to the posthuman disagreement of human-centric narratives, the human-animal combination in the novel subtly challenges human-animal dualism and anthropocentrism. Thus, the ambiguous not-quite-human representation is not only the figure associated with the Victorian fear of degeneration but also the possibility of a hybrid species and the end of an anthropocentric world.

Becoming "Humanimal": When Humans and Animals Merge

Herbert George Wells or H.G. Wells is one of the prolific novelists of the late-nineteenth century whose "scientific romance," later categorised as science fiction, speculates what humans would be like. *The Time Machine*, previously known as *The Chronic Argonauts*, was first serialised in the *Science Schools Journal* in 1888 and was published as a full-length novel in 1895. Due to several editorial revisions for both British and American publishers, the novel has different versions and thus has been said to be the most refined piece of writing among his other scientific romances that were quickly published. As Wells was once a member of the Fabian society which advocated socialism and the labour class, his socialistic idea, against the backdrop of industrialisation of England where the elites took advantage of the lower

class, is echoed in an extreme imagery of social classes divided into two species when the upper class become weak and the workers are empowered. Some journalists regarded Wells as “the English Jules Verne,” a remarkable French science-fiction novelist of the nineteenth century, whose works were different from his as Verne’s stories revolve around “actual possibilities of invention and discoveries” while his collection of scientific fantasies were indeed “exercises of the imagination” (Preface iii). *The Time Machine* can be a good example that makes Wells worth being remembered as a novelist who rejects normative Victorian realism. As J.K. Hammond notes, Wells’s early works of scientific fantasies and short stories contain his self-consciousness and pessimism, instead of following the Victorian convention of realism which logically presents the world as it is, and shape him as “a transitional figure between realism and modernism” like Joseph Conrad (15-16). *The Time Machine* is comparable to “symbolic romances,” “complex fantasy” or modern “fables” instead of “strictly scientific speculations” (Bergonzi qtd. in Hammond 73). Whereas realistic speculations about science in the late-nineteenth century could be outdated, Wells’s scientific fantasies, including *The Time Machine*, which are not based on realism but imagination, stand the test of time. In the novel, the Time Traveller justifies his time travelling theory by talking about his voyage to the future where there are the weak but lovely creatures called Eloi who are preys to the sturdy, hideous subterranean humanoids, the Morlocks. The confrontation of the two species, as some critics have observed, reflects an ongoing class conflict in the Victorian society. According to Mathew Taunton’s “Class in *The Time Machine*” (2014), the capitalism that used to run the British society has gone “monstrous” and creates class hatred or even war between classes. Critics like Patrick Brantlinger also read *The*

Time Machine as a story of racism and speciesism (149-50). This speculation of the animalistic future also reveals how the upper and lower classes evolve into two distinct species. The aristocratic Eloi become the unfit for the post-human world while the working-class Morlocks, the underground creatures, are facilitated by subterranean technology. For Catherine Redford, Wells's underworld is "a space" related to "class and adaptation" which "empowers the working classes . . . but simultaneously returns them to their position as people of the abyss, associating them with dirt, savagery and vermin" (130-131). When the subterranean region is a hellish place yet a "space of progress and industry" where criminal, immoral and parasitic creatures like Morlocks inhabit, the representation of the fragile Eloi fills the upper world with "weakness and deterioration" (Redford 133).

In the struggle of survival, many scholars have seen that the Morlocks and the Eloi are representatives of the degenerate. The beastly Morlocks with an animalised and deformed body become the fittest or strongest whereas the delicate Eloi are physically shrunken and hunted down. The bestial savages emerging as the ruling race in *The Time Machine* can be a reverse of evolution since the human perfect physique, a manifestation of physical civilisation, may become simplified and animalised. The allegory of civilised people being swallowed by murderous creatures can be reminiscent of the extinction of a species or a race. Israel A.C. Noletto has argued that the Morlocks' monstrous appearance which intensifies their criminality and the carnivorous killing of the Eloi, creatures of their own race, is undeniably seen as a bloody "cruel, wicked, destructive" act (21-22). Their ape-like form can be a reminder of degenerative anatomy once human forms are being simplified like their primate ancestors as well. Moreover, David C. Cody explores Wells's vision of human

extinction in the article “Faulkner, Wells, and the ‘End of Man’” (1993) claiming that *The Time Machine*, among the late nineteenth-century novels which portray a grim image of the world, signals Victorian pessimism about the future of humanity undergoing a degenerative pathway (469-472). As Darwin’s evolution has been said to be central to the novel, critics have concluded that humans’ transformation into simplistic forms of the sickly beautiful Eloi and barbarian Morlocks often illustrates devolution and regression. With the three stages of human evolution including savagery, barbarism and civilisation (Tyler qtd. in Brantlinger 150), the way the Morlocks are often seen as the savage instead of the civilised due to their animalistic appearance indicates a reverse of human progress which Patrick Brantlinger calls “the entropic ruins of humanity” (166). Traces of humanity are shattered and downgraded into bestial forms which can be perceived as a biological apocalypse.

The novel’s reaffirmation of the Victorian men as superior beings in contrast to its dystopian mode used to satirise the imperfection of Victorianism, however, create tonal ambiguity which is echoed by the Time Traveller’s unreliable and prejudiced view toward the non-human characters. As the Victorian period was the high point of civilisation and scientific progress, science-related theories and inventions, mostly produced by men, in nineteenth-century Britain could be a prominent milestone in human rationality and enlightenment. *The Time Machine* opens with a theory of fourth dimension (time) and a time machine that are introduced by a man who claims that he has travelled through time. All attendees of this scientific breakthrough, though it is an “impossible hypothesis” (*Literary Criticism* qtd. in Draper 35), are men of professions who are addressed by their generic titles: the Mayor, the Physician, etc. This all-male discussion about a sophisticated theory

reinforces how Victorian men were represented to be more rational and privileged to access scientific knowledge while women were absolutely absent from the scene and only portrayed as being weak and passively dependent like Weena. However, the Time Traveller's tale of the grim and unpleasant future suggests how the novel can also be read in the dystopian mode. The more he ventures into the farther future, the more disappointed and suffocated he feels. He believes that technology will be strikingly advanced while in fact there are only ruins of civilisation in the world of Eloi and Morlocks. Instead of guiding the Traveller to see a perfect world, the time machine takes him to a place where humans he knows too well are gone. The irony portrayed by the author through the Traveller's view of the dystopian future also points out the imperfection of Victorianism. Excessive obsession with rationality can become madness as Victorian rational men of science were likely to be parodied as mad scientists in Victorian science fiction like Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Hyde* and Wells's *Dr. Moreau* or the Time Traveller. This parodic image of men suggests that science is a double-edged sword: it is not only a means to a perfect society but a source of monstrosity and imperfection. In *The Time Machine*, the Time Traveller is presented as a prejudiced (a typical Victorian middle-class man) and unreliable person who subjectively presumes that the world of Eloi and Morlocks is a degenerative version of Victorian society. Seeing the world through a Victorian "mediating perspective," he knows his "interpretative limitations" comes from the lack of adequate background knowledge about utopianism (Redford 133). The non-human creatures or human-animal hybrids might not be as entirely monstrous and vicious as they seem. In fact, they can be associated with a posthuman life form many twentieth and twenty-first century critics have suggested. Arguably, Wells's early

science fiction not only introduces the monstrous imagery of degeneration but also a prophetic vision of a possible future.

Humans and animals' shared biological and behavioural traits, for many posthuman critics, provide a progressive view about human-animal hybridity and destabilise the dichotomised worldview. With all the morally ambiguous debates concerning animals, questions about a mutual relationship between humans and animals have paved the way for animal studies in the present period which consider animals as a subject existing beyond human dominion. Cary Wolfe, a significant scholar of animal studies and posthumanism, has explained in "Human, All Too Human: 'Animal Studies' and the Humanities" (2009) that animal studies can be a tool for the posthuman approach as it not only challenges the generic and humanistic definition of animals, which is what Wolfe calls "the schema of the knowing subject" or the familiar anthropocentric worldview, and links the animal with other discourses such as race and gender, but also puts emphasis on a panoramic scene of "species" (567-568). Animal studies, as Ritvo has revealed that it was loosely pioneered in the Victorian period by socio-political discussions and scientific experiments concerning animals, posts a challenge to the humanistic or anthropocentric value of human-animal dualism. It is a snub to differences between humans and animals and concerns with the "shared finitude" of humans and animals including mortality and inability to communicate or fully understand each other (Wolfe 570-571). Thinkers of animal studies after the Victorian period attempt to undermine the Anthropocene or the era of human domination, discloses human exploitation of animals in several discourses and aims to make animal studies widely accepted in the field of Victorian studies

(McKechnie and Miller 436-439). From these historical contexts, humans and animals have arguably co-constituted in biological, socio-cultural and political aspects.

The body of human-animal hybrids is, indeed, cherished as a posthuman subject which helps re-examine humanity in the techno-scientific era. It is possible to study late-Victorian science-fiction novels such as *The Time Machine* in the light of posthumanism to explore how the possibility of a posthuman life form can be speculated. It can be argued that cultural fears of the monstrously non-human others stem from how the humanistic or anthropocentric beliefs of universalism, human superiority to the non-human and human perfectibility were destabilised. As animals have been formally described by human beings as if “they were mere blank pages onto which humans wrote meaning” (Fudge qtd. in Wolfe 566), animalisation of humans both in fiction and discursive reality surely causes concerns to believers of anthropocentrism. Instead of perceiving animals under the humanistic dualism which divides humans from animals, culture from nature, and regarding animals as mere tools, capitals, products or symbolic references, animal studies and critical posthumanism attempt to debunk the meta-narratives which have been central to the notion of human dominion over the non-human. Animals, in fact, have diverse forms and ways of living. They should not be generalised as humans’ otherness or dichotomised as Matthew Calarco remarks that “the human/animal distinction” is “nonsensical” and “[h]ow could a simple (or even highly refined) binary distinction approach doing justice to the complex ethical and ontological matters at stake here?” (qtd. in Wolfe 572). Brutish traits of the human body not only imply anomaly or deviance but also suggest the possible emergence of life outside the limited anthropocentric grasp of what it means to be humans.

Among the three selected texts about confrontations of the human and the non-human, instead of portraying the grim future of human kind, Wells's *The Time Machine* hints at the end of anthropocentrism through the representation of the "humanimal" body. The term "humanimal" is generally used to describe a hybrid life which is a part human, part animal being. This ambiguous identity is reflected from the animalistic appearance of the human body or the anthropomorphic physique of animals. The chimeric-like or hybridised body, so to speak, is not merely a mythical imagery but also signifies a condensation of various life forms. According to Donna Haraway, the "humanimal" is a wordplay termed to connote a new paradigm of how "human beings and other animals co-make each other in the making of history" (Human). It is neither a human nor animal world where one strives to define. Indeed, it is the "humanimal" world where humans should no longer think about their own race as the only species that matters (Human). The term "humanimal" also coordinates with Haraway's idea of companion species that binds humans and animals together in the world where species are co-constituted and inter-related physically, mentally and politically. Pramod K. Nayar also uses this term in *Posthumanism* (2014) to clarify how animals and humans share similar attributes and sometimes the human-animal distinction is not always true in techno-scientific twentieth and twenty-first century contexts. The "humanimal" can be related to anthropomorphic representations of non-human characters in literature especially science fiction in which questions like what it means to be "truly human" or "merely machine or animal" are brought forward (Nayar 93). While the human-animal relationship was discursively described in anthropocentric thoughts, Nayar has concluded that the human and the non-human, having co-constituted and mutually

connected in physical, mental and geological aspects, should be redefined as having diverse, complex life forms instead of being conventionally framed in the illogical nature-culture division and hierarchy (98-99). In addition, both entities have been comparatively studied and proved to have similar ways of creating culture, aesthetic styles, communication, technologies and sexual behaviours. Adam Rutherford, a British author of human history, uses this peculiarly ambiguous word “humanimal” in the title of his book *Humanimal: How Homo Sapiens Became Nature’s Most Paradoxical Creature: A New Evolutionary Theory* (2019) to explore how humans, descendants of simple apes, become distinctively sophisticated and unique while other animals cannot do what most humans can. It is, however, revealed that some animals can have their own way of speech expression, start fire, create arts in their own styles, and have sex for pleasure not for reproduction. These animal behaviours resemble those humans claim to be their unique abilities. The human-animal boundary is, therefore, banished, and human beings are not distinguishably dissimilar to non-human creatures but just animals with some uniqueness.

The body with human-animal identity indicates a cyborg image and a form of companion species. In Haraway’s “A Manifesto for Cyborgs” (1985), the rigid boundary between human and non-human entities is made ambiguous in the technocultural era. She declares that cyborgs are widely present in science fiction in the present time. They are “creatures simultaneously animal and machine, who populate worlds ambiguously natural and crafted” (Haraway 66). In her explanation of the dissolving human-animal borderline, one of the “critical boundary breakdowns” resulting from a cyborg entity, Haraway argues that, as a result of “[b]iology and evolutionary theory” in the nineteenth century, living beings and things can be

regarded as “objects of knowledge” and human-animal demarcation is undermined by the fact that all organisms strive to survive in the modern time (68). As animals share what humans have exclusively claimed as their superior attributes such as language, art and culture, the biblical separation of man and the not-man is so misleading that “teaching modern Christian creationism,” or teaching about the hierarchy of beings, can be “a form of child abuse” (Haraway 68). Biology and evolution count humans and animals as equal organisms with the same struggle to survive, and can pave the way for the “humanimal” world. Evolutionary theory, as it objects to the biblical creationism, thus proves invalidity of the religious explanation of life and turns people’s attention to science. As “cyborgs signal disturbingly and pleasurably tight coupling,” “[b]estiality has a new status in this cycle of marriage exchange” (Haraway 68). This “coupling” is metaphorically made by the human and the non-human as both biologically and evolutionarily shared flesh and blood. In this bodily assemblage, there is an interplay of animalistic humans or human animality. In addition, human-animal, nature-culture dichotomy is reduced once movements of animal rights, which argue how human and animal share the fear of mortality and suffering, dignify animals while suggesting the implosion of “human uniqueness” (Haraway 68). These emphases on the co-constitution of the human and the animal, through biology and discourses, prove invalidity of the humanistic notion of human beings. In “The Companion Species Manifesto,” Haraway elaborates the cyborg identity as a sub-category of the concept of companion species as animals are humans’ significant otherness who co-inhabits and co-evolves with humans both actively and passively. In this respect, how the Victorians perceived non-human creatures as metaphors, agricultural tools, pitiful subjects and a source of knowledge from vivisection and

biological studies partially allowed these people to make sense of the world and themselves, even as the superior beings. The reinvestigation of Victorian animals could unveil that humans' wisdom, culture and distinctive status on earth would have never achieved without the existence of animals. In other words, humans and animals were arguably co-constituent. Like what Haraway asserts, the non-human, a compound of animals and machines, and the human have been companion species since they are historically, bodily and culturally merged as an assemblage.

In Braidotti's *The Posthuman*, the "humanimal" body can be associated with becoming-animal¹⁵ process, one of the post-anthropocentric transformations, which signals the conceptual shift from anthropocentric human-animal separation to human-animal unification. The becoming-animal is done by equivalently positioning humans and animals at the similar level "symbiosis"¹⁶ or close physical interaction between species or living organisms (Braidotti 66-67). Similar to Ritvo's categorisation of animal roles relevant to humans, humans and non-human creatures are confined within three problematic types of relationship as observed by Deleuze: the tamed animals or domesticated companions, the "instrumental" or edible meats and "the fantastic" or the televised exotic beings (Braidotti 67). These human-animal relationships, again, reaffirm human superiority to the non-human. As animals are taken as symbolic references to human conducts, the usual anthropocentric interpretation can be seen as limited because animals and humans are more than just master-and-slave companions in the present days in which technology and capitalism

¹⁵ This term, as employed and developed by Braidotti, is influenced by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's framework of the "becoming" or equivocal condition in which things are subject to changes and new meanings (Braidotti 66-67).

¹⁶ Margulis and Sagan's clarification of the cross-species connection, instead of species differences, is engendered by how humans and animals are mutually the embodiment, embedded entities and proximately physical and biological cooperation of species (Braidotti 66-67).

have turned them into similar commodities. The non-human creatures are equivalent to the human as they are seen as labourers and subjects of medical studies (Braidotti 70). While all non-human living beings are inferior species in the hierarchy of living beings, post-anthropocentrism is a posthuman mindset Braidotti proposes to disrupt the hierarchy of human-non-human species. Instead of a male-centric or human-centric world, it is also what she called a Zoe-centric one where living beings and things complicatedly respond to one another in a non-hierarchical manner. Human beings are not entitled to rule over all animals any more, only to react with them. Men are not superior to the not-man namely women, animals or those who are less than men. Therefore, animality, femininity and otherness are embraced and positively viewed, as Braidotti has claimed: “I am a she-wolf, a breeder that multiples cells in all directions; I am an incubator and a carrier of vital and lethal viruses; I am mother-earth, the generator of the future” (80-81). The “humanimal” body celebrates a selfhood that is constructed by multiple non-human others and becomes “a carrier” of living organisms. The body with fragmented human quality here is not a monstrous or degenerative but a potentially progressive entity that will disrupt the human-centric narratives.

The Time Machine is narrated by an anonymous narrator who begins the story by describing a gathering of Victorian professional men such as a physician, a psychologist and a governor. In the meeting at the Time Traveller’s house, the complicated theory of time as the fourth dimension and time travel are presented by the Time Traveller, the inventor of the time machine, and sceptically discussed by the attendants. The Time Traveller demonstrates the working of a miniature sample of the machine by making it disappear to illustrate time travel. Through the real time machine he actually uses, the Time Traveller proves true to the audience gathering in

his house that he has taken a voyage into the future of England in A.D. 802,701, sharing his experience with the not-quite-human creatures of the future, the Eloi and Morlocks, and his struggle to find his way out of the place. The audience is sceptical about the Time Traveller's implausible odyssey except for the narrator, an anonymous man, who believes it. What many readers might find most striking is the story of the Eloi and Morlocks, human-like creatures who are believed by the Traveller to descend from humans. The Eloi, the surface inhabitants, are child-like and physically fair but feeble whereas the Morlocks, the Eloi eater, are the subterranean dark creatures with grotesquely brutish appearance and bestial behaviour. As the Traveller scrutinises, these distinctive species are the result of class distinction in England. The carnivorous Morlocks who feed on the Eloi seem to be the antagonist the Traveller has to fight against in order to escape to the present world. After the flight, the Time Traveller arrives in the world thousands of million days ahead. It is less colourful and lively than his own as there are only vegetations and crab-like creatures. He thus moves forward, hundred years later, and finds that the world is coming to an end since the sun gets dimmer and there is no trace of life. Once the Traveller comes back to the present day, having depicted all the incidents he underwent, he disappears again, presumably traveling through time in his time machine, and never returns.

The body of the characters mutated into the not-quite-human beings in *The Time Machine* is not merely a representation of the Victorian people's anxiety over human extinction and dehumanisation but also a biological fantasy of human-animal hybrid, as this thesis will call the "humanimal," at the turn of the nineteenth century. The voyage to an unfamiliar world and the encounter with extraordinary beings are similar to what the narrator of *The Coming Race* undergoes in the subterranean Vril

kingdom. However, instead of making him a castaway in an island or cave of the present world like Bulwer-Lytton's main protagonist, Wells sends the Time Traveller to the future. Creatures of the unknown, though they look like humans, can be regarded as the non-human entity and their existence disturbs human rationality and assumption of the world. The anomalous body, especially that of the Morlocks, represented in *The Time Machine* resembles the brutish and animalistic humanoids and signifies backwardness of humans' biological and genetic progress. Such a decayed, simplified anatomy is seen by the Time Traveller as being less than human. The ruination of the human body in *The Time Machine* is widely agreed by scholars that it represents regression of human evolution or degeneration since the downgrading human anatomy brings back the animal past to the fore. Nonetheless, contemporary scholars offer a new perspective of seeing the mutants by using the posthuman approach in order to go beyond negative and anthropocentric interpretations of the literarily anomalous figures under a degeneration theme. In Paul Sheehan's "Posthuman Bodies," representations of the body of human-animal hybrids in modern literary contexts can be considered as "the mythic body" which is the re-imagination of ancient, mythical creatures whose bodies are "assembled from parts" (246) and connote the posthuman body. The image of the mythic body, as Sheehan traces, comes from Victor Frankenstein's creature in Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), continues to roam an island as beast people in Wells's *Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896) and reproduces in the form of horrifying zombies in the twentieth century. It can be inferred that the "humanimal" is among those posthuman figures of the mythic hybrids proposed by Sheehan as these horrifying monsters or chimeras have fragmented identity which lies against the proper image of humans and animals in the

humanistic concept. The ambiguity of mythic chimeras, hybrids or monsters being re-imagined, is thus considered as “the horror of posthuman non-integrity, of an assemblage that refuses to cohere into a totality” (247).

The first group of humanoids the Time Traveller meets in the future land is the Eloi whose “humanimal” body not only signifies the reverse of human evolution but also a human-animal assemblage as an alternative way of evolution. When the Traveller lands on the planet in the year 802,701, he discovers “this fragile thing out of futurity...these exquisite creatures,” later known as the Eloi, who have downsized physique compared to humans’ and their “Dresden china type of prettiness” (17-18) reminds the Traveller of oriental creatures. Apart from their facial loveliness in “uniformly curly hair,” their “large and mild” eyes and tiny mouth with “bright, red rather thin lips,” these creatures act like they are primitives and innocent children as the Time Traveller is immediately struck with a question: “were these creatures fools?” when they do not understand his language and one of them reacts to his arrival as if the Time Traveller “had come from the sun in a thunderstorm” (18). In the Traveller’s view, explaining how he has travelled through time from the past seems incomprehensible for them. These child-like creatures treat the Time Traveller like a special guest. They greet him with a garland wrapped around his neck as a way of welcoming and perhaps worshipping a god. However, their lovely appearance is contrasted with their decaying habitations. As the Traveller notes, the Eloi’s place of living has a “dilapidated look” and there are broken stained-glass windows, dusty curtains, cracking marble furniture inside the buildings (20). He also notices that these humanoids, who are fruitarians, are ignorant and childish beings. They are at first surprised by the Time Traveller’s arrival, but then “they would soon stop examining

[him], and wander away after some other toy” (21). They live collectively in “palace-like buildings” that the Traveller assumes that their way of living is associated with Communism (21). As a result of their neglect, this place is, on one hand, left deteriorating and it potentially visualises the fallen civilisation of mankind and a scene of decadence where “a tangled waste of beautiful bushes and flowers, a long neglected and yet weedless garden” and “heaps of fruits” (19) in the palace are ready for the Eloi’s excessive appetite and luxury. Moreover, what they do is only eating, sleeping, playing, and having sex (31), which make a cycle of idle, decadent life. On the other hand, the overall atmosphere is still pleasing enough as the Traveller comments: “The air was free from gnats, the earth from weeds or fungi; everywhere were fruits and sweet and delightful flowers; brilliant butterflies flew hither and thither. The ideal of preventive medicine was attained. Diseases had been stamped out. I saw no evidence of contagious diseases during all my stay...” (23). From this observation, the Eloi seemingly live a happy life with abundant food and a disease-free condition which give them young, healthy and lively bodies. Readers might perceive such a biological and mental regression and imprudent way of life as being thematically relevant to degeneration and devolution. Nevertheless, the dwarf-like body of the Eloi significantly reflects how animals during the Victorian period were tamed and domesticated, engendering the less dangerous and vivacious physique suitable for the living condition of humans in the nineteenth century. As human manipulation of animal genetics is explained in Ritvo’s “Animal Planet”¹⁷ (2013), certain types of animals such as dogs and horses that are domestically bred will have a

¹⁷ In one of the collected essays in *Global Environmental History: An Introductory Reader* (2013) edited by John R. McNeill and Alan Roe, Ritvo explores how animals gradually took part in human history, anthropology and Western culture during the nineteenth century through practices of animal breeding, animal exhibition and pet keeping (124-138).

smaller body and brain with prominent, attractive body parts like ears and furs and youthful, tameable characteristics. Some natural traits are evidently made crippled or becomes less advantageous but beautiful in accordance with human aesthetics (132-133). For Haraway, animal domestication not only signifies human domination over animals but also their ability to transform them physically, from ferocious beasts to tameable pets, in order for animals to negotiate their power and fit in human society. She calls this human-animal mutuality a co-evolution between humans and animals or “significant otherness” since the non-human could transform people’s ways of life and vice versa, and both species have taken advantage of each other for so long that they “shape each other throughout the still ongoing story of co-evolution” (29). Haraway refuses the fact that humans are the sole agents who arbitrarily control animal biology because both humans and animals physically and culturally collaborate to survive, not to degenerate. In *The Time Machine*, the anthropomorphic body of the Eloi being dwarfed like domesticated animals represents human-animal unification. Being unable to clearly describe this life form of the future, the Time Traveller resorts to the anthropocentric explanation of the upper and lower classes. He later assumes that the Eloi descend from those Victorian people who belong to the leisure class or “the Haves, pursuing pleasure and comfort and beauty” (36), and are so childishly ignorant and lazy that their body and mentality become small and delicate due to excessive “comfort and security” (24). Minimisation of the Eloi body results from the domestication which makes them physically weak and mentally feeble. In the scene when the Traveller is hanging out with them at day time, one of these little creatures, bathing in the river which runs “swiftly, but not too strong for a moderate swimmer” (31), is drowning, but nobody seems willing to give a hand. The

Traveller thus helps that drowning Eloi whom he regards as “weakly-crying little thing” and “the poor mite” (31) who is later called Weena and becomes the Traveller’s companion during his search for the missing time machine. This drowning scene clearly shows that the Eloi are so weak and dependent on human protection. Moreover, they are also scared of darkness as the Traveller observes how these futuristic humans still have fear of death and darkness: “But she[Weena] dreaded the dark, dreaded shadows, dreaded black things. Darkness to her was the one thing dreadful...I[Time Traveller] discovered then, among other things, that these little people gathered into the great houses after dark, and slept in droves” (32). The reason for the Eloi’s fear of the dark is that at night it is the time for the other group of subterranean creatures, the Morlocks, who lurk underground and feed on the Eloi. Although the binary system of the upper and underground creatures, reminiscent of the upper and lower classes, affirms Wells’s prediction of an ongoing class distinction in the future, the human-animal distinction is obviously collapsed. Following Darwinian evolution, Wells binds both species together as the “humanimal” Eloi whose body image echoes the domestication of the Victorian animals which he turns the process upside down. In other words, humans, too, are tamed and transformed into tiny, tameable, and weak pets through the course of evolution. The animalised body suggests the human-animal co-evolution that sabotages species distinction and disrupts conventional perception of the human body in Western culture.

Not only does the human body return to its simplistic form, the child-like one, but the Eloi’s mentality is also less complicated. In addition to the human body being deformed like domesticated animals, human defects which include the failure of communication and lack of intelligence make the Eloi less human and rather

animalistic. In an anthropocentric view, humans are deemed more abled and rational than non-human others. Humanistic thinkers sometimes accept that humans are originated from animals (the primates) but they still hold the belief that animals are the subordinate wilderness. Owing to humans' physical and intellectual superiority, the human-animal "species borders" are strictly drawn (Nayar 95). However, this superior quality can no longer make all humans physically and mentally equal. As the philosopher Paolo Cavalieri notes, people with "structural problems" caused by "genetic and developmental anomalies," maladies or injuries will be deprived of normal human features which include "autonomy, rationality, self-consciousness, and the like" (qtd. in Nayar 95). Apart from being physically weaker and smaller than typical human beings, the Eloi are seen as stupid savages. The Time Traveller firstly questions whether these little people are "fools" (18) and their inability to communicate in human language and inattentive manner, despite being descendants of humans, indicate their low human quality. Having failed to communicate in human language with the Eloi, the Time Traveller resorts to non-verbal language as an alternative to convey his thoughts: "I nodded, pointed to the sun, and gave them such a vivid rendering of a thunderclap as startled them" (18). The small people, yet, mistake him for a god-like entity, stepping back, making a bow and giving him a ring of flowers. In his exhausting search for the time machine day and night, along with his unsuccessful communication with the Eloi, the Time Traveller comments on the Eloi's ignorance, not only in the way they are unable to comprehend or interpret his gestures but also their inattention towards his problem, which certainly maddens him when he tries to inquire them about the lost machine:

They[the Eloi] all failed to understand my gestures; some were simply stolid; some thought it was a jest, and laughed at me . . . It was a foolish impulse, but the devil begotten of fear and blind anger was ill curbed, and still eager to take advantage of my perplexity . . . I tried a sweet-looking little chap in white next, with exactly the same result. Somehow his manner made me feel ashamed of myself. But, as you know, I wanted the Time Machine, and I tried him once more. As he turned off, like the others, my temper got the better of me . . . I was after him, had him by the loose part of his robe round the neck and began dragging him towards the sphinx. (28)

Out of anxiety, ire, and confusion, in order to know where his machine is hidden, the Traveller uses physical violence that extremely terrifies that creature. It is the Eloi's ignorance and indifference that particularly irritate him. This scene vividly conveys how the Victorian man, represented by the Traveller, regards himself as the rationally superior and uses violence as a manifestation of domination. However, in keeping with the mockery of the Victorian mad scientist and unreliable narration, the Traveller probably misjudges their brainlessness since it is his miscommunication that begets misunderstanding. In the nineteenth century, race was a key justification for colonisation by a European country like Great Britain to claim its biological superiority to other "lower" races like those indigenous peoples in Africa, Australia, Asia and the Americas in a reliably scientific way (Robb and Harris 188). That is to say, non-Europeans are genetically and anatomically closer to animals or primitive primates. Similarly, the Eloi in *The Time Machine* are considered less human in the Traveller's limited judgment and ability to communicate.

The Eloi's body being harvested by the Morlocks as if it was livestock or food resource can also depict how the human body is animalised. These little creatures are so scared of the darkness of the night that they have to stay in a big group. Although they might be seen as social animals like humans from the way they spend their entire day and night doing activities together such as playing, bathing, eating and sleeping, the Eloi, in a way, are like a herd of fearful farm animals kept in a safe shelter as the Time Traveller observes: "To enter upon them without a light was to put them into a tumult of apprehension. I never found one out of doors, or one sleeping alone within doors, after dark...I insisted upon sleeping away from these slumbering multitudes" (32). In the contemporary reality, Victorian people especially the upper-middle class were encouraged to make themselves healthy and sanitary to display the cleanliness of the nation and distance themselves from the impoverished, diseased and dirty lower class (Gilbert 10). To stay healthy and clean, staying in a crowd was unadvised and associated with the low life of labourers. The Eloi, in contrast, live as a flock of plant-eating mammals. For the Time Traveller, the way the underground creatures, the Morlocks, lurk at night to capture the Eloi for food even animalises these dwarf-like humanoids when he marks: "These Eloi were mere fatted cattle, which the ant-like Morlocks preserved and preyed upon—probably saw to the breeding of" (46). In the mid-nineteenth-century England, agrarian capitalism turned farm animal bodies into what Ritvo and Agamben call the "less mobile goods" and "bare life" that were solely worth for capital gain and profitable labour. Animals and humans in the capital farming shared the same status as agrarian labour (Griffin 42-43). The Eloi, too, are treated like farm animals, not in a way that they are labour but weak preys or goods

for the Morlocks' consumption. The human-animal proximate identity in the nineteenth century becomes an actually hybridised body.

In contrast to the animalisation of the human body, the Eloi can suggest the re-humanisation¹⁸ of the non-human entity. In the dualistic view of human-animal distinction, the departure from human form of these small creatures, who have evolved into beautiful, fragile and idle beings with animalistic characteristics, eventually falls into the non-human category as mentioned earlier. Despite being dehumanised, the Eloi are adorned with “pleasant fabrics” and sophisticated metal footwear which are a trace of human culture and arts. They do not work but are merely amused by leisure activities, so it can be inferred that someone else must have produced such artefacts for them. In addition to their human-like physique, the body being clothed is somehow a way of anthropomorphism or making the Eloi human again to separate them from naked beasts. In addition, their habits like “making love in a half-playful fashion” and tenderness can also be qualified as human actions. Most conventional naturalists strongly hold that having sex for fun not for reproduction is limited to human species. Despite their ignorance and inattentiveness, another trait that makes the Eloi more human and humane is compassion, especially from Weena. After she is rescued by the Time Traveller from drowning, Weena starts to follow him like an obediently dependent child. Her kindness is sometimes perceived by the Traveller from her caring look which exposes her humanness as the Traveller

¹⁸ Re-humanisation can literally mean making an individual—who was once dehumanised or casted as the other—human again. Unlike humanising or adding humanness, re-humanisation is to “restore human qualities” (Webster) that have been devastated by generalising or labelling. In the posthuman sense, the term is used to describe a situation when non-human entities like animals and artificial machines, which lack human characteristics and belong to the non-human others, can be perceived as having “sentience, self-awareness and desire” that will make them look like a person. In science fiction, non-human or other-than-human characters, primarily deemed monstrous and dehumanised, possess ways of life similar to those of humans and suggest the re-humanisation of the non-human others like modern vampires who follow a tradition of human familial roles (Nayar 94).

remarks: “She always seemed to me, I fancy, more human than she was, perhaps because her affection was so human” (47). It is her innate “affection” and also the way she spends much time with the Time Traveller instead of the other Eloi that, in a way, allows her to get accustomed with the foreign human and become like one. From the beginning, the Time Traveller admits that these little creatures are foolish savages who are unable to understand his gestures and even neglect his existence. Despite being dehumanised and animalised, the human-like identity of the Eloi is restored by an insertion of anthropomorphism and human emotions. They, for instance, wear fine clothes like human beings do and visibly express fear, sexual pleasure and compassion. This restoration of human characteristics later causes the Time Traveller to sympathise with them as he claims, “However great their intellectual degradation, the Eloi had kept too much of the human form not to claim my sympathy, and to make me perforce a sharer in their degradation and their Fear” (46). When confronting with another form of subterranean creatures who are more monstrous, with this black and white contrast, the Eloi are more humanised.

The “humanimal” body, a juxtaposition of animalisation and humanisation, of the Eloi then becomes a pathway to the posthuman body as it deconstructs the familiar image of how “human nature” should be like. To begin with, it is difficult for the Time Traveller to determine which one is a male or female. As he notices at a glance after being escorted inside the building by the Eloi,

Then, in a flash, [he] perceived that all had the same form of costume, the same soft hairless visage, and the same girlish rotundity of limb...Now, [he] saw the fact plainly enough. In costume, and in all the differences of texture

and bearing that now mark off the sexes from each other, these people of the future were alike. (22)

Without clothes, the Eloi's sexual distinction is ambiguous because they all look feminine. The Time Traveller reckons that the late nineteenth-century society reaches the point where "population is balanced and abundant," so there is no need for sharp contrasts in gender roles and biological sexes which are believed to increase procreation (22). As a result of this balanced population speculated by the Time Traveller, "this close resemblance of the sexes [of the Eloi] was after all what one would expect" (22). Although one would interpret the image of the Eloi as a parody of gender equality that turns the body of men and women into regressively delicate beings of the future, this representation of the sexually ambiguous body of the Eloi can be associated with Haraway's cyborg¹⁹ whose body disrupts the "fractured identities," namely gender, race and class, that are constituted and naturalised by patriarchal thinking (Haraway 72-73). From the loss of biological link to their ancestors, namely human beings, and the fact that reproduction is not as important as before, the Eloi are parentless children whose sexes are hard to indicate. An Eloi named Weena is a girl because the narrator says she is and because of the dress she wears, not the body she has. As Haraway claims that the cyborg is born without parents because it comes from an unusual creation, a union between organic life and synthetic one, so its identity is neither human nor non-human. For the Time Traveller, the Eloi are both child-like and childish creatures who enjoy playing in the

¹⁹ Donna Haraway has based her concept of a cyborg as a gender ambiguous figure on feminism which, among other things, aims to debunk the problematic male-female dualism. In a patriarchal and perhaps anthropocentric worldview, a woman can be naturalised as the not-man and synonymous with the non-human. As patriarchal hierarchy prioritises men and belittles women as subservient beings who are sometimes treated like animals or objects. With the emergent science and technology that can alter or create life, the cyborg, who is sexually unidentifiable and neither organic nor fully artificial, becomes a defiant subject for patriarchal heterosexuality and human-non-human dichotomy.

playground all day. Supposedly, they have no parents but they also seem to need ones. For example, the Traveller rescuing Weena and keeping her under his care not only builds a hero-heroine bond but also a father-daughter relationship. Weena's dependence on the hero evidently affirms the lack of parenthood. Their human-non-human identity, sexual ambiguity and orphanage are partially cyborg-like. The author's prophetic view of the future, where fixed biological sexes and parenthood are absent, destabilises an anthropocentric convention in which there should be males, females, and familial constitution that enable human race to carry on their genetic information and existence. In other words, anthropocentrism is challenged by the "humanimal," or the sexually ambiguous image of the Eloi which is open for posthuman speculation of possible human life. Furthermore, the Eloi's ability to live a double life reinforces how these creatures also prefigure the posthuman body. On one hand, they can be regarded as animals that are fed, kept like cattle, and devoured by predators like Morlocks. On the other hand, they are futuristic humans who have animalistic traits but are humanised once again by the Time Traveller who appreciates their beautiful human silhouette and humane behaviours, as demonstrated by Weena. Their "humanimal" body eventually breaks the distinction between the human and the non-human, culture and nature which is variously rejected by twentieth- and twenty-first-century posthuman scholars.

Another group of creatures that the Time Traveller later meets in the future world is the Merlocks whose physical appearance also suggests the "humanimal" transformation of humans. While the Eloi are physically depicted as beautifully delicate humanoids who are closely related to humans in former time, the Morlocks are differently portrayed as ferocious beasts. They stalk the Eloi at night and the Time

Traveller mistakes them for ghosts in the form of “ape-like creature[s]” (33). Having seen the Morlocks, the Time Traveller shows his agreement with the degeneration hypothesis of the human race as he says: “But people, unfamiliar with such speculations as those of the younger Darwin, forget that the planets must ultimately fall back one by one into the parent body” (33). He associates the animalisation of humans with how the earth and the sun constantly “fall back” to the earlier stage to begin their “renewed energy” (33). That is to say, as the planet earth is moving towards its primal condition, which one might call devolution, humans, too, have to transfigure into their animal shape, the apes. The transformation into brutish simians as witnessed in the Morlocks’s body clearly not merely indicates how humans are in the process of extinction but also the potential evolution of humanity that paves the way for the “humanimal” inter-species in the future where the familiar human form is replaced by a new one. In tracing the history of the Morlocks, according to the Time Traveller’s hypothesis, these “queer little ape-like figure[s]” with “[their] head[s] held down in a peculiar manner” and whitened body of this “nocturnal Thing” crawling up from wells are the London and East-end lower-class workmen who used to be abused by the upper class (36). He also adds that class conflict, as a result of industrialisation, was so tense in nineteenth-century England that the two distinct classes might develop into two distinct species. The Time Traveller’s supposition serves as evidence that the Morlocks are formerly humans, the labourers of underground or lower-class people in the British society. In the novel, the merging of humans and animals also resonates the nineteenth-century human-animal equivalence which revealed that the living condition of the Victorian working class was quite close to or even inferior to animals due to the fact that animals were also treated like agrarian labourers. Thereby, some

groups of people in the society, namely workers and poor people, were in the same category of Victorian animals that were regarded as industrial instruments or machines. With an influence of Darwin's evolution in the nineteenth century, the image of the cannibalistic Morlocks is Wells's evolutionary fantasy of an animalistic future and unpleasantly brutish side of mankind. Words used to describe the Morlocks by the Time Traveller thus suggest the creation of the "humanimal" through the depiction of how humans become ferocious, terrifying beasts. During his search for the time machine, when the Traveller discovers the "well-like openings" that lead to the absolutely dark subterranean cave where the Morlocks live, the scene suggests how the Morlocks's habitats and their night stalking manner intensify their thrillingly and mysteriously spectral existence. Obviously, they can be regarded as dark creatures with grotesque and vicious look which envisages a part-human, part-animal creature after the Traveller lights up a match: "I saw a small, white moving creature, with large bright eyes which regarded me steadfastly as it retreated. It made me shudder. It was so like a human spider!" (36). Unlike his view of the harmless Eloi as "people," the way the Traveller addresses a Morlock as "it" not only reaffirms their animality and monstrosity but also the underlying prejudice of the speaker. The "little monster" (36) is evidently other-than-human because of their non-human movement and ability to climb all over the place like a spider. The Morlocks' physical appearance being described as having "pale, chinless face," "abnormally large," "sensitive" and "pinkish grey" eyes without eyelids, and white ape-like body sufficiently illustrates them as a demonic and monstrous incarnation. Indeed, the Time Traveller repeatedly remarks about their physical and behavioural malice: "You can scarce imagine how nauseatingly inhuman they looked . . . there was an altogether

new element in the sickening quality of the Morlocks—a something inhuman and malign. Instinctively I loathed them” (41). Whereas the Eloi receive pity from the Traveller for their fragility, the Morlocks are hated by him right after their monstrously animalistic look is witnessed. As the Morlocks’s cavern is full of blood stain, it can be obviously inferred from the violent trace that the Morlocks are cannibals who wander at night and feed on the Eloi. This criminality both in their physique and action antagonises them as physically strong, and brutal meat-eaters or man-eaters who represent the masculine or “manly” entity in contrast to the feminine fruitarians or the Eloi, so the Time Traveller has to stay away from these threatening creatures. He furthers his commentary, which is somewhat prejudiced and judgmental, on the Morlocks that their body and manner are so primitive and animalistic, making them the absolute animal: “And so these inhuman sons of men—I tried to look at the thing in scientific spirit. After all, they were less human and more remote than our cannibal ancestors of three or four thousand years ago” (46). The bestial body is thus the linkage between the savage past and present human form which makes the “humanimal” or chimeric identity. In his flight from the Morlocks without weapons to protect himself, the Time Traveller has to urgently search for the machine and escape. After his escape from their cavern, using the light from a match to blind their sensitive eyes, the Traveller and Weena reach the Palace of Green, an abandoned library, planning to find the way out. While managing to escape in the terrifying night haunted by the Morlocks, he tells his audience about his violent motive: “And I longed very much to kill a Morlock or so. Very inhuman, you may think, to want to go killing one’s own descendants! But it was impossible, somehow, to feel any humanity in the things” (49). Because of the inhumanity and animality of the Morlocks,

the Time Traveller thus resorts to anthropocentric solution and violence to criminalise, antagonise and kill the Morlocks who are believed to be his own kin. From their monstrous and inhumane characteristics that the protagonist subjectively paints on them, the Morlocks are strongly animalised and turned into insignificantly disposable bodies.

In addition to the bestial and criminal physiognomy that signals the regression of human species, especially the English people, the Morlocks, on the other hand, can be an epitome of the posthuman entity. Firstly, their “humanimal” body resonates the cyborg image. While the Eloi body suggests Haraway’s first boundary breakdown between humans and animals, the Morlocks are not solely an incarnation of the “humanimal” beings but best fit in the cyborg-like identity described by Haraway as “creatures simultaneously animal and machine, who populate worlds ambiguously natural and crafted” (66). In addition to the human body being simplified, animalised like a chimera, the Morlocks’ body is enhanced by techno-scientific milieu as they, according to the Time Traveller, used to be industrial workers, so their body is assimilated to the machine, making them lose human traits and gain non-human features such as bigger eyes and ape-like body that are suitable for a particular landscape: “Necessarily my[Time Traveller’s] memory is vague. Great shapes like big machines rose out of the dimness, and cast grotesque black shadows, in which dim spectral Morlocks sheltered from the glare” (40). These simian creatures are regarded as “mechanical servants” (44). The discourse of the body as machine was a modern body discourse in which the human body was perceived as parts of “a social machine” once it was disciplined and controlled namely in prisons or institutes during the nineteenth century (Robb and Harris 184). Although the Morlocks seem to be out of control and indeed the ruling species, their body being altered and enhanced by

evolution definitely resists dualism of the human and the non-human, the organic and the synthetic, like the cyborg does. Secondly, their “humanimal” body reminds humans of their chimeric, savage interiority that disrupts the divine origin or anthropocentric constitution of the perfect human body. For Rosi Braidotti, the process of becoming-animal is when humans and animals are equivalently commodified as capitalistic or consumeristic products and perceived as living organisms (70). Human beings and animals are neither inferior nor superior to each other. The portrayal of the Morlocks can signify the process of becoming-animal that paves the way for the posthuman identity. Their “humanimal” body is neither human or animal but a hybrid entity that destabilises human-non-human, organic-inorganic dichotomy. In the post-anthropocentric world where the human-non-human, nature-culture hierarchy is debunked, animals somehow have the same status as humans. Animals, for example, can be a source of workforce or an asset in the capitalistic world, so are human beings especially workers. Human beings can be in and out of the realm of animal all the time. Wells’s novel provides a glimpse of how the biological transformation is caused by a changing environment. The Time Traveller speculates that the Morlocks, who were once human beings, turn into brutes due to food shortage in the past:

And then I thought once more of the meat that I had seen. I felt assured now of what it was, and from the bottom of my heart I pitied this last feeble rill from the great flood of humanity. Clearly, at some time in the Long-Ago of human decay the Morlocks’ food had run short. Possibly they had lived on rats and suchlike vermin. Even now man is far less discriminating and

exclusive in his food than he was—far less than any monkey. His prejudice against human flesh is no deep-seated instinct. (Wells 45)

In his supposition, “the great flood of humanity” might bring about the consumeristic world where there is overpopulation and food shortage. Cannibalism is probably a way out and succeeded by the fittest, supposedly the working class who are physically stronger. As assumed by the Traveller, the weaker aristocrats or Eloi as “meat” is thus needed for the survival of the Morlocks. The situation of crisis in human society in the time prior to the year 802,701 clearly portrays the dog-eat-dog world where humans do what it takes to survive even though they have to become savage monsters both physically and mentally. The Morlocks’ evilness is gradually comprehensible to the Traveller with possible motive or condition behind their inhumanity. Without a clear distinction, the vaguely “humanimal” identity leads to a mutant life that can no longer be explained by humanistic or anthropocentric doctrines but “posthuman rationality” (Braidotti 72-73).

When human beings are bodily transformed into mutants whose anatomical features retreat to animality, the earth where the Time Traveller arrives at thus signifies the new zoological ecology full of the “humanimal” beings in it. At the beginning, the Time Traveller is wondrously precautious about the future world as he describes what is going on while traveling in the time machine and what may happen once he reaches the future:

What might not have happened to men? What if cruelty had grown into a common passion? What if in this interval the race had lost its manliness, and had developed into something inhuman, unsympathetic, and overwhelmingly

powerful? I might seem some old-world savage animal, only the more common likeness—a foul creature to be incontinently slain. (16)

Whether this anxious speculation will be proven true or not, the appearances of the Eloi are, to a certain extent, correctly presumed by the Traveller as “manliness” or strong notion of patriarchal, masculine humanity is gone. The unnerving presupposition of himself as the “old-world savage animal” implies his imagination of the ultimate progress of civilisation in which he will be less sophisticated and destroyed. In contrast, the reality is not what he has predicted since the future is not technologically advanced. The Eloi and the Morlocks’ ways of life mimic what animals in the natural world do. What might seem startling to the readers is that they are the offspring of humankind with unfamiliar appearances. While the Eloi are kept and fed like plant-eaters or passive preys, the Morlocks are savage meat-eating hunters. With this prey-and-predator relationship, their human quality dissolves in the zoo-like environment which also unveils how humans are likely to transform into animals. Specifically, the zoological ecology can be regarded as the “humanimal” world uninhabitable for human species. The hostile environment in the future is reflected by symptoms of sickness and nausea which suggest that the place is inhospitable for humans. The Traveller not only feels sick after seeing the “nauseatingly inhuman” appearance of the Morlocks but also experiences sickness from the trip into the farther future while he is watching the dimly gloomy atmosphere that is suffocating and nauseating (Wells 41, 62). Another thing that serves as an index to the “humanimal” world is the chimeric statue of the white sphinx—a representation of the human-animal hybrid. It can be said that *The Time Machine* is a text that re-creates mythology in the modern time in which the “humanimal” hybrids,

the Eloi and the Morlocks, exist in reality instead of being just imaginative creatures. The hybrid body of the white sphinx, as related to the “humanimal” body, complicates the evolutionary theory and natural progress because it is questionable whether humans will be pleasantly or unpleasantly developed. This complication is an uncertain truth or a riddle which is suggested by the presence of the Sphinx. The Sphinx not only symbolises the hybridity, but is also associated with physical and mental paradoxes of the Eloi and Morlocks: the former ones are more like humans but ludicrous and weak while the latter ones are more animalistic but as intelligent as humans. In addition to the unexpected journey to the “zoo” of the evolved human-animal hybrids, the Traveller confronts with a riddle he can never solve.

The Eloi and the Morlocks are not merely passive characters who are harmed by a human but they actively interact with and even interrupt the human character. This activeness of the non-human entity, in a posthuman perspective, repudiates an anthropocentric assumption that humans always dominate animals. As for the Eloi, they are clearly portrayed as bodily small and delicately helpless beings. Weena, one of the Eloi who is saved by the Time Traveller from drowning in the stream, can be seen as an example of a pet that follows and stays with this foreign human everywhere. However, Weena’s interaction with the Time Traveller proves that she is not simply a passive, subservient agent to the human but a companion species. By living with a human, Weena becomes humanised both by him and by the way she adapts herself to subtly derive protection from the human which implies the process of coevolution in which both humans and nonhumans interact with each other to survive. It can be said that the Time Traveller keeps her as a compassionate companion while she, acting in such a humane way, presumably, also keeps him as a

bodyguard even though she is accidentally killed in the wild fire started by him in order to oust the Morlocks at the end. The bonding between the Time Traveller and Weena can be assumed as a father-daughter or pet-owner relationship in an anthropocentric view which prioritises the human in a relationship with non-human others. Yet, regardless of her helplessness, Weena is actively demanding as the Time Traveller comments:

She[Weena] was exactly like a child. She wanted to be with me always. She tried to follow me everywhere, and on my next journey out and about it went to my heart to tire her down, and leave her at last, exhausted and calling after me rather plaintively...Nevertheless, she was, somehow, a very great comfort. I thought it was mere childish affection that made her cling to me. Until it was too late, I did not clearly know what I had inflicted upon her when I left her. Nor until it was too late did I clearly understand what she was to me. For, by merely seeming fond of me, and showing in her weak futile way that she cared for me... (32)

In a way, the Time Traveller has no idea why she wants to be with him, but his anthropocentric instinct leads him to think that she is just childishly “fond of” him and he has to keep her around in order to maintain his human morality. He probably uses this “comfort” as an excuse for his inability to refuse her presence while, on the other hand, he simultaneously yields to the necessity to protect her from perilously nocturnal predators. Similar to what Haraway mentions about significant otherness of the companion species, unconditional love and obedience from pets are interpreted by humans. In fact, pets might never see their owners as their superior masters. They actively demand for food and healthcare from humans for their survival. In the novel,

Weena probably sees the Time Traveller as a protector, a helper, a shield, or whatever it is that can make her feel safe. Her human quality, interpreted by the Traveller, makes her a significant otherness to him since she is the only creature which “seems” to humanly care for and remind him of humanity in the hostile atmosphere. Concerning the process of becoming-animal, the Time Traveller and Weena’s relationship does not suggest that the human character has complete control over the Eloi as they are free from his command. While Weena tags along with the Traveller at her own will, other Eloi’s indifference and inattention to his demand for help signify the non-human challenge to human power. The notion of superior humankind or what Derrida calls “carno-phallogocentrism” (qtd. in Braidotti 69) is collapsed by the way non-human others negotiate their power. Though human victory can be obviously seen when the Time Traveller can escape from the Morlocks, these monstrous beings, intellectually and physically superior to the Eloi, outmanoeuvre the human. The Morlocks chase the Time Traveller in the building where the time machine is hidden by them. With their cunning and ill-meaning motive, the Time Traveller is eventually ensnared by them as “the bronze panels suddenly slid up and struck the frame with a clang” and he is “trapped” but still “chuckled gleefully” (58). Although the Morlocks think that they successfully trap him, the Traveller is pleased that this physical entrapment can do no harm to time traveling. The way these “little brutes” approach him with “murmuring laughter” suggests that they think they are smarter than this human and it turns out that they are wrong because they do not know how the time machine works. Despite the human’s triumph, the Morlocks are intelligent and crafty enough to set up a trap which is a sign of sophisticated mind, though in a negative way, in contrast to their degraded body. Without the matches and time machine, the

Time Traveller will surely be slain. In their eyes, he might actually be the “old-world savage animal,” not them. The non-human active interaction with the human character here reveals the unpleasant but possibly true fate of humankind as bodily becoming other-than-human and the human superiority is thus depreciated.

“I might seem some old-world savage animal”: The Future When Humans are Superseded

Apart from the non-human characters, the Time Traveller himself represents how a perfect image of humans is twisted in the “humanimal” world. As the title suggests, this novel is about hybridity of time and a machine, the abstract and the concrete. At the beginning of the novel, the Victorian gentlemen gather at the Traveller’s house for a discussion about the controversial concept of time as the fourth dimension. While other members of the group believe that every physical thing has three dimensions which include “Length, Breadth and Thickness” (Wells 4), the Time Traveller proposes that “Time” is another intangible dimension that alters the physical body. In other words, ageing is a sign of temporal changes that occur to people or things. He proves the theoretical existence of time by inventing the time machine, traveling through time and finding out, in a wider scale, the bodily changes of humankind. Although it is quite a scientific myth that most of the audience, except for the narrator, find it hard to believe the Time Traveller who breaks the law of nature, time is presented as invisible space through which travelling is possible. Through the normal current of time, the time machine thus allows the Traveller to skip or accelerate periods of time in the future. As Wells concludes in the novel, humans and animals are brought either farther or closer due to the evolutionary process made possible by time, and biological progression brings about the

“humanimal” life forms. The Traveller, presumably the first man who makes a voyage to the future, is bodily affected when entering the world of hybridity. His first symptom is sickness caused by the nauseating time traveling experience when he sees “the moon spinning swiftly through her quarters from new to full, and had a faint glimpse of the circling stars ... the palpation of night and day merged into on continuous greasiness” (14). The mix of two opposing entities—time and machinery, the abstract and the concrete, “night and day”—is nauseating for the Traveller. So is the bestial ugliness of the human-non-human creatures like Morlocks. In spite of being a Victorian male scientist whose rationality and intelligence mark the very specificity and humanness of the human species, without the time machine and survival tools, the Traveller, too, can be seen as a mere animal. When confronting the ape-like Morlocks underground, he realises that his organs and body are the sheer weapons other than a few matches:

I could have flashed that glimpse of the Underworld in a second, and examined it at leisure. But, as it was, I stood there with only the weapons and the powers that Nature had endowed me with—hands, feet, and teeth; these and four safety matches that still remained to me” (40).

In the future world where human technology is absent, without tools, the human is rendered physically less abled just like what he first expected himself to be an “old-world savage animal” (16). In addition, the Traveller is so enraged that he yearns to kill these ape-like beasts, in spite of the fact that they are also descendants of human species, because they are “[v]ery inhuman” (49). This violent and vengeful idea of the Traveller resonates with his inner, bestial urge to harm other lives. The killing of non-human others due to their “inhuman” look and behaviour justifies the hero’s violence

on an arbitrarily anthropocentric stance. He sees himself as the most human and the other as the least, so he animalises and criminalises them as diabolical creatures that should be killed. This “humanimal” world partially dehumanises the Traveller who becomes an instinctive and less abled subject. The image of a perfect man or a respectable Victorian scientist is defiled.

According to the prospect of the human species in *The Time Machine*, the human form does not solely mutate into the “humanimal” body, like that of the Eloi and Morlocks, but is also likely to dissolve into the non-human and then vanish in the farther future. After the Traveller successfully escapes the Morlocks’ chase, the machine takes him into “another thousands of millions” of days later and arrives at a shore where the atmosphere is gloomier. He then remarks, “[t]he sky was no longer blue. North-eastward it was inky black, and out of the blackness shone brightly and steadily the pale white stars” (59). With the “inky black” scenery with sole inanimate lives like “green vegetation” and red rocks (59), the landscape gives a sense of motionlessness and inanimateness, except for the “eternal sea” that is “still moving and living” (60). All of a sudden, he sees “a monstrous crab-like creature” with slowly moving legs and claws, and “stalked,” “evil” eyes (60). It is quite unclear whether these arthropods can be an evolved form of the previous-world humanoids or not, but what is certain is that humanity, both its physical and mental aspects, is absent in this grimly starry world. Once he travels a month later, these crab-like creatures outnumber and the atmosphere seems dismally darker. The place is completely vile for humans, not to mention the Time Traveller, as he describes that it is horribly uninhabitable and uncanny due to “the sense of abominable desolation that hung over the world” with red sky in the East, black sky in the North, the “Dead Sea” and crab-

like monsters, the “poisonous-looking green of lichenous plants” and “the thin air that hurt one’s lungs” (60). These terrible eyesores and atmosphere even intensify bodily and mentally “pain” that the Traveller felt back then when he was lost in the Eloi-Morlocks world (57). In over thirty-million years later, he discovers that the world is dying as the sun is being eclipsed, the sea is reddish, the sky is dark, the plants are inanimate and there is only “stillness” due to the absence of human and animal noises. Life is all gone, but there are these non-human blobs or “eddy flakes” floating to and fro (61). Being unable to withstand the decay, he flies back to his present time. Through time lapse, the human form, body and concept are chronologically swept away, and this absence of life clearly echoes the Victorian fears of human extinction. Non-existent humanity not only foretells the mass extinction but also the removal of human sovereignty and centrality.

In the novel, Wells proves wrong the optimistic development of mankind both physically, mentally and morally (Cody 469) and his text can be seen as a critique of the concept of anthropocentrism or man-centrality in the eyes of twentieth and twenty-first-century posthuman critics. Back to the world of the Eloi and the Morlocks which is close to the contemporary time of the Time Traveller, the “humanimal” body completely distorts the image and concept of man as a measure of all. The former human body in the novel is subject to physical alterations; that is, it is reimagined to be interconnected and integrated with non-human others. Nayar suggests that posthuman thinkers reinvestigate the body and its identity as “a close assemblage and interface with animals, machines and environments” which have always been “mediated” through biological, medical and socio-cultural practices in history (56). In the same fashion, following Braidotti’s post-anthropocentric concept

of multiple-becomings, the human body and self have never been biologically unique. They are, however, intertwined with and constructed by non-human others namely animals and machines. It can be concluded in a posthuman way that “the human body as a coherent, self-contained, autonomous self is no longer a viable proposition”—the self is indeed “multiple, fragmented and made of the foreign” (qtd. in Nayar 63, 76). Similar to the Eloi and the Morlocks’ bodies, human and animal identities are merged and evolved into a “multiple,” “fragmented” yet alien entity in contrast to its original form. If human uniqueness and self are attached to the human form, bodily transformation and disappearance thus cause the collapse of such an anthropocentric image and pave the way for the posthuman life. Although Wells believes that the extinction of man is possible, it can be argued that his view of biological degeneration is only employed to repudiate human hegemony and buoyancy. In “Zoological Regression” (1891), Wells asserts that degeneration can be a way of evolution as some creatures are physically downgraded only to become successful inhabitants on earth as if they “stoop[] to conquer” (250). According to Wells, “some humble creature” might be naturally modified to have “wider possibilities of appetite, endurance, or destruction” and overthrow the human species (253). He not only objects to the claim that progress is the only way of evolution but also affirms that the human species can be replaced or transformed through the course of degeneration. Humans should be prepared for biological changes and the advent of more advanced non-human others as the “Coming Beast” can evolve and claim its territory as much as the “Coming Man” (253). In “The Extinction of Man” (1898), Wells’s opposition to anthropocentrism is more obvious when he criticises human beings whom he calls “human animal” for having “excessive egoism” or being “too confident” that they will

never be extinct because they might succumb to new species and new diseases one day (172-78). Instead of being the terrifying event, degeneration in Well's view is a kind of biological transformation with possible, unprecedented outcomes. His view about the instability of humans as a species is also seen as an attempt to undermine the anthropocentric and humanistic optimism, and a contribution to critical posthumanism.

Moreover, the Traveller's inability to fully comprehend the changing world can serve as another criticism of the anthropocentric notion about the superior rationality of human species. Most of the men who listen to the Time Traveller's talk about his journey to the future find it difficult to believe in time traveling and the Traveller's fantastic voyage. For the Victorians during the late nineteenth century when science replaced supernatural and religious explanations of the world, scientific proofs and reasoning were significant. At the beginning of the novel, one of the men named Filby strongly disapproves the Traveller's theory of traveling through time due to inadequate proofs as he claims, "It's against reason . . . You can show black is white by argument . . . but you will never convince me" (6). A few scientific men like the Medical Man and the Psychologist are also in doubt about how possible it might be to travel in the past or future since "anachronisms" are unacceptable and might interrupt the very history of human civilisation (6). The audience is mostly men with expertise and rationality such as the Medical Man, the Psychologist, the Provincial Mayor, the Editor and the Journalist. Dubbing the men using their occupation not only reduces their identity as an individual but also depicts them as a group of rational and incredulous people. In an anthropocentric belief, reasoning and thinking are exclusively limited to humans. After the Time Traveller finishes his story of the encounter with the Eloi, the Morlocks and crab-like creatures, it looks too fanciful as

the Editor remarks that this story is a “gaudy lie” while the optimistic narrator has not jumped to a conclusion but thinks, “the story was so fantastic and incredible, the telling so credible and sober” (64). The Time Traveller himself also feels uncertain about what he has undergone when he is back in the present day and with the familiar people in the room: “Did I ever make a Time Machine, or a model of a Time Machine? Or is it all only a dream?” (64). The presence of the machine reassures him. He later decides to use that machine to travel again in order to collect more evidence, the physical and visible ones like tangible “specimens and photographs” (65) or the flowers that were unknowingly given by Weena. The urge to find evidence reasonable enough for human understanding makes him disappear from the present time forever and makes the ending of the story perplexing for the reader as well. The more one tries to account for what has happened to the Traveller, the more the story gets complicated; therefore, human reasoning is undermined. According to David Shackleton, *The Time Machine* reflects a Darwinian way of explaining history through a “fragmentary narrative” or incomplete writing about histories, a technique which Wells, among other Victorian writers, used in his work as “narrative unconformities”²⁰ (19-20). Shackleton added that the endless darkness of the future conveys the image of “deep time” which develops into the sublime that gives obscure feelings—fear of and wonder about the awe-inspiring and majestic quality of time. As a result, human status thus becomes “insignificant and precarious” in the misanthropic space (20-23). Human reasoning no longer works when it comes to the muddling future: “the future is still black and blank — is a vast ignorance, lit at a few casual places by the memory of his[Time Traveller’s] story” (66), as the narrator remarks.

²⁰ The narrative style which does not provide sufficient details. Instead, there are gaps and skipped points which interrupt the coherence and continuity of chronological time (Shackleton 20).

The presence of a statue of the White Sphinx in the novel, stated elsewhere as a visage of human-animal hybridity, also symbolises an unsolvable riddle. The sphinx in the Oedipus legend uses an allegory of the three stages of a day (morning, midday and evening) as a puzzle of which the answer is about the three stages of human life (birth, adult life and old age). With this reference to the transformation of a living species, underlined in this riddle, John S. Prince argues that the true riddle of the sphinx in Wells's *The Time Machine* is a reference to the problem about evolution or struggle for existence that people need to pay attention or else they will be destroyed by the sphinx, just like the Eloi who are eaten by the Morlocks due to their "optimistic complacency" (545). Wells's criticism of the excessive pessimism of the Traveller who rejects the undesirable future and yearns for "the Golden Age in some remote past era," as well as the too much optimism of the narrator (Prince 545), reinforces how the ending is so obscure that the reader can neither trust the optimistic narrator nor the pessimistic Traveller in prophesying the human destiny. This implicit ending weakens human rationality and confidence as if humans were faced with a riddle from the white sphinx to solve. This doubt about human self-importance in *The Time Machine* can be associated with what the posthuman critic Robert Pepperell notes that "[l]ogic is an illusion of human imagination" and truth is not naturally fixed but comes from "human thought" (3). Human rationality, conventionally separating humans from animals and constituting them as truth-finders, cannot reach the absolute truth and foretell what future truly holds. Furthermore, anthropocentrism is challenged by the unreliable point of view used in this text. While the novel is a story within a story, one from the narrator and the other from the Time Traveller, both are narrated in the first-person point of view of Victorian men. The truth about the future of human

species is still vague. Although the Traveller sees the future in his own eyes, what he sees can be unreliable due to his subjective pessimism about the Morlocks and unexpected ruination of human civilisation. This prejudiced hypothesis about the non-human others—the Eloi and Morlocks—can manifest how a person acts as a “spokesman of an elite species: both Human or *anthropos*” who belittles the non-human and those who are treated less than human to reaffirm human rationality (Braidotti 67-68). The way the Time Traveller treats Weena like a less intelligent pet or childish girl suggests that he still clings on to human logic of superior men and humans as rational animals. For Haraway, the non-human subservience and obedience fall into the “infantilising narrative” in which humans partially think that non-human beings are inferior as in Haraway’s notion of “dog’s devotion and unconditional love” (Braidotti 69). It can be said that all assumptions about the Eloi and the Morlocks come directly from the Time Traveller and are probably false as his conclusion is just self-referential and empirical. This perplexing “humanimal” world is what the Traveller has to “be careful of too hasty guesses at its meaning” (Wells 29). Anyway, he seems unable to fully understand and acknowledge what he sees, so the future is subjectively degenerative and harsh. It can be implied from the ending that reason, either from the Traveller or the narrator, does not provide objective truth. As man’s rational ability is proved limited, Wells’s science-fiction can also offer a critique of the human-centric knowledge.

The human-animal hybrids or “humanimal” beings in *The Time Machine* are not merely the modern imagination of dystopian creatures whose animalistic appearance is the product of cultural fear and anxieties concerning the future of human beings. They also prefigure the posthuman body that distorts the well-known

image of humans and anthropocentric human/animal, nature/culture distinction. In spite of their separateness due to intellectual and anatomical differences, both humans and animals share similar identity on cultural, political, economic, and biological grounds during the nineteenth century. The awareness of bodily closeness between humans and animals in primatology was raised and led to the anxiety about devolution indicating that human body and mentality potentially regress instead of progress. Nevertheless, the ambiguous voice of the author either affirms the superiority of rational Victorian men or satirises the figure of a mad scientist who believes his science is a vehicle to a perfect world. Being disappointed by the gloomy future, the Traveller's narration can be biased and subjectively pessimistic. The human-animal hybrids—the Eloi and the Morlocks—might be falsely represented as the animalised primitive and the monstrous degenerate. These characters, as reinvestigated in this chapter from the posthuman point of view, are arguably new, possible life forms as a result of evolution rather than degeneration. As the Eloi and the Morlocks represent the becoming-animal process and possess cyborg-like identities, their bodily transformation suggests the end of human forms and the resistance to the so-called concept of anthropocentrism which prioritises the human body and self. The body of these humanoids vaguely connects human and animal biological traits and constitutes the body as an assemblage of multiple others. Therefore, the representation of the Eloi and the Morlocks as the “humanimal” can indicate an incomprehensible life and non-anthropocentric future envisioned by the author. While the animalistic body in this chapter blurs human-animal boundary, the next chapter will focus on Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. It will demonstrate how the early twentieth-century representation of the non-human presents a new race of human beings who are

physically man-made through bioengineering. The hybrid identity of the man-made citizens, apart from being a dehumanising and degenerating image of man in the dystopian world, suggests a possible future of the posthuman species which is unpleasantly progressive and disruptive to the very idea of anthropocentrism.



CHAPTER IV: ALDOUS HUXLEY'S *BRAVE NEW WORLD* AND THE MAN-MADE BODY

The opening decades of the twentieth century in Britain were well remembered for the outbreak of the First World War and techno-scientific developments which gradually moved the British society into modernity and allowed for mass-production industries. With the increasing need for labour, Britain was then full of immigrants and job seekers. The increase in population along with the high rate of poverty demanded for governmental implementation of Welfare State to support those in need due to the belief that unhealthy citizens resulted in unhealthy nation. Henry Jephson, for example, affirmed in *The Sanitary Evolution of London* (1907) how individual health reflects national health. For him, British people were an important workforce for the nation as “the material prosperity and commercial success” depended on “the productivity of their labour” which directly came from their “physical strength,” “energy” and “mental vigour” (2). Many workers in munition factories were recruited during Britain’s entrance to the First World War. While service men fought in the war, it was working men, specifically those employed in munition factories, whose bodies were turned into productive labour or mechanic part of bigger factorial machine to ensure the nation’s economic growth and productivity. In the late nineteenth century the human body was conceptualised as a machine. However, the “productive body” and the disabled body were among the focal concepts of the body in early twentieth-century Britain. All hard work has benefited the country but not for the labourers whose physical bodies were afflicted by industrial tiredness. In “Industrial Fatigue and the Productive Body: The Science of Work in Britain, c. 1900-1918” (2017), Steffan Blayney explored an issue about

the body of industrial workers as a productive entity or “a social organised for capitalist production” conceptualised by François Guéry and Didier Deleule (qtd. in Blayney 313) in the early twentieth century. Blayney argued that fatigue was not physical illness but frailty in productivity. As exhaustion was “read not from the body, but from its output,” the industrial workers’ “productive body” was an indicator of national productivity and was transformed into an entity that could produce works under the capitalistic system in Britain (328). Any exhausted physique was seen as a threat not only to the worker’s health but the nation’s. Blayney assumed that fatigue thus, instead of being an individual infliction, was a result of “declining work rate” (328). In other words, “sickness” means the absence of labour in capitalistic definition (Harvey qtd. in 325). Fatigue thereby jeopardised healthy industries in the country and the word health was rather defined as productivity not physical stability, so work “became the fundamental *telos* of the body” (Blayney 326-327). It can be said that the late nineteenth-century representation of the body as machine has developed into the body as carrying working capacity.

While inactivity was a positive cure for the tired body, disability was regarded as the nation’s burden since it implies a permanent inability to serve the country and needs genetic improvement for healthy citizens. From the wake of eugenic birth control in the early twentieth century, human bodies were nurtured for the sake of manufacturing system. In *Memorandum No.7: Industrial Fatigue and Its Causes* (1916), the Health of Munition Workers Committee (HMWC) stated that resting after work can be perceived as an activity which results in “a restoration of the normal capacity” (3). Nevertheless, the disabled body is barely impossible to be fully restored by physical resting. For the Victorians, disability aroused pity, fear and irritation, and

was terrifyingly harmful to perfect human traits. Henry Mayhew, for example, described crippled beggars in London streets in 1862 as “the idiotic looking youth...shaking in every limb” and the “crab-like man without legs strapped to a board [who] walks upon his hands” (377). Such negative representation of the disabled was carried on in the early decades of the twentieth century and led to the return of eugenics theory that dealt with human genetic improvement. Marie Stopes, a founder of Constructive Birth Control Movement in 1921, claimed that reproductive problems of one species stemmed from “animal carelessness” (qtd. in Overy 97). A careful consideration of reproducing healthy humans was essential to eugenicists. Bertram Talbot, in addition, agreed in “Points for Propagandists on the Problem of Population and Its Solution” (1925) that the racial conflicts in early twentieth-century Britain, along with an increase of population and low quality of child-raising, necessitated proper control over human reproduction so that human perfect biology will be preserved for the future generation. As Talbot put it, “few well-born, well-bred children are worth to the nation more than hordes of rickety, under-fed, ill-cared-for little ones” (qtd. in Overy 98). Elimination of physical and mental defects in humans was a sheer solution for eugenicists to improve the human species. People with physical disabilities were not merely considered as subhuman beings but also a national burden. Julian Huxley²¹, the secretary of the London Zoological Society and Chairman of the Eugenics Society, declared the negative impact of disability on the nation in 1930:

Every defective man, woman and child is a burden. Every defective is an extra body for the nation to feed and clothe, but produces little or nothing in

²¹ Julian Huxley, Aldous Huxley’s younger brother, was known as an English evolutionary biologist and a humanistic eugenicist. For him, science was expected to serve the public good through genetic betterment. He believed that eugenics or the study of social genetics could be a way to improve the health and well-being of the English population.

return. Every defective needs care, and immobilises a certain quantum of energy and goodwill which could otherwise be put to constructive ends. Every defective is an emotional burden—a sorrow to someone, and in himself, a creature doomed, when unassisted, to live an incomplete and sub-human existence. Not only that, but if their numbers continue to increase, the burden ...will gradually drag us down. (qtd. in Overy 93)

This concern, clearly relevant to the precaution of degeneration, raised and caused eugenic attempts to ideally preserve best biological traits. The prevailing reproductive manipulation in the early twentieth century became an aspiration to create the perfect human body. This birth control prefigures the man-made, customised body pertinent to the contemporary posthuman idea that the body designed to serve the capitalistic need and maintain human perfection simultaneously alters its original human quality.

Since the war and its aftermath had worsened political and socio-cultural conditions, a number of British writers were deeply moved by human malice and tragedy. Virginia Woolf, for instance, expressed post-war experiences through a veteran character whose psyche is gravely disturbed by war in *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925). Other novelists of the early twentieth century also turned to narratives that depict hostile conditions for humans to live in the future. The dystopian world in literary texts does not have to be entirely apocalyptic or chaotic as it might be firstly perceived as a perfectly tranquil dreamland or utopia but later turns “mis-functioning” (Seed 74). The term “dystopia” is inseparable from “utopia” as Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan put it that dystopia is “the dark side of Utopia” (1). Any perfectly stable and well-regulated society with hidden disruptions and conflicts between an individual and the higher system in futuristic settings will be a fine source of social

sarcasms for twentieth-century authors like Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1945). Obsession with technology and science, regardless of moral and technological effects on people's life, was an additional motif discussed in tales of the grim future. What mostly impacted the utopian belief was the rise of totalitarianism and suspicion of techno-scientific advancement during the First World War. Failing to achieve a peaceful society, the dystopian idea was favoured by philosophers and authors in the wake of the war and of contested political regimes during the period.

In representing physical and psychological manipulation under totalitarian power, dystopian science fiction can be relevant to the prefiguration of posthuman life. Scholars of the twenty-first century like Eduardo Marks de Marques wrote in "I Sing the Body Dystopic: Utopia and Posthuman Corporeality in P.D. James's *The Children of Men*" (2013) to explain that the posthuman body and society are influenced by twentieth-century novels namely Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. These novels prompt the reinvestigation and redefinition of humanity in highly technological environments. The human bodies portrayed in the two novels are enhanced to eliminate physical disadvantages such as mortality and gender distinction. As Marques argues, "[t]he 'original' human body is essentially inhuman and it has to become (post)human" (39)²². Human beings, in other words, have been imperfect and need to be perfected. The eugenicists' movement to improve the human race through selective reproduction also allowed for

²² This sense of posthuman body rather reflects transhumanist goal in perfecting the human species, which is based on a humanistic aim to erase human flaws. Eugenacists, both in the past and at present, do not intend to deconstruct what it means to be human, yet attempt to refine human genes while critical posthuman scholars, despite discussing within the same posthuman concept, aim to deconstruct and redefine the age-old human concept, seeing transhumanist's dream of human perfectibility as a by-product that, ironically, challenges humanistic value.

genetic manipulation which could alter what it normally meant to be human. Although many eugenicists believed that biological control could improve the well-being of the population, eugenic practices brought about “bioengineering” as a fantasy of racial purity and a reflection of racism, sexism and classism (Squire 117). While the eugenic dream of posthuman life is based on human perfectibility, scholars of critical posthumanism notice that humans have lost their originality, both physically and genetically, in their body, which might prompt the re-definition and complexity of who/what should belong to the human category. The “defective” body, such as the disabled body previously discussed as a threat to the British nation’s health, in a way, becomes the posthuman entity. Autism, for example, invites humans to re-investigate what humanness means as Paul Collins asserts that people with mental defects are usually pushed to the edge of human category or alienated as the non-human while, in fact, they are both abled and disabled (qtd. in Murray 53). Deranged mentality thus undermines human uniqueness and superiority: “the autistic outhumans the humans”²³ (Collins qtd. in Murray 53). In other words, people with mental and intellectual problems are regarded as humans by biology but non-humans by conceptual principles of humanness (Cavaliere qtd. in Nayar 95). The stage of being in-between human/non-human category is central to critical posthuman discussions. Representations of disability and the eugenicists’ desire of the man-made body in the early twentieth century can lead to the question about humanness and the dynamic meaning of the body outside anthropocentric definition of humans as the most rational, divinely superior and distinguishable species of all.

²³ In Paul Collins’ *Not Even Wrong* (2004), people with intellectual deficiency or autism have always been associated with the hybrid identity of a person who is simultaneously perceived as an alien, animal and human. Thinkers of posthumanism and disability studies thus, in Collins’ perspective, consider this ambivalent stage of being in and out of the human category of autism as “outhuman(ing)” the humans (qtd. in Murray pp. 53-54).

Whether Huxley's *Brave New World* is a dystopian or utopian novel is still debatable. With the licentiousness of the new human generation portrayed in the novel, dehumanising effects of technology and a so-called parody of a techno-scientific utopia, *Brave New World* can be seen as a dystopian text projecting on cultural degeneration and condemning scientific progress. On the other hand, the technocratic representation in the novel where the government thrives on stability through eugenic scheme and bioengineering marks the novel as a utopian tale. Although many readers and critics have assumed *Brave New World* as a dystopian tale, the novel tends to explore a plausible way to achieve social stability through selective reproduction. As Joanne Woiak addresses in "Designing a Brave New World" (2007), the novel is neither a "denunciation" nor "glorification of science" since it reflects Huxley's scrutiny upon the effect of science and a eugenic view which seemed to be favoured during the period (124). Huxley not only chewed upon technological progress but also predicted a scenario of future mankind based on his scientific and political beliefs. This chapter contends that Huxley's portrayal of the man-made body or those who are genetically manipulated in *Brave New World* is closely related to the posthuman life. It is the life, a complex amalgamation of organism and technological others, with which age-old humanistic or anthropocentric paradigm is no longer applicable. Unlike imaginative representations of the electric body and the "humanimal" body in previous chapters, the man-made body takes biotechnology seriously as some critics argue that Huxley's *Brave New World*, apart from being a touchstone of modern science fiction and offering an ominous prediction of the future, also influences readers' worldview. This chapter will examine how Huxley portrays the Civilised as the new human and the Savages as the subhuman or

individuals with physical imperfection who are treated as non-human deviants by the Civilised. Once human self, autonomy, rationality and feelings are demolished by non-human technology, the natural/synthetic border is thus collapsed. So is the anthropocentric notion of humans as the centre of the universe. Through the representation of the man-made body in *Brave New World*, it is arguable that Huxley is both inquisitive and concerned not only about the impacts of technology on humanity but also man-centric history led by dualisms and polarisations. From the author's critical view of the anthropocentric world full of savages and the new civilised world full of man-made creatures, *Brave New World* becomes a territory where the old and new representations of the body can be negotiated and the two-edged connotation of the man-made body, which is unavoidable and dehumanising yet progressive and hopeful for survival, is explored.

***Brave New World* and Huxley's Prophetic View of the Posthuman Future**

Since its publication in 1932, *Brave New World* had provoked numerous criticisms. The novel primarily faced its negative reactions due to the inappropriate content for young readers and the presentation of a problematic utopian society that lacks solution. With its implication of political satire against totalitarianism and the ambiguous outcome of techno-scientific pursuit the novel has been widely read and placed among dystopian tales such as those of George Orwell in the latter half of the twentieth century. Even twentieth century readers may find it relevant to their own time in terms of socio-political turmoil and regard it as Huxley's masterpiece. *Brave New World* starts in a distant future when humans are born in test tubes and raised not by parents but scientists of the World State to fully serve the society in accordance

with their socio-biological-segregated castes. The body of this new human race, the Civilised, is mass-produced and their pain-free, blissful life can be achieved by taking drugs called “soma” to get an immediate effect of ecstasy. Huxley’s satiric and radical view of the future is influenced by several literary and scientific writings. To begin with, the title is a reference to Shakespeare’s play *The Tempest* in the scene where Miranda, Prospero’s daughter, was surprised by the first encounter with noblemen. Having no prior contact and experience with the world outside, Miranda sees those noble castaways as “goodly creatures” representing “beauteous mankind” of “brave new world” or the marvellously unknown land (Shakespeare V.i.78). Such naivety soon turns into disillusionment, for reality is not always what it seems. Similarly, in *Brave New World* Huxley’s Civilised world as a stunning utopia to John, the Savage, also turns into a hostile one with heartless people. Yet, scholars like Oliver J.T. Harris and John Robb note that Miranda’s and John’s reaction to the “new world” is certainly right since confronting the sophistication of human material bodies in real life is more startling than in scientific fantasy (3). Huxley’s reference to “ectogenesis” was influenced by the work of his physiologist friend J.B.S. Haldane. As “ecto” or “ektos” means “outside” in Greek and “genesis” is “beginning” or “birth,” the term was coined and conceptualised by Haldane in *Daedalus or Science and the Future* (1923) as a procreative method of developing an embryo outside woman’s uterus. Huxley’s knowledge of biology was indebted to his scientific background. He was born and raised in a family of notable scientists²⁴, and well taught himself into biology. Biological technology and its social effects are thus seriously explored in the novel.

²⁴ His grandfather, Thomas Henry Huxley, for example, was a famous biologist who aggressively rooted for Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution and was therefore dubbed as “Darwin’s Bulldog.” His sibling, Julian Huxley, was also a biologist who advocated to the evolution theory and believed that eugenic science could provide the public welfare.

Brave New World has inspired many dystopian writers in later times. It was Huxley's attempt to distort a utopian fantasy, especially in Wells's "Men Like Gods" (1923), as he wrote in a letter to Mrs. Roberts in 1931: "I am writing a novel about the future—on the horror of the Wellsian Utopia and revolt against it" (*Letters* 348 qtd. in Meckier 2). The novel, for example, was called a "bad utopia" (Bedford 244) imagineering a society thousand years ahead where humans are cloned and genetically adapted. *Brave New World* serves as a social and political commentary of wherever is governed by totalitarianism or under the regime in which the people are controlled by genes, machines and drugs. To be specific, consumeristic and decadent lifestyles as well as mass-produced industries in America are being criticised (Hammond 69). With drugs that heal mental agonies and the normality of pornography and polygamy, this society seems radical for the British society. However, the dystopian trope did not, as some scholars argue, start with Huxley since Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* and Wells's *The Time Machine* were categorised among the early British science-fiction novels of the nineteenth century with disfiguration of perfectly utopian worlds. While all the three selected novels are related to scientific and dystopian elements, *The Coming Race*'s mystical underworld with machine-driven Vril-ya race and *The Time Machine*'s evolutionary fantasy of human-animal hybrids are less possible than *Brave New World*'s biotechnology. Unlike Bulwer-Lytton's and Wells's works which centre on an unexpected voyage to an unknown, hostile land, early twentieth-century dystopian novels also include the clash between an individual and society, liberalism and totalitarianism, and aloofness towards history (Marques 30-31). As seen in *Brave New World*, Bernard, John and Helmholtz act against the state's will and question the newly constituted history. The

fearful representation of a totalitarian state that controls human mind and body thus reflects the early twentieth-century fears of the devastation of humanity by science and technology if they are in an absolute possession of the government.

Nevertheless, Huxley's view towards scientific progress is ambiguous since he does not entirely object to it. Despite its satirical tone, the novel also investigates how much technology can affect humanity and pave the way for a highly advanced society. Huxley is not blind to the fact that Henry Ford²⁵ was a historic figure in the age of mass-production who revolutionised manufacturing process in the early twentieth century. In *Brave New World*, Huxley makes Ford a god-like entity with his own era as the story takes place in the year AF 632 or 632 years after Ford epoch in which automated machines are used to create humans. How Ford is worshipped by the Civilised can be seen as a parody of how an industrial innovator is depicted as a playing god. As a result of Ford's industrial engineering legacy in reality, bioengineering makes a mass-production of humans through ectogenesis possible in fiction. In *Brave New World*, man, instead of God, can create man. However, Huxley does not solely criticise Ford and always shuns advanced technology. In fact, scientific progress for Huxley is "fascinating" but it also brings along a worrying impact on humans. Although hypnotism or sleep teaching, a kind of brain-washing, in *Brave New World* seems evil, "there is no overt criticism of the methods through which these lessons are put across" (Introduction xvii). Instead of being persuaded to condemn techno-scientific progress and utopian fantasy, readers of *Brave New World* are invited to be prepared for and contemplate an unsatisfying side of what science

²⁵ Henry Ford (1863-1947) was an American industrialist who introduced assembly lines using automated machines to produce machines in a form of mass-production. His revolutionary method of assembling mechanical pieces to quickly and systematically create sophisticated yet affordable equipment namely automobiles was very influential in twentieth century.

might bring. As Huxley notes in *Literature and Science* (1963), “Whether we like it or not, ours is the Age of Science” (60).

As biotechnology, a totalitarian tool for many World Controllers in the story, is central to *Brave New World*, it does not envisage only a eugenic alteration of human mind and body but also a distorted notion of humanity that posthuman thinkers are much interested in. When science and technology have predominated the way people live since the early twentieth century, the humanistic constitution of human features namely rationality, self-consciousness and feeling are re-examined when machines and animals, the non-human species, are somehow scientifically and biologically proven to possess features similar to those of the human species. In *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of Biotechnology Revolution* (2002), Francis Fukuyama²⁶ reconsiders that, after the Cold War, human history is replaced by “posthuman” history driven by science, and with that there emerges the posthuman impact on physical, mental, political and economic aspects of human life. Fukuyama presents two possibilities that will pave the way for the posthuman future: one is information technology as portrayed in Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1945) and the other is biotechnology in Huxley’s *Brave New World* which raises political and ethical controversies about what it means and should be defined as human. If biotechnology, which this chapter will call the creation of the man-made body, could come into being in the near future, strong eugenically genetic prejudice against the rights to have children inevitably returns (Fukuyama 159). The eugenic reproduction of “designer babies,” or genetically engineered babies whose biological taints are

²⁶ Francis Fukuyama is an American political scientist and capitalistic economist. He wrote *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992) with the belief that Western democracy and extreme capitalism can thrive and become the final journey of human history.

removed, certainly leads to ethical and political problems (Fukuyama 76-78). Genetic engineering or biotechnology thereby undermines the validity of human essence, the divine gift of reasoning, virtue and moral senses that made up human nature. Even if human rights are what humans feel entitled to always possess, whether it was controversially given by God, nature or humans themselves, it can be problematised. For Fukuyama, these sources of the rights do not seem absolutely and politically justifiable, for “human rights are...whatever human beings say they are” (112). The human nature and natural rights are thus rather anthropocentrically subjective than objective for many critical posthumanists and critics of humanism. Failing to possess human virtue, self-consciousness and emotion, one can be dismembered from the realm of man. The unqualified “man” might include the disabled, the mentally retarded, women, coloured people and minority races who have been metaphorically referred to as non-human animals inferior to Western “man” or even to intelligent machines. Human ways of expressing emotions and displaying virtue differ culturally and individually, so universal human features are invalid at times. In terms of biological engineering, conventional human nature and essence are also inapplicable when it comes to the man-made body of humans in which natural and artificial division is collapsed. Such body type can be called the posthuman body not only by its human-non-human, organic-inorganic assemblage but also its erosion of anthropocentric humanness. Human beings have been physically and philosophically transformed into the posthuman subject by technology as it undermines the “self-determined and supreme ontological” notion of “Man” and regards “humanity as a prosthetic existence” or a vehicle which is subject to change (Rossini 4). Huxley’s representation of the man-made body in *Brave New World* certainly reflects the

posthuman identity of the not-quite-human characters as a result of advanced reproduction and pharmaceutical technologies as well as the process of “becoming” or being fluid and unfixed. What Huxley has predicted, as most critics said, about “‘Bokanovsky process’ and modern drugs” (Firchow 303) seems to be more practical in real life. While some have been gravely anxious about horrifying “babies in bottles” prophesied in the novel, it is worth mentioning that scientific progress is unstoppable and the human species, instead of nostalgically mourning for the loss of human sacredness, should be relocated and redefined outside the problematic anthropocentrism.

Lively Tin-Man or Synthetic Human: The Man-Made Body of the Civilised

At Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre, students are being lectured by Thomas “Tomakin” Grahambell or the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning (D.H.C) about how babies are produced through “Bokanovsky’s Process” which, to put it simply, is the scientific technique of multiplying human embryos to create “[m]illions of identical twins” (5) for the World State. This opening scene of *Brave New World* boldly portrays the manufacturing of human beings who are destined to fit in particular social castes due to their biological components. With reference to Ford’s mass-production technology in the early twentieth century, industries in Europe were highly modernised. In *Brave New World*, mass-production technique is applied not solely for a good quantity of products but also for human biology. In other words, human reproduction is technologically and governmentally managed in order to “stabilise the population” and meet the World State’s highest aim of “Community, Identity, Stability” (1). Bokanovsky’s Process radically changes

human reproductive history. Traditionally, a woman's egg can produce only one embryo which turns into a child while Bokanovsky technique fertilises one egg to make it "bud," "proliferate" and "divide" into millions of embryonic cells as if the original egg regenerated countless amounts of its copies. Once the fertilised eggs develop into embryos, they will be fed with alcohol, decanted in bottles at Bottling Room and stored in shelves (4-6). The production marks a new genesis of mankind in which "[s]tandard men and women" of the World State are born and classified into higher castes (Alphas and Betas) and lower ones (Gammas, Deltas and Epsilon). The castes of these Civilised beings are determined by biological and intellectual factors, and graded by Greek ordinal numbers to emphasise that these creatures are grouped into the top-notch and the low-rank. Human reproduction in the novel is far more unorthodox and unnatural compared to the "old" human way of giving birth in which women are carriers of babies and their biological mothers. The body of bottled babies fertilised through Bokanovsky's process, in addition, is clearly man-made since the organs are synthetically nurtured by chemicals like alcohol and blood-surrogate which invigorate the body. The artificial nutrients are not merely fed at babyhood. When the babies are fully grown, "transfusions of young blood" are also conducted to maintain bodily youthfulness (91). From this modernised biotechnology, human bodies are literally constructed, controlled and maintained by means of industrial science. The image of manufactured babies or the man-made body revolutionises human procreation and prompts a new class system which is labelled by genetic components suitable for certain tasks instead of parental titles.

The creation of babies in test tubes, on one hand, gives a horrifying image. Being decanted and bottled in test-tubes, these human-to-be creatures will be kept,

like “photograph film,” at the Embryo Store where the light is dimly red as these creatures “only stand red light” (7). The view of embryonic storage intimidates the guided students because the bottles are “glinted with innumerable rubies, and among the rubies moved the dim red spectres of men and women with purple eyes and all the symptoms of lupus” (7). Observing the embryonic stage of these babies closely can be spine-chilling as “purple eyes” and blushes on the body envisage the ghost-like, monstrous creatures. Moreover, grown embryos, as the Director explains to the students, will “taste the rich blood-surrogate” and be fed with synthesised nutrients (8). Artificial blood-feeding, instead of natural mechanism in biological mother’s womb, implies that these babies are not solely ghosts but also vampiric-like, blood-sucking creatures. Although these embryos do not harm any living being, the ghostly vampiric look, in a way, reflects cultural repression or fear of scientific effect on the human body. One can take this artificial procreation as the making of hideous monsters with a degenerative outlook.

However, the depiction of man-made babies does not so much indicate degenerative humanity than present the possible reproduction that emerges against the “traditional” reproduction of human beings and transcends the logic of human birth regardless of sexuality. In the real world, it is general and normal for humans, including most non-human animals, to procreate through sexual intercourse. Nevertheless, the Bokanovsky’s Process defies natural birth and makes it sexless. In other words, sexual desire and sexual activity are not needed in the production of humans. Instead of phallic-genital union, new life can be formed via mechanic activities. That is, eggs are selected, fed with artificial nutrients, carried and transferred like goods from one laboratory to another. The darkish red storage room

full of bottled embryos, or in fact the whole building, thus literally becomes a mechanical womb. It can be implied that the robot-operated womb is unsexed and asexual but so fertile that it relentlessly produces cyborg-like creatures whose birth is completely different from natural or traditional logic of about human procreation. Bokanovsky's Process, similar to later reproductive technology like in-vitro fertilisation or IVF, is clearly not designed to fulfil the desire of infertile or barren couples. Indeed, it is used by Mustapha Mond, the Resident Controller for Western Europe, one of the ten World Controllers, to create the new human race and permanent social stability. The process of creating cyborgs goes against human coupling as Donna Haraway mentions in "A Manifesto for Cyborgs" (1985) that the birth of the cyborg is "uncoupled from organic reproduction" (66). It can be assumed from this statement that disconnection, detachment and denaturing from binaries, especially heterosexual coupling, can describe the emergence of the cyborg. Heterosexual union which is originally known in Western thoughts as the focal, natural reproduction of humanity is, therefore, undermined by the creation of the cyborg, an organic-inorganic hybrid entity as the cyborg "does not expect its father to save it" (Haraway 67-68). To Haraway, the word "father" can be a reference to "God" and a metonymy of heterosexual parents in which the male is dominant. Not only the Christian history in Europe is offended by the cyborg existence. Biological parents are irrelevant and become an object of ridicule in the Civilised community once the known genesis of human kind or biological reproduction is defamiliarised by a cyborg-like life. As a result, the human and non-human boundary, which has always been designated by the anthropocentric narrative, becomes less pronounced whereas the cyborg existence, both in literature and reality, defamiliarises the known

distinction between the organic and the inorganic, the natural and the cultural or man-made, and the human and the non-human. Despite its ambiguous identity, the cyborg entity reshapes humanity under the influence of modern science, specifically biotechnology, into the life condition that many critical-humanist scholars of the twenty-first century considered as the posthuman condition.

With the non-human, unsexed and mechanical womb, these bottled babies become parentless cyborg-like beings. One might ask if these bioengineered babies are thinking machines or artificial humans. The question can be tricky once anthropocentric thinking is applied as thinkers of this idea usually separate things in binaries. Anthropocentric principles about human rationality, self and autonomy, of course, cannot fully describe the complexity of life. Beings with less humanness always fall into the non-human category but the half-human, half-non-human entity like the cyborg is not an easy task of categorisation. Before these babies are delivered, they have to be pre-conditioned to enhance their immunity to real-world circumstances like heat or chemical exposure if they were destined to work in particular environments. According to the Director and Henry Foster, who is assisting the Director in the study tour, these embryos are engineered to withstand future diseases by the intake of “typhoid and sleeping sickness” including fish genetics for bodily immunity. The interplay between human and non-human-animal identity of the Civilised babies can be temporarily visible in their fish-like organs or gills (12). In addition, inorganic substances will be, unconsciously, provided for those embryos to prepare their bodies: if they are assigned to work as steel workers in the future, they must be kept in high temperature environment. They will be raised in and familiarised with an environment full of “lead, caustic soda, tar [and] chlorine” so that they will

grow up to be “chemical workers” (12-13) Apart from embryonic pre-condition, the bioengineered babies, especially those of the low castes, will be taught to hate nature and literature by electric shock. When the babies reach for roses and books, they will get a “mild electric shock” as corporal punishment, making them physically “twitched and stiffened” (15). Because of the bodily conditioning in childhood, the grown-up Civilised people are less individualised and emotionally diverted to fit in the rigid social positions. While the Delta-minus are bioengineered to be servants who look alike and “identically small, black and hideous” (53) for Bernard Marx, an Alpha-plus, the lowest-caste Epsilon are born with less amount of given oxygen and more hostile environments that make them unintelligent yet physically tolerant of hard work. As Mr. Foster explains to student visitors, the Epsilon embryos are “predestined to emigrate to the tropics, to be miners and acetate silk spinners and steel workers” and then are conditioned to “thrive on heat” and “love it” (12). According to Mr. Foster, this reproductive and conditioning process is “the secret of happiness and virtue—liking what you’ve *got* to do” that make “people like their unescapable social destiny” (12). In spite of their human appearance, with the loss of human originality and the life of natural-unnatural ambivalence, the Civilised possess cyborg qualities that can be implied from their artificial birth and hybrid or chimeric bodies infused with inorganic components and non-human environments.

The integration between human organism and man-made technologies gives birth to the posthuman entity of the Civilised. Here in the World State, these cyborg-like humans are procreated through mechanical organs. Braidotti has explained about the cloned animal in *The Posthuman* (2013) that it suggests the “post-anthropocentric human-animal interaction” as the cloned body undercuts sexual bond and birth, so it is

not a product of parents but of its own kind (74). Braidotti adds that bio-politics, born as a result of capitalism with the urge to control lives, is reflected in *Brave New World* where the World State's complete manipulation of human beings shows that the mechanical womb is sexless and bears no human logic of sexuality: "technological apparatus is no longer sexualised, racialised or naturalised, but rather neutralised as figures of fixity, hybridity and interconnectiveness. . . " (97). The result of this transgender-ness of the machine, once integrated with the human body, thus relocates the human body outside the known anthropocentric logic. Due to the absence of heterosexual parents, the knowledge of human psyche cannot be fully applied to these children. If they are sad, they will have "soma" or the happy medicine. If they are unhappy or desiring for sexual pleasure, they are allowed to have sex freely, for monogamy has been abolished. Artificiality—from bodily organs to emotional pleasure—is at work every inch of the Civilised life. In addition, without vital non-human others—drugs and artificial body fluids—the body cannot be sustained. The distortion of human originality in their heterosexual procreation and natural organism is thereby a result of this posthuman reproduction that forms a cyborg character artificially born, merged with the non-human others and coincidentally existing in between the organic and material worlds. In line with what Henry Foster believes, everyone in the new world is created with duty and therefore useful. Even though there are caste variants, "[a]ll men [the Civilised] are physico-chemically equal" (61). Their body and character are evenly man-made.

Cloning technology is imagined to be applied to the human body in *Brave New World* and reproduces complex creatures with the posthuman identity which defies familiar dualism of the human and the non-human. Bioengineering not only

interferes with genetic components of an embryo but also eugenically duplicates the selected specimen into millions of human bodies. Although they are genetically preassigned to work in different social fields, the Civilised are born out of the same oval cell that is fertilised and multiplied. Carrying identical genetic information of the progenitor, each cyborg clone does not live an individual, unique life but becomes a particle of millions of the repeated bodies. It can be argued that the eugenic ideal of perfect, stable society full of perfectly bioengineered humans introduces a new problem of identity and a threat to the human notion in which selfhood, autonomy and rationality are cherished. While anthropocentric and humanistic eugenicists aim to refine the human species, all humans with healthy genes can be the repetition of perfection which diminishes personhood and individuality. To Paul Sheehan, the clones and zombies are similar representations of the posthuman bodies in the late twentieth-century fiction as both the half-human species lack “individual identity” (253). The absent identity of the clones can be ghastly and refuses the fact that human identity is varied. Life is not theirs but their forefather’s (Sheehan 253). Once human genes are made possible to be duplicated by bioengineering technology, a cloned body is no longer a unique or “singular entity” but a “stockpile of information” (Baudrillard qtd. in 254) as its disposition is preserved and copied from the older generation. Thereby, neither cyborg-like clones in *Brave New World* nor the parent cells are the author of the “stockpile of information” that is copied and rewritten by Mustapha Mond. In contrast, freewill and self-realisation that are a sign of individual epiphany are also hazardous to one’s body and mind. Concerning Bernard Marx, an Alpha-plus intellectual elite of the World State who works at the Psychology Department in the Central London, his “small thin body” is always a subject of

humiliation and makes him a man of “melancholy face” (48). Bernard’s physical anomaly reveals that, despite genetic sameness, there are variations of the Civilised bodies as well. His mental pain mostly comes from his jealousy of other men who look smarter, more mentally stable and physically charming than himself like Helmholtz Watson, an Alpha-plus lecturer of the College of Emotional Engineering at the Propaganda House. These two men have a close relationship because they share something in common. Like Bernard, Helmholtz represents an individual who thinks differently from the mainstream since he considers “sport, women, communal activities” as “second bests” (56). In other words, both Alpha-plus men are struggling to be themselves instead of acting like others. Helmholtz, however, seems to be more confident in expressing his unconventional feeling than Bernard. To Bernard’s jealousy, Helmholtz becomes aware of his mental excess because “being himself and all alone was too much ability” (56). In their conversation, Helmholtz expresses frustration about the inner voice as “a queer feeling that [he’s] got something important to say and the power to say it,” but does not know “what it is” and “can’t make any use of the power” (57-58). Huxley seems to suggest that this inner voice or a desire for displaying one’s personality is a sign of mental excess in the Civilised culture. While other Civilised people never bother finding one’s own identity, Helmholtz’s interest in “something important to say” shapes him as a person who has a unique identity for which Bernard aims to achieve. Ironically, despite his unconventional ideas and lifestyle, he is a propaganda writer who is supposed to write for the Community and to brainwash the babies to well behave like others. Helmholtz’s criticism of his job as a writer for the state may invite problems if someone eavesdrops as he explains about what he wishes to write:

“I feel I could do something much more important . . . Words can be like X-rays, if you use them properly—they’ll go through anything. You read and you are pierced. That’s one of the things I try to teach my students—how to write piercingly. But what on earth’s the good of being pierced by an article about a Community Sing, or the latest improvement in scent organs? . . .”

“Hush!” said Bernard suddenly, and lifted a warning finger; they listened. “I believe there’s somebody at the door,” he whispered (58).

Obviously, “Community Sing” and all propagandas he has written for the World State are meaningless to him. For Helmholtz, what is more “important” to say or write is something from complex thoughts which may be a form of literature that will “pierce[]” the people’s body and soul instead of monotonously factual information. In spite of his strong viewpoint, Helmholtz has to succumb to biological condition which obstructs others and even him to realise and publicise the unique, personal thoughts. While Helmholtz is clear in his standpoint, Bernard has low self-esteem, paranoia and anxiety of how people think about him. Bernard’s struggle to find himself is done through the attempt to experience unorthodox happiness. Even though he is upset when Lenina Brown, a popular female Beta lab worker and Henry Foster’s sexual partner and her co-worker Fanny Crowne talk badly about his tiny body out of the rumour about excess alcohol in his blood-surrogate, Bernard likes her. Luckily, after Lenina has asked Bernard to take her to visit the Savage Reservation in New Mexico, with a chance to win her heart, he asks her out for a date. Being alone with Lenina, Bernard shares his desire to be “himself” with her, “I want to look at the sea in peace . . . It makes me feel as though...I were more *me*. More on my own, not so completely a part of something else. Not just a cell in the social body” (74). To her surprise,

Lenina, in contrast, exclaims, “It’s horrible, it’s horrible” (75). Bernard’s approaches to happiness by refusing to use “soma,” spending time alone with a girl and falling into deep feeling are not only “very odd” (73) to Lenina but also socially unacceptable. Like Helmholtz, Bernard tries to be himself and achieve individuality as he disagrees with emotional enslavement from the conditioning. Once the higher authority learns about their unconventional ideas, both Bernard and Helmholtz are eventually deported to an island as threatening deviants to communal stability. Obviously, sameness still outweighs individuality and demeans human specificity. In addition, according to Braidotti, the cloned subject, despite its identical genes, detaches the body from matriarchal and patriarchal kinship. The way viviparous birth of the clones ceases to be a norm suggests the termination of natural, sexual procreation. Due to the interplay between human and non-human states, the bodily indeterminacy indicates that the Civilised are neither tin-man nor fully human but rather a complex entity with distorted individuality and self.

“A Gramme is Better Than a Damn”: “Soma” and the Man-Made Mentality

In *Brave New World*, the mentality of the new human race is also conditioned and drugged to be emotionally stable. Even though the man-made body is not entirely robotic but still sentient, the Civilised people are strongly advised to be less sentient and more happily steady. In a very young age, they are taught, or brainwashed, by the method called “hypnopædia” or sleep teaching which is considered by the Director of Hatchery Centre as “the greatest moralising and socialising force of all time” (21). At the study tour to Elementary Class Consciousness, the Director introduces how the babies are classified into higher and lower castes using different-coloured uniforms.

Through speakers, the sleeping Beta babies are unconsciously given a lesson by synthetic and mechanical voices continuously spitting out words in a loop like:

. . . all wear green . . . and Delta children wear khaki. Oh no, I don't want to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse. They're too stupid to be able to read or write. Besides, they wear black, which is such a beastly colour. I'm *so* glad I'm a Beta. (21)

The flood of repeated sentences can be powerful enough to embed social values and proper behaviours in their brain. Human primal mentality is overtly re-constructed to make the Civilised naturally accept the world as it is without questioning. Instead of thinking beings, humans are what they are made to think and not to think in the World State. Once Lenina is on a helicopter with Henry Foster, she looks down at the low-caste Epsilons and wonders if they feel upset being inferior. Henry answers, "Of course they don't. How can they? They don't know what it's like being anything else. We'd mind, of course. But then we've been differently conditioned. Besides, we start with a different heredity" (62). With different "heredity" and conditioning, each caste is moulded to entirely believe what they are and have to do by hypnopædic lessons. Moral lessons in hypnopædia thus replace human nature which is known for human innate virtue. Loops of vocals, whispering in first-person point of view, like non-human ghosts dictate what the children need to do when they grow up. For instance, in the scene where Lenina and Fanny are talking about Lenina's plan to visit the Savage Reservation, interruption of "untiring whisper" (40) can be heard: "Every man, woman and child compelled to consume so much a year. In the interests of industry. The sole result . . ." (40). When consumption is compulsory for everyone, it is unnatural if one refuses to "consume" since the state's industry will lose "interests."

The Civilised people's desire is also fabricated by these virtual voices to be a materialist. The use of "soma" is also engrained in the children's brain as the recorded vocals explain:

Now...there is always *soma*, delicious *soma*, half a gramme for a half-holiday, a gramme for a week-end, two grammes for a trip to the gorgeous East, three for a dark eternity on the moon; returning whence they find themselves on the other side of the crevice safe on the solid ground of daily labour and distraction, scampering from feely to feely, from girl to pneumatic girl, from Electro-magnetic Golf Course to. . .' (47)

The body can be rejuvenated by "soma" or drugs that tranquillise the mind right away. Apart from young blood transfusion that allows the Civilised to have ageless body, youthfulness is also reflected from the happy mind. It is "hard to say" (2) how old Tomakin, the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning, is at the beginning. His agelessness is presumably the result of soma-intake and, of course, the bioengineered physique.

The new biotechnology of soma, in contrast, is an instant happiness for the new human race. In the past, before the era of Ford, the history is told through hypnopædia whispering that humans used to believe in Heaven and drank a lot of alcohol to feel blissful (Huxley 44-47). When people look "glum" (45) or dispirited like Bernard, it is advised that "a gramme is better than a damn" (46). In *Brave New World*, when the Civilised have mental sufferings, they should take an ecstatic pill to regain emotional stability. Refusing to take the pill and letting oneself drown in miseries, in contrast, can be "a damn" or a sinful act since unstable mentality begets disorder. Unlike their ancestors, the Civilised are encouraged to rely on drugs rather than religion or reading

to get rid of mental sufferings. In addition to hypnotising propagandas, it is the influence of the posthuman pharmacy that threatens human consciousness.

Stress-relief drugs like soma in *Brave New World* is a result of biotechnology that has a direct impact on human essence. What counts as human essence and human nature will be dissolved by advanced drugs that help people effectively and promptly cope with mental malfunctioning. Fukuyama, for example, points out how posthuman drugs imagineered in *Brave New World* that they will erase human consciousness or what he calls “subjective mental states” which include all the “sensations, feelings, and emotions” (166). Human consciousness is believed to be innate and indicates the autonomy in personal mentality that draws a line between the human and the non-human category. When the autonomous self can be distorted by technology, it is questionable whether human beings are entitled to have natural rights and authority over everything. God and nature, that have long been respected and believed to give humans power on earth, are no longer justifiable since “[h]uman rights are . . . whatever human beings say they are” (Fukuyama 166). In *Brave New World*, soma is strongly propagandised as miraculous pain-reliever that not only sends the Civilised into heavenly trance but also stabilises the body. This is the pharmaceutical technology that can be relevant to modern drugs in the real world which transform the body and mind. Steroid, for instance, makes muscles bigger and engenders better athletic performance. Viagra, on the other hand, solves erectile dysfunction and improves sexual performance in couples. These drugs make human bodies more “capable of doing different things, living in different ways and responding differently to various situations” (Robb and Harris 205). The invention of tranquillisers like Prozac allows one’s self to have higher self-esteem and improve sociability. Thus,

neural pharmacy is utilised by the state in *Brave New World* as social control just like soma addiction (Fukuyama 46). Drugs and prolongation of life lead to the posthuman health and body, and weaken the notion of human innate consciousness. Once the self-consciousness is barely human-originated, the notion of human subjectivity, as a thinking individual, is finally distorted and dissolved from the way sentience is intruded by cognitive manipulation from hypnopædia and soma-therapy.

Biotechnological drugs in *Brave New World* are not just a supplement to the body but function as a vital element for bodily maintenance. Apart from soma's medicinal cure for mental sufferings, the Civilised people are made to believe that the body and soma are inseparable. Soma-eating becomes the bodily and cultural practice for the World State citizens. Encountering this drug-driven society is startling to John the Savage, a young man who is believed to be the son of the Director Tomakin and Linda, the lost Beta woman who has survived in the Savage Reservation. In the Savage Reservation, where primitive Indians or "old" men live in a ghetto in New Mexico, John, a white-skinned offspring, lives among uncivilised primitives. John wholeheartedly internalises the "old" human codes of conduct and savage rituals although he is treated badly by the primitive tribes. His white skin is to be blamed since it represents white oppression for the primitives. Having found that Linda, a Beta citizen, breaks the World State's law by viviparously giving birth to John, Bernard decides to take John and Linda to London in order to discredit the Director and make himself famous. In London, John, generally called the Savage, is paid so much attention by the Civilised while his mother Linda is taken to the hospital for soma-holidays and bodily inspection as she is the first man-made human whose body is grossly degenerated. With a high dose of soma, Linda feels mentally blissful, yet

her decayed body is shutting down. Witnessing his mother's death, John is infuriated by the heartlessness of the Civilised technology, especially soma, which kills his mother. Soma, however, is what the Civilised vitally need. As John is observing officers distributing soma tablets, people's "attention was now focused on the black cash-box [full of soma]" and they all together exclaim "'Oo-oh!'. . . as though they were looking at fireworks" (172). Soma-distribution is a scene where a massive crowd is nastily "shoving" in fight for the drugs (172). Strangely enough, after an officer announces that he "shall stop the distribution unless [he] [sees] good behaviour" from the recipients (172), the crowd becomes less chaotic. It can be seen that the Civilised are so greedy that they will do what it takes to get the drug but immediately remain calm because "[d]eprivation of *soma*" is an "appalling thought!" for them (172). Lack of soma creates fear which reflects how the drug is so vital, desirable that hectic masses all agree to be docile. For John, this dependence on medicine is indeed enslavement. He assumes that soma is "[p]oison to soul as well as body", for he has experienced seeing his mother as its "slave" who dies because of the drug (173). John starts a revolution by throwing the soma tablets away so that everyone is liberated from its power. In opposition, this action intensifies the fear as "the khaki mob was silent, petrified, at the spectacle of this wanton sacrilege, with amazement and horror" (175). John is later seized and taken away while the astonished, terrified Civilised masses are immediately showered with "*soma* vapour" sprayed in the air to prevent them from being "killed" (176). Regardless of John's well-wishing to free these people, he is unknowingly about to commit a massacre without understanding that the Civilised are physically and mentally taught to consume soma for survival. In addition, Linda's body in the Savage Reservation, for example, is getting old and ugly

by the lack of soma tablets. Linda drinks alcohol, which gives similar effect to soma, to soothe her mental miseries. Her “monstrous” body, a result of alcoholism, is an eyesore to Civilised people though she used to be one of them. As Huxley narrates about Linda’s body: “Fat; having lost her youth; with bad teeth, and a blotched complexion, and that figure (Ford!)—you simply couldn’t look at her without feeling sick, yes, positively sick” (125). Obviously, detachment from soma can destroy the body and cause real affliction. This posthuman drug makes the body a material subject that relentlessly desires for the doses rather than a “damn” or dismay.

Instead of a religion that unites people with similar faiths, *Brave New World’s* soma is the new biological technology that makes the new human race mentally closer to one another than ever. The cloned bodies are not mentally connected by faith in God but by technological others, the drugs, which become an important tool for social connection. In Ford Day’s ritual, or the so-called “Orgy-porgy” (70), synthetic songs and hymns are sung to praise Ford as the “Greater Being” (67) of advanced industrialisation and to cherish the modern life condition bestowed by him. The attendants will mainly consume soma tablets and “loving cup[s] of strawberry ice-cream *soma*” that are passed on in a circuit. To make the attendants feel the same, a “Voice, deep strong Voice” that is hardly of a human speaks in a “musical,” compassionately “vibrant” and “supernatural” tone: “Oh, Ford, Ford, Ford” (68). Being drugged and hypnotised by the artificial voice, the ritual-goers are mentally directed to feel the presence of Ford or the Greater Being, instead of Lord or God:

‘I hear him,’ [Morgana Rothschild] cried. ‘I hear him.’

‘He’s coming,’ shouted Sarojini Engels.

‘Yes, he’s coming, I hear him.’ Fifi Bradlaugh and Tom Kawaguchi rose simultaneously to their feet. (69)

Anyone who takes soma and wholeheartedly listens to the voice will be mentally and perhaps unconsciously connected to the invisible, imaginary presence of Ford. Like Bulwer-Lytton’s Vril power that allows the Vril-ya to put someone into a trance, these Civilised people are also in a trance while taking soma-doses. This “orgy-porgy” scene, apart from representing a parody of traditional humans’ religious trance, suggests how the minds of the Civilised are connected in a web of social information and directed to have the same cognition. Technological interference with, instead of enhancement of, human cognition in *Brave New World*, again, interrupts innate human self and consciousness. The inability to join in the network can cause a problem since Bernard Marx is the only Alpha-plus who pretends that he “hears him[Ford]” although he hears nothing in order to socialise. His denial of soma and social gathering eventually isolates him from social network and leaves him with agony.

The use of soma does not only serve to unite the Civilised’s minds, it also reinvents the body as being sexualised, desirable and open for connection. Sexual drive and desire are traditionally basic factors of human reproduction. Once human beings can be mass-produced without going through sexual intercourse, sex then becomes a form of entertainment and a social activity. In the dance in the “orgy-porgy” ritual, the stanzas are sung, “Orgy-porgy, Ford and fun, / Kiss the girls and make them One. / Boys at one with girls at peace; Orgy-porgy gives release” (70). The body of boys and girls, in a heterosexual way, is sexually desirable. However, the desire is not for personal pleasure as everyone belongs to one another. It is also encouraged for the Civilised to be sexually aroused by soma from the invention of

sex-hormone chewing-gum (51). Instead of the natural instinct of human beings, sexuality does not come from individual autonomy but depends on synthetic milieu. In the scene where Lenina and Henry Foster are on a honeymoon trip, watching the “electric sky-signs effectively shut off the outer darkness” and listening to synthetic music, the couple can dance through the night and have sex in a soma-holiday (63). To begin the same sexual routine, Lenina invites John the Savage to take soma and watch “feelies” or sensational, pornographic films which arouse sexual desire with “feely effects” or sensational sounds of “Oo-oo” and “Aa-aah” (137). Despite his eventual distaste for Lenina’s prostituted body and “horrible film,” John, at first, feels “pale, pained, desiring, and ashamed of his desire” (138). The “feelies” are effective enough to make the body of Lenina desirable. Through polygamy, Lenina is ready to have many sex partners and use sensational triggers like feelies as an access to multiple human connections. As an embodiment of the traditional human race, John’s self-consciousness and value of living are insulted by the sexual practices in London, which he assumes as “false, lying happiness” (146). Sex drive and sexuality in this posthuman world are depicted as being in between naturally genuine and synthetically fake. The latter is more prominent to John, an outsider of the World State. It can be said that lust is rather culturally engineered just like an endless desire for happiness which is conditioned and drugged. The clones’ purpose is to consume and want to consume. They cannot detach themselves from artificial sexual stimuli like soma and “feelies,” for such detachment is painfully impossible. That sexual instinct is replaced by artificial lust for mere connection and entertainment rather than for a reproductive purpose, therefore destabilising the “old” human logic, autonomy and self.

Technology with an impact on the cyborg-like citizens in *Brave New World* brings about the posthuman entity which is an assemblage of multiple species. Braidotti suggested in *Posthuman* (2013) that the posthuman life form is reformatted as an organic entity combined with technological environment. In her view, the closeness, or cooperation, between human and technological others seen as a “new ‘milieu’,” unlike artificial organs that only support human body, is more “generative and complex” (83). Such human-machine and human-technological apparatus relationships indicate that the human body is dependent on technological others and thus loses its unitary subjectivity (92). In the novel, the Civilised cannot live without technological products like synthetic songs, pain-killer drugs, “feelies” as sexual stimuli and bombarding information through hypnopædia. As lives are inseparable from these apparatuses, their man-made body and mentality can signify the posthuman life. From the critical posthuman viewpoint, the human species, indeed, come into being by coevolution and “symbiotic relation with numerous forms of life on earth” rather than climbing to the top of all beings through self-contained, justified superiority (Nayar 9). As self-consciousness, individuality and innate rationality are questioned by critical posthuman thinkers, in the novel, the humanistic ideals are implicitly defied and defamiliarised by artificiality of the body, mind and desire. In the World State, drugs are a vital element of the people’s psychological and social life. Sex, in addition, is not mainly for reproduction or personal gratification but it is a cultural practice as pornographic-like films on an electric sky are meant for sexualising and socialising the bodies. The Civilised minds are made similar and connected through soma just like what some scholars have claimed that connections of nervous and conscious systems, including mental and physical integration, are what

posthuman society will look like. To be a part of that society, a person needs to sacrifice his/her own individuality (Nayar 155). Technological apparatuses are not only adjusted for the new human race that is eugenically engineered. When social stability is prioritised, individuality, self-consciousness and sentience are also customised to the milieu.

The Subhuman and Ruination of the Human Subject

As Huxley's *Brave New World* deals with the conflict between the individual and the society, otherness and dehumanisation characterise the outcasts with bodily anomalies. John the Savage, a white skinned and blue-eyed boy born from heterosexual parents, can embody the uncanny hybrid of the two worlds. His parents are of the Civilised while he is raised in primitive ways since his mother, Linda, was accidentally lost in the Savage Reservation many years ago when she was with Tomakin, the Director of Hatchery Centre. In the poor desert and dirty areas, the primitive Native American people are preserved in the Reservation as old kind of uncivilised humans. Being with the natives, John's body shows his white-European identity, so he is flogged to perform a sacrifice ritual and to repent his racial identity. John explains to Lenina, with tearful eyes showing his inner woe of being white, when she witnesses the whipping for the first time with extreme shock: "They dislike me for my complexion" (96). In addition to the primitives' hatred for the white, the whipping is also performed by the primitives for agricultural fertility and as tribute to gods (96). John is a target of hatred and corporal punishment for the primitives while his mother is condemned as a disgusting, foreign prostitute as she is used to the Civilised's way of sexual conducts. Being an offspring of the Civilised but uncivilisedly raised, John is a double outcast who is not only rejected by the

primitives but also the Civilised. To revoke his banishment ordered by the Director for his “scandalous unorthodoxy of [] sex-life” which is deemed as “an enemy of Society” (122), Bernard invites John and Linda to London to discredit and negotiate with the Director. At first, John is excited. But he later learns that he does not fit in the London society. People are addicted to soma and sexual desires while John, influenced by Shakespearean plays, yearns for genuine feelings such as love, happiness and pain. Entering the “brave new world” of London, or what he calls the Other Place (95), he is animalised and turned into the Other.

The subhuman and not-quite-human entities, in the view of critical posthumanism, can redefine how humans are not an exclusively dignified species endowed with reason, self-consciousness and morality. In other words, non-human qualities add nuance to the meaning of human beings. For Braidotti, whose posthuman view is based on anti-humanism and poststructuralism, bodies that are “sexualised, racialised and naturalised” or deviate from the notion of perfectly normal man can be new, “alternative models of the human subject” (38). Human subjectivity can be redefined, by these culturally, instead of anthropocentrically, constituted bodies. In capitalistic regime, animal and human bodies are equivalently tradable and resources for industrial economy per se (Braidotti 70). In *Brave New World*, Linda, the Civilised Beta, is left to survive alone in an uncivilised milieu and returns to London with a transformed body, for she, without soma, is aged and deteriorated. Her perfectly youthful cloned body in the Savage Reservation is turned into an old woman with “hoarse female voice,” “lines in her face, the flabbiness, the wrinkles,” “sagging cheeks,” “purplish blotches” and “enormous breasts” (97). Against the motto “Civilisation is Sterilisation,” Linda suffers from living a savage life to which she will

never get accustomed (99). Her bloated, old body is disgusted by Londoners. With her aged body which is astonishing to the Civilised utilitarian view, Linda is sent to the hospital for soma-holiday and treated like a laboratory mouse for scientific experiment. Her death is a crucial lesson for Death Conditioning in which Civilised pupils will witness and learn that death is nothing to be worried about. In John's view, Linda's life is worthless and dehumanised.

While Linda's monstrously aged body is a subject of experiment and disgust, John, despite being an offspring of Civilised people, is the Savage to Londoners who are not viviparously born. Like the Indian primitives who are seen as "a ghastly troop of monsters" in their animal-impersonation ritual, John is like an exhibited animal to the Civilised, who at the end of the novel escapes to an isolated lighthouse. Out of his belief to be "purified" and to "make amends" in the poisonous "brave new world," he commits self-punishment by whipping himself. This "extraordinary spectacle" excites the Civilised watchers (203). A mass of Civilised people come to witness the astonishing scene as if they saw an exotic animal show:

In a few minutes there were dozens of them [the Civilised people], standing in a wide circle round the lighthouse, staring, laughing, clicking their cameras, throwing (as to an ape) pea-nuts, packets of sex-hormone chewing-gum, panglandular *petits berries* . . . The Savage had retreated towards cover, and now, in the posture of an animal at bay, stood with his back to the wall of the lighthouse, staring from face to face in speechless horror, like a man out of his senses. (209)

John's way of expressing and coping with woe is considered as entertainment. Rejected by the primitive, John is also dehumanised and transformed into a real wild animal by the

Civilised citizens. His presence in London is arguably equated to happy drugs or “sex hormone chewing-gum” being thrown to him. In other words, his body, a hybrid of the old and new humans, is turned into an object of pleasure for the spectators. His life is metaphorically consumed as a material resource by the Civilised.

However, some Civilised people are also reduced into the subhuman who possesses bodily and mental defects. *Brave New World* seems to present two protagonists from two different worlds who share the predicament of being a deviant to one’s kind. Refusing to play by the rules and use soma, Bernard suffers from emotional pain afflicted by physical humiliation and his inability to socially blend in. Allowing himself to be possessed by fury instead of taking the happy medicine, his mind becomes deranged as he wishes to “hit them [Lenina and Fanny] in the face” when they talk ill about him behind his back (37). However, his “*small*” physique is quite a rumour. Fanny comments that his “smallness was so horribly and typically low-case” and is a technical mistake while Lenina defends him by seeing him as “a cat” she wants to pet (37). For Lenina, his body is desired due to its non-human quality. Bernard’s suffering is explicit when he has to pretend to join social gathering in Ford’s Day. Being asked by a girl if the ceremony is fun, he replies, “Yes I thought it was wonderful” with a pretence that intensifies his isolation and separateness from “the Greater Being” (71). Bernard yearns to be loved by the way he physically and mentally is but usually fails. He does not hesitate to savour the moment of being treated “normally” and politely as an importantly dignified person when he brings “Mr. Savage” to town (127-28). Unfortunately, he is disgraced again when John refuses to show up in his party (143). Bernard realises that he has never been important so far. Instead of using soma to heal mental woe, Bernard expresses it with

his best friend Helmholtz by “pour[ing] out the tale of his miseries and accepted consolation” (147) as a deviant way of coping with frustrations. Bernard also spends time alone in nature by staring and contemplating at the sea to feel himself. This “love of nature” is forbidden in the World State since it “keeps no factories working” (17); therefore, the Civilised babies are conditioned to instinctively loathe “books and flowers” (16) that produce distracting feelings. Bernard’s physical and mental anomalies, disability and self-consciousness, can be a sign of human defects unwanted in the State. The subhuman outcasts portrayed by John, Linda and Bernard allow for alternate way of defining the hybrid life between the human and the non-human species. These subhuman bodies, being animalised, commodified and economically desired, are pushed outside the human logic. John and Linda’s bodies become subjects of experiment and joy for the Civilised whereas Bernard is a wrecked cyborg whose dream for human self and identity is turned down.

In *Brave New World*, negative comments on traditional mankind can serve as a critique of human-centric ideology. Although the dictatorial World Controller, Mustafa Mond, is surely antagonised by contemporary readership as a hypocritical leader who “make[s] the laws” and can “break them. . .[w]ith impunity” (179), he realises that excessive selfishness and individuality jeopardise social order. Mond, who is one of the ten World Controllers, is a successor of Ford who is highly regarded as the Great Being or the legendary pioneer of technological revolution in Europe. It can be said that he, despite his antagonistic portrayal, is presented as an observer of the homo sapiens’ flaws in the past. With reference to the Freudian meta-narrative about mother-father issues as the cause of human psychological traumas, family life is unaccepted by Mond and many Civilised scholars. Family is metonymically

associated with a material construction filled with parental love like the word “home.” From Mond’s negative view, a home is “a few small rooms, stiflingly over-inhabited by a man, by a periodically teeming woman, by a rabble of boys and girls of all ages. No air, no space; and under-sterilised prison; darkness, disease, and smells” (28). Family life and home, which used to be vital for the survival of the human species, become “prison” because they, as Mond refers to Freud’s psychoanalysis, produce “appalling” consequences of madness and mystery from such paternal, maternal and relative relationships (30). Even though it can be implied, on one hand, that familial downsides in human history are merely utilised to justify totalitarian censorship and reflect the Civilised people’s prejudice, such mental complexes resulting from mother-father conflicts, on the other hand, reasonably motivate the World Controllers to create a new, civilised world free from parental miseries and driven by self-contained scientific-technology. In addition, Mond is disgusted by the traditional form of human procreation, female pregnancy and childbirth. How humans have been born from sexual intercourse and viviparous birth within the realm of parenthood is one of the “unpleasant facts” in history (26-27). Moreover, cultural materials, religions, and natural appreciations are also banned and substituted by the belief in Ford and artificiality. Disbelief of and distaste for studies of human familial affairs as anthropocentric legacies hence detach the Civilised citizens from anthropocentric history. Intentionally overlooked and suppressed, the human-centric history is, for the sake of social stability, disposed by the Civilised in order to move toward the Ford-centric world where machines and society are prioritised.

Apart from the objection to family life, naturally born human beings from the old world are rejected and marginalised for several reasons. Firstly, the higher

demand and supply prompt labour shortage. People from the old world fail to serve the needs of the State as they lack physical strength for factorial work and are emotionally fickle. Instead of personal intelligence, the Epsilons are specially created for mere labour work. They have low intellect and fast physical growth compared to the original human species (11). Biotechnology not solely resolves delayed physical growth but destroys human familial bonds. Everyone is parentless and forbidden to procreate, so this cyborg-like body signifies the loss of anthropocentric kinship. Women, in addition, are liberated from reproductive and maternal roles replaced by ectogenesis (37). Another problem is about humans' innate "feelings" and over-possessiveness. As the World Controller, Mustafa Mond, comments about the traditional man's self-obsession to the audience, the use of "I" or "My" leads to insanity: "My love, my one and only, precious, precious. . . No wonder those poor pre-moderns were mad and wicked and miserable . . . they were forced to feel strongly" (32-33). Human subjectivity combined with strong feelings and possessiveness is antagonistic to the docile body which is necessary for social stability (34). As feelings indicate self and individuality, Mond suggests that ideal civilisation must be built upon stability when strong feelings are kept in minimum and controlled by drugs to keep the "machines" or industrial system going (33). In Mond's view, the traditional humans are so "stupid and short-sighted" that they need "the first reformers [previous World Controllers] to deliver them from those horrible emotions . . ." (36). He strongly asserts that feelings, a very component of human nature, obstruct one to work and conform. Bernard, for instance, who longs for strong feelings and has to pretentiously act as if he was one of the dutiful Civilised, is eventually expelled from

the Society. In *Brave New World*, nostalgic remembrance of the human past and human nature is already left behind.

The abolition of Christian monogamic marriage can be a radical resistance to the anthropocentric worldview. In the novel, the cloned bodies, especially the Betas, are open for physical connection. Beta girls, like Lenina, are allowed to have more than one sex partner. In the Christian belief, marriage is a systemised union of human and God and a way of moralising sexual intercourse. Sexual activities outside marriage is deemed evilly sinful, so sex functions for reproduction according to the doctrines. However, mating in *Brave New World* functions as a crucial norm of socialisation, for the Civilised are conditioned to enjoy foreplay and sexual actions when they were young. Although humans in history were evidently polygamous due to the allowance for men to have several wives in many societies (*On Human Nature* 125-26), there has been no marital relationship, neither in monogamy nor polygamy, but sexual partnership in *Brave New World*. Monogamy is thus a taboo for Civilised people while having numerous sexual companions is normal. Since John internalises the primitive conduct of monogamy and romantic fondness, explicit lust is promiscuity and Lenina, rushing to have sex with him instead of waiting for his courtship (155-56), is condemned as a prostitute just like Linda who enjoys having sex with several men in the Savage Reservation. Lenina's flirtatious foreplay with her repeated calls of "Darling" terrifies John as if she was "some intruding and dangerous animal" (159). The man-made body, seemingly programmed as a sex machine with relentlessly unconscious desire for bodily intercourses, terminates monogamic universalism. Whereas the machines are very fertile, the man-made, cyborg-like body is thus unproductive and detached from family ties. Because of biotechnology and

ectogenesis, one female egg generates millions of tubed babies. As human birth is abolished so is the biological body. This biological alteration of the human species, apart from following the eugenic ideology to improve the human race, engenders the posthuman life condition out of the downfall of humanistic ideals, namely the individual self, reason, consciousness, sentience and viviparity, which used to solidify the human subject.

John's and Linda's death indicates the ruination of the human subject. John's quest for his identity through the reading of Shakespeare's plays, in which universal human emotions are explored, represents an age-old, emotional and rational being. Having read Shakespeare's *Othello*, he prefers passion and pain or "tears," which are important to human life, to fake happiness. In an argument between John and Mustafa Mond, Mond explains that the lack of freedom and passion is "the price to pay for stability,"

Because our world is not the same as Othello's world . . . the world is stable now. People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can't get. They're well off . . . safe . . . never ill . . . not afraid of death . . . blissfully ignorant of passion and old age; they're plagued with no mothers and fathers; they've got no wives, or children, or lovers to feel strongly about . . . (180)

By eliminating all causes of miseries, stability is achieved by happiness. Emotions and arts associated with passionate and critical thinking, contrastingly, lead to fallacies and chaos. After he is disillusioned, London, as the "Brave New World" to John, is too much for a human like him to endure. Linda's deteriorating body, representing the return of human ageing process after giving birth, is not a sorrowful site but, to John, a horrible and cold specimen for death conditioning in the new world (181). The man-made humans are immunised to emotional pain from mortality, but John feels the opposite. Artificial

happiness and insignificance of passion are the poisonously heartless environment from which John decides to distance himself by staying alone at the light house and whipping himself to symbolically cleanse the Civilised pollution off from his body. He can never fully escape as “the swarm of helicopters” with the massive crowd come for his “orgy of atonement” or self-punishment (212). Overwhelmed by pressure of a world without passion, friend, sympathy, art, hope and faith, John hangs himself. This death can signify how the human subject is ruined by the Civilised society. With the unstoppable progress, the new humans are destined to serve and desire while the old ones are marginalised, animalised and disposed. John’s eventual self-destruction, though tragic, suggests not only the end of the human subject but the anthropocentric nostalgia of the old, unchanging humanity. The brave new world is not entirely evil. It is John’s upbringing that makes him embrace the old world and reject the new one. It can be suggested that, by not looking forward, one can become degenerated and cannot survive.

With the mass-production revolution in Europe and the outbreak of the First World War during the early twentieth century, Britain depended on industrial, productive bodies of its population. While excessive factorial work resulted in bodily fatigue, the war engendered high rate of death and disability. In order to regain national and social stability, such undesirable bodies motivated the British eugenicists to improve humans’ biological and racial quality through birth control and proper nurturing. Among the early twentieth-century science-fiction novelists, Huxley fused the idea of mass-production and eugenic bioengineering to create fictional characters representing the new human race in *Brave New World*. In addition to serving as a criticism of a totalitarian control over technology, Huxley’s imagination of the revolutionary biotechnology paves the way for the posthuman life condition in which human beings, as a category of superior species,

are questioned and altered. The age-old human components—natural body, self-consciousness, subjectivity and feelings—are forsaken and replaced by the portrayal of the man-made body. From the electric body in *The Coming Race* to the “humanimal” body in *The Time Machine*, what *Brave New World*’s man-made body offers is a continuous projection of the posthuman body in science fiction in which the Civilised’s body and mind are constituted by non-human entities. Their cloned and chemical-infused body by Bokanovsky Process is a cyborg-like entity that is parentless and born from machine-operated reproduction instead of the heterosexual one. Hypnopædia and somapharmaceutical technology also mentally manipulate the Civilised to be happy—to desire, socialise and love what they are destined to do. Individuality, self-consciousness and autonomy are deprived from the new humans’ body and soul while the subhumans, John, the Savage and deviant citizens of the World State, who struggle for individual self and represent the old human form, are deemed disposable causing the human subject to be rejected and ruined. As human subjectivity and essence are irrelevant in this scientific and technological milieu, the creation of the posthuman man-made body breaks away from the natural-organic, nature-culture and human-non-human dichotomies and move toward bodily indeterminacy. The human species as a category becomes a curse in *Brave New World*, and will be soon wiped away. Although many critics argue that the novel reflects the cultural anxiety of technological enslavement under a totalitarian regime and seemingly conveys a degenerative dystopia, Huxley’s civilised world suggests that, despite the lack of the old human essence of freedom and individuality, techno-science can forge a futuristic world which allows the human species to survive in a new life form. This “brave” and “new” world needs a departure from the anthropocentric history and the original human quality to confront with the continuous progress.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

Due to the impact of industrialisation, science and technology in nineteenth-century Britain gradually evolved and promised an optimistic prospect of progressive civilisation. However, there was a fear of biological and cultural degeneration at the turn of the century when the Victorians became disillusioned by the emerging evolutionary theory and faced physical and moral crises. While human beings were created by God and embody His image according to Christian creationism, an evolutionary counterclaim of how humans were biologically related to apes and survived by natural selection like other animals undermined the religious doxa and offered a more tangible explanation of how the human species used to be and would become. As the British race was hypothesised to be either advanced or atavistic, there were disturbing incidents which signalled the advent of devolution in the late Victorian era. In addition to poor living condition and genetic flaws producing unhealthy bodies, despite the rigid control of crimes, horrific homicides like garrotting and the appalling case of Jack the Ripper towards the end of the Victorian era raised concerns about moral decline. With the influx of foreign workers in cities and fears of indigenous uprisings in the colonies, the British could possibly be overthrown by other races from outside Britain. Some studies such as physiognomy and bio-criminology also claimed that physical defects could indicate criminality and infectious degenerative genes. Moreover, the dehumanising life of the working class in an industrialised society was pessimistically seen as an adverse consequence of progress. For some Victorian theorists of degeneration, believing that humans tend to evolve backward and could become extinct, the *fin de siècle* evidently foreshadowed

a tragic denouement of the human species. In the realm of literature, the pessimism about transformative technology and the emerging degeneration hypotheses could influence negative representations of the body in British science fiction in the nineteenth century. Characters with dehumanised appearances can be seen in many late nineteenth-century novels. Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), for instance, depicts the triumph of inner savage and the ambivalence of science as Henry Jekyll whose beastly doppelgänger, Edward Hyde, brings him his downfall. H.G. Wells's scientific romances introduce monstrous characters, ranging from human-animal hybrids brought to life by an overreaching scientist in *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896) to threatening aliens invading human territory in *The War of the Worlds* (1898). These anomalous, non-human characters who threaten the very existence of humanity are not just vile representations of marginalised or non-white minorities in postcolonial reading but also reflect the cultural fear of degeneration.

Nevertheless, from the twentieth and twenty-first-century view of posthumanism, representations of non-human characters are not limited to issues of degeneration, anti-technology and postcolonial symbolism. Critical posthumanism has been formed to destabilise the humanistic and anthropocentric view which celebrates the supremacy of human beings over other entities. In addition to the twentieth and twenty-first century contexts, this concept can be used to redefine what it means to be human in the earlier period of time when humans started to rely on non-human entities such as plants, animals and machines. It debunks the human-non-human dichotomy by revealing that the humans are not distinct from non-human others but have co-evolved with them. Twentieth and twenty-first-century critics of

anthropocentrism have seen a monstrous hybrid as an assemblage of human-non-human, organic-inorganic elements. For Donna Haraway, a half-organic and half-mechanical subject like a cyborg challenges the traditional binary oppositions of human and non-human, culture and nature. With Rosi Braidotti's post-anthropocentric concept, it deconstructs the problematic anthropocentric worldview and relocates the human species as a tiny part, not the centre, of the self-organised ecosystem. Non-human characters as a natural-technological hybrid in late nineteenth-century science fiction become a figure of life constituent of multiple entities and deconstruct anthropocentrism. The loss of human qualities implies a progressive movement and the possibility of a new, unfamiliar identity.

As late-nineteenth century British science fiction is often presented with a theme of deviation from realism, human nature and the known world, it is the realm of fantasy in which peculiar creatures gain their vitality and the human identity is called into question. The late-Victorian science fiction tropes such as extraordinary voyages to terra incognita, techno-scientific mania and aliens or humanoids are also the authorial speculation of the ambiguous future in which civilisation might either be more advanced or reverse. While the public preoccupation with degeneration hypotheses in nineteenth-century Britain was well aware of by many scholars and often reflected in science-fiction novels, this thesis re-examines representations of the body in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century British science-fiction novels through the lens of critical posthumanism to unveil that the authors also explore what it means to be human and non-human in a technological environment. Through the representations of the body in the three selected novels, the posthuman prefiguration and concept in late nineteenth century can be traced and persist until the

early twentieth century. Arguably, the late nineteenth-century science fiction was also used as a space for non-human or not-quite-human entities whose existence destabilises the anthropocentric belief and human hegemony. Although critical posthumanism is widely discussed in twentieth and twenty-first century contexts, it can be asserted that the concept does not abruptly emerge but has evolved in the late nineteenth century British science fiction.

Since electrical technology was a scientific vista for the mass and became a fascinating energy during the nineteenth century, Chapter II presents the electric body in Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* as the reincarnation of the nearly cyborg body since Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. With the electric-like and life-producing power or Vril, the subterranean humanoids or the Vril-ya do not merely survive but also thrive on a life co-evolving with machines. While mechanical wings lift them in the air, an electric staff charged with Vril energy is used as a magic wand or a weapon firing lightning at threatening beings. The union between the Vril-ya and their technology is beyond a transhumanist dream of a physical upgrade as electrical machines are more like prostheses not ordinary tools. Their body is charged with Vril to maintain and prolong their advanced life while intuitive flying with artificial wings is like a natural skill. From the assimilation between the organic and the inorganic, the demarcation between life and artificiality is deconstructed by the Vril-ya, depicted as cyborgs that undergo the process of becoming machine. Their electric body in *The Coming Race* can be said to have influenced many cyborg-like figures in later science fiction, while their heterosexual romance seen in the forbidden love story of the narrator and Zee cannot complete the novel as a posthuman work. However, the destructive yet creative non-human entity, the Vril, has done so much like what

nowadays technology does to the human body. It is a self-organising yet controllable energy of the Vril-ya that facilitates the mind reading and body control as experienced by the narrator. While the Vril-ya are imagined as a new life form whose organic-mechanical body is foreign to the natural-artificial dualistic logic, human rationality and self are belittled in the face of the non-human other. The mockery of the human character in *The Coming Race* can be a critique of human exceptionalism as the protagonist is blinded with imperialistic illusions and obsessions about negative representations of the subterranean creatures that are not completely monstrous but benevolent. The representation of the electric body reaffirms the advent of a species amalgamated with technological others and thus becomes a counterclaim for human dominion.

In addition to the organic and inorganic hybrid, Chapter III explores the “humanimal” body in H.G. Wells’s *The Time Machine* (1895) to show how the human-animal union is not only a modern reincarnation of mythical and atavistic creatures but also a posthuman identity that objects to anthropocentrism. From the popularised knowledge of evolution and natural selection, animality in humanity is resurfaced and reinvestigated. With a hope to see a perfect world, the Time Traveller is strongly disillusioned by the way the future world looks post-apocalyptic and is dwelled by human-animal creatures, the Eloi and the Morlocks. While it is true that physical transformation into animal-like creatures accentuates the late-Victorian preoccupation with degeneration, the depiction of the impending disappearance of human shape and form is used by the author to satirise the human-centric optimism of the unchanged future of human species. By possessing the “humanimal” body and identity, the Eloi and Morlocks straddle in between the human-animal dualism and obviously shatter the image of a perfect man. While the anthropocentric view of the

Time Traveller renders these hybrid creatures monstrous and atavistic, the posthuman reading allows for a reinterpretation of the Eloi and Morlocks as the incomprehensible non-anthropocentric life, an assemblage of human-non-human entities, that challenges the human-non-human, nature-culture dichotomy. The human species, through the course of evolution, is subject to biological transformation and interconnection with non-human others. As the novel suggests, change in the form and concept of the human is unstoppable and rejection to it will only make the disillusionment more nauseating.

Finally, Chapter IV depicts the man-made body as a posthuman representation of the early twentieth century in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. The advent of the new era after the Victorian period brought the British society closer to a technologised society. As healthy and productive bodies were required in industrial expansion during the economic and political competition in Europe, human biological improvement through proper nurturing and genes was suggested by eugenicists to produce potential citizens for the nation. Humans were more or less like insignificant machines to the emergence of mass-production and the whole engine of society. Accordingly, the idea of a technocratic state manufacturing its own population in different castes for different duties was explored by Aldous Huxley. The Civilised, the new human race, being unnaturally produced from tubes is a very techno-scientific vista of extreme bioengineering which is beyond a transhumanist dream since the very notion and essence of humanity—body, sense of self, free will and reason— is distorted. The man-made body becomes the Civilised identity in which their human body, consciousness, subjectivity and emotions are under control by the state through the use of soma or happy drugs. On the one hand, the Civilised are arguably gaslighted to be satisfied with who they are designated to be. On the other hand,

through Bokanovsky Process using machines to operate human reproduction, the man-made body full of chemicals allows the Civilised to be born cyborg-like. They are physically created and mentally addicted to drugs that the World State uses to manipulate their behaviours and maintain social stability. While the Civilised live an ambiguous life in between the organic and the artificial, John the Savage, the son of Civilised parents but born outside the city in which viviparous savages live, is seen as a deviant in the World State. As he is innocent about the urban world and still believes in old human tradition of reproduction and love affair, life in the state is insupportable as he thinks everyone is heartless and shallow from the way they treat him like an animal or object. John's dream for the human past is rejected and ruined in the end when the man-made world is so unbearable that he chooses death as a way out. The characters living in and out the realm of human and non-human can be an example of the posthuman condition where individuality, autonomy and rationality are undermined in the highly technological milieu. The man-made body in *Brave New World* becomes an indeterminate identity of the Civilised and the outcasts which destabilise the natural-unnatural dualism and the hegemony of conventional view about humanity. In order to survive this unaccustomed or "brave new" world of fast-paced progress, the anthropocentric past is left behind only to make way for the new humans to survive in an artificial world.

From the electric body in *The Coming Race* to the "humanimal" in *The Time Machine* and the man-made body in *Brave New World*, it can be seen that the non-human deviants with anomalous bodies do not emerge to sabotage humanity but to give a glimpse of an impending end of the anthropocentric epoch. While Bulwer-Lytton's imagination of civilised, cyborg-like creatures with hyper-technologised

body distorts the history of human hegemony and disrupts the organic-inorganic dualism, Wells recreates modern chimeras in a human-animal form to map the future of humanity as an assemblage with animal and dismiss the human exceptionalism. *Brave New World* offers a fresh start for the posthuman race by combining industrial production with bioengineering to reincarnate the artificial body of humans. Instead of a clear-cut thematic transition from degeneration to posthumanism, the representation of the posthuman characters can be found in late nineteenth-century British science fiction and continue to gain its clearer depiction in the early twentieth century. Despite different visions of the human race in the future, the three selected science-fiction novels seriously engage in evolutionary speculation which was then a far-fetched fantasy but now a realistic hypothesis in the twenty-first century where human beings and human concept become debunked and redefined in the terrain of critical posthumanism. In the latter half of the twentieth century and the twenty-first century, representations of non-human characters in science fiction, especially in films, have been reimagined as different posthuman variants – from horrifying extra-terrestrial aliens to superhuman mutants – that not only take the audience into the fantastic world of otherness but also reflect the progress in real-life technology, fiction and cinematic production. *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), for example, was a monumental science fiction film directed by Stanley Kubrick and co-written by a famous British science-fiction author, Arthur C. Clark, with the portrayal of human life in space and alien technology. Riley Scott's *Prometheus* (2012) is a science fiction horror film where a group of humans take a space flight in search for extra-terrestrial living beings believed to be the creator of mankind and encounter with bioengineered alien entities that morph and destroy the human body. The film features a cast of non-

human characters – androids, extra-terrestrial humanoids, parasitic alien creatures born from human host bodies – that can embody the posthuman beings of the twenty-first century. In the field of social science, the future of the human species can be vividly and seriously pictured due to the studies of science and human history. As what Brian Aldiss mentions in the Foreword to Dougal Dixon's anthropological book *Man after Man* (1990), many alternative representations of human beings in the future owe a lot to "the findings of the nineteenth century" where evolutionary insights and studies of dinosauric fossils or prehistoric creatures were beneficial for futurology (9-10). In *Man after Man*, humans are envisioned to morph into animal-like creatures, such as fish-like humanoids and parasitic slugs, or possess a cyborg body in a thousand to a million years later. For Dixon, the world might be devoid of living species and eventually collapse in order for rebirth (123). As the three novels suggest, biological evolution leads to the bodily and conceptual transformation of humans instead of turning them into atavistic beings. Despite the loss of former meaning and form of humans, there is hope for mutated beings who embrace changes to prolong their existence. For posthuman thinkers, to deal with the crisis of human extinction is not to fear and destroy the non-human others, or cling onto optimism that humans never fall from grace but, perhaps, to co-evolve, cooperate and interconnect with them. According to Dixon, even if humans we all know too well disappear in the future, "it will be possible for [their] descendants to travel upwards" and "live in conditions that are totally alien to [them], if they can change enough" (123).

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