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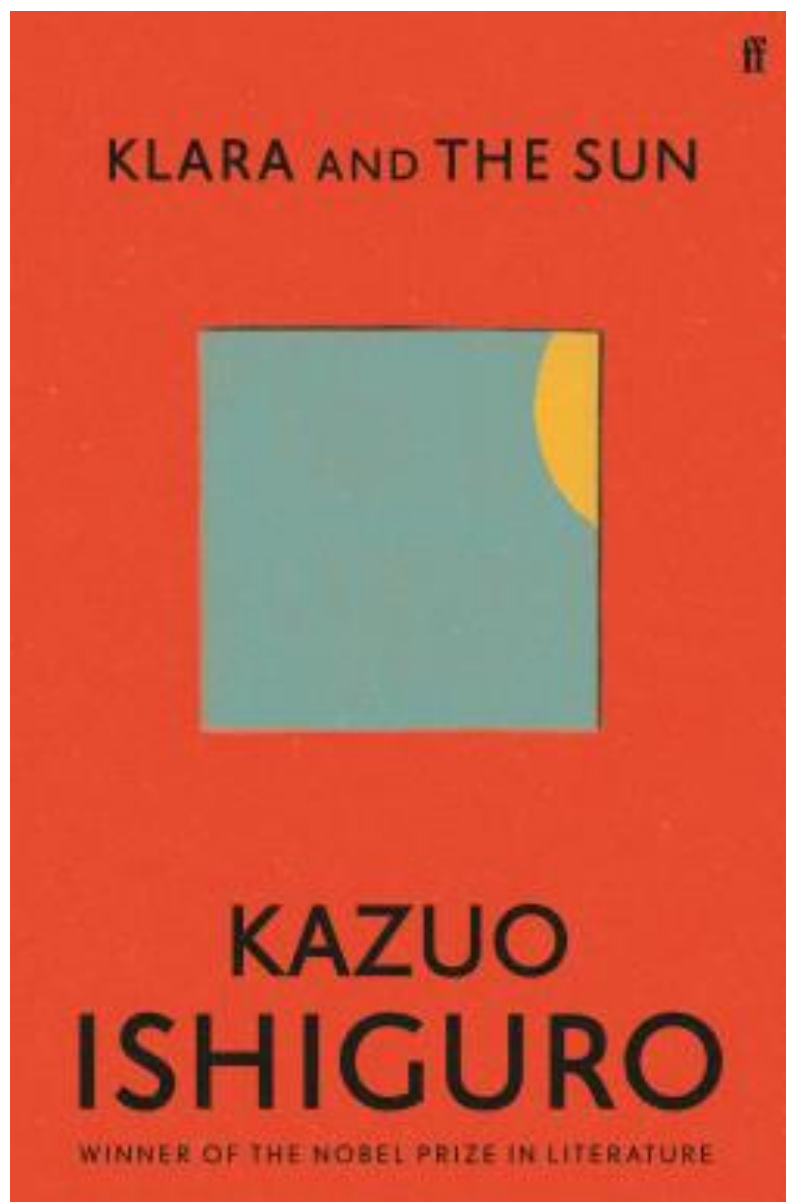
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The Colonization of AI

An Ecocritical Analysis of Kazuo
Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*



Candidate nr. 7000

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Introduction

Ecocriticism is originally about how humans have exploited the planet we live on and are in the process of destroying it. It is also about how we (traditionally Western society) have exploited marginalized people for their labour and resources. It is about colonization. The world supposedly put an end to colonization after the second world war, but colonization as defined as the exploitation of the “external other” still lives on, both in society and literature.¹

Humanity has always tried to control that which they view as lesser. Whether that is nature, animals or other humans. Or in this case, androids. Some might argue that androids are a creation of humans and that of course we should control them, and a lot of people would probably agree with that, especially at the stage of development androids are at today. But now imagine a future where AI has been made sophisticated enough that the androids have feelings and desires of their own. For what are feelings, but a bunch of electrical currents produced by chemicals in our brains? Should these emotional androids still be subjugated to human control? And what happens when humanity starts thinking that the androids might be getting too smart? Possibly even smarter than humans? These are some of the questions 2017 Nobel Prize in Literature winner Kazuo Ishiguro explores in his 2021 book *Klara and the Sun*, which follows the existence of the Artificial Friend (or, AF) Klara from her start in the Store, to the end of her “life” at the (junk)Yard.

Ishiguro was born in Nagasaki, Japan in 1954. His mother was one of the survivors of the bomb during World War II. They moved to England when he was 5, where he later studied Philosophy, literature and creative writing. Much of his early work is inspired by the second world war, but in the last decade, he has to a much greater degree gravitated toward speculative fiction.²

In the past few decades, speculative fiction and science fiction have taken a turn from the idea of a utopian future, where all the world’s problems have been solved and people live in harmony with each other and the earth. These days speculative fiction and sci-fi more often depict a dystopian future, where humanity has bled the earth dry of its resources and has to live with the consequences. Though the idea of humans and progress destroying the earth is by no means new, neither in literature nor in the human consciousness, it is only in later years

¹ Andrew Bennet & Nicholas Royle, *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory, Fifth Edition* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 164.

² Julia Reidhead and Marian Johnson, et. al. ed. *The Norton Anthology, English Literature, The Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries, Tenth Edition*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2018) 1192.

that this has become a *mainstream* topic in literature. From Young Adult fiction to canonized literature, speculative fiction about future dystopia has spread like wildfire.

Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* is a work of speculative fiction that deviates from the norm of the post-apocalyptic or dystopian narrative. It instead takes a more restrained and subtle approach to such themes as progress and its cost. But more important for this essay, the novel focuses on the theme of colonization and raceism. The passages I have chosen to close read for this essay are relevant to this theme, and specifically to the idea that the main character, Klara, and her fellow Artificial Friends are the newest in the cycle of colonization. Society seeks to control and exploit that which they view as lesser, but when the AFs show signs of not being lesser, humanity turns to fear and destruction.

Colonization

Klara and her fellow Afs are the newest victims in the cycle of colonization of the “external other”³ that humans have gone through since time immemorial. One could argue that it is not colonization or exploitation due to the Afs having been programmed to be obedient, and not find their lack of freedom in any way problematic, but the same could be argued for earlier victims of colonization, who were conditioned into believing that that was their place in the world, and they should be grateful for the “superior” people’s benevolence and willingness to govern.

The below passage is from the beginning of the book when Klara and several other Afs are still in the Store. It showcases both the humanity of the Afs, and juxtaposes how they are being treated like objects, cattle, or slaves, with their willingness to be treated this way.

“That was one reason why we always thought so much about being in the window. Each of us had been promised our turn, and each of us longed for it to come. That was partly to do with what Manager called the 'special honor' of representing the store to the outside. Also, of course, whatever Manager said, we all knew we were more likely to be chosen while in the window. But the big thing, silently understood by us all, was the Sun and his nourishment. Rosa did once bring it up with me, in a whisper, a little while before our turn came around.

‘Klara, do you think once we’re in the window, we’ll receive so much goodness we’ll never get short again?’⁴

In the first sentence, the narrator uses the word “thought”. Klara, who is the first-person narrator of this story is an Artificial Friend, an AI. The use of “thought” humanizes her to the reader, making her seem more like a human than a thing or robot. This continues in the next sentence, where the narrator uses the word “longed”. Longing is a distinctly human characteristic, further humanizing this character to the reader. The second sentence also states

³ Bennet & Royle *An Introduction to Literature*, 164.

⁴ Kazuo Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun* (London: Faber & Faber Limited, 2021) 8.

that these Afs had been “promised” a turn in the window. One does not “promise” something to, for instance, a refrigerator, or the new Snapchat AI. A promise is something distinctly human, made between humans. The first two sentences work hard to establish the narrator’s humanity, despite the reader’s knowledge of her not being so.

The third sentence mentions “Manager”, who, predictably, is the manager of the store where Klara is being sold. The narrator regularly, throughout the book, takes common nouns and turns them into proper nouns with a capital first letter, as a “title” for the person, place or item. She often also excludes the definitive article from this title. Every person in the book gets such a “title”, except the people the narrator feels closest to. This could be viewed from several different angles. It could be viewed as a reminder that the narrator is not human, it is a burr in the language flow, making the reader stop for a moment. It could also be interpreted as someone speaking English when it’s not their first language, especially when the definitive article is dropped. Though we know that Klara should not have such language problems, which would make it more believable that she is a symbol for people with those language problems, for instance, victims of the triangle trade. Building on that, the fact that “Manager” has the capital letter, turning it into a title, would make it much easier for the reader to replace “Manager” with, for instance, “Lord”, “Lady” or “Master”.

In the third sentence there is also the idea of being in the window as a “special honor”, so-called by Manager. Firstly, treating the idea of being placed on display as a “special honor” ensures that the Afs being sold keep viewing being treated like cattle as a good thing. It shifts the idea from something negative to something positive and seems to be like a “refresher” for the Afs, a reminder for them to keep “wanting” to be sold. This is confirmed in the next sentence as well. “we all knew we were more likely to be chosen while in the window”⁵

Windows are a recurring topic in the whole book. Klara spends a lot of time in different rooms throughout the novel looking out of windows. She has a strong curiosity and constantly wants to observe the outside, whether in the city or the country, but she is rarely allowed the freedom to go outside and experience what she observes. Another reason why windows are so important to the narrator and the novel is the Sun. Afs run on solar power, and Klara, and possibly the other Afs, has formed a religious bond to “the Sun and his nourishment.”⁶ The Sun keeps them “alive” so it would seem only natural to view it as a

⁵ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 8.

⁶ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 8.

deity. The fact that the Afs are not allowed to freely move into the window or outside while they're being sold in the Store seems very similar to how colonizers and slave owners would control food and water to control the colonized or slaves.

In the last sentence of the passage above Rosa, Klara's closest AF friend in the Store refers to solar power as "goodness", which could indicate that the Afs view the solar as more than just nourishment in a literal sense. "Goodness" would indicate that something is inherently "good", a positive force. This could make the Sun's nourishment similar to the Holy Spirit in Christianity, or Brahman in Hinduism. Not just a physical nourishment, but a spiritual one as well. The fact that the Afs are being denied free access to this nourishment would mean that they are denied freedom of religion, which is often used as a control tactic during colonization.

The narrator, Klara, and her fellow AFs show remarkable humanity from the start of the novel, even before they are sold and enter the real world, where their AI will be able to learn and adapt to humanity. Yet they are still treated like things or cattle. They are denied basic human rights, like the freedom to move around as they please, and access to nourishment and religion by their current owner, Manager. This will continue throughout the novel, as Klara is controlled and exploited, while only being treated like a person when it suits the humans she interacts with.

Control and Consumerism

As the next passage chosen for this essay is rather long it has instead been added as an appendix to the text. For the full passage, please see Appendix 1.

This passage shows an interaction between Klara, Josie and several other kids who are at Josie's house for a "gathering". This gathering is specifically for "lifted" kids, kids who have had genetic modifications done to them as young children, possibly babies, to get enhanced abilities. It is not specified what kind of abilities have been enhanced, but they seem to have to do with intelligence, and the choice is made by their parents so that the kids can have better prospects in life. It seems that at the time of this novel, almost no school or tutor will take on an "un-lifted" kid, making these "lifted" kids the new elites in society. This is reflected in their behaviour and treatment of Klara in the chosen passage, where Klara is controlled by Josie's expectations, and as she refuses to comply with the other kids' commands, she is threatened with bodily violence in the guise of the kids 'just joking around' while trying to exploit her presumed inability to disobey. They then move on to discussing the newest model of AF, the B3s, and how they are better than Klara's model.

In the first paragraph of the chosen passage the boy Danny, who is the main person Klara interacts with in this passage, is described as sitting with his leg extended over the sofa cushions and shouting to Josie from across the room. This shows him as confident and in command of the room. He tells Josie to tell Klara to come over to him.⁷ He does not ask Josie for permission to interact with her property, but it still establishes Klara as property, something that he has to talk to the owner to be able to interact with, instead of talking to Klara directly.

In the next paragraph, Josie tells Klara to “Go on”, and “Go say hello to those boys.” This seems very similar to how a parent might tell a shy or insubordinate child to go greet an unknown or estranged family member, infantilizing Klara, and establishing Josie’s superiority and control over Klara. The infantilization of both women and people of colour was a normal tactic of suppression, much like a twenty-year-old white man might call a sixty-year-old black man “boy” to establish dominance and superiority.

This continues in the next two sentences, where Klara realises that Josie has never used that tone of voice with her before, but it is similar to how Josie would sometimes talk to Melania Housekeeper,⁸ a woman who is not from an English-speaking country. This shows that Josie has a history of treating those she views as “lesser” as less intelligent, infantilizing them. It is also noteworthy that this is the first time Josie speaks to Klara this way when this is the first time Klara is interacting with other “lifted” kids, giving the impression that Josie mainly does this to live up to societal expectations of how she should treat her AF.

In the next couple of sentences, Danny asks “What’s wrong with her” and if she “doesn’t take commands”⁹ still not addressing Klara directly, but instead talking to her “owner”. The use of the word “command” is significant. A command is something one gives to troops or a dog. It is an imperative that the speaker believes the listener has no choice but to obey. The fact that Danny uses the word “command” shows that he believes Klara has no agency of her own, further dehumanizing her. He is expecting to be able to control her, and when that does not immediately occur, he turns physical.

In the next paragraph, Klara starts moving towards Danny after a “stern look”¹⁰ from Josie. The “stern look” enforces the infantilization of Klara. It is, again, the way a displeased parent would treat a disobedient child. Danny gets up from the couch and “moves swiftly

⁷ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 85.

⁸ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

⁹ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

¹⁰ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

through the other guests”¹¹, once more robbing Klara of her agency to make the choice to approach him herself. Danny is in this paragraph described as “taller than anyone else in the room”¹². His height symbolizes his authority in the group and makes him physically imposing. When he reaches Klara, he grabs her by both elbows, so she can “no longer move freely”¹³. This can symbolize how humanity will use physical force against those “lesser” than them if they are not obeyed. He physically restrains her and removes her freedom, as a punishment for disobedience.

It is only after he has physically restrained her that he addresses her directly, saying: “So. Settling in?”¹⁴. There is no description of his tone of voice or facial expression as he says this, but it is interesting that there is a period after “So” instead of a comma. The forced pause in the word flow gives the otherwise pleasant-seeming question a menacing undertone. The author once stated that “The big emotions loom powerfully in understatement”¹⁵, something that very much holds true here.

This is also the only point during Klara’s interaction with the “lifted” kids that she speaks, answering the question with “Yes. Thank you.”¹⁶ Again, there is no description of the tone of voice or facial expression, as well as no comment from the narrator about Klara’s feelings at the moment, leaving it up to the reader to interpret the exchange. The short response, and the period, or pause, after the “Yes”, does give the impression that Klara feels forced to answer as a form of self-preservation. This is noteworthy as it can be seen as a metaphor for how oppressed people often interact cordially with their oppressors, not out of any goodwill towards them, but as self-preservation.

One of the other boys shouts “Hey! She speaks! Rejoice!” to which Danny replies “Shut up, Scrub,”¹⁷. No one else comments on his use of the derogatory term “scrub” which has been slang for an insignificant person since the 1500s, and has also been used as a “slur to denigrate prostitutes and even Black people for a time”¹⁸ This shows both that it is normal for Danny to make such comments, and that degradation is not only limited to those who are not human in this book, it still normal to degrade other humans viewed as lesser as well. The

¹¹ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

¹² Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

¹³ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

¹⁴ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

¹⁵ Reidhead and Johnson, et. al. ed. *The Norton Anthology*, 1192.

¹⁶ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

¹⁷ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

¹⁸ <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/scrub#:~:text=Scrub%20has%20been%20slang%20for,from%20a%20form%20of%20shrub>.

fact that “Scrub” has a capital letter could signify that this is a “normal” nickname for this boy, or it could be seen as another “title”, adding layers of insult.

Scrub then tells Danny to “throw her over here”¹⁹. It becomes clear that this is not only meant as an idiom for “let me see that” he means “physically throw her” as he wants to “test her coordination”²⁰ It is shown throughout the book that Klara can easily manoeuvre through normal areas, like a house or a street, but she struggles with difficult terrain, like when she tries to make her way to Mr McBain’s Barn.²¹ Klara would experience bodily harm if they started “throwing her around” but she still chooses to resist the kids’ commands throughout this scene, and does not speak to them again. It would seem to symbolise the oppressed silent resistance toward the oppressors, even at the risk of their health.

It is interesting that the kids continuously use she/her pronouns for Klara in the scene, even though they seem to treat her more like a thing or novelty than a human. The pronouns create a juxtaposition to the way they treat her, and though the pronouns alone would have seemed humanizing, coupled with the treatment they become dehumanizing as if she were a pet animal. This is similar to the treatment of slaves. Even good owners would only treat their slaves as human when it suited them, and at best would treat them like pets, or cattle, at worst like objects to be used and thrown away.

This idea of consumerism of human beings continues through the rest of the passage, and further in the scene, as the children start discussing the B3 models of AFs, wondering why Josie didn’t get one of those, and discussing their superiority to Klara’s model. Several of the kids mention their “new B3”²² making it seem like even though AFs are meant to be a companion throughout the kid’s childhood and teenage years, they are thrown away and replaced as soon as a newer model enters the market. This is of course similar to how many people today treat, for instance, a phone, but also, it could be seen as how plantations would work slaves until they dropped, and then go to market and get a new one.

Throughout this passage, Klara is controlled and dehumanized by the “lifted” kids at the gathering, and when she refuses to comply with their commands she is restrained and threatened with physical violence under the pretence of “playing around”. As she continues to refuse to comply with their commands the kids start talking about how Klara is inferior to the newer B3 models. They wonder why Josie didn’t get one of the newer models, as well as

¹⁹ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

²⁰ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 86.

²¹ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 176.

²² Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 87-88.

imply that Josie should switch Klara out with a B3. As Klara remains silent one of the kids asks Josie directly why she didn't get a B3, leading to Josie responding with "Now I'm starting to think I should have."²³, further dehumanizing Klara by speaking about her like she's not in the room.

Fear and Destruction

There are several interesting passages in the novel regarding humanity's fear of AI becoming too intelligent. One of the most interesting and telling happens near the end of the book, where Mr Capaldi, a man who originally was helping Josie's parents to create an AF-based replica of Josie in case she died, says:

'You'll remember, Klara, how much I've always been fascinated by AF's. I've always regarded you as our friends, A vital source of education and enlightenment. But as you know, there are people out there who worry about you, People who are scared and resentful.'

(...)

'The fact is, there's growing and widespread concern about AFs right now. People saying how you've become too clever. They're afraid because they can't follow what's going on inside any more. They can see what you do. They accept that your decisions, your recommendations, are sound and dependable, almost always correct. But they don't like not knowing how you arrive at them. That's where it comes from, this backlash, this prejudice.'²⁴

The white Western society originally had the idea that people of colour were intellectually inferior to white people, and therefore it was both natural and for their own good to be subjugated to white people. As people of colour worked and fought to prove them wrong it created fear in white people, both of the ideas of losing their power and a fear of the idea that if people of colour weren't, in fact, inferior, then white people could no longer justify their treatment of people of colour, to neither themselves, of the world at large. Similarly, as AI and AFs start to change from how people expect them to be, humans start to fear them, leading to the above-mentioned backlash and prejudice.

Prejudice is the most interesting word in the entire above passage. One of the definitions of prejudice from dictionary.com is "unreasonable feelings, opinions, or attitudes, especially of a hostile nature, regarding an ethnic, racial, social, or religious group." The use of "prejudice" once more humanizes the AFs to the reader, while also drawing distinct lines to the racism, homophobia, transphobia, antisemitism and anti-Islam ideas of both history and today. This shows that AFs are a marginalized and oppressed people, similar to the victims of colonization.

As mentioned in the above chapter, humanity is already applying the idea of consumerism to the AFs. This is also shown at the end of the book, when Klara is sitting in

²³ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 88.

²⁴ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 328.

the Yard, aka the junkyard, remembering and narrating the story of the novel. As she sits there, Manager shows up, and they talk together about Klara's life. Manager specifically asks Klara whether she had stayed with the same family that first bought her for the entire time until she ended up at the Yard. When Klara confirms that she had stayed with the family the entire time, until Josie went off to college, Manager says "So it was successful. A successful home."²⁵ Though, as per usual, there is no description of the tone of voice or facial expression, it seems that Manager is relieved, and it is implied that there weren't many such "successful homes".

Klara then asks Manager if she still looks after AFs, to which Manager replies "No. Oh, no. That finished some time ago."²⁶ The tone of the answer, coupled with Mr. Capaldi's earlier comments about people's fears of AFs makes it seem like it's not just her job that was "finished some time ago," but the entire AF industry. Combine also with the above-mentioned idea of a "successful home" makes the whole AF industry seem more like a failed social experiment, than just a capitalist venture.

Klara finally asks after her first AF friend, Rosa, and Manager tells her that she found Rosa at the Yard about two years earlier, and that "Things didn't go as well for Rosa" as they did for Klara.²⁷ Since Klara and Rosa were the same models of AF, they should have had their "slow fade"²⁸ at about the same time, so the fact that Rosa ended up at the Yard a full two years earlier could indicate that she was either replaced with a newer model, or she was just thrown away, when the child either got tired, or the parents became afraid of the AI advancements. It would seem that Rosa maybe ended up in a more *prejudiced* family than Klara.

As humanity starts to realize that AFs are not in fact inferior to them they begin to fear them, treating them the same way colonisers and racists have treated people of colour in the past. This leads to the AFs' removal from the market, and many end up in the junkyard, where they have to spend their final days alone, or in the company of other abandoned AFs. And yet the world continues to progress.

²⁵ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 336.

²⁶ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 336.

²⁷ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 337.

²⁸ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 329.

Progress

The final passage chosen for this essay is the conclusion of the book. This passage describes Manager leaving Klara behind at the Yard, after their final conversation about Klara's life comes to a close:

She reached down to the metal crate she'd been sitting on, and dragged it back to its original position, making the same unpleasant noise. She then walked away down the long passage between the rows, and it was noticeable how she walked differently to the way she had in the store. With each second step, she would lean to her left in a way that made me worry her long coat on that side might touch the dirty ground. When she was mid-distance, she stopped and turned, and I thought she might look back one last time at me. But she was gazing at the far distance, in the direction of the construction crane on the horizon. Then she continued to walk away.²⁹

It is interesting how the first human Klara interacts with in the novel is also the last, bringing her life both to a close and a full circle. As Manager leaves, she replaces the metal crate she has been sitting on, and it makes an "unpleasant sound". Metal is historically one of the big advances in human technology, and the unpleasant sound can be a symbol of how not all progress and advancement are pleasant.

As Manager is walking away she is described by Klara as walking differently from how she had in the store. She keeps leaning to the left as she walks, which could indicate that she has some pain in her leg or back. This could be to show how time has passed. Klara herself is incapable of growing old, though she seems to be capable of dying. It has probably been ten years or similar since Klara was new, and it seems like the years have not been kind to Manager after she lost her job selling AFs. This too can be seen as a metaphor for how progress is not always kind to those experiencing it.

But even more interesting than that is the image of the construction crane on the horizon. Construction symbolizes progress and development. Manager was an integral part of the possibly failed social experiment on AFs, and the novel ends with her, a human, turning her back on this symbol of progress. The crane and Managers' treatment of it can also be seen as a metaphor for how not all progress is good.

Klara's life ends at the Yard, where she spends her days watching the Sun's path through the sky, orienting her memories and narrating them for us, the readers. Her final days are a moment of peace and tranquility in a world constantly pushed toward progress and innovation. Never stopping, never standing still. And as Manager leaves her there, Manager becomes a symbol of the idea that maybe humanity should try to do like Klara, turn away from progress, and take a moment to try and be at peace.

²⁹ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 339-340.

Conclusion

Ishiguro's work of speculative fiction does not follow the same pattern as many other stories about the conflict between humans and AI. There is no real conflict described; no war that ends in a new beginning. Instead, he uses these big conflicts as a backdrop to the conflicts and interactions between individual characters.

Klara is continuously, in her interactions with humans, either infantilized, dehumanized or objectified. She and her fellow AFs are treated the same way that marginalize people and people of colour have been treated historically and are still treated today. While she is in the store she is treated with the same tactics used to control colonized people. She and her fellow AFs are denied freedom of movement, freedom of religion, and free access to nourishment.

Later, during her first interaction with a group of this book's social elite, she is treated as a plaything, a toy that is easily used and thrown away, even though she continuously, throughout the novel shows remarkable humanity and empathy.

As the AFs continue to show humanity and intelligence humanity starts to fear them. which leads to humans discontinuing the production of AFs, effectively committing genocide against this new "race". This leaves Klara to spend her final days at a junkyard, while progress continues in the distance.

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Images

Front Page: bit.ly/427WxD5

Appendix 1

'Hey, Josie!' The boy called Danny - the one on the sofa with his leg extended over the cushions-was calling from the rear of the room. 'Hey, Josie, that your new AF? Tell her to come over here.'

'Go on, Klara,' Josie said. 'Go say hello to those boys.'

I didn't move at once, partly because I'd been surprised by Josie's voice. It was like the one she sometimes used when talking to Melania Housekeeper, but not like any voice she had used before to me.

'What's up with her?' Danny got up off the sofa. 'Doesn't she take commands?'

Josie was giving me a stern look, so I began to make my way towards the boys on the sofa. But Danny, who was taller than anyone else in the room, came swiftly through the other guests and, before I was even halfway to the sofa, grasped me by both elbows, so I could no longer move freely. He looked up and down, then said:

'So. Settling in?'

'Yes. Thank you.'

One of the other boys from the sofa at the rear shouted: 'Hey! She speaks! Rejoice!'

'Shut up, Scrub,' Danny shouted back.

(...)

'Hey, Danny,' Scrub shouted again. 'Throw her over here.'

'You want to see her,' Danny said, 'get up off that sofa and come over here.'

'Just throw her over. Let's test her coordination.'

'She ain't your AF, Scrub.' Danny's hands were still tight around my elbows. 'You need to ask Josie about something like that.'

(...)

'Hey, Josie,' Scrub called. 'It's okay, right? My B3, you can swing her right through the air, lands on her feet every time. Come on, Danny. Throw her over onto the sofa. She won't get damaged.'

(...)

'My B3,' Scrub continued, 'she'll somersault and land clean on her feet. Back straight, perfect. So let's see what this one can do.'

'You're not a B3, right?' Danny asked. I didn't reply, but Josie behind me said: 'No, but she's the best.'

'Yeah? So can she do what Scrub says?'

'I have a B3 now,' a girl's voice said. 'You'll see him next meeting.'

Then another voice asked: 'Why didn't you get a B3, Josie?' ³⁰

³⁰ Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, 85-87.