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TJHSS

Designed by Abeer Azmy& Omnia Raafat

Transcultural Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences (TJHSS) is a journal committed to disseminate a new range of interdisciplinary and transcultural topics in Humanities and social sciences. It is an open access, peer reviewed and refereed journal, published by Badr University in Cairo, BUC, to provide original and updated knowledge platform of international scholars interested in multi-inter disciplinary researches in all languages and from the widest range of world cultures. It's an online academic journal that offers print on demand services.

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خطاب رئيس مجلس الأمناء

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رئيس تحرير

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تحية طيبة وبعد ،،،

تتقدم إليكم جامعة بدر بالقاهرة بالشكر على ما تبذلونه من جهد مادي ومعنوي لإصدار المجلة، فتميزكم المشهود خير قدوة، ممتنين لعملكم الدؤوب وتفوقكم الباهر، ونتمنى لكم المزيد من النجاحات المستقبلية.

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رئيس مجلس الأمناء

د/ حسن القلا

Editorial:

Embracing Diversity and Inclusion in the Age of Digital Humanity

The Third International Conference hosted by the School of Linguistics and Translation at Badr University in Cairo, titled "Diversity and Inclusion in the Age of Digital Humanity", marked a significant milestone in the ongoing dialogue about the intersection of technology, language, and humanistic values. Held on October 26–27, 2024, the conference brought together scholars, researchers, and activists from around the world to explore how digital advancements can foster inclusivity while addressing the challenges posed by rapid technological evolution.

The Digital Transformation of Humanities

One of the central themes of the conference was the imperative for digital transformation in humanities disciplines. Keynote speaker Professor Ruslan Mitkov's presentation, "Language and Translation Technologies in the Artificial Intelligence Era", underscored the transformative potential of Natural Language Processing (NLP) and AI in translation and linguistics. Mitkov highlighted the evolution from rule-based systems to generative AI, emphasizing both the capabilities and limitations of Large Language Models (LLMs). His insights reinforced the idea that while AI can enhance efficiency, human expertise remains indispensable in navigating linguistic nuances, ambiguity, and cultural context.

The conference also addressed the need for integrating computational linguistics into academic curricula. Recommendations included developing undergraduate and postgraduate programs in digital humanities, equipping students with skills for emerging roles like AI translators and prompt engineers, and promoting bias-free AI technologies. These measures are critical to preparing future generations for a labor market increasingly shaped by AI.

Diversity and Inclusion in Digital Spaces

Another focal point was the role of digital platforms in promoting diversity and inclusion. Discussions highlighted the importance of creating safe digital environments for marginalized groups and minorities, as well as the ethical responsibilities of AI developers to mitigate biases in data and algorithms. Professor Sameh El Ansary's presentation on corpus-based language teaching exemplified how empirical approaches, such as using real-life language data, can bridge gaps in traditional pedagogy and foster more inclusive learning experiences.

The participation of researchers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds—with 57 papers presented in multiple languages, most of them published in this issue—further demonstrated the conference's commitment to inclusivity. The inclusion of voices like Italian poet Domenico Pisana (we publish in this issue his valuable lecture), and scholars specializing in underrepresented languages underscored the value of cultural and linguistic diversity in academic discourse.

Charting a Path Forward:

The conference concluded with a call for continuous monitoring of AI developments, ethical AI practices, and interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure technology's role as a tool for empowerment. Professor Zain A. Hady's article, "The Internet from the Age of Innocence to the Age of Decadence: A Study in the Digital Postcolonialism," furthered the discussion on the societal impacts of digital evolution. The imperative to safeguard humanistic values while embracing AI's potential was underscored.

The insights from this conference serve as a crucial reminder that the digital age must be guided by principles of diversity, inclusion, and human oversight. By aligning technological advancements with equity, we can build a future that authentically reflects the richness of our global community. The success of this conference reaffirms academia's vital role in shaping inclusive digital landscapes, urging us to carry forward its lessons and ensure technological progress aligns with understanding, respect, and inclusion.

The Editorial Board

A Techno-Dystopian Study of Alan Ayckbourn's *Henceforward… (1987)*

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Abstract: This paper provides an in-depth examination of Alan Ayckbourn's play *Henceforward…* (1987) through the techno-dystopian and posthumanist lenses. The scrutiny highlights Ayckbourn's prediction of a future where technology not only assists but deeply structures human relationships. The play centers around Jerome, a musician, who depends on NAN 300F, a machine-human-like designed to treat children as pets. He uses NAN 300F to convince his ex-wife, Corinna that he is a good father for their thirteen-year-old daughter, Geain so that Corinna gives him the custody of their daughter. He uses the machine to make it act like his fiancée and calls it Zoe. Throughout the play, Jerome treats Nan 300F as a real human being. The machine could ensure Geain could play and stay with it; however, the mother could not. Ultimately, Corinna finds that NAN 300 F is a machine and leaves with her daughter while Jerome stays with it. Through a detailed thematic and textual analysis, this paper explores Ayckbourn's portrayal of this techno-dystopian future. It illuminates how *Henceforward…* contributes to a deeper understanding of the play's commentary on technology and human relationships.

Keywords: Alan Ayckbourn, *Henceforward…*(1987), techno-dystopian, technology, posthumanism, types of techno-dystopia.

Introduction:

The overuse of technology and artificial intelligence can be accepted only on one condition which is to be useful. However, the world is being pulled up toward the replacement of human beings with machines and this is known as posthumanism. Alan Ayckbourn expresses his awareness of the danger of this replacement in many of his plays like *Henceforward…* (1987), *Communicating Doors* (1994), and *Whenever* (2000). In *Henceforward…,* Ayckbourn reflects dystopia of the invasion of technology and how it affects badly human beings' lives. *Henceforward…* invokes the world of a man who has ignored his relations and buried himself in technology to increase his ability to create a new composition. He damages even the machine that ends his relationship with his wife and daughter.

Posthumanism:

Posthumanism is a philosophical notion of how transformation occurs within the world. Keeling and Lehman define it as "a philosophical perspective of how change is enacted in the world." Although a humanist viewpoint often "assumes the human is autonomous, conscious, intentional, and exceptional in acts of change, a posthumanist

perspective assumes agency is distributed through dynamic forces of which the human participates but does not completely intend or control." In other words, people are, from a humanist viewpoint, independent and self-aware beings, and they dynamically drive changes in the world. Posthumanism contrasts this idea by suggesting that human agency, our capacity to perform, is beyond human beings' ability. This is because human beings are affected by a network of forces, systems, and technologies.

In "Prometheus as Performer: Toward a Posthumanist Culture (1977)" Ihab Hassan coined the word posthumanism. Hassan depicts the mythological character of Prometheus to indicate the beginning of posthumanism. He states that "five hundred years of humanism may be coming to an end, as humanism transforms itself into something that we must helplessly call posthumanism." (843) The similarities between Prometheus and posthumanism lie in the contradictions since Prometheus is a thief and a rescuer. He is both a devil and an angel. Prometheus had helped his father, Zeus, to win a war by cunning. When Zeus became a hard-hearted persecutor, he decided to devastate the entire human race. That led Prometheus to save the human beings from the tyranny of his father. He stole fire and bestowed human beings knowledge. He had been punished and bound by Zeus to a rock. Even more, Zeus asked a vulture to eat his son's liver. Prometheus in due course saved by Hercules. According to Hassan, the link between posthumanism and Prometheus "concerns Imagination and Science, Myth and Technology, Earth and Sky, two realms tending to one." (838)

Prometheus mirrors the crossing limitations concerning the human and the divine and helps human beings overcome their bounds through arts and technology. Hassan expounds that in contemporary culture many detachments are dissolving. Technology is merged into everything. Hassan asks: "Will artificial intelligences supersede the human brain, rectify it, or simply extend it? We do not know. But this we do know: artificial intelligences, from the humblest calculator to the most transcendent computer, help to transform the image of man, the concept of the human." (846) The boundaries between human and non-human, are blurring as well, and varying unceasingly. Hassan continues:

> Prometheus, prophet, Titan transgressor and trickster, giver of fire, Prometheus is our performer. He performs Space and Time; he performs Desire. He suffers. We are ourselves that performance; we perform and are performed every moment. We are the pain or play of the human, which will not remain human. We are both Earth and Sky, Water and Fire. We are the changing form of Desire. Everything changes, and nothing, not even Death, can tire. (850)

Hassan sees Prometheus as an example of posthumanism wherein the relationships between humans and non-humans are dissolving. However, to be in a posthumanist era, people should pass by a transitional phase. That is a transhumanist era.

Transhumanism:

In his book *Last Flesh: Life in the Transhuman Era* (1998), Christopher Dewdney highlights that "[w]e are about to enter the transition period between the human and the posthuman eras- the transhuman age." (2) Transhumanism is a movement that advocates the indulgence of the use of technology to enhance human beings' lives. Nick Bostrom stresses transhuman being is "a being that has at least one posthuman capacity. By a posthuman capacity, I mean a general central capacity greatly exceeding the maximum attainable by any current human being without recourse to new technological means." (219) Rejecting the development of this transformation, Gregory Stock proclaims that human beings will not be able to take hold of their evolutionary future. He states that this transformation "will write a new page in the history of life, allowing us to seize control of our evolutionary future." (2) Dewdney states the aim of Transhumanism is to exceed "our current biological limitations, be it our life span or the capabilities of our brain."(2) So transhumanism is simply the conviction of overcoming human boundaries via technology and science. In the *Transhumanist Manifesto* (2006), Simon Young declares that "[h]umanity will take evolution out of the hands of butterfingered nature into its own transhuman hands." (38) This evolution is represented by the methodological character Prometheus. His drive for knowledge and progress is the aim of human beings to improve their abilities. He calls for deep indulgence in technology and science. He also thinks that people who try to cease transhumanism are cowards.

Techno-dystopia:

Apart from transhumanism, techno-dystopia scorns the advancement of science and technology. Dystopia is an antonym to the word utopia, a perfect imagined place where there is no evil at all, dystopia dates to the 19th century. Pataki elucidates that "recognized as the negative counterpart of the utopia, that is, a perfectly organized, imagined society or place, dystopia is generally described as a bad place, or even more simply, a utopia gone wrong" (426). According to Claeys, the word dystopia is also derived from Greek "dus and topos, meaning a diseased, bad, faulty, or unfavorable place" (4). Veira sees that utopia and dystopia are two sides of the same coin. Although they are distinct words, they come together. Veira explains:

> Literary dystopia utilizes the narrative devices of literary utopia, incorporating into its logic the principles of euchronia (i.e., imagining what the same place, the place where the utopist lives, will be like in another time, the future), but predicts that things will turn out badly; it is thus essentially pessimistic in its presentation of projective images (17).

Dystopia, however, it is the antonym of the word utopia, it comes along with it to highlight the opposite of the meaning of the word utopia. Therefore, dystopia is a warning of a problem or a catastrophe that may lead to the end of the world.

Literary dystopia is divided into three categories: political, environmental, and technological dystopia. Political dystopia happens by the dominance of an ideology or political party. Environmental dystopia concentrates on ecological elements. The

technological one happens mainly because of the indulgence of the use of technology and science. Mahida mentions some of the dystopian themes and they are:

> mastery of nature—to the point that it becomes barren or turns against humankind; technological advances that enslave humans or regiment their lives; the mandatory division of people in society into castes or groups with specialized functions; and a collective loss of memory and history making mankind easier to manipulate psychologically and ultimately leading to dehumanization. (2)

All of them emphasize the destructive impact of technology on the individual and society. These themes refer to the dark side of technology.

Technological advancement has become noticeably clear in every device can be found in every home. However, the interest in this progression has turned out to be a dystopia. The reason for this fear is the over fast of this progression; everything happens and ends before recognizing it and its impact. Galieh Gunagama divides technological dystopia into three types. Firstly, the one that is based on technology and is not part of the human body. Gunagama describes "[i]n this type, the idea of technology is presented in the form of a sophisticated device that is outside the human body and requires a certain way to use it" (40). Examples of these devices are mobile phones, television and cameras. The second sort of technological dystopia is quite the opposite of the first type. It includes technology that is part of the human body. Gunagama explains "[t]his type of technology is portrayed as a sophisticated tool attached to the human body, which can be used in specific ways and can also work automatically". A tracker found inside human skin is as a microchip is an example of this type. The third one uses technology grounded on human awareness, duplicating human thoughts and feelings. It is "a sophisticated tool that can be connected directly with the mind and consciousness of humans to carry out real-time commands in the brain." This sort of technology can be found in *San Junipero*. The Brain Emulation technology, uploading consciousness, is used to keep the human mind and perception in digital form and store it perpetually on the Internet. (Gunagama 40-41)

Application of techno-dystopia in Alan Ayckbourn's *Henceforward…* (1987):

Henceforward… (1987) by Alan Ayckbourn is an example of the first type of technical dystopia wherein technology is represented in a machine outside the human body. Alan Ayckbourn is a prolific British novelist, director, and playwright. He is privileged to seven Evening Standard Award, for best comedy. He has also been awarded the Plays and Players Award, Honorary Doctor of Letters degree from the University of Leeds, Commander of the Order of the British Empire, Induction into the American Theater Hall of Fame, Laurence Olivier Special Award, and the Critics' Circle annual award for Distinguished Service to the Arts. In The Ayckbourn Blog, Simon Murgatroyd writes that Ayckbourn states his reason for writing plays that tackle the impact of technology as follows:

I'm always interested in the future, but I hope in the way that the best speculative fiction is; only in the way, in so far, it is in the present. What I mean to say, what current trends would present if they were left to run. So I combined three of my interests: the nature of the future, the nature of what makes humans unique and that continuing fascination with our attempt, for the first time in our lives, to create something which is potentially, if not emotionally, but certainly intellectually and logically superior to us.

Ayckbourn writes many plays about family relationships. Among them, *The Norman Conquests* trilogy (1973), *Absurd Person Singular* (1975), *Bedroom Farce* (1975), and *Just Between Ourselves* (1976) are some examples. Some of his plays present the difference between human beings and machines like *Henceforward…* (1987). Others present the capacity of technology in the future as in *Communicating Doors* (1994) and *Whenever* (2000).

In a biography written by Paul Allen, *Alan Ayckbourn: Grinning at the Edge* (2001), Ayckbourn states that *Henceforward…* is a reaction to the concern about overpopulation with a cheerfully open-minded humanity (228). The play embodied the future "as a place where both the technology and the people fail to function in the way they were intended." That is, technology is intended to help people in their lives, not to substitute them and play their roles. *Henceforward…* is a comedy and a dystopia at the same time. It is a dark comedy wherein the fact about the future invaded by technology is represented. Mel Gussow mentions that the play is a "cynical space-age comedy about a world that, according to the author's dire prophesy, is not very distant. This will be a time of overly automated man and out-of-control computers, each fighting for dominance." Ayckbourn's dystopia of the invasion of technology and science is mirrored throughout his play. Ayckbourn links posthumanism and techno-dystopia as he portrays a machine, Nan 300 F, acting as a post humanist wife and mother. It is a post humanist mother and wife in the sense that it replaces the real human being, Corinna, and acts on her roles in Jerome's life. Through depicting Nan 300F, Ayckbourn displays his dystopia from the invasion of technology in human beings' lives and relationships.

Jerome, the protagonist, is a composer who lives with a machine intended to be a nanny and it is called Nan. He describes Nan as a "[r]andom programming. If you don't tell her what to do, after a time she just selects something from her memory." (24) Ayckbourn, herein, depicts a posthuman android, called Nan, and shows one of its drawbacks. That is, it can't depend on itself to accomplish any task. In other words, Jerome should give it an order and tell it what to do. Jerome is separated from his wife, Corinna. He seems content with his divorce, as he replaces his wife with an android and continues his life with it. By substituting a human being with a machine, Ayckbourn comments on the advancement of technology and how people may misuse it since the creation of a machine that resembles human beings leads Jerome to abandon his wife, a real human being, and be satisfied with living with a machine. Jerome needs to bring his daughter, Geain, to live with him. To regain the custody of

his daughter, he needs to hire someone to act like a girlfriend. He hires Zoe, an idle actress, to pretend to be his new fiancée. She is an energetic and likable young woman who can easily win Jerome's daughter's heart.

Jerome is too obsessed with technology. In his conversation with Zoe about machines, Zoe's viewpoint about machines that no one should be kind to them leads Jerome to criticize her. The conversation goes as follows:

> ZOE: Oh, yes. But one mustn't empathize with machines, must one? They say that's fatal. Mind you, I do that all the time. I shout and scream at my washing machine. (*She laughs*.) There! That was quite a good laugh, wasn't it? Why did they go bankrupt? The firm that made them? I'd have thought they'd have sold like hot cakes. What happened?
>
> JEROME: Er. . . They were very expensive. And — (*he seems evasive*) — there were teething problems. (25)

Her argument always makes him evasive; he hates that his viewpoints are rejected. That is why he prefers living with machines rather than human beings. Another comment on the advancement of technology is that if Jerome couldn't find an alternative to his wife, that is a machine, he would accustom himself to live with human beings. Zoe is so kind, but she makes a mistake by criticizing Jerome's work. She even offers him a few tips on how he could enhance his music. Zoe's criticism of Jerome can be seen as a metaphor for Ayckbourn's dystopian viewpoint against the progression of technology. That is, Jerome couldn't bear to live with a real human being and even couldn't bear to be criticized by anyone. Their talk goes on to be a little hard:

> JEROME: I want to say — what I want to say is — well, I want to say — love. Really.
> ZOE: *(Mystified)* Love?
> JEROME: Yes.
> ZOE: I see. What sort of love?
> JEROME: Just —generally. Love. You know...
> ZOE: *(Puzzled)* No, I'm not sure I —
> JEROME: *(Tetchily)* Love. You've heard of love, I presume?
> ZOE: Yes, yes. Sorry, only you're not putting it awfully well.
> JEROME: *(Irritably)* Of course I'm not putting it awfully well. If I could put it awfully well, there wouldn't be a problem. I want to express the feeling of love in an abstract musical form. In such a way that anyone who hears it —anyone —no matter what language they speak —no matter what creed or colour —they will recognize it — and respond to it —and relate it to their own feelings of love that they have or they've experienced at some time —so they say —

> yes, my God, that's it! That's what it is! And maybe who knows, consequently, there might be a bit more of it.
> *(ZOE is spellbound by this.)* (39)

Jerome's talk is always aggressive. Every topic for him seems to be out of discussion. Zoe could bear it until she finally decided to leave and abandon him. She leaves only when she has discovered that he is recording everything between him and her. It is Ayckbourn's dystopia because of a man who is completely relying on technology in his life. That leads to the failure of communication between human beings. Also, Ayckbourn sheds light on the fact that Jerome loses his ability to compose music after his wife abandons him. Jerome resorts to record everything in his life only to get a piece of music that may be useful for him to continue his career. In other words, Ayckbourn comments on the overuse of technology that may not be helpful as in case of Jerome. That is, his reliance on a machine can't be enough. No one can replace human beings. However, machine can be helpful if it goes in line with human beings, helps them, and ease their lives.

The second act of *Henceforward…* portrays how Jerome is depending on the machine to be his partner. After Zoe's abandoned him, Jerome reprogramed Nan with Zoe's voice to act like his girlfriend before his ex-wife and Mervyn Bickerdyke, the clerk et the Child Wellbeing. Jerome always calls her darling as if she is a real human being. When Corinna comes, she suffers to enter Jerome's home because of a fault in the door. This fault existed for years even before she has been divorced and left it. Paul highlights that Jerome's department is an "immaculate and lovingly kept technical equipment, but a living area heaped with discarded clothes, food, [and] coffee mugs - 'the signs of someone who lives alone and has stopped caring much'" (230). That means Jerome's home is suitable for equipment more than human beings. Corinna is surprised when he tries to introduce his fiancée, Zoe, or rather, his machine. She says "I don't believe it. This is a joke — This is an obscene, grotesque joke. A fiancée . . . ? […] I don't believe any of this. Not one word." (Ayckbourn 60) Jerome, a man who is obsessed with technology and isolated himself from the others, tells Corinna that Zoe is living with him, a thing that Corinna could not believe it. It is because she has suffered from the way he adheres to the equipment and loses the communication with real people. He begins his lies while describing Zoe as a human being and says that she is following a severe diet.

The dependence upon technology is portrayed many times in this play. Not only Jerome who is obsessed with technical equipment but also Mervyn depends on many phones to work in his job. He speaks proudly:

> I've got a few wires about my person, yes, I have to admit it. *(He finds his answering machine and switches it on. The beeping stops. Producing items from various pockets and holding them up to show them)* Answering machine. Neat, eh? Home phone. Office phone. Oh, this is an interesting one. Location finder. If you're ever hopelessly lost. Switch it on and it can pinpoint your on- ground position to within twelve square

metres. French. Of course. Then you've got this —excuse me. *(He takes off his jacket to reveal that the whole of his neck and arms are encased in a criss-cross of wires.)* This is a personal alarm system. Latest type. West German. Naturally. Made by Heisser- Hausen Zeiplussen. They're a subsidiary of Glotz…. Any physical attack on my person and this thing screams the place down. (66)

The stage directions given by Ayckbourn and written in italics as *"Producing items from various pockets and holding them up to show them",* mirrors Mervyn's indulgence in the overuse of technology. Mervyn's overuse of technical devices will also make his life difficult. His dependence on those devices makes Corinna ridicule him. She makes fun of him by saying, "Must take you ages getting dressed in the morning." (67) When the phone rings, it becomes very difficult to recognize whose phone is ringing; is it one of Mervyn or Jerome's phones.

Mervyn states that he could not decide regarding the issue of the child's custody unless she comes and sees if she accepts this situation. Jerome, the one who is accustomed to living in isolation with technology, suggests that he breaks up with Zoe if his daughter will not love her. This leads Mervyn to explain to Jerome that the issue of divorce again, the first one is Jerome's break up with Corinna, can have devastating impacts on the child's life. Mervyn finds it difficult to explain human relationships to Jerome; he goes on and says "[t]hat's what you did before. That's the root of the problem now. You can't do that again. Think of the youngster. We must think of the youngster."(73) Mervyn also tries to know the reason Jerome lives with his neighbors whom he always calls monsters. Jerome could not even have an answer to this crucial question. It is crucial because he may lose custody of his daughter because of it. In other words, if Jerome can't provide, or even does not want to provide, a safe place to live with his daughter, he does not deserve her custody.

Geain, like father like daughter, at first rejects Nan. However, she loves it in a short time. She at first refuses to go with it and tells it, "get off me." (77) Their conversation is so tough. Jerome offers to take care of this issue, but Mervyn refuses his offer. Sooner, Nan could handle Geain and made her love it. Corinna expresses her pain "I feel so demoralized I don't know what I think. All I actually feel like doing is crying. I mean, that woman's done more with that kid in five minutes than I managed in five years." (82) In this case, a machine could do in minutes what a human being does in years. Ayckbourn, here, reflects the fact that people always think that machines are better than them. In other words, Ayckbourn casts light on the posthumanist viewpoint regarding machines. A machine can do what human beings cannot, or at least, it can achieve what they can achieve quickly and better. Now, Corinna is jealous of a machine, a posthuman android that replaces her in Jerome's life. She counts the machine's merits which are "obviously very intelligent, shrewd, cool, sexy, [and] wonderful with kids, a great actress, singer, [and] dancer." It is a posthumanist perspective that machines can be perfect while human beings are not. Corinna, ironically, can't understand that Zoe, or Nan, is just a machine. That is why it could cope with Jerome and his daughter. She says "they're both as mad as each

other." (88) In this respect, father and daughter are capable of living only with machines.

Two obsessed men with technology, Mervyn begins to ask about this machine. He asks about its origin and Jerome answers him "it originated in a factory — it was a prototype for a model that never went into full production. The firm went broke. There's no need to worry. That was actually designed to look after children. It's technically an automatic child-minder." (89) Then, Mervyn asks about its name which is NAN 300F. Just to mention its name for a veteran in the world of technology, like Mervyn, ends the issue of custodianship of Geain. This is because as Mervyn puts it: "I know all about the NAN 300F… My department had to deal with the whole business.... I suppose you could term them that. If you call putting a baby in a microwave oven teething troubles." The fact that Jerome knows the technical problems with this sort of machines and the damage that it may cause to his child and continues having it in his home reflects the author's dystopia of the obsession with having this sort of technology. Jerome still defends the machine as he explains the case that Mervyn speaks about. Jerome says it is not the machine's mistake; it is the mother's. He simply defends the machine against the human beings; he says, "If human beings behaved a bit less like human beings and a bit more like machines, we'd all be better off." It is a human being's mistake to act like a human being. A human being should learn how to act from a machine.

Nan could seize the child and choose never to give her to her mother. In their quarrel against the machine, Nan hurts Mervyn as the stage directions describe "*(NAN grips MERVYN'S face in the palm of her hand for a second. Then, with a seemingly effortless push, sends the man reeling back across the room. MERVYN trips and falls on to his back.*)" (90-91) This is the act of a machine that Jerome wants the human beings to follow. To convince his daughter to leave Nan, Jerome, ironically, tries to make Geain think that human beings are better. However, the switch in his situation does not work. He does not give his daughter any reason why people are better than machines. Finally, Corinna convinces her by stating how human beings are sometimes wrong, but they can correct their mistakes and solve their problems. Corinna expresses:

> Listen. In the past, your father and I, we have —we have both been selfish, we have been thoughtless and stupid and —human. But we have also been, in our time, warm and spontaneous and amusing and joyful and — loving. Which is something we can also be because we are human. But which that machine can never be. You see? *(GEAIN seems to be still waiting to be convinced.)* What we are going to do now, the three of us —you, me and Jerome —we are going down to that car and we are driving home together. And we're all going to start again. All of us. As of now. Isn't that right, Jerome?... All right. Then, that's it. Geain? Will you let go now? Are you coming with us? (94)

Geain accepts to leave the machine only on one condition which is her father and mother return to each other. It appears that Geain's only reason to love Nan, a machine, is to punish her family. She is eager to have a normal life with her family. This can be understandable through the mother's confessions to her daughter. That is, the mother and the father as human beings can make mistakes but there is always a time to fix these mistakes. It is noteworthy that Ayckbourn depicts not only the father who is responsible for destroying the family but also the mother. They, in the end, recognize their mistakes and they try to fix them. In this context, Ayckbourn creates a non-human character to make the human characters recognize their mistakes.

Jerome's mistakes can't end only when he wants to finish them. The daughters of the darkness and the sons of bitches swarming over the home and Jerome and his family need to escape this situation. Even after his family convinces him to leave with them "GEAIN: Come on, Dad. / CORINNA: we both love you, Jerome. God knows why, but we love you. Love, love, love! All right. Now, come on, please," Jerome never leaves with them. (95-96) He decides to follow them but changes his mind at the end. He prefers to live with the records, or memories of them, instead of continuing the rest of his life with them. He is fascinated by the word love uttered by his ex-wife and disfigured it creatively by his machines. The play ends by describing Jerome as follows:

> *He rushes [a]round the room uncovering the rest of the technical equipment…. Nearly everything in the room, it transpires, is actually part of JEROME'S recording and sampling gear, including the coffee table. As he does this, a fresh series of furious clangs are heard on the shutters outside…. JEROME begins to work feverishly now, treating the original sound of CORINNA'S cry of 'love', sampling and synthesizing. A whole complex, interminable process, dramatically condensed into stage seconds. JEROME starts to play. At first improvising, then slowly growing in confidence as he goes, the texture ever thickening, building in volume….The screen goes dark. JEROME, oblivious, plays on like a man possessed. Finally, with a great flourish, he finishes. A silence. He stands, triumphant.) (Jubilant and breathless) That's it! That's it! (A silence. A missile, thrown from outside, clangs against the shutters. JEROME does not react.) (Already feeling rather anti-climactic) That's it. (He looks around him and sits.) Yeah! (Pause.) That's it, then. (He sits all alone. And realizes how alone he is. As the missiles continue to clang).* (97-98)

He finally realizes that achieving any progress by technology on account of human relationships will gain him nothing. He sacrifices his family; both wife and daughter twice in order to get this composition, the composition of love. He, in the end, lives with memories of real people who are still alive, but they do not live with him.

Through creating a posthuman character, Nan F300, Ayckbourn shows how technological progression can destroy human relationships. For instance, Jerome

could substitute his life as a husband and a father by his accompany with a machine. Also, Ayckbourn's dystopian viewpoint regarding the advancement of technology enhanced through Jerome's disability to recognize how his life with a machine can't be enough or how he is unable to see the impossibility of replacing a human being with a machine. Billington states that Jerome "fails to see Nan's incapacities by naively and assigning her the mother role." (198) Throughout the play, Jerome fixes Nan many times but he didn't try to fix his relationship with his wife. That is, Ayckbourn's dystopia appears through his depiction of the relationship between human beings and machines. He portrays the fact that people consider machines as the achievement that can replace human beings. However, if people could use machines to support and ease their lives, they will be better.

Conclusion:

Ayckbourn's *Henceforward…* (1989) reflects a dystopia from a world wherein Artificial Intelligence and technology invaded human lives. It mirrors the first type of technological dystopia wherein technology is not a part of human bodies. Technology, however, substitutes human beings and destroys their relationships. Jerome is an example of people's dependence on technical devices in a way that affects his family. In other words, he abandons his family, daughter, and wife twice and lives with a robot called Nan F300. He depends on a posthuman NAN 300F to restore the custody of his daughter from his ex-wife. Jerome loses his creativity in composing music after his wife abandons him for the first time. He also can't keep her in the second time. He, also, refuses to leave the robot and lives with his daughter and ex-wife. That is, he refuses to live a normal life even after his daughter begs him. In brief, this paper is not against the advancement of technology, but against the overuse of it. Jerome, the play's protagonist, represents real persons who avoid their interactions within their family and resort to technology. It is painful that he loves his family as he lives the rest of his life with their memories, but he does not live with them even if they are still alive.

Henceforward…(1989) represents Alan Ayckbourn's dystopia of technological replacement of human beings. He focuses only on human relationships in this play to reflect the fact that human relationships can be destroyed by the invasion of posthuman machines that replace them and play their roles. The creation of machines may, as Ayckbourn portrays in this play, destroy human relationships. Also, the play reflects Ayckbourn's viewpoint on the human beings' rank at the top in the hierarch order. This viewpoint is reflected indirectly within the play as Jerome, a real human being, always gives orders to Nan, a machine. Jerome, herein, treats Nan as a slave who obeys his orders. He also tries to portray a picture of a good family by using Nan as his wife and a mother for his daughter. However, the machine fails to play Corinne's role in Jerome and his daughter's life.

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