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OUR BETTER SELVES

Abstract: David Rose points out that specific technologies cause both transhumanism and posthumanism to raise questions about what it is to be human. However, they find quite different answers. In their exploration of technological transformation, the former embraces the change of the primitive human as a next stage in evolution while latter in its ideal form sheds "thousands of years of damaging myths of human and anthropocentric superiority", casting aside humanism. This paper seeks to highlight the productive conflict between humans and their technological progeny, robots, androids, as well as transhumans in select works across cultures, from Karel Čapek's *R.U.R.*, Viktor Pelevin's *S.N.U.F.F.* and Aleksa Gajić's *Technotise: Edit i ja* to Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*. These fictional encounters between humans and their brethren do not showcase humanity's destruction, but rather reveal shifting lines between trans- and posthumanism to critically examine humanity's hubris.

Keywords: transhumanism, hubris, Karel Čapek, Viktor Pelevin, Aleksa Gajić, Kazuo Ishiguro.

> […] One of the stock plots of science fiction was that of the invention of a robot—usually pictured as a creature of metal, without soul or emotion. Under the influence of the well-known deeds and ultimate fate of Frankenstein and Rossum, there seemed only one change to be rung on this plot. – Robots were created and destroyed their creator; robots were created and destroyed their creator; robots were created and destroyed their creator
>
> *The Rest of the Robots*, Isaac Asimov

Our books, films and computer games are full of stories of mankind's inventions rising up against their creators, from *Frankenstein* to *Rossum's Universal Robots* (*R.U.R.*), from *Terminator* to *Battlestar Galactica* and beyond. This "dull hundred-times-told tale," which already began to bore Asimov in the 1930s (1964: xii), is, however, only one facet of fictional productive conflicts between humans and their technological progeny, robots, androids, as well as transhumans. This study turns to texts of different cultures and time periods, from Karel Čapek's *R.U.R.,* Viktor Pelevin's *S.N.U.F.F.*, Aleksa Gajić's *Technotise: Edit i ja* to Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun,* to argue they do not aim to portray humanity's destruction, but rather explore what it means to be human while revealing shifting lines between trans-

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and posthumanism in a critical examination of humanity's hubris and the potential for change. Those made in humankind's image are revealed to often not be our mirror images, but rather images of our better selves.

The root of the words transhumanism and posthumanism, human, precludes a final definition of the terms. One may agree with Simon Susen that "In recent decades, 'the human has become a question mark', indicating that it has become an increasingly contentious task to determine who and what counts – and, by implication, who and what does not count – as 'human' (2022: 64), particularly if one extends the time frame beyond the last decades. Defining posthumanism is even more fraught with dissent than defining humanism. An internet search "generates different and even irreconcilable definitions," resulting in a description on Wikipedia with which Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Bruno Latour and Donna Haraway would "for the most part oppose" (Wolfe 2021: 236). David Rose points out that specific technologies cause both transhumanism and posthumanism to raise questions about what it is to be human (2021: 12), however, they find quite different answers. Despite its age, Julian Huxley's proposal for defining transhumanism as "man remaining man, but transcending himself, by realizing new possibilities of and for his human nature" (1957, 17) still proves useful in describing the cyborg and an optimistic belief in the evolution of the human. The posthuman is related, yet stresses the interrelated concepts of "human", "humanity" and "humanism" as they are affected by technology and progress, yet may also include their radical deconstruction or annihilation (Rose 2021: 12). This has been termed by others as antihumanist posthumanism. Although less nuanced than other authors and cognizant of its deficiencies, since the human is not defined, Rose offers a useful shorthand for differentiating between the transhumanism and posthumanism:

> The two "schools", for want of a better term, express a difference between the two statements: "Humans were A and they are now A+" and "Humans were A and they are now not A." (2021: 13)

Rather than falling into an entangled debate of terms, this study uses Rose's shorthand to act as a rough guide in examining the following selected texts.

Although the concepts of posthumanism and transhumanism are shared by many fields, there can be no better place for seeking answers to what the technology induced changes mean for humankind than in science fiction (sf). Although it has frequently fallen short of such lofty goals, sf is nevertheless, as Isaac Asimov phrased in 1951:

> […] the only form of literature that consistently considers the nature of the changes that face us, the possible consequences, and the possible solutions. […] [It is the] branch of literature which is concerned with the impact of scientific advance upon human beings. (148).

While Asimov is not blind to sf's propensity for an interest in gadgets sometimes approaching fetishism and its relationship to adventure literature, he nonetheless emphasizes its sociological function:

> The contribution science fiction can make to society is that of accustoming its readers to the thought of the inevitability of change and the necessity of directing and shaping that change rather than opposing it blindly or blindly permitting it to overwhelm us. (1979: 196)

In addition, Asimov maintains that sf has grown to not serve merely one nation or race, but "tends to think of humanity as a unit" (1979: 195), echoing similar claims made by Bruce Franklin that "evaluates [science and technology] and relates it meaningfully to the rest of human existence" (1970: 239) or James Gunn "[sf] usually involves matters whose importance is greater than the individual or the community; often civilization or the race itself is in danger" (2002: vii). The end of the Anthropocene, either through surpassing the human (A+) or making it irrelevant (not A), certainly belongs to such grande topics that had been explored in sf long before the technological means for realizing the transformation became possible.

In turning to sf of the recent and not so recent past from different cultures, sf's older claims to universalism shall be tested in an increasingly critical postcolonial age that challenges such postulated universality. More importantly, however, it will be questioned, whether the frequent references to an alleged new posthumanist and transhumanist thought must not be perhaps seen as hype, representing but a part of a longer tradition of delimiting the human in humanity as humans confront their technical offspring and attempt to evolve into something greater than humans.

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*, has not only been hailed as a story that breaks from the fantastical past of the the Gothic to embark in scientific speculation and mold sf for centuries to come (Aldiss 1995: 78–79) and considered the world's first science fiction novel (or at least one of them) (for example see van der Lawn 2012: 298), but also proves itself critical for our discussion, as it deals with a "two-fold theme, the unfolding of Frankenstein's Hybris in creating artificial life [and the] fate of an alienated representative individual" (Suvin 1977: 127). While the text's epithet from Milton's *Paradise Lost* "Did I request thee, Maker, from

my clay/ To mould me man? Did I solicit thee/ From darkness to promote me? –" (iii), turns attention away from a Faustian reading and forefronts Suvin's emphasis on the lot of the monster, a similarly important theme is implied by the citation and lurks in its shadows: how the boundaries of the human are determined and how these may be ascertained. The primacy of this theme becomes clear in the second book of *Frankenstein*. The monster pleas with his creator to take mercy on him and treat him as human, with justice, and provide for his happiness, recounting his wretched tale of laying in hiding so near to the intimacy of a family for who's companionship he longed and learning human speech. His tale thus proves him not only curious and intelligent, but also a social being and a creature capable of love, even romantic love. Such characteristics are common to humanistic conceptions of man and thus suggest the monster is still human, A, even A+ in light of his heightened strength and stamina. Yet Victor Frankenstein sees no humanity in him: He recoils at his creation just as his monster's would-be family rejected him, seeing in him only a wretch and danger to humans. Thus even in very early science fiction, the uneasy interaction of human-like creatures and the previous humans, "hypohumans," is central. Long before Mori's study of the Uncanny Valley forty years ago (see Mori 2012) or the recent posited existence of an Uncanny Cliff (von der Pütten et al 2019), Shelley illustrated human's sense of the uncanny in relationships with those beings who could pass themselves off as one of them if not a fear of the posthuman or transhuman.

Čapek's *R.U.R.* has often been simplistically read as a tale of humankind's technical creations rising up to destroy their master, see for example *Wikipedia* "the robots revolt and cause the extinction of the human race" or Isaac Asimov's more nuanced comment that "The robots themselves rise in rebellion, destroy what is left of mankind and take over the world" (1963: xii). That Čapek's play continues to be performed and reviewed 100 years after its premiere suggests the play has more to offer than this tired plot. Indeed, *R.U.R.* forefronts the ideas of posthumanism, questioning what being human means, rather than the postapocalyptic.

That the distinction between human and robot is uncomfortably close is clear from the outset. Unlike today's usage of the word robot, which the *New Oxford American Dictionary* (*NOAD*) defines as "a machine resembling a human being and able to replicate certain human movements and functions automatically," the play that gave the world the word robot never questions whether the androids are living creatures. Like other Slavic languages, Czech differentiates between animate and inanimate masculine nouns, but unlike the borrowing of robot into related languages, *Robot* is clearly animate in Czech. The robots are both declined as an animate noun

in Plural, i.e. *Roboti*, (see Čapek 2018: 3, 4, 10) as well as in singular "Každý si kup *svého Robota*" (Čapek 2018: 4, my accent). Czech robots are—at least grammatically—decidedly living.

One might argue this is meaningless, for the Czech snowman (*sněhulák*) is also animate, were it not for the play's prolog which highlights the uncanny resemblance of robots and humans. The League of Humanity's representative and daughter of the president, Helena, is unable to differentiate between robots and the engineers who created them. She first believes a female model robot, with whom she converses at some length, to be a girl like herself and rejects the director's statement to the contrary: "Vy jste šarlatán! Sulla není Robot, Sulla je děvče jako já (You are a swindler! Sulla isn't a robot, Sulla is a girl like me)" (Čapek 2018: 12). Although the stage directions call for the robots to move and speak haltingly with expressionless and staring faces, this does not register as inhuman with Helena. This case of mistaken identity is followed by a second. When meeting the company's engineers, she proclaims that both she and thousands in the outside world sympathize with their lot, living on a remote island without human dignity, an assessment the engineers embrace—until the mix-up is revealed:

> DOMIN: Je mi líto. Ti pánové jsou totiž lidé jako vy. Jako celá Evropa.
> HELENA (k ostatním): Vy nejste Roboti?
> BUSMAN (řehtá se): Buh uchovej!
> HALLEMEIER: Fuj, Roboti!
> DR. GALL (směje se): Pěkně děkujem!
> HELENA: Ale… to není možno! (Čapek 2018: 18)

> DOMIN: I'm sorry. These men are people just like you. Like all of Europe.
> HELENA (to the others): You aren't robots?
> BUSMAN (chuckles): God forbid!
> HALLEMEIER: Yuck, robots!
> DR. GALL (laughs): Thanks a lot!
> HELENA: But…that's impossible! (all translations by author)

While those in the audience can distinguish between the robots and people thanks to their attire and speech, these differences are lost to Helena. Just as the *NOAD* lists in a second definition of a robot, "a person who behaves in a mechanical or unemotional fashion," so too do certain behaviors not cause Helena to question beings' humanity, believing humanity to be found elsewhere.

Helena echoes the cliché that a soul makes beings humans, extending this privilege to the robots to argue with the factory's director, Domin, for

their intrinsic humanity and right to freedom, but as a whole *R.U.R.* rejects both static and simple definition of the human as well as unchanging and unequivocally positive notions of humanity. On the one hand, as Helena felt in the prolog, being human is not tied to a natural body, but it is subject to change. In terms of their humanity, suggested in *R.U.R.* as a set of behaviors, natural humans exchange places with the robots. While the latter learn to experience emotion, desire to create, work, live and bear children, the former turn from this path. Ceasing to procreate, the natural humans' extinction was sealed before the robots' revolt, as Helena's reading of the newspaper headlines documents:

> HELENA: […] (Čte:) "Za poslední týden nebylo opeť hlášeno ani jediné narození." (Pustí noviny.)
> NÁNA: Co to má bejt?
> HELENA: Náno, lidé se přestávají rodit.
> NÁNA (skládá brýle): Tak to je konec. To je s náma konec. (Čapek 2018: 33)

> HELENA: […] (Reads:) "In the last week there was again not a single birth registered." (Drops the paper.)
> NÁNA: What's up with that?
> HELENA: Nána, people are not having children.
> NÁNA (folds up her glasses): Well that's the end. That's the end of us.

The question is what has led to humankind to stop procreating and thus to its downfall—the simple advent of robotic slaves? The answer is more complicated than at first glance. The robots were in Domin's mind only the means to free humans from work to create Übermenschen:

> DOMIN (tišeji): – chtěl jsem, abychom z celého lidstva udělali aristokracii světa. Neomezené, svobodné a svrchované lidi. A třeba víc než lidi.
> ALQUIST: Nu tak tedy Nadlidi.
> DOMIN: Ano. Ó jen mít sto let času! Ještě sto let pro příští lidstvo! (Čapek 2018: 54)
> DOMIN (quieter): – I wanted us to change all of humanity into the aristocracy of the world. An unlimited, free and supreme. And perhaps into even more than people.
> ALQUIST: So then Übermenschen.
> DOMIN: Yes. Oh, if I only had 100 years time! 100 years to make the next humankind!

Yet just as the younger Rossum was unable to create gigantic Überrobots (*Nadroboti*), since "our planet is apparently a little too small for

giants" (Čapek 2018: 11), so too does Domin's plan to create Übermenschen fail. Instead of the birth of the transhuman, an A+, the natural humans do not become something greater, but simply give in to previously known desires. Even in the moments before their demise, most only think conventionally, praising wealth (Busman) or beauty and hedonism (Hallemeier). Humanity was unable to conceive itself as something new and, having overcome existential necessity, lacked the will to think of the future.

The robots seemingly experience a Pyrrhic victory. First, having exterminated their former masters, they are yet unable to procreate and achieve their goal of continuing life in their offspring. Second, despite their superior strength, intelligence and world-wide unity in their cause rather, they carry the baggage of their natural human creators, rather than representing a clear posthuman beginning. This becomes clear when Alquist questions the robot's leader about their terrible actions in the final act:

> DAMON: Musíte zabíjet a panovat, chcete-li být jako lidé. Čtěte dějiny! Čtěte lidské knihy! Musíte panovat a vraždit, chcete-li být lidmi!
> ALQUIST: Ach Domine, nic není člověku cizejšího než jeho obraz. (Čapek 2018: 75)

> DAMON: You have to kill and rule if you want to be like people. Read history! Read human books! You have to rule and murder if you want to be human!
> ALQUIST: Och, Domin, nothing is more foreign to man than his own image.

The robots have truly become human, assuming both humanity's positive and negative character traits, while surpassing former humans strength and cognitive abilities. After Primus and Helena each prove their willingness to sacrifice themselves to save the other, Čapek's final scene invokes the book of Genesis to christen the robots a new Adam and Eve. One must agree that the robots are "not a sacrilegious invasion of the domain of the Almighty" (Asimov 1964: xiii), but may easily take humans place in the myth of creation, moreover, the new Adam and Eve demonstrate not only a work ethic, but altruism. The robots thus embody traits that their creators had lost, ushering in a a human 2.0, a vision of our better selves, rather than a truly posthuman that denies humanities values or is something entirely new (not A).

S.N.U.F.F. is most well-known as a biting satire, yet Viktor Pelevin's so-called "utopia" is also a decided questioning of humankind's privileged position in its study of human and android interaction. In the forefront of the study is Damilola and Kaya's relationship. Damilola, a drone pilot

who captures violent, sensationalist content for snuffs, has chosen Kaya as his companion, one of the most expensive and advanced surrogate companions on the market, a sura. In his introduction for the reader to his future, Damilola states his sexual preference for "dolls," extolling the superiority of the programmable lovers in comparison to mundane humans, while never doubting his own supposed intrinsic human worth. Kaya soon outgrows him – and conventional notions of what separates human and non-human. It is indeed Kaya who questions Damilola's humanity, calling him a *Babuvian* (apeviant), the meaning of which she must explain to him: „Бабувиан —это павиан, который собирался в бонвиваны, а попал в бабуины (An babovant is a baboon, who intended to become a bon viveuer, but ended up as an ape)" (Pelevin 2012: 213). The sura thus outwits the human in his own language and places him lower in the evolutionary chain than humans.

For his part, Damilola incessantly reminds the reader of his programing of his sura in order to prove Kaya is a mere machine, stating his case clearly: "Я человек, а ты — бытовой электроприбор (I am a person, while you are a household electrical appliance)" (Pelevin 2012: 404). However, the text suggests he is wrong. First of all, the supposed appliance Kaya often controls him. Kaya manipulates the pilot, feigning interest to gain his favor, and awakening his desires to demand payment for their fulfillment. Secondly, she becomes enamored with another man, the orc Grim, not as a ploy to manipulate him, as Damilola initially assumes, but in an expression of an equally free will. Finally, Kaya reveals the tenuousness of Damilola's assertion that Kaya's complex programming is only a simulation of a soul, unlike the human soul created by god, Manitou. She counters by convincingly arguing that his ego and his actions are no more his than her own:

> Мой маршрут нарисован внутри меня программно, […] а твой маршрут нарисован внутри тебя химически. И когда тебе кажется, что ты идешь к свету и счастью, ты просто идешь к своему внутреннему дрессировщику за очередным куском сахара. Причем нельзя даже сказать, что это идешь ты. Просто химический компьютер выполняет оператор «take sugar», чтобы перейти к оператору «rejoice 5 seconds». А потом опять будет оператор «suffer», его никто никогда не отменял и не отменит. Никакого «тебя» во всем этом нет. (Pelevin 2012: 402–403)

> My path is inscribed in me by a program, […] and your path is inscribed in you chemically. And when it seems you that you are walking toward lights and happiness, you're simply walking to you inner trainer to get another lump of sugar. And we can't even say that it's you're the one walking. It's

> just the chemical computer executing the command "take sugar" in order to move to the command "rejoice 5 seconds." And then there will again be the command "suffer," it has never been cancelled and never will. In all of this there is no "you."

Kaya has thus has not only challenged her master's humanity, but his very conception of self. Damilola will not be able to disprove her.

To substantiate her claims that the pilot's programming is only different from her own in that it is based on chemistry ("Ты такая же программа, только химическая"), she initiates his program of lust for her. Yet this time it is different: Damilola for the first time recognizes the commands have been initiated and realizes he can only expect suffering after a fleeting moment of pleasure: "Она отняла у меня мое счастье, но огонь страдания остался на месте […] (She had taken away my happiness, but the fire of suffering remained in place)" (Pelevin 2012: 410) The human thus becomes self-aware, learning this from the android, and hears the "echo of truth" in her voice. Humankind's children have surpassed their maker.

It is thus hardly a surprise that Kaya frees herself from her owner and goes on to lead a life outside of the confines of her programming while Damilola is unable to reinvent himself after she leaves. The intertwined story of the noble savage, Kaya's new found love, Grim, suggests some hope for the organic humans, yet Pelevin's *S.N.U.F.F.* more strikingly points to androids surpassing their human creators by the nature of their ability to reflect on their own perception of reality as a process of operations. Kaya displays human emotions, spirituality and passions, making her superior to humans in her self-awareness. In this way, the suras become A+, promising a posthuman future.

Aleksa Gajić's *Technotajz: Edit i ja* turns from the mirror images of our better-selves to transhumanism, the augmentation of humans with surgical implants to increase performance, blurring the distinction between artificial and animal life. Set in a run down, dystopian future of lack in Belgrade of the year 2074, the story centers on a lackluster psychology student, Edit Stefanović, who is a care giver for the autistic mathematical genius Abel Mustafov. Abel had created a formula to unite all the power and beings of the Earth, essentially proving the existence of God, yet no computer can execute the calculations—before the process is complete, the computers become sentient and power down. Having failed her university exams for the sixth time and unwilling to pay for a passing exam in nature, she turns to a backstreet dealer of cybertech to implant a chip in her brain to give her photographic memory in order to pass her exams. The special military chip grants her this and further powers beyond her wildest dreams. After

a glance at Abel's formular, the chip starts the calculations, the connection between human and machine overcoming both of their limitations.

While the parallel plot of the research institute attempting to use Edit for its own purposes creates one dynamic axis of the plot, the more pressing one is the possibilities a cyborg existence creates. Edit is truly beyond human, engaging in intense conversations with a God-like figure able to reveal the secrets of existence. Yet the cost of this is high—the chip is slowly turning Edit into something else, creating a parallel being inside her by creating new neurological path ways, changing the transhuman into the non-human.

The film offers a nuanced answer to transhumanism, embracing the positive potential of such crossings of human and machine, while challenging older naive, noble conceptions of humanity. Certainly the money hungry executives of the institute, who only think of their own gains, or Edit's parents, who are resigned to drinking, smoking and watching TV and threaten Edit with physical violence should not be seen as a shining beacon of humanity's grace. Yet ultimately, both in the human serving as the bridge for technology to reach enlightenment as well as in Edit's positive effect on Abel, helping him discover the world beyond his autism, the text argues there is place for both human and tech together, not one being superior to the other, but both necessary to conduct the final calculation.

Like Pelevin's *S.N.U.F.F.* and Kazuo Ishiguro's 2005 novel, *Never Let Me Go,* so too does *Klara and the Sun* challenge an anthropocentric world view. As Annalisa Quinn aptly noted in her review in NPR, "Again and again, Ishiguro asks: What does it mean to be human? What does it mean to have a self? And how much of that self can and should we give to others?" (2021). Similar to Ishiguro's previous novel, *Klara and the Sun* usurps the centrality of the human perspective from the outset by choosing a narrative perspective that privileges the disenfranchised, in this case Klara, one of the artificial friends (AFs). Unlike the clones of *Never Let Me Go,* the AFs do not seek to confirm their own humanity by discovering their human prototypes, but rather they accept themselves for that which they are, a commodity. In a fictional near future Klara waits in a shop window to be purchased and to become a human's friend. The reader hopes her dream will become reality before she disappears in the shop's bowels, far from the sunlight that powers the AFs, to make way for the much more intelligent and fashionable newer model B3s. Although she is an older model AF, the friendly saleswoman quickly recognizes that Klara has an unusual ability to perceive people and her surroundings which sets her apart from the newer, supposedly more advanced AFs. The saleswoman's keen insight becomes

apparent in the shop. Klara observes that the new male B3s seemingly embrace the friendship of older model boys and gracefully receive their pointers on presenting themselves, yet as soon as the B3s believe they are not being watched, they move away from and and mock their older AFs. Klara thus shows her perceptiveness of human(like) interaction and reveals the AF's uncanny resemblance to natural humans to the reader.

Klara is purchased to be the friend of a sick girl, Josie, who is suffering the effects from a genetic procedure to give her superior intelligence and an advantage in the world, and leaves the shop to serve in a rich household in the suburbs. Klara becomes the keen observer of Josie's life, including her great love to the genetically unmodified Rick, a talented boy from a simple, primitive home on the other side of the field, who cannot compete with the engineered humans.

If transhumanism is understood as a vision of overcoming human failings through advanced engineering, the novel argues this is a false hope. Josie's party with her improved friends, reveal them to be perhaps intelligent, yet even more socially flawed than the simple AF, Klara, or Rick, speaking condescendingly to the previous type of humans just as the newer model AFs did to the former models. There is no free lunch, and intellectual prowess comes at the cost of empathy and compassion in both humans and AFs. Josie echoes the falseness of the model B3 AFs, quickly becoming "another person" in the company of her genetically enhanced friends and thus alienating both Klara and Rick (Ishiguro 2021: 82–83) When Josie's genetic treatment eventually is successful and her bed rest ends, it thus comes as no surprise that both her relationship to Klara and Rick similarly ends. She has outgrown them.

The similarity drawn between AFs and humans combine with Klara's astute attention to the irrational, destructiveness in human relations, her empathy for the suffering of others and a religious belief in a God-like figure, the Sun, to cast the novel as posthumanist. While the novel's human characters dream, fear and hate, they also make cool calculations of what is the most expedient way to sucede and to make their lives pleasant. One might say, they are typically flawed humans, yet the transhuman beings are even more flawed. Klara, on the other hand, possesses one of humanity's most highly prized traits, altruism, willing to sacrifice herself for Josie, offering her own blood to her god the sun in exchange for Josie's health. Her simple syntax and naively objective observations of the world never allow readers to forget she is not quite human, however, having more insight into human relationships than humans themselves, and feeling for the loss of love more than those "humans" around her, prove her to be

the image of a better human despite her origins. As in Čapek's *R.U.R.*, the transhuman experiment may have failed, but an idealized humanity lives on in nonorganic bodies.

With Ishiguro's novel the circle is closed that started with Čapeks *R.U.R.* 100 years earlier. AFs, suras and yes, *Roboti* are not merely mechanical murderers of humankind, but often visions of our better selves, not less human, but more humane and human than the original biological models they follow. Primus' and Helena's, Klara's and Kaya's altruism raise them above the low bar of conventional humanity surrounding them, dethroning the king of the animal kingdom, man. Thus the message of posthumanism rings clearly, echoing the surprised words of another human when comparing robots for sale with the human salesperson: „Ale všichni vypadali laskavěji a příjemněji než on. Lidštěji. Ano, lidštěji, […] (All of them looked more kindly and pleasantly than he did. More human. Yes, more human, […])" (Petiška 2013: chapter 13).

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Кенет Хеншу

НАШЕ БОЉЕ ЈА

Сажетак

Дејвид Розе истиче да специфичне технологије наводе и трансхуманизам и постхуманизам да покрену питања о томе шта значи бити човек. Међутим, одговори које ови техномисаони правци проналазе су различити. Истражујући технолошке трансформације, први прихватају промену примитивног човека као наредну фазу у еволуцији, док други у свом идеалном облику одбацују „хиљаде година штетних митова о људској и антропоцентричној супериорности", одбацујући тиме и хуманизам. Овај рад настоји да истакне продуктивни сукоб између људи и њиховог технолошког потомства – робота, андроида, као и трансљуди – у одабраним делима различитих култура, од романа *R.U.R.* Карела Чапека, *S.N.U.F.F.* Виктора Пељевина, *Клара и сунце* Казуа Ишигура до

анимираног филма *Tehnotise: Edit i ja* Алексе Гајића. Ови измишљени сусрети између људи и њихове браће не приказују уништење човечанства, већ откривају померање линија између транс- и постхуманизма како би се критички испитала охолост човечанства.

Кључне речи: трансхуманизам, охолост, Карел Чапек, Виктор Пељевин, Алекса Гајић, Казуо Ишигуро.